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Mainstream teacher attitudes toward english language learners

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**MAINSTREAM TEACHER ATTITUDES
TOWARD ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

by

CRISTINA GONZALEZ DEKUTOSKI

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

Detroit, Michigan

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

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MAJOR: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Approved by:

Advisor

Date

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my family,
to my husband, Matt, for his constant love and support throughout this journey.

You never let me lose sight of this goal
and have been my biggest supporter from day one;
thank you for everything.

To my angel guiding this work from above.

And to my precious daughters,

Kara and Leah.

“Mommy did it!”

Always know that with hard work any goal is possible and within your reach.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication	ii
Acknowledgments	iii
List of Tables.....	viii
List of Figures.....	x
Chapter I – Introduction.....	1
Background of the Study	1
Statement of the Problem.....	8
Purpose of the Study	9
Research Questions	9
Significance of the Study	10
Limitations of the Study	10
Assumptions.....	11
Definition of Terms	11
Chapter II – Review of Related Literature	15
Attitudes of Mainstream Teachers toward English Language Learner Inclusion	15
Perceptions of the Second-Language Acquisition Process	23
Theories of Second-Language Acquisition	24
Teacher Attitudes toward Coursework Modification.....	29
Teaching ELLs in Michigan	33
Attitudes toward ESL Professional Development	37
Summary	44
Chapter III – Methodology	46

Research Design	46
Participants.....	46
Instruments.....	47
Data Collection Procedures.....	50
Data Analysis.....	50
Sample Size Justification	53
Chapter IV – Results of Data Analysis	54
Description of Participants.....	54
Reliability	59
MANOVA Results.....	67
Summary	71
Chapter V – Summary, Discussion, Findings, and Recommendations	72
Summary	72
Discussion	73
Research Questions	74
Findings.....	82
Past Coursework in ESL Positively Impacts Teacher Attitudes	83
Professional Development Positively Associated with Past ESL Coursework.....	84
Attitudes toward Professional Development Associated with Graduate and Undergraduate Credit Hours.....	85
Summary of Findings.....	86
Limitations of the Study	86
Policy Implications	87

Recommendations for Future Research.....	88
Final Remarks	89
Appendix A – English as a Second Language Students in Mainstream Classrooms A Survey of Teachers	90
Appendix B – Research Information Sheet	94
Appendix C – Open-ended Responses	96
Appendix D – Human Investigation Committee Approval.....	99
References.....	100
Abstract.....	109
Autobiographical Statement	111

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Stages of Second Language Acquisition.....	27
Table 2	Subscale Development	48
Table 3	Teaching Background Characteristics of Respondents (N = 100).....	56
Table 4	Subscale Scores (Mean [SD]) by Grade Level Taught (N = 100).....	57
Table 5	Subscales by County (N = 100)	58
Table 6	Number of ESL Students Enrolled In Your Class Throughout Teaching Career	58
Table 7	Percent of ESL Students Enrolled 2009-2010.....	59
Table 8	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients for Sections A and B (Overall and Subscale	60
Table 9	Subscale Scores Section A: Mean Subscale Scores (N = 100)	62
Table 10	Section B: Mean Subscale Scores (N = 58)	63
Table 11	Inclusion Subscale	64
Table 12	Coursework Modification Subscale	65
Table 13	Professional Development Subscale.....	66
Table 14	Language and Language Learning Subscale.....	67
Table 15	MANCOVA and ANCOVA F-Values for Ever Received ESL Training Adjusted for Grade Level, Gender, Speak Second Language and % ESL Students Taught	69
Table 16	Adjusted Mean Scores on Attitude Subscales Among Teachers with and Without Past ESL Training	69
Table 17	Adjusted Mean Scores on Attitude Subscales by Gender.....	69
Table 18	Adjusted Mean Scores on Attitude Subscales by Second Language (yes/no)	70

Table 19	Descriptive Statistics for Undergraduate Level Credit Hours by Professional Development Questions	71
Table 20	Descriptive Statistics for Graduate Level Credit Hours by Professional Development Questions	71

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Societal/Conceptual Challenges Regarding the Education of ELLs.....	41
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Chapter I

Introduction

Background of the Study

This research examined the attitudes of mainstream teachers toward English language learners (ELLs). An English language learner is categorized as a student who does not speak English at a level that enables him/her to participate fully in mainstream classroom instruction (Goldenberg, 2008). The importance of studying the attitudes of mainstream teachers toward ELLs is that their perceptions can greatly affect the quality of instruction that this growing cohort of students receives, students who substantially underperform their native English speaking peers.

The enrollment of English language learners in grades preK - 12 has doubled from 2,030,457 in 1989 – 1990 to 5,074,572 in 2005-2006 (National Clearing House for English Language Acquisition [NCELA], 2008a). To further demonstrate the rapid growth of ELLs in the United States, approximately 5% of public school students in 1990 were ELLs (Goldenberg, 2008). This number grew to 11% in 2005 and is expected to continue increasing to an estimated 25% in 2030. The states with the highest numbers of ELLs are:

- California (1,571,463)
- Texas (640,749)
- Florida (253,165)
- New York (234,578)
- Illinois (204,803; NCELA, 2008b)

States that have experienced the largest growth with ELLs are:

- South Carolina (688.2%)
- Arkansas (361.3 %)
- Indiana (349.7%)
- North Carolina (346.2%)
- Tennessee (296.0%; NCELA, 2008c)

Understanding language acquisition is central to the instruction of ELLs. Finding effective ways to teach diverse learners ideally would be the job of all teachers (Zamel, 2006). Approximately only 29.5% of teachers of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students nationally have LEP training, with this number varying from 47.3% of teachers in the West, to 11.6% of Midwest having this training (Spring, 2010).

According to Goldenberg (2008), more than 400 different language backgrounds are spoken by ELLs in the United States. A majority of these ELL students were born in the U.S, including 76% at the elementary level and 56% at the middle/high school level. Eighty percent of ELLs were born to parents outside of the United States (Goldenberg, 2008). The largest of immigrants to the U.S. comes from Mexico, with 50% of foreign born elementary school students born in Mexico, the Caribbean, and other Latin American countries. An additional 25% of ELLs had emigrated from Asian countries (Capps et al., 2005).

Eighty percent of ELLs are native Spanish speakers from families with poor educational and socioeconomic backgrounds. Less than 40% of Central American and Mexican immigrants hold high school diploma equivalents, in

contrast to 80 to 90% of immigrants from other countries (Goldenberg, 2008). “In 2000, almost half of LEP children in elementary schools had parents with less than high school educations, and a quarter had parents with less than ninth grade educations” (Capps et al.,2005). These data demonstrating limited language and socioeconomic factors suggest that ELLs are more likely to fail in the educational setting (Goldenberg, 2008).

About 8% of ELL students who speak Asian languages (e.g., Vietnamese, Hmong, Chinese, Korean, Khmer, Loatian, Hindi, Tagalog) make up the second largest group of ELLs (Goldenberg, 2008). The difference between the Hispanic and Asian ELL groups is that the families of Asian students tend to have higher educational backgrounds that may positively influence their academic performance (Goldenberg, 2008).

It is important to study mainstream teacher attitudes toward ELLs because teacher attitudes impact student performance. The achievement level for ELLs is considerably lower than students who are native speakers of English. In nationwide assessments administered by The National Assessments of Educational Programs (NAEP), reading outcomes for ELLs in 4th grade were 36 points less than native English speakers and math outcomes were 25 points less than native English speakers. Statistics have shown that differences are greater between ELLs and non-ELLs when students are compared based on their eligibility for free or reduced lunch. These outcomes can be linked to challenges facing ELLs: learning English for (a) communication and (b) academic purposes (Goldenberg, 2008). An article by Zehr (2008a) indicated that schools in which

ELLs had low achievement levels also reported low test scores for African American students. Zehr found that typically ELLs were in schools with large class sizes and high levels of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch.

Two important court decisions have paved the way for bilingual/ESL education: *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) and *Castaneda v. Pickard* (1981). *Lau v. Nichols*(1974) reached the Supreme Court because the San Francisco school district refused to provide support with help in English language acquisition for Chinese immigrant children with limited English ability. The Court ruled that limited English-speaking students must be provided support for these students to learn English and participate in English speaking classrooms. The ruling did not state the educational methods that should be used to support LEP students (Spring, 2010). The ruling also stated that “*identical* education does not constitute *equal* education under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964” (Samway & McKeon, 1999, p. 30).

A court case in 1981, *Castaneda v. Pickard*, followed *Lau v. Nichols*, had a similar impact on language minority students (Michigan Department of Education, 2009; Samway & McKeon, 1999). In this case, the court concluded that the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA) of 1974 was violated by Raymondville, Texas Independent School District’s language remediation program. As a result, the 5th Circuit Court established an assessment for evaluating programs that service ELLs. According to the *Castaneda* test, schools must:

- base their programs on educational theory recognized as sound or to be considered to be a legitimate experimental strategy.

- implement the program with resources and personnel necessary to put theory into practice.
- evaluate programs and make adjustments where necessary to ensure adequate progress is being made. (Michigan Department of Education, 2009, p. 7)

Significantly, a full 60% of ELLs receive all-English instruction with no bilingual education at all. Twenty percent of this population (about 12% of ELLS) do not have access to services that can assist in English language acquisition. Only about 40% of ELLs are in programs that help to support their home language; however, it is difficult to determine what programs are being used in these schools, as numerous instructional models are available (Goldenberg, 2008). Some examples of ESL Program Models as defined by the Michigan Department of Education (2009) are:

Transitional Bilingual Programs: serve language minority students on traditional homogeneous classroom settings. Instruction is in English. Support in the native language may be provided. (pp. 1-2)

Sheltered English Instruction Programs : serve language minority students in traditional classroom settings. Instruction is in English. (pp. 1-2)

English as a Second Language Programs: serve language minority students usually in a homogeneous setting. Students may be served outside of the regular classroom where they are taught for a portion of the day. Content based pull out ESL programs focus on instructional content area as the vehicle for teaching English. The traditional pull often only focuses on social uses of English. (pp. 1-2)

Developmental Bilingual Programs: serve language minority students-students who come to school in North America who are proficient in a language other than English. (pp. 1-2)

Two-Way Immersion Programs : serve both language minority and majority students heterogeneously in the same classroom. Instruction is in both minority and English depending on program design and language allocations. (pp. 1-2).

Newcomer Programs: serve recent immigrants of all ages who have acquired little to no English language skills. Students may have had little or no opportunity to learn through formal schooling in

their home country. (Michigan Department of Education, 2009, pp. 1-2)

As a result of the landmark No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, states are mandated to test ELLs annually to assess their proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kiefer, & Rivera, 2007). Achievement gaps between ELLs and their native English speaking peers on assessments are noted where content is linguistically challenging. These gaps are seen in all academic areas, including math. A consequence of schools performing poorly may lead to changes in schoolwide restructuring, federal funding, and reorganizing and placement of students. NCLB legislation requires schools to disaggregate test results for specific groups: African Americans, Hispanics, English language learners, and learning disabled students. The law insists that schools meet Annual Yearly Progress for each of these subgroups, with consequences for schools that fail to meet this goal. Thus, "Teachers of ELLs are under tremendous pressure" (Goldenberg, 2008, p. 11).

Mainstream teacher attitudes toward ELLs can strongly influence the type of instruction that their students receive. To date, little research has focused on mainstream teacher attitudes and how teachers view their roles toward ELLs in their classroom (Yoon, 2008). Teachers who have greater exposure to courses and training that focus on working with second language acquisition and ELLs typically have more positive attitudes (Stanosheck Youngs, & Youngs Jr., 2001). The goal of this research, to understand attitudes of mainstream teachers toward ELLs, is important in developing strategies to improve the instruction of English

language learners who presently substantially underperform, compared to their native English speaking peers. (Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005).

In October 2003, the national organization, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), presented a position paper asserting that training and preparation to instruct English language learners effectively should be required of all preK – 12 educators. The position paper further indicated that all colleges and universities with teacher preparation programs should include coursework for content area and mainstream teachers to prepare them to meet the academic needs of English language learners.

Because teachers have an important role in student achievement, the quality of their preparation is critical for them to be successful when working with ELLs. Some research asserts that language elements need to be taught explicitly to ELLs to help them to grasp academic content (Echevarria, 2006). Teachers who instruct English language learners must consider language acquisition components because of the challenges that confront ELLs when learning academic English (Short & Echevarria, 2004-2005). Most teachers have ELLs in their classrooms, yet they lack expertise and a strong knowledge base in the area of ESL (Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005).

Training teachers on second language acquisition is important. Many students are receiving instruction from teachers who lack adequate preparation to work with ELLs effectively (Short & Echevarria, 1999). Through coursework and professional development programs, teachers can learn to use many of the ESL models available for working with ELL students.

The most recent and widely used model is the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP). The model was developed by Echevarria, Vogt, and Short (2003). This model provides a framework of techniques and approaches to make academic content understandable (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006).

Statement of the Problem

Currently, approximately 11% of public school students are ELLs, a figure projected to reach 25% within 20 years. Yet, only 3 in 10 teachers have received formal training to teach these students. This research examined mainstream teachers attitudes toward ELLs. The attitudes of mainstream teachers toward ELLs can have an impact on the quality of instruction provided these students. Little research has focused on teachers' attitudes and how they view their roles toward ELLs in the classroom (Yoon, 2008). Understanding teachers' attitudes toward working with ELLs is necessary to promote change (Byrnes & Kiger, 1994). As language minority students increase, so do the negative attitudes toward this population held by the impacting negative teacher beliefs (Walker et al., 2004). Negative attitudes appear when teachers lack the background knowledge and are not supported in instructing English language learners (Menz, 2009). Teachers' attitudes impact the way students grasp content, which in turn leads to students' sense of self and with academics (Karabenick & Clemens-Noda, 2004)

Society's view of English language learners has become more unwelcoming, particularly in states such as Arizona, Massachusetts, and

California where there is a strong English-only mentality. Teachers are influenced by society. If the community does not favor diverse learners, the attitude toward these learners by teachers and administrators may be negative, thus adversely impacting the education that these students receive (Walker et al., 2004). The teacher's linguistic and cultural background is linked to student achievement, with limited background of a student's language and culture negatively impacting instruction (Harklau,1999).

Specifically, this research examined four dimensions of mainstream teacher attitudes toward ELLs: inclusion of ELLs in the mainstream classroom, the second language acquisition process, modification coursework for ELLs, and ESL professional development. With teacher preparation programs in Michigan not requiring mainstream teachers to complete coursework in ESL, it is important to examine these teachers' self-reported levels of competence in teaching ELLs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to collect and analyze data from practicing mainstream K- 12 teachers currently enrolled in graduate courses at a large, urban, Midwest university regarding four categories of their attitudes toward English language learners: (a) inclusion of ELLs, (b) the second language acquisition process, (c) modification of coursework, and (d) ESL professional development.

