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The Response Of ELLs To Task-Based Instruction Within An Inclusion Classroom

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THE RESPONSE OF ELLs TO TASK-BASED INSTRUCTION WITHIN AN INCLUSION CLASSROOM

by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Nicholas.

Thank you for walking beside me in this pilgrimage of life.

I also dedicate this dissertation to our daughter, Cecilia.

You bring such joy to my heart.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people who I would like to acknowledge. First, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Christopher Bogiages. You have been a tremendous support, offering me valuable feedback and guidance. To my administration, students, and co-teacher, thank you for your participation in this study. Your openness and honesty made this research possible. To John York, thank you for being a mentor to me over the past 10 years. You have led me through all of my professional accomplishments, and I am grateful for your insight and advice. Alyse Rizzo, thank you for the many hours of loving care that you have given to Cecilia. Your flexibility and willingness to help made this a much smoother experience for all of us. To my parents, siblings, and in-laws, thank you for your constant love. You have offered me so much encouragement. To my daughter, Cecilia Marie, thank you for your smiles, laughter, hugs, and kisses. Watching you learn and grow is such a beautiful, refreshing experience. Most of all, thank you to my husband, Nicholas. I thank God for you every day. You are a constant support to me with your listening ear, thoughtful words, and endless patience.
This action research study describes the influence of task-based instruction on English Language Learner (ELL) motivation in a seventh grade inclusion classroom. This research study was grounded in a theoretical framework that involved inclusion education, ELLs, task-based instruction (Willis, 1996), and the ARCS Model of Motivation (Keller, 2008). This action research study employed a convergent parallel mixed methods design to explore the following research question: What is the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in a grade seven English Language Arts (ELA) inclusion classroom? The participants in this study included 5 ELL students and 10 Native English Speakers (NES). The data collection methods used in this study were focus groups, field observations, student work documents, and student exit ticket surveys. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data was analyzed through a priori and emergent codes. Data analysis and discussion were grounded in the four dimensions of motivation as defined by Keller’s ARCS model: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. This action research study employed a phenomenological qualitative design to explore a second research question: How does co-teaching that implements a task-based instruction model in an inclusion classroom affect teachers? The participants were two ELA teachers. Methods of data collection included a research journal, peer observation protocols, and an end of study reflection. This qualitative data was analyzed through emergent codes. The results of this study
indicated that, when responding to the influence of task-based instruction, ELL students showed the greatest positive responses about attention and relevance, moderately positive responses about satisfaction, and the least positive responses about confidence. The findings also suggested that co-teaching using a task-based instruction model provided insight into collaboration, with implications for the classroom, and an understanding of the value of collaboration through the use of peer observation protocols.

Keywords: English language learners, task-based instruction, action research, motivation, ARCS Model of Motivation, inclusion education, collaboration
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARCS................................................. Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction
ELA ........................................................................................................ English Language Arts
ELL ......................................................................................................... English Language Learner
NES....................................................................................................... Native English Speaker
PDSA...................................................................................................... Plan, Do, Study, Act
TBI........................................................................................................... Task-Based Instruction
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Problem of Practice

Teachers work long hours, their eyes set on the goal to help form motivated students who demonstrate academic achievement. Teachers face the seemingly daunting challenge of differentiating instruction for their students, especially with growing numbers of English Language Learners (ELLs) in their classrooms. Teachers boldly experiment with instructional strategies, trying to implement new research. These teachers often work alone, receiving very little helpful feedback, re-creating the wheel within the four walls of their classrooms; however, they do not have to work alone.

This is the problem of practice that was addressed in this action research study. This study examined the challenge of teaching in an inclusion classroom and, in particular, the challenge of teaching ELL students. The purpose of this research study was to examine the influence of task-based instruction on the motivation of ELL students in a grade seven English Language Arts (ELA) inclusion classroom. This research was an attempt to find answers for how a teacher such as Brittany, a participant in this study, can “just keep kids engaged… because that's the first step in trying to accomplish anything in a seventh grade classroom.” What emerged from this study was not only a new understanding of the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation, but also a new understanding of how teachers take on their own professional growth through
collaboration with others. The collaborative efforts that became an important part of the study led to the development of a second research question that will be discussed with the original question in this dissertation.

Theoretical Framework

This action research study primarily is framed by an understanding of the inclusion model classroom. Inclusion education is grounded in the belief that it is “the fundamental right of all children and adults to fully participate, and contribute in all aspects of life and culture, without restriction or threat of marginalization” (Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus, 2014, p. 32). In an inclusion classroom, the needs of special education students and ELLs are addressed alongside the academic needs of their school-aged peers in a traditional classroom setting. Research showed that inclusion education is effective (Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus, 2014; Jacobs & Fu, 2014; Mahat, 2008; Soukakou, Winton, West, Sideris, & Rucker, 2014). However, research also indicated that many teachers have not engaged in adequate teacher preparation for inclusion education, that these teachers lack an awareness of successful teaching methods, and that teachers’ negative perceptions of inclusion greatly impact the effectiveness of the educational model (Brusca-Vega, Alexander, & Kamin, 2014; McCray & McHatton, 2011; Soukakou et al., 2014).

This action research also is framed by an understanding of ELLs and the theory of task-based instruction. Research indicated that student attitude plays a tremendous role in ELL students’ success in language learning (Hadi, 2013; Kang, 2013; Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Mayer, 2003). Research also showed that ELLs felt comfortable and safe within learning environments that implemented task-based instruction (Hadi, 2013; Kang,
Task-based instruction is a communicative language approach, which focuses on using language in meaningful tasks (Bantis, 2010; Chen, 2014; Willis, 1996; Willis & Willis, 2007; Ye, 2017). Task-based instruction is an approach to language teaching that provides students with opportunities to learn by communicating in authentic, goal oriented ways. Willis (1996; 2007) was recognized for having standardized a framework for task-based instruction where lessons were structured around the three stages of pre-task, task-cycle, and language focus (Willis, 1996; 2007). Within these learner-centered task-based environments, ELL students showed better attitudes and higher motivation (Zhang & Hung, 2013).

Lastly, this action research study is framed by the theory of the ARCS Model of Motivation, as developed by Keller (2008). The word ARCS is an acronym that stands for the four dimensions of motivation: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. The ARCS Model of Motivation provides a synthesis of motivational theories and concepts by suggesting that, in order to have motivated students, a teacher must grasp student attention, the students must find the instruction relevant, students must be confident and believe that they will succeed, and students must be personally satisfied by the learning experience (Keller, 2008). Research indicated that use of the ARCS Model positively impacted student motivation (Hess, 2015; Liao & Wang, 2008) and has been used to measure the effect of an intervention (Huang, Huang, & Wu, 2014; Izmirli & Izmirli, 2015).

**Research Questions**

This action research study explored the following original research question: What is the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in a grade
seven ELA inclusion classroom? This question was identified as the focus for this research based on the problem of practice and the subsequent review of the literature, which suggested that task-based instruction could positively influence student motivation (Zhang & Hung, 2013). Throughout the course of this study, findings that related to this research question emerged, not only through the quantitative and qualitative data that was collected, but also as a result of professional growth through collaboration. The collaboration that took place throughout this study prompted another emergent research question: How does co-teaching that implements a task-based instruction model in an inclusion classroom affect teachers?

**Methodology**

**Action Research**

I am a teacher. I am a researcher. As a teacher-researcher, I chose to conduct an action research study because it provided me with the most authentic opportunity to conduct research to develop, reflect, and change my teaching practices in order to better support students. Through action research, teachers have the potential to be reflective practitioners who cause change within their classroom (Giles, Wilson, & Elias, 2010; Mertler, 2014). A cyclical process of action research ultimately promotes the academic achievement of students (Mertler, 2014). By engaging in action research, a teacher’s influence begins in their classroom but can extend further and even influence an entire school (Mertler, 2014). Action research is an effective professional development tool that uses inquiry and reflection to promote change (Bolghari & Hajimaghsoodi, 2017; Durak et al., 2016; Giles et al., 2010; Iwasaki, Hopper, & Whelan, 2017; Shahnazarian, 2017; Yigit & Bagceci, 2017).
**Research Design and Data Collection Methods**

**Research design - research question one.** The first research question was: What is the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in a grade seven ELA inclusion classroom? In order to address the first research question, this study implemented a convergent parallel mixed methods action research design (Creswell, 2014). In this convergent parallel mixed methods design, I gathered qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously and merged the data in order to comprehensively analyze the research problem (Creswell, 2014). This design was chosen because of the nature of the first research question. Because I asked a question based around student motivation, I determined that qualitative methods of data collection, such as focus groups, would be as important as quantitative methods of data collection, such as a survey. While both qualitative and quantitative methods have weaknesses and biases, I chose a mixed methods research approach because it neutralized these weaknesses through the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2014).

**Data collection methods - research question one.** A number of data-collection methods were used to examine how task-based instruction influenced ELL student motivation. These data collection methods were: Focus Groups (Appendix A, Appendix B), Field Observations (Appendix C), Student Work Documents, and Exit Ticket Surveys (Appendix D). Focus Groups took place with students on two occasions: once at the beginning (Appendix A) and once at the end (Appendix B) of the study. All other data collection methods were collected daily.

**Research design - research question two.** The emergent research question was: How does co-teaching that implements a task-based instruction model in an inclusion
classroom affect teachers? In order to address this second research question, this study implemented a phenomenological qualitative design (Creswell, 2014). In phenomenological qualitative research, the researcher describes the lived experiences of individuals about a specific phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). This design was chosen because of the nature of the second research question; it emerged through my personal experiences of co-teaching with Brittany (pseudonym), the other ELA teacher. This research question was answered by examining the lived experiences that Brittany and I had when co-teaching with task-based instruction in an inclusion classroom.

Data collection methods - research question two. A number of data collection methods were used to examine how co-teaching that implements a task-based instruction model affects teachers. These data collection methods were: a Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E), an End of Study Reflection (Appendix F), and a Collaboration PDSA Research Journal. The Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol took place seven times during this study. The End of Study Reflection served the purpose of an open-ended interview, and took place once at the end of the study. A Collaboration PDSA Research Journal, which followed the W. Edwards Deming Institute (2016) structure of Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Cycles, took place daily and was a reflective record of my experiences.

Validity, Reliability, and Trustworthiness

When conducting action research, it remains important to identify threats to validity, reliability, and trustworthiness. Validity demonstrates that the data collected accurately measures what it claims to measure (Mertler, 2014). Reliability demonstrates that the approaches taken are consistent and stable (Creswell, 2014; Mertler, 2014).
Trustworthiness means that the qualitative researcher has established the credibility and dependability of qualitative data (Mertler, 2014). I ensured the validity, reliability, and trustworthiness of my research study by: designing my study around frameworks that were grounded in peer reviewed literature (Keller, 2008; Willis, 1996); using appropriate descriptive statistical analysis to converge several sources of data (Creswell, 2014; Holcomb, 2017; Mertler, 2014); engaging in persistent observation (Mertler, 2014); establishing inter-rater reliability through percent agreement and Cohen’s Kappa (Creswell, 2014; Gewt, 2014); and conducting member checking (Creswell, 2014; Mertler, 2014).

**Positionality**

When an action researcher is trying to determine their positionality within a research setting, they should reflect on who they are in relation to their participants and their setting (Herr & Anderson, 2015). Action research always is conducted with or by insiders to an organization (Herr & Anderson, 2015). In this study, I was positioned with both insider and insider-outsider status. From the very beginning of the school year, I began working at my research site as a part-time volunteer certified English teacher. In my position, I co-taught with Brittany, a full-time employed English teacher. Brittany was beginning her third year of teaching at the school and had recently finished her master’s degree in administration.

I attended beginning of the school year professional development with the other faculty and staff at the school and began co-teaching with Brittany from the start of the school year. Co-teaching is a coordinated instructional practice where multiple educators work together, simultaneously teaching a heterogeneous group of students (Beninghof,
In the eyes of our seventh grade students, I was an insider. I was just another teacher at the school. In the eyes of Brittany, my co-teacher, I had insider-outsider status. Brittany and I worked closely together every day by planning, co-teaching, and reflecting. Brittany described that she truly felt we worked together as “peers” and “colleagues” to implement task-based instruction in our classroom.

**Participants**

This research study took place at Bayview Middle School (pseudonym), a diverse public middle school located on the Gulf Coast. The school served nearly 600 seventh and eighth grade students. Almost 80% of these students qualified for free and reduced lunch. The participants of this study were 15 students in one grade seven ELA inclusion classroom. Of these 15 students, there were similar numbers of boys and girls. Four students were documented as receiving ELL services. One student, recently exited, still was being monitored for ELL services. In this research study, both the students receiving ELL services and the student being monitored for ELL services are referred to as ELLs. Ten students were Native English Speakers (NES).

**Significance and Limitations of the Study**

**Significance**

This research study was significant because it addressed the need to equip inclusion teachers with effective strategies for teaching ELLs. This study applied existing research in a new educational setting, examining the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation when practiced in an inclusion classroom. The results of this study have strong implications for inclusion education and ELL instruction, and can be used as a remedy to the systemic inequities that marginalize ELL students (Briscoe, 2014;

With experience as both an educator and administrator, while designing this study, I was particularly interested in teaching methods that had an influence on student motivation. My work in education includes not only experience teaching in the United States, but also teaching abroad. As a middle-school English teacher in the United States, my experience has been based in inclusion classrooms. Through many conversations with other educators and through my work in administration, I have come to understand that the challenge of inclusion education and, in particular the challenge of teaching ELL students in inclusion settings, is a very real challenge that almost every teacher faces.

When I worked as the program manager and English consultant at an English education company in Japan, I saw very clearly that when meaningful application was connected to English-language instruction, both student motivation and academic achievement increased. My work in Japan was centered on the philosophy of the communicative language approach, particularly the approach of task-based instruction. In working with over 5,000 Japanese students, I observed that methods of task-based instruction had a very positive effect on students’ academic achievement. I also observed that students were highly motivated when methods of task-based instruction were used.

In the multiple educational environments in which I have worked, I have had the opportunity to examine many different students’ behaviors and patterns of learning. These experiences have revealed the complexity of the English learning experience and the importance of relevance and real world application when planning and executing lessons. Research shows that students demonstrate more motivation when they know that
they will be able to transfer their knowledge to situations outside of the classroom (Hadi, 2013; Kang, 2013; Mayer, 2003; Zhang & Hung, 2013).

Some teachers may think that placing students in an inclusion classroom means that all students are offered an equal opportunity to learn; however, unless appropriate teaching strategies are implemented, some of these students will likely fall through the cracks. This is particularly true for ELL students. Kincheloe (1995) expressed that in order for action researchers to grasp the importance and meaning of what they might perceive, they must be aware of the “unequal power relations” in the school where they are conducting their inquiry (p. 80). I designed this study with awareness of the unequal power relations not only within the school, but particularly within the inclusion classroom. With this perspective, I aimed to find a solution to the problem of practice that was present within my seventh grade classroom at Bayview Middle School.

This study is significant because it addressed the very clear social justice issue of inclusive learning communities for ELLs. There was a significant amount of research that supported the claim that often systemic inequities prevent ELL students from being served a democratic, student-centered, inclusive learning environment (Briscoe, 2014; Brooks et al., 2010; Knudsen, 2009; Marx & Saavreda, 2014; Theoharis & Toole, 2011). This study is an effort to find a strategy that will enable teachers to create an inclusive learning community for ELL students. An emergent focus of this study is to promote teachers’ professional growth through collaboration, enabling them to create networked communities in order to become advocates for ELL students.
Limitations

Intentional decisions were made, particularly in methodological design, to minimize the limitations of this study; however, limitations still existed. The results of this study cannot be generalized to student groups outside of the research participants, although it may be possible to generalize these research findings to other ELA inclusion classrooms within Bayview Middle School. One limitation of this study was the small participant size of 15 students, and 2 ELA teachers. This was an unavoidable limitation due to the fact that this was an action research study. Another limitation within this research study was the length of the research study, which due to logistical constraints, took place over the course of five weeks. In the future, this research could be replicated with larger groups of students, in multiple classrooms, and for a longer period of time.

My positionality within the research also came with its own weaknesses and limitations. As a co-teacher, I worked closely not only with the students, but also with Brittany, another practitioner. Kincheloe (1995) explained, “Critical teachers as researchers begin to see schools as human creations with meanings and possibilities lurking beneath the surface appearances” (p. 77). I attempted to adopt this role of “critical teacher as researcher,” viewing the school as an imperfect human creation—one that can be recreated with systems and practices that promote equal-power relations and equal opportunity for all students. I believe that my perspective as “critical teacher as researcher” helped to minimize any limitations that existed as a result of my positionality.

Organization of the Dissertation

The following chapters of this research study tell the story of a collaborative effort between teachers, who implemented research within their own inclusion classroom,
hoping to gain insight into the influence of task-based instruction on ELL students’ motivation. Chapter One of this dissertation began with an overview of the problem of practice that inspired this research and continued with the theoretical framework and research question. In addition, Chapter One provided an overview of the methodology, significance, and limitations of the study. Chapter Two of this dissertation consists of a literature review. This includes a thorough discussion of the historical framework of language teaching and the theoretical basis of inclusion education, ELLs, task-based instruction, and the ARCS Model of Motivation (Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus, 2014; Keller, 2008; Willis, 1996; Zainuddin, Morales-Jones, Yahya, & Ariza, 2011). The literature review concludes with a thorough discussion about literature relevant to the methodology of this study (Bantis, 2010; Bolghari & Hajimaghsoodi, 2017; Chen, 2014; Giles et al., 2010; Ye, 2017; Yigit & Bagceci, 2017). Chapter Three provides the reader with an in-depth explanation of the research methodology, context, participants, research methods, and action plan. Chapter Three addresses the first research question by explaining the convergent parallel mixed methods approach (Creswell, 2014), describing the student participants of this study, and providing a thorough explanation of how qualitative and quantitative data was collected and analyzed. Chapter Three also provides the reader with information relevant to the second research question, including details about the phenomenological qualitative approach (Creswell, 2014), the data collection methods, and data analysis. Chapter Four consists of the research findings and discussion. The findings and discussion for my first research question are organized around the four elements of the ARCS model: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Keller, 2008). The findings for my second research question are organized according to the data
collection type, while the analysis is organized by the themes that emerged through the qualitative analysis (Creswell, 2014). The dissertation concludes with Chapter Five, which consists of a reflection, discussion of changes, an action plan, and implications for future practice. This reflection involves a thoughtful discussion about how PDSA Cycles (The W. Edwards Deming Institute, 2016) informed my experience of action research. In my discussion of changes to the research, I explain my thoughts about the limitations of this study. In the action plan and implications for future practice, I outline the next steps of action research.

**Definition of Terms**

*Action Research:* A method of systematic inquiry that follows a cyclical process of planning, acting, developing, and reflecting (Mertler, 2014). Action research is often conducted by a teacher-researcher as a way to find a solution to a problem of practice. Action research is an effective professional development tool that helps to support change (Giles et al., 2010).

*ARCS Model of Motivation:* A synthesis of motivational concepts and theories and a motivational design process, developed by Keller (2008), which identifies attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction as the four dimensions of motivation.

*Attention:* Defined by Keller (2008) as a demonstration of curiosity. For the purpose of this study, attention is further described as a student’s ability to pay attention in class, their participation in class, their perseverance to complete a task, or their ability to help other students in the class.

*Communicative Language Teaching:* A method of language teaching that promotes communication as the primary method of language acquisition. Communication tasks
involve meaning-making activities, problem solving, critical thinking, and real life scenarios or problems (Zainuddin et al., 2011).

Confidence: Defined by Keller (2008) as the belief that one will be able to succeed. For the purpose of this study, confidence is further described as when a student believes that they can do well in a lesson or feels that something about a lesson was easy or difficult.

Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods Research: A type of mixed methods research in which qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously, and then integrated in the interpretation of the results (Creswell, 2014).

English Language Learners (ELLs): Students whose primary language is not English and who are receiving special services in language learning above and beyond the normal grade level curriculum (U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, 2016). For the purpose of this study, ELLs refer to both students who are currently receiving services and students who have been recently exited but still being monitored.

Improvement Science: A systematic process of research and development, which uses deductive and inductive learning cycles in order to refine a theory, and predict a strategy, enabling educators to find solutions and effectively use them (Bryk, Gomez, Grunow, & LeMahieu, 2016).

Inclusion Classroom: A classroom where students with disabilities and students who are second language learners are educated with their regular aged peers in a typical classroom environment (Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus, 2014).
Language Focus: The third of three stages in Willis’ (1996) structure for task-based teaching. In this stage, students analyze, examine, discuss, and practice new words, phrases, and patterns.

Motivation: Within this research study, motivation is described as having four elements: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. These four elements are based off of the ARCS Model of Motivation (Keller, 2008).

Native English Speakers (NES): For the purpose of this study, Native English Speakers refers to students who are not currently receiving or being monitored for special services in language learning.

PDSA Cycle: A systematic approach that is used to gain knowledge about the continual improvement of a process or product. This improvement cycle is divided into four steps: Plan, Do, Study, and Act (The W. Edwards Deming Institute, 2016).

Phenomenological Qualitative Research: A type of qualitative research that describes the lived experiences of individuals about a specific phenomenon (Creswell, 2014).

Pre-task: The first of three stages in Willis’ (1996) structure for task-based teaching. In this stage the teacher helps students to recall and activate words and phrases, and makes sure that students understand the task instructions. This is the shortest of all of the phases.

Relevance: Defined by Keller (2008) as the recognition of personal values or helpfulness in accomplishing personal goals. For the purpose of this study, relevance is further described as when a student feels that something about a lesson is important to them.

Satisfaction: Defined by Keller (2008) as a resonance with personal incentives. For the purpose of this study, satisfaction is further described as when a student comments about
their satisfaction regarding their performance in class, or mentions that they are happy or proud of their work.

**Task:** Defined by Willis (1996) as activities where learners use the target language for a communicative purpose or goal, in order to achieve a particular outcome.

**Task-Based Instruction:** A method of communicative language teaching, popularized by Willis (1996), which relies on a pre-task/task cycle/language focus structure to lessons. It also is referred to as task-based teaching or task-based learning.

**Task Cycle:** The second of three stages in Willis’ (1996) structure for task-based teaching. In this stage the students engage in three steps: task, planning, and report. In the task, students complete the task in pairs or as a group. In the planning, students prepare to explain their task to the whole class. In the report, students present their reports to the class.

**Types of Task:** Categories of task-based learning developed by Willis (1996). The types of task are: listing, ordering and sorting, comparing, problem solving, sharing personal experiences, and creative tasks. In Willis & Willis’ (2007) book on task-based teaching, an additional type of task was added: matching.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This research study was focused on task-based instruction and its influence on the motivation of English Language Learners (ELLs). While a second research question emerged during the course of the study, the literature that is particularly relevant to professional growth through collaboration will be discussed in Chapter Five. To fully appreciate the focus of this study, the review of the literature begins with an examination of the historical context of language teaching. Educational methods of language teaching have developed over time, evolving into what is the most common methodological approach used today: the communicative approach (Arslanyilmaz, 2012; Campbell, MacPherson, & Sawkins, 2014; Roessingh, 2014; Santa Rita & Misick, 1996; Widdowson, 1978; Zainuddin et al., 2011). Following the examination of the historical context, I will provide a synthesis of the relevant literature for the theoretical framework that guides this study. This theoretical framework is grounded in the philosophy of inclusion education and the belief that schools should provide for the needs of all students in the least restrictive environment (Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus, 2014; Jacobs & Fu, 2014; Mahat, 2008; Soukakou et al., 2014). The theoretical framework also is heavily grounded in the specific learning needs of English Language Learners and the effectiveness of task-based instruction when working with these students (Bantis, 2010; Chen, 2014; Willis, 1996; Willis & Willis, 2007; Ye, 2017). Lastly, the theoretical
framework is grounded in the ARCS Model of Motivation (Keller, 2008). The ARCS Model posits that there are four dimensions to motivation: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Hess, 2015; Huang et al., 2014; Izmirli & Izmirli, 2015; Liao & Wang, 2008).

Overall, the literature about the historical context and theoretical framework highlighted the current problem of practice that was addressed in this study. Viewed as a whole, this review of the literature informed my decisions with regard to the problem of practice I was experiencing, which led to the study of the implementation of task-based instruction in an inclusion classroom as a way to increase student motivation.

