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The Effect of the English Language Learner Pull Out Program on Primary
Students' Language Achievement

By

Heidi T. Penke

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College of the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements of the Degree of

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Under the Supervision of

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Abstract

The Effect of the English Language Learner Pull Out Program on Primary
Students' Language Achievement

Heidi T. Penke

University of Nebraska

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the English Language Learner (ELL) pull out program on student achievement. Schools are facing the unprecedented challenge to educate a multicultural and multilingual student body with varied abilities and backgrounds of learning.

The independent variables in this study were the intermediate ELL students ($n = 6$) who participated in the ELL pull out program during their first, second, and third grade years and advanced ELL students ($n = 17$) who participated in the ELL pull out program. The dependent variables were the students' 2006 Reading ELO and Writing ELO pretests and 2009 Reading ELO, Writing ELO, Reading Terra Nova, and Language Terra Nova posttests.

This study may offer insight into the best use of available funding for ELL programs. Given the study outcomes, school districts may choose to provide ELL instruction using a pull out program in order to impact student achievement and close the achievement gap.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In America today, the minority population is rapidly growing. During the 1990's, the population of English Language Learners (ELL) in our schools doubled from 2.2 million to 4.4 million (Center for Professional Development and Services, 2003). At least 3.5 million children have been identified as limited in English proficiency and are now enrolled in U.S. schools (Magnuson, 2000; Miller & Endo, 2004). With the increase of minority students, the number of different languages spoken has grown and is rapidly changing. More than 10 million children live in homes in the United States where a different language other than English is spoken (Jacobsen, 2006; Mora, 1999). Statistics show that 80% of Limited English Proficient (LEP) children have the ability to speak Spanish, and four hundred first languages exist for the United States LEP population as a whole. All of these children face the challenge of learning academic skills and content, and most often not in their first language in addition to developing proficiency in the English language (Crothers, 2008). Juggling all the different languages and diverse needs can be challenging for any classroom teacher. Teachers and schools are charged with educating every child, regardless of background, ethnicity, or language spoken at home.

The educational options for ELL students are guided by federal guidelines. In the Supreme Court ruling of *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), it was determined that it is illegal to place a child in a mainstream English class before he or she can 'participate meaningfully' (Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, 2007). Under Title Six of the *Civil Rights Act* (1964), it is a violation to provide the same education to language minority students as to native English speakers (Crothers, 2008). All students are required to meet

federal standards as outlined in No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (2002) regardless if they are ELL students or not (Abedi, 2004; Kamps, et al., 2007; Protheroe, 2010; Slavin & Cheung, 2003). This requirement increases the pressures on teachers, schools, school districts, and states for ELL students to succeed (Kamps, et. al, 2007). Local school districts have the task of providing the appropriate program for the ELL students which could be a bilingual program, English immersion program, pull out program, or some other acceptable program in order for the student to be successful. As the increase in population of ELL students continues, so do the various barriers or considerations that educators must make. Immigrants from a Hispanic-origin are the fastest growing group. Analysis of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test demonstrated that only 44% of Latino students scored at or above the “basic” level in comparison to 75% of Anglo students (Slavin & Cheung, 2003). Also, ELL students’ needs are different than their English-speaking peers so the curriculum and instruction should look different (Mora, 1999).

Teachers need to help ELL students feel comfortable and safe in the school setting. ELL students should be viewed as assets to the learning environment rather than liabilities (Lewis-Morena, 2007). Overcoming the language and cultural differences will alleviate the ELL students from feeling alienated (Russell, 2007). The school must embrace and accept the responsibility of teaching the ELL population.

Understanding language acquisition and the fact that students need extra help and practice is essential for teachers (Glenn, 2002). Understanding how a student learns a new language and knowing the best strategies and practices allows classroom teachers to meet the needs of the ever-changing student population. Language acquisition is

essential to learning a second language. ELL students usually are conversationally fluent within one to two years (Haynes, 2007; Meier, 1999). Unfortunately, it takes seven to ten years for non-native speakers to academically be at the same level as their peers (Haynes, 2007; Lewis-Morena, 2007; Meier, 1999).

English language learners can be overwhelmingly challenging to teachers, especially when the teachers have received no specialized training. Only California, Florida, and New York require preservice training in ELL strategies (Center for Professional Development and Services, 2003). Around 80% of limited English proficient students reside in California, Texas, New York, Illinois, and Florida (Jacobsen, 2006). Although the majority of ELL students reside in five states, training is needed for all teachers across the United States in order to meet the needs of our ever-changing population. Many strategies that are effective with ELL students can benefit all of the learners in the classroom. Learning strategies and best practices for ELL students will strengthen the teachers' skills and expertise.

There are an increasing number of strategies and programs to teach ELL students such as bilingual, English immersion, and pull-out programs. However, there is little research critically examining the specific models and how to best implement the specific models. More research is needed to determine if there is a relationship between the ELL pull-out program and the students' academic achievement. Research is needed to determine the effectiveness of ELL programs such as a pull-out program and how the program impacts student achievement. This detailed study will examine a pull-out program and its effectiveness in order to best meet the needs of the ever changing ELL population.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this two-group exploratory comparative efficacy study was to determine the academic achievement levels of English Language learners in the intermediate and advanced levels following two years of attending the same school district cluster site schools English Language Learner pull out program. The results were drawn from the following assessments: Reading Essential Learner Outcome Assessment, Writing Essential Learner Outcome Assessment, Reading Terra Nova Assessment, and Language Terra Nova Assessment.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to analyze student achievement in the English Language Learner Pull Out Program.

Research Question #1: Is there a difference between intermediate and advanced English Language Learner students from first to third grade on the Reading Essential Learner Outcome CRT scores for:

- a. word analysis,
- b. vocabulary,
- c. reading comprehension, and
- d. grammar?

Research Question #2: Is there a difference between intermediate and advanced English Language Learner students from first to third grade on the Writing Essential Learner Outcome CRT scores for:

- a. ideas and focus,
- b. organization,

- c. voice, and
- d. conventions?

Research Question #3: Do English Language Learner intermediate and advanced students have congruent or different third grade Terra Nova NRT scores for:

- a. reading and
- b. language?

Definition of Terms

Bilingual program. Bilingual program is a program in which the students are taught in their native language for a portion of the day and taught in the English language for a portion of the day.

Cluster site. Cluster site is defined as a designated school or group of schools which provide a certain educational program. In the research school district there is a cluster of four elementary schools that provide the English Language Learner program.

Comprehension. Comprehension is intentional thinking during which meaning of text is constructed through interaction between text and the reader.

Criterion referenced test (CRT). Criterion referenced test is a test in which the questions are written according to specific predetermined criteria such as an established academic curriculum in which students have received instruction prior to the administration of the test.

Cultural groups. Cultural groups are defined as ethnic categories used to label a student's ethnic background. The five categories are: Asian/Pacific Islander; Black; Caucasian, not Hispanic; Hispanic; and Native American.

Curriculum program. Curriculum program is an established set of curriculum, objectives, and indicators that are designed and taught at each grade level.

Decoding. Decoding is the ability to pronounce a word by applying knowledge of letter and sound correspondences and phonetic generalizations.

English language learner. English language learner is a student who primarily speaks a different language other than English in their home or has a parent who primarily speaks a different language other than English in their home.

English language learner intermediate level. English language learner intermediate level is defined as level two and level three students in the English Language Learner program. These students are able to respond to questions and have some understanding of conversational English. They may require repetition and respond with short answers. While reading, they rely heavily on picture clues and require visual aids in the classroom. Errors still occur in conversation and writing with grammar (Millard Public Schools, 2009).

