

Academic Success of English Language Learners: Are Mainstream Teachers Underprepared?

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The population of English Language Learners (ELLs) in Indiana schools has increased over the years and will keep increasing. However, the graduation rates of ELLs and their standardized test scores are not improving. After reading various articles about why this might be occurring and using my personal experience as an ELL, there was one factor that stood out to me: mainstream teachers are underprepared to work with ELLs. The purpose of this research project is to investigate how prepared mainstream teachers feel to work with ELLs and what, if any, are the barriers that keep them from doing so. For this project, I will be using mixed methods research: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative research will be the primary method and will be collected in the form of teacher interviews. These interviews will include questions about how teachers feel about working with ELLs and the teachers' observations about how ELLs function in their classrooms. The qualitative research will be supported by quantitative research that will be collected through surveys and classroom observations of teacher pedagogy. The overall goal of this project is to help make classrooms places where ELLs can be academically successful and improve graduations rates and test scores.

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