**Historical Background**

**Grammar-Translation Method**

Traditional language and teaching approaches were based in the grammar-translation method, which was used to teach the classical languages of Latin and Greek (Huang, 2010). For many years, Latin was the western world’s dominant language of government, education, commerce, and religion (Farrokhi & Talabari, 2011). As a result, the grammar-translation method is based upon what was seen as effective classical language instruction (Huang, 2010). The grammar translation method focused mostly on grammatical rules, vocabulary memorization, and translation of passages (Huang, 2010; Zainuddin et al., 2011). Within the grammar-translation method, the main goal of learning was not speaking or communication. Instead, the goal was to exercise the mind and to be able to read in the target language (Zainuddin et al., 2011). As a result, students who were taught with this method possessed an academic knowledge of a language but had very little communicative abilities (Zainuddin et al., 2011).
For some, the grammar-translation method marks a time period when languages were “divorced from their social relevance” (Riches, 2006, p. 54). Though the grammar translation method is not widely used today, elements of the method still make their way into language classrooms, seen through the emphasis on reading, translating, conjugating, and memorizing grammatical rules (Zainuddin et al., 2011, p. 64). It was a perennialist and essentialist approach to educating. One researcher wrote that language classes taught using a grammar-translation method, which exclusively focused on linguistic features and neglected meaning, failed to create opportunities for students to speak about topics that were relevant to their present and future needs (Kırkgöz, 2011). These sentiments were echoed by many language teachers and researchers, who were looking for students to connect in a relevant way with the language they were learning (Ellis, 2003; O’Connell, 2014; Özturk, 2014; Willis, 1996; Willis & Willis, 2007).

**Direct Method**

The direct method of language instruction followed the grammar-translation method (Zainuddin et al., 2011). While the grammar-translation method cannot be linked to any one educational theorist, the direct method can be linked to the theoretical justification of the 1884 German psychologist F. Frankle (Zainuddin et al., 2011). In this method of language instruction, the student is impelled to make connections between objects, concepts, and the target language. Language instruction in the direct method takes place in the target language (Zainuddin et al., 2011). The primary goal is for students to speak and think the language, so the use of the native language is not allowed (Zainuddin et al., 2011). Grammar is taught inductively and vocabulary is emphasized. The direct method of language instruction historically did not take firm root in schools,
and the grammar translation method dominated language instruction in the United States until World War II (Zainuddin et al., 2011). However, researchers still emphasized the importance of using the target language when instructing (Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Özturk, 2014).

**Audio-Lingual Method**

The audio-lingual method essentially was a response to the shortcomings of the grammar translation method (Zainuddin et al., 2011). As the United States was involved in World War II, the government realized that people were not able to speak the foreign languages that they studied (Spring, 2014). Government and educational leaders were concerned about the relationship between national security and foreign languages, especially as they noticed that the American people were generally “deficient in foreign languages” (Spring, 2014, p. 370). The focus shifted from learning languages in order to read and write to learning languages in order to speak (Spring, 2014). The educational philosophy of reconstructionism is at play here. Language education was viewed through the eyes of preparation for social or political reform. At this point in time, government leaders were worried about the ability of the American people to compete with other nations (Spring, 2014). For these reasons, the audio-lingual method of teaching language focused on the development of the spoken language (Zainuddin et al., 2011). It emphasized rote practice of language structures and memorization of dialogues (Zainuddin et al., 2011).

Supporters of the audio-lingual method believed that by practicing dialogues through drills in the target language, students would form language habits that would enable them to speak fluently. However, the dialogue practice was still taught using
“highly structured sequences of forms” (Huang, 2010, p. 29). At this time, theorists still believed that learning a language meant mastering specific language elements and learning specific rules; a very strong emphasis on grammar and vocabulary remained present in this method of teaching (Farrokhi & Talabari, 2011; Huang, 2010; Zainuddin et al., 2011). Unfortunately, years later, students who learned under the audio-lingual method could not speak the foreign languages they had studied and could only remember the dialogues (Zainuddin et al., 2011). The audio-lingual method emphasized that language learning is a rule governed phenomenon that can be learned through forming mechanical habits (Farrokhi & Talabari, 2011). As time passed, it became clear that the audio-lingual method, with its “language structures in isolation” approach, was an ineffective instructional method (Lenchuk, 2014, p. 147).

**Additional Language Teaching Models**

There are a number of additional language teaching models that developed throughout the past 40 years, but most of them have fallen out of favor. These models include the method of suggestopedia, the silent way method, the total physical response method, and the natural approach (Zainuddin et al., 2011). Suggestopedia was grounded in a consideration of the affective domain, which emphasized that the way students feel about learning affects the learning process. The silent way method emphasized the use of modeling, where students practiced language by attempting to reproduce what the teacher previously modeled. In the total physical response method, students were asked to respond in a physical way to commands given by the teacher. The natural approach emphasized the development of communicative competency where students were given the opportunity to acquire language through oral production and an emphasis on
vocabulary (Zainuddin et al., 2011). Although these models are not widely used, important elements of these models, like an emphasis on psychological factors, the affective domain, modeling, active learning, and oral production, are all factors have been adapted into our currently accepted model, the communicative approach (Hadi, 2013; Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Santana-Williamson, 2012; Yang, 2012; Zhang & Hung, 2013).

The Communicative Approach

Over the years, a shift occurred in teaching language methods (Arslanyilmaz, 2012; Huang, 2010; Roessingh, 2014; Widdowson, 1978). This shift took the focus away from exercises in translation and grammar worksheets and towards work that involved “the negotiation of meaning, problem solving, strategy use, critical thinking, and the purposeful and authentic use of language for some real-life goal” (Roessingh, 2014, p. 5). This use of language is known as communicative language teaching (Arslanyilmaz, 2012; Huang, 2010; Roessingh, 2014; Widdowson, 1978). When communicative language teaching first arose in the 1970s, it was a reaction against the previous language teaching methods and the belief that language was merely a set of structures (Huang, 2010). An early proponent of communicative language teaching stressed that the goal of second language acquisition should be communication, not the mere memorization of a set of rules (Widdowson, 1978).

Communicative teaching engaged students in the “‘authentic,’ pragmatic, and contextual production of language” and, in doing so, provided students with the opportunity to practice language within a meaningful context (Arslanyilmaz, 2012, p. 20). Zainuddin et al. (2011) explained the philosophy of the communicative approach by
identifying three theoretical premises. The first principal was the communication principle, which stated that activities that involved communication promote language learning. The second principle, known as the task-principle, emphasized that activities that require students to complete real-world tasks also promoted language acquisition. The third principle was the meaningfulness principle, which said that students would be invested in activities that promoted an authentic and meaningful use of language.

In this communicative approach, students learned by doing and were often prompted to communicate because an information gap existed, and it was necessary to communicate in order to complete a task (Arslanyilmaz, 2012; Huang, 2010; Roessingh, 2014; Widdowson, 1978). Students often worked in cooperative groups when learning a language through a communicative approach (Zainuddin et al., 2011). The input received through conversations with group members provided the repetition that was necessary for language learning to progress from short-term to long-term acquisition (Zainuddin et al., 2011). From the 1970s and now, leading into the 21st century, teachers and researchers continue to reinforce the importance of communication and the reality that languages must be used if they are to be learned (Campbell et al., 2014; Ellis, 2003; Kırkgöz, 2011; Santa Rita & Misick, 1996; Shintani & Ellis, 2014; Springer & Collins, 2008; Willis, 1996; Willis & Willis, 2007).

This communicative approach most appropriately fell under both progressivist and reconstructivist philosophies of education, in which the focus was on the whole child, learning was active instead of passive, and the ability to know and do things with knowledge was emphasized (Ellis, 2003; Willis, 1996; Willis & Willis, 2007). With the shift from grammar-based approaches to communicative approaches of teaching English
came the challenge of balancing the importance of practical communication skills and a true grammatical understanding of the structure of the language being learned (Huang, 2010; Miele, 2007; Robertson, 2014; Rodríguez-Bonces & Rodríguez-Bonces, 2010). While the communicative approach to teaching became increasingly present in language instruction over the past 50 years, Riches (2006) claimed that this method was not new. He commented, “When was there ever a language teaching approach that did not have as its goal the promotion of communicative language use? The ‘traditionalists’ simply believed in a delayed-gratification route to this goal” (Riches, 2006, p. 67). Although the communicative approach has not always been widely used, it is not new as a philosophical approach (Riches, 2006). However, the role of grammar instruction within the communicative approach continued to be debated (Huang, 2010; Kirkgöz, 2011; Miele, 2007; Riches, 2006; Robertson, 2014; Rodríguez-Bonces & Rodríguez-Bonces, 2010; Willis 1996).

The research suggested that the traditionalists’ intense focus on grammar drills inhibited the natural learning process of a student (Kirkgöz, 2011; Miele, 2007; Willis 1996). In language instruction, grammar should be addressed, but the conditions must be set so that grammar awareness is a product of language development and not just the means (Miele, 2007). The stress of an artificial language learning environment inhibited students from learning to communicate authentically and effectively, and any artificial and stressful learning environment actually prevented student learning (Huang, 2010; Klinghoffer, 2008; Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Miele, 2007; Rodríguez-Bonces & Rodríguez-Bonces, 2010; Roessingh, 2014).
While the traditional language teaching approach of explicit grammatical instruction, drills, strict memorization, and translation was generally looked down upon, some researchers argued that these methods should not be abandoned (Doughty & Williams, 1998). In language classrooms where all of these approaches have been abandoned, the research revealed that students did not acquire the high levels of grammar that are needed to be proficient in a language (Doughty & Williams, 1998). It is not difficult to objectively assess the knowledge or lack of knowledge about something as black and white as vocabulary or correct grammar; this was the approach used in traditional language teaching (Zainuddin et al., 2011). On the other hand, assessing communication in a language was much more difficult (Milnes & Cheng, 2008). A Canadian study revealed that teachers who evaluated a student on his listening and speaking tasks overestimated his mastery of language skills, assuming the student was more highly developed than an objective test instrument would suggest (Milnes & Cheng, 2008). This demonstrated that teachers needed more support and training in order to accurately evaluate language skills in communication (Milnes & Cheng, 2008).

While studies showed that focusing on grammar instruction as the primary means of teaching a language had been counterproductive, other studies showed that to completely abandon grammar instruction as a part of language learning also had negative effects (Huang, 2010). The communicative language approach to teaching was most effective when it also addressed grammatical structures, but only after oral use of the language (Huang, 2010; Miele, 2007; Robertson, 2014; Rodríguez-Bonces & Rodríguez-Bonces, 2010). When students were learning a language, they needed to be given the time to process language input and practice language structures before grammar was stressed.
An organic and meaningful use of language within a communicative approach could be appropriately used as the means to address orthographic understanding (Huang, 2010; Miele, 2007; Robertson, 2014; Rodríguez-Bonces & Rodríguez-Bonces, 2010).

**Theoretical Framework: Inclusion Education**

**Inclusion Model Classroom**

Braunsteiner and Mariano-Lapidus (2014) defined inclusion as “the fundamental right of all children and adults to fully participate, and contribute in all aspects of life and culture, without restriction or threat of marginalization” (p. 32). In an inclusion classroom, students with disabilities and students who are second language learners are educated with their same-aged peers in a typical classroom environment (Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus, 2014). In this way, all students receive an education that “effectively and efficiently” meets their individual and particular educational needs (Mahat, 2008, p. 82). The inclusive model of education attempts to educate students and meet their unique needs within the least restrictive environment (Jacobs & Fu, 2014).

Federal legislation has supported the rights of children with disabilities since the passage of IDEA in 1986 (Soukakou et al., 2014). It was in 1990 that this legislation gained even more strength through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which “prohibits discrimination because of disability for full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, or accommodations associated with places of public accommodations” (Soukakou et al., 2014, p. 223-224). These federal guidelines for the treatment and care of individuals with disabilities have had an effect on the number of students who are
documented as having disabilities and their presence in the classroom (Soukakou et al., 2014).

**Student Needs**

Inclusive education and the treatment of students with disabilities are not just topics that have been discussed in the United States of America. David and Kuyini (2012) explained that in the United States and many other countries, inclusion education has been promoted not only because of academic benefits, but also because of the many social benefits for students. Research showed that studies about inclusion education had relevance to many countries, such as Canada, England, China, India, Turkey, Spain, Switzerland, South Africa, Norway, and Sweden (Alexandersson, 2011; Cameron, 2014; David & Kuyini, 2012; Dockrell, Bakopoulou, Law, Spencer, & Lindsay, 2015; Dyson, 2014; Engelbrecht, Nel, Nel, & Tlale, 2015; Gasser, Malti, & Buholzer, 2014; Sucuoglu, Akalin & Pinar, 2014; Valls & Kyriakides, 2013; Yildiz, 2015).

From an international perspective, Engelbrecht et al. (2015) explained that implementing inclusive education often is hindered by both a lack of resources and teacher attitudes. One study conducted in India recognized key findings that teacher behavior played a large role in the social inclusion of special education students (David & Kuyini, 2012). Another research study in Turkey revealed that Turkish teachers had limited experience and knowledge in teaching students with disabilities (Sucuoglu et al., 2014). These teachers’ limited experience was further exacerbated by a lack of a support system; as a result, teachers struggled when they taught special education students within general education classrooms (Sucuoglu et al., 2014). It is clear that inclusion education had clear benefits for students; however, many teachers found it a challenging method to
implement (Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus, 2014; Engelbrecht et al., 2015; Soukakou et al., 2014).

**Teacher Preparation and Perception**

Two common themes ran through the literature on inclusion education across continents. The first theme was the lack of teacher preparation for teaching in inclusion classrooms (Brusca-Vega, et al., 2014; McCray & McHatton, 2011; Soukakou et al., 2014). The second theme was that teachers’ negative perceptions of inclusion education greatly impacted the quality of the learning environment in inclusion classrooms (Brusca-Vega et al., 2014; McCray & McHatton, 2011; Soukakou et al., 2014). A research article in the *Journal of Early Intervention*, jointly written by researchers from England and the United States, explained that most early childhood personnel were not prepared to implement instructional modifications for their young students with disabilities (Soukakou et al., 2014). The study explained that these early childhood teachers often became overwhelmed by the responsibility of teaching in an inclusion classroom. When teachers did not receive support to help them feel confident and competent when using inclusive practices in their classrooms, they began to develop negative perceptions about inclusion education (Soukakou et al., 2014).

Much of the literature written by researchers in the United States echoed the belief that successful teaching and learning in an inclusion classroom was largely founded on a teacher’s skills, knowledge, and dispositions. These skills were undermined by a belief system that was inconsistent with the philosophy of inclusion (McCray & McHatton, 2011). Teacher education programs often have not trained teachers to deal with the challenges of an inclusion classroom (Casale-Giannola, 2012). Essentially, it is
the teachers who are responsible for creating a nurturing environment where all learners feel comfortable exploring, asking questions, testing themselves, and solving problems (Henderson & Lasley, 2014). When teachers have not received the appropriate tools needed to instruct students with disabilities, this in turn affects their attitudes and effectiveness in instructing these students (Brusca-Vega et al., 2014).

Some teachers perceived that in an inclusion classroom, students with additional educational needs would “take more than their share leaving others with less than they need” (Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus, 2014, p. 37). General education teachers have become frustrated when working in inclusion classrooms if they found themselves unable to meet the needs of the students with whom they were working. These teachers often failed to find appropriate educational methods that made the process of inclusion education possible (Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus, 2014; DelliCarpini & Alonso, 2014; Mahat, 2008; Royster, Reglin, & Losike-Sedimo, 2014). Adequate teacher education greatly improved inclusion classroom instruction and decreased teacher frustration (Brusca-Vega et al., 2014). Researchers from Purdue University Calumet and Northwestern University found that when teachers participated in professional development focused on teaching in an inclusion classroom, these teachers’ lessons changed. Teachers became more patient, their lessons involved fundamental concepts, and they allowed time and structure for varied learning styles (Brusca-Vega et al., 2014).

**Benefits and Disadvantages of Inclusion Education**

Many studies in the United States cited the benefits of inclusion education, not only for the students with special needs, but also for the rest of the students in the classroom. Research showed that students with mild learning disabilities who were
educated with their peers in an integrated setting benefitted academically, socially, and emotionally (Jacobs & Fu, 2014). Obiakor, Harris, Mutua, Rotatori, and Algozzine (2012) explained that often the discussion about the best learning environment for students with disabilities underestimated the students’ actual capabilities. Some service providers and educational professionals argued that excluding students with disabilities was right. However, Obiakor et al. (2012) argued that in order to increase normalcy in the lives of students with disabilities, these students should be educated alongside of their peers in an inclusive environment.

Supporters of inclusion education do not merely argue that inclusion education is right because it is what the students want. Research also revealed that many students with disabilities learn better in an inclusive setting (Campbell, 2010; Obiakor et al., 2012). Students showed educational gains when they were effectively engaged and interested in their education. Students with disabilities wanted to use the same books, learn the same material, have the same homework, and be graded by the same criteria as their nondisabled peers. Students with disabilities who were given this opportunity to learn alongside of their peers showed increased motivation (Obiakor et al., 2012). One study indicated that in an inclusion classroom when a teacher allocated their time equally between students with and without disabilities, both groups of students demonstrated consistent academic gains (Campbell, 2010). All students learn differently, and when teachers were willing to use a variety of learning styles to reach the learners in their inclusion classroom, this method of instruction was effective for students both with and without disabilities (McCray & McHatton, 2011; Obiakor et al., 2012).
Some research revealed that inclusion education may not be effective for students with disabilities or for the other students without disabilities in the classroom (Dyson, 2014; Yildiz, 2015). This research raised concerns about the state of inclusion for students with disabilities (Dyson, 2014). One of the most common arguments against inclusion education was that it does not help all students to achieve to their highest potential (Yildiz, 2015). However, other research showed that “segregation does not lead to better results for all” (Valls & Kyriakides, 2013, p. 17). In fact, high-achieving students did not benefit from homogeneous groups. Students in low-ability groups performed worse than their peers in mixed-ability classrooms, particularly because they were not able to benefit from peer effect (Valls & Kyriakides, 2013). One study expressed a concern that the increased academic expectations and the existence of high-stakes testing posed great challenges for students with disabilities in vocational settings (Casale-Giannola, 2012). These and other expectations often created an environment where the students with disabilities were requiring “special attention” and their “behavior problems” were causing teachers to need to direct a large percentage of their attention towards them (Yildiz, 2015, p. 178). The argument for a mixed ability classroom is weighted strongly on both sides, with both positive and negative results.

**Successful Teaching Methods: Engaging and Communicative**

If inclusion education is to be successful for all students in the general education classroom, teachers must be willing to employ creative methods of instruction (McCray & McHatton, 2011). Research showed that the learning needs of students with disabilities was rarely met when teachers implemented conventional forms of teaching (Cameron, 2014). All students deserve access to a meaningful and rigorous curriculum, which is
designed to help them maximize their highest potential. A meaningful and rigorous curriculum is not achieved without significant planning and thought on the part of the teacher (Obiakor et al., 2012); this can be a very daunting task. In order to effectively implement education in an inclusion classroom, it is necessary to identify common inclusive practices, evaluate their efficacy, and help teachers implement effective, evidence-based approaches (Kilanowski-Press, Foote, & Rinaldo, 2010). Research showed that adolescents learned best with active learning strategies that involved movement and multimodality (Casale-Giannola, 2012), and that there was a strong correlation between learning and engagement (Yildiz, 2015).

Engaging academic activities have been very effective tools for managing student learning and student behaviors in an inclusion classroom (Yildiz, 2015). Success in an inclusion classroom also has been attributed to the cultivation of good communication skills (Dockrell et al., 2015; Jacobs & Fu, 2014). Teachers needed to monitor classroom interactions in order to understand how children developed their receptive and expressive language skills; teachers could then respond to their students by modifying the classroom environment to support students in developing their oracy skills (Dockrell et al., 2015). The development of language and writing skills in students involved the use of cognitive, social, and comprehension language skills, which often was more challenging for students with learning disabilities than it was for their peers (Jacobs & Fu, 2014). It was in these very areas of difficulty that children with learning disabilities needed the same high-level of instruction that was given to their peers (Jacobs & Fu, 2014). If teachers employed strategies such as connecting with the students’ literacy strengths and placing
value on what interests them, these strategies enabled students to increase academic achievement (Dockrell et al., 2015; Jacobs & Fu, 2014).

**Theoretical Framework: ELLs and Task-Based Instruction**

**English Language Learning**

A prevalent finding addressed in the literature on English language learning is the importance of student attitudes (Hadi, 2013; Kang, 2013; Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Mayer, 2003). Research showed that ELLs must feel comfortable and safe within their learning environment. If ELLs are uncomfortable, they will be inhibited and it will be difficult for them to take the risk to communicate, especially if they are using the language for the first time (Lightbown & Spada, 1999). Feeling comfortable in a learning environment and being motivated to learn have a great impact on student achievement (Mayer, 2003). Educators and researchers explained that when students were motivated, they tried harder, they learned “more deeply” and they had a “better ability to transfer what they have learned to new situations” (Mayer, 2003, p. 459). This deep learning on the part of students was visible through an increase in their academic achievement (Mayer, 2003).

This interest of the student was seen as the key to success (Kang, 2013). Zhang and Hung (2013) echoed this finding when they explained that students were more engaged when lessons were learner-oriented rather than teacher-oriented. Regardless of the teaching method used, a language learner’s view of themselves and their learning process had an “undeniable impact” on their language learning (Hadi, 2013, p. 300). One study revealed significant relationships between a language learner’s interest in a task or topic, their confidence in using the second language, their evaluation of the instructor,
and their overall evaluation of the task-based instruction course (Kang, 2013). Student attitudes were clearly important to the learning process (Hadi, 2013; Kang, 2013; Zhang & Hung, 2013). A student-centered, communicative approach to teaching had an undeniably positive impact on student attitudes (Hadi, 2013; Kang, 2013; Zhang & Hung, 2013).

Willis (1996) explained that the most effective type of language instruction is one that mirrors the developmental sequence of the learner. It is difficult to create an instructional sequence that follows the learner’s developmental sequence. Learners in a given class would be at different levels in this developmental process and approaches to grammar or pronunciation that involved drills were “largely a waste of time” (Willis, 1996, p. 15). In a typical teacher-led classroom environment, teachers took most language use opportunities, and learners had few opportunities to manage their own conversations or experiment with the target language (Willis, 1996). In the 1990s, Willis popularized a communicative approach strategy known as task-based instruction and proposed this method as the most effective way to instruct ELLs (Willis, 1996). This action research study was based on the task-based instruction approach that was established by Willis (1996).

**Willis’ Task-Based Instruction**

Willis (1996) expressed that task-based communication tasks involved learners in a very different mental process of composing and expressing what they felt and thought. In order for students to learn to communicate effectively, they need to have opportunities to communicate. Willis (1996) defined a task as an activity “where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose (goal) in order to achieve an outcome”
These tasks are goal oriented and students use language in a meaningful way (Willis, 1996). The four domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are organically connected in task-based instruction (Willis, 1996). None of these skills are practiced in isolation of each other.

Willis (1996) outlined six types of tasks that naturally involve most, if not all, of the four domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing: listing, ordering and sorting, comparing, problem solving, sharing personal experiences, and creative tasks. In Willis and Willis’ (2007) book on task-based teaching, they added an additional type of task: matching. Listing tasks involve brainstorming and fact-finding (Willis, 1996). Ordering and sorting include sequencing items, ranking items, categorizing items, or classifying items (Willis, 1996). Comparing involves matching and finding similarities and identifying differences between different things (Willis, 1996). Problem solving addresses real life problems where students describe experiences and compare their ideas about a solution to a problem (Willis, 1996). Sharing personal experiences is when students are given the opportunity to talk about themselves in a more casual setting (Willis, 1996). Creative tasks are longer tasks with multiple stages, and students need to use teamwork to complete these types of tasks (Willis, 1996). Matching tasks often involve associating phrases or words to pictures (Willis & Willis, 2007).