English language learner advanced level. English language learner advanced level is defined as level four and five students in the English Language Learner program. These students are able to handle most conversations with confidence. These students are able to sustain a conversation with lengthy responses. In writing, they can write in a variety of genres and are approaching fluency in academic writing. While reading, they do not need to rely on background knowledge or picture clues. Instead they are able to utilize reading strategies learned (Millard Public Schools, 2009).

Essential learner outcome assessment. Essential Learner Outcome Assessments are criterion-referenced tests given to all students in grades one through eleven in the

research school district in Omaha, Nebraska. The purpose of these assessments is to determine the level of proficiency that students have achieved with the local curriculum that is aligned with state standards. Results of these tests are used to inform educators and parents of the progress of children, which includes required intervention for students below proficient performance. The results for students in certain grades are also used for No Child Left Behind requirements as well as for state reporting. The research school district Essential Learner Outcome Assessments are also high stakes graduation requirements.

Fluency. Fluency is the ability to easily read text with automatic word recognition, rapid decoding, and checking for meaning.

Language acquisition. Language acquisition is the process of acquiring and learning a new language.

Language development models-milestones of speech. Language development models-milestones of speech is the established language criteria that each person should obtain at certain age milestones throughout life.

Language proficiency. Language proficiency is the level of proficiency in relation to the level of English competency of their native English-speaking peers (Cummins, n.d.).

Limited English proficient. Limited English proficient is an English language learner having a deficit in the English language.

Literacy development. Literacy development is the process of learning how to read, write, listen, and speak.

Moving into English. Moving into English is defined as a computer program that the students use to practice English skills and vocabulary.

Normal curve equivalents (NCE). Normal curve equivalents are a standard score with a mean equal to 100 and a standard deviation 15.

Norm referenced test (NRT). Norm-reference tests are a means to measure student performance compared to the performance of similar groups of students who have taken the tests.

Phonemic awareness. Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear and manipulate sounds and words.

Phonics. Phonics is defined by the relationship between letters and sounds in language.

Pull out program. Pull out program is defined as a program where the student is pulled out of the mainstream general education classroom for a portion of the day in order to receive intense English instruction.

Read-aloud activities. Read-aloud activities are shared reading experiences, usually between an adult and a child or children. Although read-aloud activities may be practiced with and between readers of any age, they are most often employed with younger children.

Standard scores. Standard scores are the raw ELO scores that will be converted to standard scores with a mean equal to 100 and a standard deviation equal to 15.

Standard setting. Standard setting is the psychometric process of determining the cut scores that divides a range of scores on an exam into various levels of proficiency.

This process includes at least three and usually four simultaneously applied methods to ensure the validity of the cut scores.

Structured English immersion program. Structured English immersion program is a variety of English-only programs for limited English proficient students. A Structured English immersion program is an English as a Second Language model that can involve the English language instruction and access to mainstream general curriculum content, access to English language instruction and sheltered content or access to English language instruction only. It is not a bilingual program (Crothers, 2008).

Teacher English language learner endorsement. Teacher English language learner endorsement is the graduate coursework and certification designed to assist teachers in instructing English language learners.

Terra Nova achievement assessment. The Terra Nova-Second Edition is a group-administered, multiple-skill battery that provides norm-referenced and objective-mastery scores (Salvia & Ysseldyke, 2006).

Assumptions of the Study

This study had several strong features. All students in this study had been continuously enrolled from the beginning of first grade through the end of the third grade in the four cluster site research schools and all participated in the English Language Learner Program. This pull-out program provided English Language Learner students with 30-minutes or more of intense English instruction based on each student's measured ability level and academic needs. All of the research schools had highly qualified staff members, had implemented the English Language Learner Program based on best

practices, and were equally supported by the district at large through financial resources, school leadership, faculty, and curriculum.

Delimitations of the Study

The study, results, and discussion were delimited to third grade students in a suburban school district who were in attendance at the four cluster site research schools from first grade through third grade for the 2006-2009 school years and participated in the English Language Learner Program. The findings of the study were delimited to the English Language Learner students who attended the four cluster site research schools.

Limitations of the Study

This exploratory comparative efficacy study was limited to four cluster site research schools in a suburban school district that were located throughout the research school district. The study subjects ($N = 23$) represented a naturally formed sample population of English Language Learners. Students were not randomly assigned to classrooms, but they were assigned to the classroom that is the best educational fit and based on the students' needs. All of the students in the study participated in the English Language Learner Program at one of the four cluster site research schools for three consecutive years. The teachers who instructed the ELL students had varying amounts of training in best practices to use with ELL students. The teachers also had varying amounts of formal training on how to work with ELL students. Another limitation was that the teachers who instructed ELL students had varying amounts of experience with other languages and cultures. Using the test results from four cluster site schools may have skewed the statistical results and reduced the utility and generalizability of the findings.

Significance of the Study

This study contributed to research, practice, and policy. The study is of significant interest to parents and students as they view educational options for English Language Learners and to educators and school district officials as they consider the effective practices and whether or not the English Language Learner Program can effectively meet the needs of the students effectively.

Contribution to research. A review of professional literature suggested that more research is needed on the subject of English Language Learners in a suburban public school. There was also a need for more research on curriculum programs that serve English Language Learners. Furthermore, the results of this study informed district central office staff of the impact of student achievement of English Language Learners in such schools. In addition, the findings indicated specific factors for improvement that may determine types of services the schools need to meet the needs of the English Language Learners.

Contribution to practice. A suburban school district may decide whether or not to maintain the English Language Learner Program as it currently exists or alter the program to increase student achievement. The amount of staff development about best practices and strategies for ELL students may increase or be altered due to the outcome of the study.

Contribution to policy. The results of this study offered insight into how school districts develop curriculum for an English Language Learner Program. Given the study outcomes the school district may choose to reconsider the instructional model for the English Language Learner Program.

Organization of the Study

The literature review relevant to this research study is presented in Chapter 2. This chapter reviews the professional literature related to literacy development, English Language Learners (ELL), language acquisition, English Language Learner programs, and professional development. Chapter 3 describes the research design, methodology, independent variables, dependent variables, and procedures that will be used to gather and analyze the data of the study. This includes a detailed synthesis of participants, a comprehensive list of dependent variables, the dependent measures, and the data analysis used to statistically determine if the null hypothesis is rejected for each research question. Results of the study are outlined in Chapter 4 and discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

The study will look at ELL students and their literacy development. In order to examine the literacy development of ELL students, it is helpful to know about literacy development and language acquisition. This background information will help determine if ELL students acquire literacy development differently or the same as their peers and what program would be most beneficial to help ELL students.

Examining ELL students and the most effective programs is essential to our school systems and society since our population is ever-changing. The number of ELL students is rapidly increasing in the United States, and our public school system needs to be able to provide an appropriate education for our ELL students.

Literacy Development

As soon as a child is conceived, the human body begins to develop rapidly. Babies grow quickly during the first few years of life. During the physical development, the child also learns how to interact with others and the environment. Every child is exposed to literacy in their own environment. Literacy exposure will help the child develop the skills to read, write, listen, and speak during their life. Some children experience their entire environment with one language. Other children are exposed to multiple languages simultaneously at home or at school. In this study, we are examining students who have grown up with two or more languages or who are learning a second language with their schooling.

