

*Graduate Student Perceptions of
Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes for
Teaching English Language Learners
Before and After Taking the
Literacy Development and
Cultural Awareness Course*

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Definition of Terms

- ELL = *English Language Learner*
- ESL = *English as a Second Language*
- ESOL = *English for Speakers of Other Languages*
- LEP = *Limited English Proficiency*
- L1 = First language spoken in the home
- L2 = Second language being acquired



Why conduct study?

- Importance of preparing teacher candidates to teach ELL students
- Importance of understanding cultural and linguistic variations that impact classroom interactions and instruction
- Longwood's undergraduate liberal studies program has no coursework requirement or courses in how to teach ELL students

English Language Learners (ELL) in Virginia Schools

- 91,431 ELL students (2011-2012)
- 7.4% of VA students (NCES, 2014)
- Students come from more than 72 countries
- 184 languages spoken (VA DOE, 2006)
- 139% increase from 2001-2011
- Virginia identified as high-ELL-growth state (Annenburg, 2013)



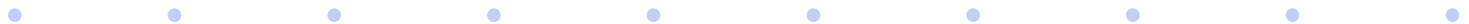
English Language Learners (ELL) in Virginia Schools

- Approximately 2.5% of teachers in U.S. have degree in ESL or bilingual education (NCES, 1997)
- Teachers of English as a Second Language, PK-12 listed as shortage area in Virginia (U.S. DOE, 2014)
- ELL students overrepresented in special education because of lack of teacher understanding of L2 acquisition (Klingner, Artiles & Barletta, 2006).



Dependent Variables

1. Perception of ELL knowledge & skill
2. Attitude toward inclusion of ELL students in mainstream classrooms
3. Perception of understanding of cultural and linguistic variations that impact classroom interactions and instruction (Smith, 2005)



Participants

27 Reading, Literacy, and Learning (RLL) graduate students enrolled in Fall 2014 semester READ 520 course

Course title and description: Teaching English Language Learners in a Multicultural Society (3 credits)

“This course focuses on the concepts and practical skills English Language Learners (ELL) students need to acquire literacy in English. Methods and strategies for planning, implementing, and assessing reading and writing instruction for all ages and levels of ELL students will be explored. Emphasis is on effective instruction that is appropriate for English Language Learners, an understanding of the cultural contexts of the in-school and out-of-school environment, and intercultural communication.” (Graduate Course Catalog, 2014-2015)



Methodology

- ESOL Awareness Survey Instrument developed at University of South Florida
 - High validity and reliability
 - Internal consistency, stability of instrument, predictive validity, construct validity tested (Smith, 2005)
- READ 520 students given randomly-generated numbers for anonymity
- Survey taken online
 - 40 questions
 - Pre-survey at beginning of semester
 - Post-survey at end of semester



