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ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY TEACHERS' ATTITUDES AND EFFICACY
FOR TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE MAINSTREAM
CLASSROOM

By

Dawn L. Mathis

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major: Educational Administration

Under the Supervision of: Dr. Kay A. Keiser Ed.D.

Omaha, Nebraska

March 28, 2017

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FOR TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE MAINSTREAM
CLASSROOM

Dawn L. Mathis, Ed.D.

University of Nebraska, 2016

Advisor: Dr. Kay A. Keiser, Ed.D.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate Elementary and Secondary teachers' attitudes, efficacy, and cultural proficiency with mainstream ELL students. This study further explored teachers' beliefs toward professional development, differentiating curriculum and instruction, and understanding language acquisition with mainstream ELL students. The resulting data will be utilized to provide comprehensive feedback to the school district and surrounding school districts in Midwestern urban areas with similar ELL student populations. Using a quantitative, Likert scale evaluation re-designed using *English-as-a-second-language (ESL) Students in Mainstream Classroom: A Survey of Teachers* (Reeves, 2006), will provide feedback for future professional development, curriculum and instruction development, and assist with strengthening teacher efficacy toward mainstream ELL students in an urban Midwestern school district with a 2% ELL population. Surveys were answered by Kindergarten through Twelfth grade teachers and administrators. The data results were interpreted to analyze research and establish conclusions of the study. The quantitative data collected demonstrated the need for additional professional development for teachers and administrators in the areas of

cultural proficiency, properly differentiating curriculum and instruction, accurately understanding the levels of language acquisition, and the need to build stronger teacher efficacy.

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My life quickly changed when I interviewed and was accepted to spend a semester living in the Dominican Republic. I travelled and lived on the beautiful island as a naïve and non-Spanish speaking 19 year old international business major. I returned a more culturally proficient, independent, and a somewhat Spanish speaking 19 year old knowing I needed to change my major to education to work with children, much like the children I volunteered with in the Haitian Batey. I returned to finish out my spring semester and quickly changed my major to education. Since that time I have made it my life's journey to work with families from different cultures, languages, and backgrounds.

When I was accepted into the Education Leadership doctoral program at the University of Nebraska Omaha I knew I wanted to complete my dissertation encompassing English as a Second Language students. However, with any dissertation process, I knew I wanted to research English Language Learners, but what research to conduct continually changed. It can become quite a daunting task of writing a dissertation when the changes happen. There is no way I would have been able to get this far without the help of many special people in my life.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

“Caballo, caballo! Deja me! Deja me!” I yelled to the driver of the guagua. It was only my second week living in the Dominican Republic and my first time riding public transportation without an English interpreting guide. I squeezed into the back of a minivan with roughly 15 other passengers. I had little to no command of the Spanish language. As I noticed my stop nearing, the anticipation began to grow. I certainly didn’t want to miss my stop and find myself in a different city. I yelled out to the driver to stop and let me off.

Suddenly the people in the minivan erupted into laughter. I looked around at all of the unfamiliar faces and wasn’t sure what joke I had missed or if I was the joke. I soon learned it was the latter. Luckily one of the passengers knew a few words in English and quickly became my new Spanish teacher. Public transportation drivers in the Dominican Republic are called “cobradores” I happened to call the nice man a “horse”. I began to understand the discomfort and excitement of being a second language learner. Over the next few months I became immersed in the exciting, frustrating, and interesting experiences of living in a new country through learning a new language and culture.

My experience living in a foreign country influenced my passion to work with students with a native language other than English in the United States. As I have been working with English Language Learners (ELLs) over the years I have been given ample opportunities for professional development, best practices training to ensure high achieving education for ELLs, and gained a greater cultural proficiency. However, when

working with mainstream classroom teachers in a district with roughly a 2% ELL population I listened to frustrations, from my colleagues, regarding teacher efficacy, cultural awareness/proficiency, differentiating instruction for ELLs, content appropriate resources and professional development opportunities.

Throughout the years I have listened and interacted with many teachers who feel ill prepared when differentiating instruction for ELL students in their classroom. Many of my colleagues even have a feeling of anxiety when they are told they will be receiving an ELL student in their classroom. A common response I hear, from teachers upon hearing they will have an ELL student in their classroom is, “But I don’t speak Spanish! How will I be able to communicate with them?” I have also experienced the misplacement of ELL students into special education services, only to find out later once the student has gained more English proficiency, the student is not properly placed in Special Education.

A veteran Kindergarten teacher often described how her ELL students were not processing information as quickly as her native English speakers. She further explained to me that when she poses a question to her ELL students they often sit there and do not respond, but will eventually give her an answer to the question after she has moved onto another question. I took the opportunity to explain to her that many of the ELL students are listening to what she is saying translating it into Spanish in their heads, then translating their answer back into English, and finally telling the teacher the answer (Krashen, 1981). The ELL students needed wait and think time before moving onto another question (Rubinstein-Avila, 2013). Once she was given some teaching techniques to try with the ELL students I asked if she would report back to me if the

techniques were working. Within two days the Kindergarten teacher was almost skipping down the hall to find me. She had a large smile on her face and she proceeded to tell me how the techniques were working with her ELL students. The teacher went even further to explain that the techniques she practiced with the ELL students also worked with her native English speakers.

At parent-teacher conferences later in the Spring I was able to sit and listen to the Kindergarten teacher explain to the parents of ELL students how much she has enjoyed having their children in her classroom. She also was able to confidently explain to the parents how their child was moving through the stages of language acquisition. From a few easy teaching adjustments, the teacher had gained a great amount of self-efficacy. Now when she is told she will have an ELL student in her classroom the anxiety has been replaced with excitement.

Background and Context

The research conducted in this study examined the attitudes, teacher efficacy, and cultural proficiency of Kindergarten through Twelfth grade teachers toward English language learners (ELLs) in the mainstream classroom in an urban school district with a 2% ELL population. An English language learner is classified as a person whose native language is one other than English, but who may acquire the English language through various English language instructional programs (National Council of Teachers of English, 2008). Teacher efficacy plays a large role in student achievement (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000; Diaz-Rico, 2014; Bandura, 1997). Teacher efficacy and cultural proficiency are necessary to close the achievement gap for ELL students.

On a daily basis English Language Learners (ELLs) are entering the hallways of the United States school systems. Approximately 4.4 million students in K-12 public schools were identified as English Language Learners during the 2012-13 school year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). ELL students come from very diverse cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds. Classrooms increasingly illustrate the ever-changing face of education through, diverse native languages, differing levels of English proficiency, varying degrees of education completed in native countries, as well as contrasting cultural expectations in regards to social behaviors and norms. With these obstacles to traverse ELL students must also learn a new language, understand content curriculum, and succeed academically to further assimilate into American society. As ELL students are trying to adjust to their new surroundings educators must also adjust to provide ELL students with equitable educational opportunities in comparison to native English speakers.

A common misconception of classroom teachers, with little professional development or teaching time with students of limited English proficiency, believe an ELL student will naturally learn English by simply being surrounded to the language in class (Diaz-Rico, 2014). Native English speaking students, from middle class families, by age 3 have been exposed to approximately 30 million words (Avineri & Johnson, 2015). Depending on the socio-economic background of the student and the highest educational level obtained by the parents, a child may enter the classroom with far fewer words. The same research can be discussed when referring to English language learners. An ELL student may or may not have been exposed to or acquired as many words in their

native language, thus learning and comprehending a second language may prove to be more difficult (Diaz-Rico, 2014).

Additionally, ELL students often will promptly learn conversational and informal English to fit in with their peers. Often educators will hear the ELL student using conversational English with classmates and mistake the true level of English acquisition of the ELL student as proficient (Soltero, 2011). This study will examine if educators in K-12 classrooms, in an urban district with a 2% ELL population, understand the amount of time for language proficiency through language acquisition and the difference between “social and academic English” (Soltero, 2011).

Mainstream teachers, with ELL students in their classrooms, must also be properly trained on best teaching practices. Not all of the methods teachers use for native English speakers will work well when teaching students to acquire a second language (Diaz-Rico, 2014). Using orally rich context, with very little or no visual context, or remediation techniques for ELL students often can hinder language acquisition (Diaz-Rico, 2014). With larger numbers of ELL students entering the classrooms it is imperative for educators to understand how to properly assimilate, differentiate, and educate all learners. It is important for education professionals to understand the steps to language acquisition, building meaningful relationships with ELL students, high teacher efficacy, teacher attitudes, and teacher cultural proficiency. Furthermore, when educators are not properly prepared to understand educating ELL students, mistakes may occur and ELL students can be misdiagnosed and placed into incorrect classes such as special education.

Teacher attitudes, efficacy, and cultural awareness also play a crucial role in student achievement. For this study defining teacher attitudes will be looking into the psychological aspects of humans' inward and outward beliefs and dispositions when working with ELL students. Furthermore, understanding teacher efficacy and cultural awareness of classroom teachers, when working with mainstream ELL students, will be essential in understanding the outcomes of the disposition survey.

Fifty years ago The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, also known as the Hart-Cellar Act, was signed (Kao, Vaquera, & Goyette, 2013). The quota system of allowing immigrants predominantly from northern and western European countries to enter into the United States was going to drastically change by accepting more immigrants from Asian and African countries (Center for Immigration Studies, 1995). With the new law enacted, the United States would no longer favor certain nationalities from Anglo-Saxon descent.

During the next forty years over approximately 24 million immigrants entered the United States legally (Kao, et al., 2013). The composition of the United States immigrant population was going to markedly change, representing more nations of the world. From 1970 to 2013 the number of U.S. immigrants more than quadrupled from 9.6 million to 41.3 million (Zong, 2015). Socioeconomic and education levels of the newly arrived immigrants also posed a sharp contrast to the immigrants who arrived before the immigration act of 1965.

After the immigration act was enacted U.S. immigrants distinctly fell into two socioeconomic and educational groups. The first class is comprised of professionals who possess high levels of education in their native country. This first class has had an easier

time gaining employment, acquiring housing in middle to upper middle class neighborhoods, and are able to expose their children to more elite schools. The second class consists of immigrants with inferior education and work skills. Many of the immigrants from the second class have a difficult time gaining steady employment, many work jobs for minimum wage, tend to acquire housing in lower income areas, and their children attend schools with less academic resources. With this large disparity, businesses have found the need to adapt to ensure proper assimilation for all immigrants into the United States. Accordingly, United States education systems and classrooms also must differentiate and readjust to ensure an equitable education for all new immigrants.

Language diversity and immigration have continuously been a topic for much debate throughout American history. How do US immigrants properly assimilate into the norms and societal expectations without losing native identity? How do US immigrant students accomplish academic feats to learn not only English as a social language but understanding English in the academic realm? In 2011 a reported 40.4 million immigrants, a combination of both documented and undocumented represented 13% of the population in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2013). The 2012-13 academic school year reported 4.85 million ELL students enrolled in public schools (Migration Policy Institute, 2015). Time is of the essence for US immigrant students entering the public school system to ensure a proper and equal education.

Providing equal education for ELL students can prove challenging for mainstream teachers in a Midwestern, urban school district with roughly 2% English Language Learners in the student population. ELL students are primarily in mainstreamed

classrooms with limited resource support from teachers endorsed in English as a Second Language. Furthermore, federal guidelines impose provisions through curricular content, academic performance on standardized tests, and graduation rates to measure success of limited English proficient (LEP) students. A key component of the federal guidelines laid forth by The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2002 asserts limited English proficient students (LEP) will become proficient in English and attain high levels of academic achievement comparable to their English-speaking peers (Batalova, Fix, & Murray, 2007). Moreover, newly arrived ELL students are expected to become English proficient within a limited amount of time. After the prescribed amount of time given to become English proficient, ELL students are required to take state mandated achievement tests. The state achievement tests are given to all students; native and non-native English speaking students. ELL students are then assessed to determine if they have made enough progress to close the achievement gap.

Newly arrived, school age, US immigrants are granted one year of reprieve before being required to participate in state achievement tests (Nebraska Department of Education, 2015). However, under Title III of NCLB all ELL students, beginning the first year in the United States, are required to take a yearly test exhibiting levels of English proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and comprehension. Subsequently, during the second academic year and beyond, ELL students are expected to take all state mandated achievement tests in reading and math (Nebraska Department of Education, 2015). Additionally, certain grade levels must also participate in writing and science tests.

The ELL student population of the school district utilized for this study, Kindergarten through Twelfth grade, continues to stay a constant, at 2%. However, with the ever increasing immigrant populations seeking protection in the United States from political discourse in their native country, immigrants moving to the United States to gain employment, and unaccompanied minors entering the United States to escape violence and unrest in their native country, the ELL population in school systems will continue to rise.

In addition to immigrant ELL students entering the United States, unaccompanied minors seeking refuge has also seen a significant rise. In the beginning of the 2014 fiscal year an influx of more than 102,000 unaccompanied minors entered the United States (Migration Policy Institute, 2015). Many of the unaccompanied minors entering the United States have had interrupted or little formal schooling. Therefore, educators will need to adjust teaching techniques, gain cultural proficiency, and modify curriculum all while continuing a rigorous education for all learners in the mainstream classroom.

Problem Statement

In an urban school district with a student population of 10,000 and a 2% ELL population, are teachers prepared to properly differentiate instruction, provide an equal education, maintain teacher efficacy, and cultivate cultural proficiency with mainstream ELL students? Have Kindergarten through Twelfth grade teachers been suitably educated to understand language acquisition and psychological adjustments associated with ELL students in the mainstream classroom?

Little research is available on Kindergarten through Twelfth grade teachers' attitudes toward mainstream ELL students in an urban school district with a modest population of ELL students. At present, a greater amount of research has been conducted regarding mainstream ELL students in school districts with larger ELL student populations. In addition to districts with large ELL populations being represented in research studies, school districts where ethnic diversity has been prevalent for numerous years likewise have more research conducted.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes and efficacy of Kindergarten through Twelfth grade teachers and administrators who are responsible for the academic achievement of ELL students in the mainstream classroom. The teacher and administrator behavioral dispositions will be assessed through attitudinal measures, seek to assess affect or feelings toward educational topics (Creswell, 2012). The questions concentrated in this research study:

1. Are there significant differences in teacher efficacy and attitudes when working with mainstream ELL students between male and female teachers? Are there significant differences between elementary and secondary teachers efficacy and attitudes toward mainstream ELL students?
2. Do teachers feel adequately prepared to work with mainstream ELL students and have been given sufficient professional development to understand how to differentiate curriculum and instruction, language acquisition, and cultural proficiency? Is there a difference between

elementary and secondary teachers differentiating curriculum for mainstream ELL students? Do teachers feel they receive an adequate amount of time to differentiate curriculum for mainstream ELL students?

3. Are teachers given enough cultural proficiency training to understand language acquisition, learning styles, and cultural backgrounds to assist in teaching mainstream ELL students? Do teachers feel they receive sufficient support from building and district administrators to properly serve ELL students in mainstream classrooms?

Significance of Study

Efficacy and behavioral dispositions of educators, both teachers and administrators, is significant to examine when understanding student achievement and how to close the achievement gap among ELL students. With the changing demographics of the American educational system, it is necessary to understand how teachers and administrators are adjusting with the transformation. This study attempts to identify efficacy and behavioral dispositions of K-12th grade teachers and administrators in an urban Midwestern school district with a 2% ELL population. This study will provide additional research in understanding the affect of teacher and administrators' efficacy and behavioral dispositions on closing the achievement gap among ELL students. Additionally, after the data has been analyzed a comprehensive plan is written to look at possible ways to strengthen teacher efficacy, cultural proficiency, understanding of language acquisition among ELL students, and ways to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction to establish a rigorous academic program for mainstream ELL students.

Definition of Terms

This research study provides definitions pertaining to terminology usage in order to provide clarity and refrain from ambiguity.

Accommodations. Accommodations are adaptive adjustments or modifications to tests and/or testing procedures in order to ensure accurate content knowledge is measured. Applicable accommodations may include the following; (e.g., permitting extra time during testing, modifying classroom materials, providing dictionaries in both native and second languages, changes in testing conditions, materials, or procedures). The adjustments are to assist the ELL student's participation in assessments, without contaminating the test results or constructs (Gil, O'Day, Hector-Mason, & Rodriguez, 2010).

Attitude. Attitude is defined by how educational professionals feel regarding English language learners in the mainstream classrooms (Reeves, 2004).

Bilingualism. Bilingualism refers to a person who successfully communicates in two languages (Baker, 2000).

Behavioral dispositions. Behavioral dispositions describe a way a person thinks, acts, and feels toward a group of people from different cultures or perceived stimuli.

Content area. Content area describes an educational area of study. Content area subjects include but are not limited to; English, mathematics, science, and history.

Dual language. Dual language is a language program model in which students are taught content area skills and terminology in two languages. Dual language programs are intended to develop bilingualism, cultural competency, and biliteracy.