Early literacy development. As soon as children are born they are exposed to literacy in their environment. From environmental print to watching television to listening to people talk, literacy exposure is everywhere (Hiebert, 1981). The stages of

literacy development start at an early age. Infants listen to voices and learn to recognize their own name. Infants and toddlers begin to communicate by making utterance and then using words and sentences (Hiebert, 1981; Ohio Statewide Language Task Force, 1990). As children grow, parents become the child's first reading teacher through read alouds, singing songs, storytelling, and interactions (Bailey, 2006). A crucial element in early literacy development for young children is regular parent read alouds. Regular parent read alouds help children develop an interest in reading and a positive attitude toward reading (Bailey, 2006; Durkin, 1975; Zeece, 2007). By the time children are school-age, teachers assume the primary responsibility of explicitly teaching reading to the children.

There are five major elements that contribute to early reading success: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency (National Reading Panel, 2000; Slavin & Cheung, 2003). In preschool, letter identification is a strong predictor of later reading skills and letter knowledge helps children develop phonemic awareness skills. Letter identification and letter knowledge are early aspects of print awareness and literacy development (Dickinson, 2002; Hiebert, 1981; Ohio Statewide Language Task Force, 1990; Tunmer, Herriman, & Nesdale, 1988). As children enter school, letter identification and letter knowledge skills are further developed. Phonemic awareness and phonics skills are explicitly taught so that children learn the letter sound relationships found in words. Children also develop print awareness and begin identifying sight words. As children are able to construct meaning from the words on the page, they begin reading for meaning.

From the very beginning, a gap in achievement exists based on children's life experiences and the level of interaction that the children have with others, environmental print, and books prior to formal schooling. Research shows that if a child is struggling with reading development and is not caught up by third grade, then the child will continue to struggle and be behind their peers. The achievement gap can be closed in the crucial kindergarten through third grade years with systematic and diagnostic interventions. Literacy instruction needs to focus on the individual needs of each learner. Rather than using one reading program, the teacher needs the skills and knowledge to diagnostically analyze the needs of the learner and construct an effective instructional plan (Ediger, 2004; Quick, 1998). "Increasingly, researchers are finding better results from teachers who take a balanced approach-that is, classrooms that offer rich literature, writing, lots of shared reading, and direct instruction in phonics as well-especially with children from disadvantaged backgrounds" (Quick, 1998, p.260). With the vast amount of research that exists about effective literacy instructional practices, it is imperative that schools examine the current instructional practices and interventions and determine if the instructional practices and interventions are meeting the needs of all the children with their literacy development. This is essential for children who come to school with no significant repertoire of literacy experiences and, therefore, face a lifetime of school struggles without thoughtful and immediate intervention. Schools must intervene early and effectively in order to assist the struggling readers and close the achievement gap. Using the best instructional practices and interventions is imperative for ELL students who are already charged with learning two or more languages and possibly have not had extensive literacy experiences.

English Language Learners and Literacy Development

English language learners' literacy development. Literacy development is a challenge for all students, but it may be even harder for ELL students. ELL students are working at learning how to read, write, listen, and speak most likely in a different language than they already know or in a different language than spoken at home. Closing the achievement gap for ELL students is a challenge when their peers continue to make growth as well (Drucker, 2003). Their learning needs pose new challenges instructionally for an ever-changing population of teachers (Protheroe, 2010). Unfortunately, it takes seven to ten years for non-native speakers to academically be at the same level as their peers (Cummins, n.d.; Haynes, 2007; Lewis-Morena, 2007; Meier, 1999). Educators need to figure out how to overcome this obstacle and help the ELL students get caught up by the end of third grade.

Research shows that ELL students develop literacy skills by mastering the same five elements as English-proficient children which are phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. Good teaching is teaching for all. Many strategies that help ELL students will also help typical students (Drucker, 2003). Knowing this information, educators cannot assume that they do not need to do anything different for ELL students, but effective reading instruction will benefit all (Protheroe, 2010; Slavin & Cheung, 2003). ELL students need to be allowed time to absorb all of the new information as it can become overwhelming at times. All of these children face the challenge of learning academic skills and content, and most often not in their first language in addition to developing proficiency in the English language (Crothers, 2008). Educators need to provide instruction that has a balance between holistic and skills.

Research shows that effective educators are able to draw on prior knowledge, make connections, and explicitly teach word identification, phonological awareness, and vocabulary (Klingner & Edwards, 2006). Engaging students in challenging theme-based curriculum can assist in developing academic concepts (Freeman & Freeman, 2003).

ELL students need the opportunity to become proficient at the English language and develop literacy skills. Unfortunately, ELL students must master the English language simultaneously as they develop literacy skills. This is the challenge and obstacle that most ELL students must overcome.

Language acquisition. The ELL population poses a new challenge to educators. ELL students may or may not be having the same literacy experiences, but they may also be learning how to speak and read in a different language. Also, research shows that language acquisition is essential to learning a second language (Protheroe, 2010). ELL students usually are conversationally fluent within one to two years (Drucker, 2003; Haynes, 2007; Meier, 1999). In order for ELL students to feel comfortable at school, they need to know key phrases that they can use to communicate with the teacher and their peers. This is known as conversational fluency. ELL students need to be able to effectively communicate in order for learning to occur such as understanding directions and interpreting facial expressions (Colorado, 2007). Also, opportunities need to be created for greater student engagement and interaction to occur (Klingner & Edwards, 2006).

ELL students may exhibit different behaviors as they are beginning to acquire their second language. Those who have a strong foundation in their native language typically make better progress than those without a strong foundation (Protheroe, 2010).

Some students who are outgoing may begin to imitate phrases and try to speak without hesitating or worrying about making mistakes (Zehler, 1994). Educators must remember that the fast talkers are not always the best readers (Cummins, n.d.). Other children may be silent for a period of time. This is frequently referred to as the silent period. The child may remain silent until they are sure of what they should say. Students may also be silent as they tune out from the overwhelming effort of learning a new language (Zehler, 1994).

Educators have the huge task of helping all of their students develop the literacy skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking at the same time that the ELL students need to be taught the English language. Across the country the ELL population is growing and rapidly changing. School districts are trying to keep up with the changing needs by offering different and effective ELL programs such as a bilingual program, English immersion program, or a pull out program within the school district.

English Language Learner Programs

Along with ELL students being placed in mainstreamed classrooms, many school districts provide other programs such as a bilingual program or an English immersion program.

Bilingual programs. In bilingual education, the student adds a second language as the first one is being developed. The instruction is given in two or more languages so that the learner can fluently speak, read, write, and comprehend all of the languages instructed (Buly, 2008). In bilingual programs, the transition to English is gradual over four to six years (Noonan, 2002). Bilingual programs usually begin in Kindergarten with the majority of the instruction being taught in the student's home language. As the students progress through the grade levels, the ELL students are typically taught in

English half of the day and in another language such as Spanish the rest of the school day (Genesee, 2000). Bilingual education is a state law requirement in Texas. California no longer requires bilingual education (Baker, 1998).

There are many benefits to bilingual education such as parent involvement, increase in academic achievement, decrease in absence rates, and economic enrichment-access to markets and opportunities (Buly, 2008). In a bilingual program, students also feel connected to school and therefore, reduce gang behavior and violent acts (Buly, 2008). The school-home connection is strong in a bilingual program because there is not a language barrier with the school and the family.

One strong belief amongst bilingual education advocates is that a student who is of limited English proficiency (LEP) should not be formally taught in English until they have a solid base of their home language (Glenn, 2002). Bilingual programs are more easily implemented where there are a substantial number of students from the same first language. There can be drawbacks to bilingual programs though. It can be difficult to find highly qualified bilingual teachers and statistics show the rate of language acquisition is slower than other programs.