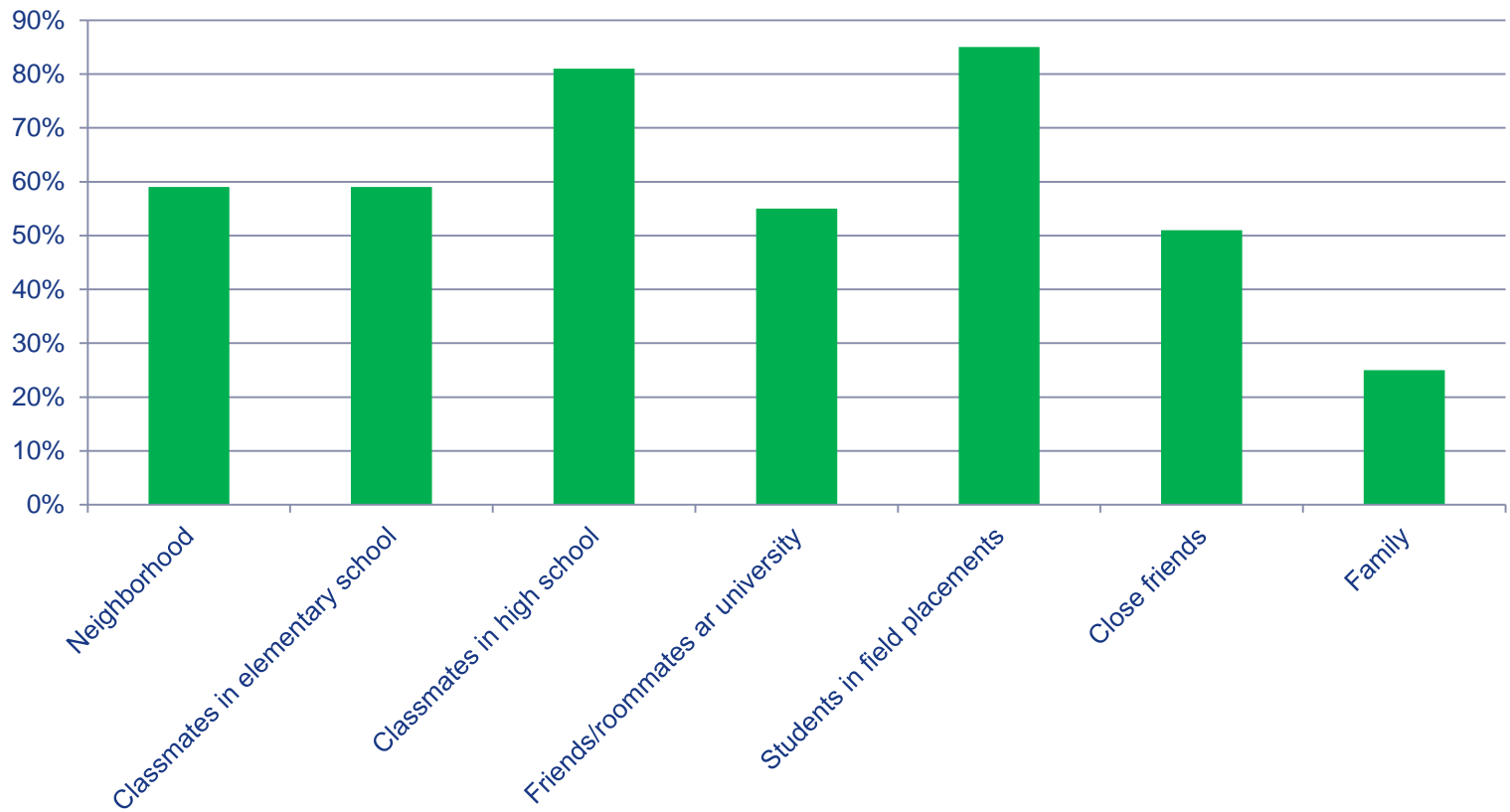
Survey Question

- Have you taken any previous ESL/ELL courses?
 - Pre-survey results - 100% of students responded **no**
 - Post-survey results – after completion of the READ 520 course, 100% of students responded **yes**

