

UCLA

UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Examining the Perceptions and Expectations of Teachers of Dually-Identified Students
(English Language Learners with Learning Disabilities)

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/79658289>

Author

Lemus, Irma

Publication Date

2021

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Examining the Perceptions and Expectations of Teachers of Dually-Identified Students
(English Language Learners with Learning Disabilities)

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Education

by

Irma Lemus

2021

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Examining the Perceptions and Expectations of Teachers of Dually-Identified Students
(English Language Learners with Learning Disabilities)

by

Irma Lemus

Doctor of Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2021

Professor Lucrecia Santibañez, Chair

This qualitative study focuses on teachers of dually-identified students (English Language Learners with learning disabilities). The study investigates teachers' expectations and perceptions of dually-identified students and how these perceptions impact teachers' instructional decisions and practices. Nineteen teachers from two Los Angeles area schools were interviewed as part of this study. There is a limited body of research that focuses on teachers of dually-identified students. However, there is a large body of research that supports the hypotheses that teacher perceptions and expectations impact the academic success of students. Beginning with Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968) work on the Pygmalion Effect, there has been much research on how teachers' expectations impact student achievement.

The research study consisted of interviews with 19 middle school and high school teachers. The synthesis of the data led to several significant findings. Most notably, that teachers hold similar academic expectations for dually-identified students as they do for all other students. Based on interviews, teachers perceived that holding dually-identified students to the same academic expectations as other students was holding students to “high standards”. The study findings suggest that school leaders must invest in providing teachers and school staff targeted professional development on the unique learning needs of dually-identified students. Other recommendations include prioritizing teacher collaboration time at school sites, so teachers may share best practices and learn from their colleagues.

The dissertation of Irma Lemus is approved.

Marjorie Faulstich Orellana

Inmaculada Garcia-Sanchez

Connie Kasari

Lucrecia Santibañez, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2021

Dedication Page

Para mi mamá que siempre me ha apoyado. Gracias por creer en mí y no dejarme rendir.

For my family who has been my lifeline through this journey. I am grateful for your support, encouragement and prayers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION	ii
COMMITTEE	iv
DEDICATION	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS	x
CHAPTER 1: THE PROBLEM	1
SUMMARY OF PROBLEM.....	1
TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS & EXPECTATIONS	2
INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITIES: ELS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES.....	3
EXISTING GAPS	4
THE PROJECT	5
RESEARCH QUESTIONS	5
RESEARCH SITES	6
RESEARCH DESIGN	6
SIGNIFICANCE	6
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	7
INTRODUCTION	7
EXAMINING TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS & EXPECTATIONS	8
FACTORS INFLUENCING TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS & EXPECTATIONS	11
THEORETICAL MODEL.....	11
CULTURALLY & LINGUISTICALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING.....	14
THE INTERSECTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION & ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS	17
CURRENT STUDY.....	19
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	20
INTRODUCTION	20
DESIGN RATIONALE.....	21
RESEARCH SITE & POPULATION	21
DATA COLLECTION METHODS	23
DATA ANALYSIS.....	23
POSITIONALITY & ROLE MANAGEMENT	23
ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	24
CREDIBILITY AND VALIDITY	24
STUDY LIMITATIONS	25
SUMMARY	25
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS	26
INTRODUCTION	26
DATA COLLECTION.....	27
TEACHING DURING THE PANDEMIC	27
OVERVIEW OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS.....	29
IMPACT OF PANDEMIC ON FINDINGS.....	30
FINDINGS.....	30
<i>Teacher Expectations</i>	30
<i>Teachers Expect Self Advocacy & Communication Skills</i>	31
<i>Students’ Low Self-Concept</i>	33
<i>Instructional Approaches</i>	36

<i>Implementation of Mastery Learning and Grading</i>	38
<i>Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Practices</i>	41
SUMMARY.....	43
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION	45
OVERVIEW	45
INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS.....	46
<i>Tension Between Expectations and Unconscious Bias</i>	46
<i>Expectations of Self-Advocacy and Communication Skills</i>	48
<i>Teachers Implement Mastery Learning and Grading</i>	49
<i>Culturally Responsive Lessons</i>	50
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EDUCATORS.....	51
LIMITATIONS.....	55
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	55
CONCLUSION	56
APPENDIX A: STUDY PARTICIPATION CONSENT FORM.....	59
APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.....	61
APPENDIX C: RECRUITMENT EMAIL	63
REFERENCES	64

List of Tables

Table 1. *Theoretical Model of Teacher Characteristics and Student Achievement*.....11

Table 2. *Overview of Study Participants*.....29

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people whose support helped me reached this milestone. I would like to thank my committee members for their time and valuable feedback. I want to especially thank my chair, Dr. Lucrecia Santibañez, for her guidance through this process.

I also want to thank the teachers who participated in this study. They willingly shared their experiences of working with dually-identified students. Their passion for meeting students' needs despite the challenges of a global pandemic was truly inspiring.

Lastly, I couldn't have completed my program without the support of great friends. I am grateful to Lisa Maggiore for encouraging me to go for it from day one. I also want to thank my amiga Adrianna Douglas whose support these last few years has been a blessing.

VITA

1999	B.A. in English Cal State University, Los Angeles Los Angeles, California
2005-2013	English Language Arts Teacher David Starr Jordan High School & Public Service Community High School Los Angeles Unified School District
2012	M.S. in Administration & Administrative Services Credential Pepperdine University Malibu, California
2013-2016	Assistant Principal Compton High School Compton Unified School District
2017-2021	Assistant Principal Charles R. Drew Middle School Los Angeles Unified School District

Chapter I: Introduction

The Problem

Labels have the potential to determine students' future. English Language Learners have been historically underserved in American public schools, and the problem is further confounded when these same students are *dually labeled* as ELs with learning disabilities (Cioe-Pena, 2017). In Los Angeles Unified School District about 90 percent of dually-identified students (English Language Learners with learning disabilities) are Latino (Wise, et. al, 2018). These students are discouraged, disengaged and are at risk of dropping out of school. When these students arrive to secondary schools--whether it be middle school or high school—they have significant gaps in their academic learning (Thompson, 2015).

Dually-identified students enter middle school with major deficits in reading and writing, and as a form of intervention, dually-identified students are placed into segregated remedial courses (Estrada, 2014). Students' lack of academic progress has led to students being "remediated into segregated academic program tracks" (Parrish et al, 2006; Estrada & Wang, 2017). Course segregation then diminishes students' opportunities to be exposed and engage in more advanced course work that is a prerequisite to prepare students for college. The consequences of remediation exacerbate and increase the achievement gap for students (Parrish et al, 2006). Once in high school, most dually-identified students go through their four years in high school in low-level courses, never accessing grade-level curriculum that would prepare them for college. These students are not prepared for life after high school nor are they given the skills to be productive citizens.

In LAUSD there are approximately 50,000 Long Term English Language Learners (LTELs) enrolled in schools (Wise, et. al, 2018). LTEL is an educational classification given to

students, who after attending US schools for more than six years, have not met state English proficiency standards, and are struggling academically (California Ed Code 313.1). Of the LTELs enrolled in LAUSD, about 40% of these students are dually-identified students who also receive Special Education services (Wise, et. al, 2018). An independent report of LAUSD found that dually-identified students are twice as likely to become LTELs than their peers who are not dually identified (Wise et. al, 2018).

Teachers' Perceptions and Expectations

Teachers have the greatest impact on student performance when compared with other school-related factors (Opper, 2019). On reading and math tests, a teacher is estimated to have two to three times the impact of any other school factor, including school services, facilities, and even leadership (Opper, 2019). Similarly, research has shown a strong link between teachers' perceptions and expectations of their students and students' academic performance (Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1968; Good, 1987; Mujis & Reynolds, 2002; Blanchard and Muller, 2014). Teachers' beliefs, such as political or ideological views, can influence how teachers view their roles as educators, as well as how teacher view their subject matter and the choices they make when teaching (Richardson, 1996).

For dually-identified students positive teacher interactions can significantly impact their academic performance. "Teachers' beliefs hold powerful implications for ELLs in their classrooms. Teachers' attitudes toward ELLs affect the classroom interaction between these students and the teacher, which ultimately affects achievement" (Pettit, 2011). Researchers have found that teachers' perceptions and expectations may lead to gatekeeping behavior, by directing students perceived as high-achieving toward academic opportunities, while holding back students who teachers deem as low-achieving (Blanchard & Muller, 2014). This type of behavior

by teachers can have a profound negative effect on students' academic and social emotional state. The evidence suggest that positive teacher-student interaction significantly motivates students to pursue higher lever courses and subject matter that better prepares students for college (Blanchard & Muller, 2014). "Teachers' perceptions of students' social backgrounds shape their academic outcomes in ways that produce winners and losers at a decisive phase of students' educational trajectories" (Blanchard & Muller, 2014).

Intersectional Identities: English Learners with Learning Disabilities

In her work on intersectional identities, Cioe-Pena (2017) states that dually-identified students are left in the *intersectional gap* because students are "multifaceted and complicated beings that do not readily fit into the predetermined categories currently used to evaluate, categorize and educate them" (Cioe-Pena, 2017). According to Cioe-Pena, schools often overlook the educational needs of dually-identified students as they mainly focus on the inclusion of disabled students into the general education classroom setting.

"The discourse around inclusion focuses so heavily on monolingual students with disabilities that it misses the culturally and linguistically diverse students that are not benefiting from inclusive programmes. Issues of inclusion need to be considered beyond ability to also include language and culture" (Cioe-Pena, 2017). In California, English Language Learners receive instruction in a separate setting, often called sheltered classes, where students receive instruction away from the general education classroom setting (Olsen, 2010). Critics of this model state that segregating English learners, including dually-identified students, from the inclusive classroom diminishes students' opportunities to access higher-level curriculum (Parrish et al, 2006; Estrada & Wang, 2017).

“Children who speak languages other than English can often fall deeper into the inclusion’s intersectional gap because they face additional challenges gaining access to inclusive spaces. Not only does the general education machine define normal as White, typically developing and middle class, but in order to be considered normal one must also have command of the English language” (Cioe-Pena, 2017). Based on her research, Cioe-Pena has developed recommendations for the needs of dually-identified students, including creating bilingual inclusive classrooms and training teachers on culturally and linguistically responsive teaching practices.

Disability Critical Race Theory, or DisCrit, explores the connections between race, language, and disability (Annamma, Connor & Ferri, 2013). DisCrit sheds light on the experiences of students of color who are labeled with a disability. Furthermore, for dually-identified students, who are labeled as both English learners and students with learning disabilities, DisCrit offers a different view of these students. DisCrit calls for teachers to face their biases and deficit thinking, as well as celebrate students’ unique differences and perspectives. A main tenant of DisCrit also recognizes the social and psychological impact of labeling students. “DisCrit acknowledges ways that marginalization in schools flows in multiple directions at once – illustrating how English Language Learners, for instance, are also marginalized and generally perceived from a deficit lens, which leads to their citizenship and belonging also being questioned (Annamma, Connor & Ferri, 2013).

Existing Gaps in Research

Few studies have addressed teachers of dually-identified students. The literature on

dually-identified students has mostly concentrated on the challenges in identifying learning disabilities among this student population (Morgan, et al., 2015; Umansky, Thompson, & Diaz, 2017). These studies have focused on the identification of students' disability and how school teachers and personnel lack professional knowledge to properly identify learning disabilities in dually-identified students (Sanchez, Parker, Akbayin, & McTigue, 2010). Currently, there is limited literature that addresses the teachers who work with dually-identified students. This study aims to add to the existing body of research by providing insight into the perceptions and expectations of teachers of dually-identified students.