English immersion programs. In English immersion programs the student is taught using English at an appropriate level for the class. Adjusting the level of English is essential for the learning to occur. The focus for the first year in immersion programs is to acquire basic English skills (Noonan, 2002). The teachers aim to instruct using English 70% to 90% of the time and integrate language development activities (Baker, 1998; Protheroe, 2010). The ELL students are not taught with the classroom curriculum until they have acquired enough English to be mainstreamed with the other students.

Using English the majority of the time allows the teachers to feel confident that the students will succeed when they are mainstreamed (Baker, 1998). The overall goal of English immersion programs is to create students who are bilingual but develop adequate English skills early enough to be successful in school (Noonan, 2002). English immersion programs can be overwhelming for ELL students at the beginning, but as the student acquires some English skills their confidence grows.

Pull out programs. In pull out programs, the student is mainstreamed in the regular classroom for the majority of the day with a small percentage of time being pulled out of the classroom in order to receive direct English services. The direct English services are typically determined by the language level of the student. The areas focused on are reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The time allotted for pull out services is determined by the English level of the student which take into account their literacy and language skills. In 2001-02, a majority of English learners, approximately 60%, are in essentially all-English instruction. About 50% are in all-English instruction with some amount of LEP services (Goldenberg, 2008). Pull out programs are used in many school districts. According to Thomas and Collier (2001), the least effective form of English as a Second Language services is the form most commonly used (2001). By eleventh grade students who received services in ESL pull out programs through the fifth grade performed the same on standardized assessments as those who received no services (Thomas & Collier, 2001).

In the English Language Learner Pull Out Program for the research district, the ELL students are mainstreamed into a regular classroom for the majority of the day. The ELL students are taught using the same curriculum as the rest of the class in the regular

education classroom. The teacher may make modifications to the assignments or make accommodations for the ELL student based on the skills and ability of the student.

In the pull out program, the ELL students are pulled out of the classroom for a small amount of time each day to work on reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills that they are missing in the English language. In the research district, there are suggested guidelines for how much time a student should be pulled out of the classroom to receive direct English instruction based on their ELL level. For a level one student in third grade, the suggested amount of time is 360 minutes per week which is approximately 72 minutes a day. For a level three student in third grade, the suggested amount of time is 240 which is approximately 48 minutes a day. The suggested time is a range at some ELL levels so that the students' needs can be taken into account.

At the elementary schools in the research district, a school-wide master schedule is established to set aside an hour per grade level for pull out services to be given. This hour is established during the literacy block in order to pull ELL students during independent work time or workstations in order to receive direct instruction. Scheduling is a struggle, but if the ELL student is continually missing direct instruction, then they will continue to be far behind their peers. An issue is that ELL students do not receive uniform access to mainstream curriculum during the time they are learning English (Crothers, 2008).

Along with the suggested timeline, the ELL program has a rubric for each ELL level that outlines what each ELL student should be able to accomplish within the ELL level in the classroom and in the ELL pull-out program. The rubric was created by a committee of ELL teachers and general education teachers. The committee used the

grade level standards to create a continuum of necessary skills in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. For example a third grade level three student would be expected to demonstrate in the area of speaking the use of expanded basic verbal communication independently, request and share information independently, use level-appropriate vocabulary to carry on a conversation in a variety of settings, and begin to use informal standard, academic, and technical language effectively. A third grade level three student would be expected to demonstrate phonemic awareness by recognizing and identifying initial digraphs and vowels, use knowledge of spelling patterns to read, read grade appropriate and level appropriate sight words, and consistently identify new words in a written context by using prefixes, suffixes, root words, syntax, and common word patterns. There are two different rubrics: one for grades Kindergarten through second grade and the other one for grades three through twelve. The ELL teacher uses the rubric to guide instruction to meet the needs of each student. The ELL teacher may use different curriculum than the classroom teacher in order to fill the gaps of the learner or may preteach the core curriculum in order to build the student's background. ELL teachers often plan instruction around content themes to maximize opportunities for students to acquire language and concepts (Millard Public Schools, 2009). For example, the second grade reading theme was baseball so the ELL teacher set up and taught a baseball unit with the appropriate vocabulary and an actual game of baseball. Some of the curriculum used in the research districts' ELL pull-out program is Reading A to Z, Moving into English, Leveled Literacy Instruction, Reading Street support materials, and leveled texts. Each ELL teacher makes instructional decisions for each child and determines which curriculum will help the ELL student learn the skills and concepts they

are lacking. The goal of the research district's pull-out program is to assist students in becoming full participants in the regular education program (Millard Public Schools, 2009).

In the research district, the ELL students are assigned to cluster site schools. The cluster site concept is influenced by funding and teacher training. The research district has a reasonably small population of ELL students, although the population is continually growing, and centralizing the pull-out program into six schools (four elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school) allows the research district to consolidate appropriate resources. The ELL program has trained ELL teachers at each cluster site school. Also the general education teachers participate in extensive professional development at the cluster site schools in order to develop instructional strategies to best support ELL students. The centralization of the ELL services in the research district allow for funds to be used efficiently.

There are several different programs that help ELL students learn English. The programs should be based on sound pedagogical principles and research that support the use of effective teaching strategies and practices (Mora, 1999). With the increasing population of ELL students, school districts must take an active role in training teachers in the best strategies and practices to meet the needs of the ELL population. Many critics of ELL programs argue that the quality of reading instruction is as important as or more important than the language of instruction (Slavin & Cheung, 2003). Each school district is charged with the challenge of providing effective ELL services to the ELL population and effective professional development for the teachers.

Professional Development

Classroom teachers need to be trained on the best practices and strategies for ELL students such as oral language development, second-language acquisition, scaffolded instruction, differentiated assessments, and literacy instruction (Lewis-Morena, 2007; Mora, 1999; Quick 1998). The most effective approach to staff development is to have colleagues and instructional specialists provide ongoing, embedded staff development and strategies (Protheroe, 2010). There are many learning strategies that are effective for ELL students such as modeling the use of academic language and formal structures and providing graphic organizers that are partially completed to assist with a reading selection (Lewis-Morena, 2007). Peer editing and writing signals are ways to assist ELL students with writing and constructing paragraphs (Grenier, 2004; Lewis-Morena, 2007). ELL students also benefit from service learning projects which provide real-life meaningful experiences (Russell, 2007). The learning environment should include routines and predictability as well as extensive dialogue and interaction with peers such as Think Pair Share (Baker, 1998; Center for Professional Development and Services, 2003; Dickinson, 2002; Lewis-Morena, 2007; Magnuson, 2000). Another effective learning strategy is the use of manipulatives, gestures, pictures, and physical movement to understand and illustrate concepts (Hill & Flynn, 2006; Lee, Silverman, & Montoya, 2002; Noonan, 2002). Teachers need to be trained to use the strategies and use their professional knowledge to make instructional decisions (Quick, 1998). All of these strategies can be implemented with all students in the various ELL programs that are available.

Classroom teachers also would benefit from training on parental involvement and how to initiate and teach parents to have meaningful literacy interactions with their

children. Research shows that regular parent and child reading sessions influence early reading acquisition significantly more than their family's background or socio-economic status (Bailey, 2006).