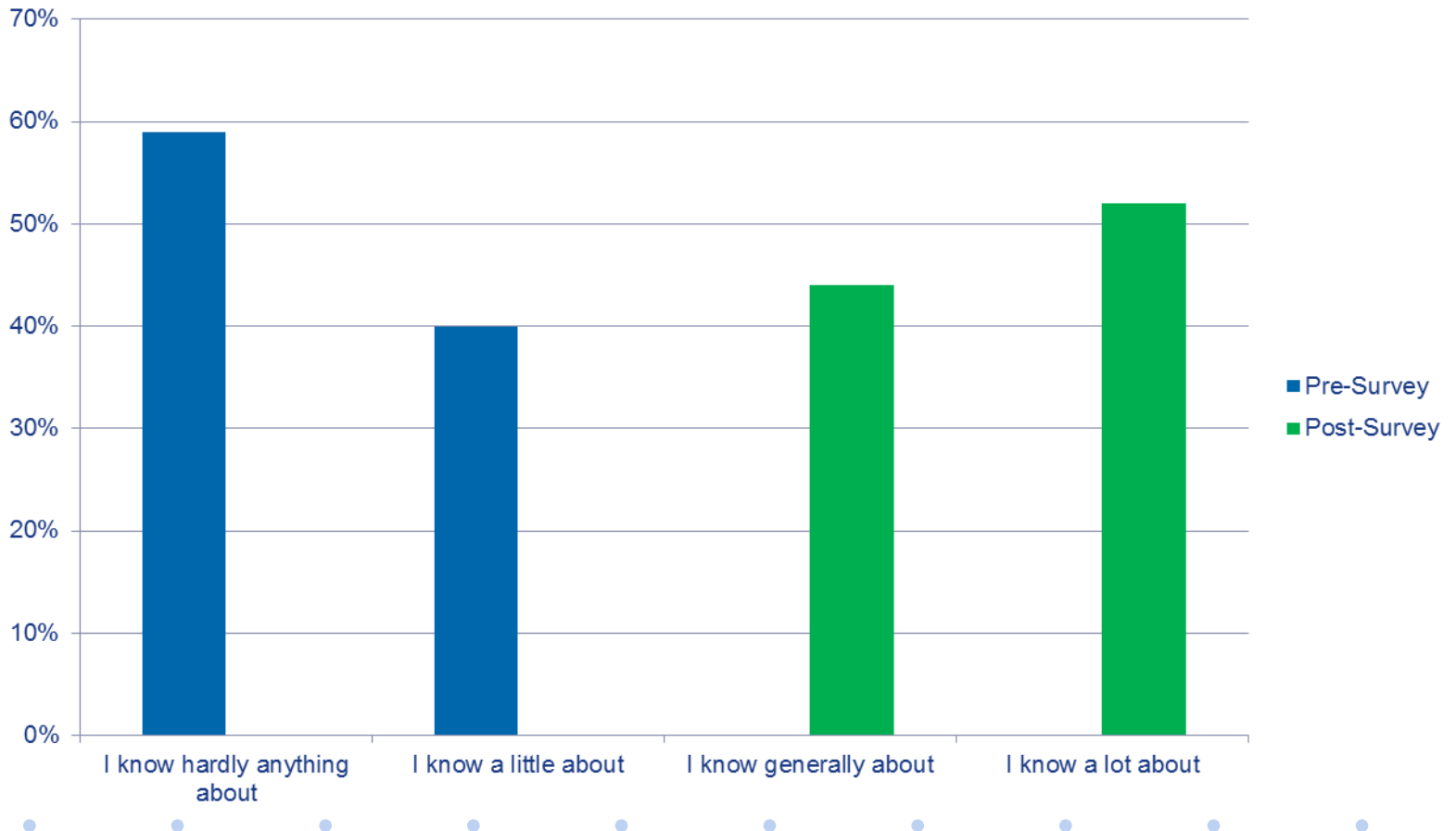


Indicate all areas where you have experienced ethnic/cultural diversity (culture other than your own)