Research Question

The research questions developed for this study were:

1. What are mainstream teachers' attitudes toward ELL inclusion in mainstream classes?
2. What are teacher perceptions of the second language acquisition process?
3. What are teacher attitudes toward the modification of coursework for ELLs?
4. What are teacher attitudes toward ESL professional development?

Significance of the Study

Research about mainstream teachers' attitudes toward ELLs has public policy implications for two reasons. First, as the rigor of grade level curriculum increases (i.e., high school graduation requirements, state MEAP testing, NCLB etc.), understanding the complexities of ELLs and background knowledge of the language acquisition process can be beneficial for educators, parents, and students in educational reform efforts to improve achievement levels of ELLs who currently substantially lag behind their native English-speaking peers.

Second, an examination of teacher attitudes toward English language learners might provide support for the importance of requiring coursework in areas of language acquisition and methodology for all teachers at institutions that offer teacher preparation programs. At the time of the study, the National Accreditation Agency Council Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) did not require this type of coursework in undergraduate teacher programs.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations for this study are acknowledged:

- The study is limited to graduate level teachers at one university which may reduce its generalization to other universities,
- Participants in this study are general or special education k-12 teachers who are enrolled in graduate classes at the university. Other stakeholders in teacher training may have supporting or conflicting perceptions of required courses for teachers.
- The study is limited to teachers in a single state that has a large influx of immigrants and growing student populations in ESL classes. The findings may not be generalized to other states with different immigration patterns.

Assumptions

The following assumptions are made for this study:

- General and special education teachers enrolled in graduate level classes typically have not completed courses for teaching ELL students.
- Graduate students who are k-12 teachers will provide appropriate answers to the survey questions.

Definition of Terms

English language learners (ELL)	Students whose first language is not English and who are in the process of learning English (MDE, 2009).
English as a second language (ESL)	An educational approach in which ELLs are instructed in the use of the English language. Instruction is based on a special curriculum that typically involves little or no use of the native language, focuses on language (as opposed to

content) and is usually taught during specific periods. For the rest of the school day, students are placed in mainstream classrooms, an immersion program, or bilingual education program. Every bilingual education program has an ESL component (U.S. General Accounting Office as cited in MDE, 2009).

English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA)

An annual assessment given to students who are eligible for ELL (English Language Learner) services (MDE, 2009).

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Within Title I of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) each state is to determine Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). AYP indicates the expected growth expected each year in content areas (reading, language arts, and math currently with science added in 2005-2006) for students served with Title I funds. Various penalties are provided for schools not reaching AYP across 2-4 yrs (MDE, 2009).

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)

Acronym developed by Cummins (1984) is often referred to as “playground English” or “survival English”. It is the basic language ability required for face-to-face communication where linguistic interactions are embedded in a situational context. This language, which is highly contextualized and often accompanied by gestures, is relatively undemanding cognitively and relies on the context to aid understanding BICS is much more easily and quickly acquired than CALP, but is not sufficient to meet the cognitive and linguistic demands of an academic classroom (Cummins; Baker & Jones as cited in MDE, 2009)

Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)

The level of language required to understand academically demanding subject matter in a classroom. Such language is often abstract, without contextual supports such as gestures or visual clues. It takes 5-7 years to become fluent at this level (Michigan Association of Bilingual Education [MABE], 2007).

Mainstream Classes

Classes designed for native or fluent speakers of English in which no accommodations are made for ELLs (MABE, 2007).

Language Acquisition

The process of acquiring a first or second language. Some linguists distinguish between acquisition and learning of a second language, using the former to describe the informal development of a person's second language and the latter to describe the process of formal study of a second language. Other linguists maintain that there is no clear distinction between formal learning and informal acquisition. The process of acquiring a second language is different from acquiring the first (Baker as cited in MDE, 2009).

Language Proficiency

To be proficient in a second language means to effectively communicate or understand thoughts or ideas through the language's grammatical system and its vocabulary, using its sounds or written symbols. Language proficiency is composed of oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) components as well as academic and non-academic language (Horgett as cited in MDE, 2009).

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)

A professional association of teachers, administrators, researchers, and others concerned with promoting scholarship, the disseminating of information, and

strengthening instruction and research in the teaching of English to speakers of other languages and dialects (MDE, 2009).

Chapter II

Review of Related Literature

As the population of English language learners (ELLs) continues to grow, examining attitudes of mainstream teachers toward ELLs becomes important. With less than one-third of teachers formally trained to teach ELLs, required coursework/training may be necessary to meet the linguistic and academic needs of these students. This review of literature addresses five topics: mainstream teacher attitudes toward ELL inclusion, teacher perceptions of the second language acquisition process, teacher attitudes toward the modification of coursework, teaching ELLs in Michigan, and attitudes toward ESL professional development.

Attitudes of Mainstream Teachers Toward English Language Learner Inclusion

A slim majority of ELLs spend their entire day in the mainstream class. The remainder of ELLs attend an ESL class for an hour or two. ESL research has paid scant attention to the relationship between the ESL specialist and the classroom teacher, or to the perceptions and attitudes of regular classroom teachers toward LEP students (Penfield as cited in Youngs, 1999). According to Nieto (2002):

Every child needs to feel welcome, to feel comfortable. School is a foreign land to most kids (where else in the world would you spend time circling answers and filling in the blanks?), but the more distant a child's culture and language are from the language of the school, the more at risk the child is. A warm, friendly, helpful teacher is nice but isn't enough. We have plenty of warm friendly teachers who tell the kids nicely to forget their Spanish and ask mommy and daddy to speak to them in English at home; who give them easier tasks when so they won't feel badly when the work becomes difficult; who

never learn about what life is like at home or what they eat or what music they like or what stories they have been told or what their history is. Instead, we smile and give them a hug and tell them to eat our food and listen to our stories and dance to our music. We teach them to read with our words and wonder why it is hard for them. We ask them to sit quietly and we'll tell them what's important and what they must know to "get ready for the next grade." And we never ask them who they are and where they want to go. (p. 9).

Several studies have been conducted that have explored the welcoming or unwelcoming attitudes of mainstream teachers toward English language learners, focusing on three issues: 1) the impact of ELL inclusion on the teacher; 2) the influence of inclusion on the learning environment, and 3) perceptions of ELLs. (Reeves, 2006, p.132)

Byrnes, Kiger, and Manning (1997) looked at teacher attitudes using the Language Attitudes of Teachers Scale (LATS). Their research set out to explore (a) teachers' previous experience with ELLs, (b) the parts of the country where this instruction is taking place, and (c) the effects of training. Their study found that:

1. a high number of language minority students are not found in high concentrations in public schools
2. numerous public teachers do not have proper training in ESL
3. the inability of teachers to understand a student's linguistic and cultural background can bring forth negative feelings that can impact academic promise for ELLs.

Additional findings from this study were that positive teacher attitudes were indicated by respondents with graduate degrees. Those educators who had previous experience with ELLs also held positive attitudes. Formal training was linked with positive teacher attitudes. Attitudes as indicated by region of the

country were most optimistic by teachers who lived in Arizona, followed by Utah, and finally Virginia. Findings also suggested that there needed to be more direction placed on teacher education programs to train mainstream classroom teachers to instruct ELLs in a more effective fashion. Formal training should be provided to teachers in the areas of field experience and presentations in order to bring greater awareness and understanding to language development and cultural diversity. As previously stated, the region of the country where one lives was significant in this study. Teachers from Arizona had the most positive attitudes toward ELLs, due in part to the fact there is strong support in state legislation and educational mandates, in addition to attention by political leaders as well as attention to language diversity by political leaders and educators in the state.

Youngs' (1999) study found that mainstream teachers wanted to do a good job, but often felt at a loss as what to do with ELLs. As a result of this study, Youngs was able to categorize teacher perceptions into three areas: (a) chronic lack of time to address ELLs' special classroom needs, (b) unclear expectations for mainstreaming of ELLs, and (c) the belief that there needs to be more time for collaboration between the ESL and the mainstream teacher.

Youngs and Youngs' (2001) study on teacher attitudes toward ELLs revealed six themes. These themes were: (a) general educational attitudes, (b) specific ESL training, (c) personal contact with diverse cultures, (d) prior contact with ESL students, (e) demographic characteristics, and (f) personality. Specific findings from this study were: mainstream educators averaged 15.5 years of

teaching experience, had approximately 2.3 ELLs students in their classroom at the time the survey was administered, and had instructed an average of 11.2 students over the past 6 years. A majority of teachers who responded to regional diversity had worked with students from countries ranging from Southwest Asia, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe. In response to the question about the frequency of contact mainstream that teachers had with ELLs, the highest amount of ELLs in one class was 2.3, which also included 1.8 district languages other than English.

Responses on attitudes of mainstream teachers toward ELLs elicited 133 respondents who answered positively (64%); 5% responding negatively; with a fair amount of respondents, 31%, answering neutrally. In the area of educational experience, teachers who had taken one or more years of a foreign language course were more welcoming to working with ELLs than those teachers who did not take a foreign language course. In the same vein, teachers who had taken courses in multicultural education demonstrated more positive attitudes toward ELLs than teachers who did not take a course in multicultural education.

The researchers hypothesized that teachers with social science backgrounds would have a more positive attitude toward ELLs, given the presumption that cultural awareness was studied in their educational sequence. However, the results did not support the researchers' initial assumptions about social science teachers and their outlook toward ELLs. In the area of training, there were no differences in teacher attitudes by way of college courses, training/in-services, or in terms of conferences or workshops. However, there

were a few important training results that were brought forth. Teachers who had received some ESL training were more positive about teaching ELLs. Only 12 teachers responded to this question, so the authors minimized this finding. Yet, teachers who marked that they had a small amount of ESL training were notably more positive about teaching ELLs, as opposed to teachers who had not ESL training at all. Results also were significant in response to the question which asked respondents about experience with foreign cultures. Mainstream teachers who had experience living abroad were more positive toward ELLs. Student contact findings showed that the frequency of contact and teacher attitudes toward ELLs were not significant. Gender findings were that female teachers had more positive attitudes toward ELLs.

Overall, mainstream teachers were neutral to slightly positive in their attitudes toward teaching ELLs. ESL training does impact attitudes. In order for mainstream teachers to be successful in working with ELLs, there needs to be an opportunity for cultural diversity by way of contact with culturally diverse students, classes in multicultural education, ESL training, and foreign language courses.

Reeves' (2002) research findings were based on a sample of secondary teachers within one school district. In the area of language acquisition, teachers perceptions with regards to the amount of time that is needed to acquire the English language was underestimated. Participants indicated that students should learn English within two years of being enrolled in U.S schools. In the area of training, 90.3% of participants marked there was deficiency in ESL training and that the second language process was unfamiliar to them. A majority

of participants also indicated not having a knowledge base with the second language learning process. Respondents noted that English proficiency was crucial in order for ESL students to be successful. Participants responded negatively to the use of one's native language in the classroom; however, the overall sentiment of native language use in the school was neutral. Eighty percent of respondents were in favor of making English the official language of the U.S. A majority of respondents indicated positively with regards to coursework modification. Educators felt they did not have sufficient time to work with ELLs in their classroom, did not have sufficient training, and indicated feelings of inadequacy towards ESL inclusion. Overall, three quarters of educators in this survey stated that ELLs would be welcome in their classrooms, though 74.9% indicated that students should not be placed in the mainstream unless there was a nominal level of English proficiency.

Walker et al.'s (2004) study looked at existing teacher preparation as a whole, factors that influence attitudes, and community influences on teacher attitudes. A majority of respondents to this survey held negative attitudes toward having ELLs in the classroom due to lack of time and demands these students place on teachers to meet their academic needs. The following comments were made by teachers in this study;

- ESL students should not be placed in the mainstream classroom until they are ready to learn at that level.”
- “I think ESL services should be rendered in a self-contained classroom by an expert in the field. (Walker et al., 2004 p.153)

Apparently, the lack of responsibility many teachers feel toward ELLs make it challenging to meet the needs of these students.

Research by Karabenick and Noda (2004) looked at how teacher attitudes influence and impact academic performance. The study first examined ELL practices, beliefs, and attitudes of teachers district wide and then looked to see if there was a distinction between teachers who were more or less accepting of English language learners in their classrooms. The findings from this study were that ELLs, for the most part, were not viewed as problematic by staff, teachers, and administrators, but it is important that mainstream teachers understand the process of second language acquisition.

Reeves (2006) study found that although mainstream teachers held welcoming attitudes toward ELLs, they firmly believed ELLs should not be mainstreamed until they possessed a minimum level of English proficiency (Reeves, 2006 , p.136) In studies conducted between 1994 and 2006, the consensus was that teacher attitudes in regard to ELLs were unfavorable for the following reasons:

1. not enough time to deal with the needs of ELLs (Youngs as cited in Reeves, 2006)
2. perceptions of higher workloads with ELLs present in mainstream classrooms
3. feelings of professional unpreparedness toward instructing ELLs (Reeves, 2006).

Montero and McVicker's (2006) study examined whether differences exist between ELL teacher and mainstream teacher beliefs toward second language learning at the secondary level. Findings revealed that ELL teachers hold a more positive perception than mainstream teachers toward ELLs. Mainstream teachers held a neutral attitude overall toward ELLs. The analysis also addressed the research question: Are there differences in teachers' perceptions of ELLs and the number of years experience they have teaching? Teachers who had 6-10 years of teaching experience showed positive perceptions of ELLs.

Menz (2009) examined mainstream teacher attitudes in relation to teacher preparation programs. Findings were that teachers viewed language and culture as problematic and that ELLs presented many challenges for mainstream teachers. Menz also placed emphasis on the need for teacher preparation programs to change.

Rutledge's (2009) research on teacher attitudes toward ELLs explored mainstream teacher perceptions of ELLs in Mississippi. The findings were: teachers welcomed ELLs, but did not feel that they had the necessary training to instruct these students. The themes that presented themselves in this study were: time, coursework modification, language educational environment, training and support, and general attitudes. The findings included: (a) teachers were not equipped for ELL inclusion in their classrooms, (b) a consensus was reached that students need to be proficient with the English language to succeed academically, (c) students' native languages were not looked upon favorably, (d) expectations were that ELLs should complete coursework in the same fashion as

their native English speaking counterparts without the use of their native language to assist with this process, (e) inclusion was viewed as an opportunity for diversity appreciation, and (f) participants welcomed training but were unsure of what type of training was needed.

Teacher beliefs thought of as a belief substructure that interrelates with all other beliefs; they have a filtering effect on everything that teachers think about, say, and do. Despite professional coursework and practical field experiences, teachers beliefs tend to remain unchanged regardless of the context within which they teach. (Johnson 1999, p. 30)

Perceptions of the Second-Language Acquisition Process

Teachers' statement/beliefs with regards to second language instruction were cited in Johnson's (1999) research:

Ken . . . "I think an effective language teacher creates academic learning situations where kids can stretch their minds" (p. 31).