Willis (1996) explained that the task-based learning framework was divided into three stages: the pre-task stage, the task cycle, and the language focus. During the first stage, the pre-task stage, the teacher explores the topic with the students, makes note of the useful phrases or words, and helps students understand the task’s instructions. During the task cycle stage, students engage in three steps: task, planning, and report. In the task,
students work in pairs or groups to do the task, and the teacher monitors at a distance. In the planning, students prepare to give an oral or written report of how they did the task. In the report, some groups of students present and compare their reports. The language focus is the last stage of the task-based learning framework. This stage involves both analysis, where students examine and discuss specifics about the text, and practice, where the teacher guides students to practice new phrases, words, or patterns that are occurring. Willis (1996) explained that through these three stages – pre-task, task cycle, and language focus – ELL students are given opportunities for authentic language use.

**Task-Based Instruction: Positives and Negatives**

The research showed that the use of task-based learning was still a debated topic in education (Scheffler, 2011; Swan, 2005). Swan (2005) argued that task-based instruction was less effective for teaching a new language. Swan (2005) said that task-based instruction was especially ineffective where time was limited and when students had no out-of-class exposure. Despite the existence of some literature that revealed disadvantages to the communicative approach of task-based instruction, the vast majority of literature indicated the advantages of such a method. Kırkgöz (2011) considered task-based instruction suitable for all learners, and explained that task-based instruction was an especially effective method when learners engaged in similar real life tasks.

One example of task-based instruction was in Canada where newcomers to the country received lessons about how to deal with situations that new arrivals found themselves in, such as speaking with a child’s teacher or talking with a landlord about rent (Springer & Collins, 2008). This approach to language instruction tried to “approximate the demands of real language use outside the classroom” by selecting
learning activities that were “characterized by primacy of meaning” (Springer & Collins, 2008, p. 40). An emphasis on meaning was essential to this approach. In addition to gaining basic communication skills, an emphasis also should be placed on speaking with greater levels of proficiency; this was particularly true for students who need to accomplish more academic tasks in English (Kırkgöz, 2011).

The attitude of the teacher was very important to the success of task-based learning (Hadi, 2013). It was important to “bridge the gap between teacher and learner” in order to increase the effectiveness of the learning process (Hadi, 2013, p. 300). Differences between a teacher’s and a learner’s perceptions affected the quality and amount of learning that took place in the classroom (Hadi, 2013). When implementing task-based instruction methods, a teacher must have a positive attitude and be well informed in the methodology of task-based instruction and communicative language teaching (Calvert & Sheen, 2015; Hadi, 2013). Because some teachers do not understand how to apply task-based methods or techniques, they need to be given opportunities to learn about planning, practicing, and evaluating task-based language teaching (Hadi, 2013). If teachers have training in task-based instruction, then they create and empirically evaluate their own tasks (Calvert & Sheen, 2015).

Task-based instruction sometimes was criticized for its lack of emphasis on grammar (Scheffler, 2011). In his research, Scheffler (2011) argued that a communicative, task-based learning approach was not appropriate when teaching foreign languages to adults. Scheffler (2011) claimed that grammar should be taught systematically for adults. Scheffler (2011) proposed, through his research, that teachers should not assume that grammar acquisition will “take care of itself” with only a little
help” (p. 183). On the other hand, another researcher cited evidence in support of task-based instruction and the positive effect it had on grammar instruction (Kırkgöz, 2011). Kırkgöz (2011) stated that task-based learning could be a beneficial method of teaching grammar, precisely because tasks provided natural learning opportunities for students, kept students interested, and enabled students to grasp the meaning and function of grammar.

One study conducted in Japan revealed that listen-and-do tasks created a context for vocabulary and grammar and were effective task-based methods for young learners (Shintani, 2012). Another researcher also cited the effectiveness of task-based instruction in teaching grammar; one study showed that task-based instruction was effective in teaching specific forms (Means, 2014). Shintani and Ellis (2014) also explained that the main finding of their research was that differences in the success of learners in acquiring an understanding of adjectives was “directly traceable to their learning behaviors” during task-based instruction (p. 521).

Another researcher’s implementation of task-based instruction in a Turkish higher education setting proved that the method enhanced students’ speaking skills by offering learning experiences with meaningful interactions (Kırkgöz, 2011). These experiences enhanced the learning for students in areas where they saw an obvious need to improve (Kırkgöz, 2011). Zhang and Hung (2013) examined the use of task-based instruction in big-sized classes. Their results could be summarized in three major findings: participants exposed to task-based instruction had the same or better academic achievement compared to participants who received traditional instruction; task-based instruction had a positive impact on the participants’ oral performance in English; and the participants who
received task-based instruction had better attitudes and higher motivation than participants who received traditional instruction (Zhang & Hung, 2013). The results of these two studies by Kırkgöz (2011) and Zhang and Hung (2013) demonstrated the effectiveness of task-based instruction as a method that enhanced students’ learning, engagement, motivation, and overall academic achievement.

The use of task-based instruction is not exclusively reserved for advanced language learners (Dunne, 2014). Neither is it an approach that is used in isolation in certain continents of the world (Arslanyilmaz, 2013; Liu, 2010; Meng & Cheng, 2010; Özturk 2014; Yamazumi, 2006; Yang, 2012; Yuasa, 2010). Task-based instruction can be used effectively in all language learning environments, especially if teachers conduct a needs analysis to identify situations where the language being practiced is relevant to the learners (O’Connell, 2014). Particularly in Asia, English education has changed and continues to change from the dominant grammar-translation method to the communicative method (Yuasa, 2010). Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Taiwanese English education has moved away from the “simple absorption of knowledge” and has begun to “emphasize communicative competence” (Yuasa, 2010, p. 156). In China, communicative classroom activities like role-play are used, even in universities, to increase student motivation (Liu, 2010). In Japan, English education is focused more on communication: Japanese textbooks have been designed to increase students’ interest in appreciating and communicating with foreign cultures (Yuasa, 2010). This communication-oriented approach is fairly new to the Japanese (Yuasa, 2010).

In a country like Japan, where the pedagogic practices in schools are controlled from above, teaching often has been defined by curriculum packages, stage-by-stage
teaching, and standardized testing (Yamazumi, 2006). Despite the stringent pedagogical guidelines that English teachers face in Japan, the Japanese government strongly urges Japanese nationals to learn and become proficient in English in order to maintain competitiveness in a world where English is becoming the lingua franca (Chapple, 2014). Amaki (2008) suggested that in order for the Japanese student to demonstrate success, the schools should give their students incentives to learn English for practical reasons, not just for achieving a good test score.

This test-score oriented approach can be seen as parallel to the memorization, drills, and lists that followed from a traditional language approach (Zainuddin et al., 2011). Amaki (2008) expressed that if English education in Japan focused less on entrance exams, grammar, and translation, and focused more on practical communication skills, then their ability to communicate and use English would increase exponentially. A Chinese task-based English class revealed that students rated their own performance at a high level when they frequently participated in different tasks (Meng & Cheng, 2010). Meng and Cheng (2010) wrote that the results of their study indicated how important it was for English teachers to address students’ needs from the learners’ perspectives: task based instruction helped teachers to do this. Addressing language learning from the learner’s perspective increased students’ ability to communicate (Meng & Cheng, 2010).

One research study was conducted in Turkish foreign language classes (Arslanyilmaz, 2013). In this study, classes were randomly assigned to two treatment groups. The experimental group received instruction through computer-assisted task-based language instruction while the control group received instruction through computer-assisted form-focused language instruction. After seven days, the two groups
were compared in their “language production in terms of accuracy, lexical complexity, and fluency” (Arslanyilmaz, 2013, p. 303). Statistical analysis of the results showed that students in the computer-assisted task-based language instruction group produced more fluent language than students with computer-assisted form-focused language instruction. The study concluded that task-based instruction was more effective than form-focused instruction in enhancing language production and, in particular, language fluency (Arslanyilmaz, 2013). This study showed clear evidence that task-based instruction produced higher academic achievement on the part of students (Arslanyilmaz, 2013).

Another research study, conducted in Taiwan, was designed to “investigate the attitudes and self-efficacy of using mobile learning devices for college students in a language class by employing task-based instruction” (Yang, 2012, p. 148). The results of the study showed that most students felt increased motivation to learn English (Yang, 2012). Another researcher, Özturk (2014), used task-based learning to provide intermediate level language learners with personalized and relevant instruction. Özturk (2014) specifically examined the advantages of task-based learning as opposed to the traditional Present-Practice-Produce approach. The results of the study indicated that although there could often be challenges when initially implementing task-based learning, as the tasks became central to the classes and were supported by the learners, they played a “major role” in “enhancing real interaction” in the classroom environment (Özturk, 2014). The research by both Özturk (2014) and Yang (2012) showed that task-based instruction greatly enhanced the learning experiences of students and increased student motivation.
Overall, this synthesis of the literature on English language learners and task-based instruction revealed the importance of student and teacher attitudes, especially in a language learning environment (Hadi, 2013; Kang, 2013; Lightbown & Spada, 1999; Mayer, 2003). Research studies identified task-based instruction as an effective communicative approach which enhanced students’ engagement, motivation, and overall academic achievement (Kırkgöz, 2011; Zhang & Hung, 2013). Task-based learning, as a student-centered, communicative approach to teaching, had a positive impact on student attitudes (Hadi, 2013; Kang, 2013; Zhang & Hung, 2013). This research study incorporated many of the elements of Willis’ (1996; 2007) approach to task-based instruction. The following section provides an explanation of the ARCS Model of Motivation (Keller, 2008), which not only provided me with a clear definition for motivation, but also served as the basis for developing my data collection methods, analyzing the resulting data, and discussing these findings.

Theoretical Framework: ARCS Model of Motivation

Keller and Instructional Design

Keller was a recognized scholar in the field of instructional design; his educational background was in the fields of psychology and instructional systems technology (Simsek, 2014). Keller’s experience and personal research interests made him a very knowledgeable reference in the topic of motivational aspects of learning and instructional design (Simsek, 2014). Keller’s biggest contribution to the field of education was his development of the ARCS Model of Motivation, which “provides a synthesis of motivational concepts and theories and a motivational design process” (Keller, 2008, p. 80). Keller (2008) explained that there are four dimensions of
motivation: Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction. The acronym, ARCS, comes from these four dimensions. The ARCS model posits that in order to have motivated students, teachers must pique their curiosity (attention); the instruction must be relevant to students’ personal values or helpful to them in accomplishing goals (relevance); the students must believe that they will be able to succeed (confidence); and the learning experience must resonate with the learners’ personal incentives (satisfaction).

Keller (2008) explained that in order to use the four concepts of ARCS to design instruction, the teacher should first obtain information about the course and the intended audience, identify the course objectives, and then focus on identifying potential methods for addressing motivation within the instruction. Then, using the ARCS model, a teacher should be focused on gaining learners’ attention, demonstrating the relevance of what is being learned, making students confident in their success, and providing learners with opportunities to feel satisfied from their learning (Keller, 2008). If these four elements - attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction - are present, the research suggested that students in the classroom would demonstrate higher levels of motivation.

**Applied Motivation Theory**

Research showed that use of the ARCS Model of Motivation could positively impact student motivation and achievement (Hess, 2015; Liao & Wang, 2008). One research study, which examined the ARCS model and its use in information literacy instruction, found that students perceived the instructional session as interesting, and that they “felt very confident in their ability to apply their learning” (Hess, 2015, p. 50). Another research study conducted by Liao and Wang (2008) incorporated the ARCS
model into the traditional classroom instruction of technological and vocational students. The study demonstrated that the application of ARCS made instruction more responsive to students’ interests and needs, and had a positive effect on students’ satisfaction (Liao & Wang, 2008).

The perspective of the ARCS motivation theory also has been applied to different kinds of studies where the ARCS framework has served as the theoretical basis for gathering data and measuring the effect of an intervention. For example, researchers Huang et al. (2014) applied the ARCS model when they conducted a research study that examined the effectiveness of digital game-based learning to support student learning in a primary school mathematics class. Using a questionnaire about the four elements of the ARCS model, these researchers demonstrated the advantages of digital game-based learning. In another example, Izmirli and Izmirli (2015) conducted a study to determine the factors that were motivating pre-service teachers for online learning. In the study, data were collected through an open-ended questionnaire that followed the framework of the ARCS motivation model. This data was then analyzed using the themes of attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction.

The ARCS Model of Motivation suggested that students will demonstrate motivation if teachers attend to their attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Keller, 2008). Similar to previous research examples (Huang et al., 2014; Izmirli & Izmirli, 2015), I used the ARCS model extensively when developing my research methodology. My study examined the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation. In order to develop a definition for motivation, I referred to the ARCS model: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. I also used this basis of the ARCS
model in order to develop my data collection methods, which gathered information about students’ attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. These four elements of the ARCS model also were used in the data analysis and my organization of the research findings and discussion. The following section provides a synthesis of the current mixed methods research studies on task-based instruction. This synthesis sheds light on the methodological approach that I used in this research study.

**Methodology**

**Mixed Methods Research**

Much of the current research on task-based instruction revealed that successful studies were those that implemented mixed methods of data collection and analysis. Mixed methods research utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis. Researchers who utilized a mixed methods approach often felt that while all methods have weaknesses and biases, the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data neutralized these weaknesses (Creswell, 2014). Bantis (2010), Chen (2014) and Ye (2017) provided strong examples of mixed methods research on task-based instruction. An additional study by Pyun (2013) provided an example of a quantitative research study, but one which reflects that future research should incorporate a mixed methods approach. These four studies provided me with strong examples that informed my decisions about the methods and data collection methods I used in my research.

Bantis (2010) conducted mixed methods research on task-based writing instruction with Hispanic ELLs. Bantis (2010) used the following data sources: transcripts of writing conferences, pre/post writing samples, and interviews. When analyzing this data, Bantis (2010) explained that teacher interviews did not quantify the
impact that task-based writing instruction had on second language acquisition. Since the teacher interview data analysis was not quantifiable, Bantis (2010) focused on the other data sources of pre/post interviews and student work. Bantis (2010) explained that validity and reliability “was achieved through multiple passes of analysis of the data set” so that he maintained consistency within the coding and classification (p. 21). Consistent coding and classification enabled Bantis (2010) to make sense of the data. The findings of Bantis’ (2010) study revealed that task-based writing instruction highly impacted differentiation of instruction.

Chen (2014) conducted a case study of English language learners’ task-based interactions, also using a mixed methods design. Chen’s (2014) study employed a concurrent mixed-methods design to more effectively answer the research questions both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data was collected during the pre and post task-based interactions of students. Qualitative data was gathered through student journal entries which asked students to think about and reflect on their perceptions of their learning experience (Chen, 2014). Chen (2014) was able to draw conclusions about qualitative results from the triangulation of multiple data sources.

Ye (2017) conducted research on the application of task-based instruction in English reading classes for non-English majors at a university in China. The study attempted to show that task-based instruction aroused non-English majors’ interest in learning, established their self-confidence in studying English, and improved their ability to read English (Ye, 2017). In order to gather data, Ye (2017) used a close-ended questionnaire, random student interviews, and classroom observations. Major findings of the study indicated that task-based instruction did, in fact, arouse students’ interest in
studying English, helped build their self-confidence, fostered a sense of cooperation, and improved their English reading. Ye (2017) was able to conclude his research with these findings because of the mixed methods approach, which provided him with both quantitative and qualitative data.

Another research study conducted by Pyun (2013) explored second language learners’ “attitudes toward task-based language learning… and how these attitudes relate to selected learner variables, namely anxiety, integrated motivation, instrumental motivation, and self-efficacy” (p. 108). This study did not implement a mixed methods design; it was a quantitative study. Only a questionnaire was used to gather data on the students. This questionnaire gathered information on student background, and also asked questions related to anxiety, integrated motivation, instrumental motivation, and self-efficacy. The conclusions of Pyun’s (2013) study suggested that future research should explore the effects of motivational, cognitive, and affective factors on students’ proficiency and achievement. Furthermore, Pyun advised that future researchers should also “consider incorporating qualitative observational data that can provide a more detailed and complex account of students’ perspectives and achievement in the task-based classroom” (p. 116). This indicated that, given the nature and topic of the research study, Pyun (2013) believed it would be valuable to incorporate a mixed methods approach in a future study.

The research conducted by Bantis (2010), Chen (2014), Ye (2017), and Pyun (2013) suggested that mixed methods research was a very appropriate approach to take when examining the use of task-based instruction in the classroom. Some of the most common data collection methods seen in the literature were conferences, samples of
student work, interviews, student journals, and open and close-ended questionnaires. The research by both Pyun (2013) and Ye (2017) indicated that further research was needed in order to examine the relationship between task-based instruction and student motivation and self-confidence. This relates very strongly to the problem of practice examined in this action research study.

A mixed methods approach was appropriate for this study because of the nature of the research question. As previously discussed, research conducted by both Pyun (2013) and Ye (2017) identified that further research was needed to explore the relationship between task-based instruction and motivation. Pyun’s (2013) research questions were about students’ attitudes toward task-based learning and the relationship between students’ attitudes toward task-based learning and their anxiety, motivation, and self-efficacy. Ye’s (2017) study aimed to show that task-based instruction was more effective than traditional English reading teaching methods. Both of these authors suggested that qualitative and quantitative data collection methods should be used in similar future research studies (Pyun, 2013; Ye, 2017).

In my research, I used a mixed methods approach to examine the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in a grade seven ELA inclusion classroom. This mixed methods approach was implemented within an action research setting. The following section provides a synthesis of the literature related to action research, and an explanation of my choice to conduct action research.

**Action Research**

Giles et al. (2010) explained that action research helped school personnel improve their practice by systematically developing a question and then gathering and analyzing
data. An action research approach was the most appropriate style of research for my study. As a teacher-researcher in this study, I identified a problem of practice within my classroom and was committed improving that problem of practice through action research. Mertler (2014) explained that, through action research, teachers were able to use the systematic inquiry of research methods to effect change within their own classroom. Mertler (2014) defined action research as a cyclical process of planning, acting, developing, and reflecting. Action research has been identified as a very effective professional development tool that helps to support change (Giles et al., 2010). It allows a teacher to influence their classroom through making changes to their own teaching practices, which often greatly affects the lives of their students (Bolghari & Hajimaghsoodi, 2017; Giles et al., 2010; Iwasaki et al., 2017; Shahnazarian, 2017; Yigit & Bagceci, 2017).

Action research was described as useful to teachers because it helped to support them in their professional and personal development (Durak et al., 2016; Yigit & Bagceci, 2017). The themes of development, actualization, and application have been found in the work of teacher-researchers who conducted action research as their capstone master’s thesis or dissertation (Durak et al., 2016). Action research helped teachers develop their knowledge of professional practice by encouraging teachers to try new teaching methods (Bolghari & Hajimaghsoodi, 2017; Yigit & Bagceci, 2017). Action research also helped teachers to actualize and improve their communication with students and increase their level of awareness (Bolghari & Hajimaghsoodi, 2017; Iwasaki et al., 2017; Yigit & Bagceci, 2017). Action research further supported teachers to apply their
learning by encouraging them to share their professional experiences with their colleagues (Bolghari & Hajimaghsoodi, 2017; Yigit & Bagceci, 2017).

Some of the challenges associated with action research in education were the issues of time, training, and interest (Bolghari & Hajimaghsoodi, 2017). Teachers felt they lacked the time to successfully complete their day to day responsibilities and were hesitant to take on action research in addition to their other responsibilities. When it came to the challenge of training, teachers felt they did not have a clear enough understanding of research. These factors contributed to some teachers’ lack of interest, or hesitancy to conduct action research (Bolghari & Hajimaghsoodi, 2017). However, many teachers overcame these challenges of time and training because they realized the positive impact of action research (Iwasaki et al., 2017; Shahnazarian, 2017; Yigit & Bagceci, 2017).

One teacher, who conducted action research in her classroom, shared that the research process helped her create opportunities to engage in critical consciousness, which increased student engagement and interest (Shahnazarian, 2017). Other studies also showed that action research helped support the meaningful engagement of youth and had the power to effect change (Calvert & Sheen, 2015; Iwasaki et al., 2017). Calvert and Sheen (2015), who conducted action research on task-based instruction, explained that, as language teachers, action research aimed to improve pedagogy. This was accomplished by helping teachers understand the learning processes of students, enabling them to experiment with different methodological options, and providing them with an opportunity to examine and reflect on lessons in a critical way. Iwasaki et al. (2017) found that conducting action research helped them to more effectively support at-risk youth, enabling them to support their students to achieve meaningful educational
engagement. My own action research study was designed to help support students in meaningful academic engagement, particularly by examining the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in an inclusion classroom.

**Conclusion**

This literature review examined in detail the historical framework of language teaching and the theoretical basis of inclusion education, ELLs, task-based instruction, and the ARCS Model of Motivation. A review of primary and secondary sources revealed many strong themes that guided my action research study. The literature related to the history of language teaching provided a strong historical and philosophical basis for the communicative approach to education (Arslanyilmaz, 2012; Campbell et al., 2014; Roessingh, 2014; Santa Rita & Misick, 1996; Widdowson, 1978; Zainuddin et al., 2011). Much of the literature showed that inclusion education was an effective method of instruction when teachers were well trained and were utilizing engaging and communicative teaching methods (Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus, 2014; Jacobs & Fu, 2014; Mahat, 2008; Soukakou et al., 2014). Literature about ELLs revealed a very strong trend toward communicative language teaching, studies specifically demonstrated the effectiveness of task-based instruction (Arslanyilmaz, 2013; Liu, 2010; Meng & Cheng, 2010; Özturk 2014; Yamazumi, 2006; Yang, 2012; Yuasa, 2010). The communicative teaching method of task-based instruction was strongly explained through Willis’ (1996; 2007) teaching practices. The ARCS model provided a framework for understanding the four dimensions of motivation: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Keller, 2008).
My research study examined the question: What is the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in a grade seven inclusion classroom? My study was grounded in the literature of similar research studies and implemented a mixed methods action research approach. The existing research suggested that task-based instruction would likely have a positive influence on ELL student motivation. The following chapter, Methodology, addresses my first research question by explaining the convergent parallel mixed methods approach (Creswell, 2014), describing the student participants, and providing a thorough explanation of the processes for data collection and analysis. Chapter Three also provides information relevant to my second research question, which emerged through the course of this action research study.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This action research study examined the challenge of teaching in an inclusion classroom and, in particular, explored the challenge of teaching ELL students. The first purpose of this study was to consider the influence of task-based instruction on the motivation of ELL students in an inclusion classroom. As the researcher, I was positioned with insider/outsider status within this research study. I was a volunteer co-teacher and worked with Brittany (pseudonym), another middle school teacher. In this mixed methods study, Brittany and I worked together in a grade seven English Language Arts (ELA) inclusion classroom. As co-teachers, we coordinated our instructional practice, simultaneously teaching a heterogeneous group of students (Beninghof, 2012). Over the course of five weeks, we implemented task-based instruction, and I collected data about ELL student motivation. This study began with the research question: What is the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in a grade seven ELA inclusion classroom? Throughout the course of this study, a second research question emerged: How does co-teaching that implements a task-based instruction model in an inclusion classroom affect teachers? This chapter addresses the methodology associated with both of these research questions.
Rationale for the Selected Methodology

In action research, teacher-researchers work to improve their practice by systematically developing a research question and then gathering and analyzing data (Giles et al., 2010). Action research provides teachers with an opportunity to be a reflective practitioner, engaging in a process of planning, acting, developing, and reflecting (Mertler, 2014). My action research study was conducted using a mixed methods research design. As discussed in Chapter Two, mixed methods research utilizes both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis (Bantis, 2010; Chen, 2014; Creswell, 2014; Ye, 2017). Mixed methods research can take different forms; my first research question used a convergent parallel mixed methods design (Creswell, 2014). In convergent parallel mixed methods, a researcher “converges or merges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem” (Creswell, 2014, p. 44). I collected quantitative and qualitative data at the same time, and then integrated the information in the interpretation of my results (Creswell, 2014). I did a rapid analysis of my qualitative and quantitative data on a daily basis. Then, after all of my data was collected and initially analyzed, I did a summative analysis. My second research question was answered using a phenomenological qualitative approach (Creswell, 2014), which describes the lived experiences of individuals about a specific phenomenon. After the results of my study were interpreted and the findings presented, I discussed these findings with the perspective of action research and suggested changes to the study, provided an action plan, and outlined implications for future practice.
Context and Participants

Research Question One

This action research study was conducted at Bayview Middle School (pseudonym), a middle school located on the Gulf Coast. This middle school served nearly 600 seventh and eighth grade students. Almost 80% of these students qualified for free and reduced lunch. The school embraced an inclusion approach to teaching (Braunsteiner & Mariano-Lapidus, 2014). The participants of this study were 15 students in one grade-seven ELA inclusion classroom.