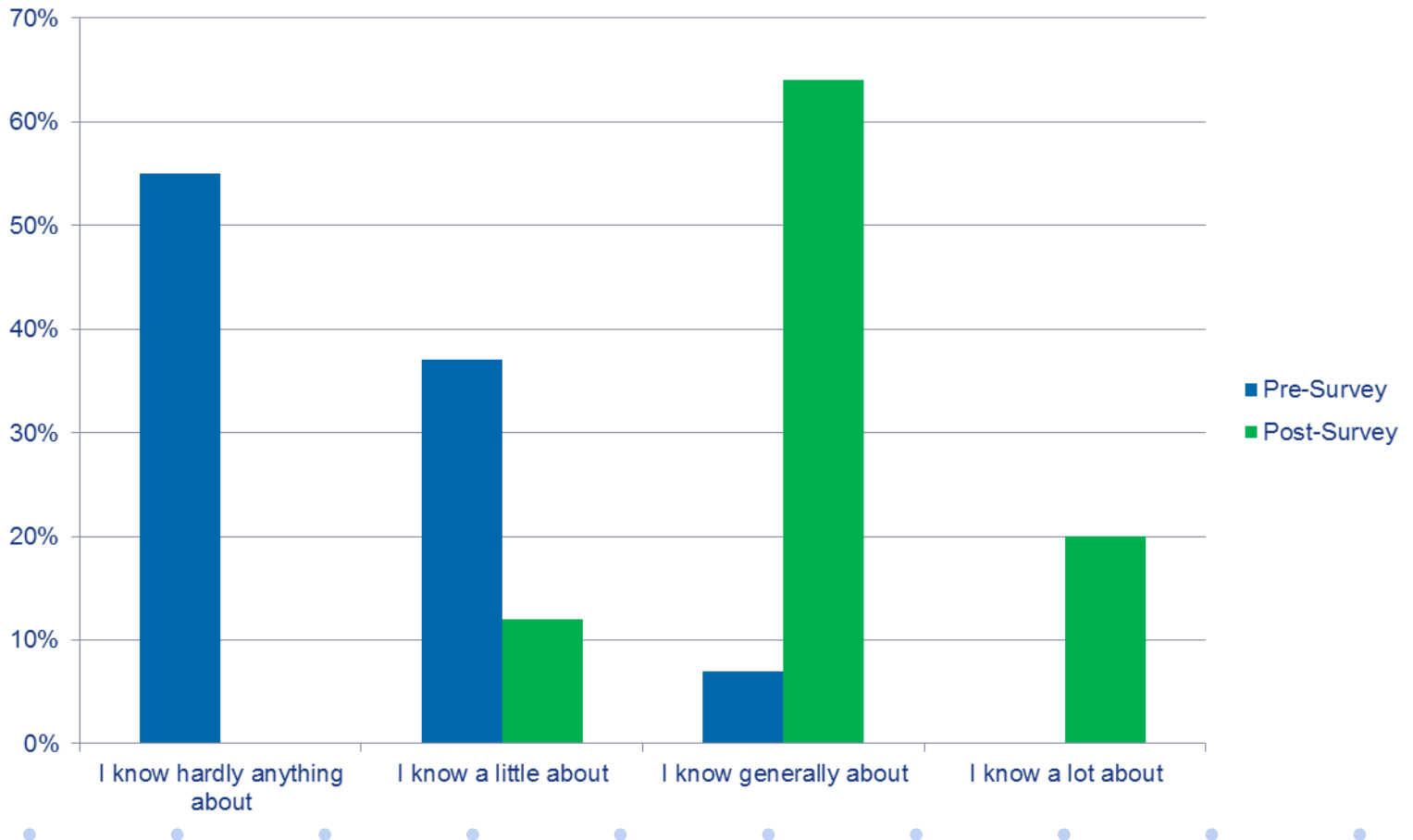
Pre-survey



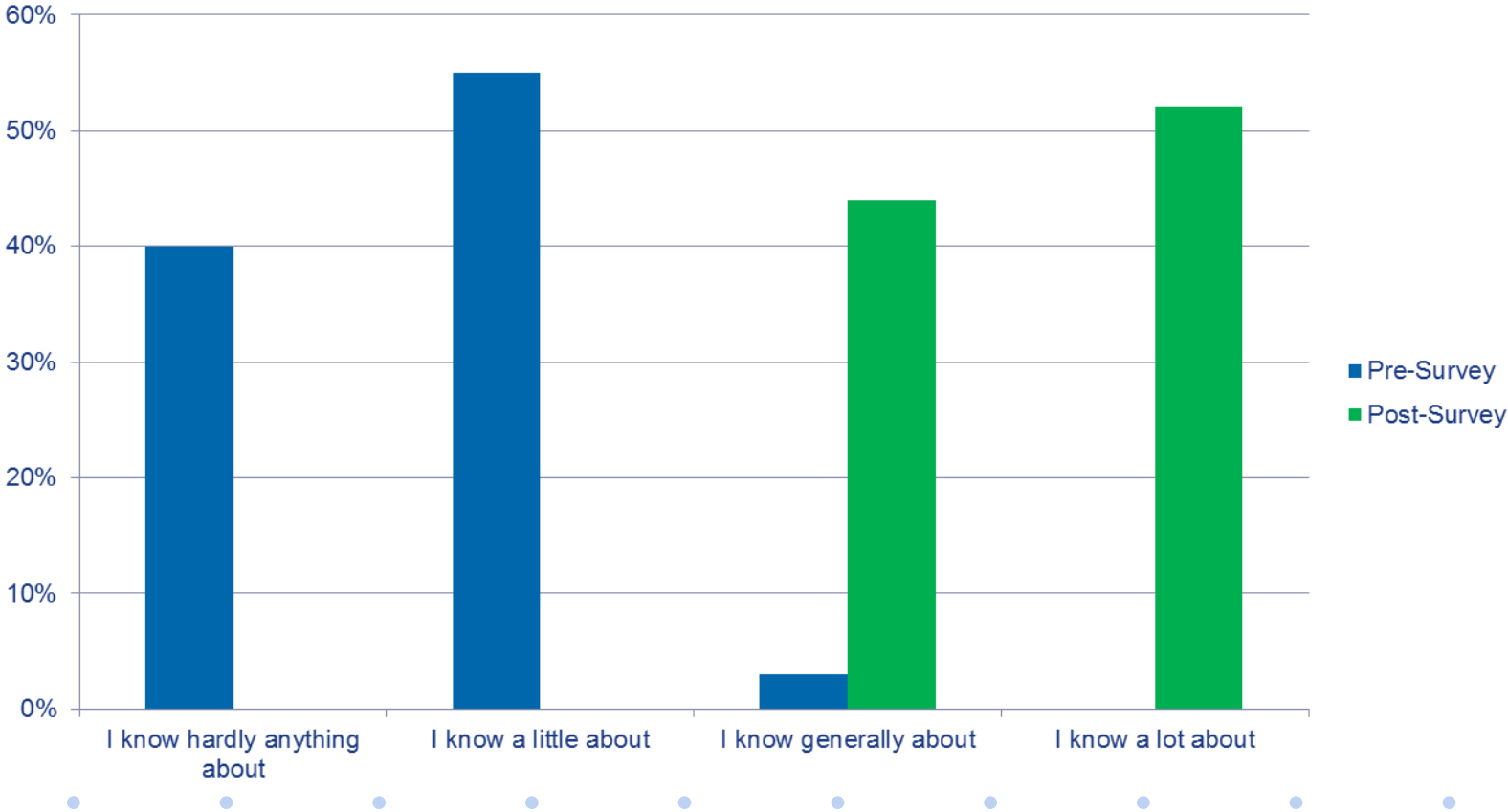
Your knowledge of methods of teaching ESL/ELL students