With the ever changing population, educators have the task of meeting the needs of all the learners by providing meaningful curriculum and instruction (Gill, 2008). These needs are rapidly changing and growing as the population does. Educators need to understand the literacy development through the stages for all the learners, especially ELL learners. ELL students develop their literacy skills in similar ways as other learners, but there are some strategies educators can employ to help their literacy development. It is also essential to look at the staff development needs of the educators in order for them to be successful teachers. School districts also need to identify the best program to teach ELL students.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter describes the participants, procedures, independent variable descriptions, dependent measures and instrumentation, research questions, and data analysis.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this two-group exploratory comparative efficacy study was to determine the academic achievement levels of English Language learners in the intermediate and advanced levels following two years of attending the same school district cluster site schools English Language Learner pull out program. The results were drawn from the following assessments: Reading Essential Learner Outcome Assessment, Writing Essential Learner Outcome Assessment, Reading Terra Nova Assessment, and Language Terra Nova Assessment.

Research Design

This study is a two-group pretest posttest exploratory comparative efficacy study designed to determine the impact of the English Language Learner (ELL) pull out program on third grade intermediate students compared to third grade advanced students. The study examined the achievement levels of the intermediate ELL students and the advanced ELL students based on Reading and Writing ELO assessments and Reading and Language Terra Nova Assessments.

All student achievement data was retrospectively, archival, and routinely collected school information. Permission from the appropriate school research personnel was obtained. Non-coded numbers were used to display individual de-identified achievement data. Aggregated group data, descriptive statistics, and inferential statistical

analysis were utilized and reported with means and standard deviations on tables. Raw scores were converted to scale scores.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to analyze student achievement in the English Language Learner Program.

Research Question #1: Is there a difference between intermediate and advanced English Language Learner students from first to third grade on the Reading Essential Learner Outcome CRT scores for:

- a. word analysis,
- b. vocabulary,
- c. reading comprehension, and
- d. grammar?

Research Question #2: Is there a difference between intermediate and advanced English Language Learner students from first to third grade on the Writing Essential Learner Outcome CRT scores for:

- a. ideas and focus,
- b. organization,
- c. voice, and
- d. conventions?

Research Question #3: Do English Language Learner intermediate and advanced students have congruent or different third grade Terra Nova NRT scores for:

- a. reading and
- b. language?

Participants

Students participating in this study were enrolled in an ELL program in an Omaha area suburban school district during the 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09 school years. Each of the students participated in the pull out ELL program within our four cluster site schools.

Twenty-three students were selected for this study by identifying the English Language Learner students who attended the same school from first grade through third grade. English Language Learners are students who primarily speak a different language other than English in their home. All ELL students completed classes starting at 8:45 A.M. and ending at 3:30 P.M. Monday through Friday. All students were required to complete the same courses including (a) reading, (b) mathematics, (c) writing, (d) social studies, (e) science, (f) physical education, (g) music, (h) art, and (i) technology. No students were identified by name and no information will be released beyond the scope of this study.

The maximum number of participants ($N = 23$) chosen for this study were English Language Learner intermediate students ($n = 6$) and English Language Learner advanced students ($n = 17$) attending the same cluster site school first grade through third grade. The genders of the participants were congruent with enrollment patterns in the participating school district where females represent 51% and males represent 49% of the total enrollment. These numbers were representative of the overall student population of the school district. The age range of the study participants was 5 years old at the beginning of the study and 9 years old at the time of posttest data collection at all four cluster site schools. The racial and ethnic origin ratio was not congruent with enrollment

patterns in the participating schools. The racial and ethnic origin of the four cluster site schools is 75% Caucasian, not Hispanic; 9% Hispanic; 7% Black; 8.5% Asian/Pacific Islander; and 0.5% Native American.

Data Collection Procedures

Students were grouped into two academic levels based on their ELL level of intermediate or advanced. The intermediate group consisted of all ELL students at an English proficiency level of 2 or 3. The advanced group consisted of ELL students at an English proficiency level of 4 or 5. As part of the research district assessment requirements, elementary students must take the ELO assessment in reading and writing as well as the Terra Nova assessment. The Reading ELO Assessment and the Writing ELO Assessment are taken in first grade and third grade. The Terra Nova NRT assessment is taken in third grade. All of the participants in this study have participated in each of these assessments.

Criterion-referenced test scores in the areas of reading and writing of intermediate English Language Learner students were compared to criterion-referenced test scores of reading and writing of advanced English Language Learner students to determine if there was an impact on student achievement between first grade and third grade. Norm-referenced test scores in the areas of reading and language of intermediate English Language Learner students were compared to norm-referenced test scores of reading and language of advanced English Language Learner students to determine if there was an impact on student achievement between first grade and third grade.

Instruments

The research school district Essential Learner Outcomes Reading and Writing Assessments have test items and distracters developed in conjunction with highly qualified teachers and curriculum supervisors using the services of an outside the school district contracted professional test item writer. All Essential Learner Outcome assessments undergo a rigorous pre-pilot and pilot test to ensure item quality. Following pilot testing, separate groups of professional educators judge the assessment for curriculum alignment, test bias, and sufficiency of items which accurately diagnose students with ability levels at the below proficient, barely proficient, proficient, and beyond proficient levels (Millard Public Schools, 2009).

Cut scores for all ELO assessments were established using multiple methods to ensure accuracy. These methods include global rating (predicting current student performance at four levels of proficiency), the Angoff Method (item analysis), and teacher professional judgment (consensus for lower reading group placement). These processes are carried out under the direction of the Buros Mental Measurement Institute at the University of Nebraska and Alpine Testing Solutions (Millard Public Schools, 2009). All data was available through the school district's database and all data is uniformly required and uniformly collected.

Data Analysis

Dependent and Independent Measures. One dependent variable evaluated for this study was student achievement. The dependent variables were the pretests in first grade and the posttests in third grade. Also the groups: intermediate and advanced were dependent variables. The independent measures for this study include the strands of the

assessments: word analysis, vocabulary, reading comprehension, grammar, ideas and focus, organization, voice, conventions, reading, and language.

Analysis. Data was analyzed using two-way analyses of variance (ANOVA). ANOVA is a parametric test of significance used to determine whether a significant difference exists between two or more means at a selected probability level. This determined if the differences among the means represent true, significant differences or chance differences due to sampling error (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006). An ANOVA was selected as it is efficient and keeps the error rate under control (Gay, et al., 2006). A follow-up test was completed if significance is found between groups. Because of the small sample size, the significance level was .05.

The purpose of this two-group exploratory comparative efficacy study was to determine the academic achievement levels of English Language learners in the intermediate and advanced levels following two years of attending the same school district cluster site schools English Language Learner pull out program. The results were drawn from the following assessments: Reading Essential Learner Outcome Assessment, Writing Essential Learner Outcome Assessment, Reading Terra Nova Assessment, and Language Terra Nova Assessment.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this two-group exploratory comparative efficacy study was to determine the academic achievement levels of English Language learners in the intermediate and advanced levels following two years of attending the same school district cluster site schools English Language Learner pull out program. The results were drawn from the following assessments: Reading Essential Learner Outcome Assessment, Writing Essential Learner Outcome Assessment, Reading Terra Nova Assessment, and Language Terra Nova Assessment.

Research Question 1-Reading ELO

Is there a difference between intermediate and advanced English Language Learner students from first to third grade on the Reading Essential Learner Outcome CRT scores for: a. word analysis, b. vocabulary, c. reading comprehension, and d. grammar?

Word analysis. There was no statistically significant main effect for time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade), $F(1, 21) = 2.93, p = .10$. There was no significant interaction between time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade) and level (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = 0.75, p = .40$. There was a significant main effect for level (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = 5.15, p = .03, d = 1.17$.