Sandra . . . "I believe learning a language is a process of gathering tools to use in expressing thoughts, ideas and ourselves" (p. 40).

"Teacher attitudes play an important part in the overall learning process. Second language acquisition theory informs us of the importance of providing a good learning environment for all ELLs." (Menz, 2009, p. 47) Educators who work with ELLs might benefit from knowledge of second language acquisition to help ELLs navigate successfully through academic content (Christian, 1999). Teachers need to understand how language fits into academic learning (Wong-Fillmore & Snow, 2000). Knowledge of second language acquisition theory is necessary to promote an encouraging educational environment for ELLs (Menz, 2009).

Learning a second language is not a linear process. Second language acquisition research argues that there are many individual differences in attaining second language. The reasons for these differences are not completely understood by researchers. Having a knowledge base regarding how a learner acquires a second language and then applies it toward their academic courses is important for teachers (Ren Dong, 2004). Recognizing the importance of students' first language in learning a second language is also a component of background knowledge needed by teachers. Awareness of second language acquisition can help to minimize negative attitudes. Valuing the importance of students' first language helps educators to understand how students can acquire a second language and make academic progress.

Mace-Matluck, Alexander-Kasparik, and Queen (1998) indicated three areas that affect language learning. The areas are: (a) fluency in the first language, (b) the model of second language learning that is available, and (c) the interpersonal and social characteristics of the student. In the high school setting acquiring a second language is complex, given the short amount of time a student has to learn the English language.

Theories of Second Language Acquisition

Krashen (1982) and Cummins (1979) are two well known scholars in the field of Second Language Acquisition. They each have developed a theory on language acquisition and have written extensively on how these theories have helped educators to instruct ELLs.

There are five main hypothesis in Krashen (1982) theory of language acquisition; (a) acquisition/ learning hypothesis, (b) natural order hypothesis, (c) monitor hypothesis, (d) input hypothesis, and (e) affective filter hypothesis.

- *The acquisition/learning theory* indicated that there were two ways to learn language: acquisition – which is a subconscious process and learning – which is conscious.
- *The natural order hypothesis* suggested language acquisition follows a natural predictable order. Krashen (1982) rejected grammatical sequencing when the goal is language acquisition.
- *The monitor hypothesis* proposed that acquisition was responsible for language fluency and learning (where one knows the rules) functions to edit and correct when three specific functions are met: (a) the learner has sufficient time at their disposal, (b) time is available to focus on form and correctness, and (c) students know the rule. The role of the monitor hypothesis was to give a more polished appearance. Individual student characteristics also factored into the monitor hypothesis. Students who use the monitor hypothesis all the time are considered overusers, while students who had not learned and preferred to use their conscious knowledge are underusers. Students who monitor as needed are optimal users. Psychological profiles also factor into types of users. For example, extroverts typically are underusers and perfectionists tend to over use.

- *The input hypothesis* is the ways in which a learner acquires a second language; acquiring meaning first and structure second. When a learner receives instruction that is one step above their competence (level $i+1$), learning typically occurs (Krashen, 1982). Teachers need to incorporate input appropriate to the level of the students, as ELLs are at the different proficiency levels.
- *The affective filter hypothesis* suggested that a number of variables can impact second language acquisition. These variables include; motivation, self-esteem, and anxiety. Learners with high motivation, self-esteem, and low anxiety generally have a good basis for second language acquisition. Conversely, learners who suffer from low self esteem and high anxiety encounter more difficulty and raise their affective filter, which can impede language acquisition.

Krashen also partnered with Terrell (as cited in Hill & Flynn, 2006) on the Stages of Language Acquisition that first appeared in the book *The Natural Approach* (1983). Table 1 provides the stages of language acquisition, characteristics of each stage, time frame, and teacher prompts that are used as each stage.

Table 1

Stages of Second Language Acquisition

Stage	Characteristics	Approximate Time Frame	Teacher Prompts
Preproduction	The student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Has minimal comprehension * Does not verbalize * Nods "Yes" and "No" * Draws and points 	0-6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Show me... * Circle the... * Where is...? * Who has...?
Early Production	The student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Has limited comprehension * Produces one-or two – word responses * Participates using key words and familiar phrases * Uses present- tense verbs 	6 months-1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Yes/no questions * Either/or questions * One or two –word answers * Lists * Labels
Speech Emergence	The student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Has good comprehension * Can produce simple sentences * Makes grammar and pronunciation errors * Frequently misunderstands jokes 	1-3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Why...? * How...? * Explain... * Phrase or short-sentence answers
Intermediate Fluency	The student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Has excellent comprehension * Makes few grammatical errors 	3-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * What would happen if...? * Why do you think...?
Advanced Fluency	The student has a near-native level of speech.	5-7 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Decide if... * Retell...

Note: Krashen & Terrell as cited in Hill & Flynn, 2006, p. 15

Cummins' (1979) research on the nature of language proficiency and second language acquisition emphasized social and academic barriers that could limit success for culturally diverse students. He believed that that learning occurs when students are more likely to feel comfortable in their classrooms and their identities are confirmed.

The iceberg theory (Cummins, 1979) is comprised of basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). BICS are at the tip of the iceberg and are referred to as language skills necessary for day-to-day communication. Grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary play roles in this type of language that typically takes one to three years to acquire. CALP is at the base of the iceberg, with the more complex academic language taking from seven to ten years to acquire. CALP incorporates application, comprehension, and knowledge of academic language and the ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate content.

Having reviewed the stages of language development (Krashen & Terrell as cited in Hill & Flynn, 2006), as well as BICS and CALP (Cummins, 1979), implications for instruction are that language and content can be successfully acquired when students are challenged cognitively. In addition, students need to be provided with contextual and linguistic support, both of which are necessary for academic achievement. BICS and CALP are shaped by their contexts and acquisition and use (Freeman & Freeman 1998). Instruction should focus on the message, the language, and use of the language. Understanding language acquisition can assist teachers in providing appropriate instruction to students (Northwest Regional Education Laboratory [NWREL], 2003).

Theories by Krashen and Cummins are important for educators to understand, as numbers of English language learners continue to increase. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (n.d.), in the 2003-2004 academic year, 3.8 million students were provided English language learner

services (11% of all students). Understanding learning theories can give teachers the knowledge base that is needed to help ELLs learn effectively.

New York's Department of Education developed a requirement that all pre-service teachers needed to have ESL training (Ren Dong, 2004) including a course that provides:

Knowledge about the principles of first and second language acquisition and their [teachers] sensitivity to the needs of their students with limited English proficiency and an awareness of the differences in language and backgrounds, expectations, need, roles, and values held by the teacher and the students in their classrooms. (New York State Department of Education as cited in Ren Dong, 2004, p. 202)

Few states require teachers to complete coursework in ESL acquisition and methodology, which may partly explain why ELLs are not mastering academic content as rapidly as their English speaking peers (Echevarria & Short, 2004).

The importance of mainstream teachers' ability to actively teach ELLs remains, as this student group continues to rise.

Any theory of second language acquisition, any classroom methodology, or any description of the English language as subject matter must be understood against the backdrop of teachers professional lives, within the setting where they work and within the circumstances of that work. (Johnson & Golombeck, 2002, p. 8)

Teacher Attitudes Toward Coursework Modification

ELLs need to have access to the mainstream curriculum. In educating ELLs, teachers need to understand the academic curriculum in addition to possessing a knowledge base of language acquisition, and how ESL is taught (Walqui, 2000). To effectively instruct ELLs, knowledge and content need to be taught at the same time (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008).

While there are many means to contextualize a lesson and multiple avenues for creating a highly interactive language-rich environment, a key element appears to be teachers' conscious attention to these factors, in addition to an awareness of the kinds of classroom variables that can be successfully manipulated to generate a learning environment that promotes language acquisition. (Milk, Mercado, & Sapiens, 1992, p. 4)

Inclusion is the norm for ELLs, who typically are mainstreamed for almost the whole school day. Reeves (2006) found that mainstream teachers show reluctance to modifying their curriculum to accommodate ELLs. The majority of respondents opposed simplifying the course or lessening the quantity of coursework for ELLs, but showed support for granting ELLs more time to complete their coursework (Reeves, 2006, p.136)

The challenge of educating ELLs is circuitous, as there is no single determinant that has been identified as the primary reason for ELLs' low academic performance. Classes that have been found to be successful are those that combine language and content (Valdes, 2001).

For even the most well intentioned teacher, the experience of not knowing how to help an ELL can quickly turn negative (not to mention how detrimental the experience can be for the student). Teachers who are uncomfortable with feeling overwhelmed, frustrated and helpless may in time begin to deflect their negative feelings onto their ELL students and begin to believe in the widespread deficit theories teachers hold regarding ELLs. (Walker et al., 2004, p. 142)

Teachers make changes in curriculum to welcome the influx of ELLs from different cultures and ethnic groups. However, many educators are uninformed and continue to group and teach ELLs in the traditional manner. The result often is the exclusion of these students from full-access to the mainstream curriculum (Olsen, 1997). Olsen also suggested that the lack of time and resources could

make it difficult for teachers to implement a more inclusive curriculum. Teachers need to develop close relationships with their students to promote effective instruction. Listening to student perspectives also supports teacher instruction of these students (Nieto, 2002). When ESL and mainstream teachers collaborate, all participants benefit. ESL teachers gain understanding of the curriculum, mainstream teachers acquire a deeper understanding of immigrant students and their needs, and students benefit from the interaction knowledge of both educators (Lucas, 1997).

The language of classroom instruction is another key component of which mainstream teachers need to be aware. ELLs may have a limited vocabulary base compared to their native English speaking peers. In addition, academic language is complex for English language learners, especially as they progress into higher grades. For ELLs to be successful in school, they must learn the English language and grammar, as well as understand how academic English is used in content classes (Short, 2008)

Students learn vocabulary to support basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS; social language) and for cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP; academic language). Once vocabularies associated with academic courses are made comprehensible, students can develop better comprehension, which lends itself to understanding the course curriculum. Teachers should not assume that English is being taught in another class (de Jong & Harper, 2005), nor should they continue to assert that it is not their responsibility because they did not have training in their pre service educational programs. Teachers need to

understand that learning does not occur by merely disseminating facts and information. Learning occurs when opportunities are provided for meaningful communication in the target language with members of the classroom community (Walqui, 2000). Teachers need both an understanding of the ELL population, as well as how they acquire language. All school staff that will be interacting with ELL students should have training and awareness of this population. Educators need to examine school policies that impact their work with ELLs (Houk, 2005).

Age-appropriate knowledge of the English language may be a prerequisite for students to be able to attain content standards (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006). Teachers need to address the following areas when working with ELLs in their mainstream classrooms: guided reflection, coursework, fieldwork, and instruction and methods of assessing second language learning (Jones, 2002). Many mainstream classroom teachers may not be prepared to work with ELLs (Fu, 2004; Short & Echevarria, 1999)

Students need to have the opportunity to demonstrate what they know (strengths and weaknesses) with their teachers and peers. Modifications that mainstream teachers can make to their classroom to support ELLs are:

1. acknowledge and validate first language
 2. community knowledge of language representation within the classroom elicited and embedded within the learning environment
 3. student work reflected positively on their personal background
 4. encourage students to read in their first and second language
- (Schechter-Cummins, 2003)

Teaching ELLs in Michigan

The proposal for an ESL endorsement was brought to the attention of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) in 1996 by a group of experienced educators who were aware of the rapid increase in Michigan's population of ELLs. They noted a need for qualified staff to teach linguistic and academic skills to these students. The proposal was accepted and curriculum for the ESL endorsement went into effect in 1997.

An ESL endorsement in Michigan consists of 24 credit hours in courses including: linguistics, language acquisition, language and culture, ESL pedagogy, assessment, literacy, and a practicum. Upon completion of the required coursework, a student must then take the Endorsement Test of the Michigan Test for Teacher Certification (MTTC). Upon passing the test, the ESL endorsement is then issued and appears on one's teaching certification (MDE, n.d.).

While pre-service teachers must follow a structured curriculum, updates are constantly being made to the curriculum and textbooks to keep current in the present day academic world and to meet needs of the changing student population. At the present time, specific coursework is required for teachers who wish to specialize in the field of English as a Second Language (ESL). However, none of these classes are required for mainstream teachers.

In reviewing the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) (2008) requirements for obtaining a teaching certificate, a required course in ESL is not part of the course sequence for pre-service teachers in either elementary or

secondary programs. Several universities in Michigan list courses in diversity that are required components of pre-service teachers' plans of work. These classes are wide ranging and often fall under the broad title of multicultural education. Some examples include: Michigan State University requires teachers to take a class in Cross Cultural or International Studies; Wayne State University lists its course as Multicultural Education In Urban America; at Eastern Michigan University the course is Cross Cultural and International Studies; and at Western Michigan University students are required to take Multicultural Education. While courses in diversity education are important, they differ from language acquisition and methodology courses. Some researchers suggest that teacher preparation programs should be responsible for preparing teachers to work with ELLs (Jones, 2002).

Although Michigan does not require courses in ESL language and methodology for preservice teachers (MDE, 2009), its colleges and universities with teacher preparation programs require classes that can be categorized under diversity. This requirement is based on National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) established in 1954 that regulates and standardizes teacher education programs nationwide.

The standard which is relevant for this section of the literature review is Standard 4: Diversity. Under this standard, instructional units are designed with a focus on helping all students to learn. Candidates are given exposure and gain experience in working with diverse populations in the Pre K-12 setting, as well as higher education. While this standard is concerned with diversity and its impact

on instruction in schools, language acquisition theories or methodologies are not included as either a component of or requirement for the standard.

“Because few teachers are certified in content area and in ESL or bilingual education, particularly at the secondary level, program planners must encourage their teachers to obtain formal qualifications” (Mace-Matluck, Alexander-Kasparik, & Queen 1998, p. 115).

“If we believe all children can learn, this also means we need to review classroom, school and district policies that assume that some children are smarter than others or that some deserve more than others” (Nieto, 2002, p.169).

[Elizabeth says]... “A good teacher is able to adjust to the needs of the students. Try to put yourself in the place of the students. Try to think about how they’re going to see this activity. What is important to explain to them is are they going to understand that this is important or a useful activity? What are they going to get out of this activity? Is it going to be scary? Think about their culture when you are designing classroom activities.” (Johnson, 1999, p. 33)

Attention needs to be directed toward teachers when it comes to the instruction of ELLs, so that proficiency levels are increased in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. This focus will assist ELLs in fulfilling the requirements of the No Child Left Behind legislation (Menz, 2009). ELL students must be assessed annually for English language proficiency using four language domains: (a) speaking, (b) listening, (c) reading, and (d) writing. Francis et al. indicated that states are accountable under NCLB for ELL student progress:

- Expectations that Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is made for reading and mathematics as required for Title 1

- Demonstration that ELL students are making acceptable progress in learning English and achieving English proficiency as required under Title III, Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO).