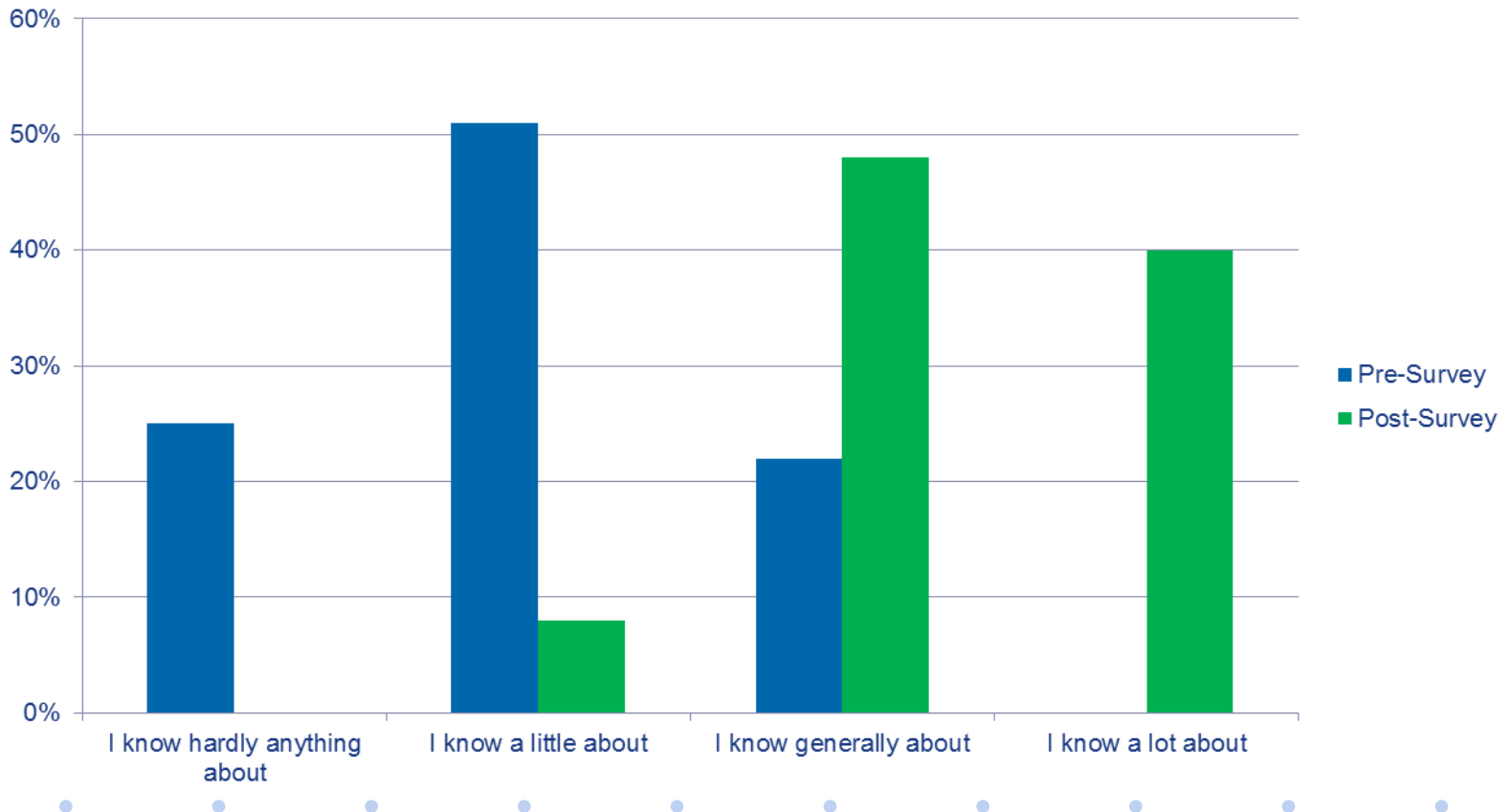
Your knowledge about second language (L2) acquisition