The statistically significant main effect for level indicated that intermediate students' ($M = 121.95, SD = 18.75$) scored significantly lower than advanced students' ($M = 139.80, SD = 11.82$) scored on the pretest first grade. The means and standard deviations of the reading ELO word analysis strand scores are displayed in Table 1. The ANOVA for the reading ELO word analysis strand scores are displayed in Table 2.

Vocabulary. There was a statistically significant main effect for time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade), $F(1, 21) = 22.85, p < .01, d = 1.24$. There was no significant interaction between time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade) and level (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = 4.50, p = .05$. There was a statistically significant main effect for level (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = 8.881, p = .01, d = 1.58$.

The statistically significant main effect for time indicated that students' scores decreased significantly from the pretest first grade ($M = 130.76, SD = 17.50$) to posttest third grade ($M = 111.43, SD = 13.63$), regardless of the level (intermediate/advanced). The statistically significant main effect for level indicated that intermediate students ($M = 114.89, SD = 15.01$) scored significantly lower than advanced students ($M = 137.71, SD = 13.78$) scored on the pretest first grade. The means and standard deviations of the reading ELO vocabulary strand scores are displayed in Table 3. The ANOVA for the reading ELO vocabulary strand scores is displayed in Table 4.

Reading comprehension. There was no statistically significant main effect for time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade), $F(1, 21) = 89.12, p = .53$. There was a significant interaction between time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade) and level (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = 2790.48, p < .01, d = 0.50$. There was a significant main effect for level (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = 7826.26, p < .01, d = 2.05$.

The statistically significant main effect for time indicated that students' scores decreased significantly from the pretest first grade ($M = 123.18, SD = 29.15$) to posttest third grade ($M = 113.53, SD = 9.61$), regardless of the level (intermediate/advanced). The statistically significant main effect for level indicated that intermediate students ($M = 91.69, SD = 27.25$) scored significantly lower than advanced students ($M = 136.96, SD =$

16.84) scored on the pretest first grade. The means and standard deviations of the reading ELO reading comprehension strand scores are displayed in Table 5. The ANOVA for the reading ELO reading comprehension strand scores is displayed in Table 6.

Grammar. There was a statistically significant main effect for time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade), $F(1, 21) = 7.86, p = .01, d = 0.94$. There was no significant interaction between time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade) and level (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = 3.56, p = .07$. There was a significant main effect for level (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = 8.80, p < .01, d = 1.38$.

The statistically significant main effect for time indicated that students' scores decreased significantly from the pretest first grade ($M = 135.87, SD = 23.04$) to posttest third grade ($M = 117.17, SD = 16.92$), regardless of the level (intermediate/advanced). The statistically significant main effect for level indicated that intermediate students ($M = 116.05, SD = 34.01$) scored significantly lower than advanced students ($M = 144.53, SD = 7.27$) scored on the pretest first grade. The means and standard deviations of the reading ELO grammar strand scores are displayed in Table 7. The ANOVA for the reading ELO grammar strand scores is displayed in Table 8.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Reading ELO Word Analysis Strand Scores

	Pretest 1 st Grade		Posttest 3 rd Grade	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Group 1 Intermediate (<i>n</i> =6)	121.95	18.75	117.84	20.57
Group 2 Advanced (<i>n</i> =17)	139.80	11.82	127.23	19.13
Total	134.37	16.18	124.37	19.61

Table 2

ANOVA for Reading ELO Word Analysis Strand Scores

Source of Variation	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Between Subjects					
Level	1	1807.44	5.15	.03	1.17
Error	21	351.03			
Within Subjects					
Word Analysis	1	677.17	2.93	.10	ns
Word Analysis*Level	1	174.16	0.75	.40	ns
Error	21	231.44			

ns = not significant

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Reading ELO Vocabulary Strand Scores

	Pretest 1 st Grade		Posttest 3 rd Grade	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Group 1 Intermediate (<i>n</i> =6)	114.89	15.01	105.73	8.65
Group 2 Advanced (<i>n</i> =17)	137.71	13.78	113.92	14.86
Total	130.76	17.50	111.43	13.63

Table 4

ANOVA for Reading ELO Vocabulary Strand Scores

Source of Variation	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Between Subjects					
Level	1	2340.44	8.88	.01	1.58
Error	21	263.52			
Within Subjects					
Vocabulary	1	2642.27	22.85	.00	1.24
Vocabulary*Level	1	520.85	4.50	.05	ns
Error	21	115.65			

ns = not significant

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Reading ELO Reading Comprehension Strand Scores

	Pretest 1 st Grade		Posttest 3 rd Grade	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Group 1 Intermediate (<i>n</i> =6)	91.69	27.25	105.59	3.18
Group 2 Advanced (<i>n</i> =17)	136.96	16.84	117.01	9.43
Total	123.18	29.15	113.53	9.61

Table 6

ANOVA for Reading ELO Reading Comprehension Strand Scores

Source of Variation	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Between Subjects					
Level	1	7826.26	29.54	<.01	2.05
Error	21	264.97			
Within Subjects					
Reading Comprehension	1	89.12	0.41	.53	ns
Reading Comp*Level	1	2790.48	12.90	<.01	0.50
Error	21	216.28			

ns = not significant

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Reading ELO Grammar Strand Scores

	Pretest 1 st Grade		Posttest 3 rd Grade	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Group 1 Intermediate (<i>n</i> =6)	116.05	34.01	111.22	17.01
Group 2 Advanced (<i>n</i> =17)	144.53	7.27	119.77	16.74
Total	135.87	23.04	117.17	16.92

Table 8

ANOVA for Reading ELO Grammar Strand Scores

Source of Variation	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Between Subjects					
Level	1	3340.21	8.80	.01	1.38
Error	21	379.58			
Within Subjects					
Grammar	1	2133.36	7.86	.01	0.94
Grammar*Level	1	966.27	3.56	.07	ns
Error	21	271.46			

ns = not significant

Research Question 2-Writing ELO

Is there a difference between intermediate and advanced English Language Learner students from first to third grade on the Writing Essential Learner Outcome CRT scores for: a. ideas and focus, b. organization, c. voice, and d. conventions?

Ideas and focus. There was no statistically significant main effect for time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade), $F(1, 21) = 3.58, p = .07$. There was no significant interaction between time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade) and level (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = .02, p = .89$. There was no significant main effect for level (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = 2.97, p = .10$.

The means and standard deviations of the writing ELO focus and ideas strand scores are displayed in Table 9. The ANOVA for the writing ELO focus and ideas strand scores are displayed in Table 10.

Organization. There was no statistically significant main effect for time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade), $F(1, 21) = 2.86, p = .11$. There was no significant interaction between time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade) and level (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) < .01, p = .99$. There was no significant main effect for level (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = 2.37, p = .14$.

The means and standard deviations of the writing ELO organization strand scores are displayed in Table 11. The ANOVA for the writing ELO organization strand scores are displayed in Table 12.

Voice. There was a statistically significant main effect for time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade), $F(1, 21) = 7.95, p = .01, d = 0.81$. There was no significant interaction between time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade) and group

(intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = .84, p = .92$. There was no significant main effect for group (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = 291.41, p = .15$.

The statistically significant main effect for time indicated that students' scores increased significantly from the pretest first grade ($M = 99.45, SD = 6.91$) to posttest third grade ($M = 107.44, SD = 12.80$), regardless of the group (intermediate/advanced). The means and standard deviations of the writing ELO voice strand scores are displayed in Table 13. The ANOVA for the writing ELO voice strand scores are displayed in Table 14.