English language learner (ELL). English language learner refers to a person actively participating in language studies in order to acquire the English language. The individual's primary language is one other than English. The person often engages in support programs to develop their academic attainment in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

English proficient. English proficient is a term used to define native English speaking students. English proficient is additionally used to depict second language learners who have obtained English proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Inclusion. Inclusion, in this study, pertains to English language learners participating in mainstream classrooms. The students engage in content area subjects without the assistance of an ELL resource teacher. However, an inclusion ELL student may be pulled out of the classroom to receive additional support from the ELL resource teacher. Inclusion students, if the program is properly conducted, contribute to a positive climate. The mainstream teacher positively accommodates the ELL student, encourages learning proper social and academic language in English, understands language acquisition of second language learners, and is able to differentiate curriculum to ensure academic success of inclusion students.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Limited English proficiency defines English language learners who have not obtained English proficiency or fluency. LEP is a term used by the U.S. Department of Education when designating students enrolling in elementary and secondary schools with insufficient English proficiency levels needed to meet state assessment requirements.

Mainstream classes. Mainstream classes encompass all students. These classes teach the core content curriculum with focus on reading, math, writing, science, and social studies. All course material is taught in English. These classes are not constructed to replace language assistance.

Pullout ELL Services. Pullout ELL services are English language learner programs specifically for newly arrived immigrant students or ELL students with limited amount of time in the United States education system. A teacher, certified in TESOL or ELL, teaches this program. ELL resource teachers may modify district curriculum or create curriculum specific to individual ELL students. The ELL student leaves their mainstream classroom to receive services in the pullout program.

Push-in ELL program. Push-in ELL program facilitates the ELL teacher going into the mainstream classrooms to assist and work with ELL students on classroom content.

Assumptions

The measurements assembled from this study rely on the following assumptions:

1. The questions in the survey were created to gather information regarding teacher and administrators' beliefs, self-efficacy, and cultural proficiency when teaching English language learners in mainstream classrooms.
2. A significant amount of teachers and administrators were given the survey. Therefore, giving a clear representation of beliefs, efficacy, and cultural proficiency among elementary, middle, and high school cohorts.

3. With a 2% ELL population in a school district, teachers will not feel as prepared to differentiate curriculum, understand different cultural norms, and may possess a lower self-efficacy for working with mainstream ELL students.

Limitations

This study was vulnerable to weaknesses associated with survey research, including:

1. Electronic survey communication administered to teacher and administrator participants have had a low return rate.
2. Participants may not return surveys if they are not assured that the survey is truly anonymous and confidential (Dommeyer, Buam, Hanna, & Chapman, 2004).

Delimitations

1. The survey was administered to Kindergarten through Twelfth grade teachers and administrators in an urban Midwestern school district. This may limit the ability to generalize findings for other school districts.

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Humans have migrated throughout history to new lands in hopes of bettering their living conditions, to find ample food, water, shelter, and discover an area where they feel safe from any dangers. Just as our migratory ancestors arrived to the United States in search of the conditions for a better future so do immigrants today. With mass immigration to the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries political and social strife had ensued. People have often feared how newly arrived immigrants would assimilate into the societal norms of the United States. Education has always been on the forefront of indoctrination into American cultures for immigrant children. However, not all education professional, politicians, and community leaders have had the efficacy or training to positively create gateways for immigrants to assimilate.

Today's increasing number of immigrant students in the United States public school system has created compelling demands for greater teacher efficacy to differentiate instruction, to provide an equitable education and achieve high academic rigor for all students. Nonetheless, in order to understand the wide range of issues with immigration and education, historical timelines of immigration and education is of importance.

The first section will provide a brief history of immigration into the United States. Next, the chapter will connect the brief history of immigration with racial hierarchy in the United States, socioeconomic perceptions of immigrants, and cultural proficiency of teachers impacting assimilation and educational attainment of immigrant students.

Furthering the look into educational attainment how the state and federal laws impact English Language Learner education. Teacher efficacy and educational practices will be addressed, concentrating on cultural competency, instructional strategies, and professional development for teachers working with mainstream ELL students. The chapter will include descriptions of English language learners, how second language acquisition is developed, and the advantages or challenges of having ELL students in mainstream classrooms.

History of Immigration

The beginning of the mass migration of immigrants arriving in the United States began between the 1820s and 1880s. These newly arrived immigrants, primarily from European countries in the northern and western areas, were joining family members already established in the United States (Kao, et al., 2013). During the next seven decades European countries would send roughly 15 million immigrants to the United States (Department of Homeland Security, 2014).

The arrival of new immigrants evoked concerns within the existing US citizens. Many people were concerned if the new immigrants would properly assimilate to the US customs and standards. Furthermore laws beginning in the 1870s were enacted to discourage and prohibit any immigrants that were considered undesirable from entering the United States. The list of unsatisfactory characteristics of newly arrived immigrants included; paupers, people with mental health concerns, any person being investigated for a crime or currently in the criminal system in their native country, people suffering from contagious diseases, and women who were brought to the United States for the direct purpose of committing prostitution (Department of Homeland Security, 2012).

With the new laws enacted, lawmakers also began to look at the educational level of immigrants. Data was being collected on all new immigrants; questioning educational levels, if they were able to read and write, what occupations they held in their native country, and if they were currently married. All of the data collected was then used as a guideline to accepting or denying entrance into the United States (Kao, et al., 2013). Although most laws were used to keep out immigrants the United States determined as unfavorable, additional laws were established to keep large groups of immigrants from gaining entrance into the United States.

During the mid to late 1800s the United States began experiencing a greater influx of immigrants from China. Many of the Chinese immigrants had little to no formal schooling and were in search of jobs requiring manual labor. The call to travel to the United States was great with the appeal of the California gold rush and considerable job openings with the rapidly developing West Coast (Xie & Goyette, 2004). Chinese immigrants gravitated to areas in cities on the West Coast where manual jobs were plentiful and they could live within communities of other Chinese immigrants. Children of Chinese immigrants became insulated within the Chinese communities. Consequently, many of the children grew up only speaking Chinese and having little to no contact with English speaking children.

The Central Pacific Railroad was expanding and Chinese immigrants comprised 90% of the workforce (Xie & Goyette, 2004). As Chinese immigrants acquired more jobs, the Chinese people were viewed as creating instability in the labor force and infringing on jobs for white workers (Xie & Goyette, 2004). Hostility toward the Chinese immigrants began to grow. Out of this dissension the Chinese Exclusion Act

was created in 1882. The Chinese Exclusion Act limited the amount of Chinese immigrants allowed into the United States. This was the first Act against any one cultural group outside of the people found as “unfavorable” to US standards (Department of Homeland Security, 2012). Additionally during 1885 the Alien Contract Labor Law was created to safeguard immigrants from being ferried into the United States with the intention they would perform services of any kind and labor under contract by any person paid to bring the immigrant to the United States (Department of Homeland Security, 2012).

A new wave of immigrants converged through the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. The first two decades of the 1900s experienced a large wave of immigrants totaling 14.5 million people admitted into the United States (Department of Homeland Security, 2012). Many of the new immigrants were affected by World War I and needed to find a stable economy where their basic hierarchy of needs could be met. Once again the United States was seeing a great expansion among railroad systems, agriculture, manufacturing, and mining. The need for workers was apparent and labor jobs were plentiful (Kao, et al., 2013).

With the advancement of mining, farming, manufacturing, and the railroad system, companies quickly realized the need for more laborers. Japanese immigrants began entering the United States in the nineteenth century. Many of the Japanese immigrants started working in the agriculture sector and migrated into other labor areas (Xie & Goyette, 2004). As many of the Chinese immigrants remained in tight Chinese cultural neighborhoods, the Japanese immigrants encouraged their children to quickly

assimilate to the United States' culture. Accordingly, many Japanese children attended public school and were pushed to quickly become fluent in English.

Much like the view of the Chinese immigrants infringing on the jobs of the white workers, the Japanese were now looked upon as a threat to the availability of jobs in the United States. Growing hostility between white workers and the Japanese immigrants signaled the early stages of discourse between the United States and Japan. In 1905 the Japanese-Korean Exclusion League was created in San Francisco. This new league was created to suspend additional Japanese or people from different Asiatic countries from entering the United States. Furthermore, the league's mission was to disrupt the lives of Japanese people and businesses already established in the United States (Cullinane, 2014).

Antipathy between the United States and Japan continued to grow. In 1906 the hostility between white workers and Asian groups became greater. Japanese businesses were boycotted and defaced. The resistance toward Japanese citizens manifested into the public school systems (Cullinane, 2014). The San Francisco school board mandated and organized for all Japanese children to be enrolled into segregated schools. Reports of the embroilment between Japan and the United States began speculation of a war between the two countries.

Subsequently, racial tensions continued to build prompting action from the U.S. government. President Theodore Roosevelt created the Gentlemen's Agreement in 1907. The Gentlemen's Agreement was a congenial resolution between Japan and the United States. If the Japanese government agreed to restrict the number of passports for Japanese immigrants, the US government would agree to end the segregation of Japanese

students in California's schools, and the legislation on the west coast would also facilitate the simplification of unfair laws created against Japanese immigrants (Cullinane, 2014).

Despite the federal government intervening to suppress racial tension toward Asian cultural groups, in 1913 the Alien Land Law was created to deny any immigrant, who was ineligible for U.S. citizenship, from owning or obtaining land (Ferguson, 1947). This law was specifically designed to discriminate against Japanese and Chinese immigrants; they were the only groups of immigrants prohibited from becoming US citizens (Kao, et al., 2013). Additionally, in 1917 to perpetuate the discrimination of Asian people, the United States Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1917, also known as the Asiatic Barred Zone Act (Grigorenko, 2013). The Immigration Act of 1917 prohibited the immigration of people arriving from Asian countries located "south of the twentieth parallel latitude north, west of the one hundred and sixtieth meridian of longitude, or who are natives of any country, province, or dependency situate on the Continent of Asia" (Immigration Act of 1917). Much like the laws in the 1800s prohibiting undesirable immigrants from entering the United States, the Immigration Act of 1917 banned people entering the United States including; prostitutes, beggars, "idiots", "imbeciles", anyone found of not sane mind, alcoholics, any person with a contagious disease, tuberculosis, prostitutes, or any person who has been convicted of a crime or is currently in the penal system in their native country (Immigration Act of 1917). Moreover, immigrants from Asian countries were also placed into the same category as the "undesirables".

Subsequently, in 1921 the National Origin Act established immigration quotas based on country of birth. The act was revised in 1924 to include more restrictive

measures favoring immigrants from Western and Northern-European countries (Grigorenko, 2013). The National Origin Act of 1924 became the blueprint for immigration reform today in the United States. Immigrants were now placed into two different categories “permanent immigrants” and “temporary visitors” (Grigorenko, 2013). With the new immigration regulations, World War II, and The Great Depression immigration to the United States virtually came to a standstill. New reforms began with immigration after World War II and the onset of the Cold War. The United States wanted to be viewed as a country without racial bias, proving they were the true free and open country. Accordingly in 1952 the McCarran-Walter Act was passed shaping new immigration reform (Grigorenko, 2013). No longer would immigration be based on racial bias. Immigrants with families already established in the United States or would be sponsored by a business for employment purposes would be admitted first. In 1965 the immigration quota was eliminated from the Hart-Cellar Immigration Act. Finally, in 1980 the Refugee Act fulfilled the requirements for the United States to be compliant with the United Nations Refugee Law of 1951 (Grigorenko, 2013). In spite of the many racial and political issues with immigration one constant remained, the best way to assimilate newcomers was through education.

Immigration Today

Today immigration continues to be a prominent fixture in American society. However, after so many decades of welcoming immigrants into the United States, our understanding of the reality of what many immigrants endure entering the United States seems lacking. Furthermore, when immigrant children enter the school systems teachers

may not feel as prepared to differentiate and accommodate ELL students into the mainstream classroom.

The percentage of English language learners entering into the United States school system increases each year creating a need for mainstream teachers to adjust teaching techniques and curriculum to ensure equitable education for all students (Soltero, 2011). Educators and school administrators are presented daily with pressure to close the achievement gap, ensure a safe learning environment by blocking outside influences, and the ever-present testing systems to measure student achievement. Heighten the everyday stressors with state and federal educational mandates stating all students meet requirements on standardized testing including English language learners and differentiating curriculum to meet all students' needs becomes a daunting task.

In 2013 immigrants numbered 13% of the 316 million residents living in the United States (Zong & Batalova, 2015). Moreover, when considering U.S. born children, either first or second generation, of immigrant parents the number climbs to approximately 80 million people or 25 percent of the U.S. population (Zong & Batalova, 2015). Projections have estimated by 2040 one in three children will grow up in an immigrant household in the United States (Suarez-Orozco, Suarez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). The U.S. Census Bureau estimated by 2024 roughly half of 15 through 19 year olds in the United States would be from minority groups (Malone, Baluja, Costanzo, & Davis, 2003). With the current trends of first and second generation immigrant children becoming the fastest growing population, it is critical for educators, school districts, and higher educational institutes to analyze the changing student population and the issues that will arise for educators (Nieto, 2000).

Dating back to the earliest onset of immigration to the United States immigrants have been classified into different socio-economic, educational, physical and psychological health categories. Immigrants with previous formal education in their native country and greater financial resources have a tendency to assimilate easier and gain higher social status (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Legal immigrant status, race, and level of fluency in the English language also have a tremendous impact on the assimilation of the immigrant parents and their children (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). With greater resources, newly arrived immigrant families, have a larger circumference when choosing where to live, schools to attend, and higher salary employment to attain.

On the other end of the classification spectrum, some immigrants may arrive in the United States as “asylum seekers” or “refugees” (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). For most immigrants they are creating a pathway to a new life with the hopes of helping additional family members make the journey to the United States in the future. Some immigrants also see the migration to the United States as a way to establish their family in a better economy, but intend on returning to their native country later. Asylum seekers or refugees are seeking security and protection in the United States to escape from extreme fear of oppression or torture (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Not all asylum seekers will gain official protection and the right to stay in the United States. Many asylum seekers are eventually sent back to their home country or to a third country to start the process of seeking asylum again (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Some asylum seekers decide to give up on the process and will flee the immigration detention camps and enter the United States illegally.

An immigrant and an asylum seeker may have two very different paths migrating to the United States (Chishti, Hipsman, & Bui, 2014). Often times immigrants have carefully planned their move to the United States, psychologically, financially, and perhaps educational attainment have been part of the process in migrating. Asylum seekers involuntarily leave behind their native country without the ability to properly prepare for the move. Asylum seekers are leaving their country quickly to protect themselves and their families from harm or death (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Often children of asylum seekers have witnessed the horrific crimes they are escaping. This can have great implications on the psychological strain an asylee student may harbor when entering the United States school system (Chishti, et al., 2014).

Another group of immigrants and their children, who may have a direct correlation on education, are migrant immigrants. Migrant immigrants move frequently while following employment opportunities. Often migrant immigrants are pursuing seasonal employment. The children of seasonal migrant immigrants who move with their parents face frequent disruptions in their schooling and have difficulty filling in academic gaps from one school district to the next. Not all migrant immigrants follow the seasonal cycle and are able to remain stationary in an urban area, providing educational stability for their children (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Migrant students and families may not have access to educational and community support or are unaware of supports, placing the students at a higher risk for academic failure (Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2008).

In addition to seasonal and stationary migrant immigrants, binational immigrants move between the United States and their native country for employment. Children of

binationals often have interruptions in their schooling and never become fully fluent in their native or second languages (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Many students of binational parents leave the United States around the holidays and return several weeks after the holiday break, culminating in a large loss of class and schoolwork time. However, the amount of binationals traveling between the United States and their home country is much smaller than migrant immigrants, asylum seekers, and immigrants. Therefore, data to make a strong determination regarding children of binationals educational status is lacking (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001).

Finally, undocumented immigrants were recorded at 11.3 million in 2014. This makes up roughly 3.5% of the United States population (Krogstad & Passel, 2015). Kindergarten through 12th grade students with at least one undocumented parent in 2012 comprised 7% of the student population (Krogstad & Passel, 2015). The majority of children born to immigrant parents are however, documented in the United States. Approximately 10 to 15% of foreign-born children, living in the United States, are undocumented (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Some of the undocumented children are crossing the border into the United States with their parents. Yet, the majority of the undocumented children are entering the United States as unaccompanied minors. Each year thousand of unaccompanied minors immigrant and refugee children enter into the United States (Chishti, et al., 2014). Many of the children are trying to reconnect with family members who have established a living in the United States. Other children are fleeing persecution, gang and drug trafficking violence, political strife, sexual abuse, economic conditions, or war torn areas with the hope of finding employment and safety in the United States (Rosenblum & Ball, 2015). Ultimately the

unaccompanied minor hopes to establish a safe working and living environment and send money back to family members in their native country.