Students who transferred into or out of the class during the middle of the study were not included in the data analysis. Of the 15 students included in this study, 4 students were documented as receiving ELL services, and 1 student, though recently exited from ELL services, still was being monitored. Under Title III of the Every Student Succeeds Act, Local Education Agencies must monitor the academic achievement of former ELLs for four years after exiting students from ELL services (U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition, 2016). Within this study, all 5 of these students are referred to as ELLs. The 10 other students in the classroom are referred to as Native English Speakers (NESs).

Research Question Two

My second research question emerged very early in the process of my action research. I was co-teaching with Brittany during this study. As I examined the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in our grade seven ELA class at Bayview Middle School, I began to realize that my experience of action research was enriched by my collaboration with another teacher. In reflecting on this, my second
research question emerged. I wanted to examine how co-teaching that implements a task-based instruction model in an inclusion classroom affects teachers. Brittany and I were the participants examined through this second research question.

**Research Methods**

**Implementation of Task-Based Instruction**

Task-based instruction, as explained by Willis (1996), was designed to be used when all students in the classroom were ELLs. Though my action research study was grounded in the foundational work of Willis (1996), I aimed to apply task-based instruction using a less structured approach. I felt strongly that general education teachers need to have access to simple, effective tools which help them reach the ELLs in their classrooms. Using Willis (1996) as the basis for my work, I developed a basic method of integrating task-based instruction - one that inclusion teachers, like myself, could use in order to easily address the learning needs of the ELLs in their classrooms. While Willis (1996) offered a very strong approach for teaching ELLs, I found it helpful to modify her structure of task-based instruction in order to more easily and efficiently implement her methods in the inclusion classroom.

The review of the literature in Chapter Two provided a detailed explanation of Willis’ (1996) method of task-based instruction. This method followed a three-part structure of pre-task, task-cycle, and language focus (Willis, 1996). Willis (1996) also defined six types of task: listing, ordering and sorting, comparing, problem solving, sharing personal experiences, and creative tasks. Later, in Willis and Willis’ (2007) book on task-based teaching, they added an additional type of task: matching. As mentioned previously, in this action research I adapted the work of Willis, embracing the
foundational elements of her work, while creating a less structured approach so that the method of task-based instruction could be integrated by general education teachers like myself.

At the beginning of my research, I did not intend to utilize Willis’ (1996) three-part structure of pre-task, task-cycle, and language focus. Instead, I focused on the types of tasks themselves and how these tasks could be integrated into my everyday lessons. Within the first week of my research, however, I realized that the three-part structure of pre-task, task-cycle, and language focus was an important part of task-based instruction. I then attempted to incorporate these three phases each time I integrated task-based instruction within a lesson.

In order to integrate task-based instruction into daily lessons, I created a protocol to examine pre-existing daily lesson plans. The pre-existing lesson plans were a collaborative effort, written weekly by the seventh grade ELA teachers at Bayview Middle School. The protocol I created to examine these lessons was called the Task-Based Instruction Integration Protocol (Appendix G). The protocol was designed to be used prior to the start of teaching a lesson. The protocol was based on seven types of tasks, which were a melding of Willis’ definition of task from her earlier (1996) and later (2007) works.

The Task-Based Instruction Integration Protocol (Appendix G) has five steps. The first step (A) is the presentation of the lesson, where the learning objectives and general structure of the lesson are reviewed. The second step (B), provides an opportunity for clarifying questions in order to identify if anything is unclear about the learning objectives or structure of the lesson. In the third step (C), the teacher rereads the learning
objectives and looks at the Task-Based Instruction Chart at the bottom of the protocol in order to identify the process that best fits the lesson objective. The fourth step (D) involves designing the task, based on the process that was selected. The examples in the Task-Based Instruction Chart help teachers create the task. The fifth step (E) of the protocol provides teachers with an opportunity for reflection and documentation. In this step, a teacher reflects on the task-based activity, ensures that it appropriately aligns with the objectives and structure of the lesson, and documents the task-based activity within the lesson plan.

Throughout the duration of this study, Brittany and I used the Task-Based Instruction Integration Protocol (Appendix G) in order to examine the pre-existing daily lesson plans for our class. We used the protocol to look for an authentic opportunity to integrate one task-based activity within each daily lesson. The authentic opportunity differed from lesson to lesson and the length of time designated to the task-based activity also varied. A sample lesson plan, with an example of this task-based instruction integration, can be found in Appendix H, Example Lesson Plan.

The implementation of task-based instruction took place daily. My process of decision making and reflection about task-based instruction took place on a rapid basis. I needed a process to support me in the continual improvement of my practice; therefore, I conducted daily Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Cycles about task-based instruction. The PDSA Cycle (The W. Edwards Deming Institute, 2016) is a systematic approach that is used to gain knowledge about the continual improvement of a process or product. This improvement cycle is divided into four steps: Plan, Do, Study, and Act (The W. Edwards Deming Institute, 2016). By conducting daily PDSA Cycles throughout my research
study, I was able to consistently and systematically think about questions and predictions I had at the beginning of each class, conduct lessons, study the results of my data collection methods, and act on the learning that took place, planning for future lessons.

Data Collection Methods: Research Question One

Overview of Methods. My original research question asked: What is the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in a grade seven ELA inclusion classroom? As explained at the beginning of this chapter, my research study implemented a convergent parallel mixed methods design; I collected both qualitative and quantitative data in order to achieve the most comprehensive analysis of my research question (Creswell, 2014). My data collection methods enabled me to examine how integrating task-based instruction in my inclusion classroom affected student motivation when communicating in English. I used a variety of data collection methods. The research study began with a focus group (Butin, 2010; Mertler, 2014) (Appendix A), which was composed of the ELLs in the class. I conducted daily field observations (Butin, 2010; Mertler, 2014) (Appendix C) during the task-based activity. I also gathered documents by collecting student work (Butin, 2010; Mertler, 2014) from the task-based activity every day. At the end of each lesson, the students completed an exit ticket (Appendix D), which served the purpose of a daily survey (Butin, 2010; Mertler, 2014). At the end of the study, I conducted another focus group (Butin, 2010; Mertler, 2014) (Appendix B) with the ELLs in the class. Table 3.1, Data Collection Methods: Research Question One, provides an overview of the data-collection methods used in this study.
Table 3.1

*Data Collection Methods: Research Question One*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data-Collection Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Documents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus Groups (Butin, 2010; Mertler, 2014)</td>
<td>Conducted by the researcher; interviews of ELL students. Collection of data about ELL student motivation.</td>
<td>Twice during research</td>
<td>Appendix A, Appendix B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Observations (Butin, 2010; Mertler, 2014)</td>
<td>Completed by the researcher. Examination of student attention during task-based instruction.</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>Appendix C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Work Documents (Butin, 2010; Mertler, 2014)</td>
<td>Student work. Documentation of student achievement on daily task-based activities.</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit Ticket Surveys (Butin, 2010; Mertler, 2014)</td>
<td>Completed by the students as an end of class exit ticket. Collection of qualitative and quantitative student data about their feelings of relevance, confidence, and satisfaction.</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>Appendix D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Focus groups.** A focus group is a simultaneous interview, consisting of no more than 10 to 12 people (Mertler, 2014). Interviews and focus groups provide a simple and concrete method for collecting important data from relevant individuals (Butin, 2010). I used a focus group twice within the course of this study; once within the first week of research (Appendix A) and once within the last week of research (Appendix B). These semi-structured interviews were conducted with the ELLs in my class. I audio-recorded the interviews. The interviews were then transcribed.
I chose to conduct focus groups as a way to gather information about ELL students’ motivation pre and post the implementation of task-based instruction. Focus groups often are very informative because people tend to feed off of each other’s comments (Mertler, 2014). Using focus groups in this research gave me an opportunity to gather rich data about students’ “experiences, their feelings, and their intuitions” (Butin, 2010, p. 97). Keller’s (2008) ARCS model provided a synthesis of motivational concepts and theories by identifying four dimensions to motivation: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction.

At the beginning of the first focus group (Appendix A), I gathered introductory information about the students. At the beginning of the second focus group (Appendix B), I omitted these introductory questions and replaced them with specific questions about students’ feelings about task-based instruction activities that took place during the research study. In both focus groups, I used my understanding of motivation, informed by the ARCS model, to design the questions to elicit student responses about their curiosity and interest in class (attention), their perception of the instruction as helpful or relevant to their personal values and goals (relevance), their belief that they can succeed (confidence), and their belief that learning resonates with their personal incentives (satisfaction).

**Field observations.** Field observations can range from being very open-ended, like shadowing, to being very focused, like using an observation protocol (Butin, 2010). The more focused and formalized an observation protocol, the more precise the data collection will be, and the easier it will be to avoid being overwhelmed by the data collection (Butin, 2010). Classroom observations can be beneficial because they allow
researchers to gather data about actual student behaviors that are taking place, rather than asking students to report their feelings or perceptions (Mertler, 2014). I conducted focused Field Observations (Appendix C) in order to examine student behavior every day during the task-based activity.

I used Keller’s (2008) definition of motivation, based on the ARCS model, in order to design my field observations. These observations collected data about the first dimension of motivation, focusing on student attention. A motivated student has piqued curiosity and maintains their interest in a task: this is attention (Keller, 2008). During the time when students were engaged in the task-based activity, I did not engage them in conversation or teaching. I used the Field Observation checklist (Appendix C) to examine the on task/off task student behaviors of the ELLs in the classroom. These field observations enabled me to have a consistent record documenting student attention during each task-based activity. Each ELL student was given a rating for their attention based off of the five-point Likert scale (5) exceptionally attentive, (4) attentive, (3) moderately attentive, (2) less than attentive, and (1) needs improvement.

**Student work documents.** Documents are a pervasive part of our lives; they often contain a wealth of untapped data (Butin, 2010). Classroom artifacts, such as student work, are written or visual sources that are contained within the classroom (Mertler, 2014). Every day during my research, I collected student work from each of the task-based instruction activities. Mertler (2014) suggests that researchers use an organized, single form in order to compile various types of information, as opposed to “having a conglomeration of loose papers stuffed in a file folder” (p. 135). In order to collect and compile these classroom artifacts in an organized way, I kept student work
organized in a physical binder and electronically through photographs. An example of student work can be found at the end of the Example Lesson Plan (Appendix H). Student work was graded using a five-point Likert scale (5) exceptionally well done, (4) well done, (3) complete, (2) less than complete, and (1) needs improvement.

**Exit ticket surveys.** A survey allows a researcher to gather written information from research participants, through either open ended or close ended questions (Mertler, 2014). Surveys are valuable data collection methods because they are not only easy to create, but also easy to distribute, collect, and analyze (Butin, 2010). They allow researchers to gather a large quantity and variety of information in a relatively quick way (Mertler, 2014). I conducted surveys of my students through the use of daily Exit Ticket Surveys (Appendix D). Using the Exit Ticket Surveys allowed me to gather daily self-assessment data from students, which enabled me to monitor and promote intrinsic motivation, effort, goal orientation, and meaningful learning (McMillan & Hearn, 2008). These exit tickets were in a paper form, and were distributed for students to complete during the last few minutes of each lesson. The exit tickets consisted of both closed and open-ended questions, which elicited self-assessment data about student motivation.

My understanding of motivation was, once again, based off of the ARCS model of attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Keller, 2008). The exit tickets collected data about three dimensions of the ARCS model: relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. Keller (2008) explains that motivated student will view instruction as helpful or relevant to their personal values or goals (relevance), they will believe that they can succeed (confidence), and they will experience learning as something that resonates with their personal incentives (satisfaction). With this model in mind, I designed the exit
tickets to gather student responses on their feelings about the relevance of the task-based instruction activity of the day, as well as their feelings of confidence and satisfaction during the activity.

The exit ticket used the following five-point Likert scale: (5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) no opinion, (2) disagree, (1) strongly disagree. Students used this Likert scale to respond to three statements. The first statement was, “The task was about a topic that is important to me” (Appendix D). The second statement was, “The task helped me to believe that I could do well in English” (Appendix D). The third statement was “I am happy and proud of my work in English class today” (Appendix D). At the end of the exit ticket, students also responded to one open ended question that asked, “Why did you give those scores?” (Appendix D).

Data Analysis: Research Question One

Overview of Data Analysis. This research was conducted using a convergent parallel mixed methods design. As explained earlier in this chapter, in convergent parallel mixed methods, a researcher collects both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time, and then integrates the information in the interpretation of results (Creswell, 2014). I used four data collection methods throughout my research: Focus Groups (Appendix A, Appendix B), Field Observations (Appendix C), Student Work Documents, and Exit Ticket Surveys (Appendix D). Focus Groups took place at the beginning and end of the research, and were analyzed quantitatively. Field Observations, Student Work Documents, and Exit Ticket Surveys all took place each day, and were analyzed quantitatively.
Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the quantitative data collection that took place in this research study. Descriptive statistics aim to summarize, rather than draw inferences about the data (Holcomb, 2017). All of the quantitative data in my study used a Likert scale, therefore presenting ordinal data. Ordinal data is most appropriately analyzed using the median as the measure of central tendency, and the interquartile range as the measure of variability (Holcomb, 2017). The median is computed by putting all the scores in order from low to high, and counting to the middle. Using the median as the measure of central tendency provides the most accurate representation of the average since it is not skewed by the existence of outliers (Holcomb, 2017). The interquartile range is computed by calculating the range of the middle 50% of the scores (Holcomb, 2017). The interquartile range measures the spread of data. It is a more trustworthy representation of spread than the range, since it is the range of the middle half of the data. The interquartile range is the difference between the third quartile and the first quartile (Holcomb, 2017).

**Focus groups analysis.** When analyzing large sets of qualitative interview data, it is necessary to reduce the volume of information collected by first coding, and then organizing the codes into themes (Creswell, 2014; Mertler, 2014). Coding is the “process of organizing the data by bracketing chunks… and writing a word representing a category in the margins” (Creswell, 2014, p. 247). Organizing the codes into themes is called winnowing (Creswell, 2014). More specifically, winnowing is the process of focusing on some of the data and disregarding other parts of the data: the result is that the data can be aggregated into a smaller number of themes (Creswell, 2014).
When I conducted the focus groups (Appendix A, Appendix B), I audio recorded the conversations. This raw data then needed to be organized and prepared for data analysis. First, the audio-recordings were transcribed. This typed document was then coded. I coded the focus group transcripts in two ways. First, I coded the document using a priori codes; I “use[d] predetermined codes and fit the data to them” (Creswell, 2014, p. 248). I had four a priori codes: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. These four codes were based off of Keller’s (2008) ARCS model, which identified these four words as the four dimensions of motivation. These four codes became four different themes that were used to construct a framework for the key findings of my research (Mertler, 2014). Second, I developed codes “on the basis of the emerging information collected” (Creswell, 2014, p. 248). Using the process for mixed methods qualitative analysis, as described by Creswell and Clark (2011), I grouped evidence and labeled ideas so that they reflected broader perspectives. These were then grouped into codes, and the codes were grouped into a broader theme. The emergent codes were: Positive Response to Collaboration, Negative Response to Collaboration, and Neutral Response to Collaboration. The theme captured by these codes was Responses to Collaboration. The themes established through my process of coding displayed different perspectives from individuals and were supported by specific evidence and diverse quotations (Creswell, 2014). Identifying themes within my a priori and emergent codes allowed me to construct a framework for presenting the key findings (Mertler, 2014). In doing so, I was able to interpret the meaning and implications of my data.

**Field observation analysis.** When gathering field observations, I used a Field Observation checklist (Appendix C) and examined the on task/off task student behaviors.
of the ELLs in the classroom. Data from these field observations was quantitative (Creswell, 2014). Each ELL student was given a rating for their attention based off of the following five-point Likert scale: (5) exceptionally attentive, (4) attentive, (3) moderately attentive, (2) less than attentive, and (1) needs improvement. This Likert data is considered ordinal (Holcomb, 2017). As a result, descriptive statistics were used to analyze this data, using the median as the measure of central tendency, and the interquartile range as the measure of variability (Holcomb, 2017). These statistics were calculated for all ELL students, however, no data was collected or analyzed about NES students.

**Student work document analysis.** Document analysis is the analysis of a text “through a specific, standardized, and theoretically informed protocol” (Butin, 2010, p. 99). I used a standardized protocol to rate the completion of the student work I collected. This standardized protocol rated student work, and focused on a student’s ability to communicate, rather than focusing on their grammatical correctness. Each student’s work was rated on a five-point Likert scale: (5) exceptionally well done, (4) well done, (3) complete, (2) less than complete, and (1) needs improvement. Likert data is considered ordinal (Holcomb, 2017). Therefore, descriptive statistics were used to analyze this data, using the median as the measure of central tendency, and the interquartile range as the measure of variability (Holcomb, 2017). These statistics were calculated for all students in the classroom, and the ELL student work was compared with the NES student work.

**Exit ticket survey analysis.** The surveys collected during this research were student Exit Ticket Surveys (Appendix D), consisting of both closed and open-ended questions. These surveys elicited self-assessment data about students’ feelings of
relevance, confidence, and satisfaction during the task-based instruction activity of the
day. While closed-ended questions provided quantitative data, the open ended question
provided qualitative data. These two types of data were analyzed separately.

The quantitative, closed-ended questions asked students to respond using the
following five-point Likert scale: (5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) no opinion, (2)
disagree, (1) strongly disagree. Descriptive statistics were used in the analysis. Since this
Likert data is considered ordinal data (Holcomb, 2017), the median was used as the
measure of central tendency, and the interquartile range was used as the measure of
variability (Holcomb, 2017). These statistics were calculated for all students in the
classroom, and the ELL student responses were compared with the NES student
responses. Although it does not fall under the realm of descriptive statistics, the non-
parametric statistical analysis, the Mann-Whitney Test, also was conducted to compare
the ordinal data from ELL and NES students. The Mann-Whitney Test examines the data
from two independent groups and assesses if differences in the data are statistically
significant (Altman, 1991).

Qualitative student responses on the student Exit Ticket Surveys (Appendix D)
were coded first, using a priori codes. The a priori codes were based off of the
dimensions of the ARCS model: Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction
(Keller, 2008). The Codebook (Appendix I) provides the definition and two student
two examples for each a priori code. To ensure the reliability of my a priori codes, I worked
closely with an external researcher, outside of my study, to establish intercoder
agreement. Intercoder agreement is the process of cross-checking in order to ensure that
that coders agree on codes used for the same passage (Creswell, 2014). Consistency in
coding should be in agreement at least 80 percent of the time to establish strong qualitative reliability (Creswell, 2014).

A second reliability measure was also used: Cohen’s Kappa. Cohen’s Kappa is a statistical approach for measuring agreement that takes into account the role of chance (Gewt, 2014). An equation for the estimated percent chance agreement is used to adjust the percent agreement in order to obtain what is called a Kappa coefficient. The Kappa coefficient can be interpreted using the following scale: < 0 - less than chance agreement, 0.01–0.20 - slight agreement, 0.21– 0.40 - fair agreement; 0.41–0.60 - moderate agreement; 0.61–0.80 - substantial agreement; 0.81–0.99 - almost perfect agreement (Gewt, 2014).

Throughout the rounds of independent coding, the external researcher and I talked about each code we disagreed on, and negotiated the meaning of the a priori codes in the Codebook (Appendix I). We established that multiple codes could be assigned to one student comment. One example of negotiating the meaning of the codes had to do with student comments regarding their feelings about working in pairs or groups. When we were trying to establish intercoder agreement, one of us used the code Attention when students spoke about pair/group work, while the other used the code Satisfaction. Through negotiating the codebook, we determined that comments about pair/group work should be coded as Attention; we edited the codebook to reflect our decision. Once we had attained intercoder agreement, responses from the rounds of independent coding were revisited using the final codebook and assigned codes were readjusted as needed. All adjusted codes were discussed by both researchers until a consensus was reached for each code.
The qualitative open responses from students also were coded in a second way. I examined student responses on the basis of emerging information (Creswell & Clark, 2011). In this study, I referred to these codes as emergent codes. In order to establish my emergent codes, first I grouped evidence and labeled ideas so that they reflected the broad student perspectives (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The exit ticket responses were grouped into positive, negative, and neutral student perspectives, and particular attention was paid to student perspectives about their collaboration in pair/group work. Then, I grouped these perspectives into codes (Creswell & Clark, 2011). These emergent codes were: Positive Response to Collaboration, Negative Response to Collaboration, and Neutral Response to Collaboration. The Codebook (Appendix I) provides the definition and two student examples for each emergent code.

The qualitative data on the Exit Ticket Survey (Appendix D) was analyzed for all students in the classroom, and the results from the ELL student responses were compared with the results from the NES student responses. Using descriptive statistics, I calculated the frequency of student responses within each a priori and emergent code, reporting the number and percent (Holcomb, 2017). I compared the ELL and NES results. For the a priori codes, Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction, I also additionally coded students’ responses as either positive or negative, using the emergent codes Positive ARCS Response and Negative ARCS Response.

**Data Collection Methods: Research Question Two**

**Overview of methods.** As previously explained, a second research question emerged through the process of this action research study. This second research question was: How does co-teaching that implements a task-based instruction model in an
inclusion classroom affect teachers? While my original research question implemented a convergent mixed-methods design, this emergent research question was answered using a phenomenological qualitative approach (Creswell, 2014). A phenomenological qualitative approach describes the lived experiences of individuals about a specific phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). There were two data collection methods that were used: Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E) and an End of Study Reflection (Appendix F). Table 3.2, Data Collection Methods: Research Question Two, provides an overview of the data-collection methods used in this study.

Table 3.2

*Data Collection Methods: Research Question Two*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data-Collection Methods</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Documents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration PDSA Research Journal</td>
<td>Completed by the researcher. Written documentation of the PDSA Cycle.</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Bryk, Gomez, Grunow, &amp; LeMahieu, 2016; Mertler, 2014)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol</td>
<td>Conducted by the researcher-participant with the Brittany, the participant; served the purpose of both an observation and an interview.</td>
<td>Seven times throughout the research</td>
<td>Appendix E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Butin, 2010; Creswell, 2014)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Study Reflection</td>
<td>Conducted by the researcher-participant with Brittany, the participant; served the purpose of an end of study open-ended interview.</td>
<td>Once, at the end of the study</td>
<td>Appendix F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Creswell, 2014; Mertler, 2014;)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Collaboration PDSA research journal.** A research journal provides valuable information about what is going on between students and teachers in the classroom (Mertler, 2014). Research journals give teacher-researchers the chance to keep a narrative account of their professional reflections (Mertler, 2014). I chose to complete this research journal as a part of my daily data collection so that I would have a consistent way to reflect on my professional practice. I used the PDSA Cycle (The W. Edwards Deming Institute, 2016) of Plan, Do, Study, and Act to facilitate my reflections about my collaboration with Brittany. This research journal provided me with the structure to record information about my daily questions and predictions, a place to record what happened in our collaboration, the results of our collaboration, and suggestions of next steps for the future (Bryk et al., 2016).

**Peer observation-discussion protocol.** Observations can be very open-ended, like shadowing, or very focused, like using an observation protocol (Butin, 2010). Observations can provide important data in a qualitative study (Creswell, 2014). If an observation protocol is focused and formalized, the data collection will be more precise (Butin, 2010). As this second research question began to emerge as a part of this study, I developed an observation protocol called the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E). The protocol was designed in order to facilitate discussion between me, the researcher-participant and Brittany, the participant. This protocol followed Willis’ (1996) task-based learning framework. The protocol was designed to be used by two people: an observer and an observed. The purpose of this observation protocol was to help deepen the observed person’s ability to implement task-based teaching. When conducting an observation, the observer focused on writing notes about what was
occurring during the observation, and how the observed person’s instruction was/was not aligned to the task-based framework. At the end of the observation, the observer and the observed met, undisturbed, to discuss the protocol. This meeting, essentially a conversation between the observer and observed, was audio-recorded. Brittany and I used the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol seven times throughout this research study. Our conversations about these observations of each other were audio-recorded and then transcribed.