In 2004, the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards were adopted by the state of Michigan. The standards focused on the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing for English language learners. The standards were aligned with the Michigan Language Arts Curriculum and Teachers of English to Speakers of other Languages (TESOL) Standards for Pre K – 12. The General Principles of the ELP Standards are:

- Language is functional
- Language processes develop independently
- Language acquisition occurs through meaningful use and interaction
- Language acquisition is a long term process
- Language learning is cultural learning
- Native language proficiency contributes to second language acquisition (MDE, n.d.).

ELP standards provide the foundation for language acquisition and academic development. In addition, they outline specific language competencies needed to become proficient with the English language. The proficiency levels include basic, low intermediate, intermediate, and proficient levels. The levels of proficiency categorize what a student is able to understand and perform, with benchmarks highlighting the progression of achievement. When students reach the proficient level, they are categorized as no longer requiring language services

and typically test out of the program. Proficient students are monitored for a period of two years. If in that time they need language services, they are able to re-enter an ESL program. The standards bring relevance of focused instruction for English language learners to the forefront. The end goal is to ensure that students are able to participate successfully and have access to the full academic curriculum.

In the spring of 2006, Michigan conducted its first annual assessment of English language learners (MDE, 2004). The assessment instrument is the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) and was developed from the English Language Proficiency Standards. This test is administered to all English language learners in the state of Michigan in grades K-12 to assess proficiency in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. This assessment justifies the need for ELLs to succeed in the elementary and secondary school settings and acknowledges that the state of Michigan recognizes the need to help these students to gain English language proficiency. The ELPA is also linked with accountability and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The results of this assessment are reported to each district and the federal government by the Michigan Department of Education.

Attitudes toward ESL Professional Development

Professional development for mainstream teachers should result in an understanding and knowledge that pertains to the instruction of ELLs. Educators need to grasp the essential components of second language acquisition (Clair & Adger, 1999). Teacher training is a highly contested topic. Teachers feel upset in

that they are told what to do to improve their teaching. Professional development is not viewed favorably, as it adds time to an already lengthy day (Olsen, 1997). Professional development, to be effective, must dispel inaccuracies and misconceptions, and instead provide teachers with research-based data on similarities and differences in learning displayed by ELLs and their English-only speaking peers. “One stop” and “Fits all” teacher training models should be avoided as support needs to be tailored to meet the needs of each individual school and staff (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008).

Professional development is an area that needs to be considered when examining teacher attitudes toward English language learners (ELLs). Some research found that teachers have stated they would like to receive additional professional development on effective instructional strategies and comprehensive assessment of ELLs (Cho & Ha Na, 2008). However, the research shows that even though key respondents felt that they were certified to work with ELLs, these mainstream teachers do not perceive that they needed to participate in additional training (Reeves, 2006). The more exposure that teachers have to courses and training on working with second language acquisition and ELLs, the more positive are their attitudes (Stanosheck Youngs & Youngs Jr., 2001). One reason why some mainstream teachers are uninterested in receiving ELL training may be their perception that they are not primarily responsible for educating ELLs; that is the job of the bilingual teacher (Valdes, 2001)

By 2050, many, if not all, teachers are expected to have at least one English language learner in their classes. The National Center for Education Statistics (United States Department of Education, 2006) indicated that 41% of teachers in the United States have had English language learners as students in their classrooms, with only 13% of these teachers reporting that completed instruction or professional development in the education of ELLs. ELLs often are taught by less-qualified teachers who lack training and teaching strategies on how to instruct these students effectively. Professional development for teachers with an emphasis on English language development is not consistent. The U.S. teaching force is not equipped to help culturally and linguistically diverse children (Montgomery, Roberts, & Growe, 2003). Focus areas that need to be incorporated when working with ELLs in mainstream classrooms include:

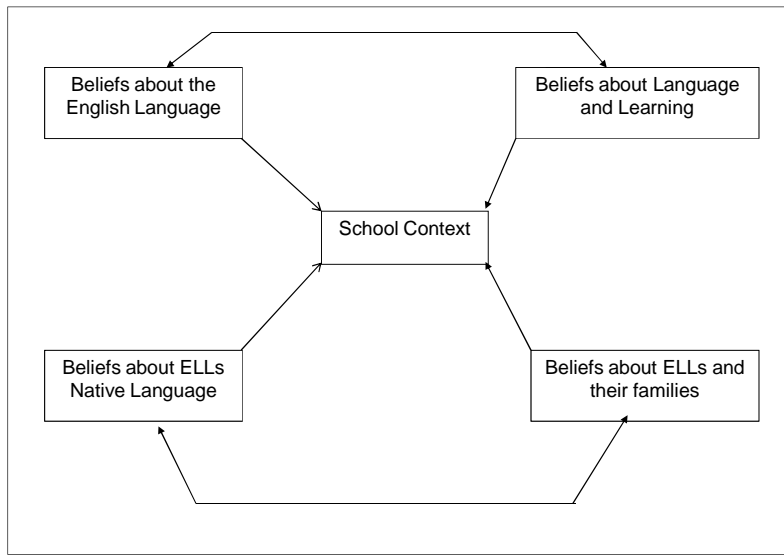
- involving students in the overall school operation
- having high expectations
- valuing the linguistic and cultural background of the students
- developing clear goals and objectives
- creating well designed instructional routines
- encouraging active engagement and participation
- providing informative and timely feedback
- applying of new learning
- conducting periodic review and practice
- interacting with other students
- making certain modifications to instruction (Verdugo & Flores, 2007).

In addition, Goldenberg (2006), in a talk to the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Partnership Meeting, provided additional strategies for general education teachers working with ELLs in their classrooms:

- making clear assignments
- posting language objectives and content objectives
- using language and content skills strategically
- allowing additional time for subject matter comprehension and practice
- using material with familiar content to build on prior knowledge

(Goldenberg, 2006)

Another model for working with English language learners effectively was described by Meskill (2005). Within the school context, she emphasized that four areas need to be considered and focused on when instructing ELLs: (a) beliefs about the English language, (b) beliefs about ELLs native language, (c) beliefs about language and learning, and (d) beliefs about ELLs and their families. These four areas are highlighted in Figure 1.



Note: Meskill, 2005, p. 142

Figure 1: Societal/Conceptual Challenges Regarding the Education of ELLs

Focusing on these areas during training can assist teachers in understanding difficulties that ELLs encounter when learning English. A new knowledge base and greater sensitivity to the subject matter being presented can result from their training. Teachers can emphasize strategies that can be applied directly in their classrooms. Without specialized training, effective instruction of ELLs in mainstream classrooms may be impeded.

Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) is a model and training tool developed through the work of Echevarria (California State University, Long Beach, California), Vogt (California State University, Long Beach, California) and Short (Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC). The seven year research project (1996-2003) was sponsored by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE), and was funded by the Office of School

Improvement and the U.S. Department of Education. The model of sheltered instruction that was developed by this project provided general education teachers with strategies that could be used to help their ELLs achieve academic success (Echevarria & Short, n.d.). Given diverse backgrounds and variability of English language learners, mainstream teachers needed to recognize different pathways of learning that need to be used in promoting ELLs' academic success.

SIOP was created using the researchers' backgrounds, teachers' experiences, and professional literature. A framework of techniques and strategies expands upon the features of sheltered instruction and are used to make content comprehensible (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006). Sheltered instruction uses strategies that teachers can use when teaching subject content to ELLs. These approaches can help make subject matter understandable and help students to develop their English language skills. SIOP is effective if staff development is consistent and is an excellent way to support ELLs in mainstream classrooms (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). Sheltering techniques are used to help students to meet high academic standards. Using the SIOP model helped teachers to develop strategies that could be used to improve teaching and learning in the classroom. When implemented appropriately by teachers, SIOP helped improve the academic success of ELLs, assisted students in learning content not provided in their native language, and bridged the gap between mainstream and bilingual classes effectively (Short, 2000).

As the numbers of ELLs rise in rural areas, teachers need training and preparation to work with these students from diverse backgrounds (Menz,

2009). Teacher preparation programs are constantly changing to meet the current needs of students in public education. As the population of ELLs rises, states and districts are facing challenges of ensuring that teacher education programs are prepared to meet this demand by including ESL training for all teachers (*No Child Left Behind [NCLB] Compliance Insider*, 2008). Francis, Rivera, Leasaux, Kieffer, and Rivera (2007) acknowledged that classroom and ESL teachers need to be aware of ELLs and their academic needs and achievement, as NCLB is holding schools, districts, and states accountable for providing instruction for both English and content knowledge.

The following data from Ballantyne, Sanderman, and Levy (2008) emphasized the need for professional development and training:

- It is likely that a majority of teachers have at least one English language learner in their classroom.
- Only 29.5% of teachers with ELLs in their classes have the training to do so effectively.
- Only 20 states require that all teachers have training in working with ELLs.
- Less than 17% of colleges offering pre-service teacher preparation training on working with ELLs.
- Only 26% of teachers have had training related to ELLs in their staff development programs.
- 57% of teachers believe they need more training in order to provide effective education for ELLs. (p. 9)

Faltis (1999) asserted that teachers need to participate in professional development to work with effectively ELLs because teacher education programs have not required ELL coursework and training.

Summary

As the number of ELLs in the U.S. is projected to reach 25 % of the student population, the examination of mainstream teachers' attitudes toward ELLs is important. Teacher attitudes have an impact on the quality of instruction of ELLs, who substantially underachieve academically compared to their native English speaking peers. There has not been a vast amount of research focused on mainstream teacher attitudes. What is known today is that ELL inclusion, modification of coursework, perceptions of the second language acquisition process, and ESL professional development are all areas that impact teacher attitudes.

The inclusion of ELLs can bring forth both positive and negative attitudes from teachers. Many teachers feel unprepared to work with this student population, which may lead to frustration and negative attitudes. There may also be an assumption among teachers that if ELLs are in the mainstream classroom, they must be proficient with the English language. Often this is not the case and therefore can be very misleading to the teacher, thus adding to negative attitudes toward this population. Through the modification of coursework, students are able to grasp academic content in a more comprehensive manner. If ELLs are to succeed in both the k-12 setting and beyond, opportunities to participate in a challenging curriculum must be made available to them. These opportunities allow ELL students to comprehend and reach their full potential.

Understanding second language acquisition is also necessary for educators, given the fact the ELL population continues to grow. Educators who

work with ELLs may benefit from knowledge of second language acquisition in order to help ELLs navigate successfully through academic content. (Christian,1999). ESL professional development is looked upon from two opposing viewpoints. First, it is welcomed by some teachers in the effort to acquire and understand effective knowledge and strategies to work with students. Second, it is looked at unfavorably by other teachers, as professional development is just more time added to an already long day. Given these viewpoints, what is important to note is ongoing ESL professional development benefits not only the teachers but the students as well.

Currently, 11% of public school students are ELLs, a figure projected to reach 25% within 20 years. Yet only 3 in 10 teachers have received formal training to instruct these students. This research examined mainstream teacher attitudes toward ELLs and how attitudes impact ELL inclusion, perceptions of the second language acquisition process, modification of coursework, and ESL professional development. According to the *No Child Left Behind Compliance Insider (2008)*, “ As the number of ELLs continues to increase, states and districts will be more challenged to make sure teacher that education programs, whether offered by universities or local systems, include effective ELL strategies for all teachers” (p.6).

Chapter III

Methodology

Research Design

The survey, English-as-a-second language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers (Reeves, 2006) was used as the primary data collection tool. In addition, a demographic survey was used to obtain personal and professional characteristics of the participants. According to Sapsford (2007), “attitudes and perceptions form a whole constellation of working rules about the world and reactions to it” (p. 141). Therefore, measuring teachers’ attitudes and perceptions using results of surveys can be effectively approached through the use of questions that indirectly measure the opinions, attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs of teachers (Reeves, 2006). Use of a survey that includes multiple statements that “directly and indirectly probe respondents’ attitudes and perceptions” (Reeves, 2006, p. 133) can provide information regarding teachers’ perceptions of ELLs in their classrooms and the importance of coursework to prepare them to work with these students.

Participants

The participants in the study were practicing mainstream teachers who are enrolled in graduate level courses in the College of Education in a large, urban university located in a Midwestern area. These teachers currently are assigned to varying levels (elementary, middle, and high school) in their school districts. They were teaching both academic (English language arts, social studies, mathematics) and nonacademic (music, physical education, art) classes to

general and special education students. Many teachers are expected to have had ESL students in their classes either currently or in the past.

Instruments

The English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers (Reeves, 2006) was used to collect data on mainstream teacher attitudes toward English language learners. The survey is divided into three sections: Section A includes 22 statements designed to measure perceptions in which teachers indicate their level of agreement or disagreement of inclusion of English language learners (ELL) and English as a second language (ESL); Section B includes 11 statements intended to measure the frequency of teaching behaviors among teachers with ELLs in their classroom, Sections C and D cover demographic, personal, and professional characteristics of the sample.

Four subscales are included in Section A: (a) inclusion, (b) coursework modifications, (c) professional development, and (d) language and language learning. Section B of the questionnaire measures three subscales, classroom practices, impact of inclusion, and teacher support. The demographic sections were used to obtain information on the personal and professional characteristics of the teachers. Reeves indicated that the items were drawn from an extensive review of literature. Table 2 presents the items that are included on each of the subscales.

Table 2

Subscale Development

Subscale	Description	Items
Teacher Attitudes Toward Inclusion, Coursework Modification, Professional Development, and Language and Language Learning		
Inclusion	Including ESL students in general education classrooms	1, 2, 3*, 6*, 15
Coursework modifications	Teachers attitude toward modifying curriculum and classroom assignments for ESL students	7, 8, 9, 10*, 11*, 12
Professional development	Specialized training for general education teachers who may have ESL students in their classes	13, 14
Language and language learning	Teacher attitudes toward students learning and acquiring language	4, 5, 16
Strategies General Education Teachers Employ with ESL Students		
Classroom practices	Strategies used in the general education classroom with ESL students	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Impact of inclusion	The extent to which the inclusion of ESL students affects the general education classroom	6, 7, 8
Teacher support	The extent to which the general education teacher obtains help from administration and the ESL staff in working with ESL students	9, 10, 11

*Items that need reverse coding.

The 16 items on Section A used a 4-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 4 for strongly agree, to rate the extent to which participants agreed or disagreed to the item. The 11 items on Section B are rated using a 3-point scale, 1 for seldom or never, 2 some of the time, and 3 most or all of the time.