For the unaccompanied minor, they have traveled alone with little money and little to no understanding of the English language. The psychological implications of the journey, the unaccompanied minor has faced, are only one piece of the equation when they enter the United States (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). A few of the children will arrive in the United States and make their way into migrant labor communities. Yet, many of the children are taken into custody by the Immigration and Naturalization Service with hopes of gaining entrance into the United States and are not returned to their native country (INS) (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001).

Unaccompanied minors apprehended by INS will begin the lengthy process of either moving in with a family member already established in the United States or spend time in a detention center before finding out their fate of being deported to their native country or entering the United States as an asylee.

As undocumented children journey to the United States border the crossing is stressful and frequently traumatic. Unaccompanied minors entering the United States between 2011 and 2014 increased from 15,949 to 68,551 (Rosenblum & Ball, 2015). Furthermore, undocumented women with young children making the journey saw an even greater rise in apprehension at the border between 2011 and 2014 from 14,855 to 68,445 people (Rosenblum, 2015). The women and children faced many difficult safety, financial, and health issues. Women and children before being detained may experience, sexual assault, coercion, theft, and other modes of abuse creating strained psychological and physiological issues (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). For undocumented

women and children the journey to the United States is a very different migration process in comparison to documented immigrants.

Education Reforms and Policies

Many immigrants believe in order to achieve the American dream they must start with a solid education in the United States (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Classroom teachers must ensure all students are receiving an equal education (Diaz-Rico, 2014). ELL students, who are not fully proficient in the English language, are required to receive additional differentiated instruction and curriculum to establish skills necessary to be proficient in the English language.

Looking back throughout history of immigration and education, immigrants had to fight an uphill battle in the beginning to pave the way for future immigrants in education. *Lau vs. Nichols* (1974) was a monumental court case instituting fair and equal education for all students. Chinese students and their parents filed a discrimination suit against the San Francisco School Board stating, Chinese students were not given access to an equal education based on English language deficiency due to having a native language other than English (Kao et al., 2013). During this time the curriculum and instruction was not differentiated to implement Basic English language and reading fundamentals to students who spoke another language other than English.

The Chinese students concluded the San Francisco School District discriminated against students who were not native English speaking students and were not able to achieve the same academic status as their English-speaking peers. The United States Supreme Court decided the Chinese students educational rights were violated based on the 1964 Civil Rights Act, all students should have access to a fair and equitable

education regardless of their native language being different than English (Kao et al., 2013). As a result, educational institutions, receiving federal funding, cannot discriminate against any person and any person may equally participate in all educational activities (1964 Civil Rights Act). Furthermore the Equal Educational Opportunities Act established further guidelines to safeguard equal education needed to “...take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by students in an instructional program” (Equal Educational Opportunities Act, 1974).

Furthermore, other notable legal cases were decided upon to protect equal educational opportunities for ELL students. *Castaneda v. Pickard* (1981) argued for bilingual education to serve ELL students. Despite, the court deciding against Castaneda, a three-pronged test was created to determine if a district is violating the rights of limited English students. *Plyer v. Doe* (1982) was fought all the way to the United States Supreme Court. Individual states and school districts restricted funding for schools educating undocumented immigrant children. Moreover, some districts wanted to charge undocumented immigrant children \$1,000 tuition to attend public schools.

State and federal government agencies have become more rooted in school reform measures. Observing and researching the changing student demographics in the United States education system is imperative to cultivating a society of high academic achievement. The United States must safeguard education to remain on top of the world markets (Grigorenko, 2013). How can the United States government take into consideration the different social norms, education levels, and skill sets of newly arrived immigrants to ensure jobs are created, education reforms continue to focus on high academic achievement for all learners, and assimilation into US cultural norms and

expectations are fluid? All of these issues can begin to be addressed through proper education for all newly arrived immigrants and children of immigrants born in the United States (Grigorenko, 2013).

State legislation conducts mandated testing of all students to measure academic success. Students with limited English proficiency are also required to take state assessments. When ELL students enroll in the school district they are asked to fill out a Home Language Survey specifying the student's native language and what language is communicated in the home. The Home Language Survey is used as a screening process to determine if the student would require further testing to identify the need for additional classes in reading, writing, speaking, and listening for English proficiency. ELL students in grades three through eight and eleventh grade are required to take all of the state mandated tests.

The only opportunity for an ELL student to opt out of a state mandated test, in the state of Nebraska, is during their first year in the United States. The newly arrived ELL student is exempt from taking the state mandated reading test for their first year (Nebraska Department of Education, 2015). Despite exemption for one year from the reading test, they are required to take math, science for third through eighth and in addition writing for fourth and eleventh grades. ELL students are given accommodations, created and approved by the state, when taking state standardized exams (Nebraska Department of Education, 2015). In the spring all ELL students are required to take a state standardized English proficiency exam in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

As ELL students are working to acquire English proficiency they are also learning content area vocabulary and concepts. Through the language acquisition process, classroom teachers must also ensure they are differentiating instruction to provide an equitable education. Differentiating instruction as well as teaching the native English speaking students compulsory curriculum, increases stress for both the students and teachers. Additionally, if teachers have not been provided proper professional development on best practices for differentiating curriculum to accommodate ELL students' learning, teacher efficacy falters.

Federal mandates, through the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001-2002 and under Title III, ELL students will show consistent growth with accountability measures intended to close the achievement gap (NCLB, 2002). The No Child Left Behind Act disaggregates students into subgroups based on race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status who are eligible for the free or reduced lunch program, special education students, students served in migrant programs, and English Language Learners (Nebraska Department of Education, 2015).

In Nebraska when a subgroup contains 30 or more participants, the scores are calculated and entered into the Federal system for AYP reporting purposes. In accordance with NCLB an ELL student is defined as a person with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), whose first or home language is other than English, and who has difficulties with reading, writing, speaking, or listening in English which may constitute a deficiency when meeting the state's proficiency level on state achievement assessments. Students in the LEP subgroup also may have difficulty with successfully achieving and comprehending grade level content, when English is the language being used in

classroom instruction (Nebraska Department of Education, 2015). Using the above guidelines the state determines where students will fall under the subgroup for English Language Learners.

If a subgroup in a school does not meet AYP requirements, the school nor the district pass AYP. If a school fails to meet AYP requirements two years in a row, punitive sanctions may be placed on the school and district to draft areas, which need improvement. The schools, which have been placed on the “Not Met” lists for AYP, must then show the following year where they have made improvements in unsatisfactory areas. Often times it is difficult for districts to gain a clear picture of the growth with ELL students due to high mobility rates among ELL students and families. High student mobility rates have been connected with lower student achievement (Rumberger, 2003). Students when faced with high mobility not only have a negative impact on their academic achievement, but also on social emotional development with social disruptions (Fong, Soung, & Huang, 2010). Intradistrict and interdistrict transfers not only can have adverse effects on the ELL student both academically and emotionally, but school districts will have a hard time accurately assessing the ELL students’ academic achievement. High ELL student mobility rates will also have an impact on teacher efficacy and differentiation of curriculum. When a new student enters the classroom the teacher must assess the ELL student to gain a greater understanding of the student’s education level and what gaps may need to be filled to ensure an equal education for all learners. Moreover, the classroom teacher will have to start at the very beginning of establishing a positive relationship with the newly entered ELL student, regardless if the student enters in the beginning, middle, or end of the school year.

Teaching English Language Learners

Teaching professionals have the tremendous duty of ensuring a rigorous and equitable education for all students, preparing them with skills to become productive members of the larger society (Sugarman, 2015). Educational professionals must also properly differentiate instruction and curriculum to provide teaching, which enables all students with different academic and cognitive levels to achieve academic success. Additionally, educators must understand the different levels of language acquisition along with internal and external factors affecting the development of a second language (Soltero, 2011). During the initial surges of immigrants entering the United States, jobs in the manufacturing and agricultural industries were plentiful. With the expansion of technology performing many of the manufacturing jobs once occupied by human labor, industries are now requiring more formal education (Good, et al., 2003).

Teacher Attitudes Reflect on Student Achievement

Students who are highly engaged and feel supported by their classroom teacher will show greater gains in student achievement (Klem, & Connell, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Stronge, Ward, & Grant, 2011). Students must feel connected to other students, their teachers, and their school in order to raise academic achievement. In addition to building positive relationships, highly effective teachers are prepared with carefully planned lessons, materials are relevant and appropriate for the lessons, and students are re-taught curriculum when they may have struggled (Good, Grumley, & Roy, 2003). Understanding how a teacher's attitude can play a key role on student achievement is of utmost importance when also researching teacher efficacy and attitudes toward mainstream ELL students.

Despite evidence of teachers building positive relationships with students and the effect on student achievement, several different studies have focused on teacher attitudes, toward mainstreamed ELL students. Many of the responses from teachers were perceived as negative or inhospitable (Reeves, 2010). ELL students entering the United States in the high school years have also felt more pressure to achieve academic success in less than accommodating environments. ELL students are trying to learn a new language, understand content area curriculum, assimilate and socialize with their peers, learn new cultural norms, and find a suitable career in a postindustrial economy (Harklau, 2000). The classroom teacher plays a key role in the success or failure of an ELL student through teacher/student relationships.

Teacher Self-efficacy and Cultural Proficiency

Self-efficacy is the belief and expectation a teacher will set to accomplish a task. Additionally, the beliefs a teacher may have about students or certain groups of students can also affect expectations and achievement outcomes (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). Teacher self-efficacy is important to understand and analyze when researching teachers' attitudes and beliefs toward ELL students in mainstream classes. Furthermore, understanding administrator efficacy will also drive the culture and climate in a building when deciding what professional development would be appropriate to guarantee high student achievement.

Teacher self-efficacy is often examined as a thought process or belief a teacher conceptualizes, how they will confront students from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. If a teacher possesses strong self-efficacy and cultural proficiency, the teacher often applies new teaching methods, finds ways to differentiate curriculum,

and will research different processes to promote the education of ELL students in the mainstream classroom (Woolfolk-Hoy, & Davis, 2006). Additionally, understanding how teacher self-efficacy can change during the course of a teacher's tenure could have an impact on properly conducting professional development, capitalizing on teachers' strengths.

Self-efficacy can shift during different moments in a teacher's career. A novice teacher may not have as strong self-efficacy as a veteran teacher. Self-efficacy can be strengthened through increased experience and different professional development opportunities (Woolfolk-Hoy, Hoy, & Kurz, 2008). However, teacher self-efficacy can also change for veteran teachers, over the course of years, with changes in student populations. When students from different cultural or first language backgrounds enter mainstream classrooms, teachers may not feel as prepared to properly teach the students. For this reason, it is imperative to ensure teachers and administrators are receiving proper professional development including cultural proficiency.

Instructional quality may also be affected due to teacher self-efficacy. Teachers with high self-efficacy have the tendency to set high expectations, seek more ambitious goals, continue with professional development and higher education, and are unafraid to remain persistent during difficult times (Woolfolk-Hoy & Davis, 2006). Teachers with high self-efficacy may choose to pursue additional professional development opportunities apart from district mandated professional development days. Therefore, teachers with high self-efficacy will see a need to understand how to differentiate instruction and cultural proficiency to provide proper teaching techniques for ELL students in mainstream classrooms.

Understanding the cultural and socio-economic backgrounds of the students is imperative to establishing proper expectations for all students to provide equal educational opportunities and high student achievement. A teacher with low self-efficacy may often demonstrate low competencies or will over compensate to try and cover deficiencies. A vital component of working with mainstream ELL students is to understand different cultural norms. If a teacher is exhibiting low self-efficacy, a mainstream ELL student's cultural norms and learning styles may become overlooked.

Cultural proficiency and relationship building for mainstream ELL students is essential to promote student achievement. Understanding cultural norms, the parents' level of English proficiency, educational grade completion, and current working conditions can all affect how a teacher will communicate with parents of mainstream ELL students. The parents of the ELL student may have had limited access to education in their native country. Likewise, when they enter the United States they would like to contribute to their child's education, but may not feel comfortable or are unable communicating with the teaching staff. Some immigrant parents may also be working two or three jobs to provide for their family and are unable to invest the amount of time into their child's education that some teachers seek (Suarez-Orozco, et al., 2008). Professional development and training on cultural proficiency is fundamental to broaden and strengthen mindsets of teachers and administrators.

School administrators and classroom teachers need to understand cultural proficiency and ELL language acquisition to provide academic programs that are inclusive to all learners including mainstream ELL students (Soltero, 2011). When ELL students are segregated from native English speaking students the learning climate for the

ELL student becomes one of disconnect and creates an environment of ELL students feeling inferior to their native English speaking peers (Soltero, 2011). Therefore, it is crucial schools and school districts provide a supportive learning environment with inclusion for ELL students.

Teachers and administrators, who are properly trained in understanding cultural proficiency, language acquisition, differentiating curriculum and instruction, and can bridge the home to school gap, are able to provide a comprehensive and culturally responsible education for mainstream ELL students. Schools with teachers, who have strong efficacy when working with mainstream ELL students, are able to provide a rigorous and inclusive education, preparing mainstream ELL students for careers and college (Soltero, 2011). Teachers, who have not had the opportunity to receive adequate professional development to address the needs of ELL students, how to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction, cultural proficiency, and understanding language acquisition have the responsibility of collaborative planning and teaching with the ELL resource teacher (Soltero, 2011). Therefore, it is important for school and district administrators to also understand the need for mainstream and ELL resource teachers to collaborate and work together. Administrators can be advocates for mainstream ELL students by scheduling common plan time, develop schedules to arrange lunch and specials times where ELL students will be able to interact with their native English speaking peers, address flexible scheduling to allow teachers, if needed, additional time to work on language building and language arts skills, and provide research and professional development for all staff members to include cultural proficiency (Soltero, 2011). Additionally when non-native English speaking students are isolated from native

English speaking students, the schools are creating “linguistic isolation” for students who’s future depends on language acquisition in English (Gifford & Valdes, 2006).

Having a strong knowledge of different cultural norms will also implement a safe and secure learning environment for mainstream ELL students. Many ELL students may come into schools in the United States with a wealth of knowledge from their country. Teachers understanding of different cultural norms can have a tremendous impact on the achievement of ELL students (Marzano, 2004).

Summary

A recent census on the immigration population of the United States was conducted in 2017. Of the 43.3 million immigrants living in the United States, the people come from all different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. The 43 million immigrants are comprised of naturalized citizens, permanent residents, temporary residents, and unauthorized immigrants. When looking at the population of the United States as a whole, these 43 million immigrants make up 13.5% of the United States population (Migration Policy Institute, 2017). Accordingly it is indispensable for all educators, pre-service and veteran, to understand language acquisition, cultural proficiency, best practices, differentiating curriculum and instruction, and strengthening teacher efficacy to provide a comprehensive and rigorous education for mainstream ELL students.

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes, efficacy, and cultural proficiency of K-12 grade teachers and administrators with mainstream ELL students in an urban Midwestern school district with a 2% ELL population. Student achievement is affected positively when teachers and administrators hold students to high academic standards, are prepared with engaging curriculum, staff members create positive and professional relationships with all stakeholders, and teachers and administrators collaborate and participate in meaningful professional development.

Schools with charismatic and positive leaders, teachers with strong teaching efficacy and cultural proficiency, a safe and comfortable learning environment, and an educational staff setting high academic standards, who believe all students can achieve, create a formidable learning environment for all learners including newly arrived immigrant children (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Teacher efficacy, attitudes, and cultural proficiency toward students are essential to ensure academic success and closing the achievement gap.

Research Design

A survey was used to theorize teacher and administrator attitudes, beliefs, and cultural proficiency when working with mainstream ELL students. The survey took a sample of the teacher and administrator population in an urban Midwestern school with a 2% ELL population to assess the attitudes and behavior of a larger population (Creswell, 2013).

Answers to the following questions were analyzed through a survey design. Participants answered questions based on teacher efficacy, years in the profession, if they currently taught on the elementary or secondary level, and participants' competency concerning cultural proficiency while teaching ELL students in mainstream classrooms.

This quantitative study of Kindergarten through Twelfth grade teachers and administrators, in an urban Midwestern school district with a population of 2% ELL students, regarding the attitudes, cultural proficiency, and efficacy of educators while working with mainstream ELL students has been designed to address the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of K-12 grade teachers and administrators concerning differentiation of instruction, inclusion of ELL students, cultural proficiency, and academic expectations?
2. Do teachers feel adequately prepared to teach diverse learners in an inclusion setting? Is there a relationship between numbers of years taught and teacher cultural proficiency when teaching ELL students? How strong do teachers feel they understand cultural proficiency?
3. Do teachers feel they have received adequate training to differentiate instruction and curriculum for inclusion ELL students?
4. Do teachers who have had experience teaching ELL students, feel better prepared to differentiate instruction and curriculum? Do they have higher academic expectations for ELL students than a teacher who has had little to no experience working with ELL students in the mainstream classroom?