Conventions. There was no statistically significant main effect for time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade), $F(1, 21) = 2.16, p = .16$. There was no significant interaction between time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade) and group (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = 0.45, p = .51$. There was no significant main effect for group (intermediate/advanced), $F(1, 21) = 4.13, p = .06$.

The means and standard deviations of the writing ELO conventions strand scores are displayed in Table 15. The ANOVA for the writing ELO conventions strand scores are displayed in Table 16.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for Writing ELO Ideas and Focus Strand Scores

	Pretest 1 st Grade		Posttest 3 rd Grade	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Group 1 Intermediate (<i>n</i> =6)	99.46	10.64	105.41	7.43
Group 2 Advanced (<i>n</i> =17)	104.66	6.37	109.77	10.67
Total	103.07	8.03	108.44	9.84

Table 10

ANOVA for Writing ELO Ideas and Focus Strand Scores

Source of Variation	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Between Subjects					
Level	1	222.47	2.97	.10	ns
Error	21	75.02			
Within Subjects					
Word Analysis	1	298.07	3.56	.07	ns
Word Analysis*Level	1	1.73	0.02	.89	ns
Error	21	83.38			

ns = not significant

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for Writing ELO Organization Strand Scores

	Pretest 1 st Grade		Posttest 3 rd Grade	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Group 1 Intermediate (<i>n</i> =6)	98.20	9.25	102.89	5.59
Group 2 Advanced (<i>n</i> =17)	103.00	7.98	107.64	11.15
Total	101.54	8.48	106.19	9.91

Table 12

ANOVA for Writing ELO Organization Strand Scores

Source of Variation	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
<hr/>					
Between Subjects					
Level	1	222.37	2.37	.14	ns
Error	21	93.73			
Within Subjects					
Vocabulary	1	211.90	2.86	.11	ns
Vocabulary*Level	1	.01	< .01	.99	ns
Error	21	74.05			

ns = not significant

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics for Writing ELO Voice Strand Scores

	Pretest 1 st Grade		Posttest 3 rd Grade	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Group 1 Intermediate (<i>n</i> =6)	95.85	6.71	103.43	4.99
Group 2 Advanced (<i>n</i> =17)	101.03	6.58	109.20	14.81
Total	99.45	6.91	107.44	12.80

Table 14

ANOVA for Writing ELO Voice Strand Scores

Source of Variation	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Between Subjects					
Level	1	291.41	2.21	.15	ns
Error	21	131.67			
Within Subjects					
Reading Comprehension	1	604.08	7.96	.01	0.81
Reading Comp*Level	1	0.84	0.01	.92	ns
Error	21	75.94			

ns = not significant

Table 15

Descriptive Statistics for Writing ELO Conventions Strand Scores

	Pretest 1 st Grade		Posttest 3 rd Grade	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Group 1 Intermediate (<i>n</i> =6)	108.97	19.99	104.69	9.24
Group 2 Advanced (<i>n</i> =17)	127.34	22.97	115.89	19.76
Total	121.75	23.31	112.48	17.81

Table 16

ANOVA for Writing ELO Conventions Strand Scores

Source of Variation	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Between Subjects					
Level	1	2127.91	4.13	.06	ns
Error	21	515.86			
Within Subjects					
Grammar	1	602.25	2.16	.16	ns
Grammar*Level	1	125.39	0.45	.51	ns
Error	21	278.54			

ns = not significant

Research Question 3-Reading and Language Terra Nova

Do English Language Learner intermediate and advanced students have congruent or different third grade Terra Nova NRT scores for: a. reading and b. language?

Reading. Analysis of the scores using the dependent t test indicated a significant difference between the intermediate level scores ($M = 37.86$, $SD = 16.58$), and advanced level scores ($M = 62.38$, $SD = 18.02$), $t(21) = 3.01$, $p = .01$ (two-tailed), $d = 1.42$, in reading as measured by the Terra Nova. Table 17 displays the means and standard deviations and the results of the t test.

Language. Analysis of the scores using the dependent t test indicated a significant difference between the intermediate level scores ($M = 41.29$, $SD = 9.86$), and advanced level scores ($M = 62.50$, $SD = 19.41$), $t(21) = 2.72$, $p = .01$ (two-tailed), $d = 1.45$, in language as measured by the Terra Nova. Table 18 displays the means and standard deviations and the results of the t test.

Table 17

Posttest Terra Nova Reading Scores for Intermediate and Advanced Level Students

	Intermediate		Advanced		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Terra Nova Reading	37.86	16.58	62.38	18.02	3.07	.01	1.42

Table 18

Posttest Terra Nova Language Scores for Intermediate and Advanced Level Students

	Intermediate		Advanced		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Terra Nova Language	41.29	9.86	62.50	19.41	2.72	.01	1.45

Summary

In summary, on the vocabulary strand and the grammar strand, there were significant differences between the pretest scores and the posttest scores, regardless of level. Both levels' scores went down significantly in third grade. On the reading comprehension strand, there were significant differences between the levels on the pretest and the posttest. Intermediate level students scored significantly lower than advanced level students. Also, on the reading ELO assessment for the word analysis strand, the vocabulary strand, the reading comprehension strand, and the grammar strand, there were significant differences between the intermediate level scores and the advanced level scores.

On the writing ELO assessment for the ideas and focus strand, the organization strand, and the conventions strand, there were no significant differences. Scores increased on the voice strand for both the intermediate and advanced levels from the pretest to the posttest, but neither level increased significantly.

Finally the statistical results for the Terra Nova Reading assessment and the Terra Nova Language assessment indicated that there was a significant difference between the intermediate level scores than the advanced level scores. The intermediate level scores were significantly lower than the advanced level scores.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Discussions

Educators have always been concerned with helping students learn, grow and achieve academic success. Providing the necessary tools and skills to learn, however, is not always easy. While some young children come to school with a wealth of academic background and a variety of experiences, others have little prior knowledge to a formal schooling experience and quite possibly do not speak the same language. Another factor is the home language and the student's experience and skills with more than one language. The ELL population faces the challenge of learning academic skills and content and most often not in their first language in addition to developing proficiency in the English language (Crothers, 2008). Our population is ever changing and educators need to develop teaching skills that assist all learners regardless of background, experiences, or language skills.

Our ELL population is rapidly growing throughout the country. The goal of education is to close the achievement gap with all subgroups and help all learners become productive, responsible citizens. Keeping in mind that it usually takes at least five years for ELL students to catch up to native English speaking peers (Cummins, n.d.). The ELL population brings unique challenges to the educational setting.

The purpose of this two-group exploratory comparative efficacy study was to determine the academic achievement levels of English Language learners in the intermediate and advanced levels following two years of attending the same school district cluster site schools English Language Learner pull out program. The results were drawn from the following assessments: Reading Essential Learner Outcome Assessment,

Writing Essential Learner Outcome Assessment, Reading Terra Nova Assessment, and Language Terra Nova Assessment. Study conclusions are presented for each of the four areas; Reading, Writing, Terra Nova Reading, and Terra Nova Language.

Finally, while there are high levels of accountability for school performance and academic achievement for all students, the ELL pull out program needs to be concerned with the literacy development of each child as well as the retention of information in order to make at least a year's growth (No Child Left Behind, 2002). Study findings have implications for each of these areas.

Conclusions

Reading

All study participants took the Reading Essential Learner Outcome (ELO) assessment in both first grade and third grade. There were four common strands on both reading assessments: word analysis, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and grammar.

