

Chapter 1

Mentorship and Training ESOL Teachers Through a Clinically Rich Intensive Teacher Institute

JungKang K. Miller
Mercy University, USA

Bahar Otcu-Grillman
Mercy University, USA

ABSTRACT

The authors of this chapter conducted research to address how professional development and support networks can strengthen ESOL teacher education when they co-directed a state-funded grant program for ESOL teachers. Through the program in which they collaborated with mentor teachers, school administrators, and program participants, they ensured that professional support was made accessible to program participants who were being trained to become certified ESOL teachers through institutional and state-level resources and emphasized the importance of ESOL teachers' professional growth through professional support networks. This chapter will focus on mentorship within the program and advocate the importance of building support systems for teachers during and after teacher training while highlighting professional development for ESOL teachers.

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to provide insights into the mentoring of new ESOL teachers for their professional development and growth through various professional activities, which will improve classroom instruction for English learners and encourage family and community involvement. Professional development for ESOL teachers is essential to building support systems for teachers. In ESOL educational contexts, teacher collaboration is essential due to the multiple layers of instruction provided for English learners. Therefore, schools need to support ESOL teachers to actively participate in professional communities to improve their knowledge and instruction for English learners and also improve parental, family, and community engagement. Mentoring within schools and school districts would provide focused and guided professional development that enhances ESOL teachers' ability to build meaningful relationships with other teachers and school personnel and support English learners' families and their learning at home.

Researchers in education have long-established the need for continuous professional development and support for teachers, especially teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse learners. High-quality professional development opportunities for teachers improve instructional effectiveness and increase student learning (Vangrieken et al., 2017; U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Various studies have stressed the importance of reducing first-year attrition by providing beginning teachers with mentoring from teachers of the same subject (Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Mentoring relationships can have a positive impact on mentees' early teaching experiences by providing: self-confidence, classroom management support, guidance on time and work load management, positive student teacher management, self-reflection, problem solving skills, culture of professional support (Delaney, 2012). Currently, mentorship is perceived as a personal and professional relationship in which both participants co-construct their professional identities within a specific context via pre-service or in-service mentorship (Delaney, 2012).

Mentoring is believed to contribute to both the professional development of experienced teachers and the formation of professional networks among teachers (Hobson et al., 2009). This research aims to raise awareness about mentorship and other existing professional development and support networks for ESOL teachers and address the need to make professional development and support networks accessible to in-service and pre-service teachers. Professional support networks in multimodal ways, where a mentor and mentee relationship is indispensable, help create a sense of community and belonging in the profession of ESOL teachers and, therefore, teachers' continuous professional growth throughout their profession (Otcu-Grillman & Miller, 2021). Likewise, the need for quality professional development exists not only for teacher candidates or novice teachers but also for experienced teachers who

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