The demographic sections obtained information regarding the personal and professional characteristics of the teachers included in the study. The items

used a combination of forced choice and fill-in-the-blanks responses. The questions gathered information about teachers experience with ELLs in their classrooms, over their courses, their subject areas, years of teaching, gender, native language, second-language competence, training in teaching ESL students, and greatest challenges faced by teaching ELLs.

Reliability. Reeves (2002, 2006) did not report any information in either her doctoral dissertation or her journal article on the reliability of the survey. To determine the internal consistency of the instrument, the researcher calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the survey sections that are in Chapter 5. Spearman Brown prophecy coefficients were used to assess reliability for the subscales after the means and standard deviations were calculated for each of the four subscales

Validity. Reeves (2002) conducted a pilot study to determine the content validity of the instrument. Thirty middle school teachers were included in the pilot study. In addition to completing the survey, they answered four questions: (a) which items were unclear; (b) which items were difficult to answer; (c) scales were adequate to express opinions; and (d) bias on the survey. The results of the pilot test were used to modify the instrument. Following the pilot test, Reeves considered the instrument to have face validity. To insure its validity for use in the present study, the researcher had three experts in ESL education - a professor of ESL at Oakland Community College in Royal Oak, Michigan, Michigan State University's English Language Center's External Language Program Coordinator, and a professor of ESL at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia-

review the survey. They provided comments and suggestions to determine the content validity.

Data Collection Procedures

Following approval from the Human Investigation Committee (HIC) at the university, instructors of graduate level teacher education classes were contacted to discuss the inclusion of students in their classes in the study. At a mutually agreeable time, the study was discussed with potential graduate student participants. Survey packets were available for distribution to students willing to participate in the study. The survey packets included a copy of the research information sheet and the survey instrument. The research information sheet contained all elements of an informed consent, including purpose of the study, procedures, assurances of confidentiality, and voluntary nature of participation. In addition, contact information for the researcher and the HIC also were provided on this form.

The graduate students who are teaching in a public or private school system were asked to participate in the study. Those who volunteered to participate were asked to complete the survey at that time. The surveys were administered and collected in the college classrooms.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the surveys were analyzed using SAS version 9.2 statistical software. In the primary analysis, participant responses to the survey questions were summarized descriptively. Responses to the Likert scale questions in Section A, were assigned a numerical value ranging from 1- strongly

disagree, 2- disagree, 3- agree, and 4 strongly agree. Analyses of the data were based on percentages of agreement or disagreement with the statements. Additionally, the means and standard deviations were calculated for each of the four subscales (inclusion, modification of coursework, ESL professional development, and language and learning). As shown in Table 2, the responses to questions 1, 2, 3, 6, and 15 addressed teacher attitudes towards inclusion, questions 7 through 12 addressed teacher attitudes toward the modification of coursework for ELLs, questions 13 and 14 address teacher attitudes toward ESL professional development, and questions 4, 5, and 16 addressed teacher perceptions of second-language acquisition process.

For section B, the responses for items on each subscale were summed to obtain a total score. The mean score was determined by dividing the total score by the number of items on each subscale. The standard deviation of the subscale means also was calculated. Frequencies (N and percent) for questions in Section C were tabulated for all questions with closed responses.

To determine if teachers' attitudes toward ELLs are associated with the number of years teaching or past coursework in ESL, Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) models were fitted for each of the four subscales in Section A as the dependent variables, and number of years of teaching and past coursework in ESL as the independent variables. Initial analyses included teaching for univariate associations between each of the subscales and years of training and past coursework (yes/no). Additionally, univariate associations between teacher demographics, including gender, native language, previous

contact with ESL students, and percentage of ESL students enrolled during the 2009-2010 school year, and mean subscale scores from Section A were tested using MANOVA. Number of years teaching and past coursework in ESL, along with variables from the univariate analyses with $p < 0.20$ were then considered in multivariate analysis variance (MANOVA) models. The final MANOVA model included all variables with $p < 0.05$.

Normality of the subscale scores in Section A was assessed. If these subscales were not normally distributed, number of years teaching and past coursework were analyzed using Kruskal-Wallis tests and Wilcoxon rank-sum tests, respectively. Univariate associations between additional teacher demographics were also assessed using Wilcoxon rank-sum tests for categorical (yes/no) variables, and by Spearman correlation coefficients for continuous variables.

The association between teachers' training and experience with ESL students relates to classroom practices, as measured by the number of undergraduate and graduate credit hours that dealt with language minority students, and staff development hours that dealt specifically with language minority students, and teaching practices based on responses from the three subscales in Sections B (Classroom Practices, Inclusion of ELL Students, and Teacher Support), were assessed using Spearman correlation coefficients.

Sample Size Justification

Approximately 100 participants were included in this study. For a comparison of subscale responses between two groups (i.e. yes/no independent variables), a sample size of 100 respondents with equal group sizes ($n=50$ per group) and group sizes of 1:3 ($n_1 = 25$, $n_2 = 75$) would have 80% power to detect an effect size of 0.566 or larger and 0.653 or larger, respectively, at a two sided alpha level of 0.05. The effect size is the difference between two means, divided by the common standard deviation, and is considered to be medium at 0.4 - 0.8. Using means and standard deviations presented in the Reeves paper, an effect size of 0.5 - 0.6 is plausible. For example, a difference in mean subscale scores of 0.34 (e.g. 2.84 - 2.50) and a common standard deviation of 0.6 would equate to an effect size of 0.567.

Chapter IV

Results of Data Analysis

Description of Participants

A total of 100 teachers responded to the survey - "English- as- a -second - language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms A Survey of Teachers" (Reeves 2006). In Table 3, the background characteristics of respondents are presented. In several fundamental ways, gender, grade level teaching, and teaching experience, the sample is approximately representative of the U.S. teaching population. The overwhelming majority of respondents were (76%) were female. Forty-four percent of respondents currently teach grades K-5, 20% teach grades 6-8, and 35% teach grades 9-12. Four respondents did not indicate which grade level they currently teach.

Three-fourths (76%) of respondents have been teaching less than 10 years, specifically, with 35% teaching for 1-4 years and 38% 5-9 years. There were an additional 16 respondents who have taught between 10-15 years, six others for 16-24 years, and only two have been teaching 25 years or longer. Nearly all (94%) of respondents speak English as their native language. Twenty-six percent of respondents speak a second language. Similar to national data, only 30% of respondents have ever received training in teaching ESL students. Surprisingly only 57% of respondents have ever had an ESL student enrolled in their class.

Of the 30 survey respondents who had received training in teaching ESL students, 63% marked that that their training was College Coursework, 53% cited

Professional Development in School, 36% marked Seminars/Workshops, 26% cited Professional Development, 2% marked Research Literature, and 2% checked Other.

In terms of the three biggest challenges that respondents experienced having ELLs in their class, the following categories were selected in order: Language barriers between you and your ELLs, 60%; lack of time and resources, 50%; lack of guidelines and or support systems at school levels, 40%; lack of background knowledge of content areas, 40%; assessment and grading of ELLs, 32%; cultural differences between you and your ELLs, 18%; and lack of motivation, 8%.

When asked to what extent their training for ESL students had contributed to your ability to work effectively with this population, 77% replied often and 35% replied somewhat. While slightly over half of respondents replied positively, a full one-third (33%) of respondents indicated that their training had not helped, with 15% experiencing a neutral opinion.

Section D of the questionnaire provided an open-ended space for participants to indicate any additional comments that they had concerning the inclusion of ESL students in their subject-area classes. Twenty-six participants wrote comments. Of the 26 comments, 46% were positive in nature and include statements in Appendix F - 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 13, 19, 20, 21, 24, 26. Thirty percent were neutral comments which include statements - 6, 1, 8, 17, 18, 23, 16, 22. Twenty-three percent of respondents' comments were negative in nature,

statements – 7, 11, 12, 14, 15, 25. The open-ended responses are discussed in Chapter 5.

Table 3

Teaching Background Characteristics of Respondents (N = 100)

Background Characteristic	Number	Percent
Gender		
Male	23	23.0
Female	76	76.0
Did not respond	1	1.0
Current Grade Level Teaching		
K - 5	41	41.0
6 - 8	20	20.0
9 – 12	35	35.0
Did not respond	4	4.0
Number of Years Teaching		
None	2	2.0
1 – 4	35	35.0
5 – 9	38	38.0
10 – 15	16	16.0
16 – 24	6	6.0
More than 25	2	2.0
Did not Respond	1	1.0
English as a native language	94	94.0
Speak a second language	26	26.0
Ever received training in teaching ESL students	30	30.0
Ever had ESL student enrolled in your class	57	57.0

Table 4 presents data on the 4 subscales of teacher attitudes toward ELLs (Inclusion, Coursework, Professional Development, and Language and Language Learning). The subscales were cross tabulated with grade level of instruction: elementary, middle school, and high school. The results did not bring forth any statistically significant findings regarding teacher attitudes by grade level of teaching.

Table 4

Subscale Scores (Mean [SD]) by Grade Level Taught (N = 100)

Subscale	Elementary (n = 41)		Middle School (n = 20)		High School (n = 35)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Inclusion	3.05	.48	2.90	.54	2.87	.52
Coursework	2.76	.45	2.65	.50	2.76	.45
Professional Development	2.39	.61	2.20	.68	2.57	.60
Language and Language Learning	2.30	.60	2.39	.60	2.46	.51

Table 5 presents the data on the school district in which respondents are currently teaching. The district data were grouped according to county. Detroit was removed from Wayne County and listed separately because of the large size of the district and because of its large African American student population which in 2010 stood at 89%. Detroit had the largest representation ($N=27$), followed by Oakland County ($N=19$), and Wayne County (outside of Detroit) ($N=16$). Results indicated that teacher attitudes toward ELLs on the four subscales were not related to the county in which their school district resides in a statistically significant manner.

Table 5

Subscales by County (N = 100)

Subscale	<u>Detroit (n = 27)</u>		<u>Wayne County* (n = 16)</u>		<u>Oakland (n = 19)</u>	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Inclusion	2.95	.58	2.88	.44	2.84	.59
Coursework	2.75	.40	2.67	.44	2.67	.43
Professional Development	2.46	.69	2.50	.58	2.47	.68
Language and Language Learning	2.53	.60	2.29	.48	2.27	.62

*Excluding Detroit
MANOVA p -value=0.44

Table 6 presents the data of the number of ESL students that respondents had enrolled in their class throughout their teaching careers. Only 43 respondents answered this question and many of the answers could not be tabulated (i.e. “many”, “dozens”, 20%). Overall, the mean number of ESL students was 22.5.

Table 6

Number of ESL Students Enrolled in Your Class Throughout Teaching Career

Number	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
43	22.5	0	180

Table 7 presents the data from the survey question which asked – “What is the percentage of ESL students enrolled in your classes throughout the 2009-2010 school year?” A total of 63% of teachers reported having zero to three

students, 20% of teachers had five to ten students, 7% of teachers had ten to twenty students, and 7% of teachers indicated having twenty or more students.

Table 7

Percent of ESL Students Enrolled 2009-2010

	<u>0 to 3</u>		<u>5 to 10</u>		<u>10 to 20</u>		<u>20 or more</u>	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Number of ELLs	37	62.0	12	20.3	4	6.7	4	6.7

Reliability

The reliability of sections A and B of the questionnaire were assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficients and Spearman Brown prophecy coefficients. For both sections, the coefficients were determined for each individual subscale and for the entire section.

Table 8 presents the Cronbach's alpha coefficients and Spearman Brown for sections A and B overall and all four subscales on teacher attitudes toward ELLs. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for Section A suggests that the overall scale was moderately reliable (alpha = 0.55). Subscale reliability was assessed by Spearman Brown coefficients. There was good consistency for the Inclusion subscale (SB = 0.87). For the Coursework subscale, the initial alpha coefficient was -0.0045, suggesting that this subscale was not reliable. For this subscale, the Cronbach's alpha with deleted variable analysis showed that questions 10 and 12 were not associated with the other questions in the subscale. After excluding these questions Spearman Brown's alpha coefficients for the

coursework subscale indicated good reliability (SB = 0.82). Thus, questions 10 and 12 were excluded from further analyses. Spearman Brown coefficients for Professional Development and Language and Language Learning subscales indicated good internal consistency (SB = 0.74 and 0.80, respectively).

Cronbach's alpha coefficient for Section B suggests that the overall scale was moderately reliable (alpha = 0.65). Subscale assessments, using Spearman Brown coefficients, indicated that Teacher Support had the highest alpha coefficient, with high internal consistency (SB = 0.96), while Impact of Inclusion showed good consistency (SB = 0.84) and Classroom Practices showed weak internal consistency (SB = 0.56).

Table 8

Reliability Results for Sections A and B (Overall and Subscale)

Section	Cronbach's Alpha	Spearman-Brown Prophecy Coefficients
<i>A. Overall (excluding Questions 10, 12)</i>	<i>0.55</i>	
Inclusion (Questions 1, 2, 3*, 6*, 15)	0.71	0.87
Coursework (Questions 7-9, 11*)	0.56	0.82
Professional Development (Questions 13, 14)	0.29	0.74
Language and Language Learning (4, 5, 16)	0.46	0.80
<i>B. Overall</i>	<i>0.65</i>	
Classroom Practices (Questions 1-5)	0.37	0.56
Impact of Inclusion (Questions 6-8)	0.59	0.84
Teacher Support (Questions 9-11)	0.87	0.96

Descriptive statistics for the total score and individual subscales of Section A are presented in Table 9. Responses to each question in this subscale ranged

from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). An average score of 3 or higher indicates that the respondent agreed to the questions in the subscale, while an average score of 2 or lower indicates that the respondents disagreed. On average, respondents agreed with the questions comprising the Inclusion subscale and Coursework subscales, but were neutral in the Professional Development and Language and Language Learning subscale.

More specifically, teachers were in favor of the inclusion of ELLs in the general education classes and felt that all students benefit from their inclusion (mean [*SD*] =2.95 [0.51]). Teachers were somewhat less agreeable to the Coursework subscale (mean [*SD*]=2.74 [0.45]). However, the assessment of individual questions in this subscale showed that teachers were less agreeable to simplifying coursework or reducing the quantity of work for ESL students (mean [*SD*]=2.32 [0.77] and 2.21 [0.75], respectively), but were more agreeable to allowing more time for ESL students to complete work or to modifying the assignments for ESL students (mean [*SD*]=3.19 [0.58] and 3.24 [0.61], respectively).

The Professional Development and Language and Language Learning subscales were comprised of only two and three questions, respectively. For the Professional Development subscale, on average, teachers felt they did not have adequate training in working with ESL students (mean [*SD*] = 1.98 [0.84]) and were interested in receiving more training in working with ELLs (mean [*SD*] = 2.94 [0.80]). Responses to the Language and Language Learning subscale indicated that teachers felt that students should not avoid using their native

language at school (mean [*SD*]=1.93 [0.81]), were neutral in their opinion that ELLs should be able to acquire English within two years (mean [*SD*]=2.45 [0.77]), and supported legislation making English the official language of the United States (mean [*SD*]=2.88 [0.90]).