5. Is there a relationship between years taught and teacher attitudes when setting expectation toward inclusion students regarding; student achievement, differentiation of instruction, and providing additional support for inclusion ELL students?
6. Have teachers gained a greater efficacy for working with mainstream ELL students based on how much cultural proficiency professional development they have received?
7. Do administrators and teachers feel they have had professional development training to adequately work with mainstream ELL students? Do administrators and teachers feel they should receive more or less training when preparing to teach ELL students?
8. Is there a correlation between the amount of cultural proficiency training teachers and administrators have received and the attitudes of teachers toward mainstream ELL students?
9. Is there a correlation between the amount of teacher efficacy when differentiating instruction and how much professional development training teachers have received?
10. What do teachers and administrators feel are the greatest assets and concerns when working with ELL students in the mainstream classrooms (qualitative question discussed in chapter 5)?

Participants

In this study, the population included school administrators and classroom teachers, who are employed in an urban, Midwestern school district, with a 2%

population of ELL students Kindergarten through Twelfth grades. There are two high schools, three middle schools, and fifteen elementary schools. In order to safeguard the study and gain access to as many respondents as possible all teachers and administrators who work with mainstream ELL students was conducted. An attitudinal measure survey to quantify teacher and administrators' attitudes, perceptions, and cultural proficiency toward ELL students in the mainstream classroom in grades Kindergarten through Twelfth grade were invited to participate. However, due to the low ELL population in the district not all teachers invited may have had contact with an ELL in a mainstream setting. Additional questions were posed for participants who have not worked with ELL students during their career.

Teacher and Administrator Recruitment

To comply with the district's mandates regarding data collection for research purposes the district Superintendent and research department were contacted to ensure guidelines and district policies were properly being enforced when conducting the survey before, during, and after the research. Teachers and administrators with limited or no instruction time with an ELL student will also have the opportunity to voice their beliefs and dispositions, furthering the research into improving instruction and professional development for ELL students in mainstream classrooms.

Before recruiting participants a conference was held with the district superintendent, assistant superintendent, and the director of the district research department to safeguard procedures for conducting research in the school district. After obtaining permission from the superintendent, assistant superintendent, and director of research, an email letter was sent to all participants explaining the survey being

conducted. A research proposal was created and given to the superintendent and assistant superintendent, per their request (Appendix A).

All teachers and administrators currently working in a Kindergarten through Twelfth grade classroom or building were invited to participate. The survey (Appendix B) was distributed to two high schools, three middle schools, and fifteen elementary buildings in the suburban Midwestern school district during the 2016-2017 academic year. Teacher and administrator participation was voluntary and anonymous. The survey was conducted through a website link and was emailed to all 676 fulltime teacher and administrators in the district. Two hundred sixty-seven survey responses were returned and six survey responses were incomplete for a total of two hundred and sixty-one completed surveys.

Survey Instrument

A survey was created and utilized to ascertain the attitudes, efficacy, and cultural proficiency of Kindergarten through Twelfth grade teachers and administrators who have mainstream ELL students in their classrooms and buildings (Appendix B). A survey organized by Reeves (2002) was researched and adapted for use with this study. Reeves survey explored attitudes of secondary teachers working with ELL students in mainstream content area courses. A letter contacting Dr. Reeves, requested permission to change the survey to correspond to the research conducted in the present study, and an approval letter was obtained. (Appendix C).

Section A of the survey covered three questions to ascertain if the participant worked at the elementary or secondary level, if they have or have not taught ELL students, if they are a building administrator with or without ELL students, and the name

of the building they are assigned. The purpose behind obtaining information on which building the teacher or administrator is assigned was exclusively to review if the answers from the teacher or administrator were different based on the percentage of ELL students present in mainstream classes.

Section B of the survey embodied 23 questions on a Likert Scale requesting the participant to answer the questions with their opinion based on *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *agree*, or *strongly agree*. The questions in Section B focused on cultural proficiency, self-efficacy, and dispositions regarding ELL students in mainstream classrooms.

In Section C participants were given open ended and drop-down ordinal questions. The open-ended questions allowed participants to additionally respond with more detail about their attitudes, self-efficacy, and cultural proficiency when working with mainstream ELL students. Additional drop-down questions in Section C included how many years the participant has been in education, have they received professional development regarding ELL mainstream students, highest level of professional education, and if English is their native language. The end of the section provided an area for additional comments.

Data Collection

Before data collection application, and approval from the International Review Board was obtained (Appendix D). Written permission from the school district to administer the survey to teachers and administrators was also attained. An introduction letter was sent to all teachers and administrators explaining the purpose of the research study and survey (Appendix E). The survey electronic link was emailed out to all

participants Kindergarten through Twelfth grades in all district school buildings. To secure an appropriate number of returned surveys, the school district superintendent sent out an email with the survey link to all teachers and administrators.

Data Analysis

Survey Monkey was utilized, with a web link, to administer the survey. The data was collected from *Survey Monkey* and downloaded into an Excel Spreadsheet with corresponding numbers for the Likert Scale. *Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Agree=3, Strongly Agree=4, Male=1, Female=2, Elementary=1, Secondary=2, Teacher=1, and Administrator=2*, determined the key for the Excel Spreadsheet before usage in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Of the 676 fulltime teachers and administrators, 267 participant responses were returned. 6 of the surveys were not completed and were discarded, ending with a total of 261 completed surveys.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data from the survey. Looking at differences between elementary and secondary teachers and administrators' attitudes, self-efficacy, and cultural proficiency when engaging mainstream ELL students. Descriptive statistics demonstrated overall trends in the survey data through central tendency and variability (Creswell, 2012). Inferential statistics through categorical and parametric *t*-tests provided the mean between the different groups, male versus female, elementary versus secondary, and years of professional service. Pearson Correlation tests were also provided to determine if there were any correlations between independent subjects.

Research Expectations and Hypothesis

Teachers and administrators are facing ever-changing student demographics. Teachers in content area classrooms must adjust curriculum, teaching techniques, and cultural proficiency to provide equal educational learning opportunities for all students. Are teachers and administrators properly prepared to educate students with a native language other than English? Have teachers and administrators received sufficient professional development providing strategies and methods to successfully support ELL students in mainstream classes? (Diaz-Rico, 2014). ELL students are entering public school systems with differing education levels in their native language. Are teachers and administrators prepared to understand language acquisition, social norms, and cues in the students' native country, and different learning styles based upon prior education in their native country? Furthermore, do teachers and administrators understand the difference between students' language acquisition when working with ELL students coming into schools as immigrants versus students who were born in the United States but have had little exposure to English before attending school for the first time?

Mainstream ELL students who are taught by teachers with high self-efficacy, understanding of cultural proficiency, and language acquisition can be held to the same high standards as their native English speaking peers. The survey results can provide a more a thorough understanding of teacher and administrator self-efficacy, understanding language acquisition, and cultural proficiency in a school district with a 2% ELL population. In addition, the results provided comprehensive information to administer feedback and implement professional development to ensure an equitable education for all learners.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

Analyzing the data from the survey provided answers to the following research questions. The questions posed represented the need to understand teacher and administrators' cultural proficiency, self-efficacy, attitudes, and understanding language acquisition of ELL students in mainstream classrooms. The questions are as follows:

1. Is there a significant difference in attitudes of male or female teachers toward mainstream ELL students?
2. Is there a significant difference in attitudes toward mainstream ELL students between elementary and secondary educators?
3. Do years of experience provide stronger efficacy for educators to differentiate curriculum and create instructional strategies to support ELL students in mainstream classrooms?
4. Are there differences between elementary and secondary educators expectations of language acquisition and the level of work mainstream ELL students are able to complete comparable to their native English speaking peers?
5. Are there differences between elementary and secondary educators' attitudes toward mainstream ELL students generating a positive classroom atmosphere and having a positive impact on native English speakers in the classroom?
6. Do teachers feel they receive sufficient support from the district administrators? Do they feel they receive sufficient support from their building administrators when working with mainstream ELL students? Is there a

difference in perceived level of support between elementary and secondary educators?

7. Is there a correlation between how much language acquisition and cultural proficiency professional development a teacher has received and their attitude toward mainstream ELL students?

8. Do teachers feel they have received sufficient professional development to assist with working effectively and properly differentiating curriculum for mainstream ELL students?

9. Do teachers feel they have sufficient time to modify curriculum and differentiate assignments for mainstream ELL students in content area classes?

10. What are the additional feelings of elementary and secondary teachers regarding mainstream ELL students?

Demographics

Kindergarten through twelfth grade teachers and administrators were invited to participate in the survey. The teachers and administrators surveyed work in an urban Midwestern school district with a 2% ELL population. Six hundred seventy-six fulltime teacher and administrators were given the survey. Two hundred sixty-seven participants returned the survey. However, due to incomplete surveys the number of completed surveys used was $n = 218$. Fifty-six percent ($n = 122$) of respondents were from the elementary schools, 17.4% ($n = 38$) from the middle schools, and 26.6% ($n = 58$) from the high schools.

There were 23.9% ($n = 52$) of respondents were elementary teachers currently teaching ELL students in mainstream classrooms, 22.5% ($n = 49$) currently teach

mainstream ELL students at the secondary level, 41.7% ($n = 91$) educators that do not currently teach mainstream ELL students, but have taught mainstream ELL students in their career, 6% ($n = 13$) have never taught mainstream ELL students, and 6% ($n = 13$) of respondents are building administrators with mainstream ELL students in their building. There was a large difference between the participant representation between male and females, 17.1% ($n = 35$) of male participants and 82.9% ($n = 170$) of female participants completed and returned the survey. Fewer respondents highest degree earned was a Bachelor's degree (18.8%, $n = 39$), while more than half had attained a Master's degree (76.9%, $n = 160$). The smallest number of respondents had completed an Education Specialist / six year degree (2.9%, $n = 6$), and only three respondents (1.4%, $n = 3$) had earned a Doctoral degree.

Analysis of Research Questions

Overarching Question 1:

Is there a significant difference in attitudes of male or female teachers toward mainstream ELL students? The research question explored if gender had a significant effect when including ELL students into the mainstream classes. A comparison of means from the 205 participants answering (Questions 4, 5, & 6) measured teacher attitudes toward ELL students in mainstream classrooms with a mean score of 2.43 ($SD=1.06$) for males and 2.69 ($SD=.849$) for females. There was not a significant difference between male and females when measuring attitudes of teachers working with mainstream ELL students in Table 1.1 using an Independent T-test.

Sub Question 1A: Are there significant differences between elementary and secondary teachers attitudes toward mainstream ELL students?

Using an Independent *t*-test, there was no significant difference between Elementary ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 1.01$) and Secondary teachers' ($M = 2.50$, $SD = 1.09$), attitudes when working with mainstream ELL students. $t(183) = .448$, $d = 0.27$, $p = .252$. Data is displayed in Table 1.2.

Overarching Question 2:

Do teachers feel adequately prepared to work with mainstream ELL students in an inclusion setting? Do teachers feel they have been given sufficient professional development to understand how to differentiate curriculum and instruction, language acquisition, and cultural proficiency?

Sub Question 2A: Do years of experience facilitate stronger efficacy and understanding to differentiate curriculum and instructional strategies for mainstream ELL students? An ANOVA was conducted to explore if years of teaching experience facilitates a stronger teacher efficacy and understanding when differentiating curriculum and instructional strategies for mainstream ELL students

There was a significant difference in cultural proficiency between years 0-10 ($M = 2.92$, $SD = .388$), 11-15 years of teaching experience ($M = 2.92$, $SD = .444$) and 16-30 years of teaching experience ($M = 3.16$, $SD = .428$), between groups ($SS = .30$, $df = 2$, $MS = .154$, $F = 2.145$, and a *p* value of .120). Veteran teachers with 16 to 30 years of experience were significantly higher than the other two groups when answering questions about cultural proficiency. Data is displayed in Table 2.1.

Sub Question 2B: Is there a difference in teacher efficacy between elementary and secondary teachers when differentiating curriculum for mainstream ELL students?

Using an Independent *t*-test there was not a significant difference between elementary and secondary teachers' efficacy when differentiating curriculum for mainstream ELL students. Elementary ($M = 2.66$, $SD = .234$), Secondary ($M = 2.65$, $SD = .314$). $t(188) = .146$, $d = 0.03$, $p = 0.88$. Data is displayed in Table 2.2.

Sub Question 2C: Do teachers feel they receive an adequate amount of time to differentiate curriculum for mainstream ELL students? Elementary ($M = 2.82$, $SD = .657$), Secondary ($M = 3.01$, $SD = .771$). $t(-1.74)$, $d = 0.26$, $p = .748$. Using an Independent *t*-test there was no significant difference between Elementary and Secondary teachers beliefs of receiving adequate amount of time to differentiate curriculum for mainstream ELL students. Data is displayed in Table 2.3

Sub Question 2D: Is there a difference between elementary and secondary teachers' attitudes toward mainstream ELL students generating a positive classroom atmosphere and having a positive impact on native English speakers in the classroom? Elementary ($M = 3.39$, $SD = .578$), Secondary ($M = 3.07$, $SD = .685$). $t(3.45)$, $d = 0.50$, $p = .437$. Using an Independent *t*-test there was no significant difference between Elementary and Secondary teachers' attitudes toward mainstream ELL students generating a positive classroom atmosphere. Data is displayed in Table 2.4

Sub Question 2E: Is there a difference in teacher attitudes' toward ELLs' language acquisition and level of work completed compared to native English speakers in mainstream classrooms in the Elementary and Secondary levels? Elementary ($M = 2.50$, $SD = .204$), Secondary ($M = 2.47$, $SD = .255$). $t(.893)$, $d = .120$, $p = .108$. Conducting an Independent *t*-Test there was not a significant difference between Elementary and Secondary teachers' attitudes toward ELL language acquisition and the level of work

completed compared to native English speaking peers in mainstream classrooms. Data is displayed in Table 2.5

Sub Question 2F: Is there a difference between male and female educators' expectations toward language acquisition and the level of work mainstream ELL students are able to complete comparable to their native English speaking peers? Male ($M = 2.51$, $SD = .222$), Female ($M = 2.48$, $SD = .233$). $t(.816)$, $d = 0.131$, $p = .632$. There was not a significant difference between male and female educators' expectations toward language acquisition and the level of work mainstream ELL students are able to complete comparable to their native English speaking peers. Data is displayed in Table 2.6.

Sub Question 2G: Is there a difference between Elementary and Secondary teachers' expectations toward language acquisition and the level of work mainstream ELL students are able to complete comparable to their native English speaking peers? Elementary ($M = 2.87$, $SD = .372$), Secondary ($M = 2.94$, $SD = .339$). $t(-1.20)$, $d = 0.19$, $p = .403$. There was not a significant difference between Elementary and Secondary teachers' expectations regarding the level of work mainstream ELL students can complete compared to their native English-speaking peers. Data is displayed in Table 2.7

Overarching Question 3:

Are teachers given enough cultural proficiency training to understand language acquisition, learning styles, and cultural backgrounds to assist in teaching mainstream ELL students. Do teachers feel they receive sufficient support from district and building administration to assist mainstream ELL students?

Sub Question 3A: Do Elementary and Secondary teachers believe they are receiving sufficient assistance from district administrators when working with ELL

students in mainstream classrooms? Elementary ($M = 2.45$, $SD = .656$), Secondary ($M = 2.29$, $SD = .722$). $t(1.55)$, $d = 0.231$, $p = .539$. There was not a significant difference between Elementary and Secondary teachers' beliefs that they are receiving sufficient support from district administration when assisting with mainstream ELL students with outcomes distributed by administering an Independent t -Test. Data is displayed in Table 3.1

Sub Question 3B: Do Elementary and Secondary teachers believe they receive sufficient support from building administrators to assist in the education of mainstream ELL students?

Elementary ($M = 2.63$, $SD = .671$), Secondary ($M = 2.55$, $SD = .657$). $t = .859$, $d = 0.120$, $p = .684$. There was not a significant difference between elementary and secondary teachers beliefs that they receive sufficient support from building administrators when assisting with mainstream ELL students through administering and Independent t -Test. Data is displayed in Table 3.2.

Sub Question 3C: A Pearson Correlation was calculated to assess the relationship between teachers' understanding of cultural proficiency with mainstream ELL students and the amount of professional development received regarding cultural proficiency. There was little correlation between the two variables ($r = .112$, $n = 190$, $p = .123$). Data displayed in Table 3.3.

Sub Question 3D: A Pearson Correlation was calculated to assess the relationship between mainstream teachers' understanding of ELL students' language acquisition in correlation to the amount of professional development teachers received regarding ELL

in the mainstream classroom. There was little correlation between the two variables ($r = .015, n = 190, p = .837$). Data displayed in Table 3.4.

Sub Question 3E: A Pearson Correlation was computed between teachers' efficacy when differentiating curriculum for mainstream ELL students in regards to receiving professional development training. There was little correlation between the two variables ($r = -.015, n = 188, p = .842$). Data displayed in Table 3.5.