Statement of the Project

This study focuses on the teachers who work with dually-identified students (English Language Learners with learning disabilities). The study investigates teacher perceptions and expectations of dually-identified students and how these beliefs affect teachers' instructional choices and practices. As secondary education is a critical time for dually-identified students due to the importance of EL reclassification and college and career readiness, the teachers participating in this qualitative study will be middle and high school teachers. This research study focuses on the following questions:

Research Questions

1. What are teachers' expectations and perceptions of dually-identified (English Language Learners with learning disabilities) students?
2. How do teachers' expectations and perceptions of dually-identified students impact their instructional decisions and practices?

Research Sites

Teachers participating in this study came from two schools in a large urban school district in southern California. Nineteen teachers from two schools, middle school and high school, participated in this study. The research sites are full inclusion schools where special education students are mainstreamed into general education classes. Both schools are Title I schools with at least 98 percent of students receive free or reduced lunch.

Research Design

This qualitative research study consisted of in-depth teacher interviews. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, teacher interviews were conducted via Zoom video conference. Interviews focused on teachers' perceptions and expectations of dually-identified students and how these beliefs play a role in teachers' instructional decisions. The interviews informed my study by providing first-hand account, teacher perspectives of what they considered are the characteristics that make dually-identified students academically successful, as well as how these teachers decided how and what to teach this particular subgroup of students.

Project Significance

Schools are failing dually-identified students, one of our most vulnerable groups of students. Many dually-identified students perform poorly in schools and many become disengaged and discouraged. Most dually-identified are not able to take college preparatory courses, and therefore are not college ready at high school graduation (Wise, Tien Le, & Ganon, 2018) . It is my hope that this study's results will help educators better understand dually-identified students, as well as identify how to best support teachers who work with these students

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

English Language Learners are the fastest growing student population in the United States, according to the National Center on Educational Statistics. One in four children in the US are born into immigrant families where the household language is other than English (Miranda, Wells, & Jenkins, 2019). Teachers across the country face the challenge of meeting the needs of English learners and the issue is further confounded when these same students are also identified with learning disabilities. Dually-identified students are English Language Learners with learning disabilities. Most dually-identified students, especially in middle and high school, struggle academically and do not reach English proficiency, which leads to students being further classified as Long Term English Learners (LTELs). LTEL is a classification given to students who have not met English proficiency despite being enrolled in a U.S. school for six or more years.

Teachers beliefs and expectations of students, perhaps as much as teacher qualifications, affect what students learn in the classroom (Pettit, 2011). For dually-identified students this significantly impacts their academic success. “If teachers have unexamined negative beliefs toward ELLs, even well-meaning teachers might discriminate without realizing it. On the other hand, teachers who hold high expectations for ELLs are able to make a positive impact on the school experiences of these students—a persistently vulnerable population” (Pettit, 2011). Richardson (1996) found that teachers’ beliefs also influence how teachers view their subject matter and the choices they make in their teaching. Teachers will emphasize certain aspects of the curriculum or make choices through their lessons, which are influenced by teachers’ beliefs and their stance on educational issues (Richardson, 1996). “Teacher beliefs hold powerful

implications for the ELLs in their classrooms...[beliefs] shape their perceptions and judgments, which, in turn, affect students' behavior in the classroom" (Pettit, 2011).

This study focuses on the teachers of dually-identified students (English Language Learners with learning disabilities). In particular, the study investigates teacher expectations and perceptions of dually-identified students and how these perceptions affect teachers' instructional choices and practices. In this literature review, I first summarize the research and theories that support the hypotheses that teachers' perceptions and expectations affect student learning. Next, I review the factors that influence teachers' perceptions in the classroom. I then outline the how culturally and linguistically responsive teaching provides a framework for effective instruction. I continue by giving an overview of the intersectionality of special education and English Language Learners and what this means for teachers of dually-identified students. Finally, I offer an overview of my study.

Examining Teachers' Perceptions & Expectations

There is a large body of research that supports the hypotheses that teacher perceptions and expectations impact the academic success of students. Beginning with Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968) seminal work on the Pygmalion Effect, there has been much research on how teachers communicate expectations to students. The original work of Rosenthal and Jacobsen "*Pygmalion in the Classroom*" (1968) found that teacher expectations influence student performance. The research focused on a randomized control trial of elementary school students in San Francisco, California where teachers were given the names of students who showed potential growth on a supposed IQ test. Unknown to teachers, the students were randomly selected. The teachers were told the students were expected to bloom academically within the school year. Over 300 students participated in the study with 255 students in the control group

and 65 students in the experimental group. When the students were tested eight months later, the researchers found the randomly selected students scored significantly higher than their peers, especially in the early elementary grades. “One person’s expectations of another’s behavior may come to serve as a self-fulfilling prophecy. When teachers expected that certain children would show greater intellectual development, those children did show greater intellectual development” (Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1968).

The Pygmalion Effect and the self-fulfilling prophecy have been studied by later researchers. Good (1987) in his meta-analysis of 20 years of research specifically addresses teacher expectations as self-fulfilling prophecies. Good’s research shows that teacher and student interactions are much more complex than originally believed. Good hypothesizes that low teacher expectations may be due to the mismatch between teacher and student. “The problem of low teacher expectations may not be one of simple identification or labeling of students (i.e., recognition that one student is relatively less able than another) but rather of inappropriate knowledge of how to respond to students who have difficulty learning” (Good, 1987). Good (1981) studied how teachers communicate expectations to students. Based on his decade of field research in observing elementary teachers, Good found that teachers exhibit certain behaviors with students such as: paying more attention to high-achieving students, calling less often on low-achieving students, seating low-achieving students farther away from the teacher, having friendlier interaction with high-achieving students, less eye contact with low-achieving students and providing less feedback to low-achieving students.

Blanchard and Muller (2014) studied teachers’ perceptions of English Language Learners, specifically teachers’ beliefs about their students’ capacity to be college-bound. The researchers study includes national survey data from more than 16,000 10th grade students

enrolled in US public and private high schools, as well as student transcript information. English and math teachers were also surveyed. “Teachers may potentially be supportive mentors who offer valuable institutional expertise or gatekeepers who respond to stereotyped ideas about their students and maintain inequality. We found evidence for both” (Blanchard and Muller, 2014). When comparing English Language Learners to native English speakers, Blanchard and Muller found that teachers viewed native English speaking students as more likely to be successful in higher-level math classes that are required for college preparation. Although many teachers viewed English Learners as hardworking, they believed that native English speaking students were more likely to successfully complete higher-level math courses. The researchers found that student academic performance was consistent with teacher perceptions of students. Native English speaking students, perceived as college bound by teachers, had GPAs more than 1.5 full letter grades higher than English Learners (Blanchard and Muller, 2014).

Mujis and Reynolds (2002) in their research of teachers at three primary schools in the United Kingdom found that student achievement is directly connected to teachers’ behaviors, beliefs, self-efficacy and subject knowledge. “The evidence for the relationship is not equally strong in all cases, however. The evidence for the relationship with teacher behaviors would appear to be most robust, whereas that for subject knowledge appears mixed” (Mujis & Reynolds, 2002). During their study, the researchers evaluated mathematics instruction. As part of their data collection, teachers’ behaviors were collected by observing them twice a year. Mujis and Reynolds hypothesize that teachers’ beliefs, self-efficacy, and subject knowledge are motivational factors that influence teachers’ behaviors with students. The researchers state that subject knowledge has a direct effect on both teachers and students, as it will impact both teachers’ behaviors and may be directly experienced by students (Mujis & Reynolds, 2002).

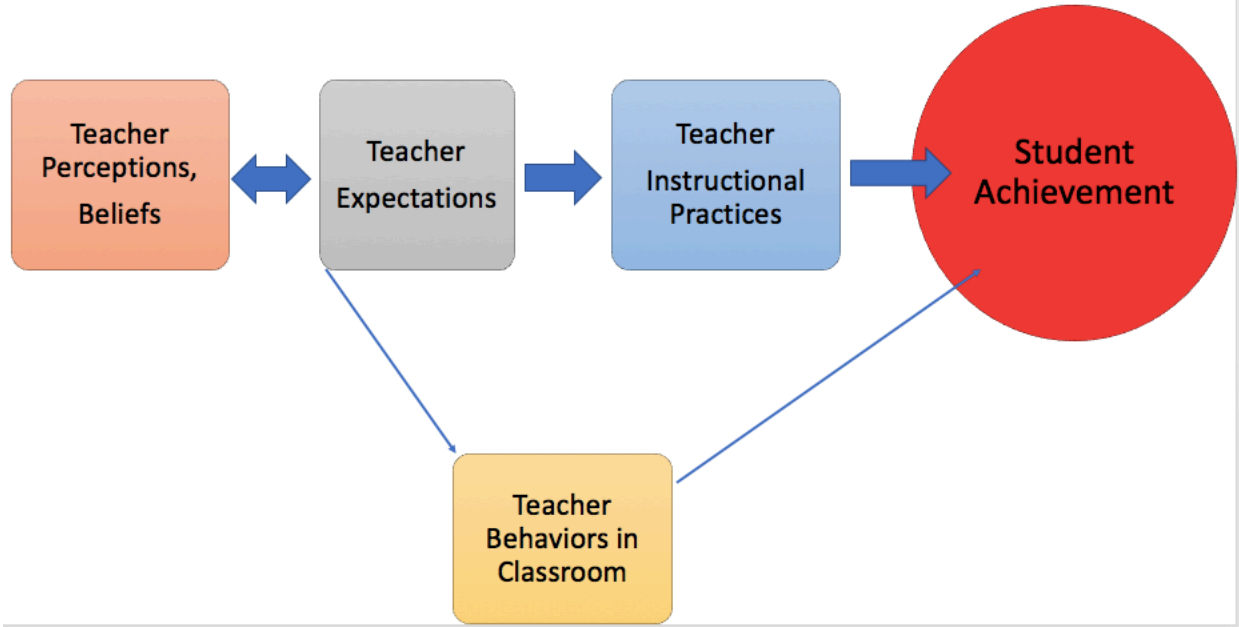


Figure 1. Theoretical model of the relationship between teacher characteristics and student achievement. Teachers’ perceptions and expectations of students influence their instructional practices, which ultimately impact student achievement (Blanchard & Muller, 2014; Pettit, 2011; Mujis & Reynolds, 2002). Research has also shown that teachers communicate expectations to students through teachers’ behaviors in the classroom, such as positive interactions with students, which also affect student performance (Good, 1981; Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1968).

Factors Influencing Teachers’ Perceptions & Expectations

In their study of teachers’ and administrators’ perceptions of dually-identified students, Stutzman and Lowenhaupt (2020) identified the following major findings as influencing teachers’ behaviors in the classroom: 1) Teachers lack professional knowledge and training in instructional practices in order to adequately work with ELs with learning disabilities. 2) Schools’ lack of teacher collaboration time. 3) Teachers misunderstanding culturally responsive teaching practices and struggling to implement them in the classroom. The researchers conducted their qualitative study in a school district in Massachusetts. “As the population of dually identified students continues to grow in schools, it is not enough to continue to respond to these

students' needs as they arise. Schools need to be prepared to accommodate the students at this critical intersection" (Stutzman & Lowenhaupt, 2020).

Earlier research also found that teachers of dually-identified students are ill-prepared to work with students. Miranda, Wells and Jenkins' (2019) research of special education teacher preparation programs found a disjointed approach to preparing preservice teachers to teach dually-identified students. "This may be partially due to the historical practices of ELLs being instructed by specialists in schools resulting in many general and SPED teachers in the school not perceiving a need to gain additional skills for teaching and supporting ELLs. Rather, many may still perceive instruction of ELLs as the task of the ELL specialist. This schism perpetuates the marginalization of ELLs in our schools" (Miranda, Wells, & Jenkins, 2019). This study also shed light on the range of faculty perspectives.