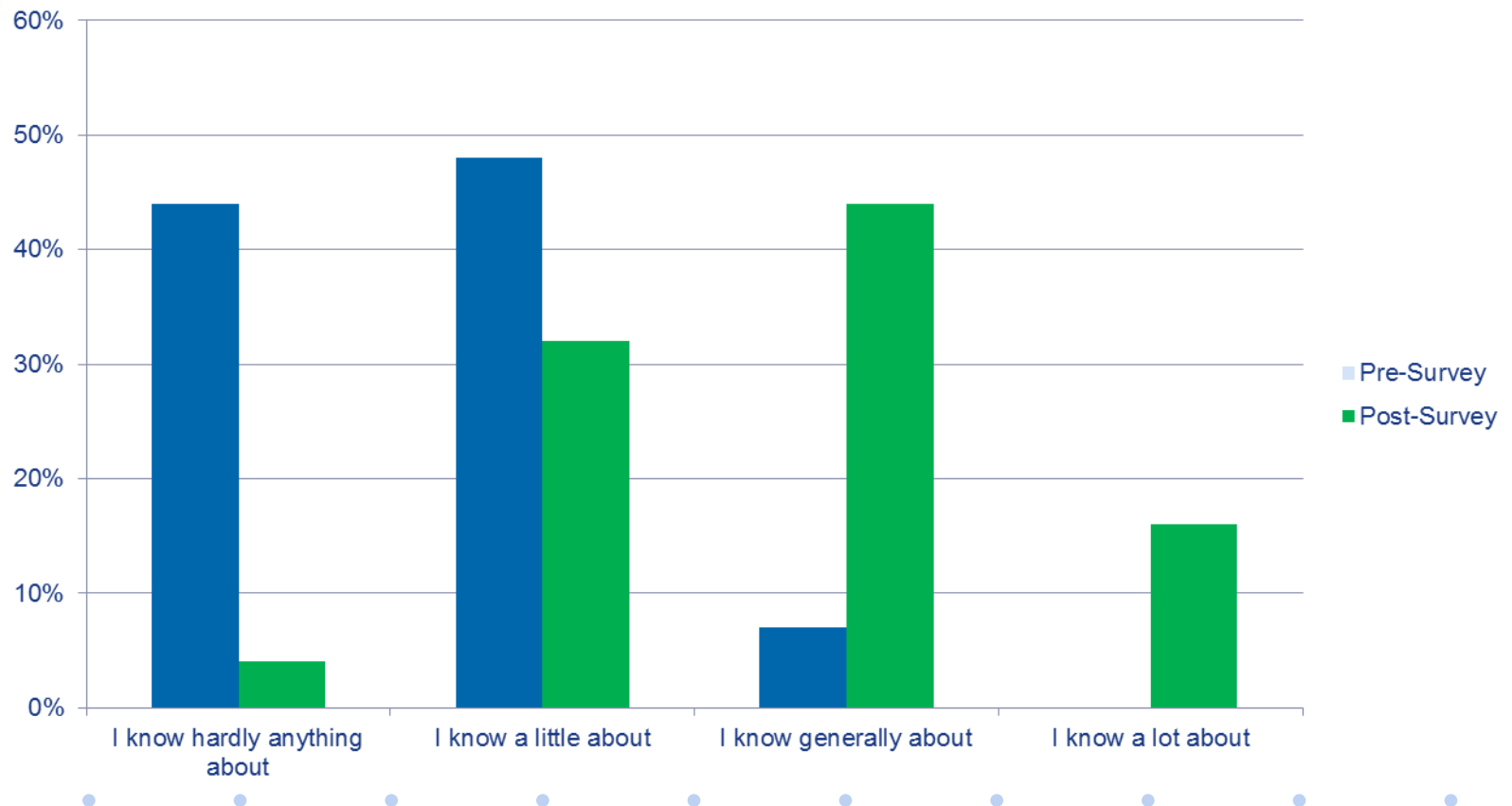
Adaptation of content instruction for ESL/ELL students



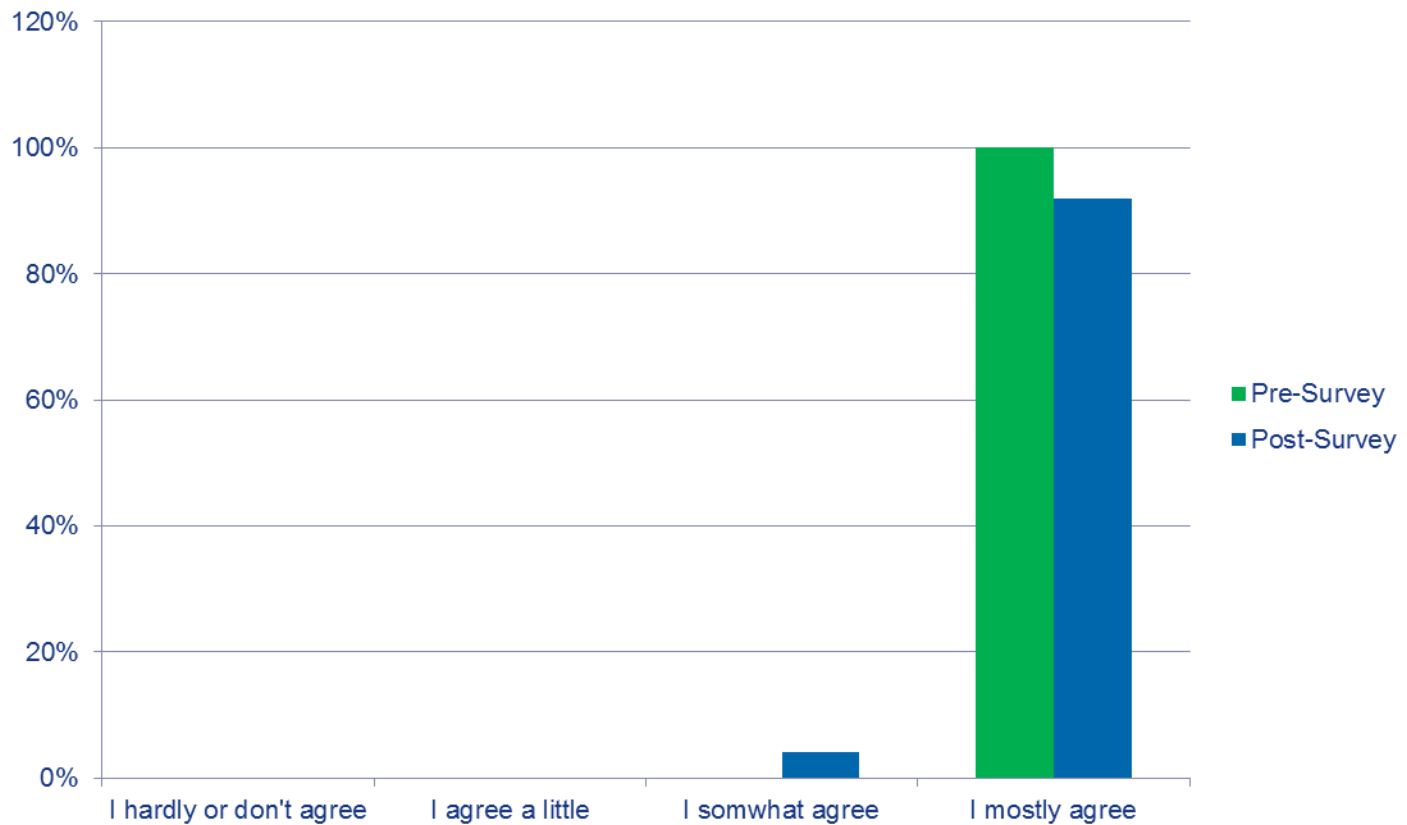
Your skill in responding appropriately to culturally diverse learners