While there were no significant differences for time (pretest first grade/posttest third grade) for either the word analysis strand or the reading comprehension strand, there were still findings worthy of note. There is a significant main effect for the word analysis strand for both the intermediate and advanced levels, and each group decreased significantly, $F(1, 21) = 5.15, p = .03, d = 1.17$. A decrease in scores was not a predicted result, and it was discouraging that both levels decreased in this strand. The ELL pull out program needs to focus more on direct reading instruction.

On the reading comprehension strand, there was no significant difference for time, but there was a significant interaction between time and level, $F(1, 21) = 2790.48, p < .01, d = 0.50$. There was also a significant main effect for level on the reading

comprehension strand, $F(1, 21) = 7826.26, p < .01, d = 2.05$. The intermediate level students increased their scores from the pretest in first grade ($M = 136.96, SD = 16.84$) to the posttest in third grade ($M = 117.01, SD = 9.43$). The increase in scores was a predicted result, and the reading comprehension instruction should continue in the ELL pull out program.

On the Reading ELO assessment for both the vocabulary strand and the grammar strand, there were significant differences between the first grade scores and the third grade scores. Both groups' scores went down significantly in third grade.

The vocabulary strand showed a significant decrease, $F(1, 21) = 22.85, p < .01, d = 1.24$ for both groups. There was no significant interaction between time and level. This strand also indicated a difference between intermediate level students and advanced level students. The intermediate level students had significant lower pretest scores ($M = 114.89, SD = 15.01$) in first grade than the advanced level students ($M = 137.71, SD = 13.78$), $F(1, 21) = 8.881, p = .01, d = 1.58$. On this strand the intermediate level students started with lower scores in first grade and while both groups' scores decreased, the intermediate level students loss less ground than the advanced level students. The decrease in scores is disappointing. One implication of this research study for the research school district may be to evaluate the direct reading instruction that is incorporated in the ELL pull out program as well as the classroom instruction. Another implication may be how to help ELL students retain the readers' knowledge and skills as well as making at least a whole year's growth each school year.

On the grammar strand of the Reading ELO assessment, student scores decreased significantly, $F(1, 21) = 7.86, p = .01, d = 0.94$ from first to third grade. Again, a

decrease is disappointing in achievement results. There was no significant interaction between time and level for grammar. This strand also indicated a difference between intermediate level students and advanced level students. The intermediate level students had significantly lower pretest scores ($M = 116.05$, $SD = 34.01$) in first grade than the advanced level students ($M = 144.53$, $SD = 7.27$), $F(1, 21) = 8.80$, $p < .01$, $d = 1.38$. On this strand, the intermediate level students started with lower scores in first grade, and while both groups' scores decreased, the intermediate level students lost less ground than the advanced level students.

Overall reading results were disappointing. In all four strands (word analysis, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and grammar) the scores decreased from first to third grade at all levels except for one group: the intermediate level scores increased on the reading comprehension strand. Retaining and gaining a year's growth each year is an essential piece that needs to be looked at with the ELL pull out program.

Writing

All study participants took the Writing Essential Learner Outcome (ELO) assessment in both first grade and third grade. There were four common strands on both writing assessments: ideas and focus, organization, voice, and conventions.

There were not significant differences for time on three of the writing strands: ideas and focus, $F(1, 21) = 3.58$, $p = .07$, organization, $F(1, 21) = 2.86$, $p = .11$, and conventions, $F(1, 21) = 2.16$, $p = .16$. Also there was no significant interaction between time and level on all four writing strands: ideas and focus, $F(1, 21) = 0.02$, $p = .89$, organization, $F(1, 21) < 0.01$, $p = .99$, voice, $F(1, 21) = 0.84$, $p = .92$, and conventions, $F(1, 21) = 0.45$, $p = .51$. There was also no significant main effect for level

(intermediate/advanced) for all four writing strands: ideas and focus, $F(1, 21) = 2.97, p = .10$, organization, $F(1, 21) = 2.37, p = .14$, voice, $F(1, 21) = 291.41, p = .15$, and conventions, $F(1, 21) = 4.13, p = .06$. There were, however, results that had implications for this study.

On the voice strand the students' scores increased significantly from the pretest first grade ($M = 99.45, SD = 6.91$) to posttest third grade ($M = 107.44, SD = 12.80$) regardless of the group (intermediate/advanced). It was encouraging on the writing results that the scores went up for both groups on the voice strand.

Terra Nova

The statistical results for the Terra Nova Reading and Language were similar to those of the reading and writing results. For the Terra Nova Reading, the scores indicated a significant difference between the intermediate level students ($M = 37.86, SD = 16.58$) and the advanced level students ($M = 62.38, SD = 18.02$). Also on the Terra Nova Language, the scores indicated a significant difference between the intermediate level students ($M = 41.29, SD = 9.86$) and the advanced level students ($M = 62.50, SD = 19.41$). Again the intermediate level students performed at a lower level than the advanced level students.

Study results were consistent and clear. Intermediate level students do not achieve at levels as high as the advanced level students.

Discussion

Literacy Development

To impact success in school, educators may want to more carefully consider the components of the ELL pull out instruction. If students are struggling in reading, they

may not achieve at appropriate levels in other content areas. In this study, students who had more English language skills which was the advanced level group performed better on assessments. They were more able to complete literacy tasks and score well on tests. Instructing ELL students should look similar to other students in the regular classroom, but the literacy components need to be emphasized more within the ELL pull out program. The English used and the reading materials must be at the ELL students' level of English (Crothers, 2008). The ELL teachers should be literacy experts in order to help the ELL students retain their literacy skills and knowledge as well as make at least a year's growth. Educators need to realize that accomplished readers in their first language use many of the same strategies when they are reading in the second language (Drucker, 2003). Unfortunately not all ELL students have a strong literacy foundation in their first language. Therefore the instructional strategies are crucial to the success of the ELL students.

Mobility

This research study evaluated ELL students who had attended the same school and participated in the ELL pull out program for three consecutive school years. The ELL population is a highly mobile population. It is difficult for students to constantly move from school to school without potentially missing out on learning opportunities. There is little research on how to help ELL students' transition when they continuously move from community to community and school to school. The research school district should inquire about screening materials for new students in order to know the academic abilities and language development of the new ELL students. A clear process should be established in order to quickly determine the ELL students' needs when they move in.

Language Development

Research discusses that if a child has a strong language foundation with their first language, then learning the second language will be easier. ELL teachers do not know the level of language in the student's home language, so it is a challenge for the ELL teacher to determine the appropriate rate of learning. If the research district has clear procedures and quality assessment tools in place, then the ELL student will be better served academically.

Recommendations for Further Research

While educational researchers are beginning to develop best practices for ELL instruction the movement and the population are relatively new. Few studies have evaluated the best practices to teaching ELL students all of the literacy components of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. This study supports intense literacy instruction for ELL students, but it does not lay out a specific instructional design or a method to use. Program evaluation is worthy of further study.

This study was also conducted on a small sample of ELL students in a Midwestern, suburban school district. It would be worth studying the achievement of ELL students in urban and rural settings.

Summary

All educators will tell you that they believe all students should be given an opportunity to learn. ELL students pose unique challenges to educators. Educators need a strong background on language development, literacy development, and best instructional practices. Also a clear process of assessment procedures needs to be established in order to measure an ELL students' language development and academic

ability. With the high mobility of the ELL population, the process and procedures will help educators better meet the needs of the ELL students.

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APPENDIX A

Letter of Approval for Research from the Millard Public Schools

A letter is on file and available upon request.

APPENDIX B

Letter of Approval for Research from the Combined University of Nebraska Medical
Center/University of Nebraska at Omaha Institutional Review Board for the Protection of
Human Subjects

A letter is on file and available upon request.