**End of study reflection.** The End of Study Reflection (Appendix F) served the purpose of an open-ended interview. Open-ended interviews are a very common piece of data collection within a qualitative study (Creswell, 2014). Open-ended interviews, also called semi structured interviews, allow a researcher to ask pre-planned questions, but also to have the option of following up a given response by asking additional questions (Mertler, 2014). I used the End of Study Reflection as an open-ended interview between Brittany and me. Questions in the End of Study Reflection prompted conversations about the impact that task-based instruction had on our classroom practices, the satisfying and challenging parts of incorporating task-based instruction, our current thoughts about task-based instruction, and our impressions of the tools we had developed as a part of our implementation of task-based instruction.

**Data Analysis: Research Question Two**

The Collaboration PDSA Research Journal was written electronically, and was in an easy format to analyze. The Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E) and the End of Study Reflection (Appendix F) were conversations that took place between Brittany and me. All of these conversations were audio-recorded, and then transcribed. In
order to analyze these large sets of qualitative interview data, it was necessary to decrease the volume of information collected by first coding, and then organizing the codes into themes (Creswell, 2014; Mertler, 2014). For all of the qualitative data analysis, I used Creswell and Clark’s (2011) process for establishing codes on the basis of emerging information. First, I grouped evidence and labeled ideas. Then, these labels were grouped into codes, and the codes were grouped into themes. In my analysis of the Collaboration PDSA Journal, the following two codes emerged: Challenges and Successes. These two codes were grouped into the theme: Collaboration. Within the Peer-Observation Discussion Protocol (Appendix E), the codes that emerged through this analysis were: Pre-Task, Task-Planning-Report, and Language Focus. These codes were grouped into the theme: Implications for the Classroom. When analyzing the End of Study Reflection (Appendix F), I also grouped evidence and labeled ideas; the code that emerged through this analysis was: Impact of Observation. The data analyzed with this code was captured in the theme: Collaboration. The Codebook (Appendix I) provides the definition and two examples for each emergent code.

Validity, Reliability, and Trustworthiness

Researchers are always trying to identify threats to validity and reliability, raising questions about the ability to conclude that the intervention, and not some other factor, has affected an outcome (Creswell, 2014). Validity means that the data that has been collected accurately measures what it claims it measures (Creswell, 2014; Mertler, 2014). Reliability means that the approaches taken are reliable, consistent, and stable (Creswell, 20140, Mertler, 2014). When conducting qualitative research, researchers also are concerned with trustworthiness, which “is established by examining the credibility and
dependability of qualitative data” (Mertler, 2014, p. 137). In this research study, I implemented a number of practices in order to ensure the validity, reliability, and trustworthiness of my data.

First, I based the design of my study around theoretical frameworks that were grounded in peer-reviewed literature (Willis, 1996; Keller 2008). An extensive literature review showed that the method of task-based instruction is a very effective method of teaching ELLS (Bantis, 2010; Chen, 2014; Ye, 2017; Willis, 1996; Willis & Willis, 2007). Literature about the ARCS Model of Motivation also indicated the strength of this theoretical approach (Hess, 2015; Huang et al., 2014; Liao & Wang, 2008). Through basing pedagogical and methodological decisions of my study in peer-reviewed literature, I was able to strengthen the validity and reliability of my findings.

I used multiple data sources and multiple data collection methods in order to support the findings of my first research question. Creswell (2014) explained that if themes within the research were established by converging several sources of data, then this added to the validity of the study. This is called triangulation (Creswell, 2014; Mertler, 2014). I used four data collection methods, and analyzed this data in multiple ways, in order to triangulate the findings of my research. For example, when presenting and analyzing the findings for my first research question, I examined daily quantitative student self-assessment data from Exit Ticket Surveys, daily qualitative student self-assessment data from Exit Ticket Surveys, as well as qualitative Focus Group data.

Another way that I ensured the validity and reliability of my data is through engaging in persistent observation (Mertler, 2014). This means that I developed trust with my participants, learned the culture of their setting, and observed their behavior patterns,
even to the point of being routine (Mertler, 2014). I engaged in this persistent observation through the formal field observations I conducted about students’ attention. I also engaged in informal observations of my students and my educational practice by using PDSA Cycles throughout my research study (W. Edwards Deming Institute, 2016).

Third, I ensured the validity and reliability of my a priori codes. I did this in multiple ways. The first thing I did was work with a researcher outside of my study to conduct multiple independent rounds of coding with the a priori codes. Consistent coding should be in agreement at least 80% of the time to establish strong qualitative reliability (Creswell, 2014). The external researcher and I continued the coding process until we established a strong percent agreement of over 80%. In order to affirm the strength of our percent agreement, I also ran a Cohen’s Kappa statistical analysis. Cohen’s Kappa is another statistical approach for measuring agreement, which confirms the validity and reliability of codes between multiple raters (Gewt, 2014).

In order to ensure the reliability of the data analysis for my second research question, I also conducted member checking. Member checking means sharing the data collection and analysis with research participants in order to provide them with an opportunity to confirm or approve of the data they provided (Carlson, 2010; Creswell, 2014; Mertler, 2014). At the end of my research study, I shared the results and implications of my research with Brittany and gave her the opportunity to confirm that I had represented her ideas accurately (Creswell, 2014; Mertler, 2014).

Ethical Considerations

Throughout the course of this study, I built an atmosphere of trust by protecting the rights of the research participants. These ethical considerations guaranteed that
research participants would not be harmed in any way by my study. Prior to the start of the study, I provided the district with a Research Setting Approval Form (Appendix J) and I obtained written permission to conduct my research. The school also provided consent. During the course of my research, I made sure to maintain the confidentiality of the participants by keeping the data and evidence collected for the study in a secure environment. Within this dissertation, I maintained confidentiality by limiting detailed descriptions that could reveal the name of the school, removing any explanations about the school, faculty, or students that are not essential to the research, and using pseudonyms for the school and individual participants.

**Developing an Action Plan**

An action plan involves taking the results of the data analysis, my interpretations of these results, and my final conclusions, and formulating a plan of action for the future (Mertler, 2014). An action plan might include strategies for future implementation, revisions to instructional methods, and/or designs and proposals for future action research cycles. The important aspect of an action plan is that the researcher now has “some sort of strategy for trying out, carrying out, or otherwise putting into practice” the changes that have resulted from the findings of the action research (Mertler, 2014, p. 211). Professional reflection is an extremely important part of developing an action plan.

In order to devise an action plan at the culmination of my research, I first examined what I learned from the study. Based on my reflections on the findings of my action research, I developed a number of recommendations specifically related to my research questions. In my action plan, I outlined how these recommendations will be implemented and monitored in the future. As Mertler (2014) expressed, action research
“never really ends” (p. 212). As a professional educator, I know that I will continually move through subsequent action research cycles throughout my career, as I search for new ways to improve instructional practice. The action plan included in this study outlines the next steps that I will take in order to implement what I have learned from my first research question: examining the influence of task-based instruction on the motivation of ELL students. The action plan also draws on what I have learned from my second research question: how teachers are affected by co-teaching using a task-based instruction model.

**Conclusion**

This chapter, Methodology, has addressed my first research question by explaining the convergent parallel mixed methods approach (Creswell, 2014), describing the student participants of this study, and providing a thorough explanation of how qualitative and quantitative data was collected and analyzed. This chapter also has provided the reader with information about my second research question, including details about the phenomenological qualitative approach (Creswell, 2014), the data collection methods, and data analysis. The following chapter, Findings and Discussion, not only analyzes the qualitative and quantitative data collected in this study, but also discusses and interprets the meaning of this data. The findings and discussion for my first research question are organized by examining the four elements of the ARCS model: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Keller, 2008). The findings for my second research question are organized according to the data collection type, while the discussion is organized by the themes that emerged through the qualitative analysis (Creswell, 2014).
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Summary of Methodology and Methods

Research Questions and Methodological Approach

This chapter explores the findings of the two research questions. It begins with the findings of the original research question: What is the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in a grade seven ELA inclusion classroom? In order to answer this research question, I implemented a convergent parallel mixed methods action research design (Creswell, 2014), collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data was analyzed using the descriptive statistics: the median and interquartile range (Holcomb, 2017). Frequency distribution tables and other figures present the data. Qualitative data was analyzed using both a priori coding and emergent coding (Creswell & Clark, 2011). These quantitative and qualitative data were then analyzed together, as indicated by a mixed methods approach (Creswell, 2014). This chapter also explores the findings of my second research question: How does co-teaching that implements a task-based instruction model in an inclusion classroom affect teachers? This question implemented a phenomenological qualitative approach (Creswell, 2014), which described the lived experience of individuals. Qualitative data was collected and analyzed through emergent codes (Creswell & Clark, 2011). All qualitative data sources were merged in a final data analysis (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The remainder of this chapter will consist of a description of the findings for my original research question. The
presentation of these findings is followed by a discussion. I then address the emergent research question, first presenting the findings and then a discussion of these findings. The chapter ends with a conclusion that summarizes the key findings and discussions of both research questions, and introduces the action plan that will be further discussed in the following chapter.

**Findings: Research Question One**

**Likert Data: Scatter Plots**

**Overview.** The quantitative data collected in this research study was ordinal data based on a five-point Likert scale. This data was collected about students’ attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction, as well as their student work. This data was collected 16 times over the course of this research study. The data was analyzed using the median as the measure of central tendency and the interquartile range as the measure of variability. Central Tendency and Variability Tables (Appendix L) present these descriptive statistics in greater detail. A brief written summary of these descriptive statistics is also included in the findings.

Although it is not considered descriptive statistics, the non-parametric statistical analysis, the Mann-Whitney Test, was run on this data in order to compare the median ratings from ELL and NES students. The Mann-Whitney Test examined the data from two independent groups and assessed if differences in the data were statistically significant (Altman, 1991). When the Mann-Whitney Test was used to analyze the student scores in this study, the results showed that there were very few instances where the difference in scores between the ELL and NES students was statistically significant. Since this data did not show any consistent statistically significant differences between
ELL and NES students, it did not provide any additional insights and was not presented in the findings of this study.

The Likert data that was collected and analyzed for attention, relevance, confidence, satisfaction, and student work is displayed in scatter plots. A scatter plot shows the relationship between two variables (Holcomb, 2017). In these scatter plots, one variable, the median five-point Likert rating, is displayed on the y-axis, and another variable, the day of implementation, is displayed on the x-axis. A line of best fit indicates the relationship between these two variables, showing change over time (Chaudhary & Kumar, 2010). Although correlation does not imply causality, the line of best fit suggests a relationship between variables. While data for attention was only collected on ELL students (Figure 4.1), data for relevance (Figure 4.2), confidence (Figure 4.3), satisfaction (Figure 4.4), and student work (Figure 4.5) were collected for both ELL and NES students. The scatter plot on attention represents data for ELL students only. The scatter plots for relevance, confidence, satisfaction, and student work represent that data for both ELL students and NES students.

The following five-point Likert scales were used. Attention used the scale: (5) exceptionally attentive, (4) attentive, (3) moderately attentive, (2) less than attentive, and (1) needs improvement. In order to measure relevance, confidence, and satisfaction, students responded based on the scale: (5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) no opinion, (2) agree, or (1) disagree. Student work was graded using the scale: (5) exceptionally well done, (4) well done, (3) complete, (2) less than complete, and (1) needs improvement.
Figure 4.1. Median-Attention.

Figure 4.2. Median-Relevance.
Figure 4.3. Median-Confidence.

Figure 4.4. Median-Satisfaction.
**Attention.** In order to measure attention, Field Observations (Appendix C) of ELL students took place every day that task-based instruction was implemented. Each ELL student was given a rating for their attention based off of a five-point Likert scale. An analysis using the measures of central tendency and variability (Appendix L) indicates that the median for ELL student attention was a 5 in 14 out of 16 instances, or 87.5% of the time. The interquartile range for ELL students was a 0 in 13 out of 16 instances, or 81.25% of the time. Figure 4.1, Median-Attention, displays the possible relationship between two variables: students’ five-point Likert rating for attention (y-axis), and day of implementation (x-axis). The line of best fit shows a slightly positive slope, which suggests a positive relationship between variables.

**Relevance.** The Exit Ticket Survey elicited student responses about the relevance of the task by asking students to react to the statement: “The task was about a topic that is important to me” (Appendix D). An analysis students’ five-point Likert responses using
the measures of central tendency and variability (Appendix L) indicates that the median response for ELLs was equal to or greater than the median response for NESs 87.5% of the time, or in 14 out of 16 instances. The interquartile range for ELL students was less than the interquartile range for NES students 9 out of 16 times. Figure 4.2, Median-Relevance, displays the possible relationship between two variables: students’ five-point Likert response about relevance (y-axis) and day of implementation (x-axis). Although correlation does not imply causality, the line of best fit shows a positive slope, which suggests a positive relationship between variables. This is true for both ELLs and NESs. The line of best fit indicates that at the beginning of the research study, ELL students found the task more relevant than students who were NES. Over time, the rate of change for NESs was higher than the rate of change for ELL students. By the end of the research study, the line of best fit was slightly higher for NESs than it was for ELLs.

**Confidence.** The Exit Ticket Survey elicited student responses about their confidence when participating in the task by asking students to react to the statement: “The task helped me to believe that I can do well in English” (Appendix D). An analysis of students’ five-point Likert responses, using the measures of central tendency and variability (Appendix L) indicates that the median response for ELLs was equal to or greater than the median response for NESs 81.25% of the time, or in 13 out of 16 instances. The interquartile range for ELL students was less than the interquartile range for NES students 12 out of 16 times. Figure 4.3, Median-Confidence, displays the possible relationship between two variables: students’ five-point Likert response about confidence (y-axis), and day of implementation (x-axis). Data is displayed for both ELL students and NES students, in order to provide a comparison. A line of best fit is provided
for both ELLs and NESs. Although correlation does not imply causality, the line of best fit shows an undefined slope for ELLs, and a positive slope for NESs. This suggests no relationship between variables for ELLs, and a positive relationship between variables for NESs. The line of best fit indicates that at the beginning of the research study, ELL students tended to felt more confident than students who were NESs. Over time, the rate of change for NESs was higher than the rate of change for ELL students. By the end of the research study, NESs tended to feel more confident than ELL students.

**Satisfaction.** The Exit Ticket Survey elicited student responses about their satisfaction after participating in the task by asking students to react to the statement: “I am happy and proud of my work in English class today” (Appendix D). An analysis of students’ five-point Likert responses, using the measures of central tendency and variability (Appendix L), indicates that the median response for ELLs was equal to or greater than the median response for NESs 81.25% of the time, or in 13 out of 16 instances. The interquartile range for ELL students was less than the interquartile range for NES students 7 out of 16 times. Figure 4.4, Median-Satisfaction, displays the possible relationship between two variables: students’ five-point Likert response about relevance (y-axis), and day of implementation (x-axis). Data is displayed for both ELL students and NES students, in order to provide a comparison. A line of best fit is provided for both ELLs and NESs. Correlation does not imply causality. However, the line of best fit shows a positive slope for NESs, suggesting a positive relationship between variables. The line of best fit shows a negative slope for ELLs, suggesting a negative relationship between variables. The line of best fit indicates that at the beginning of the research study, ELL students found the task more satisfying than students who were NESs. Over time, ELLs
showed a negative rate of change, while NESs showed a positive rate of change. By the end of the research study, the line of best fit was higher for NESs than it was for ELLs.

**Student Work.** Student work was graded using a five-point Likert scale. An analysis using the measures of central tendency and variability (Appendix L) indicates that the median for ELLs was equal to or greater than the median for NESs 75% of the time, or in 12 out of 16 instances. The interquartile range for ELL students was less than the interquartile range for NES students 4 out of 16 times. Figure 4.5, Median-Student Work, displays the possible relationship between two variables: students’ five-point Likert grade for student work (y-axis), and day of implementation (x-axis). Data is displayed for both ELL students and NES students, in order to provide a comparison. A line of best fit is provided for both ELLs and NESs. Although correlation does not imply causality, the line of best fit shows a positive slope for NESs, which suggests a positive relationship between variables. The line of best fit shows an undefined slope for ELLs, suggesting no relationship between variables. The line of best fit indicates that from the beginning of the research study, and until the end of the research study, ELL student work stayed the same. For NES, however, the line of best fit indicates a positive rate of change. By the end of the research study, the line of best fit was higher for NESs than it was for ELLs.

**Open Response Data: A Priori Codes**

**Overview.** Daily Exit Ticket Surveys (Appendix D) asked students to respond to the open ended question: “Why did you give those scores?” Students’ qualitative responses to this question were coded using the a priori codes: Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction. These a priori codes and their definitions were based off of
the four dimensions of the ARCS model (Keller, 2008). After the initial a priori coding, the student responses within each of the four codes was examined, and two emergent codes were used to further analyze the responses. These emergent codes were: Positive ARCS Response and Negative ARCS Response. In order to ensure the reliability of my a priori codes, I worked with a researcher outside of my study, to establish reliability through intercoder agreement. Intercoder agreement is the process of cross-checking in order to ensure that that coders agree on codes used for the same passage (Creswell, 2014). After multiple rounds of independent coding, the external researcher and I established an intercoder agreement of 81.81%. I then also ran a Cohen’s Kappa statistical analysis, as a second measure of reliability (Gewt, 2014). The results of the Cohen’s Kappa statistical analysis in this research study indicated a Kappa of .749, which shows substantial agreement.

Table 4.1, A Priori Code Data for ELL and NES Students, shows the frequency and percent of student responses for the a priori codes Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction. The data is broken down by student groups: ELL and NES students. Definitions and example student responses for the a priori codes are included in each of the subsections below; this information can also be found in the Codebook (Appendix I). Figures 4.6 through 4.13 present the results of the data analysis from student comments given the emergent codes Positive ARCS Response and Negative ARCS Response. The code Positive ARCS Response was given to a comment where the student spoke positively about Attention, Relevance, Confidence, or Satisfaction; the code Negative ARCS Response was given to a comment where the student spoke negatively. Student examples of these codes can be found in the Codebook (Appendix I). This emergent code
data was analyzed and displayed through pie charts, which show the percentages of positive and negative student responses about Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction. The responses of ELL students are displayed next to the responses of NES students.

Table 4.1

*Type of A Priori Code Data for ELL and NES Students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Priori Code</th>
<th>ELL</th>
<th>NES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
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<td>Attention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
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<td>9.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
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<td>35.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4.6. ELL Responses About Attention.*

*Figure 4.7. NES Responses About Attention.*
Figure 4.8. ELL Responses About Relevance.

Figure 4.9. NES Responses About Relevance.

Figure 4.10. ELL Responses About Confidence.

Figure 4.11. NES Responses About Confidence.
Attention. The definition for Attention, as stated in the Codebook (Appendix I), was: student comments about how easy/difficult it was for them to pay attention in class, may mention participating well/not participating well, perseverance to complete the task/giving up on the task, or helping each other/not helping each other. An example of a student comment that was coded as Attention is the response, “I gave those scores because me and my partner cooperated” (Appendix I). Table 4.1 indicates that students who were ELLs responded with comments about their attention 22.35% of the time, while NESs responded with comments about their attention 23.63% of the time. Figure 4.6 shows that, of these responses, ELLs responded with a positive comment about attention 89.47% of the time, and a negative comment about attention 10.53% of the time. Figure 4.7 shows that students who were NESs responded with a positive comment...
about attention 72.09% of the time, and a negative comment about attention 27.91% of the time.

**Relevance.** The definition for Relevance, as stated in the Codebook (Appendix I), was: student comments about how class helped them/did not help them to reach their personal goals, may mention why the task was important/not important to them; student may say "no opinion". An example of a student comment that received the code Relevance is the response, “This will help me in my test tomorrow and use higher vocabulary” (Appendix I). Table 4.1 indicates that students who were ELLs responded with comments about relevance 32.94% of the time, while NESs responded with comments about relevance 21.43% of the time. As Figure 4.8 shows, of these responses, ELLs responded with a positive comment about relevance 89.29% of the time, and a negative comment about relevance 10.71% of the time. Figure 4.9 shows that students who were NESs responded with a positive comment about relevance 66.67% of the time, and a negative comment about relevance 33.33% of the time.

**Confidence.** The definition for Confidence, as stated in the Codebook (Appendix I), was: student comments about how class made them feel more/less confident, may mention how the task helped them to believe/did not help them to believe they could do well in English. An example of a student comment that was coded as Confidence is the response, “Because I don't think I did good” (Appendix I). Table 4.1 indicates that students who were ELLs responded with comments about confidence 9.41% of the time, while NESs responded with comments about confidence 20.56% of the time. As Figure 4.10 shows, of these responses, ELLs responded with a positive comment about confidence 75% of the time, and a negative comment about confidence 25% of the time.
Figure 4.11 shows that students who were NESs responded with a positive comment about confidence 67.57% of the time, and a negative comment about confidence 32.43% of the time.

**Satisfaction.** The definition for Satisfaction, as stated in the Codebook (Appendix I), was: student comments about how satisfied/not satisfied they were with their performance in class, may mention that that they are happy/unhappy or proud/embarrassed by their work in class. An example of a student comment that received the code Satisfaction is the response, “I gave those scores because I really liked when we got to explain how we got the answer” (Appendix I). Table 4.1 indicates that students who were ELLs responded with comments about satisfaction 35.29% of the time, while NESs responded with comments about satisfaction 34.62% of the time. As Figure 4.12 shows, of these responses, ELLs responded with a positive comment about satisfaction 70% of the time, and a negative comment about satisfaction 30% of the time. Figure 4.13 shows that students who were NESs responded with a positive comment about satisfaction 69.84% of the time, and a negative comment about satisfaction 30.16% of the time.

**Open Response Data: Emergent Codes**

**Overview.** The qualitative open responses from students were also examined on the basis of emerging information (Creswell & Clark, 2011). In order to establish my emergent codes, students’ open responses were grouped and labeled to reflect broad student perspectives (Creswell & Clark, 2011); the responses were grouped into positive, negative, and neutral student perspectives. Particular attention was paid to student perspectives about their collaboration in pair/group work. Then, I grouped these
perspectives into codes (Creswell & Clark, 2011). These emergent codes were: Positive Response to Collaboration, Negative Response to Collaboration, and Neutral Response to Collaboration. These three codes were grouped into the theme: Responses to Collaboration.

**Responses to Collaboration.** The Codebook (Appendix I) provides the definition and two student examples for each emergent code. The code Positive Response to Collaboration was assigned to comments where the student made a positive statement about collaborating with peers. One example of this is the student comment, “Because I loved doing group work. Because we all cooperated” (Appendix I). The Code Negative Response to Collaboration was assigned to comments where the student made a negative statement about collaborating with peers. An example of this is seen in the student comment, “One of my group members didn't try to help or speak” (Appendix I). The code Neutral Response to Collaboration was assigned to comments where the students made a neutral statement about collaborating with peers. The student comment “Because we worked in groups and learn what kind of stuff was in the 1950s” is an example of a neutral response (Appendix I).

Table 4.2, Emergent Code Data for ELL and NES Students, displays the number and percentage of student responses under each of these emergent codes. Students who were ELLs showed a Positive Response to Collaboration 86.67% of the time, while NESs showed a Positive Response to Collaboration 72.5% of the time. ELL students showed a Negative Response to Collaboration 6.67% of the time, while NES students showed a Negative Response to Collaboration 22.5% of the time. ELL and NES students’ Neutral Responses to Collaboration were similar: 6.67% and 5%, respectively.
Table 4.2

*Emergent Code Data for ELL and NES Students*

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<tr>
<th>Emergent Code</th>
<th>ELL</th>
<th>NES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
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<td>Positive Response to Collaboration</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Response to Collaboration</td>
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<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral Response to Collaboration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Focus Group Data: A Priori Codes and Emergent Codes**

*Overview.* During Focus Group One (Appendix A), I collected introductory information about the students. I learned that all students had attended the same elementary school in the previous year. Three students shared that their favorite subject was math, one student responded with science, while another student said their favorite subject was reading. Some students were involved in sports or clubs such as track, volleyball, soccer, and robotics. After the introductory information in Focus Group One, I gathered qualitative data about students’ motivation in English class by asking questions centered around the four dimension of the ARCS model: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Keller, 2008). During Focus Group Two (Appendix B), I omitted the introductory information about students. Instead, I asked students to respond to different tasks that we had done in class together. I took out the materials for a number of different tasks and, one task at a time, showed them to the students. I asked students what kind of things they liked about the task and if they preferred working in groups, pairs, or
individually. I then proceeded to ask the same questions about attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction that I had asked in Focus Group One.