Table 9

Subscale Scores Section A: Mean subscale scores (N=100)

Subscales	Mean	SD	Range	
			Minimum	Maximum
Inclusion	2.95	.51	1.80	4.00
Course Work	2.74	.45	1.70	4.00
Professional Development	2.45	.64	1.00	4.00
Language and Language Learning	2.41	.58	1.00	4.00
Total score	2.79	.30	1.90	3.60

In Table 10, responses to Section B are summarized. Possible responses ranged from 1 (“seldom or never”) to 3 (“most of the time”). On average, teachers responded “some of the time” for all subscales (mean=1.92). Among responses to the individual questions in section B, the lowest mean response was for Question 8 - “The inclusion of ESL students in my class slows the progress of the entire class” (mean [*SD*] = 1.40 [0.56]). The highest mean response was for Question 1- “I allow ESL students more time to complete their coursework” (mean [*SD*] = 2.33 [0.66]).

Table 10

Section B: Mean subscale scores (N=58)

Section A - Subscales	Mean	SD	Range	
			Minimum	Maximum
Classroom Practices	1.95	.37	1.00	2.80
Impact of Inclusion	1.83	.48	1.00	3.00
Teacher Support	1.96	.70	1.00	3.00
Total score	1.92	.33	1.00	2.70

Three experts in the field of ESL were given the survey English as-a-second-language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classrooms A Survey of Teachers (Reeves, 2006) to review for content validity. The consensus was that the survey was well constructed and valid. Responses to individual questions in Section A are displayed in Tables 11 - 14.

Table 11 shows the responses which comprised the Inclusion subscale and addresses the research question – “What are mainstream teacher attitudes toward ELL inclusion in mainstream classes?” Fifty five percent agreed and 35% strongly agreed with (Q1) – “The inclusion of ESL students in subject area classes creates a positive educational atmosphere.” Fifty two percent agreed and 26% strongly agreed with (Q2) - “The inclusion of ESL students in subject area classes benefits all students”. Fifty seven percent agreed and 32% strongly agreed with (Q15) – “I would welcome the inclusion of ESL students in my class”. Thus, teachers felt the inclusion of ESL students created a positive environment, benefitted most students, and welcomed ESL students in their classrooms. Similarly, mainstream teachers overall believed that students should be included in the general education classes even though they had not yet attained a

minimum level of proficiency. Teachers also expressed the view that subject area teachers had enough time to deal with the needs of ESL students.

Specifically, a small majority of teachers either disagreed (33%) or strongly disagreed (16%) with (Q3) – “ESL students should not be included in general education classes until they attain a minimum level of proficiency.” Teachers also indicated disagreement with (Q6) – “Subject area teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of ESL students”, with 42% disagreeing and 18% strongly disagreeing with this statement.

Table 11

Inclusion Subscale

Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Q1- Creates Pos. Env.	0%	10%	55%	35%
Q2 –Benefits All Students	0%	22%	52%	26%
Q3 – Excluded Until Proficient	16%	36%	33%	15%
Q6 – Teachers Lack Time	18%	42%	33%	7%
Q15- Welcome Inclusion	1%	10%	57%	32%

Table 12 displays the responses to the four questions which comprise the Coursework subscale and addresses the research question – “What are teacher attitudes toward the modification of coursework for ELLs? For this subscale, 63% agreed and 27% strongly agreed with Q9 – “It is a good practice to allow ESL students more time to complete coursework.” Only 9% agreed to Q11 - “Teachers should not modify assignments for the ESL students enrolled in subject-area classes”. Over half of the respondents disagreed or strongly

disagreed with Questions 7 and 8, which stated that teachers should simplify or lessen coursework for ESL students, respectively. Overall, teachers showed a substantial willingness to modify coursework for ELLs, and to give students more time to complete coursework. On the other, hand teachers were opposed to simplifying of lessening coursework.

Table 12

Coursework Modification Subscale

Question	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Q7-Simplify Coursework	15%	40%	41%	3%
Q8- Lessen Coursework	17%	46%	34%	2%
Q9- More Time	1%	6%	66%	27%
Q11- Not Modify Assignments	33%	57%	9%	0%

Table 13 presents the responses to Questions 13 and 14, which comprise the Professional Development subscale. It also addresses the research question – What are teacher attitudes toward professional development? This figure shows that only 22% of teachers indicate they have adequate training to work with ESL students (Q13). Similarly, 81% of teachers indicate that they would like additional ESL training (Q14).

Table 13

Professional Development Subscale

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q13- Adequate ESL Training	30%	48%	16%	6%
Q14 – More ESL Training	8%	10%	61%	20%

Table 14 displays responses to the Language and Language Learning subscale and addresses the research question – “What are teacher perceptions of the second language acquisition process?” The responses of the teachers to the questions comprising the Language and Language Learning show some inconsistency. Eighty-one percent of teachers disagreed that ESL students should avoid using their native language at school (Q4). However, teachers were exactly evenly divided, (50% to 50%), on whether or not ESL students should be able to acquire the English language. Additionally, most respondents- with 52% agreeing and 24% strongly agreeing, supported legislation to make English the official language of the US (Q16). In short, although respondents were willing to use materials in students native languages, they supported making English the official language, and were undecided about whether students should be able to acquire English after two years.

Table 14

Language and Language Learning Subscale

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Q4-Avoid Native Lang. Materials	31%	50%	14%	5%
Q5-Acquire English 2 yrs	11%	39%	44%	6%
Q16 – English Official Language	11%	13%	52%	24%

MANOVA Results

The distributions of the individual subscale scores in Section A did not deviate greatly from the normal distribution, and thus, MANOVA modeling was performed. First, one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) models were fit in order to determine the effect of the number of years of teaching and past coursework in ESL on the four attitude subscales (inclusion, coursework modification, professional development, and language and language learning). MANOVA results indicate that the teachers' overall attitude towards ESL students was not associated with the number of years of teaching (Wilks' $\lambda=0.897$; F value = 1.30; 8 df ; $p = 0.25$), but was strongly correlated with having past coursework in teaching ESL students (Wilks' $\lambda = 0.697$; $p < .0001$).

The association between demographics and their overall attitudes towards ESL students was also assessed in one-way MANOVA models, but no significant associations were found. Results showed gender ($p = 0.109$), grade level taught ($p = 0.259$), English as a native language ($p = 0.291$), and speaking a second language ($p = 0.113$) did not have a statistically significant overall effect on

teachers' attitudes. However, speaking a second language, gender, and percent ESL students all met the $p < 0.20$ criteria for inclusion in the final MANOVA model. The percent ESL students was not modeled, since nearly 40% of respondents did not answer this question.

Because an overall multivariate effect was observed for Past Coursework in ESL, a MANCOVA model was fit with gender and speaking a second language as covariates. The individual ANCOVA models for each subscale also were assessed (see Table 15). Tables 15-18 present the adjusted means by subscale for Past Coursework in ESL, gender, and speak a second language.

Results indicated that after adjusting for gender and speaking a second language, there was still a strong relationship between teachers' attitudes towards professional development and whether or not they had previous ESL coursework ($p < 0.0001$). The adjusted mean response for professional development was considerably higher for teachers who had previous ESL coursework compared to those who did not (LS Mean=2.98 and 2.29, respectively). None of the other subscales were statistically significantly associated with previous ESL coursework.

Table 15

MANCOVA and ANCOVA F-values for Ever Received ESL Training Adjusted for Grade Level, Gender, Speak Second Language and % ESL Students Taught

	Inclusion		Coursework	Professional Development	Language and Language Learning
	F Value (DF) ^a	F Value (DF) ^a	F Value (DF) ^a	F Value (DF) ^a	F Value (DF) ^a
Ever received ESL training	9.24 (4)**	0.07 (1)	0.15 (1)	31.7 (1)**	0.16 (1)
Gender	1.63 (4)	2.53 (1)	0.34 (1)	0.02 (1)	4.64 (1)*
Speak 2 nd language	1.21 (4)	2.31 (1)	0.16 (1)	2.27 (1)	1.79 (1)

^aF value for MANOVA results determined using Wilks' Lambda; MANOVA=Multivariate Analysis of Variance; ANOVA=Analysis of Variance.

N=99.

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.001$.

Table 16

Adjusted Mean Scores on Attitude Subscales among Teachers with and without Past ESL Training

Subscale	Received ESL Training (<i>n</i> = 30)		Did not receive ESL Training (<i>n</i> = 69)	
	Mean	SE	Mean	SE
Inclusion	2.92	.10	2.95	.08
Coursework	2.96	.09	2.73	.07
Professional Development	2.98 _a	.11	2.29 _a	.09
Language and Language Learning	2.48	.11	2.43	.09

Note: Means in a row sharing the same subscript (a) are significantly different. For all subscales, a higher mean corresponds to a higher agreement score.

Table 17

Adjusted Mean Scores on Attitude Subscales by Gender

Subscale	Male (<i>n</i> = 23)		Female (<i>n</i> = 76)	
	Mean	SE	Mean	SE
Inclusion	2.84	.07	3.03	.07
Coursework	2.73	.06	2.74	.06
Professional Development	2.54	.08	2.63	.07
Language and Language Learning	2.54	.08	2.30	.07

Table 18

Adjusted Mean Scores on Attitude Subscales by Second Language (yes/no)

Subscale	<u>Speak 2nd Language</u> <u>(n = 26)</u>		<u>Do Not Speak 2nd Language</u> <u>(n = 73)</u>	
	Mean	SE	Mean	SE
Inclusion	2.84	.07	3.02	.11
Coursework	2.76	.06	2.69	.10
Professional Development	2.54	.08	2.73	.12
Language and Language Learning	2.54	.08	2.36	.12

In an additional analysis, the association between teachers' attitudes towards professional development and the number of undergraduate and graduate credit hours was assessed using a two-sample Wilcoxon rank-sum test. Results indicated there was a statistically significant association between teachers' attitudes towards adequate training dealing with ESL students and both undergraduate ($p = 0.002$) and graduate ($p < .0001$) credit hours. On average, these teachers who agreed that they had adequate training to work with ESL students (Q13a) also had more undergraduate and graduate level credit hours compared to those who did not. However, the amount of undergraduate or graduate level credit hours was not significantly associated with teachers' attitudes towards additional training. In fact, those who agreed they would like to receive more training (Q14a) had slightly higher undergraduate and graduate credit hours compared to those who disagreed (Tables 19, 20).

Table 19

Descriptive Statistics for Undergraduate Level Credit Hours by Professional Development Questions

Question	Agree			Disagree			<i>p</i> -value
	<i>N</i>	Credit hours Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Min, Max	<i>N</i>	Credit hours Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Min, Max	
13a	14	3.71 (5.27)	0, 20	72	1.64 (4.20)	0, 20	.002 _a
14a	67	2.12 (4.51)	0, 20	17	1.53 (4.40)	0, 18	.345

*Significant at $p < 0.05$.

Table 20

Descriptive Statistics for Graduate Level Credit Hours by Professional Development Questions

Question	Agree			Disagree			<i>p</i> -value
	<i>N</i>	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Min, Max	<i>N</i>	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Min, Max	
13a	17	6.68 (11.4)	0, 50	72	0.88 (2.05)	0, 9	<.001 _a
14a	72	2.44(6.57)	0, 50	17	0.82 (1.70)	0, 6	.327

*Significant at $p < 0.05$.

Summary

The data analysis results that were used to describe the sample and answer the research questions have been presented in this chapter. The conclusions, implications and recommendations gathered from these results are presented in Chapter V.

Chapter V

Summary, Discussion, Findings, and Recommendations

Summary

The examination of mainstream teacher attitudes toward ELLs is essential, as this student population in the U.S. continues to increase. By 2050, many, if not all, teachers will have at least one ELL in their class, (NCES, 2002), whereas in this study, only 57% of respondents ever had an ELL enrolled in their class.

Though studies on teacher's attitudes toward ELLs remain sparse, research on this topic is significant for two reasons. First, as the rigor of grade level curriculum increases (i.e. high school graduation requirements, state MEAP testing, NCLB), understanding the complexities of ELLs and background knowledge of the language acquisition process can be beneficial for educators, parents, and students in educational reform efforts of ELLs, whose academic performance currently substantially lags behind their native English speaking peers.

Second, an examination of teacher attitudes toward English language learners might provide support for the importance of requiring coursework in the areas of language acquisition and methodology for all teachers at institutions that offer teacher preparation programs. At the time of this study, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) did not require this type of coursework in undergraduate teacher programs.

This study adds to the existing research on teacher's attitudes toward ELLs by focusing on the full range of K-12 teachers, who represent the elementary, middle, and high school instructional levels. Past research on attitudes has typically focused on one instructional level; (ie secondary level [Reeves,2002]; [Montero & McVicker, 2006]; [Youngs,1991] and middle school level, [Stanoshecck Youngs & Youngs, 2001].

The purpose of this study was to collect and analyze data from K-12 teachers currently enrolled in graduate courses at a large, urban, Midwest University regarding four categories of their attitudes toward English language learners: (a) inclusion of ELLs, (b) the second language acquisition process/ language and language learning, (c) modification of coursework, (d) ESL professional development.

The discussion that follows will present subscale data from Chapter IV which address this study's four research questions. The research data will then be discussed with regards to the findings, limitations, policy recommendations, and recommendations for future research.

Discussion

The findings presented in this study are reflective of the surveyed teachers who reside in the greater Detroit Metropolitan area. Of the 100 teachers who participated in this study and indicated the grade level that they currently teach, 41 were elementary teachers, 20 were middle school teachers, and 35 were high school teachers. Four participants did not indicate their grade level.

Numerous Michigan school districts, both public and private, were represented in this study. The district data were then organized by county. The top three communities that were represented in this study were Detroit, Wayne County (excluding Detroit), and Oakland County.

The inclusion of the three instructional levels- elementary, middle school, and high school in addition to district data, organized by county, did not present any statistically significant findings regarding teacher attitudes toward ELLs.

However, as indicated in Chapter 4, on three of the four subscales, respondents in Detroit where 89% of students are African American, expressed a more positive attitude toward ELLs, while teachers in Oakland county where students are overwhelmingly white, displayed the least positive attitude toward ELLs on all four subscales.

Research Questions

Four research questions were presented for this research study. Each research question represented its own subscale. When grouped together and assessed using Cronbachs alpha coefficients, the overall scale was moderately reliable ($\alpha=0.55$).

Research question 1. What are mainstream teachers attitudes toward ELL inclusion in mainstream classes?