Inclusion of English Language Learner teaching practices in the teacher preparation program was a point of contention for faculty. "I do not focus on ELL. ELL is not a physical or intellectual disability and is, therefore, not specifically addressed." Another faculty stated "I do not see ELL as program for the special education department simply because our focus is on those who struggle with intellectual and physical issues" (Miranda, Wells, & Jenkins, 2019). Another faculty member added: "The inclusion of language support is often not used meaningfully by the teacher candidates in the field since they don't have the ELL foundational knowledge. None of us likes to look into areas that we feel we are weak in. This is a wakeup call" (Miranda, Wells, & Jenkins, 2019). Teacher candidates believed they were not prepared to work with English learners. "I do not have any idea where I would start in teaching ELL reading or content areas, it scares me really," stated one teacher candidate. Another stated: "I feel that the program barely touched upon the subject of ELL. It is viewed in terms of 'modifications' but not

much time or course work is devoted to how to teach ELL students” (Miranda, Wells, & Jenkins, 2019).

Paneque and Barbetta (2006) study of special education teachers of dually identified students found that teachers felt they were not prepared to work with students. Teachers expressed concern about their own teacher education programs. Teachers wished their preparation programs had included “instructional strategies needed to effectively teach ELLs with disabilities (e.g. using visuals and manipulatives, teaching key vocabulary, and building lessons on the students’ cultural background” (Paneque & Barbetta, 2006). Furthermore, the study’s findings also suggested that pre-service teachers have opportunities for field-based experiences in order to provide these teachers with classroom experience of working with dually-identified students.

The lack of teacher collaboration opportunities was also found to be a factor that influences teachers’ perceptions and behaviors in the classroom (Delgado, 2010; Stutzman & Lowenhaupt, 2020). Delgado’s (2010) qualitative study of dually-identified teachers found that teachers worked in isolation when trying to meet the needs of dually-identified students leading to inadequate instruction. “The failure to implement integrated services across bilingual education and special education was due, to a large extent, to teachers having limited opportunities for systematic, ongoing planning and collaboration” (Delgado, 2010). Through the researchers interviews of dually-identified teachers, Delgado found that many teachers expressed frustration over not having the professional knowledge or teaching expertise to support dually-identified students. This was especially the case with special education and bilingual education teachers who expressed interest in collaborating in order to share teaching practices. “As more ELLs meet eligibility criteria for special education and schools examine how to best allocate

resources to serve students across different programs, it becomes critical that bilingual education teachers and special educators seek to coordinate their efforts to meet the unique needs to second language learners with learning disabilities” (Delgado, 2010).

In their interviews of dually-identified teachers, Stutzman & Lowenhaupt (2020) found that teachers repeatedly commented on their need to learn from each other and share ideas. “The siloing of departments made teachers feel isolated in their struggles. The onus for improvement was put on the teacher, who now had to figure out who to ask, and more importantly, when to find time to ask” (Stutzman & Lowenhaupt, 2020).

Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching

Culturally responsive instruction has proven to be successful for dually-identified students (Orosco & O’Connor, 2014; Stutzman & Lowenhaupt, 2020). Culturally responsive teachers relate their classroom lessons to the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of their students. In their research of culturally responsive instruction, Orosco and O’Connor (2014) found that most teacher education programs do not train teachers to address English learners’ academic needs.

Orosco and O’Connor (2014) conducted research on dually-identified teachers from the lens of culturally responsive instruction. The researchers conducted their qualitative study in an urban southwestern elementary school setting where they observed special education teachers who taught dually-identified students. Orosco and O’Connor found that culturally responsive teaching led to increased reading achievement because students’ culture and language were validated and affirmed.

For teachers of dually-identified students it is critical that teachers recognize that

language is power and an essential part of students' identity (Powell, Cantrell & Rightmyer, 2013; Hollie, 2018; Yuan & Jiang, 2019). In their research of teachers of dually-identified students, Stutzman and Lowenhaupt (2020) found that teachers had limited knowledge of and application of culturally and linguistically responsive instruction. Their survey findings indicated that teachers felt frustrated and alone in trying to support the needs of dually-identified students, and that teachers indicated the need for more professional development (Stutzman & Lowenhaupt, 2020). Culturally and linguistically responsive teaching honors the racial, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural heritage of students of color marginalized in schools, and features a pedagogy that uses students' cultural symbols and terms to impart knowledge and skills (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Hollie, 2018; Yuan & Jiang, 2019). Culturally and linguistically responsive teaching is an assets-based, student-centered approach that helps students move toward academic achievement by teachers making the learning inclusive and culturally relevant (Hollie, 2018).

“Within the U.S. mainstream standardized school system, a deficit view lingers regarding the language abilities of students of color—If they speak a language other than standard English at home, they are likely to be viewed as having a deficit, rather than being considered emergent bilinguals, who possess dynamic, emergent, cultural, and linguistic repertoires of more than one language” (Yuan & Jiang, 2019).

As the student population becomes increasingly diverse, and teachers continue to be predominately monolingual white teachers, culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy becomes even more important (Mellom, Straubhaar, Balderas, Ariail & Portes, 2017). In 2015, about 4.9 million students nationwide were identified as English Language Learners (National Center for Educational Statistics).

“Many teachers, regardless of race, may perceive themselves a race neutral, or colorblind, and do not acknowledge the differences in privileges that have been allotted to them and not their students of color. Being race-neutral can justify teachers’ biases and expectations they have for their students of color because students can be identified as lazy when they have academic difficulties” (Olvera, 2015).

Olvera’s research of teachers of English learners found that teachers’ perceptions were based on their own backgrounds and upbringing; yet they do not acknowledge their own assumptions and beliefs about the challenges faced by students of color. Olvera found that teachers often believed that ELs, who may not reclassify as proficient English speakers even after six years or more of schooling, must “not value education because schools and education are just and fair for everyone who wants to learn” (Olvera, 2015). Stutzman and Lowenhaupt (2020) research of teachers of dually-identified teachers found similar findings where teachers’ expectations of student performance were limited by the label placed on students. For students identified as English learners, many teachers did not expect these students to excel academically (Stutzman and Lowenhaupt, 2020).

Providing teachers of dually-identified students with training in culturally responsive teaching practices may lead to an “ideological shift” and change teachers’ erroneous attitudes and beliefs about students (Stutzman & Lowenhaupt, 2020; Mellom, Straubhaar, Balderas, Ariail & Portes, 2017). Mellom et al., in their research of high-poverty, elementary schools in Georgia found that teachers’ attitudes toward English learners changed after having undergone two years of culturally responsive pedagogy training. “Treatment teachers overwhelmingly indicate that their interaction with their students has changed and that they now believe that home language use and student talk in the classroom is an asset to student achievement” (Mellom, Straubhaar,

Balderas, Ariail & Portes, 2017). This is a striking difference from before the study when the researchers cited the beliefs held by teachers, which included teachers believing that students' home language interfered with students learning English or teachers holding unrealistic expectations of students, such as expecting students to be English proficient after one or two years in a US classroom when research shows that it takes six years to gain a workable mastery of the English language (Mellom, Straubhaar, Balderas, Ariail & Portes, 2017).

The Intersection of Special Education & English Language Learners

Among the literature addressing dually-identified students, the research concentrates on the struggles of identification and the need for language support (Artiles & Klinger, 2006; Umansky, Thompson, & Diaz, 2017). Absent from the current literature on dually-identified students is insight into the perceptions of teachers who work with students, and how the intersectionality of ability, language and culture impact student learning (Stutzman & Lowenhaupt, 2020; Martinez-Alvarez & Chiang, 2020).

Cioe-Pena (2017) states that dually-identified students are left in the *intersectional gap* of education due to students' intersectional identities, that is being classified as both English learners and students who receive special education services. These students' unique needs are not met as their educational needs becomes one-sided, typically focusing exclusively on students' special education needs. "The discourse around inclusion focuses so heavily on monolingual students with disabilities that it misses the culturally and linguistically diverse students that are not benefiting from inclusive programmes. Issues of inclusion need to be considered beyond ability to also include language and culture" (Cioe-Pena, 2017). Based on her research of dually-identified students, Cioe-Pena recommends that schools create bilingual

inclusive classrooms, as well as train teachers on culturally responsive pedagogy in order to work with bilingual and multilingual learners.

Similarly, Stutzman and Lowenhaupt (2020) found that schools were prioritizing one program over another and it was having a negative effect. “Institutional bias can impact educational decisions. Several [teacher] comments described a district-wide culture of advocating for and prioritizing special education over the needs of ELs. This can lead to pattern of increased funding for special education, exiting ELs only to transition them to special education, and special educators having an increased workload of ELs that they are not adequately prepared to teach” (Stutzman and Lowenhaupt, 2020). Other researchers found similar findings in that educational systems tend to prioritize students’ special education classification over other factors such as language (Kangas, 2017; Pugach & Blanton, 2012).

Martinez-Alvarez and Chiang (2020) studied a teacher credential program that focused specifically on training teachers of dually-identified students. The researchers found that teacher candidates intentionally reflected on how students’ intersectional differences impacted their learning. Based on their research, Martinez-Alvarez and Chiang found that the program provided a strong model for teachers and the researchers urged institutions to develop similar programs. “Creating a streamlined certification option for those teachers interested in teaching emergent bilinguals with disabilities will be an important, more radical step in recognizing children who have multiple intersecting needs, and are exposed to forms of oppressions that need to be both holistically and uniquely understood” (Martinez-Alvarez & Chiang, 2020).

The Current Study

There is limited research on teachers of dually-identified students. This study aims to add to the literature by investigating teachers' perceptions and expectations of dually-identified students and how these beliefs impact teachers' behaviors in class and their instructional decisions. This study is guided by Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968) seminal work on teacher perceptions and expectations, and the research that has grown from this work including Mujis & Reynolds (2002) theoretical model on teacher behavior, as well as culturally and linguistically responsive teaching. Study findings will contribute to practical knowledge by providing practitioners with information on how teachers' perceptions shape the academic outcomes of dually-identified students.

Chapter Three: Research Methods and Design

Introduction

English Language Learners continue to be underserved in schools, and the problem is further complicated when these same students are dually-identified as students with learning disabilities. In Los Angeles Unified School District about 90% of dually-identified students are Latino and 99% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch (Wise et. al, 2018). Dually-identified students enter schools with major deficits in reading and writing. Therefore, they are often “remediated into segregated academic program tracks” (Parrish et al, 2006). Course segregation diminishes students’ chances at a college education. They go through their four years in high school in low-level courses, never accessing grade-level curriculum that would prepare them for life after high school. This study focuses on teachers of dually-identified students, and will investigate teachers’ expectations and perceptions of dually-identified students and how these beliefs impact teachers’ behaviors and their instructional decisions. This study is guided by Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968) work on teacher perceptions and expectations, and the research on teacher perceptions that has grown since Rosenthal and Jacobsen’s work, as well as culturally and linguistically responsive teaching.

This study will answer the following research questions:

1. What are teachers’ expectations and perceptions of dually-identified (English Language Learners with learning disabilities) students?
2. How do teachers’ expectations and perceptions of dually-identified students impact their instructional decisions and practices?

Research Design and Rationale

This project is a qualitative study on teachers of dually-identified students (English Language Learners with learning disabilities) and focuses on teachers' expectations and perceptions of students and how this affects teachers' behaviors in the classroom and their instructional decisions.

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) describe the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research as qualitative research using words as data. Merriam and Tisdell describe qualitative researchers as “interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (P.6). As such, the goals of this study are to gain a deeper understanding of teachers of dually identified students and their perceptions of these students, as well as how teacher perceptions influence their instructional practices when teaching English learners with learning disabilities. This study will also identify how teachers' perceptions and expectations impact teachers' instructional decisions and choices. A qualitative study allows me to take a deeper look into this issue and move into the reasons why this problem continues to occur in our schools. Through my interviews of teachers, I gained an understanding of teachers' perceptions and experiences working with dually-identified students. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic teacher interviews were conducted on Zoom video conference.