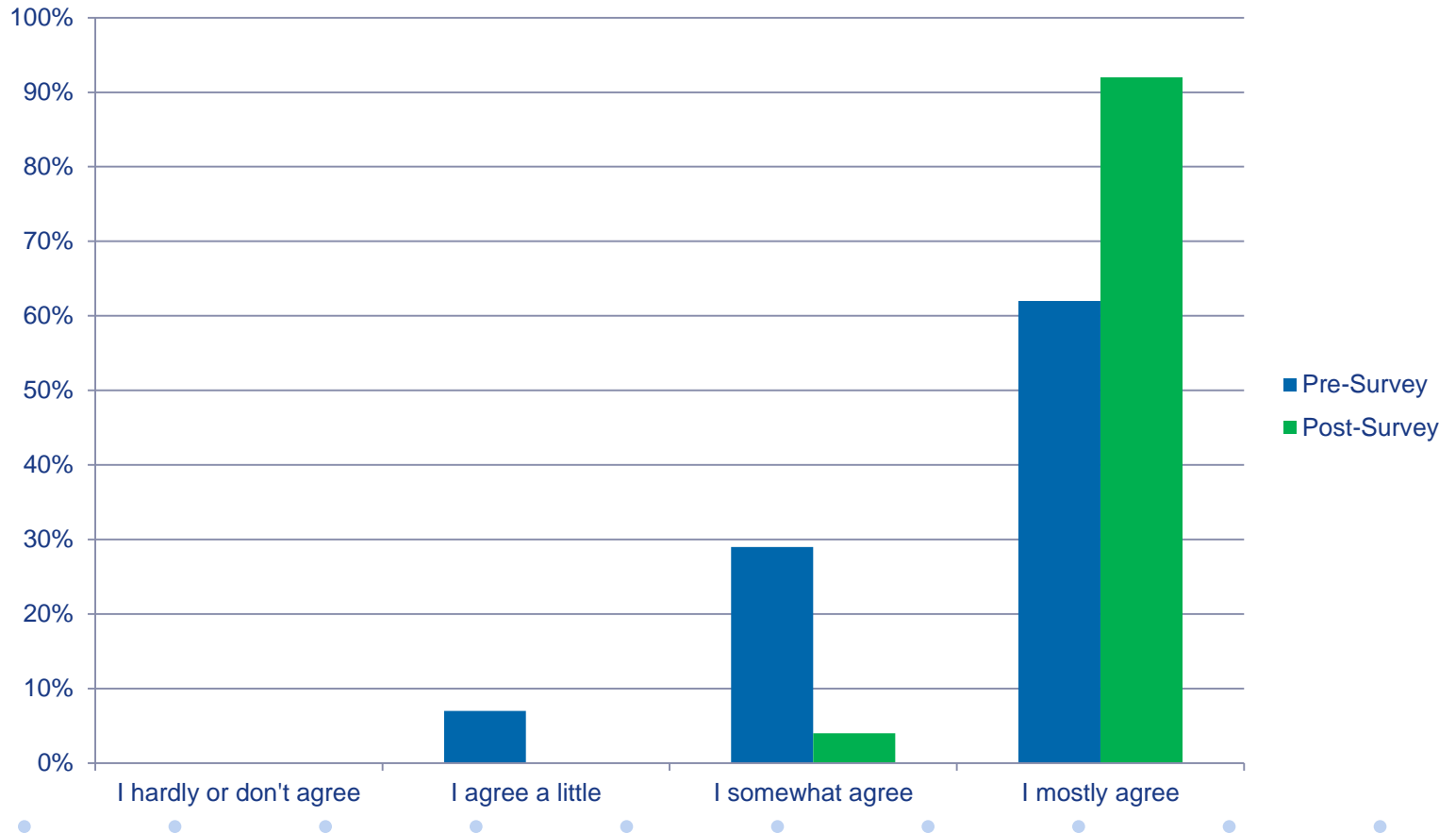
Your skill in working with people who do not speak English well