Reliability as determined by the Spearman-Brown prophecy formula was good for the inclusion subscale ($SB=0.87$). Teachers were in favor of the inclusion of ELLs in the general education classes and felt that all students benefit from their inclusion (mean subscale score = 2.95 $SD= 0.51$). Fifty-five percent of teachers agreed and 35% strongly agreed with Q1- "The inclusion of

ESL students in subject area classes creates a positive educational atmosphere.” Fifty-two percent of teachers agreed and 26% strongly agree with Q2 – “The inclusion of ESL students in subject area classes benefits all students. Finally, 57% of teachers agreed and 32% strongly agreed with Q15 – “I would welcome the inclusion of ESL students in my class.”

Similarly, approximately half (52%) of the teachers did not believe that ESL students should have to delay entering the general education classroom. Specifically, 36% of teachers disagreed and 16% strongly disagreed with Q3 – “ESL students should not be included in general education classes until they attain a minimum level of proficiency.” Disagreement was also noted with Q6 – “Subject area teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of ESL students,” with 42% of teachers disagreeing and 18% strongly disagreeing with this statement.

Open-ended statements from Section D of the survey brought forth one positive and three strongly opposing negative sentiments regarding inclusion. The positive comment surrounding inclusion was statement 4. “I celebrate the differences in my classroom and work hard to reach and motivate my students.”

There were three lengthy negative statements offered. Statement 11 posited the difficulties of inclusion on the mainstream teacher:

The inclusion of ESL students without any previous English classes causes frustration on their part and my part too. It is hard to explain every single math term to them while you want to finish teaching the lesson to the other students.

Statement 14 expressed the belief that ELLs needed to acquire proficiency in order to benefit from the general education classroom:

If a child has no English basis, then what is the point of them sitting through a class in which they have no idea what is going on. First, learn the English language to a baseline degree then participate in classes to practice what English they have learned.

Finally statement 15, focused on how inclusion undercuts the quality of instruction to ELL students:

My daughter hated full inclusion, she thought that she could be a straight A student if somebody would translate to her the direction of the math assignment or translate to the teacher what she had to say about weather (in science!) The grade did not reflect her skills, her self esteem was low. Two years later she was very frustrated that she had to translate everything to a new Romanian child. She could not concentrate on the instruction.

In studies conducted by Reeves,(2006), high school teachers were receptive and welcoming to the inclusion ELLs in their classroom, (mean[*SD*] = 2.81[.62]). Seventy-five percent of respondents in Reeves study agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the inclusion of ELLs created a positive educational atmosphere in their classrooms. Forty percent of respondents did not agree with the question “The inclusion of ESL students in subject area classes benefits all students (mean [*SD*] = 2.65[0.70]). Though teachers in this study welcomed the inclusion of ELLs, 75% strongly agreed that ELLs should not be mainstreamed until the students had attained a minimum level of English proficiency (mean [*SD*] =2.95[0.74]). In addition, 70% of teachers were in agreement with the statement – “subject area teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of ESL students (mean [*SD*] = 2.83 [0.70]).

Another research study presented data on inclusion was Stanosheck Youngs & Youngs (2001). Results from this study indicated that teachers were neutral to slightly positive toward the inclusion of ELLs in mainstream classes.

Another study – Rutledge-(2009) found that teachers were not equipped for ELL inclusion in their classrooms; however, they viewed inclusion as an opportunity for diversity appreciation and welcomed ELLs. Finally, a study by (Walker et al., 2004) found that teachers had negative attitudes on inclusion based on the lack of time to meet the demands of ELLs.

Conclusions. In the area of inclusion, there were similarities and differences between this study's findings compared with other research studies. Data which strongly mirrored this study's findings on inclusion were found in the work of Reeves, (2006). The data from Reeves' study agree with this study's findings in three regards; teachers welcomed the inclusion of ELLS in their classroom, inclusion created a positive atmosphere, and teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of ESL students. However there is one major difference between Reeves' finding and those in this study. Whereas a slight majority (52%) of respondents in this study believed that ELLs should not be mainstreamed until the students had attained a minimum level of English proficiency, in Reeves' study, a much higher proportion of teachers (75%) held this negative view of inclusion.

Some other studies had shown that teachers held much more negative views toward inclusion than this research. Rutledge,(2009) found that teachers were not equipped for ELL inclusion in their classrooms. The work of (Walker et al., 2004) also brought forth differences in that teachers did not look favorably upon inclusion because they lacked the time to meet the demands of these students.

Research question 2. What are teacher perceptions of the second language acquisition process/language and language learning?

Internal consistency was good for this subscale (SB=0.80). Responses to this subscale indicated that 31% of teachers strongly disagreed and 50% disagreed with Q4 – “students should avoid using their native language at school”, (mean [SD] =1.93[0.81]). Teachers were exactly even split, (50% to 50%), on the question of whether “ELLs should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in US schools,” (mean [SD] =2.45[0.77]). Teachers expressed strong support for making English the official language of the U.S., with 52% agreeing and 24% strongly agreeing (mean [SD] = 2.88[0.90]) with this program.

Overall, the teachers in this research expressed more positive attitudes toward ELLs on all three items of the language acquisition subscale than those in Reeves’ (2006) research. Specifically, Reeves’ found that 58.4% of teachers disagreed that ESL students should avoid using their native language while at school (mean[SD] = 2.39[0.75]), and that 71.7% of teachers felt that ESL students should be able to acquire English within two years (mean [SD] = 2.86[0.60]). Finally, 82.5% of teachers in Reeves’ study supported making English the official language of the U.S. (mean [SD] = 3.26[0.80])

Other studies presented data surrounding the second language acquisition process include: A study by Byrnes, Kiger, and Manning, (1997) found that the inability of teachers to understand a students linguistic and cultural background can bring forth negative feelings that impact academic promise for ELLs. Research by Rutledge (2009) found that the use of ones native language

was not looked upon favorably. A study by Ren Dong, (2004) found that having a knowledge base regarding how a learner acquires a second language and then applying it toward their academic content courses is important for teachers.

Conclusions. In comparing this study's findings on second language acquisition/language and language learning, with Reeves, (2006) similar results were found surrounding the statement "ESL students should avoid using their native language while at school. In both studies over 50% of teachers were in disagreement with this statement. Similarities in both studies were also found regarding the survey question which supported making English the official language of the U.S. Over 80% of those surveyed in both studies agreed with this statement.

Differing results were found on the question, "ESL students should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U.S. schools." This study found those who were surveyed to be evenly divided regarding this question, whereas the data from Reeves, (2006) indicated that most teachers, 71.7%, felt students should be able to acquire English within two years.

Research question 3. What are teacher attitudes toward the modification of coursework for ELLs?

The Spearman-Brown coefficient for the original subscale suggested no reliability (-0.0045). The deleted variable analysis indicated questions 10 and 12 were not associated with any other questions in the subscale. After excluding these questions, the reliability coefficient for this subscale increased to 0.82 thus indicating a considerable improvement over the proposed subscale.

Overall, teachers expressed mixed views on the modification of coursework subscale (mean[*SD*] = 2.74[0.45]). In the assessment of individual questions, 55% of teachers were less agreeable to simplifying coursework. An even larger 63% of teachers disagreed with this statement. “It is a good practice to lessen the quantity of coursework for ESL students,” (mean[*SD*] = 2.21[0.75]). On the other hand, 66% of teachers agreed with this statement - “It is good practice to allow ESL students more time to complete coursework.”, (mean[*SD*] = 3.19[0.58]). Similarly, 90% of teachers disagreed with the statement, “Teachers should not modify the assignment for ESL students.” 57% of teachers disagreed with this statement (mean[*SD*] = 3.24[0.61]).

The open ended responses brought forth qualified support regarding coursework modification. According to statement 5:

I believe we (educators/society) should help ELLs to achieve by modifying the curriculum we are teaching them the common language of America; English. I also believe it is important to have a common language for communication in our country. Too many misunderstandings and inadequacies in education can occur from a language barrier.

Similarly, statement 9 expressed the view that modifications to the coursework should be balanced with furnishing ELLs with an ELL specialist:

The ELL students were able to have a valuable learning experience as long as two things are in place: 1). adequate and consistent native language to English adaptations are made to them in their core assignment to facilitate comprehension. 2.) Consistent face to face support of the staff ELL specialist with the ELL students to monitor understanding, progress, and concerns.

In the area of modification of coursework, 53% of participants in the Reeves (2006) study disagreed that the simplification of coursework was good

practice (mean [SD] = 2.44 [0.66]). An equal 53% of participants also disagreed with lessening coursework (mean [SD] = 2.43 [0.07]). On the other hand, 80% of teachers favored allowing ELLs more time to complete coursework (mean [SD]= 2.91 [0.57]). Valdes (2001) found that successful classes have combined teaching language and content knowledge at the same time. Olsen (1997) presented the finding that the lack of time and resources could make it difficult for teachers to implement a more inclusive curriculum.

Conclusions: The results from the coursework modification subscale of this research are similar to those of the study conducted by Reeves (2006). An identical 43% of participants in this study disagreed with either “simplification of coursework” or “lessening coursework for ESL students”, compared to 53% of participants in Reeves (2006) on both statements.

In addition, agreement in both studies was found with the statement – “It is good practice to allow ESL students more time to complete coursework, with 66% of teachers in this study and 80% of teachers in the Reeves study favoring this practice.

Research question 4. What are mainstream teacher attitudes toward ESL professional development?

Internal consistency for this subscale was high (SB = 0.74). Seventy-eight percent of teachers felt they did not have adequate training to work with ESL students. Similarly, 81% of teachers were interested in receiving more training in working with ELLs. In looking at the results on professional development from the study conducted by (Reeves, 2006), 82% of respondents felt untrained to work with ELLs and 53% of participants were interested in receiving more training in

working with ELLs. Both research studies show that teachers do not have adequate training in ESL and therefore were highly receptive to receiving more training in this area.

Other research on professional development was the work of Montgomey, Robert, and Growe (2003), who found that the U.S. teaching force was not equipped to help culturally and linguistically diverse children. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2002) indicated that 41% of teachers in the United States have ELLs in their classrooms, with only 13% of these teachers reporting that they have completed instruction or professional development in the education of ELLs.

Conclusions. Overall, the research studies reflect that teachers do not have adequate training in ESL and are more receptive to receiving more training in this area.

Findings

Three statistically significant findings emerged from this research study regarding teacher attitudes toward English language learners:

1. Past coursework in ESL **is positively associated** teachers' attitudes toward ELLs.
2. Professional development was positively associated with past coursework in ESL.
3. A statistically significant association was found between teacher's attitudes toward professional development and their number of

graduate and undergraduate credit hours that deal specifically with language minority students.

Past Coursework in ESL Positively Impacts Teacher Attitudes

Clearly, for teachers to have background knowledge in the field of ESL is highly relevant. Possessing a strong knowledge base of ESL positively impacts teacher attitudes. Teachers who understand how a second language is acquired are better able to provide favorable academic environments for the students that they instruct. Several past studies support the importance of teachers having background knowledge in ESL include; (Christian, 1999; Echevarria 2004-2005, 2006; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005; Ren Dong, 2004; Short & Menz, 2009).

On the other hand, one piece of past research disagrees with the importance of teachers having a knowledge base in second language acquisition (Stanosheck Youngs & Youngs, 2001). Their research results indicated that teacher attitudes were not impacted by way of college courses, training, in-services, and conferences. A reason for the difference in results could be that the study by Stanosheck Youngs & Youngs was conducted in 2001 and since that time there has been more information and data available for teachers to access regarding second language acquisition.

Professional Development Positively Associated with Past ESL Coursework

The second statistically significant finding from this study was that professional development is positively associated with past ESL coursework, impacting teacher attitudes in a positive manner. These data were brought forth from the question – “Have you received training to work with ESL students?” Only thirty respondents in this study indicated that they had received some form training to work with ESL students either through college coursework, professional development, research literature, or in school seminars. These research findings are similar to Spring, (2010), who stated that only 29.5% of limited English proficient (LEP) students nationally have ESL training.

These data also agree with findings from Reeves, (2006). In her study, respondents also claimed that they felt untrained to work with ESL students. Results of research by Cho and Ha Na (2008) revealed that teachers would like to receive more training on instructional strategies for ELLs.

On the other hand, some past research (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008; Reeves, 2006), found that educators felt that professional development was not worthwhile and that it added time to an already lengthy school day. Educators have also expressed their concern as to why they should participate in ESL professional development when ELLs are not their primary teaching responsibility. Furthermore, many educators believe that ESL professional development should be tailored to meet the needs of each individual school and staff.

One model of professional development that is gaining in popularity nationwide is Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP), the work of Echevarria, Vogt, and Short (as cited in Echevarria & Short, & Powers, 2003). This training tool was developed to help make academic content comprehensible for ELLs and academic success achievable. Although this program can be a powerful model for teachers to implement in their daily instruction, in order for it to be effective, professional development directed toward SIOP needs to be ongoing and consistent as presented in the work of Hansen-Thomas (2008)

It is necessary to change teachers' mindset when it comes to the ESL professional development opportunities. Understanding the value in this type of professional development and how it benefits teachers and the academic success of their students is vital, as the ELL student demographic continues to grow.

Attitudes toward Professional Development Associated with Graduate and Undergraduate Credit Hours

The data from this study showed that teachers who indicated that they had adequate training to work with ELLs had more undergraduate and graduate credit level hours than those who did not. This research finding supports the study conducted by Byrnes, Kiger, and Manning, (1997) who found that graduate courses positively impact teacher attitudes. These findings reiterate the importance of ESL coursework and how it positively impacts teacher attitudes toward ELLs.

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study on mainstream teachers' attitudes toward English language learners in the areas of past coursework, professional development, and graduate and undergraduate hours are noteworthy as the findings encompass three instructional levels (elementary, middle school, and high school). Past studies typically have focused on one level of instruction. These findings confirm the value for all teachers to take courses in ESL, as well as to willingly take part in professional development opportunities as they are made available.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations for this study are acknowledged:

- This study was limited to graduate level teachers at one university which may reduce its generalization to other universities.
- Participants in this study were general education K-12 teachers who were enrolled in graduate classes at the university. Other stakeholders in teacher training may have supporting or conflicting perceptions of required courses for teachers.
- The study was limited to teachers in a single state that has a large influx of immigrants and growing student populations in ESL classes. The findings may not be generalized to other states with different student populations.
- The assumption was made of item invariance. Future research should study invariance of the items, in particular, for the grade level taught

(elementary, middle school, high school) and also for the county where teachers work (Detroit, Wayne County outside Detroit, and Oakland County).

- Future research could explore the dimensionality of the items of the four research questions (Inclusion, Modification of Coursework, Professional Development, and Language and Language Learning.)

Policy Implications

The findings from this research study strongly suggest the need to make changes to current policy with regards to ELLs. The population of ELLs in the U.S. is increasing, with projections indicating that ELLs will represent 25% of the public school population by 2030. Therefore, it would be prudent for state policy makers to consider requiring a course in second language acquisition as part of the pre-service teaching sequence.