Methods

Research Site and Population

Sites. The chosen sites were Alva Middle School and Chapman High School, in a large urban school district in Southern California. The schools are both Title I schools with at least 98 percent of students receiving free or reduced lunch. English Language Learners are the largest

subgroups of students at both schools. The research sites are full inclusion sites where all special education students are mainstreamed into general education classes

Sample. The aim of this study was to have a criterion sampling of general education content teachers, Special Education teachers and English Language Development (ELD) teachers. Once I was granted permission by the district to conduct my research study, I recruited teachers via email. Teachers, from Alva Middle School and Chapman High School, were recruited to participate in this study. After receiving approval from the respective school principals, I emailed teachers at each school site to invite teachers to participate in the study. The school principals provided me with staff email lists, as well as forwarded my email introducing myself to their teachers. In my email to teachers, I introduced myself, as well as gave an overview of the study and the steps I had taken to keep teacher information confidential. The target sample number was to recruit 20 teachers; the final number of teachers who participated in my study was 19 participants. I used purposeful selection to pick a balance of general education content teachers, Special Education teachers, and ELD teachers to participate in the study. As full inclusion school sites, Special Education students receive their educational services within the general education setting. Special Education students are not placed in separate classes. English Learners are placed in sheltered English Language Development classes as a form of intervention. Once students reclassify as English proficient, they exit sheltered English classes.

Access. The school district where I conducted the research is my employer. I serve as assistant principal at a different school site. I did not conduct the research study at my own school site. I have built rapport with other school administrators and so my colleagues did allow me access to their school sites.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted through teacher interviews. I interviewed general education content teachers, Special Education teachers and English Language Development (ELD) teachers who work with dually-identified students on a daily basis. These interviews were conducted on Zoom video conference due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The interviews lasted anywhere from 30-60 minutes each. All interviews were semi-structured in order to allow for more open-ended questions. The interviews were audio recorded, and I also took detailed written notes during the interviews. During the interviews, questions ranged from having teachers identify their beliefs and perceptions on what makes students successful to what factors influenced teachers' instructional decisions. (RQ1, RQ2).

Data Analysis

After teachers were interviewed, the audio-recorded transcripts were transcribed using Rev.com and read over to check for accuracy. As I read over the interview transcripts, I wrote notes on potential coding categories and subcategories. I utilized Delve online coding software and Microsoft Word. This data was then exported into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet in order for the information to be categorized into major headings and subheadings. This heading and subheading data was then coded and compared with the other data sets from teacher interviews.

Positionality and Role Management

As a school administrator, I am aware of my positionality and I carefully managed my role as a researcher. Although I did not conduct research at my own school site, I realize that some teachers may still view me as an administrator, which could lead to teachers feeling like they are forced to participate in the study. I was transparent with study participants and created a

clear distinction between my administrator role and my researcher role. I informed teachers that all information collected during the study was to be kept confidential. I also informed teachers that they were not required to participate in the study and their participation was completely voluntary. I also conducted member checks in order to allow participants to confirm that I accurately captured and represented their ideas and viewpoints.

Ethical Considerations

The primary ethical consideration of this study was that of coercion. I did not conduct research at my own school site, however I am a school administrator in the district. As an administrator, I supervise teachers and that could lead to some teachers feeling like they are forced to participate in my study or teachers may fear that not participating in this study could negatively affect their employment. In order to address this, I informed teachers that all data and information collected during the study was to be kept confidential and would not be shared with their school nor district administration. I also informed teachers that they were not required to participate in the study and their participation was completely voluntary. I informed teachers that their interviews are confidential and all files and data would be stored under password protection in my computer and in a portable hard drive. To address teachers' fear of retaliation, I changed teachers' names in my write ups so that readers will not know the true identify of teachers.

Credibility and Validity

The biggest credibility threats to my study are bias and reactivity. I realize that bias is a challenge because as an administrator I can have certain viewpoints and opinions regarding teachers. To address this concern and build credibility and trust with my study participants, I conducted member checks, which included follow-up interviews as well as opportunities for study participants to comment on findings. This process of member checks validated the data and

helped me gain an accurate picture of the findings. As a school administrator, I know that some teachers will tell me what they think I want to hear. To address this concern, I created a systemic data collection method that ensured that all participants are asked the same questions as to prevent any reactivity. Based on the data, themes were established by using a convergence of teachers' perspectives.

Study Limitations

A potential limitation to this study is the small sample size. While only 19 teachers are being studied, the data gathered on teachers provides an in-depth analysis through rich, descriptive interview data. Furthermore, as the two research sites are located in the Los Angeles area, specifically an area that serves low socio-economic students, this study's findings may serve in advancing future research in the area of dually-identified students and some of the challenges faced by teachers of these students. Therefore, this study's findings may be generalizable and transferable beyond one school site.

Summary

This qualitative study seeks to investigate teachers' expectations and perceptions as related to students' performance in class and how teachers' beliefs impact their instructional decisions. This study is designed to delve deeper into teachers' expectations and perceptions of dually-identified students. Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, teacher interviews were conducted via Zoom video conference and followed all safety precautions.

Chapter Four: Findings

Introduction

This qualitative study focused on teachers of dually-identified students, and investigated teachers' expectations and perceptions of dually-identified students and how these beliefs impact teachers' behaviors and their instructional decisions. This study is guided by Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968) work on teacher perceptions and expectations, and the research on teacher perceptions that has grown since Rosenthal and Jacobsen's work, as well as culturally and linguistically responsive teaching. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are teachers' expectations and perceptions of dually-identified (English Language Learners with learning disabilities) students?
2. How do teachers' expectations and perceptions of dually-identified students impact their instructional decisions and practices?

In order to address these questions, I interviewed 19 middle school and high school teachers of dually-identified students from two schools in one large urban school district. These teachers ranged in years of experience, and the subject matter they taught. While analyzing the data collected, the following main findings emerged:

- Most teachers held same expectations for dually-identified students as for non dually-identified students
- Many teachers expect dually-identified students to express strong social skills, such as self-advocacy and effective communication
- Teachers cited students' low self-concept as a challenge
- Teachers utilize a variety of instructional approaches
- Teachers state they implement Mastery Learning and Grading
- Some teachers consider culturally & linguistically responsive instructional practices

The Data Collection Process

The participants in this study were 19 middle school and high school teachers from two schools in a large urban school district. Data was collected through semi-structured teacher interviews. The teacher interviews took place from March to June 2021. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic all interviews were conducted via Zoom in order to follow safety guidelines. At the time of the interviews, the district held online classes and students attended classes virtually.

The interview data was transcribed using Rev.com and read over to check for accuracy. The data was then coded using the online coding software Delve. The coded data was then categorized into major headings and subheadings. The analysis of these codes also led to the development of themes and findings.

Teaching During The Pandemic

Teachers interviewed for this study taught online classes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. At the time of the interviews in Spring of 2021, teachers had been teaching online classes since schools first shut down in Spring 2020. During the interviews, a common theme emerged where teachers expressed concern about the impact of online classes on dually-identified students. All 19 teachers interviewed reported that dually-identified students struggled with online classes during the pandemic. Teachers stated that online classes during the pandemic created unique challenges for dually-identified students. In particular, teachers stated that online classes prevented students from receiving one-on-one support, which students received during in-person instruction prior to the pandemic. “It’s been very difficult to reach out to these students because they don’t ask questions because of their disabilities. Maybe they’re too shy or maybe they stutter. Because I’m not in person I can’t see their screen and I can’t see if they’re okay or if they’re doing the work. It’s very difficult to engage with them and give them the scaffolds and

everything they need,” said Diana, a middle school English teacher. Emma, a Special Education teacher, also stated that online classes posed a challenge to students with learning disabilities.

“With my students with ADHD because of a lack attention this distance learning is not conducive to them. We have to be giving synchronous instruction for 40 minutes. Even if we start off strong, at some point we lose them. We can’t tell because it’s not mandatory for students to have their screen on or camera on. We don’t know what’s going on, on the other side of the screen.”

Sean, a physical education teacher, whose classes can be as large as 50 students said holding virtual PE classes was at times difficult to check in with all his students. The PE teacher stated he was especially concerned about his English Learners. “It was only the ELL learners who were having difficulty logging in. They couldn’t log in and navigate through the websites we’re using. It was because of the language barriers.” Emma also worried about the impact of online classes on her dually-identified students.

“So when we transitioned this was the first time for a lot of our students using Google products or navigating Schoology. They didn’t know how to download their assignments or work on their assignments. Then when we did this abrupt change to distance learning, and I’m like: ‘Okay, on your iPad you’re going to click this button’ and they are like ‘which button?’ And that’s the moment where everything clicked for me. Our students are struggling to read. They’re reading at either the primer or third-grade level. Our students are not the strongest readers and we expect them to go to Schoology and navigate the platform when some of them can’t even read these buttons. That’s challenging.”

Table 1: Overview of Study Participants

Name	Gender	Years Teaching	Subject	Level	Length of Interview (minutes)
Diana	F	1 yr	English Teacher	Middle School	58 min
Alma	F	5 yrs	Resource Specialist Program (RSP) Teacher	Middle School	42 min
John	M	4 yrs	Science & Health Teacher	Middle School	49 min
Emma	F	2 yrs	Special Education Teacher	Middle School	57 min
Sean	M	5 yrs	Physical Education Teacher	Middle School	48 min
Mathew	M	32 yrs	Math & Science Teacher	Middle School	39 min
Gavin	M	2 yrs	Special Education Teacher (moderate/severe)	Middle School	43 min
Maria	F	18 yrs	History Teacher	Middle School	45 min
Darlene	F	19 yrs	Math Teacher	Middle School	54 min
Deborah	F	2 yrs	Special Education Teacher	Middle School	42 min
Elias	M	1 yr	Spanish Teacher	High School	39 min
Stella	F	3 yrs	English Language Development (ELD) Teacher	High School	46 min
Fatima	F	2 yrs	History Teacher	High School	42 min
Melanie	F	8 yrs	History Teacher	High School	38 min
Mary	F	1 yr	Science Teacher	High School	40 min
Vivian	F	24 yrs	History Teacher	High School	47 min
Ana	F	4 yrs	Spanish Teacher	High School	42 min
Mariah	F	20 yrs	English Teacher	High School	56 min
Leah	F	6 yrs	Science Teacher	High School	40 min

Impact of Pandemic on Findings

This study was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic. During a time where the learning environment was not the typical and normal environment. At the time of this study, teachers had taught online classes for about 11 months. During the interviews, the fatigue of teaching online classes came through as teachers shared their experiences with dually-identified students. Teachers vividly described the daily challenges they faced as they attempted to meet the needs of students with learning disabilities. Teachers cited a number of challenges they faced from students' learning loss, lack of support from their respective schools to the negative impact online classes had on dually-identified students. Despite the challenges teachers faced, they showed unwavering optimism and passion for their profession and for their students.

Findings

Research Question #1

The first research question explores teachers' expectations and perceptions of dually-identified students (English Language Learners with learning disabilities).

Finding—Most Teachers Held Similar Expectations for Dually-Identified Students as Non Dually-Identified Students

When teachers were asked about their expectations, 15 out of 19 teachers (79%) stated they held the same expectations for their dually-identified students as they did for non dually-identified students. Teachers stated they expected dually-identified students to perform academically similarly to non dually-identified students. Mathew, a veteran middle school math and science teacher, stated he held high expectations for his students. "They're expected to do the same type of work. They are expected to know the same basics and be able to rationalize

higher-level thinking questions for math and science, maybe less of it--so modified curriculum--but not dumbed down.” Ana, a high school Spanish teacher, also shared similar expectations. “My expectations: they’re the same for all students in my class. I keep dually-identified students accountable for their assignments even though I do some modifications in the work they submit or the level of performance.” Darlene, a middle school math teacher, stated that while her expectations for dually-identified students are the same as her non dually-identified students, she did state some reservations. “I wanna be able to teach everybody the same level, but I do get frustrated. I do think often that I can’t do it alone and I need support.” Darlene expressed concern over not having a teacher’s assistant in her class.