The focus group transcripts were analyzed using a priori codes of Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction. The definitions of these codes, and examples for each, have been specified in previous sections of these findings, and can also be found in the Codebook (Appendix I). The emergent codes for Positive Response to Collaboration, Negative Response to Collaboration, and Neutral Response to Collaboration were also used. More information on these codes can also be found not only in the previous sections of these findings, but also in the Codebook (Appendix I).

**A priori code: Attention.** In both focus groups, students were asked the question: “What makes it easy or difficult to pay attention to English class?” (Appendix A, Appendix B). In Focus Group One, one student expressed that he finds himself “thinkin about other stuff.” No other students responded to the question. In Focus Group Two, however, when I asked “What makes it easy or difficult to pay attention—”, a number of students interrupted me with responses even before I could finish asking the question. Two students agreed that groups are distracting when people are talking to each other, making it difficult for other students to hear the teacher. One of these students also expressed, as he did in Focus Group One, that he gets distracted because he is thinking about other stuff. Three students expressed that they often get distracted because they are tired at the end of the day. I then prompted students to tell me about what makes it easy to pay attention. The following dialogue reveals two students’ responses to this question:

Interviewer: Okay. Okay. What makes it easy to pay attention?

Carisa: Um, working in panther pairs.
Interviewer: Working in panther pairs. Carisa says. Is there anything else make it easier to pay attention? Manuel, you look ready to talk. What makes it easy to pay attention?

Manuel: When, like... in the mornings it's easier for me to pay attention.

Interviewer: Okay.

Manuel: In the afternoon I can fall asleep.

Interviewer: Okay. [laughs] So what things could help you in the afternoon to feel more awake to pay attention? Is there anything we've done that's helped you?

Manuel: Like, something that keep me awake is, like, a fun activity.

Interviewer: Can you give an example of a fun activity? Have we had any in English class?

Manuel: I don't know. I like these two. [points to two tasks]

Interviewer: Uh, what are these?

Manuel: Um, I like the story one.

Interviewer: The story one?

Manuel: Yeah.

Interviewer: And the picture one?

Manuel: Yeah.

This dialogue shows that two students, Carisa and Manuel, identified working in pairs and doing a fun activity as things that help them to pay attention in class. Nearly every task that took place within this study involved students working collaboratively in groups or pairs. In the sample dialogue, Carisa expressed that working in pairs made it easy to pay attention. Manuel expressed that fun activities, like tasks that involved stories and pictures, made it easy for him to pay attention.
A priori code: Relevance. Students were asked the question: “How does English class help you to reach your personal goals?” in both focus groups (Appendix A, Appendix B). In Focus Group One, students’ responses were minimal, but one student commented about personal goals of reading, and two students expressed that it helps them reach their personal goals when the teacher talks about something that they like. Students were only a little bit more responsive to this same question during Focus Group Two. Melissa said that “learning different words and stuff like that… like the Schaffer Paragraph” helps her to reach her personal goals. I asked a follow-up question of the students, saying, “What topics in class are important to you?” Carisa said, “I like when somebody else reads [stories] out loud.” Manuel also added to the conversation, saying, “I like when we read stories… When they, um, um... Sometimes when they're telling the story, I, like, describe it in my head, too.”

A priori code: Confidence. During both focus groups, students were asked the question: “How does English class help you to feel more confident communicating in English?” (Appendix A, Appendix B). In Focus Group One, Manuel said, “Oh, like, when we make groups, we have to talk to each other.” Carisa agreed with Manuel saying “I was gonna say that.” I asked the students what about group worked helped them to feel confident, and Rafe responded “It’s easy to talk to them.” Melissa also expressed that when she gets good grades, she feels confident. In Focus Group Two, students were asked the same question. Melissa and Carisa both responded saying that they don’t like speaking in front of the class. Manuel also added that if he has to speak in front of the class, he faces the opposite direction, avoiding eye contact with other students. Melissa, Carisa, and Manuel then engaged in a conversation about the difficulty of speaking in
front of the class, and explained they are afraid that people will laugh if they make a mistake. I then asked the students what would help them feel more confident speaking in front of people:

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay. What helps you to feel more confident communicating? That's something that you don't like doing, but what could help you feel more confident maybe with speaking in front of people?

Manuel: Um, like—

Melissa: Not—

Manuel: —if I feel proud of what I did.

Interviewer: If you feel proud of what you did, Manuel, then you might find it easier?

Manuel: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay

Melissa: Me, the same.

Interviewer: Same thing.

Melissa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Carisa: Like—

Interviewer: Go ahead, Carisa.

Carisa: [inaudible 00:32:04]

Interviewer: When the teacher's next to you?

Carisa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. What makes you feel confident about that?

Melissa: Because the teachers know everything.
Interviewer: They know everything. [laughs]

Carisa: Yeah, when you need help with something they just help you.

The dialogue above reveals that Manuel and Melissa express feeling more confident when they feel proud of their work. Carisa goes on to explain that she feels confident about her work when the teacher is next to her. Carisa expresses that she feels confident having a knowledgeable teacher help her during class.

A priori code: Satisfaction. Students were asked the question: “In what ways are you satisfied with how you are doing in English class?” during both focus groups (Appendix A, Appendix B). In Focus Group One, Melissa responded saying that her grades make her feel satisfied. Manuel responded that satisfaction comes “when you get a high score… when you feel like you’ve done good” and when someone “comments on your work… like um, like, like, I like your work.” In Focus Group Two, Melissa again shared that “getting good grades” makes her feel satisfied. Manuel expressed that sometimes he likes it when they work alone. Manuel explained, “I stay focused, like, the whole class time… And when I'm focused, um, sometimes the time goes really fast.” Carisa agreed with Manuel, saying that she felt the same way. Manuel then continued to elaborate about what makes him feel satisfied in English class. He said, “when we do fun stuff the time goes so fast.” When I asked Manuel to explain if any of the tasks we did in class were considered fun stuff, he responded quickly, saying “the story.” Students then began to discuss the way certain tasks were set up in the classroom, and the role of time limits. The following conversation reveals a number of students’ perspectives:
Manuel: Also, when we do fun stuff time goes so fast.

Interviewer: Okay. Can you ... where any of the things we did here (clears throat) fun stuff in [inaudible 00:33:14]?

Manuel: The story.

Interviewer: The story.

Melissa: Yeah, 'cause you have time to give us a certain... y'all give us a certain and we gotta do it quickly.

Interviewer: Do you like that?

Melissa: Yeah.

Interviewer: You do?

Carisa: I don't.

Manuel: I don't like to rush.

Carisa: I like to take my time.

Melissa: Well, some teachers be [crosstalk 00:33:35] like, "You need to hurry up because when you go in the other school,"um, they say, "You need to [inaudible 00:33:40]."

Interviewer: Hmm. Okay. But you did like when we had timers in class. It didn't feel the same way as teachers saying you need to hurry up.

Melissa: Yeah, but I'm okay with that.

Interviewer: Okay.

Manuel: Sometimes, like, I like it 'cause, um, it's like ... It's like a competition and it's challenging and I like it sometimes.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Okay. So sometimes you like it.

Manuel: Yeah.

Interviewer: But if you feel too rushed you don't like it?

Manuel: Yeah.
Interviewer: Okay. Rafe, do you like time limits?

Rafe: No.

Interviewer: No? Why not?

Rafe: [inaudible 00:34:20]

Interviewer: You don't.

Rafe: [inaudible 00:34:22]

Interviewer: It goes by quick. Time passes quickly.

The conversation revealed that students had strong opinions about the use of time limits within classroom activities. Melissa began by sharing that she liked having time limits. Carisa, on the other hand, responded that she did not like limits, she would rather take her time. Manuel agreed that he did not like to rush, but that he did like it when class felt like a challenging competition. Rafe also explained that he did not like to feel rushed in class.

**Emergent codes: Responses to collaboration.** In Focus Group One, students made only a few comments about collaborating with their peers by working in groups. For example, Manuel expressed that class helps him to feel more confident communicating in English “when we make groups, we have to talk to each other.” Carisa agreed that she liked working in groups. Rafe also said that, when working in groups, “it’s easy to talk to them.” Manuel also commented, “I just like working by myself.” In Focus Group Two, I specifically asked students to tell me if they would like to work in pairs, groups, or individually, when completing certain tasks. Students responded to multiple scenarios where they could reflect on whether they preferred to work in groups
or pairs. Their responses indicated their strong feelings about the advantages and
disadvantages of collaboration with their peers.

Students often expressed that they liked to work collaboratively with their peers.
For some tasks, students responded that they would prefer to work in pairs, while for
other tasks, students responded that they would prefer groups. Melissa expressed that “I
like it in pairs 'cause it's more challenging, like, so you can learn better.” Rafe agreed
with Melissa, saying “Cause, like Melissa said, you can learn instead of other people
telling you want to do.” In another instance, Melissa explained that she liked pairs
because it gave her the opportunity to explain things to her partner. The following
dialogue provided insight into Melissa’s thoughts and feelings:

Melissa: I said pairs because I remember that my partner didn't understand it.
Interviewer: Okay. And was that a good thing or a bad thing for you?
Melissa: A good thing.
Interviewer: Why?
Melissa: ‘Cause ... so I can help them.
Interviewer: Okay. Good. So you were able to explain it to somebody else. And
how did that make you feel about your work that day?
Melissa: Good.

Working in pairs gave Melissa the opportunity to share with another student. This
opportunity to share made Melissa feel good about herself and the fact that she was able
to help someone else. Other students also expressed that working in groups can be easier
for them, because they can correct each other and help each other come to the right
answer. Carisa expressed her feelings about this by saying, “I mean, I don't like working in groups, but, like, it's easier... we get to have more opinions.” Manuel also expressed a similar sentiment about the benefits of group work when he said “Because, um, when... what's... You know, in two groups there's only, like... there's, um, less opinions and they might be wrong and when there's more, um... there's more people, um, they might correct you and 'cause there's more people.” Overall, students found value in being able to collaborate and help one another through working in pairs or groups.

Although students often responded positively about collaboration with their peers, they also explained some of the challenges they experience when working with others. At one point in the conversation Carisa tried to explain her reasons for preferring working in pairs versus working in groups by expressing, “when we work in groups sometimes we just don’t get concentrated.” She continued, “like like you know when they, like... like, we have different answers in then they have different answers and we start arguing back and forth.” Sometimes students would feel frustrated if their partner did not understand something. In some of these instances, students said they would prefer to work individually. Carisa explained that at times, she would prefer to work by herself because “they do all the work and they don't let you do anything.” Manuel agreed, saying, “Or sometimes they let you do, like, everything and they don't do nothing.” In these kinds of situations, Carisa, Manuel, and Rafe all agreed that they would rather work individually. Melissa then commented that one of the negatives about working in groups is that “when you have a lot of people, you don't... they give you the answers and you don't know them.” In this type of situation, Melissa felt like she was not being challenged because she did not need to contribute to the group.
Discussion: Research Question One

Organization of Discussion

A majority of the data collected and analyzed in this study compared ELL student responses to those of NES students. This approach was taken in order to address the responsibility that inclusion teachers have to meet the needs of all students their classroom. While this study aims to measure the influence of task-based instruction on the motivation of ELL students in an inclusion classroom, it often does so by examining the influence of task-based instruction on the motivation of NES students, compared to the influence of task-based instruction on the motivation of ELLs. Often, the meaning of the ELL student data is made clear through the comparison to NES student data. The following discussion provides an interpretation of the findings of this research study. This discussion is organized, first by the four dimensions of the ARCS model: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Keller, 2008). This is followed by discussions about student work and the emergent findings about student responses to collaboration.

Interpreting Attention

Multiple data sources gathered student responses about the influence of task-based instruction on student attention. This data indicates that ELL students showed the greatest positive responses about attention. Student field observations showed that ELL students almost always displayed exceptionally attentive behavior during task-based instruction. The scatter plot (Figure 4.1) provides a strong visual representation of this data. While there was not a strong positive slope in the line of best fit, the trend did demonstrate an increase over time. The median student attention was almost always a 5 (exceptionally attentive), and only in two instances was the median for student attention a
4 (attentive) (Appendix L). Student exit ticket responses (Table 4.1) also showed that ELL students often commented about their ability to pay attention, 22.35% percent of the time; they made these types of comments almost as frequently as NES, who commented about attention 23.63% of the time. However, ELL students were much more positive in their comments about attention than NES were; 89.47% of ELL student responses were positive (Figure 4.6), compared to a 72.09% positive response rate for NES students (Figure 4.7). Finally, the focus group analysis provides very strong evidence for the influence of task-based instruction on ELL students’ attention. Students made very clear references to task-based instruction as fun activities that helped them to pay attention.

**Interpreting Relevance**

Multiple data sources gathered student responses about the influence of task-based instruction on student relevance. This data indicates that ELL students showed the greatest positive responses about relevance. The results displayed through the line of best fit in the scatter plot (Figure 4.2) indicated that the median rating of relevance for both ELL students and NES students increased over time. A close examination of the median response for both students indicates that the median response for ELLs was equal to or greater than the median response for NESs 87.5% of the time (Appendix L). The visual representation of the scatter plot shows that, as the days of implementation progressed, students found task-based instruction increasingly more relevant. Interestingly enough, the NES median progressed at a higher rate of change than the ELL median. However, the ELL median for relevance started at a higher rating than the NES rating for relevance. On the open response exit tickets, ELL students also showed a higher percentage of comments about relevance, at 32.94%, compared to their NES peers, at 21.43% (Table
4.1). This comparison shows that ELL students responded about the relevance of task-based instruction on a much more frequent basis than NES students. In support of this finding is the deeper analysis of the positive or negative nature of these comments about relevance. The data shows that ELLs responded much more positively about relevance than NESs; ELL student responses about relevance were positive 89.29% of the time (Figure 4.8), while NES student responses about relevance were positive only 66.67% of the time (Figure 4.9). This suggests that not only did ELL students find task-based instruction more relevant, they also talked about relevance in a more positive way. The analysis of students comments during the focus group did not reveal any specific comments about the relevance of task-based instruction, although students did talk about topics that were a part of task-based activities.

**Interpreting Confidence**

Multiple data sources gathered student responses about the influence of task-based instruction on student confidence. This data indicates that ELL students showed the least positive responses about confidence. The scatter plot provides a visual representation of the data analysis of the median. The results displayed through the line of best fit in the scatter plot (Figure 4.3) indicated that the median rating of confidence for ELL students showed an undefined slope, while the median for NES students indicated a positive slope. As the days of implementation progressed, NES students found task-based instruction increased their confidence, while ELL students showed no significant change in confidence. A closer look at students’ median responses showed that, when compared to their NES peers, the median rating of confidence for ELLs was equal to or greater than the median rating of confidence for NESs 81.25% of the time.
(Appendix L). This suggests that in the majority of cases, ELL students did rate themselves as confident, if not more confident, than their NES classmates. On another note, ELL students did not often make comments about their confidence in the open responses of the exit tickets. The NES students made comments about confidence much more frequently than ELLs: 20.56% versus 9.41%, respectively (Table 4.1). However, a closer look at the positive and negative nature of these comments reveals that ELL students demonstrated a higher percentage of positive comments about their confidence (Figure 4.10), as compared to their NES peers (Figure 4.11), 75% versus 67.57%, respectively. The conversations that took place within the focus group indicate that ELL students struggle with feeling confident when they need to speak in front of people. Students spoke about some things that help them to feel more confident, mentioning group work and supportive teacher feedback; both of these things were implemented as part of the structure of task-based instruction.

Interpreting Satisfaction

Multiple data sources gathered student responses about the influence of task-based instruction on student satisfaction. This data indicates that ELL students showed moderately positive responses about satisfaction. The line of best fit displayed in the scatter plot (Figure 4.4) suggests that throughout the implementation of this study, ELL students’ satisfaction showed a negative trend, while NES students demonstrated a positive trend. However, even though it seems that ELL students’ satisfaction seemed to decrease throughout the course of implementation, they did rate their satisfaction higher than that of NESs’ at the start of the study. An analysis of the measure of central tendency shows that median for ELL students’ was equal to or greater than that of NES
students’ 81.25% of the time (Appendix L). Both groups of students frequently commented about their satisfaction; in fact, both ELLs and NESs commented more about their satisfaction than they did about attention, relevance, or confidence; students who were ELLs commented about satisfaction 35.29% of the time, and NES students commented about satisfaction 34.62% of the time (Table 4.1). Both ELL and NES students demonstrated similar percentages of positive comments about satisfaction, 70% and 69.84%, respectively (Figure 4.12, Figure 4.13). Lastly, in the focus group, ELL students made direct references to the ways that task-based instruction helped them to feel satisfied in English class. Students talked about specific tasks they enjoyed, and mentioned specific elements of the tasks that they liked. Students also talked about enjoying tasks that felt like a competition or a game. These student comments demonstrate that ELL students found specific tasks very satisfying.

**Interpreting Student Work**

An analysis of student work documents also generates interesting findings. The scatter plot (Figure 4.5) provides a helpful visual of the median ratings of student work. Students who were ELLs demonstrated a median rating for student work that was equal to or higher than the rating for NESs 75% of the time (Appendix L). This percentage is lower than the median rating found for attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. The line of best fit in the scatter plot showed that while the median rating for ELL students’ work did not increase over time, neither did it decrease over time. Interestingly, the median rating for NES students’ work increased over time. It seems that task-based instruction did not have as large an impact on ELL students’ work as it did on ELL
students’ motivation. Nevertheless, the data in this study suggests that task-based instruction did not negatively impact ELL students’ work.

**Interpreting Student Responses to Collaboration**

Two data sources provide insight about the emergent findings about students’ feelings about collaboration. On the open response questions, while both ELL and NES students made positive comments about collaboration with their peers, ELL students were, as a whole, more positive about collaboration than NES students; 86.67% to 72.5%, respectively (Table 4.2). On a similar note, ELLs demonstrated a lower negative response to collaboration, at 6.67%, while NESs showed a higher response, at 22.5%. Students’ neutral responses to collaboration were similar, ELLs at 6.67% and NESs at 5%. This suggests that ELL students saw strong benefits to collaboration, and did not frequently identify collaboration as a negative thing. This data analysis and interpretation is further supported by focus group conversations with the ELL students. In these focus groups, ELL students reaffirmed their interest in working in groups. They shared honestly about the benefits of peer collaboration and explained that it provided them with opportunities to help each other, correct each other, and learn from each other’s mistakes. Students also clearly stated some of the challenges of collaboration. Students explained that some of the difficulties of working collaboratively with their peers are disagreements between students, and an unequal/unfair distribution of work among students. However, overall, ELL students viewed collaboration as a positive thing that was important to them.

**Findings: Research Question Two**

Three sources of data were collected in order to answer my second research question: a Collaboration PDSA Research Journal, Peer Observation-Discussion
Protocols (Appendix E), and an End of Study Reflection (Appendix F). There were 15 journal entries in my Collaboration PDSA Research Journal. The Peer Observation-Discussion Protocols (Appendix E) took place seven times, and the End of Study Reflection took place at the conclusion of the study. This section will explore the findings of these three data collection methods. These methods were analyzed using emergent codes (Appendix I). The findings will be organized according to the two themes that emerged from the coding process: Collaboration and Implications for the Classroom. After the findings are presented, the next section will provide a discussion and interpretation of these finding.

**Collaboration**

**Challenges.** There were a couple challenges to successful co-planning. An examination of my Collaboration PDSA Research Journal revealed that these challenges had to do with distractions, and prioritizing the time to co-plan. Computers and phones often became an obstacle to Brittany and I when they became distractions to our co-planning meetings. In one journal entry, I wrote, “She was busy on her computer.” On another day, I wrote about being “distracted by [the] phone or the computer” during our co-planning session. Another example can be seen in the journal entry when I wrote, “She said she needed to send an email. She had a to-do list to get done, and she needed to leave right after the bell.” Distractions made successful co-planning challenging.

Another challenge to collaboration was prioritizing the time to co-plan. In my first journal entry, I recorded that Brittany and I had arranged to get together to co-plan, but “something came up and she could not make it.” Later that week, on a day when I wrote “It was difficult to collaborate,” Brittany and I were pulled in different directions,
“running errands.” We often only had a “few minutes to sit down and make sure we had our plans together. On another day, my journal recorded, “We had 10 minutes.” The struggle to prioritize co-planning made it challenging for Brittany and I to collaborate together.

**Successes.** The examples of successes in collaboration were found through an analysis of the Collaboration PDSA Research Journal. These successes were seen when Brittany and I became more intentional about our collaboration (Appendix I). On day three of the study, Brittany and I chose to design a notes sheet that would help us to implement task-based instruction more fully. Two days later, on day five of the study, we used what we called the Task-Cycle Notes Sheet (Appendix K) in class to support us as we implemented task-based instruction. In my journal entry from this day of the study, I wrote “It worked!... We seemed to have a purpose… The Task-Cycle Notes Sheet seemed very effective in helping [us] to know what to do in the classroom.” The Task-Cycle Notes Sheet was successful in helping us to be intentional about our collaboration.

We used the Task-Notes Sheet again with success on day six of the study. However, although we intended on using the notes sheet every day, the journal indicates that the notes sheet was not used on days seven, and eight. Then, on day nine of the study, the notes sheet was used again with success: “The notes sheet was very successful today! Brittany used the notes sheet, and then used her notes from that sheet to incorporate a language focus piece to the lesson.” On day 10, I also wrote “This notes sheet is very a successful tool!” The Task-Cycle Notes Sheet (Appendix K) was the first more formal intentional step that Brittany and I took to communicate more with each
other about the phases of task-based instruction, and our individual roles within these phases.

After using the task-notes sheet intermittently within the first ten days of the study, we became intentional about our collaboration in an additional way. Brittany and I began to make plans to collaborate by conducting observations of each other. On days 11 through 15 of the study, Brittany and I used a Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E). We made plans to use this protocol 8 times, and successfully used the protocol 7 times. After the first observation using the protocol, on day 11, I wrote that it enabled us to engage in a discussion about “how to teach something.” After the second and third observations, on day 12, I wrote: “We are learning how to work together. The observation protocol went well. Using the observation protocol prompted our conversations about our use of the TBI method.”

The increasing success of the protocol is evidenced by the enthusiastic comments that I recorded in my PDSA journal. Following the fourth and fifth observations, I wrote: “Good collaboration! This is going well.” After the sixth and seventh observations, I wrote, “Collaboration went well. We have learned to communicate and had a meaningful conversation at the end of the class period. Today I learned that the TBI Observation Protocol is a very effective tool in helping teachers to see the elements of each step of TBI.” In my Collaboration PDSA Research Journal, not only was using the observation protocols identified as a success, but a closer look at the journal entries reveals my growing excitement, as the protocol contributed to more meaningful collaboration about task-based instruction.
Impact of Observation. The conversation that took place in the End of Study Reflection between Brittany and me further reveals the impact of the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E), and its effect on collaboration. In the End of Study Reflection, neither of us had anything negative to say about using the protocol. Brittany and I both viewed the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol as a positive. In fact, Brittany shared, “The observations that you and I did I really felt like it was more a bettering process… I didn't take anything negative away from it, and sometimes when I get observed there are negatives, you know?” Some of the positives that we associated with the protocol were establishing respectful peer-to-peer feedback, emphasizing improvement, and drawing authentic connections to classroom practice. Examples of these positive elements are explained with evidence in the following paragraphs.