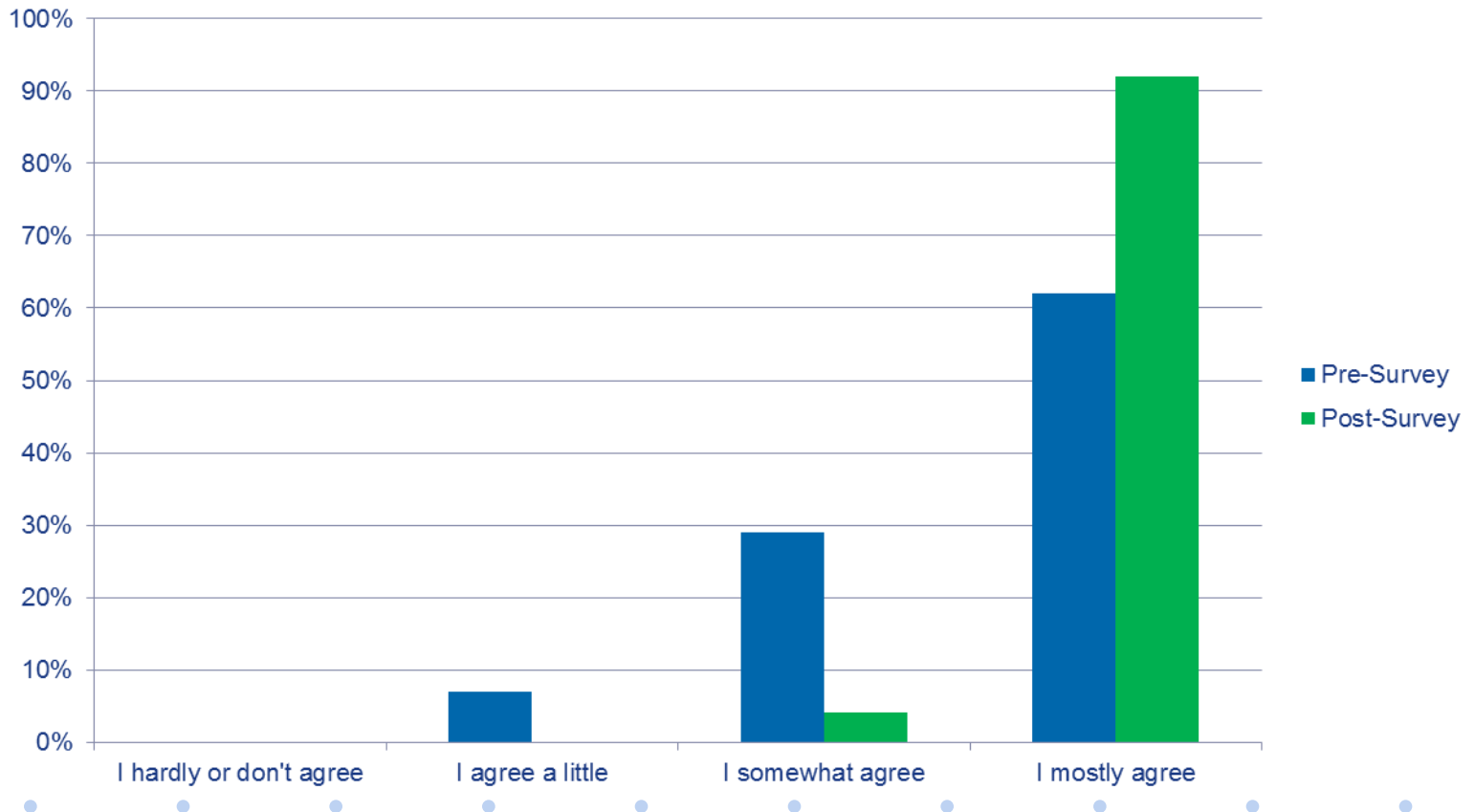
I think all teachers should have ESL/ELL training



I support having ESL/ELL students in all mainstream classes



ESL/ELL education is important to me



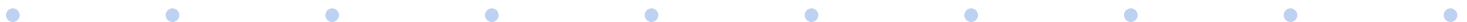
Limitations

- Small number of participants
- Homogeneity of participants (all in same graduate program, at the same stage of their preparation, 26 female, 1 male)
- Students from only one semester surveyed
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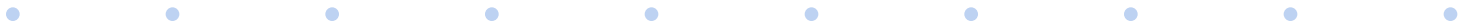
Further Studies

- Administer survey to three sections of READ 520 in Fall 2015
- Two sections will have similar characteristics
- Third section will be in different location (Northern Virginia)
- Third section will have currently practicing, experienced classroom teachers



Further Studies

- Third section will probably have had some previous professional development in ELL methods because of the student population
- Three sections of same course will allow for increase in number of participants, comparison of different groups of graduate students



References

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