Four teachers out of the 19 research participants (21%) stated they did not hold the same expectations for their dually-identified students as their non dually-identified students. Stella, a middle school English Language Development teacher who works closely with English learners, said her expectations were based on students’ IEP. “There is no one answer. My expectations are whatever’s delineated in the IEP. I definitely want students to meet the targets and standards, and so because I’m giving them scaffolds and accommodations, I hope they reach those standards.” Gavin, a middle school Special Education teacher who teaches autistic and other severely disabled students, also stated his expectations of students were guided by students’ IEP learning goals. “We may not be at the same pace as a general education class, but we are working through grade level material, with as many scaffolds as I can throw in there. My expectations are to try to engage them in as close to grade level work as I can.” John, a middle school science teacher, stated his expectations were based on learning targets. The teacher implements Mastery Learning and Grading, also known as standards-based learning, where learning targets describe what students will learn. “My expectation is adjusted. If they’re not hitting their targets, it’s not

because of them it's because of what I'm doing. So I have to constantly adjust, whether it be the way I'm delivering the lesson or the way I'm assessing their understanding.”

Finding—Most Teachers Expect Dually-Identified Students to Express Strong Social Skills, Such as Self-Advocacy and Effective Communication

Most teachers interviewed expect dually-identified students to express social skills, such as self-advocacy and effective communication. When teachers were asked to describe the skills and characteristics that they expect to see in dually-identified students, 11 out of 19 teachers (58%) cited self-advocacy and effective communication. In general these two social skills were cited the most by teachers as what they perceived to be important characteristics in dually-identified students to be academically successful.

Ana, a high school Spanish teacher, stated that while online learning has been challenging for her dually-identified students, students who are doing well are those who are vocal and participate in class. Ana described one of her successful dually-identified student: “She logs in class every day that we have class. She advocates for herself whenever she doesn't understand something, she asks me. She will stay after class is over and will join tutoring hours. She's not afraid of asking for help.” Melanie, a high school history teacher, also stated that her most successful dually-identified students are those who communicate their needs. “Students are active as far as like in the [Zoom] chat or by completing their assignments. They advocate for themselves as well. They tell me what they might need. They ask for help in the chat.”

Effective communication was cited by teachers as also being important for student success. Diana, who teaches middle school English, agreed that communication was an important characteristic for student success. The teacher a student in her class: “She participates every single time, unmutes herself. She even made her own Zoom background. I think she was

inspired to create her own little background and she turns on her camera and participates in the chat. She'll even take on breakout room roles." Teachers also described characteristics of students who they perceived as not academically successful. Teachers mostly described these students as not being verbally active in classroom lessons. Elias, a high school Spanish teacher, said it was challenging to motivate his students to participate in class. "They just freeze up and they don't communicate anything back to me. The student doesn't response to me after I've called them like three, four times. I let it go because I have 25 other students waiting for me."

Kamperman (2020) in her research of students with disabilities argues that teachers' expectations that students self-advocate is not fair to students with learning disabilities. Kamperman states that educators view self-advocacy and assertiveness through the lens of able students and do not consider the challenges faced by students with learning disabilities. Teachers expect students with learning disabilities to behave the same as able students and do not recognize students' special needs. "To view quietness as a lack of willfulness is to accept a rhetorically impoverished picture of self-advocacy" (Kamperman, 2020).

Finding— Teachers Cite Students' Low Self-Concept As a Challenge

Eight out of 19 teachers interviewed (42%) stated that students' low self-concept was a challenge to teachers and directly related to students' poor academic performance. Teachers reported that many students are not motivated to improve academically because they hold low expectations for themselves. Emma, a middle school Special Education teacher, said that many of her dually-identified students struggle with a sense of shame and embarrassment because they are not doing well academically. Emma described the challenges faced by one dually-identified student. "This student is very much embarrassed. He is currently reading at the primer level. So as an eighth grader this is significantly low, so there's a lot of rejection and refusal of doing

classwork out of his fear of revealing this. I don't know if it's fear of revealing this to himself or to me." Emma added this student is completely disengaged in class. "When he's in class he won't answer questions. It's like most of the time I'm trying to figure out if he's even in the Zoom class. I've called home and mom says he'll do better, but he never does."

Emma stated this student, just like many other dually-identified students, is struggling with stigma of a learning disability.

"He is grappling and coming to terms with the fact that he has a disability and it's making academics very challenging. Parents are in denial that he should be in Special Ed classes. Mom herself said that the reason why he is so behind is because he's in these classes. She kind of told me she thinks he's stupid because he's in these classes and it's like that's not the way this works. But you know, that's just part the stigma against mental health and learning disabilities in the Latino culture."

Emma added that dually-identified students' low self-concept is formed from the experiences they encounter in school. She stated that students have shared negative experiences with previous teachers that have further impacted students' self-esteem.

"Our kids are aware. They know they are in SDC classes and so other kids start to say things. Sometimes it's even from years of education. I've had one kid reveal to me: 'my past teachers were excited when I left their classes. They are happy I left their class' It's taking the time to really get to know your students and know their trauma. I'm only one person I can't undo years of trauma."

Fatima, a high school history teacher, stated that dually-identified students' low self-image led students to lose interest and motivation.

“I have a student who is in the 10th grade, she is disengaged. She is not engaged in any of the instruction. Although we have some type of rapport and I know her, she is detached from learning. She doesn't complete her assignments. When we're on Zoom, she doesn't log into Zoom at all. So I can't even gauge if she's making any progress. The reason for her being so disengaged is that she reads significantly below grade level.”

John, a middle school science teacher, said he's become frustrated when he creates lessons that he believes will meet the needs of dually-identified students, but yet many of his students are not engaged. “I was going up there, showing different kinds of videos, playing games, but all I saw was apathy.” John cited a specific dually-identified student who the teacher said was one of his most challenging student.

“This specific student couldn't read or write in English, but he couldn't read or write in Spanish either. It was definitely a challenge. I felt like he didn't have that grit that you look for in a learner. He was like: ‘I don't understand, so I'm not even going to try.’ There was a lot of self-limitations that he was putting on himself and he was not able to break out of that. He had a lot of self-doubt.”

Mariah, a high school English teacher, said it's challenging to motivate dually-identified students who have been in classroom settings where they have not been supported. Mariah said that some Special Education teachers are not challenging students academically and this impacts students. “In some special education classes there is this expectation that students can't handle rigorous course work. It's disheartening because students begin to believe they can't handle the work and they give up.”

“Getting them to believe that they can be successful has been a challenge. I'm trying to say to them: ‘you've got this, you can do this and it's okay if you're at this level for now.’

If you just practice, and we practice together, we can get you to improve.’ But then realizing that they’re so used to being told they can’t do it.”

Mariah added that it’s the teacher’s responsibility to create a supportive learning environment for students to thrive.

“They’re not accustomed to trying because they haven’t been in an environment where they’ve been valued and respected and supported on their efforts without being torn down. They’ve been in so many settings where teachers have dumbed down the curriculum just because the students are Special Ed. and unfortunately, students have been given work like coloring and not very rigorous work.”

Research Question #2

The second research question investigates how teachers’ expectations and perceptions of dually-identified students impact teachers’ practices and instructional decisions.

Finding— Teachers Utilize a Variety of Instructional Approaches

When teachers were specifically asked about the instructional practices they employ with dually-identified students, study participants’ responses varied. Twelve out of 19 teachers (63%) stated they utilize audio and visual strategies such as language translations, videos and audio recordings to make classroom lessons and content more accessible to dually-identified students. Ten teachers (53%) said they regularly implement cooperative student groups into their lessons. Five teachers (26%) stated they implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL) teaching strategies. UDL is an approach to teaching and learning that promotes learning by giving

students options in learning. These options in learning may include differentiating assignments by tailoring different assignments for students based on individual student needs.

Melanie, a high school history teacher, said teaching dually-identified students is challenging as students have different language and learning needs.

“There is no one size fits all kind of situation when it comes to teaching these students. Understanding that they’re a diverse group of students, I think that’s very important. A lot of times as teachers we think all students have the same accommodations and that’s not the case. There’s a broad range of accommodations and there are a broad range of experiences from students. ELs are not a monolith. They have very different needs and then when you marry the two, ELs and students with disabilities, students have very distinct learning needs.”

Alma, a middle school Special Education teacher, said she incorporates visuals into her classrooms lessons in order to support dually-identified students. “I always try to incorporate visuals, whether it’s pictures, videos or an audio of the story so that they can hear and see it. I also do a lot of guided work with them too because I know that they need the extra help and support.” Diana, a middle school English teacher, said she provides students online video lessons. “So in my YouTube Channel, I have myself recorded reading the story so that students can pause and rewatch it. I also have explanations for assignments that they can also pause when they need to rewatch, which has been super great for them.” Maria, a middle school history teacher, also utilizes visual and audio supports. “I do a lot of visual discovery, and then I compliment it with a video and then we do the reading. I figure they have something going on in their head in regards to the subject, and they’re seeing it and hearing because students don’t

really like to read aloud.” For Mary, a high school science teacher, providing students language translations is important.

“Just watching a video and hearing it is like: ‘I didn’t quite catch all that,’ but if you’re also reading the subtitles for a language learner that helps students a lot. So, I might come across a video I think is great, but if it doesn’t have subtitles available I’m likely to skip that video because I feel that’s really important.”

Fatima, a high school history teacher, implements cooperative instructional groups as a teaching strategy with her dually-identified students. Fatima said she said she creates cooperative student groups based on student achievement data.

“When I make my groups, I try to group my dually identified students based on their reading ability or whatever skill that we’re working on that day. Another way that I group them is placing them with students who are maybe more advanced than them, maybe a student at a higher Lexile reading level. So, they’re able to learn from each other.”

Finding— More than Half of Teachers State They Implement Mastery Learning and Grading

When asked about their instructional practices, 11 out of 19 teachers (58%) stated they implement Mastery Learning and Grading. Teachers stated that Mastery Learning and Grading is a new form of implementing classroom lessons and grading that does not penalize students for low scoring or missed assignments. The teachers stated that Mastery Learning and Grading benefits students with special needs, such as dually-identified students.

Mastery Learning and Grading is a growth-mindset approach to teaching and learning. Unlike traditional grading system, in mastery grading students constantly revise their assignments until they master the content. Mastery Learning and Grading is an initiative of the

school district and training is offered to teachers. Leah, a high school Science teacher, said this new approach to learning is much more beneficial for dually-identified students. “I started doing Mastery Grading because I just recognized how arbitrary grades are. Grades just show whether or not a student is compliant rather than actually what a student knows.”

Stella, a high school English Language Development teacher, believes Mastery Learning and Grading helps dually-identified students more so than traditional grading.

“It eases the constraint of like ABC grades and it’s more autonomous. Instead of a letter grade students know where they are based on a rubric. A student would say: ‘I am approaching this target’, ‘oh, I met this target, or ‘I’m emerging in this target.’ So I think it’s a better way to look at their learning for all students, but also for our dually-identified students. These students need clear expectations. So, I give them my rubric beforehand and they know the learning targets and know that there’s always an opportunity to get better.”

Stella added that she provides her students many opportunities to revise and improve their work before submitting for a final grade.

“Success is like taking risks, especially with our population. The biggest factor is feeling like they’re in a safe space or being able to take that risk to try to answer the question or submit an assignment. So, if they’re submitting and they’re showing that they’re conscious of the rubric that I gave them or the checklist that to me is success.”

For Gavin, who teaches severely disabled students at the middle school level, Mastery Learning and Grading has allowed him to meet the individual needs of his students.

“I can get them to where I’m not worried about a test. I’m more worried about can they show me in some way that they are understanding the content. This also allows me the flexibility

to meet their needs because some students might do better in oral presentations. Some students might do better in written presentations, some students might do better with a visual, like making a video or making a piece of art that explains the concept that we're working on. I have that ability to go between the visual, the auditory, the kinesthetic, the tactile, everything for each individual student."