There were many moments in our conversation where Brittany and I shared things about how the protocol helped us to establish respectful peer-to-peer feedback. At one point in the conversation, Brittany shared, “I guess I have a different mindset because I just finished my master’s program last year for administration, so every time I get observed that's what's in my head - is how it’s supposed to be in a text book. But it really was, this went really well. Then you and I sat down to talk about it, like as peers.” Brittany felt that our observations and discussions were living examples of a concept she had heard about in a textbook, but had never experienced in professional practice. I also shared, “Yeah, the expectation is one of having each other’s best interest in mind, and knowing that each other is putting their best foot forward, and coming with that perspective.” Brittany and I agreed that the protocol helped us to establish respectful peer-to-peer feedback.
Brittany and I commented that using the protocol enabled us to emphasize improvement. Brittany shared “But there was never a time where I thought, ‘Well crap that didn't go well.’ I thought, ‘Well this went really well, next time I'm gonna do this and that.’” Using the protocol helped to frame our conversations as positive steps towards future improvement, rather than critical analyses of each other’s past teaching. The protocol set a tone that said, “‘Hey take this, take notes, and help me figure this out while I'm doing it.’” This emphasis on improvement helped Brittany and me to brainstorm together about suggestions for the future. Brittany commented, “It was never, ‘Hey, you need to do it.’ It's ‘Hey, you and I both have the same problem at the same time. What are we going to do about this?’” We both agreed that when we had the opportunity to sit down and talk about our observations, we felt that the feedback we provided each other with always led in a positive direction.

Our conversation also showed that Brittany and I felt the protocol enabled us to draw authentic connections to classroom practice. Brittany commented that our process of conducting observation protocols with each other felt different than the observations she had received from administrators. I also agreed. Brittany shared: “I think too, it's because like you and I were teaching the same thing... I mean... if I go into a science class and watch somebody teach, how much of that is going to resonate with me - maybe the classroom management? I don't know. I don't know what kind of teacher she is. But to watch you do the same thing that I'm trying to do and vice-versa, and taking notes on that.” Brittany explained that she felt this relevance had to do with the fact that we were both English teachers, engaging in the same lessons, with the same group of students. There was a certain unique level of relevance to our observations and discussions. We
were able to draw authentic connections to our classroom practice because we understood our roles as English teachers.

**Implications for the Classroom**

**Pre-task.** When Brittany and I discussed the pre-task phase, we reflected about how we introduced the topic, explained the directions, and helped students to identify words that they would need. Our conversations often included direct feedback to each other. After one lesson, Brittany shared the following feedback with me, about how I engaged students in the pre-task: “Repeating the instructions as they work is super great, and not just repeating the instruction but encouraging instructions, you know, like, ‘Do this, and work together.’ It was just really positive.”

A day later, during the pre-task phase, Brittany and I reflected again on the practice of providing students with positive instructions. In this observation, Brittany shared with me:

I really liked how you encouraged them and you're constantly restating things, but you're restating it in a way that's not very obvious to them, so they're constantly trying to listen to what you're saying because it's not the same thing every time. Like, me, they'll drown me out because I'll be like, “Clear your desk, clear your desk,” or “Stop talking, stop talking.” But when you were going over the instructions, you said them differently each time, a little bit differently. This quote also indicates that the Observation-Discussion Protocol generated conversations about the pre-task phase. These conversations specifically focused on ways to gain student attention during classroom time - especially when the teacher needed to give instructions to students.
Task-Planning-Report. When Brittany and I discussed the task, we talked about how we monitored or encouraged students while they worked and commented on how engaged the students were in the task. During one observation, Brittany provided feedback to me, saying, “The difficulty level today, I think, is what really helped engage them because they were zoned in because it was tough. I heard a lot of great discussion.” In conversations following the observation protocol, Brittany and I examined ways to further encourage and engage students. One day, Brittany was looking at her Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E) and commented, “In here, it says, ‘Prepare to report to the class how they did the task and what they discovered and decided.’ They're sharing their favorite sentence and everything, but they're not walking us through any kind of thought process.” After this comment Brittany tried to brainstorm about ways to have students be more engaged in their reports.

During the task, Brittany and I also discussed classroom systems and procedures that related to students’ appropriate work in groups, and students’ ability to share out with the class. As we implemented task-based instruction, focusing on the dynamics of pairs/groups of students became an important piece of maintaining order within our classroom systems. On one occasion, Brittany shared, “The pair work was really good today. I feel like they didn't argue or anything like that.” We brainstormed ways to structure our classroom practices in order to best facilitate the task-based instruction framework. In another observation, I shared the following thoughts: “I'm thinking, how can we get more creative with the report and not always having a full group? Like having peer to peer reporting to each other. Instead of sharing out everybody, having two groups
share to each other?” Brittany and I tried to think about ways to give all students opportunities to talk about their work with each other.

**Language Focus.** As Brittany and I discussed the language focus, we identified times when the teacher analyzed and practiced useful words with the students. In one of our observations, we mentioned specific conversations within our lessons that addressed the language focus. In this case our feedback stemmed from identifying a key moment in instruction that we wanted to imitate in the future. In this observation, I provided the following feedback to Brittany: “You were saying to the students, you know, somebody would share the meaning of a word, like ‘selfish,’ and you asked somebody, ‘Did they know what 'selfish' meant?’ And it was the EL student. And then you asked them ‘How could you explain selfish to them?’” I went on to identify how that was a perfect example of bringing the language focus into the lesson.

In the language focus, Brittany and I tried to think about how to structure our classroom practices to easily facilitate the use of the language focus. During one observation, Brittany came to the realization that she could envision the language focus as “just a quick re-teach.” We tried to think about ways effectively incorporate the language focus as a conclusion to the lesson. In another observation, I gave the following feedback to Brittany: “And then the other thing I feel like I'm hearing is that we need to think more about, and we're thinking more about, creative ways to incorporate this language piece at the end to kind of tie everything together.” Brittany and I tried to understand the language focus piece as a way to wrap up our lesson, creatively re-teaching or re-clarifying certain elements of instruction before concluding the lesson.
Discussion: Research Question Two

This discussion is organized according the two themes that were established through the qualitative data that was analyzed in the findings. These themes are:

Collaboration and Implications for the Classroom. Due to the fact that this was an emergent research question, the data collected and analyzed was not aligned in ways that support triangulation. This became evident in the analysis when the emergent codes did not always overlap with each other. The findings of this data do support each other, however, and can be interpreted in order to answer this research question.

The theme of Collaboration can be interpreted, first, through looking at the findings from the research journal. This journal provides a documentation of the challenges and successes that were identified through the process of co-teaching with task-based instruction. The two challenges that Brittany and I faced when implementing task-based instruction were distractions and the challenge to find intentional co-planning time. As the days and weeks of implementation progressed, the PDSA journal documents the fact that Brittany and I began to experience successes through both our co-planning and implementation of task-based instruction. We experienced these successes as we began to be more intentional about our collaboration. This success was seen first, through our use of the Task-Notes Sheet (Appendix K) as a tool to help us focus our implementation of task-based instruction. While the Task-Notes Sheet was a good starting point, we did not use it consistently. Brittany and I began to implement another strategy that supported our collaboration in an even more powerful way. This powerful strategy was the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E). As we used this protocol we not only observed each other, but also took the time to sit down and talk with
each other about our observations. Through this process our co-teaching relationship grew stronger. Brittany and I began to understand how to teach, how to work together, and how to collaborate with meaningful conversations about our classroom practices.

An interpretation of the theme Collaboration is furthered by the data collected in the End of Study Reflection (Appendix F). When this End of Study Reflection was analyzed, it revealed that both Brittany and I placed tremendous value in the experience of using the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E). Together, we discovered that the protocol served as a positive tool that enabled us to establish respectful peer-to-peer feedback, emphasize improvement, and draw authentic connections to classroom practice. As we used the protocol to help us engage in peer-to-peer feedback, we felt that we were able to establish a positive tone, and a trusting, open relationship. Our emphasis during these discussions always focused around improvement, and helping each other to find solutions to problems that we were having in the classroom. The observations helped us to stay connected to our classroom practice in a very unique way: we were two English teachers, trying to support each other as we implemented task-based instruction in our classroom.

When the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocols (Appendix E) themselves were analyzed, the findings revealed many things about the theme of Implications for the Classroom. The process of co-teaching helped Brittany and I to gather information from our experiences and conversations, and to develop feedback that held implications for our future implementation of task-based instruction. This feedback included ideas about how to: establish clear instructions in the pre-task phase, create challenging tasks and support students to give high quality presentations during the task cycle, and authentically
incorporate vocabulary opportunities in the language focus phase. Through our focused conversations about the different phases of task-based instruction, we were able to develop very practical and focused ideas for our upcoming lessons. We also discovered that the protocols helped us to identify moments in our classrooms where we could establish different systems and procedures that would better support instruction. Brittany and I reflected on: how to provide students with positive instructions and re-directions, how to effectively organize group work, and how to manage end of class time. Not only were we improving in our ability to implement task-based instruction, but we were also improving in our ability to develop appropriate classroom systems and procedures that would support any method of instruction.

**Conclusion**

This action research study asked the following original research question: What is the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in a grade seven ELA inclusion classroom? Motivation was measured according to the four elements of the ARCS model: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Keller, 2008). The research question was, therefore, answered by examining ELL students in each of these elements. Using a convergent parallel mixed methods design, qualitative and quantitative data was gathered simultaneously, and merged in the analysis (Creswell, 2014). The results of this data collection and descriptive statistical analysis indicated that when responding to the influence of task-based instruction, ELL students showed the greatest positive responses about attention and relevance, moderately positive responses about satisfaction, and the least positive responses about confidence. The findings of this study
suggest that, overall, ELL students responded positively about the influence of task-based instruction on their motivation.

A second research question also emerged as a part of this action research study. This research question was: How does co-teaching using a task-based instruction model in an inclusion classroom affect teachers? This question was addressed through a phenomenological qualitative approach which described the lived experience of individuals (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative data was collected and analyzed, and the results of this analysis demonstrated that co-teaching using a task-based instruction model provided insight into collaboration, with implications for the classroom, and an understanding of the value of collaboration through the use of peer observation protocols.

This chapter has outlined the findings and discussion of the original and emergent research questions addressed in this study. Action research follows a cycle of planning, acting, developing, and reflecting (Mertler, 2014). Throughout the implementation of my study, I engaged in a daily reflective action research process. This chapter, along with the previous chapters, has demonstrated the planning, acting, and developing that has taken place throughout this study. I will now continue the action research process through the reflecting phase. The next steps of improvement are outlined in the following chapter. These steps of improvement begin with a discussion of changes, which provides the reader with my thoughts about the limitations of this study. The steps of improvement continue with an action plan and implications for future practice, which are proposals about my next steps in action research.
CHAPTER FIVE: ACTION PLAN AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE PRACTICE

Reflection

Introduction

This action research study aimed to answer my original research question: What is the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in a grade seven ELA inclusion classroom? As demonstrated in the findings and discussion, ELL students responded positively about the influence of task-based instruction on their motivation; this motivation was measured through the four elements of the ARCS model - attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Keller, 2008). The data analysis in the previous chapter indicated that ELL students showed the greatest positive responses about attention and relevance, moderately positive responses about satisfaction, and the least positive responses about confidence. A second research question emerged through the process of this action research study. This emergent research question asked: How does co-teaching using a task-based instruction model in an inclusion classroom affect teachers? The findings of this research question suggest implications for future implementation of task-based instruction, implications for classroom systems and procedures, and a deeper understanding of the value of collaboration through the use of peer observation protocols.
The previous discussion about the implications of these two research questions now leads into the last chapter of this study, which includes a process of self-reflection, provides a discussion of changes to the study, outlines an action plan, and provides implications for future practice. As Mertler (2014) explains, action research follows a cycle of planning, acting, developing, and reflecting. In fact, the action research process is never really finished (Mertler, 2014), but follows a continual process of improvement. In the previous chapters, the research plan, data collection, analysis, and discussion represented the stages of planning, acting, and developing within the cycle of action research. This chapter now completes this process through reflection and planning for future implementation.

**PDSA Cycles**

Through the course of this research study, the most powerful thing that I did to engage in self-reflection was use daily Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Cycles (The W. Edwards Deming Institute, 2016). A PDSA Cycle is a systematic approach within improvement science, that can be used to gain knowledge about the continual improvement of a process or product. I used the PDSA Cycle as a way to organize my plans, my questions and predictions at the beginning of each day, record what happened, document the results, and outline my modifications for the future. I began using the PDSA Cycle as an informal tool that supported me with a rapid process to make decisions and reflect about task-based instruction. The PDSA Cycle began as a process to support me in the continual improvement of my practice around task-based instruction.

Improvement science provides the PDSA framework for data-driven exploration of practice, in order to integrate change into complex systems (Hannan, Russell,
The method of improvement science is often used in healthcare and education settings, in order to “optimize a process or system” (Inkelas, Christie, & Lemire, 2017, p. 93). The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, an educational policy and research center, has led the way in the development and use of improvement science in education (Bryk et al., 2016). When conducting improvement science in the educational field, educators use deductive and inductive learning cycles in order to refine a theory, predicting a strategy that will work in the future (Inkelas et al., 2017). I was not able to find any research studies that combined the PDSA Cycle of improvement with action research. In fact, some research presented these two methods of improvement as mutually exclusive entities (Eather, Chiarella, & Donoghue, 2013). In my own personal experience, however, I found that the PDSA framework supported me on a day to day basis throughout this action research. My classroom was a complex process that was in need of improvement.

**Collaborative Action Research**

When this study began, I had an original research question about the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation. Each day, I looked for ways to implement task-based instruction more clearly, closely, intentionally, and with more fidelity. As I looked for opportunities to be more intentional in my teaching, I also began to look for ways to be more intentional about my own professional growth through collaboration with Brittany, my co-teacher. I believe my growing awareness and focus on collaboration was a result of engaging in PDSA Cycles. I began to recognize the value of the co-teaching relationship I had with Brittany, and the following research question emerged as a second focus of this study: How does co-teaching that implements a task-
based instruction model in an inclusion classroom affect teachers? Previous studies indicated the benefits of collaboration in action research: not only does it contribute to professional development (Castro Garces & Martinez Grenada, 2016), but it also has been found to improve collaboration when supporting students with learning needs (Salm, 2014). While I did not anticipate the benefits of this collaboration at the beginning, when I set out to address my first research question, I quickly realized that my action research study was being enhanced because of my collaboration with another professional.

As co-teachers, Brittany and I constantly talked and reflected on our teaching practice. In these conversations, we were able to monitor ELL student motivation, troubleshoot challenges with classroom management, discuss what parts of our lessons were most effective, and brainstorm ways to improve our practice in the future. Other previous research suggested that co-teaching is a very effective form of job-embedded professional development (Shaffer & Thomas-Brown, 2015). My personal experience through the course of this study further supports this previous research.

**Peer Observation-Discussion Protocols**

For Brittany and I, what began as casual planning sessions and reflective conversations transformed over time as we developed tools to help us support our teaching practice, and to help us support each other. As this action research study progressed, Brittany and I began to create intentional professional learning opportunities within our working relationship, using the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E). We used this protocol to advance our implementation of task-based instruction. What we realized is that not only did it help us to improve our
implementation of task-based instruction, but it also gave us an opportunity to talk about improving classroom systems and procedures, and demonstrated the unique value of collaboration through the use of peer observation protocols. Previous research indicated that teachers who have used peer observation protocols believed that receiving peer feedback about their teaching helped them to become more reflective practitioners and enabled them to improve their instructional skills (Amrein-Beardsley & Osborn Popp, 2012). Brittany and I also found that the observation protocols we used throughout our collaboration helped us to be more reflective and to improve our teaching skills.

**Implications for Next Steps**

My self-reflection through the use of daily PDSA Cycles enabled me to engage in a meaningful process of action research, a true process of improvement. An action research study that began as one research question evolved into a study with a second, emergent question. I believe it was the process of engaging in PDSA Cycles about task-based instruction that enabled me to embrace the surprising discoveries that I was making about collaboration and professional growth through co-teaching. The emphasis on the PDSA Cycle as a process of improvement made me open to exploring another facet of task-based instruction: not only was I able to examine the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation, but I was also able to examine how co-teaching using a task-based instruction affected teachers. What follows in the rest of this chapter is a reflective discussion of the changes I would make to this research study, a summary of my action plan, and implications for future practice. The suggestions I list as changes to my research study, as well as my action plan for the future, are grounded just as strongly
in my discoveries about professional collaboration as they are based in my findings about task-based instruction.

**Discussion of Changes**

This study was designed as a mixed methods action research study, which asked the original research question: What is the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in a grade seven ELA inclusion classroom? This study implemented a convergent parallel mixed methods design where both qualitative and quantitative data were collected at the same time, and this data was integrated in the results of the study (Creswell, 2014). The research participants were students in one grade seven ELA classroom, consisting of 5 ELL students and 10 NES students. This study implemented four data collection methods: Focus Groups (Appendix A, Appendix B), Field Observations (Appendix C), Student Work Documents, and Exit Ticket Surveys (Appendix D).

If I had the opportunity to conduct this study again, I would make some minor changes to my process of implementation. At the beginning of this research study, I had hoped to implement task-based instruction by using a simple protocol to integrate just the “task-cycle” piece of task-based instruction into my daily lessons. Within the first week of conducting my research study, however, I realized that all of a sudden, task-based instruction did not feel like it was making any real changes in my classroom practice. Task-based instruction did not seem like anything revolutionary or new: how was this method really a change that I could measure? Through a process of reflecting, I realized that I needed to be faithful to the whole process of task-based instruction: the pre-task, task-cycle, and the language focus. I began to scaffold the process of implementation.
week by week, first adding the pre-task, and then adding the language focus. If I were to conduct this action research study again, I would fully implement all three phases of task-based instruction, from the very start of the research.

Another change I would make to this study is to the data collection methods. My student surveys included four questions for students. The first three questions asked students to respond on a five-point Likert scale about their feelings of relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. I did not ask students a question about their attention. This was an intentional decision that I made when I was designing my research study. I had planned to gather data about students’ attention through observations. While the Field Observations (Appendix C) did provide me with valuable data about students’ attention, I did not have as much self-assessment data from students about their attention. In a future study like this one, I would add a question about attention to the student survey.

A third thing I would change about this study is related to my emerging focus on a second research question. The second research question of this study asked: How does co-teaching using a task-based instruction model in an inclusion classroom affect teachers? Throughout this study, as Brittany and I began to be more intentional about our collaboration, our implementation of task-based instruction grew stronger. Not only were we able to collaborate about improving the process of task-based instruction, but we also grew stronger in our collaboration about general classroom systems and procedures. When Brittany and I became more intentional with our collaboration, our experience of professional growth was richer, and our reflections and ideas for the future were stronger. This intentionality came through using the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E). Brittany and I used this protocol seven times, to conduct observations of
each other. If I were to conduct another research study like this one, I would increase the number of times that we used the observation protocols, in order to gather more robust qualitative data.

**Action Plan**

**Developing an Action Plan**

Developing an action plan is an essential part of the process of action research (Mertler, 2014). An action plan allows me the opportunity to think about the process of conducting action research, with a focus on next steps. This action plan helps me to think about what I learned about my topic that I did not know before I started, and what unintended consequences resulted from my study (Mertler, 2016). I developed the following two step action plan in order to continue the process of learning that began with this research study.

**Action Plan: Step One**

**Purpose.** The original focus of this study was to examine the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation in a grade seven ELA inclusion classroom. Motivation was defined by attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction (Keller, 2008). The findings of this research indicated that, when responding to the influence of task-based instruction, ELL students showed the greatest positive responses about attention and relevance. However, ELL students had only moderately positive responses about satisfaction, and the least positive responses about confidence. The purpose of Step One of this Action Plan is to find and implement strategies to increase ELL students’ feelings of satisfaction and confidence.
**Objectives.** The desired outcomes for Step One are outlined through the following objectives:

1. Brittany and I will plan and implement lessons, using research-based methods that have been successful in increasing ELL student satisfaction and confidence.
2. ELL students will show an increase in satisfaction.
3. ELL students will show an increase in confidence.

**Example strategies.** Research suggests that ELL students’ self-perceptions of empowerment are connected to perception of teacher power (Diaz, Cochran, & Karlin, 2016). This may affect students’ satisfaction. Other research suggests that ELL student confidence increases when the arts are integrated into the curriculum through dance, art, music, drama, and language (Ingraham & Nuttall, 2016). This existing research provides suggestions about what elements of the classroom dynamic might be altered, in order to increase ELL student satisfaction and confidence. This research can be effectively applied to task-based instruction; some examples are outlined below.

The first example strategy is about an opportunity to increase ELL student satisfaction. In order to identify an opportunity to increase ELL student satisfaction within task-based instruction, I examined the plot diagrams for satisfaction, found in Chapter Four of this study (Figure 4.4). Overall, the median for ELL student satisfaction decreased throughout the course of this study. I looked back at the Central Tendency and Variability Tables (Appendix K), and tried to identify a day when ELL students’ satisfaction was low, while their attention, relevance, and confidence were high. On day
14 of this study, the median for ELL students’ satisfaction was a 4, while in all other categories, the ELL median was a 5. I examined the task-based lesson on that day.

On this day, students engaged in an ordering and sorting task, which demonstrated how plot and characters grow throughout a story. In this task, students worked in pairs. Each pair of students received an envelope that had pictures in it; the students could arrange the pictures in whatever order they wished, and then they needed to write a story about their pictures. After each pair of students was finished with their story, the teacher added a new picture, and the students needed to re-write their new story, thinking about how it changed as a result of the new picture.

Diaz et al. (2016) suggested that ELL students’ self-perceptions of empowerment were connected to perception of teacher power. These researchers explained that referent power contributes positively to ELL self-perceptions of empowerment. Referent power is the ability to build relationships and communicate on an authentic level with students. The ideas generated by this research could be applied to lesson that took place on day 14 of this study. During the part of the task when the teacher added a picture to the students’ story, the teacher could take a few minutes with each pair of students, and connect with the students about how this new picture changed the direction of their story. The teacher also could build relationships with the students by being intentional about commenting on their unique student work, affirming them for their creativity. The literature suggested (Diaz et al., 2016) that ELL student satisfaction would increase through a teacher’s efforts to build relationships and communicate on an authentic level.

The second example strategy is about an opportunity to increase ELL student confidence. In order to identify an opportunity to increase ELL student confidence within
task-based instruction, I first examined the plot diagram for confidence, found in Chapter Four of this study (Figure 4.3). Overall, the median for ELL student confidence did not change throughout the course of this study. I looked back at the Central Tendency and Variability Tables (Appendix K). I examined this student data and looked for days where ELL student confidence was low, but ELL student attention, relevance, and satisfaction were high. On day seven of my study, I found that this was the case: the median for both ELL students’ attention and satisfaction was a 5, the median for ELL student relevance was a 4, but their median for confidence was a 3.

The task-based activity on day seven of my study was a listing task about the topic of character analysis. In this task, students had worked in pairs to brainstorm and list character traits about themselves, and character traits about the main character in the book we were reading. After the students had completed the task, they reported out to the class, and shared the character traits they had identified.

Ingraham and Nuttall (2016) found that by integrating dance, art, music, drama, and language into a school curriculum, ELL students showed in increase in confidence. The ideas generated from Ingraham and Nuttall’s (2016) research could be applied to the task that took place on day seven of my study, in order to improve student confidence. For example, after students worked in pairs to brainstorm and list character traits about themselves and the main character, students could be given multiple options for how they would report out to the class. Students could be given the opportunity to write a song or a rap about their character traits, or they could use drama to act out their character traits.

The literature suggested (Ingraham & Nuttalls, 2016) that ELL student confidence would
increase after having these opportunities to express themselves using music or drama, instead of just spoken words.

In order to meet the first objective in Step One of this Action Plan, Brittany and I will implement research-based strategies, designed to increase ELL student satisfaction and confidence. These strategies will be similar to the two examples listed above. This will take place over a number of months. Once the objectives to increase ELL student motivation and confidence have also been met, we will move on to Step Two of this Action Plan.

**Action Plan: Step Two**

**Purpose.** A second research question emerged as a result of this action research study, which examined how co-teaching using a task-based instruction model affects teachers. The findings from this research question suggested that collaboration about task-based instruction supports teachers by helping them to improve task-based instruction and also improve other classroom systems and procedures. In particular, collaboration about task-based instruction was supported through the use of the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E). The purpose of Step Two of this Action Plan is to accelerate learning through a kind of “networked community” (Bryk et al., 2016) with one other grade seven ELA teacher at Bayview Middle School.