(Table 1.1) Attitudes toward Mainstream ELL students by Gender

Sources of Data	Male (<i>n</i> = 35)		Female (<i>n</i> = 170)		Effect Size	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
	2.43	(1.06)	2.69	(.849)	0.27	-1.53	.067

(Table 1.2) Attitudes toward Mainstream ELL students by Elementary or Secondary teachers

Sources of Data	Elementary (<i>n</i> = 122)		Secondary (<i>n</i> = 95)		Effect Size	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
	2.52	(1.01)	2.50	(1.09)	0.27	.448	.252

(Table 2.1) Years of Experience facilitate stronger efficacy and understanding to differentiate curriculum and Instructional Strategies for mainstream ELL students

Sources of Data	0-10 Years (<i>n</i> = 52)		11-15 Years (<i>n</i> = 64)		16-30 Years (<i>n</i> = 75)		<i>p</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	
	2.92	(.388)	2.92	(.444)	3.16	(.428)	.120
ANOVA							
Source of Variation	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>		
Between Groups	2.45	2	1.24	6.916	.001		
Within Groups	33.70	188	.179				
Total	13.80	190					

Note. To control for errors an F ratio and alpha level of .05 were applied to control Type 1 errors.

(Table 2.2) Elementary and Secondary teachers' efficacy when differentiating curriculum for mainstream ELL students

Sources of Data	Elementary (<i>n</i> = 107)		Secondary (<i>n</i> = 81)		Effect Size	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
	2.66	(.234)	2.65	(.314)	0.03	.146	0.88

(Table 2.3) Teachers' perceptions about receiving adequate amount of time to differentiate curriculum for mainstream ELL students

Sources of Data	Elementary (<i>n</i> = 105)		Secondary (<i>n</i> = 80)		Effect Size	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
	2.82	(.657)	3.01	(.771)	0.26	-1.74	.748

(Table 2.4) Difference between elementary and secondary teachers' attitudes toward mainstream ELL students generating a positive classroom atmosphere and having a positive impact on native English speakers in the classroom

Sources of Data	Elementary (<i>n</i> = 105)		Secondary (<i>n</i> = 80)		Effect Size	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
	3.39	(.578)	3.07	(.685)	0.50	3.45	.437

(Table 2.5) Teacher attitudes toward ELLs' language acquisition and level of work completed compared to native English speakers in mainstream classrooms

Sources of Data	Elementary (<i>n</i> = 107)		Secondary (<i>n</i> = 81)		Effect Size	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
	2.50	(.204)	2.47	(.255)	0.12	.893	.108

(Table 2.6) Male and Female educators' expectations toward language acquisition and the level of work mainstream ELL students are able to complete comparable to their native English speaking peers

Sources of Data	Male (<i>n</i> = 30)		Female (<i>n</i> = 157)		Effect Size	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
	2.51	(.222)	2.48	(.233)	0.131	.816	.632

(Table 2.7) Elementary and Secondary educators' expectations toward language acquisition and the level of work mainstream ELL students are able to complete comparable to their native English speaking peers

Sources of Data	Elementary (<i>n</i> = 107)		Secondary (<i>n</i> = 81)		Effect Size	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
	2.87	(.372)	2.94	(.339)	0.19	-1.20	.403

(Table 3.1) Elementary and Secondary teachers' beliefs of receiving sufficient support from District Administration when working with mainstream ELLs

Sources of Data	Elementary (<i>n</i> = 101)		Secondary (<i>n</i> = 78)		Effect Size	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
	2.45	(.656)	2.29	(.722)	0.231	1.55	.539

(Table 3.2) Elementary and Secondary teachers' beliefs in support from Building Administration with assistance toward mainstream ELLs

Sources of Data	Elementary (<i>n</i> = 102)		Secondary (<i>n</i> = 78)		Effect Size	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
	2.63	(.671)	2.55	(.657)	0.120	.859	.684

(Table 3.3) Correlation between mainstream teachers' understanding of cultural proficiency with the amount of Professional Development received regarding English language learners in the mainstream classroom

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Average_CulturalProficiency	3.0208	.43665	192
sufficient_PD_mainstreamELL	2.1632	.67433	190

Correlations

		Average_Cultural Proficiency	sufficient_PD_mainstream ELL
Average_CulturalProficiency	Pearson Correlation	1	.112
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.123
	N	192	190
Sufficient_PD_mainstreamELL	Pearson Correlation	.112	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.123	
	N	190	190

(Table 3.4) Correlation between mainstream teachers' understanding of ELL students' language acquisition with the amount of Professional Development received regarding English language learners in the mainstream classroom

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
sufficient_PD_mainstreamELL	2.1632	.67433	190
Expectations_Average	2.4840	.23058	192

Correlations

		sufficient_PD_mainstream ELL	Expectations_Average
sufficient_PD_mainstream ELL	Pearson Correlation	1	.015
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.837
	N	190	190
Expectations_Average	Pearson Correlation	.015	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.837	
	N	190	192

(Table 3.5) Correlation between teachers' efficacy for differentiating curriculum for mainstream ELLs after receiving Professional Development

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
sufficient_PD_mainstreamELL	2.1632	.67433	190
Modified_assignments_mainstream	3.0684	.54487	190

Correlations

		sufficient_PD_m ainstreamELL	Modified_assignments _mainstream
sufficient_PD_mainstream ELL	Pearson Correlation	1	-.015
	Sig. (2- tailed)		.842
	N	190	188
Modified_assignments mainstream	Pearson Correlation	-.015	1
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.842	
	N	188	190

Summary

Evaluating the survey data presented the majority of respondents agreed they would like to have more professional development with differentiating curriculum and instruction, cultural proficiency, and language acquisition of mainstream ELL students. The larger part of the respondents also felt they needed more time to differentiate curriculum and instruction, would like to have more support from both district and building administration, and want to strengthen their teacher efficacy when working with mainstream ELL students.

Through professional development, teachers will gain a greater understanding that one size does not fit all in educating mainstream ELL students. All ELL students will not progress and acquire the English language at the same rate. Each ELL student enters the classroom with varying degrees of prior education, socio-economic backgrounds, learning styles, and social cues (Diaz-Rico, 2014). Furthering the professional development, district and building administrators have a responsibility of providing feedback and coaching to preserve the techniques discussed during the professional development is utilized.

CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes and efficacy of Kindergarten through Twelfth grade teachers and administrators who are responsible for the academic achievement of ELL students in the mainstream classroom. The teacher and administrator behavioral dispositions will be assessed through attitudinal measures, seek to assess affect or feelings toward educational topics (Creswell, 2012).

Conclusions

Overarching Question 1

Question 1 explored if there was a difference in teachers' gender or grade level when inviting ELL students into the mainstream classroom and beliefs toward ELL students creating a positive atmosphere in the classroom. The majority of respondents at the Elementary and Secondary grade levels agreed they welcome ELL students into their classroom and believe ELL students promote a positive atmosphere in the classroom ($M = 2.43, SD=1.06$). This shows categorically teachers believe all students are welcomed into their classroom and all learners can provide a positive atmosphere. A few of the teacher responses included; "They are part of the class. This encourages diversity which is a reality." "1. It helps Americans to understand about other cultures and other languages. 2. It helps to teach students about compassion for others." "All students benefit from language rich environments. ELL students may bring cultural beliefs in the classroom and expose other students. I feel that it is important for students to experience all types of diversity."

Teachers' expectations and beliefs play a powerful role in high social and academic achievement of mainstream ELL students. If teachers' beliefs, due to low self-

efficacy, are negative regarding mainstream ELL students can have an adverse affect on the achievement of the students. Additionally, some teachers may be unaware of negative beliefs they may hold toward mainstream ELL students without being aware of the deep seeded beliefs. Thus, negatively separating the ELL students from their native English-speaking peers without awareness of their bias (Peregoy & Boyle, 1997).

Accordingly, through cultural proficiency and language acquisition professional development, teachers will gain a greater understanding of mainstream ELL students' cultural beliefs and learning styles to establish a fair and rigorous education (Freeman & Freeman, 1994). Teachers will be given the opportunity to examine their own beliefs regarding mainstream ELL students and will gain a greater efficacy and cultural proficiency lowering the possibility of unaware biases toward mainstream ELL students from occurring in the future.

Overarching Question 2

The objective of Question 2 was to study teachers' beliefs concerning if they feel they have been adequately prepared to teach mainstream ELL students through professional development to differentiate curriculum and instructional strategies, understand language acquisition, and cultural proficiency. As ELL enrollments continue to rise in the United States, particularly in areas that in the past have not seen large amounts of ELL students, there is a pressing need to assure teachers are properly prepared to teach mainstream ELL students (de Jong, Harper, & Coady, 2013). Teachers will benefit from understanding the sociolinguistic and cultural facets of the mainstream ELL students in their content area classrooms. When teachers, who are culturally proficient, fully understanding how to differentiate curriculum and teaching strategies to

facilitate bridging the ELL students' native language with English, students will build upon their background knowledge to understand concepts in English (Turkan, Oliveira, Lee, & Phelps, 2014).

In this study survey participants did not feel they have had enough professional development to assist with understanding cultural proficiency, sociolinguistics, language acquisition, and how to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction to aid mainstream ELL students ($r = .112, n = 190, p = .123$). When teachers, understand mainstream ELL students' process of language development and overall language acquisition, students' cultures and languages becomes easier to incorporate into the content curriculum (Hadjioannou & Hutchinson, 2011). After proper professional development, teachers often have more appreciation for different cultural norms, language acquisition difficulties, a greater understanding of language acquisition, and teacher efficacy is strengthened through understanding the process the mainstream ELL students must experience before becoming fluent in a second language (Hadjioannou & Hutchinson, 2011). Walton, Baca, and Escamilla (2002), report pre-service and veteran teachers necessitate training of techniques, strategies, and procedures, specifically constructed with cultural proficiency and language acquisition at the forefront, to provide successful academic content concepts to mainstream ELL students. Additionally, many of the teaching techniques positively utilized for mainstream ELL students are also highly engaging and effective strategies for all learners.

Sub Question 2A examined if years of teaching experience facilitate a stronger teacher efficacy to differentiate curriculum and instructional strategies for mainstream ELL students. An ANOVA was conducted to determine if years of experience affect

teacher efficacy when working with mainstream ELL students. There was a significant difference ($F = 2.145, p = .120$), 0-10 years ($M = 2.92, SD = .388$), 11-15 years ($M = 2.92, SD = .428$), and 16-30 years of teaching experience ($M = 3.16, SD = .428$), between teachers with more years of experience and their attitudes toward cultural proficiency. Veteran teachers with 16 to 30 years of experience showed significantly higher efficacy than teachers with 0 to 10 years and 11 to 15 years of experience.

Analysis of the outcomes for the ANOVA can present different questions regarding teacher efficacy and years of experience. Through evaluating the information several questions can be suggested if there is a need for more teacher preparation with pre-service and early veteran teachers in understanding cultural proficiency, language acquisition, and proper ways of differentiating curriculum and instruction or have veteran teachers have had more experience with mainstream ELL students in mainstream classrooms? Additionally, is it also possible that self-perception between the years of experience and cultural proficiency had an affect on the outcomes. For example do newer teachers have a higher threshold for cultural norms and veteran teachers feel they are culturally proficient when they display piñatas for Cinco de Mayo? The outcomes could suggest that some educators feel they are comfortable with their efficacy regarding cultural proficiency where others may feel they have more to learn. This may suggest that pre-service teaching classes are preparing new teachers to understand cultural proficiency with a greater efficacy than veteran teachers. However, it can also suggest veteran teachers have a stronger efficacy-teaching mainstream ELL students in content area classes from years of teaching and experiencing with ELL students.

Sub Question 2B did not show a significant difference ($t = 188$, $p = 0.88$) between elementary and secondary teachers efficacy when differentiating instruction and curriculum for mainstream ELL students. The survey showed they all had a low efficacy when understanding differentiating instruction and curriculum for mainstream ELL students. ($M = 2.66$, $SD = .234$) Elementary and ($M = 2.65$, $SD = .314$) Secondary indicates an area that needs to be addressed for all teachers. All participants strongly felt they would like to have more time and professional development to understand how to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction for mainstream ELL students. However, the participants in the elementary and secondary buildings would like more professional development for different reasons when assisting mainstream ELL students. Teachers' responses regarding differentiating instruction included; "Frustration on behalf of the ELL student. Time that it takes from the mainstream teachers to make appropriate accommodations for the ELL student." "Lack of knowledge on how to work with ESL students by general education teachers, biases by teachers who do not know how to work with ELL kiddos, low expectations from teachers who do not believe that ELL students can be successful, not enough training for teacher who work with ESL students." "It is extremely difficult to know how to appropriately teach them. It is incredibly difficult planning modified work for the students. I don't know what the most important areas are to teach. The ELL teachers do as much as they can but there really NEEDS to be some type of curriculum to follow, or there needs to be more ELL teachers to provide support. They are spread way too thin!"

When interpreting the data, secondary teachers had a harder time being able to differentiate curriculum and instruction for mainstream ELL students. Furthermore,

higher secondary participants felt ELL students should not be included in mainstream classes until they have reached a certain level of language proficiency. Consequently, research provided by Karabenick and Noda (2004) suggests mainstream teachers are inadequately prepared when understanding primary knowledge related to ELL mainstream students. As a result there were significant differences in teachers' beliefs between elementary and secondary teachers' efficacy toward mainstream ELL students.

Elementary teachers, on a daily basis, are required to differentiate curriculum and instruction for all students in their classrooms. Elementary teachers are also obligated to teach all content area curriculums. For this reason elementary teachers find differentiating curriculum and instruction an easier task. Secondary teachers are required to prepare students to be career and college ready. The secondary curriculum, at times, can be difficult to differentiate and still maintain academic rigor and high achievement for all students in the mainstream classrooms. Secondary teachers are also given a limited amount of time with each section of students, where as elementary teachers may be able to extend a lesson if the students are having a difficult time understanding the curricular concepts. However, effective instructional methods are necessary to ensure mainstream ELL students are receiving a rigorous and equitable education. Teachers' open responses regarding differentiating curriculum included; "Comprehension intertwined, complex skills of reading, listening, and talking in a new language is a tremendous challenge. Topping that off is taking on a new culture, making friends and fulfilling family responsibilities all the while playing a part in the classroom culture is again a major challenge my ELL students face daily." "Language barrier. What I feel is a simplified word, may not be." "Most mainstream teachers have no training in ELL & are

wholly unprepared to have these students in their classrooms. The amount of time needed to adapt curriculum for them is extensive. This should be done at the district level.”

Elementary and secondary teachers can facilitate learning for mainstream ELL students by incorporating cooperative learning, grouping strategies, and understanding diversified language-learning approaches to establish academic success for ELL students in content area classes (de Jong & Harper, 2007). In order to increase teacher efficacy professional development in the areas of understanding how ELL students’ language and culture shape their academic experiences, being informed of the ELL students’ former educational background in their native country, and using cultural proficiency to shape differentiated curriculum and instructional strategies is necessary to establish a culturally proficient classroom.

Sub Question 2B builds upon Sub Question 2A in regard to teachers understanding how to properly differentiate curriculum and instructional strategies to assist with mainstream ELL students ($M = 2.66$, $SD = .234$) Elementary, and ($M = 2.65$, $SD = .314$) Secondary. Elementary and secondary teachers feel they do not receive an adequate amount of time to differentiate curriculum for mainstream ELL students. Increasing demands are placed on mainstream teachers to provide a learning environment where mainstream ELL students must have language and content objectives met through content curriculum, and students are then assessed using formidable high stakes testing to determine academic growth and achievement (de Jong, et al. 2013). Teacher open-ended responses overwhelming showed they do not feel they have enough time to differentiate curriculum for mainstream ELL students. “I don’t have access to materials that would be

at the students' level. It is hard to find time to work with students individually to help him/her progress. How to modify the assignments/tests." "Time to modify assignments- mainly tests, knowing the different resources available." "Explanation of curriculum materials is difficult at times. Managing a full classroom and modifying instruction for ELL students can be difficult." "Modifying and adapting assignments to meet the needs of the students. I want to, but I think out curriculum moves very quickly and I am not sure where or what I am allowed to modify."

In order for teachers to properly be able to differentiate curriculum and instruction in a timely manner they must first understand mainstream ELL students literacy levels, language acquisition level, the amount of schooling did they receive in their native country, and cultural proficiency with socio-emotional norms for learning. Correspondingly, once teachers understand the foundations of the mainstream ELL students' background, they will be able to differentiate curriculum to meet the needs of the learner. Once teachers also understand the process of language acquisition for mainstream ELL students, allowing ELL students additional time to complete assignments and tests reduce the achievement gap (Rance-Roney, 2009).