Gavin added that for students with learning disabilities, and specifically dually-identified students, Mastery Learning and Grading was beneficial because students receive clear feedback from teachers on their learning.

"It's constant feedback. It's giving them that opportunity to fix their work, to improve it or refine it. I like it because it lets them move at their pace and it lets me still move with the content while still letting them continue to revisit those learning targets so that they can continue to work on them through the semester. So they're not limited on time either."

Mariah, a high school English teacher, said Mastery Learning and Grading is a paradigm shift for teachers and students, but in her opinion this approach to learning benefits dually-identified students because it provides students with clear personalized feedback on how to revise and improve their work.

"With my criteria chart, if a student gets a one on an assignment, I'm going to have some information at the bottom that shows them what you need to do to move to that two. The chart will also have information on what students need to do to move from a two to a three and from a three to a four. So, I have clear expectations and very clear examples of what it takes to move from one place to the other so students can demonstrate growth."

Finding— Less than Half of Teachers Stated They Consider Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Instructional Practices

Less than half of the 19 teachers interviewed stated they considered culturally and linguistically responsive instructional practices and/or strategies when working with dually-identified students. Eight teachers (42%) stated they intentionally implemented students' cultural and linguistic background when planning and delivering their classroom lessons. Teachers also stated they had not receive any formal training on culturally responsive instructional practices, but instead relied on their intuition and teachers' own cultural background. Orosco and O'Connor (2014) research on teachers of dually-identified teachers found that most teachers are not trained on culturally and linguistically responsive teaching. Orosco and O'Connor (2014) research also found that providing teachers with training in culturally responsive teaching practices may lead to changing teachers' erroneous attitudes and beliefs about dually-identified students. Fatima, a high school history teacher, said that in her class she makes sure to include students' culture in her lessons. An activity she incorporates is having students write a poem about their cultural background, which is a popular assignment.

“It’s important not to strip them away from their culture. I’m not a dually-identified learner, but I am someone who has parents who did not originate in this country. So it’s not my goal to have my students assimilate just because they’re learning the English language. It’s my goal for them to bring their culture into my classroom. I don’t want them to lose who they are. I think we should be culturally responsive and allow students to be themselves and incorporate that into the learning.”

Mariah, a high school English teacher, said her lessons include exposing students to literature about different facets of students' lives. “I look at culturally relevant as not just based on ethnicity. I look at different levels of culture. I look at youth culture and want my students to

read about topics and issues that resonate with them.” Mariah added that she wanted to learn more about how to implement culturally responsive lessons. John, a middle school science teacher, said he believes it’s important to begin the semester with an activity where students have an opportunity to write about their cultural backgrounds so students feel celebrated. John said he also plays music in students’ native Spanish language in order to celebrate students’ culture “I’m always doing funds of knowledge type activities so students can share their backgrounds and interests. I want them to feel empowered.” For Emma, a middle school Special Education teacher, including culturally responsive lessons into her classroom is an opportunity for students to discuss important topics.

“I’m really big on representation and so I try to include materials that the students could resonate with and can formulate an opinion on. I like to give students an opportunity to show who they are because a lot of times people only think of identity in terms of race and no it’s like we have multiple identities it’s not just race. Sometimes it’s being first born or the youngest in the house, or even gender.”

Mary, a high school science teacher, said implementing culturally and linguistically responsive lessons is a challenge due to the fact that she hasn’t been trained.

“It doesn't occur to me naturally. I have to kind of think about that. I'm thinking about a lesson I did in chemistry. I try to use a lot of cooking and there's a lot of relevant examples in cooking and baking, and all teenagers love food. So, I'll use examples of using acids to make cheese. Then I found this really great video about me making queso blanco, and I'm like this is perfect. So I think about those things and try to come up with examples that seem relevant to what students might be experiencing in their homes”

Leah, who also teaches high school science, said that making her classroom culturally responsive is a priority. “I really focus on making my classroom a place where students feel safe and accepted. So making sure that students feel comfortable in class is really big for me.” Leah said that a lesson she implements with her dually-identified students is vocabulary building. “When students are learning, we look at the root of words, especially since most of my students speak Spanish and can identify the root words. We also look at the vocabulary words in Spanish.” Fatima, who said she did not receive training on culturally responsive instructional practices, said it’s important to incorporate students’ cultures into classroom lessons. “I think the most important thing I could say about teaching dually-identified students, especially EL Learners is to not strip the students away from their culture. We should be culturally responsive and allow students to be themselves and incorporate that into the learning.”

Culturally and linguistically responsive instruction has been proven to be successful for dually-identified students (Orosco & O’Connor, 2014; Stutzman & Lowenhaupt, 2020). In their research of culturally responsive instruction, Orosco and O’Connor (2014) found that teachers do not regularly receive training on culturally responsive teaching strategies. However, when teachers are provided with training on culturally responsive teaching practices, research found ideological shifts and changes in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs about students (Stutzman & Lowenhaupt, 2020; Mellom, Straubhaar, Balderas, Ariail & Portes, 2017).

Summary

Teachers who participated in this qualitative study shared their expectations and beliefs of dually-identified students (English Language Learners with learning disabilities). Teachers also shared information about their instructional practices and decisions. Major findings included: teachers identified social skills as key to student success; teachers reported

implementing Mastery Learning and Grading in order to make curriculum and instruction more accessible for dually-identified students; and few teachers prioritized culturally and linguistically responsive teaching. Chapter five addresses these findings as they relate to future research.

Chapter Five: Discussion

Overview

Dually-identified students (English Language Learners with learning disabilities) continue to be underserved in schools. Due to their intersectional identities these students' educational needs are misunderstood by educators. These students are often seen as "complicated beings that do not readily fit into the predetermined categories currently used to evaluate, categorize and educate them" (Cioe-Pena, 2017). Dually-identified students enter schools with major deficits in reading and writing. As a result, they are often "remediated into segregated academic program tracks" (Parrish et al, 2006). Course segregation diminishes dually-identified students' opportunities at a college education because students never access grade-level, rigorous curriculum that prepares students to be college and career ready.

Teachers can significantly impact the academic performance of dually-identified students. Teachers' beliefs hold powerful implications for dually-identified students as attitudes towards and interaction between student and teacher ultimately affect achievement (Opper, 2019). Research has shown a strong link between teachers' perceptions and expectations of their students and students' academic performance (Rosenthal & Jacobsen, 1968; Good, 1987; Mujis & Reynolds, 2002; Blanchard and Muller, 2014). Teachers' beliefs, such as political or ideological views, can influence how teachers view their roles as educators, as well as how teachers view their subject matter and the choices they make when teaching (Richardson, 1996). "Teachers' perceptions of students' social backgrounds shape their academic outcomes in ways that produce winners and losers at a decisive phase of students' educational trajectories" (Blanchard & Muller, 2014).

This qualitative study focused on the teachers of dually-identified students, and investigated teachers' expectations and perceptions of dually-identified students and how these beliefs impacted teachers' behaviors and their instructional decisions. The study involved 19 middle school and high school teachers from the Los Angeles area who work with dually-identified students. Teachers participated in semi-structured interviews where they shared their views on their perceptions, expectations and instructional practices as related to their work with dually-identified students. The research questions that guided this study were:

1. What are teachers' expectations and perceptions of dually-identified (English Language Learners with learning disabilities) students?
2. How do teachers' expectations and perceptions of dually-identified students impact their instructional decisions and practices?

In this chapter, I first summarize and interpret the study's significant findings and explain this study's contribution to the existing body of research. Next, I present recommendations for school leaders. Then, I identify the limitations of my study and suggestions for future research. Finally, I end this chapter with my concluding thoughts and reflection.

Interpretation of Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' expectations and perceptions of dually-identified students (English Language Learners with learning disabilities), as well as explore how teachers' expectations and perceptions impact teachers' practices and instructional decisions. The study revealed new and notable findings that have not been addressed in the limited body of research on teachers of dually-identified students.

Tension Between Expectations and Teachers' Unconscious Bias

A revelation that appeared strongly in the findings was that of the tension between teachers' expectations and unconscious bias. The majority of teachers (79%) stated that they

expected their dually-identified students to perform academically similarly to all of their other students. In other words, there was no differentiation when it came to academic expectations between dually-identified students and non-dually identified students.

During the interviews, most teachers expressed the need to hold dually-identified students to “high standards” and “high expectations” same as their peers because according to teachers this was necessary to better prepare students to be academically competitive. Most special education teachers interviewed also believed that dually-identified students should be held to the same academic expectations as other students.

While teachers stated they provided students with various supports, when it came to questions about expectations teachers’ unconscious biases appeared through their responses. Emma, a Special Education teacher, said she doesn’t believe in “watering down” the curriculum because her students are in special education classes. Mathew, a middle school math and science teacher with 32 years of experience, shared the same sentiment as Emma but stated his opinion differently. He stated that it was a disservice to students to “dumb down” the curriculum. These teacher responses are examples of deficit thinking that is prevalent in many schools, especially in schools found in underserved communities. Although teachers may not be aware of their own unconscious biases, their statements and behaviors impact their decisions in the classroom.

Even though most teachers stated they held dually-identified students to the same academic expectations, there were four teachers who stated they held different academic expectations. Out of these four teachers, one was a Special Education teacher, one was an English Language Development teacher and two general education teachers. All four teachers stated they utilized either their general knowledge of IEP student goals or training in Mastery Learning and Grading to determine their students’ differentiated learning goals. Mariah, who

implements Mastery Learning and Grading, described her student expectations as equity based. “Not every student needs the same thing. It’s about equity, not necessarily equality. We want to be equitable, so we meet students where they are. We create that bridge so dually-identified students can access the rigor of the content.”

Absent from the limited body of literature on teachers of dually-identified students is insight into the perceptions of teachers who work with these students (Stutzman & Lowenhaupt, 2020; Martinez-Alvarez & Chiang, 2020). The current research on teachers of dually-identified students focuses on teachers’ challenges with effectively identifying students, as well as teachers providing language supports (Artiles & Klinger, 2006; Umansky, Thompson, & Diaz, 2017). Current research on teacher expectations does not address my study’s finding that teachers hold the same academic expectations for their dually-identified students as their non dually-identified students. However, Kamperman (2020) in his research of students with learning disabilities does touch on the discrepancies in teacher expectations. Kamperman found that teachers fail to recognize that students with learning disabilities have unique needs, and as a result teachers expect students with learning disabilities to behave the same as able students.

Teachers Expect Strong Self-Advocacy & Communication Skills

The second finding was that teachers expected students to exhibit strong self-advocacy and communication skills. More than half of teachers interviewed (58%) cited self-advocacy and effective communication as important characteristics for dually-identified students. This finding also revealed teachers’ unconscious bias in regards to expecting dually-identified students to behave the same as other students, disregarding their learning disabilities. Teachers perceived these two social skills as being vital to student success. During interviews, teachers cited self-advocacy and effective communication as skills they wanted their dually-identified students to

exhibit, especially during the pandemic when classes were held online and teachers stated students had to be more vocal and assertive in Zoom classrooms. Melanie, a high school history teacher, stated her most successful students were those who advocated for themselves. Teachers like Melanie do not recognize that students with learning disabilities have different learning needs than other students. By teachers expecting dually-identified students to express strong self-advocacy and communication skills, teachers fail to recognize students' learning disabilities, which may impact students' ability to learn these skills. These students may require additional support in learning and developing these skills.

Kamperman (2020) argues that teachers of students with learning disabilities often view these students through the lens of able students and expect students with learning disabilities to behave the same as able students. Other scholars have found that skills such as self-advocacy are learned skills, which may take students with disabilities additional time to learn and develop (Daly-Cano, Vaccaro & Newman, 2015).