**Objectives.** The desired outcomes for Step Two are outlined through the following objectives:

1. Brittany and I will introduce the implementation of task-based instruction to another grade seven ELA teacher at Bayview Middle School.
2. The new grade seven ELA teacher will use the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E) to observe Brittany and me as we implement task-based instruction.

3. Ongoing collaboration will enable us to create a “networked community,” (Bryk et al., 2016) that advocates for ELL students, and works against systemic inequities. This networked community will be formed through using the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E) on a regular basis. This will lead to a refined implementation of task-based instruction, making improvements better, within multiple classrooms.

**Example strategies.** Step Two of this Action Plan is founded in the literature about improvement science. As mentioned earlier, improvement science provides a framework for data-driven exploration of practice, in order to integrate change into complex systems (Hannan et al., 2015). The PDSA Cycle, which I used informally to examine task-based instruction, and formally as my research journal about collaboration, is a rapid evaluation framework that is based in improvement science (The W. Edwards Deming Institute, 2016).

Within education, we often seem to “adopt, attack, and abandon” potential solutions to problems in the field (Rohanna, 2017, p. 66). Using improvement science, we can implement a systematic process of research and development, and begin to find solutions and effectively use them, rather than search blindly and quickly abandon them (Bryk et al., 2016). The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2017) and Bryk et al. (2016) explained that one of the six core principles of improvement is to create networked communities in order to accelerate learning through establishing a
common language and system of measurement. By establishing common language and measures, educators can enable social learning within the field of education. “Research and practice truly fuse” when teachers are able to establish networked improvement communities (Byrk et al., 2016).

Within this study, Brittany and I learned a tremendous amount about the process of collaboration, and how to implement task-based instruction. Through Step Two of this Action Plan, we will share this knowledge with another grade seven ELA teacher, in order to begin to establish a networked community. We will meet the first objective through meeting with the ELA teacher, and explaining what we have learned about task-based instruction. Since Brittany and I have worked together during our own process of implementation, we already have experience about how to share this with another person. We have talked through the stages of task-based instruction and have refined our own understanding through our conversations. This will help us to share the practice with another teacher.

The second objective will be met when the additional grade seven ELA teacher uses the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E) to observe Brittany and I as we implement task-based instruction. Brittany and I found tremendous value in using the format of the peer observation protocols as a way to improve not only task-based instruction, but also our own classroom systems and procedures. In using the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol with another teacher, we will be able to provide that teacher with an opportunity to engage in a respectful, improvement focused, conversation about task-based instruction.
The third objective will be met as a “networked community” (Bryk et al., 2016) is formed. This networked community, beginning with just a few teachers, will lead to intentional collaboration and improvement about task-based instruction. This third objective will be met through regular use of the Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol (Appendix E). Since there will be multiple teacher perspective being combined through this stage of implementation, it will advance our refinement of task-based instruction. As a result, the improvements we make to our practice of task-based instruction will be stronger, and will positively impact more students. This networked community will serve as an antidote to the systemic inequities that often prevent ELL students from being served democratic, student centered, inclusive learning environments (Briscoe, 2014; Brooks et al., 2010; Knudsen, 2009; Marx & Saavreda, 2014; Theoharis & Toole, 2011). As the networked community of teachers work to improve task-based instruction, ELL students will receive the attention and support that they deserve.

**Implications for Future Practice**

There are many implications for future practice that have stemmed from this action research study. The first suggestion is to conduct a similar study over a longer time period and with a larger group of students. While the results of this study do indicate that ELL students responded positively about the influence of task-based instruction on their motivation, some of the data does not show statistically significant growth. If this study was conducted again over a longer period of time, and with multiple classrooms of students, it may be possible to show statistically significant results.

Another implication for future practice is to further explore ways to increase ELL student confidence. During the focus group, students in this study expressed that they
often felt uncomfortable when speaking out loud in front of their peers. Analysis of all of the data collection methods in this study also indicated that task-based instruction itself did not significantly increase ELL student confidence. Future research could explore strategies for helping ELL students to gain confidence, particularly in their speaking skills. Based on the research discussed in the action plan (Ingraham & Nuttalls, 2016) a new research question could be: How does incorporating music, art, and drama within task-based instruction influence student confidence? This could be explored through a convergent parallel mixed methods design, very similar to the one used in this study.

A third implication for future practice is to further explore the impact of peer observation protocols as a tool for professional growth, particularly in identifying successful teaching strategies for ELLs. An unintended but very valuable consequence of this study was the realization that Brittany and I were making significant gains in our own learning experiences because of our intentional collaboration. As we became more intentional, and used observation protocols to guide our focus and discussion, the quality of our professional growth increased significantly. Although these findings were captured and expressed in the emergent research question, the impact of peer observation protocols could be examined in more depth in a future study. Another study could examine the research question: How does peer-observation enable teachers to identify successful strategies for teaching ELLs? This could be explored through a phenomenological qualitative approach, implementing a variety of qualitative data collection methods.
Conclusion

The problem of practice addressed in this research study was the challenge of instructing in an inclusion classroom; particularly a search to effectively meet the needs of ELL students. In order for these ELL students to achieve academically, they must be motivated. In looking for a solution to my problem of practice, I asked the following original research question: How does task-based instruction influence ELL student motivation in a grade seven ELA inclusion classroom? This study employed a convergent parallel mixed methods design, where data was collected through Focus Groups (Appendix A, Appendix B), Field Observations (Appendix C), Student Work Documents, and Exit Ticket Surveys (Appendix D).

Throughout the study, task-based instruction was embedded into daily lesson plans, and data was collected to gather information about the influence of this type of instruction. Data was gathered for all students in the classroom: 5 ELL students and 10 NES students. The motivation of ELL students was examined through the lens of the ARCS model (Keller, 2008), which presumes that there are four elements that drive motivation: attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. The analysis of student data revealed that, overall, ELL students responded positively about the influence of task-based instruction on their motivation. This study showed that when responding to the influence of task-based instruction, ELL students showed the greatest positive responses about attention and relevance, moderately positive responses about satisfaction, and the least positive responses about confidence.

A second, emergent, research question also evolved through this action research study. This second research question was: How does co-teaching using a task-based
instruction model in an inclusion classroom affect teachers? The study for this research question employed a phenomenological qualitative design, where data was collected through a Collaboration PDSA Research Journal, Peer Observation-Discussion Protocols (Appendix E), and an End of Study Reflection (Appendix F). The participants in this study were Brittany and me, who worked together as co-teachers throughout the research. Qualitative analysis of the data indicated that co-teaching using a task-based instruction model provided teachers with insights about implications for task-based instruction, implications for classroom systems and procedures, and a greater understanding of the value of collaboration through the use of peer observation protocols.

My personal reflections about this action research study have led me to a greater understanding of the value of PDSA Cycles as a reflective tool, the value of collaborative action research, and the impact of peer observation protocols. A two-step action plan emerged from this study, which gathered together the important findings of the original research question, and also incorporated lessons learned from the second research question. This action plan aims to further learning not only about the influence of task-based instruction on ELL student motivation, but also about task-based instruction through networked communities. These networked communities use peer observation to support collaborative professional development, in order to work against the systemic inequities that disenfranchise ELL students.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A – FOCUS GROUP ONE

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<td>Interviewer:</td>
<td>Interviewees:</td>
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What do you like about English class?  
Rephrase/Follow up: What is your favorite thing to do in English class?  
Example: I like it when the teacher has us read silently. / I like it when we get to work in groups.

What makes English class difficult for you?  
Rephrase/Follow up: What is your least favorite thing to do in English class?  
Example: It is difficult for me to present my work to the class. / It is difficult for me to read out loud in English.

What makes English class easier for you?  
Rephrase/Follow up: What helps you learn better in English class?  
Example: It is easier when the teacher tells me the directions a second time. / It helps me when I can use a bilingual dictionary in class.

What makes it easy or difficult to pay attention to English class?  
Rephrase/Follow up: What makes class interesting to you?  
Example: It is easy to pay attention when the topic is interesting, like when we are talking about sports. / It is hard to pay attention when we have to read silently.

How does English class help you to reach your personal goals?  
Rephrase/Follow up: What topics in class are important to you?  
Example: I like cars, and I like it when we talk about cars in class. / I want to be a waitress at a restaurant, so I like it when we ask each other questions in class.

How does English class help you to feel more confident communicating in English?  
Rephrase/Follow up: What makes you believe you can do well in English?  
Example: I feel confident because the teacher has us practice speaking out loud every day. / I feel confident because the things we do in class are never too difficult for me to understand.

In what ways are you satisfied with how you are doing in English class?  
Rephrase/Follow up: What makes you happy and proud of your work in English class?  
Example: I am satisfied when I can answer the questions the teacher asks me. / I am proud of how I can speak English more quickly, without forgetting the words I want to say.
**APPENDIX B – FOCUS GROUP TWO**

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<td>Interviewer:</td>
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<td>Interviewees:</td>
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Show students their work from a number of different task-based instruction lessons. For each task-based instruction, ask students:

**What kinds of things did you like about this task?**
Rephrase/Follow up: *Did you like tasks that involved working in pairs/tasks that seemed like a game/tasks that involved words and pictures?*

**Do you prefer working in groups, pairs, or individually?**
Rephrase/Follow up: *What is it that you like about group/pair/individual work?*

**What makes it easy or difficult to pay attention to English class?**
Rephrase/Follow up: *What makes class interesting to you?*
Example: It is easy to pay attention when the topic is interesting, like when we are talking about sports. / It is hard to pay attention when we have to read silently.

**How does English class help you to reach your personal goals?**
Rephrase/Follow up: *What topics in class are important to you?*
Example: I like cars, and I like it when we talk about cars in class. / I want to be a waitress at a restaurant, so I like it when we ask each other questions in class.

**How does English class help you to feel more confident communicating in English?**
Rephrase/Follow up: *What makes you believe you can do well in English?*
Example: I feel confident because the teacher has us practice speaking out loud every day. / I feel confident because the things we do in class are never too difficult for me to understand.

**In what ways are you satisfied with how you are doing in English class?**
Rephrase/Follow up: *What makes you happy and proud of your work in English class?*
Example: I am satisfied when I can answer the questions the teacher asks me. / I am proud of how I can speak English more quickly, without forgetting the words I want to say.
This field observation checklist gathers data about ELL students’ attention. This tool was used daily to document on-task/off-task student behaviors during the task-based instruction activity during each lesson. When using this field observations sheet, I made a note about ELL student (on-task vs. off-task) behavior during the length of the task-based activity. Notes were taken at a rate of once per minute, for the length of the task-based activity, or for up to fifteen minutes. The number of incidences of on-task behavior was calculated for each student, and this number was displayed over the total number of minutes. The calculated percentage of on-task behavior was given a rating on a scale of 1-5. General notes were also taken about the attention of other students in the classroom.

| Observation Number: __________ |
| Date: ________________________ |
| behavior | / indicates on-task |
| Time: ________________________ |
| behavior | O indicates off-task |

Rating Scale: The number of incidences of on-task behavior is calculated for each student; this number is displayed over the total number of minutes. A percentage is calculated. The calculated percentage is given a rating on a scale of 1-5.

0-20% = 1
21-40% = 2
41-60% = 3
61-80% = 4
81-100% = 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name</th>
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General notes about the attention of other students in the classroom:
Exit Ticket

Name_________________
Date_________________
Period_________________

1.) The task was about a topic that is important to me. 1 2 3 4 5
2.) The task helped me to believe that I can do well in English. 1 2 3 4 5
3.) I am happy and proud of my work in English class today. 1 2 3 4 5
4.) Why did you give those scores?
APPENDIX E – PEER OBSERVATION-DISCUSSION PROTOCOL

Date: ___________________
Observer: ___________________
Observed: ___________________

Directions: This protocol follows Willis’ (1996) task-based learning framework. This protocol was designed to help deepen the observed’s understanding of task-based teaching. The observer should focus on writing notes about what is occurring during the observation, and how the observed’s instruction is/is not aligned to the task-based framework. At the end of the observation, the observer and the observed meet – undisturbed – for 10 minutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRE-TASK</th>
<th>TASK CYCLE</th>
<th>REPORT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o <strong>Teacher</strong>: introduces the topic, explains directions, helps students identify useful words &lt;br&gt; o <strong>Students</strong>: make note of useful words or phrases</td>
<td>o <strong>Teacher</strong>: monitors and encourages, takes notes on mistakes that can be addressed &lt;br&gt; o <strong>Students</strong>: do the task in pairs or small groups</td>
<td>o <strong>Teacher</strong>: acts as chairperson, giving brief feedback to students &lt;br&gt; o <strong>Students</strong>: present their reports to the class</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TASK:</th>
<th>PLANNING:</th>
<th>REPORT:</th>
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<tr>
<td>o <strong>Teacher</strong>: helps students with language and with organizing their thoughts &lt;br&gt; o <strong>Students</strong>: prepare to report to the class how they did the task and what they discovered/decided, rehearse what they will say or draft a written version to read</td>
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<tr>
<th>LANGUAGE FOCUS</th>
<th>ANALYSIS</th>
<th>PRACTICE</th>
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<tr>
<td>o <strong>Teacher</strong>: identifies language items from reporting stage, brings useful words to students’ attention</td>
<td>o <strong>Teacher</strong>: conducts practice activities if necessary, to help students build confidence</td>
<td>o <strong>Teacher</strong>:</td>
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APPENDIX F – END OF STUDY REFLECTION

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<td>Interviewer:</td>
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<td>Interviewees:</td>
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Intro: I would like to do an exit interview with you, and I’d like to ask you some questions, and I would also like to see if you have any questions for me?

1. What impact do you think task-based instruction has in our classroom?

2. What has been the most satisfying part of incorporating task-based instruction in the classroom?

3. What is the most challenging part of incorporating task-based instruction in the classroom?

4. What do you think of TBI now? Is this something that you plan on using going forward?

5. How did the TBI Notes sheet support us?

6. How did the Observation Protocol support us?

7. Teachers rarely get to do this - be intentional about observing each other. We started being more casual about our collaboration, and then become very intentional through using the protocols. What do you think about this? Would you do it again?
APPENDIX G – TASK-BASED INSTRUCTION INTEGRATION PROTOCOL

I developed the following protocol based on Willis (1996) and Willis and Willis’ (2007) frameworks for task-based learning and teaching. This protocol was used to examine daily lesson plans in order to integrate task-based activities.

A. Presentation of the Lesson (3 minutes)
   a. What are the learning objectives?
   b. What is the general structure of the lesson?
B. Clarifying Questions (3 minutes)
   a. Is there anything that is unclear about the lesson objective or structure of the lesson?
C. Identifying the Process (5 minutes)
   a. Re-read the learning objective. Look at the Processes listed in the Task-Based Instruction Chart. Identify which process best fits the learning objectives.
D. Designing the Task (5 minutes)
   a. Create a task for the lesson, based on the process that was selected. Referencing the Examples section of the Task-Based Instruction Chart may help in creating the task.
E. Reflection and Documentation (4 minutes)
   a. Reflect on the task-based activity. Does it appropriately align with the objectives and structure of the lesson? Document the task-based activity within the lesson plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task-Based Instruction Chart</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Listing</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2. Ordering and Sorting</strong></td>
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<td><strong>3. Comparing</strong></td>
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<td><strong>4. Matching</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. Problem Solving</strong></td>
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<td><strong>6. Sharing Personal Experiences</strong></td>
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<td><strong>7. Creative Tasks</strong></td>
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APPENDIX H - EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

This lesson plan was a collaborative effort, written by the seventh grade ELA teachers at Bayview Middle School. The lesson was created without task-based instruction. Brittany and I then took the lesson plan, and used the framework of the Task-Based Instruction Integration Protocol (Appendix G) and found an authentic opportunity to integrate task-based instruction within the lesson. This particular lesson took place on day 15 of this study. The lesson plan documents the inclusion of task-based instruction; the task-based instruction piece of the lesson is in the gray box within the original lesson plan. At the end of the lesson plan, Figure H.1 provides a student example of the completed task.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Plan – Day 15</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Outcomes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Common Core State Standard Number(s) and Description:</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.1.C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.2.C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essential Question of this lesson:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can context clues from the text help me determine the meaning of a word?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of the Lesson: The purpose of this lesson is to complete the weekly vocabulary quiz and to assess the student’s ability to write a character analysis, in the form of a Schaffer Paragraph.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bell Ringer: The students will (TSW) participate in silent sustained reading (SSR) time and take Accelerated Reader (AR) quizzes. (10 min)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. TSW take the Lesson 3 Vocabulary quiz on the Google Classroom identifying synonyms and antonyms of each vocabulary word using context clues. (25min)</td>
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</table>

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<th>PRE-TASK:</th>
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<tr>
<td>The teacher will (TTW) introduce the topic and explain the directions. Today’s task is both a matching and an ordering and sorting task. It is about the Schaffer Paragraph. TSW work in their Panther Pairs to complete the task. Each pair of students will receive an envelope with five sentences on separate slips of paper, and five Schaffer Paragraph sentence labels. These sentences need to be sorted so that they are in the correct order, creating a paragraph. The sentences also need to be matched with the correct Schaffer Paragraph sentence label. The finished Schaffer Paragraph will be a character analysis about the character of the Beast, from Beauty and the Beast.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| (TTW also explain to students that after they finish this task, during the second half of class, the TSW be working individually to write their own Schaffer Paragraph: a character analysis describing one of the characters from The Outsiders.) |
TTW help students to identify useful words. The abbreviations and meanings of the Schaffer Paragraph sentence labels will be discussed. These labels are: TS (topic sentence), CD1 (concrete detail 1), CM1 (commentary 1), CD2 (concrete detail 2), CM2 (commentary 2), CS (concluding sentence).

**TASK CYCLE:**
- **Task** - TTW monitor and encourage students. TSW follow the directions for the task.
- **Planning** - TTW help students with language and with organizing their thoughts. TTW prepare to report to the class about how they did the task and what they discovered.
- **Report** - TTW act as the chairperson, and give feedback to the students. TSW work in their pairs, and will present their work to the class.

**LANGUAGE FOCUS:**
TTW identify language from the reporting stage and bring useful words to the students’ attention. TSW identify and process any new or unclear language from the task. If necessary, TTW conduct practice activities about these useful, new, or unclear words.

2. TSW write a character analysis (Schaffer Paragraph) describing a character from The Outsiders and provide evidence from the text to support their answer. (30 min)

*Figure H.1. Photograph of Student Work From Day 15. August 2017.*
## APPENDIX I – CODEBOOK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Type of Code</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attention</td>
<td>A priori</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Reference to “task completion”: student comments about how easy/difficult it was for them to pay attention in class, may mention participating well/not participating well, perseverance to complete the task/giving up on the task, or helping each other/not helping each other</td>
<td>I gave those scores because me and my partner cooperated. I had to do all the work. Them kids are childish.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Emergent</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Comments that indicate challenges within co-teaching, or challenges within task-based instruction implementation</td>
<td>It was difficult to collaborate…                                                                                                           It is challenging to collaborate…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>A priori</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Reference to “I can do it” in a non-emotional way: student comments about how class made them feel more/less confident, may mention how the task helped them to believe/did not help them to believe they could do well in English, might talk about the task as being easy/hard</td>
<td>Some of the words was harder than it was last week. But I understood it. :) Because I don't think I did good.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Emergent</td>
<td>Implications for the Classroom</td>
<td>Speaker makes a reference to the language focus phase of task-based instruction</td>
<td>You did pull in the language focus… And that is exactly what the language focus could look like…</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative ARCS Response</td>
<td>Emergent</td>
<td>Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction</td>
<td>Student makes a negative or indifferent comment about attention, relevance, confidence, or satisfaction</td>
<td>I was very distracted by someone in the classroom so I could NOT do my work! Because it was kind of not fun today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Response to Collaboration</td>
<td>Emergent</td>
<td>Responses to Collaboration</td>
<td>Student makes a negative statement about collaborating with peers</td>
<td>One of my group members didn't try to help or speak. The task we did today was helpful but the group work with Pablo was not helping us to answer the question.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neutral Response to Collaboration</td>
<td>Emergent</td>
<td>Responses to Collaboration</td>
<td>Student makes a neutral statement about collaborating with peers</td>
<td>Because we worked in groups and learn what kind of stuff was in the 1950s. It was kinda fun but kinda boring and if you let us choose our partner we will get it done faster.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Impact of Observation</td>
<td>Emergent</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Speaker makes a reference to the observations that were conducted using the Task-Based Instruction Peer Observation-Discussion Protocol</td>
<td>The observations that you and I did I really felt like… Using the Observation Protocol, it was definitely a positive…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive ARCS Response</td>
<td>Emergent</td>
<td>Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction</td>
<td>Student makes a positive comment about attention, relevance, confidence, or satisfaction</td>
<td>Because I really like the group work we did today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Response to Collaboration</td>
<td>Emergent</td>
<td>Responses to Collaboration</td>
<td>Student makes a positive statement about collaborating with peers</td>
<td>Because I loved doing group work. Because we all cooperated. Because we worked together and I didn't get some of it but my partner helped me a lot.</td>
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<td>Pre-task</td>
<td>Emergent</td>
<td>Implications for the Classroom</td>
<td>Speaker makes a reference to the pre-task phase of task-based instruction</td>
<td>Okay. So in the pre-task, I saw that you… The pre-task you went through…</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>A priori</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Reference to “helping”: student comments about how class helped them/did not help them to reach their personal goals, may mention why the task was important/not important to them; student may say “no opinion”</td>
<td>This will help me in my test tomorrow and use higher vocabulary. I didn't learn because it wasn't interesting to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>A priori</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Reference to emotions: student comments about how satisfied/not satisfied they were with their performance in class, may mention that they are happy/unhappy or proud/embarrassed by their work in class</td>
<td>I gave those scores because I really liked when we got to explain how we got the answer. It was not very fun because I do not like summarizing paragraphs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successes</td>
<td>Emergent</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>Comments that indicate successes within co-teaching, or successes within task-based instruction implementation</td>
<td>It worked! We are learning how to work together.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Task-Planning-Report</td>
<td>Emergent</td>
<td>Implications for the Classroom</td>
<td>Speaker makes a reference to the task-planning-report phase of task-based instruction</td>
<td>So you’re talking about the task right now? I know we talked a little bit about this last time, but the report piece…</td>
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APPENDIX J – RESEARCH SETTING APPROVAL FORM

Date

Mr. XXX
Assistant Superintendent – Secondary Education
XXX School District
XXX
XXX

RE: Permission to Conduct Research Study

Dear Mr. XXX,

I am writing to request permission to conduct an action research study at XXX. I am currently enrolled in the Educational Doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of South Carolina. I am in the process of writing my doctoral dissertation. The study is entitled: Task-Based Instruction and Student Motivation. The study will examine the influence of task-based instruction on English language learners’ motivation in class.

The research study will take place within one English Language Arts classroom. The sample size for this study will be between 10-30 students. The research will be conducted within one unit of instruction.

The study will implement a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. I will use the following data-collection methods: focus groups (audio recorded), field observations, student work documents, surveys, and a research journal.

When conducting this research, I will protect the rights of the research participants. All data with personal information will be kept in a secure place. Pseudonyms will be used for the school and any individuals involved in the study. If you would like to grant me permission to conduct this research study, please sign below.

Sincerely,

Sarah E. Bularzik

Approved By:

Name and Title:

Signature: ______________________________ Date: ____________
APPENDIX K – TASK-CYCLE NOTES SHEET

Directions: This Task Cycle Notes Sheet follows Willis’ (1996) task-based learning framework. This notes sheet was designed as a supportive tool to help teachers effectively implement task-based instruction in their classrooms.

Date: ______________________

PRE-TASK: Explain the task.

_______________________________________________________________

TASK CYCLE: Notes about students’ language/understanding of key concepts.

_______________________________________________________________

LANGUAGE FOCUS: What useful words or phrases need to be addressed?
# APPENDIX L – CENTRAL TENDENCY AND VARIABILITY TABLES

Table L.1

*Central Tendency and Variability – Attention*

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Table L.2

*Central Tendency and Variability – Relevance*

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Table L.3

*Central Tendency and Variability – Confidence*

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Central Tendency and Variability – Satisfaction

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