Teacher professional development, to differentiate curriculum and instruction for mainstream ELL students in a timely manner, must first begin with the teachers' understanding of how the ELL students native language (L1) and second language (L2) can be connected to produce language development both orally and process content curriculum (de Jong, Harper, & Coady, 2013). Professional development, instructing teachers on how to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction, will prevent the curriculum from becoming weak and creating low academic achievement. In order for

teachers to be able to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction, within the given time allotment during their plan time, teachers must understand the proficiency levels of the mainstream ELL students. By understanding the ELLs' appropriate language proficiency level, teachers will be able to create cooperative learning strategies and group work to maintain a cognitively challenging academic classroom.

Sub Question 2C did not show a significant difference between Elementary and Secondary teachers' beliefs when analyzing data asking teachers if they felt they have an adequate amount of time to differentiate curriculum and instruction for mainstream ELL students ($t = -1.74, p = .748$). However, Elementary teachers are required to differentiate instruction for all students in all curricular content areas. Therefore, "do Elementary teachers feel they do not have an adequate amount of time due to having to differentiate curriculum for all students in all subject areas instead of segregating the differentiation to solely mainstream ELL students?"

Furthermore, Secondary teachers teach many different learning and grade levels of students in one subject area to provide an education to prepare all students to be career or college ready after completion of high school. Accordingly, "do Secondary teachers feel they do not have enough time to differentiate instruction and curriculum when they are given a limited amount of time with students to teach their core content area?" Further, investigation into why teachers feel they do not have enough time to differentiate curriculum and instruction would be beneficial for future professional development.

Sub Question 2D explored if there was a difference between Elementary and Secondary teacher' beliefs concerning mainstream ELL students contributing to a positive atmosphere in the classroom. The majority of respondents agreed or strongly

agreed mainstream ELL students positively contributed to the classroom. Teachers and administrators promoting positive school culture and climate will further advocate for cultural proficiency and understanding of familial and societal norms with mainstream ELL students (Soltero, 2011). Mainstream ELL students' academic success is elevated and the achievement gap will diminish as mainstream ELL students feel supported and receive an academically rigorous curriculum differentiated to their learning styles.

Sub Question 2E asked Elementary and Secondary survey respondents if they felt mainstream ELL students are able to complete the same level of work as their native English speaking peers. Additionally, the questions in this part of the survey, were analyzing teachers' attitudes toward mainstream ELLs' level of language acquisition. There was not a significant difference ($t = .893, p = .108$) between Elementary ($M = 2.50, SD = .204$) and Secondary ($M = 2.47, SD = .255$) teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward mainstream ELL students being able to accomplish the same level of work as their native English-speaking peers. The majority of respondents felt that mainstream ELL students are not able to complete the same level of work and have not acquired the amount of English necessary to be as successful as their English-speaking peers. Teacher open ended responses regarding ELL students level of completing work in comparison to their peers included; "Students are at different levels of knowledge and may not be able to grasp the classroom curriculum." "For those who have limited English proficiency, checking for understanding of concepts/essential objectives can sometimes have its challenges." "Difficult for ELL KIDS to understand what's going on."

Often times, without proper professional development, mainstream teachers are unsure how the process of language acquisition works. Mainstream ELL students will

have oral language skills developed at all of the different stages of language acquisition. When teachers are asked and agree that mainstream ELL students are not able to complete “regular classroom work” this is an observable area where teachers lack understanding of the stages of language acquisition and how to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction to assist mainstream ELL students (Hayners & Zacarian, 2010).

An ELL student at the beginning stages of language acquisition will noticeably have a difficult time with curriculum in the classroom. However, this does not mean the student is not capable of completing the curriculum. Instead, through proper professional development, the classroom teacher will be able to differentiate the curriculum and instruction to assist in building upon the ELL student’s educational background in their native language. At the same time, there may be an ELL student with a higher level of oral language acquisition but who may be lacking background knowledge of the curriculum in their native language, comprehension of the content curriculum in English, or limited content vocabulary in English. The classroom teacher may perceive this student as a fluent ELL student due to their strong oral language development. Despite the student having strong Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) they have not acquired the language necessary to be successful and truly independent completing the classroom content curriculum with Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) (Cummins, 2000). Subsequently, the classroom teacher may not properly differentiate curriculum and instruction for the mainstream student with a higher BICS but underdeveloped CALP.

In order to achieve appropriate differentiated content curriculum and instructional strategies it is essential for mainstream classroom teachers and administrators to attend professional development on language acquisition and proficiency levels. Often teachers without a strong understanding of language acquisition feel they need to give the ELL student curriculum on their reading level. Lack of teacher efficacy toward language acquisition is seen each day in mainstream classrooms. For example, mainstream ELL students can be seen sitting at their desk coloring pictures, working on curriculum that is on their reading level but not content from their grade level, or being placed on computer language programs for the majority of the school day instead of the recommended 20 minutes a day. With proper professional development on the subject of language acquisition and proficiency levels, teacher efficacy will strengthen and mainstream ELL students will receive proper differentiated curriculum and instruction in the content area. Mainstream ELL students are capable of understanding and completing complex content curriculum, on their grade level, if the assignments and teaching strategies are differentiated correctly (Gottschalk, 2016).

Sub Question 2F was comparing means between Elementary and Secondary mainstream teachers attitudes, beliefs, and expectations of mainstream ELL students being able to complete comparable work to their native English-speaking peers, this study also compared if there was a difference between male and female respondents answers to the same question. There was no significant difference ($t = .816, p = .632$) between male and female respondents. The majority of respondents did not have strong efficacy and felt mainstream ELL students were not capable of completing content curriculum equivalent to their native English-speaking peers.

Overarching Question 3

Question 3 studied the amount of professional development teachers received to understand language acquisition, learning styles, and cultural backgrounds to assist in teaching mainstream ELL students, and how teachers feel about the amount of professional development acquired. Finally, do teachers feel they receive enough support from building and district administrators to assist with mainstream ELL students?

Sub Question 3A Indicated there was not a significant difference between Elementary and Secondary teachers' beliefs in regard to attaining sufficient support from district administrators ($t = 1.55, p = .539$). The majority of respondents did not feel they receive sufficient support from district administrators in facilitating support to teachers when working with mainstream ELL students. State and federal mandates invariably will keep district administrators extremely busy. In a school district with a 2% ELL population, professional development relating to how to properly work with mainstream ELL students, cultural proficiency, and strengthening teacher efficacy through understanding language acquisition, tend to be placed to the side to provide time for professional development based on the larger needs of the school district.

However, this way of processing the needs for certain professional development can be detrimental to the future of the school district. Immigrants and ELL students will continue to enter and exit the school district. At some time all teachers and administrators will be working with an ELL student or their family. Therefore, it is essential to provide professional development with repeated follow through to establish cultural proficiency and language acquisition understanding to all stakeholders in the school district. Teachers' responses regarding the need for professional development

included; “Teachers need education on the second language acquisition process.” “Lack of knowledge on how to work with ESL students by general education teachers, biases by teachers who do not know how to work with ELL kiddos, low expectations from teachers who do not believe that ELL students can be successful, not enough training for teachers who work with ESL students.” “Most mainstream teachers have no training in ELL & are wholly unprepared to have these students in their classrooms. The amount of time needed to adapt curriculum for them is extensive. This should be done at the district level.”

In 2009 The Council of the Great City Schools conducted a study to find out what school districts with high ELL student achievement were doing differently than school districts with the same amount of ELL students that had a large achievement gap (Soltero, 2011). One of the major findings from the report found the districts with the greatest ELL student achievement were from districts with strong and vocal supporters of mainstream ELL students. These people ranged from the superintendent, board members, ELL director, and chief academic officer (Soltero, 2011). These key advocates would also establish open communication and collaboration among the other departments at the district level. Therefore, creating a culture and innovating new ways of helping mainstream ELL students through collaboration and teamwork (Soltero, 2011). In a district with 2% of an ELL student population it is essential for a strong advocate to be at the district level to facilitate the transparency, collaboration, bridge the home to school connection with the families of ELL students, be engaged in curricular and cultural decision making processes, research best practices and curriculum strategies which further ELL students’ BICS and CALP, and help create professional development to

facilitate stronger teacher efficacy when working with ELL students in mainstream classrooms.

Sub Question 3B provided information regarding Elementary and Secondary teachers' beliefs of receiving sufficient assistance from their building administrators in the education of mainstream ELL students. There was not a significant difference between Elementary ($M = 2.63$, $SD = .671$) and Secondary ($M = 2.55$, $SD = .657$) teachers' responses to the survey ($t = .859$, $p = .684$). The general consensus, between the two groups of teachers, most of respondents felt they received a sufficient amount, no more no less, of guidance when working with mainstream ELL students.

Researchers Aleman, Johnson Jr., and Perez conducted a study in 2009 to investigate why some schools with mainstream ELL students consistently outscore other schools with the same demographic population and have frequently scored higher than state averages on standardized tests. The findings from the research rest squarely on strong building leadership. Principals in high achieving schools with mainstream ELL students celebrate different cultures, boost student achievement by ensuring all students are receiving a rigorous curriculum. Principals collect, reflect, and praise academic gains and achievements, emphasizing even the smallest of accomplishments. Finally, Principals continue the success by facilitating ways for teachers to gain a greater efficacy through meaningful teacher collaboration. Principals give the teachers the tools to assess benchmark data and collaboratively create ways to provide additional support for the students.

Sub Question 3C examined if there was a relationship between teachers' understanding of cultural proficiency and the amount of professional development they

have received regarding cultural proficiency. There was little correlation between the two variables ($r = .112$). Exploring the outcome of the correlation presents areas for future research. Have teachers received sufficient cultural proficiency training through college classes, district professional development, or through self-taught avenues? Do teachers feel they have had enough cultural proficiency professional development? Do teachers have a strong or weak efficacy when discussing cultural proficiency?

Sub Question 3D asked if there is a correlation between teachers' understanding of language acquisition and the amount of professional development they have received. Once again there was little correlation found between the two variables ($r = 0.15$). Further questioning and research would benefit the school district in finding ways to strengthen teacher efficacy.

Sub Question 3E sought the relationship between teachers' efficacy when differentiating curriculum for mainstream ELL students in regard to receiving professional development training. There was little correlation between the two variables ($r = -.015$). However, when analyzing data asking teachers if there was enough time to differentiate curriculum and instruction for mainstream ELL students, teachers did not feel they had enough time to differentiate curriculum and instruction and may present a lower teacher efficacy when working with mainstream ELL students. Teacher responses regarding the relationship between teacher efficacy and the ability to differentiate instruction based on the level of professional development received from the district; "Planning, lack of training, and adding to the work load for any accommodations." "There has not been enough training for teachers to know how to appropriately modify curriculum." "ELLs need extra time to finish some work, this is great...until the end of

the semester when everything comes due at once. Many teachers and students get nervous around ELL students & vice versa, and this gives both parties a negative impression of each other. There needs to be more cultural awareness training for both staff and students.”

Discussion

The aggregate data in this research study demonstrates teachers do not have a strong efficacy when working with mainstream ELL students, are unsure of how to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction within a reasonable amount of plan time, and desire additional professional development to address how to properly teach mainstream ELL students and close the achievement gap. Although the data collected showed Elementary and Secondary teachers are in agreement with not having enough time to differentiate curriculum and instruction, are welcoming of ELL students in the mainstream classroom, and would like more professional development to assist mainstream ELL students, there was a significant difference in how teachers perceive their own efficacy when working with mainstream ELL students.

Keeping in mind, there must be additional research to ensure teachers are receiving the proper professional development to include all participants at every level of efficacy when teaching mainstream ELL students. The study indicated teachers maintain a positive attitude and are inviting concerning welcoming ELL students into the mainstream classroom.

Teachers need to have pedagogy to properly instruct ELL students in mainstream classrooms, with understanding cultural proficiency, proper differentiation and learning strategies in alignment with language acquisition, all while maintaining academic rigor to

raise student achievement and close the achievement gap between mainstream ELL students and their native English speaking peers illustrated by authors Gersten and Baker (2000). Often teachers with lower efficacy and understanding of language acquisition believe ELL students will learn English just by sitting in class and listening to the content curriculum. However, this way of teaching often leads to large gaps in building the ELL students' background knowledge and the foundation for curricular understanding in the future (Gersten & Baker, 2000).

An overarching belief, the majority of respondents agreed upon, was the lack of time to properly differentiate curriculum and instructional strategies for mainstream ELL students in content area classes. With the amount of emphasis placed on teachers ensuring students are prepared for state and national testing, NeSA and the ACT, the heightened pressure placed on test scores and the accountability of the content curriculum given to teachers can become overwhelming when the teachers are now needing to differentiate instruction and curriculum to assist with mainstream ELL students. Teacher efficacy, cultural proficiency, and understanding language acquisition, and how to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction for mainstream ELL students can be achieved through proper professional development and follow through.

Each morning eager learners wait patiently outside the doors of school buildings all around the United States. Some students may be quietly waiting in line remembering the directions their classroom teacher gave them about standing quietly in line, others may be chasing each other around still trying to find their niche in social circles, students may have their faces down staring at their cell phones texting or waiting for that really important text, or ear buds in their ears making sure they hear their favorite song one

more time before they are told to put their electronics away, a couple of children may be listening to their stomachs grumble as they can't wait to eat breakfast since the last meal they had was lunch at school the day before. When you close your eyes for a moment and think back to your first day entering a school building as an educator how did you feel? Did you notice all of the humans standing around waiting for you to show them their future? Do we think each morning as we walk into school buildings these children are our future and can't wait to learn new concepts that we as educators will be giving to the students.

How about the student that at the tender age of 7 was forced out of her home by rebel soldiers? As she ran into the forest clinging to her parents' and siblings' hands, hoping they will one day be able to return home to retrieve her favorite doll her grandma had made for her still laying on her pillow. Instead she is forced into a refugee camp with her Grandmother while her parents and siblings are placed in a different refugee camp 10 miles down the road. Each weekend this young girl would walk the 10 miles to visit with her parents and siblings.

Now imagine a few years later this student walks 3 miles each day to get to school, excitedly learns her curriculum only to turn around and walk the three miles home to her refugee camp. Often wondering what her Grandmother was going to feed her for dinner, surely a bowl of rice and some beans or berries from their small garden. If they are lucky maybe they will be able to have a prized chicken that has been shared among families.

Finally, one morning a person comes into camp and tells the young girl that her teachers have recommended her to travel to the United States where she will be able to

finish high school. She is afraid but excited and runs the 10 miles to the next camp to share the news with her family. As she is running to tell her parents the good news, conversations she overheard to other students amble around her mind, some were going to Australia and others to Europe, she was going to miss her friends, but she was going to the United States! When she arrives at her parents' refugee camp she tells them the exciting news. Her parents and siblings hug onto her tightly with tears of pride rolling down their faces. She also knew at this point she was going to have to leave her family behind in hopes of achieving the "American Dream" and one day saving enough money to bring her family to the United States.

Several weeks later she boarded her first plane. She couldn't believe the awesome and scary power this man-made bird possessed. After several hours of flying she was tired of this metal bird and just longed for being at home in school with her friends. When she finally arrived in the United States her eyes weren't big enough to take in all of the new sights around her. Suddenly, she really needed to use the restroom. She walked into restroom and saw rows of "bowls" that had water in them. After she was finished using these large "bowls" she was so embarrassed and afraid she didn't know how to flush the "bowl". She ran out of the bathroom looking for any woman that looked like her.

Finally, she found a woman that had long dark hair and her eyes looked the same. She ran up to the woman and rapidly started speaking to her in Karen. The woman looked at her and said "I am sorry I don't understand you I speak English". She grabbed onto the ladies arm and pulled her into the restroom and pointed at the large "bowl". The kind woman showed her that the "toilets" flush automatically. She felt embarrassed and

nodded her head at the woman. She quickly grabbed her bags and headed for her next flight to Omaha.

A year later this young lady entered my classroom. After teaching ELL for 9 years in an elementary building I was asked to teach ELL at the high school level. On my first day of school, pushing my cart down the hallway while the high school students towered over me, I thought to myself “what have I gotten myself into?” I was used to little children running up to me and rapidly speaking to me in Spanish about how much fun they had during the Summer and how much they missed me while they quickly hugged me goodbye with the promise of seeing me later because they didn’t want to be late to class. Now here I was feeling the way I did when I lived in the Dominican Republic taking my first guagua ride. I dug deep and told myself it was going to be “OK” they are still children just taller than me. I walked into my first period class and saw 19 sets of big round eyes staring back at me. I had just met my first wonderful group of high school ELL students.

Each student that year had an amazing story to tell me about his or her journey to the United States. They each wanted to achieve the “American Dream”. Including one young lady who told me her story about how embarrassed she was when she first came to the United States because she didn’t know how to flush the toilet, and now is in college to become a teacher. Her story was one of many stories I heard and have continued to listen to about perseverance, fear, happiness, sadness, and feelings of accomplishment as they acquired a second language and were told they were graduating from high school and starting a new job or going to college. Without my own experience living in a foreign country would I be as prepared to teach ELL students?