Teachers Implement Mastery Learning and Grading

A surprising finding that appeared during teacher interviews was that of Mastery Learning and Grading. More than half of teachers interviewed (58%) stated that they implement Mastery Learning and Grading. Teachers frequently mentioned Mastery Learning and Grading when describing their instructional practices. This was an interesting finding because Mastery Learning and Grading is a new approach and philosophy on teaching and learning, as well as a paradigm shift to the traditional grading system.

During the interviews, teachers enthusiastically described the benefits of Master Learning and Grading on their dually-identified students. Eleven teachers, both middle school and high school teachers, stated they received training through their respective school sites. The teachers

also stated that Mastery Learning and Grading was a priority at their respective school sites and within their departments where teachers had opportunities to collaborate with colleagues to extend their professional development learning. Teachers felt that this new approach to learning benefits dually-identified students because as teachers they provide students personalized feedback on how to revise and improve their work until students reach mastery.

The current body of literature on teachers of dually-identified students does not address the impact of teachers use of Mastery Learning and Grading. However, research on the impact of mastery learning has shown positive effects on students, and the effects appear to be stronger on struggling students (Kulik, Kulik & Bangert-Drowns, 1990). The researchers also found that mastery learning has positive effects on students' attitudes and confidence toward their course work (Kulik, Kulik & Bangert-Drowns, 1990).

Culturally Responsive Lessons

Less than half of the teachers interviewed (42%) stated they intentionally implement culturally and linguistically responsive lessons. Issues of competency and teacher self-efficacy came up as teachers shared their experiences with culturally responsive instruction. During interviews, these teachers stated they had not received any training on culturally responsive instruction and instead relied on their own intuition and backgrounds to develop lessons. Without any training and school support, teachers stated they were left on their own to develop culturally responsive lessons.

Mariah, a high school English teacher, stated that she didn't feel competent in the area of culturally responsive teaching.

"I definitely feel like I have some room to grow in this area. One of the things that's missing often times is that teachers are left to figure it out on their own. Whereas if

teachers are given the support and time to come together and collaborate and have these discussions, then teachers can work on meeting those needs and helping students access rigor.”

For Fatima, a high school history teacher, creating a culturally responsive classroom is important because as a daughter of immigrant parents she feels the need to create a safe and welcoming learning space for English Language Learners. Like most other teachers, Fatima draws on her own personal background and general knowledge of culturally responsive instruction that she gained from a course during her teacher prep program.

The study’s findings validated the current research on culturally and linguistically responsive teaching, specifically that most teachers do not receive adequate training to address English Learners’ academic needs (Orosco & O’Connor, 2014). In their research of teachers of dually-identified students, Stutzman and Lowenhaupt (2020) also found that teachers had limited knowledge and application of culturally and linguistically responsive instruction. Similarly to the sentiments expressed by the teachers in my study, Stutzman and Lowenhaupt (2020) found that teachers in their study felt frustrated and alone in trying to support the needs of dually-identified students. Lack of teacher collaboration was also found to be a factor that influences teachers’ perceptions and behaviors in the classroom (Delgado, 2010; Stutzman & Lowenhaupt, 2020). Delgado (2010) research of teachers of dually-identified students found that many teachers worked in isolation, which led to inadequate instruction.

Recommendations for Educators

This study’s findings make important contributions to the body of knowledge on teachers of dually-identified students. These findings fill the gap in better understanding how to support

teachers of dually-identified students. Considering the study findings, the following recommendations have been developed to guide educational leaders.

Professional Development Specifically for Teachers of Dually-Identified Students

During interviews, most teachers shared their frustrations about not receiving professional development and guidance that assist teachers in meeting the educational needs of dually-identified students. Leah, a high school science teacher, said she learns about her dually-identified students' educational needs through IEP documents provided to her. "Rather than giving me pieces of paper and saying do this, I feel it would help if there was a more personal touch so that we could really know these students by name early on and give them the care they need rather than just looking at some papers," said Leah. Other teachers shared similar experiences, stating that they feel unsupported by their school sites when it comes to guidance on how to best support dually-identified students.

It is vital that teachers and school staff be provided regular professional development that targets the specific educational needs of dually-identified students. While schools may provide teachers with training on English Language Learners, dually-identified students are often overlooked. There needs to be an intentional focus on the learning needs of dually-identified students. Furthermore, professional development must be followed up with ongoing resources and support for teachers.

Teacher Training on Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Instruction

Less than half of teachers interviewed stated they implement culturally and linguistically lessons. These same teachers stated that they had not received any training in the area of culturally responsive instruction and instead relied on their own background knowledge. During interviews, teachers recognized the importance of culturally responsive instruction for dually-

identified students. Many teachers stated they wanted to learn more about culturally responsive instructions. They also stressed their frustration about feeling like they were working in isolation when it came to implementing these lessons and they wished they had an opportunity to collaborate more often with colleagues. Stutzman and Lowenhaupt (2020) found that teachers of dually-identified students have limited knowledge and application of culturally and linguistically responsive instruction, which leads to teachers feeling frustrated and alone in trying to support the needs of dually-identified students.

District and school leaders must make culturally and linguistically responsive instruction a priority and commit to training teachers and school staff, especially since research shows that culturally responsive teaching improves student achievement. Culturally responsive instructional practices have proven to be successful for dually-identified students (Orosco & O'Connor, 2014; Stutzman & Lowenhaupt, 2020). Research has found that culturally responsive teaching has led to increased reading achievement in dually-identified students (Orosco & O'Connor, 2014).

Building Teacher Collaboration

In addition to training and support, teachers stressed the importance and value of collaborating with their colleagues. As teachers stated during their interviews, it's important for teachers of dually-identified students to collaborate with their colleagues, such as Special Education and English Language Development (ELD) teachers who are experts in their fields and work closely with dually-identified students. It's during these collaborative sessions that educators have an opportunity to share best practices and learn from each other. Mariah, who teaches high school English, stated she doesn't have an opportunity to meet and collaborate with colleagues. "We're just not given time to meet together and learn from each other," said Mariah,

“If teachers are given the support and the time to come together and collaborate and have these discussion, then they can work on meeting those needs and helping students access rigor.”

School leaders must commit to providing teachers time to regularly collaborate with colleagues in order to provide teachers with valuable time where they can share best practices. Research on teacher collaboration has found the positive effects of teacher collaboration to include improved teacher self-efficacy, as well as improved instructional quality (Mora-Ruano, Heine, & Gebhardt, 2019).

Mastery Learning and Grading Training and Support

One of the most striking findings in the study was that teachers not only stated they implemented Mastery Learning and Grading, but they felt very passionate about this new concept of teaching and learning. It’s important to note that the teachers who participated in this study are from two different school sites, a middle school and high school, and yet they spoke on the importance and impact of Mastery Learning and Grading on their dually-identified students. Teachers spoke enthusiastically about the impact that Mastery Learning and Grading practices had on dually-identified students. The district where I conducted my research has begun to make a shift to Mastery Learning and Grading. District officials have encouraged all district schools and teachers to embrace this different approach to teaching and learning. Teachers are encouraged to attend the district sponsored trainings although not required. Teachers did say that while they may have received training, they still needed more support on the implementation of Mastery Learning and Grading. District and school leaders must provide teachers and school staff training on Mastery Learning and Grading, as well as provide ongoing supports so that teachers can effectively implement the program.

Limitations of this Study

The limitations of this study are similar to those found in other qualitative studies. The first limitation of my research study is the lack of generalizability of my findings, primarily due to the small sample size. Although the sample size of 19 participants includes teachers from several content areas and varying years of teaching experience it's such that it does not allow generalization beyond outside of this study. For the purposes of this study, the sample met the needs of data gathering until saturation. In the sample, there was some variability in years of teaching experience, nearly half of study participants had 8 years or less of teaching experience. Four teachers had 18 years or more of teaching experience and one teacher had 32 years of experience.

The second limitation to this study was that of participants who took the time and effort to contact the researcher to participate in the study. These teachers self-reported their knowledge and experience of working with dually-identified. I did not observe teachers' virtual classrooms and because of the pandemic all teacher interviews were conducted via Zoom conference. These teachers shared their views and perceptions about teaching dually-identified students, but the views not expressed are not known. Additionally, the views of teachers who did not choose to participate are missing from this study.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study focused on teachers of dually-identified students, for which there is a limited body of research. My study in particular investigated the expectations and perceptions of teachers and how these beliefs impact teachers' instructional decisions. From the beginning of the interviews, teachers' expectations were a central theme of the interviews as teachers shared in detail their academic expectations of dually-identified students. A revealing finding from this

study is that teachers of dually-identified students expect these students to behave the same as non dually-identified students. This finding appeared the strongest in the data with the majority of teachers stating they hold the same expectations for dually-identified students as all other students. This is a significant finding as there is limited studies that focus on the expectations of teachers of dually-identified students. A more in-depth study on the academic expectations of dually-identified students would be helpful in providing much needed information in this field of study. Additionally, teachers also stated they expected dually-identified students to exhibit strong self-advocacy and communication skills, so more research in this field would shed light on an area that has not been fully studied.

Another area of research is the impact of Mastery Learning and Grading on the achievement of dually-identified students. During the interviews, teachers shared their implementation of Mastery Learning and Grading and how they believed this new form of teaching and learning is beneficial for students with learning disabilities, such as dually-identified student. This is a fairly new field in education and so there aren't many studies that focus on the impact of Mastery Learning and Grading on dually-identified students. A broader study on Mastery Learning and Grading and its impact on dually-identified students could potentially have a significant impact on the current body of research.

Conclusion

This journey began many years ago as a teacher when I realized that my own dually-identified students' educational needs were being ignored by my school. Then, years later as I served as administrator in different school sites, I always witnessed the same: the learning needs of dually-identified students were not a priority. What educators failed to see then--and still do not to recognize today--is the fact that dually-identified students' have unique learning needs

because of their intersectional identities. Dually-identified students are both English Language Learners and students with learning disabilities who require that educators recognize and validate their learning needs.

During my study, I heard the voices of many educators who desperately wanted to meet the educational needs of dually-identified students. Despite the pandemic and working with limited resources, teachers were hopeful that they could make a difference in the lives of their students. These same teachers openly shared their opinions and perceptions regarding their dually-identified students. As I synthesized my data, I was struck by the findings. The strongest findings were that of teachers holding the same academic expectations for dually-identified students as all other students. In other words, teachers were not differentiating learning expectations between their dually-identified students and all of their other students. As I reflected and analyzed the interview data, I identified the tension between teachers' expectations and their unconscious biases. Teachers may not have realized it, but their biases came through their use of negative, deficit language during the interviews. Contrary to the findings on expectations, when it came instructional decisions teachers seemed more positive. Another significant finding was that of teachers implementing Mastery Learning and Grading, which is a growth-mindset approach to teaching and learning. Teachers enthusiastically described how this new approach to teaching and grading supports the learning needs of dually-identified students.

The learning needs of dually-identified students must be a priority with districts and schools allocating resources to support teachers. Teachers must receive intentional and authentic training that prepares teachers to meet the unique needs of these students, where teacher collaboration is key. On a personal level, this study helped me raise awareness of the learning needs of dually-identified students at my own school site. As a school site administrator, I realize

I am in position to advocate for change especially when it comes to supporting dually-identified students whose learning needs are often misunderstood.

APPENDIX A



Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study

Research Study: Teachers' Perceptions of Dually-Identified Student (English Language Learners with Learning Disabilities)

Location: Zoom Interviews of Teachers from XX Middle School and XX High School

Dates: March 2021 to June 2021

Principal Investigator: Irma Lemus

Introduction: Thank you for participating in this research study. The purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' perceptions and expectations of dually-identified students (English Language Learners with learning disabilities) and how these perceptions impact teachers' instructional choices and practices.

Procedures: Participation in this research study involve that teachers participate in Zoom interviews. Interviews may take up to 45 minutes per session.