At the time of this study, requirements for obtaining a teaching certificate in Michigan do not require a course in ESL as part of the teaching sequence at the elementary or secondary level. Currently, ESL courses offered at universities in Michigan typically fall under the umbrella of Multicultural Education. The courses that teachers should take to provide effective instruction to ELLs may not be offered individually, as they tend to be embedded within a multicultural course. While not taking away from the importance of having background knowledge in the area of diversity, this topic differs quite significantly from classes whose focus centers around second language acquisition theory and methodology.

Requiring ESL coursework would be beneficial for all teachers. Support for requiring coursework was reiterated in the open ended section of the survey used in this study. According to statement 4 - "I think it (ESL inclusion) is a wonderful thing. I wish we would have a bit more resources and support." This statement supports the position paper presented in 2003 from Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) a national organization. The paper recommended that all universities with teacher education programs include coursework for content area and mainstream teachers to prepare them to meet the needs of ELLs.

As the rigor of grade level curriculum increases in areas such as high school graduation requirements, state MEAP testing, and NCLB, teachers will require background knowledge regarding the intricacies of ESL if students are to be successful. This is yet another reason why there needs to be policy changes at the state level to add required courses in ESL to the existing teaching curricular in universities and colleges.

Recommendations for Future Research

Much work remains for research that examines mainstream teacher attitudes toward ELLs. Future research could include;

- Surveying teachers in local school districts to assess what specific ESL courses they have taken and how these courses have impacted their attitudes toward ELLs. These research findings could then be used by those at the university level who select courses and plans of work for incoming pre-service teachers.

- Educating teachers in states that do not currently have high concentrations of ELLs would be another focus for future research. Few states require teachers to complete coursework in the area of ESL, which may possibly explain why ELLs are not mastering content as rapidly as their English speaking peers (Echevarria & Short, 2004). As the population of ELLs expands, more schools and teachers will be impacted. Requiring courses to ensure that educators have background knowledge of who ELLs are and how to provide effective instruction will be paramount.

Final Remarks

This study has examined K-12 mainstream teacher attitudes toward English language learners. The statistically significant findings of this study are that past ESL coursework (graduate and undergraduate), and participation in ESL professional development opportunities positively impact teacher attitudes toward ELLs. These findings suggest the need for state policy makers to strongly consider requiring coursework in ESL for all teachers. As the influx of ELLs continues to impact public schools throughout the nation, school systems and educators must be appropriately prepared.

Appendix A

English as a Second Language Students in Mainstream Classrooms A Survey of Teachers

Section A

1	2	3	4
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

ELL Inclusion

Read each statement and place a check mark in the box that best describes your opinion.	1	2	3	4
1. The inclusion of ESL students in subject-area classes creates a positive educational atmosphere.				
2. The inclusion of ESL students in subject-area classes benefits all students.				
3. ESL students should not be included in general education classes until they attain a minimum level of English proficiency.				
4. ESL students should avoid using their native language while at school.				
5. ESL students should be able to acquire English within two years of enrolling in U. S. schools.				
6. Subject-area teachers do not have enough time to deal with the needs of ESL students.				
7. It is a good practice to simplify coursework for ESL students.				
8. It is a good practice to lessen the quantity of coursework for ESL students.				
9. It is a good practice to allow ESL students more time to complete coursework.				
10. Teachers should not give ESL students a failing grade if the students display effort.				
11. Teachers should not modify assignments for the ESL students enrolled in subject-area classes.				
12. The modification of coursework for ESL students would be difficult to justify to other students.				
13. I have adequate training to work with ESL students.				
14. I am interested in receiving more training in working with ESL students.				
15. I would welcome the inclusion of ESL students in my class.				
16. I would support legislation making English the official language of the United States.				

I. Approximately how many graduate or undergraduate credit hours have you taken that deal specifically with language minority students?
 Graduate____ Undergraduate____

II. Approximately how many staff development hours have you taken that dealt specifically with language minority students?

1. Have you ever had an ESL student enrolled in your classes? Yes No
 (If No, skip to Section C.)

2. What is the percentage of ESL students enrolled in your classes during the 2009-2010 school year?

- a. 0-3
- b. 5-10
- c. 10-20
- d. 20 or higher

3. Approximately how many ESL students have enrolled in your classes throughout your teaching career?

Section B

1	2	3
Seldom or never	Some of the time	Most or all of the time

Which, if any of the following are descriptive of your classes when ESL students are enrolled? Please indicate the extent to which each of the following apply in your classes.	1	2	3
Classroom Practices			
1. I allow ESL students more time to complete their coursework.			
2. I give ESL students less coursework than other students.			
3. I allow an ESL student to use his/her native language in my class.			
4. I provide materials for ESL students in their native languages.			
5. Effort is more important to me than achievement when I grade ESL students.			
Impact of Inclusion			
6. The inclusion of ESL students in my classes increases my workload.			
7. ESL students require more of my time than other students require.			
8. The inclusion of ESL students in my class slows the progress of the entire class.			

Section D

1. Circle the three biggest challenges you have experienced in having ELLs in your class.
 - a. Language barriers between you and your ELLs
 - b. Cultural differences between you and your ELLs
 - c. ELLs lack of background knowledge of content area
 - d. ELL lack of motivation
 - e. Lack of guidelines and or support system at school levels
 - f. Lack of time and resources to devote to ELLs
 - g. Assessment and grading of ELLs

2. To what extent do you feel that training for working with ESL students has contributed to your ability to work effectively with this population? Please circle one.
 1. None
 2. Somewhat
 3. Neutral
 4. Often

Comments: Use the following space to provide any additional comments you may have concerning the inclusion of ESL students in your subject-area classes.

Appendix B

Research Information Sheet

Title: Mainstream Teacher Attitudes toward English Language Learners

Principal Investigator: Cristina Gonzalez Dekutoski

RESEARCH INFORMATION LETTER

I. Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this research study is to examine attitudes of mainstream teachers toward English language learners. This study is intended to determine if teachers perceive that required coursework is needed to provide effective instruction to English language learners.

II. Procedure

Participants will be asked to complete the questionnaire: English as a Second Language Students in Mainstream Classrooms: A Survey of Teachers. The questionnaires should not require more than 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

III. Benefits

There are no benefits to the participants.

IV. Risks

No risks or additional effects are likely to result from your participation in this study. In the unlikely event of an injury arising from participation in this study, no reimbursement, compensation, or free medical treatment is offered by Wayne State University or the researcher.

V. Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to choose not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this survey, you can later change your mind and withdraw from the study. You are free to only answer questions that you want to answer. You are free to withdraw to from participation in this study at any time. Your decisions will not change any present or future relationship with Wayne State University or its affiliates or other services you are entitled to receive.

Title: Mainstream Teacher Attitudes toward English Language Learners

Principal Investigator: Cristina Gonzalez Dekutoski

VI. Costs

There are no costs involved in your participation in the study.

VII. Compensation

There is no compensation being offered for participation in the study.

VIII. Confidentiality

All information collected during the course of this study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. All information will be presented in aggregate, with no individual participant identifiable in the study. All information will be collected without any identifiers.

IX. Questions

If you have any questions regarding the items on the survey or the purpose of the study, please feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience. I can be reached at (248) 866-8692. If you would like information regarding your rights regarding participation in this study, please contact the chairperson of the Wayne State University Behavioral Investigation Committee at (313) 577-1628.

X. Consent to Participate in a Research Trial

The return of your completed survey is evidence of your willingness to participate in this study. Please retain this information sheet in case you have any questions or would like additional information regarding this study.

Appendix C

Open-ended Responses

Use the following space to provide any additional comments you may have concerning the inclusion of ESL students in your subject area classes.

1. "I have not yet had to deal with ESL students in my classroom."
2. "Teachers need to be more flexible and positive."
3. "ESL students require regular exposure to the same amount of information as regular students. Its imperative they receive the extra hour. However, it is also crucial they are allowed to maintain their own culture while learning that of their host nation."
4. "I celebrate the differences in my classrooms and work hard to reach and motivate all my ESL students."
5. "I believe we (educators/society) should help ELL's to achieve by modifying curriculum are teaching them the common language of America; English. I also believe it is important to have a common language for communication in our country. Too many misunderstandings and inadequacies in education can occur from a language barrier."
6. "Due to the small population of ESL in my district, it is out sourced to the county."
7. "Students in general have a difficult time with ESL students speaking a foreign language. Students feel as if the ESL students talks about them in a different language."
8. "My interaction with ESL students is limited our workshops are offered at various schools throughout the year and our topics are rarely academic. However I conduct sessions at schools with large Hispanic populations and occasionally I run into barriers with the language. I do often order and provide materials in Spanish for those schools."
9. "The ELL students were able to have a valuable learning experience as long as two things were in place: 1. adequate and consistent native language to English adaptations are made to them in their core assignments to facilitate comprehension. 2. Consistent face to face support on the part of staff ELL specialist with the ELL students to monitor understanding, progress, and concerns."

10. "Teacher has to have time, resources, willingness, to work with ELLs. Without all three the entire content area experience is not only lost but can have a negative effect on both ELL and mainstream students."

11. "The inclusion of ESL student without any previous English classes causes frustration at their part and at my part too. It is hard to explain every single math term to them while you want to finish teaching the lesson to the other students."

12. "I believe that at a certain point in their education that is quite feasible – They cannot be new to the language because mine is a language class. However once they have working knowledge we can work that is to their advantage!"

13. "No student should be denied quality education."

14. "If a child has no English language basis then what is the point of them sitting through a class in which they have no idea what is going on. First learn the English language to a baseline degree then participate in classes to practice what English they have learned."

15. "My daughter hated full inclusion, she thought that she could be a straight A student if somebody would translate to her the direction of the math assignment or translate to the teacher what she had to say about weather (in science!) The grade did not reflect her skills, her self esteem was low. 2 years later she was very frustrated that she had to translate everything to a new Romanian child. She could not concentrate on instruction."

16. " Vocab and jargon without a good understanding of English, students could miss meanings and definitions."

17. "I've had no training in dealing with ESL students."

18. "In my very limited experience with ELLs, their level of competency in English seemed to be a predictor of their success in my mathematics classes."

19. "My experience has been that if the student has good parental support he or she works to their best ability, learns and does well. This is true when the parents may be non- English speaking and have difficulty communicating with me but are concerned that their child learns and progresses. These parents often can provide materials for interpreting and helping the student learn and succeed in school with little English speaking ability. Parental backup seems important for ESL kids; I have had some with parent input and I see the difference in success with the student and their work effort/success."

20." I am very happy to work with ELLs and would try to overcome language barriers as much as possible. I spent one year volunteering in an ESL high

school classroom. I let my Spanish-speaking students speak Spanish to me if they prefer that.”

21.” I coached football at Southwestern High School for 1 football season. For our players who spoke mainly Spanish we had a coach of Hispanic decent to translate for use. As coaches, we began to learn the basic words needed to communicate with those players by listening to the Hispanic coach talk to them. Even the other English speaking players began to learn how to communicate to those Hispanic players through observation.”

22.” ESL student are not identified by administration. The only time I knew who they were was when they left the classroom to take some test!”

23.”Have not had this situation to this date.”

24.” I think it is a wonderful thing. I wish we would have a bit more resources and support.”

25. “ESL is difficult b/c it takes So long to learn a second language And a second culture.”

26.” I would definitely encourage my school to use some of our P.D. time to help the staff with inclusion of ESL students. We have very few but feel it would be useful to all.”

Appendix D

Human Investigation Committee Approval

**WAYNE STATE
UNIVERSITY**

HUMAN INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE
101 East Alexandrine Building
Detroit, Michigan 48201
Phone: (313) 577-1628
FAX: (313) 993-7122
<http://hic.wayne.edu>



CONCURRENCE OF EXEMPTION

To: Cristina Gonzalez Dekutoski
College of Education

From: Ellen Barton, Ph.D. *S. Millis/EB*
Chairperson, Behavioral Institutional Review Board (B3)

Date: June 11, 2010

RE: HIC #: 058610B3X

Protocol Title: Mainstream Teacher Attitudes Toward English Language Learners

Sponsor:

Protocol #: 1005008406

The above-referenced protocol has been reviewed and found to qualify for **Exemption** according to paragraph #2 of the Department of Health and Human Services Code of Federal Regulations [45 CFR 46.101(b)].

- Information Sheet

This proposal has not been evaluated for scientific merit, except to weight the risk to the human subjects in relation to the potential benefits.

- Exempt protocols do not require annual review by the IRB.
- All changes or amendments to the above-referenced protocol require review and approval by the HIC **BEFORE** implementation.
- Adverse Reactions/Unexpected Events (AR/UE) must be submitted on the appropriate form within the timeframe specified in the HIC Policy (<http://www.hic.wayne.edu/hicpol.html>).

NOTE:

1. Forms should be downloaded from the HIC website at each use.
2. Submit a Closure Form to the HIC Office upon completion of the study.

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Zehr, M. A. (2008b, June 4). Hurdles remain high for English learners. *Education Week, 27*(39), 10-11.

ABSTRACT**MAINSTREAM TEACHER ATTITUDES TOWARD
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**

by

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August 2011

Advisor: Dr. Monte Piliawsky**Major:** Curriculum and Instruction**Degree:** Doctor of Philosophy

The purpose of this study was to collect and analyze data from practicing mainstream K-12 teachers currently enrolled in graduate courses at a large, urban, Midwest university regarding four categories of their attitudes toward English language learners: (a) inclusion of ELLs, (b) the second language acquisition process/language and language learning, (c) modification of coursework, and (d) ESL professional development.

Though studies on teacher attitudes toward ELLs remain sparse, research on this topic is important for two reasons. First, as the rigor of grade level curriculum increases (i.e. high school graduation requirements, state MEAP testing, NCLB) understanding complexities of ELLs and background knowledge of the language acquisition process can be beneficial for educators, parents, and students in educational reform efforts of ELLs, whose academic performance currently substantially lags behind their native English speaking peers.

Second, an examination of teacher attitudes toward English language learners might provide support for the importance of requiring coursework in the

areas of language acquisition and methodology for all preservice teachers at institutions that offer teacher preparation programs. At the time of this study, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) did not require this type of coursework.

Three statistically significant findings emerged from this research study regarding teacher attitudes toward English Language Learners: (a) past coursework in ESL positively impacts teachers' attitudes toward ELLs; (b) professional development was positively associated with past coursework in ESL; (c) an association was found between teacher's attitudes toward professional development and the number of graduate and undergraduate credit hours that deal specifically with language minority students.

These findings confirmed the value for teachers to take courses in ESL, and also suggested the need for state policy makers to consider requiring coursework in ESL for preservice teachers. As the influx of ELLs continues to impact public schools throughout the nation, school systems and educators must be appropriately prepared.

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