Although teachers do not feel a strong efficacy, understand language acquisition, and cultural proficiency toward mainstream ELL students there is hope for the future. Universities preparing pre-service teachers can require classes be taken regarding cultural proficiency in the classroom. School districts can assist veteran teachers, through professional development, to better understand proper differentiation of curriculum, language acquisition, and cultural proficiency.

Additional Research Areas for Future Development

The percentage of ELL students enrolled in classrooms in the United States during the 2013-14 school year was 9.3% or an approximated 4.5 million students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). By 2025 it is projected that one out of four students will be and English Learner (NEA, 2008). In order to prepare teachers in the school district surveyed to close the achievement gap, gain stronger teacher efficacy, and cultural proficiency, the district needs to provide a comprehensive differentiated curriculum beginning in the High Schools and trickling down into the elementary buildings. Furthermore, professional development must have continuous follow through to safeguard best practices and professional development concepts are being utilized correctly. This will also allow for teachers to collaborate and discuss areas of strengths and weaknesses.

In an urban school district with a 2% ELL population emphasis on cultural proficiency, properly differentiating curriculum and instruction, and language acquisition doesn't tend to be a high priority when professional development days arrive. However, at some point in every classroom teacher and administrator's career they are going to work with an ELL student and their family. It is essential that all educators have proper

training in cultural proficiency, understanding the levels of language acquisition, and how to differentiate curriculum and instruction to ensure all learners are provided with an equal education.

Despite the fact the majority of Elementary and Secondary teachers felt ELL mainstream students positively impact the classroom, many teachers did not feel they had a strong efficacy when understanding how to properly differentiate curriculum and instructional strategies for mainstream ELL students for each language acquisition level. Later in the survey teachers demonstrated a few reasons there is not a strong efficacy for differentiating curriculum and instructional strategies for ELL students in mainstream classrooms is due in part to time constraints and the lack of professional development on how to properly assist ELL students.

In order for ELL students to be successful in the mainstream classrooms they must have proper scaffolding of instruction and curriculum provided by the classroom teachers. ELL students need to be engaged in academic rigor that is highly challenging but in a way that the student is highly supported when actively learning the curriculum (Gibbons, 2015). Mainstream classroom teachers have an obligation to scaffold curriculum and instruction to facilitate a classroom conducive to ELL students. However, without proper professional development and time constraints are unable to properly scaffold curriculum and instruction to assist ELL students into building background knowledge of subject matter, acquire academic language acquisition, and create higher levels of understanding content curriculum (Gibbons, 2015).

Although respondents felt they would be able to differentiate curriculum and instruction for mainstream ELL students, the majority of respondents felt they did not

have enough professional development and efficacy to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction for mainstream ELL students. In order for teachers to gain a greater efficacy to differentiate curriculum and instruction for mainstream ELL students, professional development on language acquisition, cultural proficiency, scaffolding, and understanding how to increase the students autonomy is imperative to closing the achievement gap between ELL and native English speaking students (Gibbons, 2015).

ELL mainstream students require a highly engaged, challenging, and supportive curriculum and instruction. Many of the best practices researched to ensure academic achievement for mainstream ELL students are also meaningful for native English speaking students. However, without productive professional development teacher efficacy will decrease. In addition to teachers' efficacy ebbing when working with mainstream ELL students, respondents felt they are not given enough time to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction. Would teacher efficacy increase with proper professional development, thus empowering teachers to create curriculum, through scaffolding, which creates high academic rigor with proper support for all learners (Gibbons, 2015).

According to the survey conducted K-12th grade teachers desire differentiated curriculum to support their ELL students' needs, however have difficulty finding the time to create curriculum to better serve ELL students. The question posed to teachers asked, "I don't feel/haven't felt I have enough time to modify curriculum and assignments for ELL students in the mainstream classroom", 51.85% of respondents agreed and 19.58% strongly agreed that they do not have adequate time to differentiate curriculum to better serve ELLs.

Differentiating curriculum and instruction will take less time when teachers fully understand the mainstream ELL students' cultural and language backgrounds. Teachers are able to provide high expectations, rigorous and engaging curriculum once understanding the ELL mainstream students' socio-economic background, level of education in their native language, and how to properly build curricular background through scaffolding appropriate supportive curriculum (Soltero, 2011). Furthermore, with a total of 71.16% of respondents agreeing, they do not feel they have enough time to modify curriculum, it seems imperative to place an emphasis on creating differentiated curriculum which mainstream teachers will be able to easily access, to ensure academic rigor and appropriate content and language objectives are being applied to English Learners.

Accordingly, formative and summative assessments should be created corresponding with the ELLs proficiency level in core content areas based on Nebraska State Standards for the students' grade level and subject content area. Assessment results will be analyzed to check for understanding and areas for possible re-teaching of concepts. Many of the teachers and administrators who completed the survey expressed a considerable desire for more professional development regarding English Learners. The first question posed, "I have received sufficient professional development to assist me in working effectively with mainstream EL students", 58.42% of respondents disagreed and 13.68% strongly disagreed for a combined total of 72.10% felt they have not received sufficient professional development on how to support English Learners.

One of the ways to close the achievement gap between mainstream ELL students and native English speakers, the school district could assemble teams of teachers,

administrators, and curriculum directors in order to develop a comprehensive differentiated curriculum in alignment with Nebraska State Standards for Kindergarten through 12th grades and create meaningful professional development. Furthermore, with coaching and follow through to ensure research based concepts to improve student achievement are implemented after professional development and curriculum training sessions. Core curriculum areas in math, reading, science, and social studies will be the first created to ensure scaffolding with content area vocabulary and building strong background knowledge for ELLs.

The teachers in this study are ready and want to receive professional development to strengthen their efficacy when working with mainstream ELL students. As seen in Figure 1, 72.10% of the respondents felt they have not received sufficient professional development to assist them in working with mainstream ELL students. Figure 2 also displays 79.26% of respondents would like to receive professional development in working with mainstream ELL students.

When teachers do not have proper cultural proficiency and language acquisition training, mainstream ELL students often are placed into curriculum programs that are void of specifically designed language accommodations (Soltero, 2011). Students who do not receive specific and individualized language instruction and accommodations, based on their academic background knowledge in their native language as well as cultural norms, will find themselves in a “sink or swim” educational system. Results of a “sink or swim” academic program frequently end with the ELL student losing pieces of their native language as well as not gaining the English necessary to be academically

successful in the United States. Consequently, these ELL students continue to fall behind their native English-speaking peers and the achievement gap widens

In order for professional development to be purposeful, cultural proficiency training focuses on a district wide systematic approach incorporating understanding second language acquisition and materials interconnected to educating mainstream ELL students (Soltero, 2011). All school district staff members should participate in cultural proficiency training and language acquisition focusing on different cultural norms and the different levels of language acquisition. This professional development should also not be a one-stop shop. Ongoing professional development delving deeper into different cultures, stereotypes, and how to rethink our own biases to different cultural norms we do not understand will facilitate an open mind when then working on understanding language acquisition.

Professional development should focus on creating district and building wide collaboration and discussion. Effective professional development, to assist mainstream ELL students, requires teachers to eliminate mistaken beliefs and bias regarding mainstream ELL students (Soltero, 2011). For example Figure 3 represents a mind shift that needs to occur before teachers and administrators will begin to fully open their minds to changing their thought process of other cultures. Figure 3 displays teacher and administrators' beliefs in relation to English being written into Legislation as the official language of the United States. 59.58% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that English should be written into Legislation as the official language of the United States. With over half of the respondents feeling this way, the data can be researched to find out why they feel this way and what cultural proficiency training needs to be put into place to

create an understanding that the United States was built by immigrants that spoke all different languages. Furthermore, placing an emphasis, during the professional development, with research based examples of how dual language programs can positively benefit ELL students and close the achievement gap.

Once teachers and administrators begin to understand the cultural norms and backgrounds of the students they are servicing and are able to discern the different levels of language acquisition, curriculum and instruction professional development will be purposeful. Teacher and administrators need to have a strong understanding of each mainstream ELL students' former educational and cultural background before they can fully differentiate curriculum and instruction to assist the mainstream ELL student. Additionally, continuous professional development bringing together ELL resource specialists, mainstream classroom teachers, district and building administration, with collaboration, will facilitate a positive district wide mind shift in understanding the needs of mainstream ELL students.

Looking forward additional district, state, and grant funding would provide an opportunity for teachers, district administrators, and the curriculum director to create differentiated curriculum and instruction K-12, aligned to Nebraska State Standards, to assist with the daily needs of ELL students in mainstream classrooms, and to ensure an equitable education is provided. Conducting and creating professional development, collaborating with teachers, and working with teams to differentiate curriculum will facilitate productive growth in cultural proficiency and teacher efficacy. Professional development on cultural proficiency, differentiating curriculum and instruction, and creating stronger home to school connections with families of ELL students will assist

teachers and administrators with building strong self-efficacy. Furthermore, the study acknowledges the need for more cultural proficiency training, how to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction for mainstream ELL students, and understanding the process of language acquisition for pre-service teachers in undergraduate college programs. With classrooms becoming more diverse cultural proficiency, differentiated instruction and curriculum, and understanding the process of language acquisition will necessitate additional professional development for pre-service and veteran teachers to ensure strong teacher efficacy (Soltero, 2011).

ELL mainstream students require a highly engaged, challenging, and supportive curriculum and instruction. Many of the best practices researched to ensure academic achievement for mainstream ELL students are also meaningful for native English speaking students. However, without productive professional development teacher efficacy will decrease. In addition to teachers' efficacy ebbing when working with mainstream ELL students, respondents felt they are not given enough time to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction. Would teacher efficacy increase with proper professional development, thus empowering teachers to create curriculum, through scaffolding, which creates high academic rigor with proper support for all learners (Gibbons, 2015).

According to the survey conducted K-12th grade teachers desire differentiated curriculum to support their ELL students' needs, however have difficulty finding the time to create curriculum to better serve ELL students. The question posed to teachers asked, "I don't feel/haven't felt I have enough time to modify curriculum and assignments for ELL students in the mainstream classroom", 51.85% of respondents agreed and 19.58%

strongly agreed that they do not have adequate time to differentiate curriculum to better serve ELLs.

Differentiating curriculum and instruction will take less time when teachers fully understand the mainstream ELL students' cultural and language backgrounds. Teachers are able to provide high expectations, rigorous and engaging curriculum once understanding the ELL mainstream students' socio-economic background, level of education in their native language, and how to properly build curricular background through scaffolding appropriate supportive curriculum (Soltero, 2011). Furthermore, with a total of 71.16% of respondents agreeing, they do not feel they have enough time to modify curriculum, it seems imperative to place an emphasis on creating differentiated curriculum which mainstream teachers will be able to easily access, to ensure academic rigor and appropriate content and language objectives are being applied to English Learners.

Accordingly, formative and summative assessments should be created corresponding with the ELLs proficiency level in core content areas based on Nebraska State Standards for the students' grade level and subject content area. Assessment results will be analyzed to check for understanding and areas for possible re-teaching of concepts. Many of the teachers and administrators who completed the survey expressed a considerable desire for more professional development regarding English Learners. The first question posed, "I have received sufficient professional development to assist me in working effectively with mainstream EL students", 58.42% of respondents disagreed and 13.68% strongly disagreed for a combined total of 72.10% felt they have not received sufficient professional development on how to support English Learners.

One of the ways to close the achievement gap between mainstream ELL students and native English speakers, the school district could assemble teams of teachers, administrators, and curriculum directors in order to develop a comprehensive differentiated curriculum in alignment with Nebraska State Standards for Kindergarten through 12th grades and create meaningful professional development. Furthermore, with coaching and follow through to ensure research based concepts to improve student achievement are implemented after professional development and curriculum training sessions. Core curriculum areas in Math, Reading, Science, and Social Studies will be the first created to ensure scaffolding with content area vocabulary and building strong background knowledge for ELLs.

Targeted Outcomes

Professional development with coaching and follow through, after the initial training, is essential to establishing regular use of effective research based teaching strategies being utilized to close the achievement gap for ELLs. The ELL Coordinator will conduct walkthroughs of classrooms where teachers have been trained on differentiating lessons, identifying content and language objects, and cooperative learning strategies.

Exploring different comprehensive areas for professional development would include but is not limited to:

- Providing language support and how to properly collaborate between the content teacher and the ELL Resource teacher: Teachers will have training on working with small groups to provide a language rich learning environment. Content teachers will incorporate collaboration with the ELL Resource teacher to

establish appropriate language support. Content teachers and ELL Resource teachers will understand how to properly collaborate and create a timeline of what topics will be taught. This will enable the ELL Resource teacher to pre-teach content concepts, utilize differentiated curriculum, and check for ELL students' understanding before, during, and after the concept is also taught in the mainstream classroom.

- **Optimizing group work to be inclusive for all learners in mainstream classrooms:** Teachers and ELL Resource teachers will work together during and after the professional development to understand and utilize collaborative learning in the classroom. ELL students will be included in all group work to promote content (Kagan & McGroartry, 1993) and language acquisition (Mackey & Gass, 2006). Through this professional development segment teachers and resource specialists will learn and identify the “4Cs” (collaboration, communication, critical thinking, and creativity) of 21st century learning and leading edge skills to provide career and college ready education to all learners. All participants in the professional development will also brainstorm and create ways to incorporate the “4Cs” into their daily curriculum.
- **Engaging parents and the community to promote collaboration and cultural proficiency:** Teachers and administrators will receive professional development on cultural proficiency and how to welcome families into their schools. Teachers and administrators will be provided with a professional development training based on the Cultural Proficiency Continuum. Participants will be able to self assess their own beliefs and understanding of cultural proficiency.

Cultural norms and beliefs, understanding how negative beliefs about cultural norms and beliefs can hinder a student's academic growth, and how strong cultural proficiency through understanding different aspects of family and cultural norms can strengthen students' learning will be presented during the professional development.

After each professional development training surveys will be conducted to explore how to make the ELL program stronger. The ELL coordinator and ELL resource teachers will follow up and continue coaching classroom teachers after training to ensure strategies are being utilized. Through reciprocal coaching and collaboration classroom teachers and resource teachers will be able to work together to strengthen cultural proficiency and differentiated curriculum and instruction.

Summary

Teachers and administrators in the school district surveyed are ready to receive a differentiated curriculum and professional development to strengthen teacher efficacy and cultural proficiency to assist with mainstream ELL students. Many of the respondents felt they did not have time to differentiate the curriculum and learning strategies. Therefore, stakeholders from all areas of the school district can advance the process of creating a comprehensive, differentiated curriculum, based upon cultural proficiency, with academic rigor to close the achievement gap between native English speakers and mainstream ELL students. Through proper professional development, teachers and administrators would be given research based instructional strategies when working with mainstream students.

These strategies would benefit all learners and create an inclusive classroom, allowing all students to be active participants in their learning.

Outcomes from the study were analyzed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 further considers the survey data and discusses areas for improving teacher efficacy, cultural proficiency, understanding language acquisition, differentiating curriculum and instruction, and the need for additional professional development to assist teachers when working with mainstream ELL students. Chapter 5 concludes with recommendations for future actions to assist with implementing areas for improvement to close the achievement gap between mainstream ELL students and their native English speaking peers and strengthen teacher efficacy when working with mainstream ELL students.

The aggregate data in this research study demonstrates teachers do not have a strong efficacy when working with mainstream ELL students, are unsure of how to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction within a reasonable amount of plan time, and desire additional professional development to address how to properly teach mainstream ELL students and close the achievement gap. Although, the data collected showed Elementary and Secondary teachers are in agreement with not having enough time to differentiate curriculum and instruction, are welcoming of ELL students in the mainstream classroom, and would like more professional development to assist mainstream ELL students, there was a significant difference in how teachers perceive their own efficacy when working with mainstream ELL students.

Keeping this in mind there must be additional research to ensure teachers are receiving the proper professional development to include all participants at every level of efficacy when teaching mainstream ELL students. Above all, the research indicated

teachers maintain a positive attitude and are inviting concerning welcoming ELL students into the mainstream classroom.

Teachers need to have the pedagogy to properly instruct ELL students in mainstream classrooms, with understanding cultural proficiency, proper differentiation and learning strategies in alignment with language acquisition, all while maintaining academic rigor to raise student achievement and close the education gap between mainstream ELL students and their native English speaking peers illustrated by authors Gersten and Baker (2000). Often teachers with lower efficacy and understanding of language acquisition believe ELL students will learn English just by sitting in class and listening to the content curriculum. However, this way of teaching often leads to large gaps in building the ELL students' background knowledge and the foundation for curricular understanding in the future (Gersten & Baker, 2000).

An overarching belief, the majority of respondents agreed upon, was the lack of time to properly differentiate curriculum and instructional strategies for mainstream ELL students in content area classes. With the amount of emphasis placed on teachers ensuring students are prepared for state and national testing, NeSA and the ACT, the heightened pressure placed on test scores and the accountability of the content curriculum given to teachers can become overwhelming when the teachers are now needing to differentiate instruction and curriculum to assist with mainstream ELL students.