Benefits: Study findings will contribute to practical knowledge by providing educators with information on how teachers' perceptions shape the academic outcomes of dually-identified students. This will help educators understand how to best support teachers who work with dually-identified students.

Risks & Inconveniences: There are no known risks associated with this study.

Payment for Participation: You will receive a \$25 Amazon gift card for your participation in the study.

Confidentiality: The researchers will do their best to make sure that your private information is kept confidential. Information about you will be handled as confidentially as possible, but participating in research may involve a loss of privacy and the potential for a breach in confidentiality. Study data will be physically and electronically secured. As with any use of electronic means to store data, there is a risk of breach of data security. Your data, including de-

identified data may be kept for use in future research. All interview files and data will be stored under password protection in an off-line hard drive.

Withdrawal: Participation is voluntary and teachers may withdraw from this research study at any time.

Contact Information: Principal Investigator, Irma Lemus, may be contacted at (310) 600-5808, ix10727@lausd.net. Faculty Sponsor: Lucrecia Santibañez, UCLA Associate Professor of Education, may be contacted at lsantibanez@ucla.edu.

Participant's Rights: If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers, you may contact the UCLA OHRPP by phone: (310) 206-2040; by email: participants@research.ucla.edu or by mail: Box 951406, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1406.

APPENDIX B

Interview Protocol for Teachers of Dually-Identified Students

Script:

Thank you for participating in this interview. The purpose of this interview is to gather information about your instructional practices as related to dually-identified students (Long Term English Language Learners with learning disabilities). Your participation in this interview is voluntary and all information shared with me will remain confidential. I will be taking notes during the interview, as well as recording this interview.

1. Please tell me the subject you teach, and the number of years you have been teaching?

Probes:

If you feel comfortable identifying your race and ethnicity. How do you identify yourself?

2. Please describe your experience working with dually-identified students (English Language Learners with learning disabilities)?

3. Tell me about one dually-identified student who is successful in your class.

Probes:

Tell me about your definition of success. What makes students successful?

Tell me about another student who is successful in your class.

4. Now, tell me about one dually-identified student who is not successful in your class. Why do you think this student is not successful?

Probes:

What makes this student not succeed in your class?

Tell me about another student who is not successful in your class.

What are your expectations of dually-identified students?

5. We've discussed some of the students in your class and your thoughts on why these students are successful or not in your class. So, considering dually-identified students, how do you make instructional decision for these students?

Probes:

Do you consider students' levels when making instructional decisions such as lesson planning, student instructional groups, curriculum decisions, etc.?

How do you make these decisions?

Do you consider culturally relevant instructional teaching strategies? If so, how and what type of strategies/activities do you implement?

6. This is the end of the interview. Is there anything else you would like to add or you would like for me know in regards to teaching dually-identified students?

APPENDIX C

Recruitment Email for Study Participants

Dear Ms./Mr. XXX,

I write to invite you to participate in a study that focuses on teachers who work with dually-identified students (English Language Learners with learning disabilities). I received permission from your principal to contact and invite teachers at XXX High School. Several teachers have already participated in the study, which consist of one Zoom interview.

Teachers who participate in the study will receive a \$25 gift card. As part of the study, teachers will participate in *one* Zoom interview. I understand your time is limited, so this study will not take a lot of your time.

This study, part of my UCLA doctorate program, investigates teachers' perceptions of dually-identified students and how these perceptions may impact instructional decisions. Study findings may provide data on how future professional development may be planned for teachers.

Please let me know if you are interested in participating in this study and If you have any time this week to schedule the Zoom interview. If you have any questions or would like to learn more about this study, I may be reached by email at IXL0727@lausd.net.

Sincerely,

Irma Lemus
UCLA Graduate Student/Study Investigator
UCLA Graduate School of Education
& Information Studies

References

- Annamma, S. A., Connor, D., & Ferri, B. (2013). Dis/ability Critical Race studies (DisCrit): Theorizing at the Intersection of Race and Dis/Ability. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 1-31.
- Artigliere, M. (2019, May). The Proficiency, Instructional and Affective Domains of Long Term English Language Learners: A Review of the Research. *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language Electronic Journal*, 23(1), 1-19.
- Bailey, A., & Kelly, K. (2011). Home Language Survey Practices in the Initial Identification of English Learners in the United States. *Sage Publication*, 770-804.
- Billings, E., & Walqui, A. (2017). *Dispelling the Myth of "English Only": Understanding the Importance of the First Language in Second Language Learning*. New York: Office of Bilingual Education and World Languages.
- Blanchard, S., & Muller, C. (2015). Gatekeepers of the American Dream: How Teachers' Perceptions Shape the American Outcomes of Immigrant and Language-Minority Students. *Social Science Research*, 262-275.
- Blanchett, W. J., Klinger, J. K., & Harry, B. (2009). The Intersection of Race, Culture, Language, and Disability. *Urban Education*, 389-409.
- Cioe-Pena, M. (2017). The Intersectional Gap: How Bilingual Students in the United States are Excluded from Inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 906-919.
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 139-167.
- Delgado, R. (2010). Poco a Poquito Se Van Apagando: Teachers' Experiences Educating Latino English Language Learners with Disabilities. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 150-157.
- Estrada, P. (2014). English Learner Curricular Streams in Four Middle Schools: Triage in the Trenches. *Urban Review*.
- Estrada, P., & Wong, H. (2018). Making English Learner Reclassification to Fluent English Proficient Attainable or Elusive: When Meeting Criteria Is and Is Not Enough. *American Educational Research Journal*, 207-242.
- Good, T. L. (1981). Teacher Expectations and Student Perceptions: A Decade of Research. *Educational Leadership*, 415-422.

- Good, T. L. (1987). Two Decades of Research on Teacher Expectations: Findings and Future Directions. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 32-47.
- Hollie, S. (2018). *Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning: Classroom Practices for Student Success*. Huntington Beach, CA: Shell Education.
- Jussim, L., & Harber, K. D. (2005). Teacher Expectations and Self-Fulfilling Prophecies: Knowns and Unknowns, Resolved and Unresolved Controversies. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 131-155.
- Kamperman, S. (2020). Academic Ableism and Students with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities: Rethinking Self-Advocacy as an Anti-Ableist Practice. *Critical Education*, 21-38.
- Kulik, C.-L. C., Kulik, J. A., & Bangert-Drowns, R. L. (1990). Effectiveness of Mastery Learning Programs: A Meta-Analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 265-299.
- Linquanti, R., & Bailey, A. (2014). *Reprising the Home Language Survey: Summary of a National Working Session on Policies, Practices, and Tools for Identifying Potential English Learners*. Washington, D.C.: Council of Chief State School Officers.
- Los Angeles Unified School District. (2020, March 2). School-Site Professional Development Priorities and Banked Time Tuesdays for Middle and School Schools (2020-2021). *Los Angeles Unified School District Memorandum*. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles Unified School District.
- Mahoney, K., & MacSwan, J. (2005). Reexamining Identification and Reclassification of English Language Learners: A Critical Discussion of Select State Practices. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 30-42.
- Martinez-Alarez, P. (2019). Disability Labels and Emergent Bilingual Children: Current Research and New Possibilities to Grow as Bilingual and Biliterate Learners. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 174-193.
- Martinez-Alvarez, P., & Chiang, H.-M. (2020). A Bilingual Special Education Teacher Preparation Program in New York City: Case Studies of Teacher Candidates' Student Teaching Experiences. *Equity & Excellence In Education*, 196-215.
- Mellom, P. J., Straubhaar, R., Balderas, C., Ariail, M., & Portes, P. (2018). "They Come With Nothing:" How Professional Development in a Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Shapes Teacher Attitudes Towards Latino/a English Language Learners. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 98-107.
- Mendoza, C. (2019). Language Development Policies and Practices Impacting the College and Career Readiness of Long-Term English Learners (LTELs) in Secondary Schools.

- Educational Leadership and Administration: Teaching and Program Development*, 14-34.
- Menken, K., & Kleyn, T. (2007). The Long-term Impact of Subtractive Schooling in the Educational Experiences of Secondary English Language Learners. 399-417.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation (4th Edition)*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Miranda, J. L., Wells, J. C., & Jenkins, A. (2017). Preparing Special Education Teacher Candidates to Teach English Language Learners with Disabilities: How Well are We Doing? *Language Teaching Research*, 330-351.
- Mora-Ruano, J. G., Heine, J.-H., & Gebhardt, M. (2019, August 13). Does Teacher Collaboration Improve Student Achievement? *Frontiers in Education*, 4, 1-12.
- More, C. M., Spies, T. G., Morgan, J. J., & Baker, J. N. (2016). Incorporating English Language Learner Instruction Within Special Education Teacher Preparation. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 229-237.
- Morgan, P. L., Farkas, G., Hillemeier, M. M., Mattison, R., Maczuga, S., Li, H., & Cook, M. (2015). Minorities Are Disproportionately Underrepresented in Special Education: Longitudinal Evidence Across Five Disability Conditions. *Educational Researcher*, 1-15.
- Mujis, D., & Reynolds, D. (2002). Being or Doing: The Role of Teacher Behaviors and Beliefs in School and Teacher Effectiveness in Mathematics, a SEM Analysis. *Journal of Classroom Interaction*, 3-15.
- Olsen, L. (2010). *Reparable Harm: Fulfilling the Unkempt Promise of Educational Opportunity for California's Long Term English Learners*. Long Beach: A Californians Together Research & Policy Publication.
- Olvera, C. (2015). Teacher Perceptions of English Learners Acquisition of Academic English: Impacts on Long Term English Learner Classification. *Journal of Education Policy*, 78-92.
- Opper, I. M. (2019). *Teachers Matter: Understanding Teachers' Impact on Student Achievement*. Rand Corporation. Santa Monica: Rand Corporation. Retrieved from Rand Corporation: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR4312.html.
- Orosco, M. J., & O'Connor, R. (2014). Culturally Responsive Instruction for English Language Learners with Learning Disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 515-531.

- Paneque, O. M., & Barbetta, P. M. (2006). A Study of Teacher Efficacy of Special Education Teachers of English Language Learners with Disabilities. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 171-193.
- Parrish, T., Perez, M., Merickel, A., & Linqanti, R. (2006). Effects of the implementation of Proposition 227 on the education of English Learners, K-12. *American Institutes for Research*.
- Pettit, S. K. (2011). Teachers' Beliefs About English Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom: A Review of the Literature. *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 123-147.
- Rand Education. (2019). *Teachers Matter: Understanding Teachers' Impact on Student Achievement*. Retrieved from Rand Corporation: https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR4312.html
- Richardson, V. (1996). The Role of Attitudes and Beliefs in Learning to Teach. *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*, 102-119.
- Sanchez, M. T., Parker, C., Akbayin, B., & McTigue, A. (2010). Processes and Challenges in Identifying Learning Disabilities Among Students who are English Language Learners in three New York State Districts. *Institute of Education Sciences*, 1-44.
- Shifrer, D., Muller, C., & Callahan, R. (2011). Disproportionality and Learning Disabilities: Parsing Apart Race, Socioeconomic Status, and Language. 246-257.
- Stutzman, B., & Lowenhaupt, R. (2020). At the Intersection: Examining Teacher and Administrator Perception of ELs and Special Education. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 1-18.
- Thompson, K. D. (2015). Questioning the Long-Term English Learner Label: How Categorization Can Blind Us to Students' Abilities. *Teachers College Record*, 1-38.
- Umansky, I. M., Thompson, K. D., & Diaz, G. (2017). Using an Ever-English Learner Framework to Examine Disproportionality in Special Education. *Exceptional Children*, 76-96.
- Wise, B., Tien Le, Q., & Ganon, S. (2018). *Characteristics of Long Term English Learners*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles Unified School District Independent Analysis Unit.
- Yuan, T., & Jiang, H. (2019). Culturally Responsive Teaching for Children from Low-Income, Immigrant Families. *Young Exceptional Children*, 150-161.