Therefore, the ELL students are going to have diminished understanding of content curriculum and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) will decline. Teacher efficacy, cultural proficiency, understanding language acquisition, and how to properly differentiate curriculum and instruction for mainstream ELL students can be

achieved through proper professional development and follow through. It is imperative for pre-service teachers, veteran teachers, and administrators to understand cultural proficiency, differentiating curriculum and instruction, and the language acquisition process to build stronger teacher efficacy. Stronger teacher efficacy will ensure all students are receiving a fair and equal education, thus closing the achievement gap and preparing all students to be successful in the future.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Permission for Survey Use

(School District Information has been redacted to safeguard anonymity)

Application to Conduct Research

Title of Research Study: Elementary and Secondary Teachers' Attitudes, Efficacy, and Beliefs for Teaching English Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom

Primary Researcher: Dawn Mathis

Research Organization: University of Nebraska at Omaha

Research Application Date Submitted: October 25, 2016	For Research to be conducted during: Fall Semester
Research Department Approval	Year Research is being conducted 2016-17

Application Attachments and Submission Checklist

DOCUMENT 1: Application to Conduct a Research Study in

- DOCUMENT 2: Request to Research Department to Conduct a Survey, Interview, or Other Assessment (please include survey, interview questions, or documentation of other assessment)
- DOCUMENT 3: Request for Assessment Data to Use in Research Study (i.e. Map data, ACT scores, Attendance data)

Additional documents to attach in your application:

- Introduction letter to participants
- Letter of consent / assent forms
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval
- Other _____

Application to Conduct a Research Study in the (redacted) School District

Date of Application: __ October 25,
2016_____

Research Title:__ Elementary and Secondary Teachers' Attitudes, Efficacy, and
Beliefs for Teaching English Language Learners in the Mainstream
Classroom_____

Name of Primary Researcher: ____Dawn
Mathis_____

Organization or University: __University of Nebraska at
Omaha_____

Address: __6001 Dodge Street_____

City: __Omaha_____ **State:** __NE_____ **Zip:** _6

8182_

Telephone: _____ **Email Address:** _____

**Grant Agency (if
applicable):** _____

Are you an employee of? Yes

No

If yes, please list your school or department: English Language Learners

Teacher _____

Is this part of your Master's Thesis? Yes No

Is this part of your Doctoral Dissertation? Yes No

Is this application a renewal? If yes, what is the date of the original approval?

What dates do you expect to begin and end your study with BPS?

Start: October 25, 2016 End: November 12, 2016

Description of the Research Study

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to examine the attitudes, efficacy, and cultural proficiency of Kindergarten through Twelfth grade teachers toward English language learners (ELLs) in the mainstream classroom in an urban school district with a 2% ELL population. In an urban school district with a student population of 10,000 and a 2% ELL population, are teachers prepared to properly differentiate instruction, provide an equal education, maintain teacher efficacy, and cultivate cultural proficiency with mainstream ELL students? Are Kindergarten through Twelfth grade teachers suitably prepared to understand language acquisition and psychological adjustments associated with ELL students in the mainstream classroom?

Briefly describe how your research study aligns with the district goals and initiatives.

Teachers' efficacy, cultural proficiency, and beliefs when teaching ELL students in mainstream classes will enable the district to research strengths and weaknesses in the ELL program. The district will receive accurate information through the survey conducted to investigate teachers' understanding of language acquisition, if they feel they receive adequate support from the district, building administrators, and ELL resource teachers. Do teachers feel they have sufficient amount of plan time to differentiate curriculum and instruction for mainstream ELL students? All of the questions being answered will allow the district to create productive professional development and look into different opportunities for teachers to research and write curriculum which will align with district and state standards to ensure mainstream ELL students are receiving an equitable education, creating career and college ready students while closing the achievement gap.

How will the study benefit the School District? What do you hope to gain from the studies findings that may provide more information to the district?

Efficacy and behavioral dispositions of educators, both teachers and administrators, is significant to examine when understanding student achievement and how to effectively close the achievement gap among ELL students. With the changing demographics of the American educational system, it is necessary to understand how teachers and administrators are adjusting with the transformation. This study attempts to identify efficacy and behavioral dispositions of K-12th grade teachers and administrators in an urban Midwestern school district with a 2% ELL population. This study will provide additional research on understanding the effect of teacher and administrators'

efficacy and behavioral dispositions on closing the achievement gap among ELL students. Through this study, survey outcomes may provide further guidance on developing appropriate professional development, coaching teachers on language acquisition and cultural proficiency, and create differentiate curriculum.

Briefly describe the study's procedures and instrument.

A quantitative study of Kindergarten through Twelfth grade teachers and administrators, in an urban Midwestern school district with a population of 2% ELL students, regarding the attitudes of educators when working with mainstream ELL students will be achieved through research questions given through a survey. The population sampling will be conducted through an anonymous survey. The survey will be disseminated through email with a link to the survey online. In order to safeguard the study and gain access to teachers and administrators, who work with mainstream ELL students, a Stratified sampling procedure will be conducted (Creswell, 2012). An attitudinal measure survey to quantify teacher and administrators' attitudes, perceptions, and cultural proficiency toward ELL students in the mainstream classroom in grades K-12 will be invited to participate.

Briefly describe the communication you have had with the district administrators and research department regarding the study.

To comply with the district's mandates regarding data collection for research purposes the researcher met with the district Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent to ensure guidelines and district policies were properly being enforced when conducting the survey before, during, and after the research. After obtaining permission from the

Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent the survey will be disseminated through district email accounts.

Please complete the following information regarding requesting access to the (redacted) School District sites.

Total number of schools:

_____ 19 _____

Grade Levels: _____ Kindergarten through 12th grades _____

Total number of students: _____ Zero _____

Total number of teachers: _____ 676 _____

Total number of administrators: _____ 32 _____

Others:

Please mark all of the schools you will be requesting access:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Time requirements for data collection:

The survey online will be open for 2 weeks.

Extent of Access to School Sites:

During the research:

Will researcher or other personnel connected to the study be visiting school sites or interacting with students?

Yes No

If “Yes”:

a. At any time will the researcher be alone with a student or group of students?

Yes No

b. Will the researcher conduct repeat visits with students?

Yes No

c. Will the researcher conduct extensive research with any student resulting in considerable interaction time?

Yes No

If you answered “Yes” to any of the above questions, you will need to complete the parental consent form attached to the end of the application. The School District also retains the right to request a background check on all researchers

When requesting parental consent/assent the following information must inform the parent/guardian: Parental/Guardian consent letter must be attached to the application.

1. Purpose of the study

2. What existing student data will be requested and used/or what new student data will be completed during the research process
3. How will the information be collected
4. How the data collected will be used and published
5. All research instruments and study are available for parent/guardian review before, during, and after the study
6. Researcher's contact information for further questions

***If the parent/guardian does not speak English the consent form must be translated into the language spoken by the parent/guardian.**

Researcher Conduct and Consent Form

Title of Research: Elementary and Secondary Teachers' Attitudes, Efficacy, and Beliefs for Teaching English Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	I certify and have attached to the application is evidence of a Background check to obtain permission for any researcher, agent, research organization personnel, or volunteers for anyone entering a school site and will have contact with students, and is not a current employee of the School District.
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	I certify that the researcher, organization personnel, or volunteers will have Limited or NO contact with district students

By marking the boxes below, I certify that:

	I will obtain parental/guardian consent to obtain release of any student data for all students involved in the study. I have submitted the parental/guardian consent form with my application.
--	--

Supervisor Signature

Name (please print)

Date

NON-APPROVAL

Supervisor Signature

Name (please print)

Date

Supervisor Signature

Name (please print)

Date

Appendix B

Survey

Mainstream ELL Students**Section A**

1. In what building are you currently working? (All answers are anonymous and will be used only when calculating data points.)

2. Mark the box that describes your experience with ELL students

- I currently teach ELL students in my classroom at the Elementary Level
- I currently teach ELL students in my classroom at the Secondary Level
- I do not currently have any ELL students in my classroom but I have taught them during my career
- I have never taught ELL students
- I am currently a Building Administrator with ELL students
- I am currently a Building Administrator with NO ELL students

3. If you have never taught ELL students, please mark the box and you will be directed to section B

- Yes, I have taught ELL students during my career
- No, I have not taught ELL students during my career

Mainstream ELL Students

Section B

4. The inclusion of ELL students in mainstream classes generates a positive classroom atmosphere.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. The inclusion of ELL students in mainstream classes contributes to the development of all students.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. ELL students should NOT be included in mainstream classes until they have a certain level of language proficiency in English.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. ELL students in mainstream classes increases / did increase my workload.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. ELL students in mainstream classes are able to complete work at the same level at or above their peers.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. ELL students should acquire English proficiency within two years of continuous schooling in the United States.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. ELL students should be included in all Nebraska state testing after 2 years of schooling in the United States.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. ELL students should NOT use their native language in the mainstream classroom.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. I allow / would allow ELL students extended time to complete assignments.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. ELL students should be given a passing grade if they show effort.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Assignments should be modified for ELL students in mainstream classrooms.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. I provide / would provide materials in the ELL students' native languages.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. I simplify / would simplify assignments for ELL students in the mainstream classroom.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. I don't feel / haven't felt I have enough time to modify curriculum and assignments for ELL students in the mainstream classroom.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

18. Modifying assignments for mainstream ELL students would be difficult to rationalize to other students.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. I welcome / would welcome the inclusion of ELL students in my classroom.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

20. English should be written into legislation as the official language of the United States.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

21. I receive sufficient support from *district administration* for ELL students enrolled in my classes.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

22. I receive sufficient support from *school administration* for ELL students enrolled in my classes.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

23. I have received sufficient professional development to assist me in working effectively with mainstream ELL students.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

24. I would like to receive professional development / additional professional development in working with mainstream ELL students.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

25. I conference regularly with the *ELL Resource Teacher*.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

26. I receive sufficient support from the *ELL Resource Teacher*.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Mainstream ELL Students**Section C**

27. What do you consider are the positive benefits of including ELL students in mainstream classes?
Please list.

28. What do you consider to be the challenges of including ELL students in mainstream classes? Please list.

29. How many years have you been teaching? (including this year)

30. Please indicate your gender:

31. Please indicate your highest professional educational background.

32. Is English your native language?

33. Have you received professional development in teaching ELL students?

If yes, please briefly describe the training you received. (Example: college coursework, district professional development days, outside inservice)

34. Comments: Please write any additional comments you may have regarding the inclusion of ELL students in mainstream classes

Appendix C

Introductory Email to Teachers

(Redacted) Public Schools
November 1, 2016

Dear Teacher,

I am inviting you to participate in a research study I am conducting on teaching English language learners in the mainstream classrooms.

This anonymous survey is to be completed by teachers and administrators in Kindergarten through 12th grades. Your participation in this survey is crucial to analyzing and understanding ways to strengthen programs for our students. Your participation in this study will provide valuable information in understanding beliefs, efficacy, and cultural proficiency when working with ELL students in mainstream classes. Your responses will be confidential and all reporting will be conducted using whole group. Any open-ended responses will be used strictly for research analysis and will not be released.

After the study has been completed all responses to the survey will be shredded. At any time you have questions about the survey or the outcomes please feel free to contact me at (redacted). By completing this survey, you have given your consent to participate in this research study.

Sincerely,
Dawn Mathis

Appendix D

Permission to Revise Dr. Reeves Survey: *A Survey of Teachers*

Dawn Mathis <dmathis@unomaha.edu>

Feb 8 ☆



to jreeves2 ▾

Dr. Reeves,

Good morning Dr. Reeves. My name is Dawn Mathis and I am currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Nebraska Omaha. I am writing my dissertation on K-12 teacher beliefs, efficacy, and cultural proficiency when working with mainstream ELL students. I would like to ask your permission to implement and adjust your survey "Secondary teacher attitudes toward including English language learners in mainstream classrooms. I look forward to communicating with you more on this topic in the future. I am currently an adjunct professor at UNO teaching Introduction to ESL for pre-service teacher candidates. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Dawn Mathis

Jenelle Reeves via uofnelincoln.onmicrosoft.com

Feb 16 ☆



to me ▾

Hi Dawn,

Yes, you have my permission to use my survey and adapt it as needed for your own research. Please cite my work where appropriate. And, I'd love to hear what you find out!

Best,

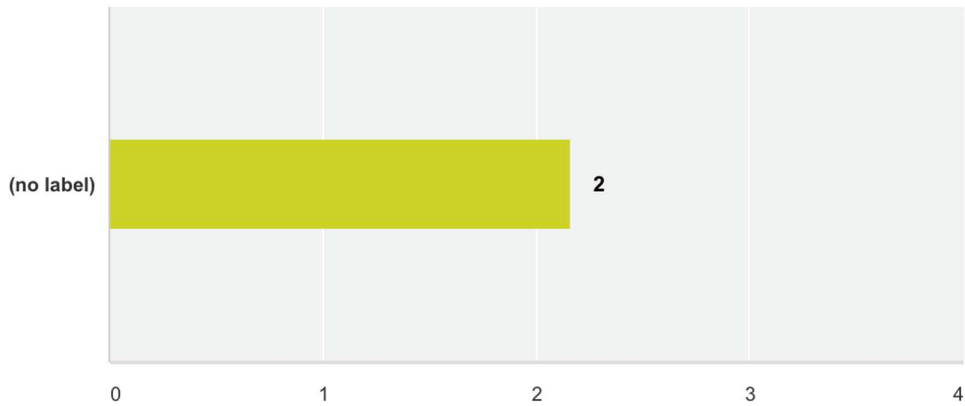
Jenelle Reeves

Section E
Graphs/Figures

Figure 1.

I have received sufficient professional development to assist me in working effectively with mainstream ELL students.

Answered: 190 Skipped: 31

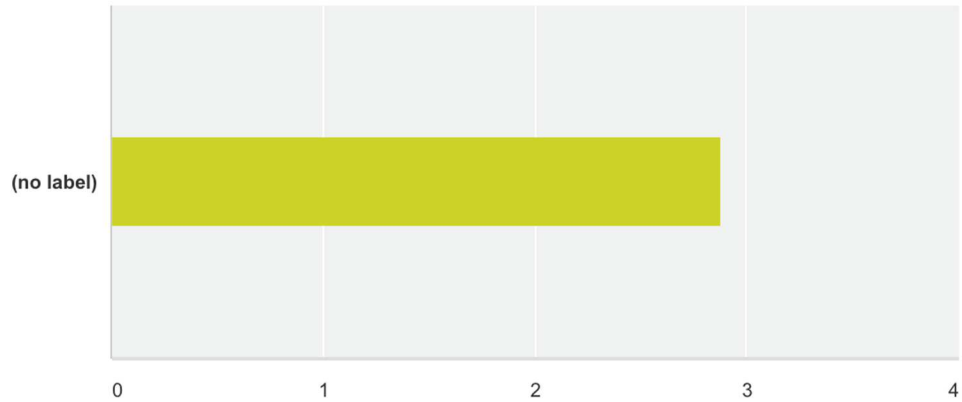


	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Weighted Average
(no label)	13.68% 26	58.42% 111	25.79% 49	2.11% 4	190	2.16

Figure 2

I would like to receive professional development / additional professional development in working with mainstream ELL students.

Answered: 188 Skipped: 33

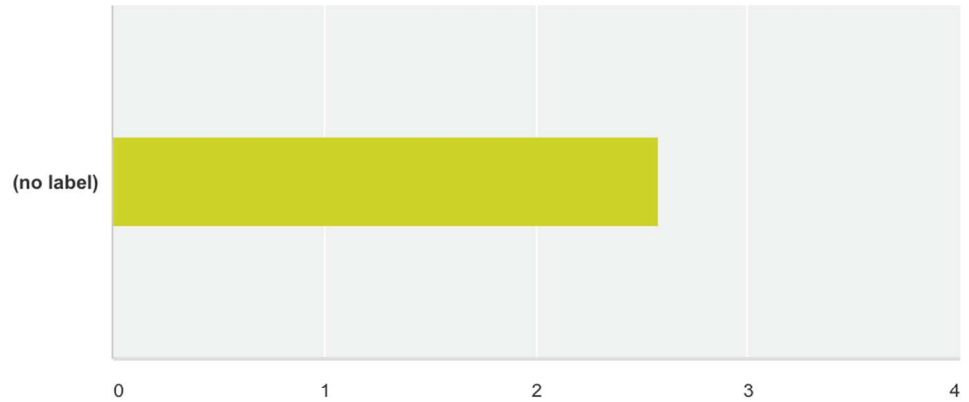


	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Weighted Average
(no label)	1.60% 3	19.15% 36	69.15% 130	10.11% 19	188	2.88

Figure 3

English should be written into legislation as the official language of the United States.

Answered: 188 Skipped: 33



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Weighted Average
(no label)	14.36% 27	26.06% 49	46.81% 88	12.77% 24	188	2.58