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TEACHER ATTITUDES TOWARD ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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Degree
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Rich Walton McKinney
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my loving wife, Maggie, whose support and encouragement kept me going. I also dedicate this work to my two precious daughters, Katelyn and Kelsey. My family’s willingness to sacrifice the past three years is greatly appreciated and will never be forgotten.
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ABSTRACT

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has created a situation in which teachers are required to educate English Language Learners (ELLs) at the same level of proficiency as native speakers. However, there is a paucity of research concerning teacher attitudes regarding ELLs, and thus, little is known about how these attitudes will impact instruction. The purpose of this study was to examine regular education teachers’ attitudes toward the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom. More specifically this study sought to understand whether teacher attitudes were influenced by the specific instructional factors of support, expertise, and time.

The study was conducted in conjunction with a large, metropolitan school system in Tennessee. In the study, several schools were selected based on their ELL populations over the past three years. Teachers at these schools were invited to participate in the study, and were asked to respond to a survey instrument which was adapted from the Opinions Relative to Integration (ORI). The adapted ORI was used to quantify teacher attitudes regarding the inclusion of ELLs in regular education classrooms, and the results were subsequently used to generate an index score of teacher acceptance of ELLs in the regular education classroom.

Additionally, teachers were asked to respond to a survey instrument which examined whether the teacher felt they had the necessary amounts of support, expertise, and time to teach ELLs.

The data were analyzed using a three-way ANOVA, and the results suggest that teachers’ attitudes are influenced by a scarcity of instructional factors. This paper discusses the extent to which the three specific instructional factors of support, expertise, and time influenced teacher attitudes. Additionally, the paper considers how educational leaders might use these findings to improve teacher attitudes toward ELLs.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

The face of public education has changed drastically over the past century (Byrnes, Kiger, & Manning, 1996, 1997; Friend & Pope, 2005). A picture of an average American classroom would show male and female students, students of different color, students from a variety of economic backgrounds, and even special education students learning in a shared environment (United States Department of Education, 1996). This snapshot would serve as evidence of the vast social, legal, and political changes that have affected public education in the United States. Today, change is once again altering the image of the typical classroom.

Traditionally, the majority of immigrants to the United States came from Europe. However, immigrants from Asia and Latin America are the fastest growing demographic groups today (Davis-McFarland, 2008). Widespread immigration, once predominantly in coastal and border areas of the country, has now begun to affect classrooms nationwide. As illustrated by Davis-McFarland, 25% of the students in Dearborn, Michigan are of Arabic descent, while Iowa and Louisiana are experiencing a rapid increase in the number of Bosnian and Vietnamese immigrants, respectively (p. 199). Additionally, North Carolina has the fastest growing Hispanic population in the nation.

In recent years, the discussion regarding immigration in this country has reached a crescendo with an increase in proposed legislative actions and in public demonstrations. While the issue of immigration is multi-faceted, one of the most pressing aspects is the question of how immigrant children should be taught in public schools. In addition to religious, cultural, and ideological diversity (Davis-McFarland, 2008), linguistic diversity is an issue. The majority of immigrant students enter American schools with limited ability to read, write, and speak
effectively in English. These students, many of whom cannot even understand what news reports say about them, are caught in the center of a maelstrom that continues to be discussed in public schools across the country.

To appropriately educate these English Language Learners (ELLs), many school districts have sought the most effective means of providing service to these students. Some districts have even created cluster schools or newcomer centers for educating ELLs. While the effectiveness of these programs is unknown, questions swirl around them. Some educators feel that keeping ELLs in a separate environment violates the spirit of the Brown v Board of Education ruling and, thus, is an issue for the Office of Civil Rights. Others, who are more focused on budgets than outcomes, claim that these programs cost taxpayers too much (Cobb, 2006). Rossell (2004/2005) identified some of the more popular methods of instruction:

1. ELL Pullout Programs. These programs allow students to receive mainstream instruction while simultaneously receiving additional English skills work in a self-contained classroom.

2. Transitional Bilingual Education. This approach allows students the opportunity to learn core content in their native language while developing English language skills.

3. Two-Way Bilingual Education. This approach has teachers instructing a class in two different languages to students who speak either of those two languages as a primary language.

4. Bilingual Maintenance Program. These programs place an emphasis both on developing English and maintaining the students’ primary language.

The question of how to teach these students most effectively is a politically difficult issue, with ideologies from both sides of the aisle in conflict. Even educational researchers have been unable to agree on one best method; thus, school systems across the country must choose the method that works best for them. Unfortunately, what often works best for these districts is not the best for the students. Many districts are choosing delivery programs based on cost, even
if the programs fail to offer the services these students are legally guaranteed. ELLs are often placed in regular education classrooms for much of the instructional day, and often with a teacher who has little understanding of how best to teach a student that is learning English (Wong-Fillmore & Meyer, 1992). Defined by the United States Department of Education’s (2008) Office of Civil Rights (OCR) as submersion, this practice is built around the theory that students will naturally acquire the English language. The OCR does not consider submersion an effective program for providing an education to ELLs.

While the focus of the controversy is often on the students, little mention is made about the teachers who work with these students in class. In an attempt to understand the impact immigration has on educators, Shuford (2004) interviewed a teacher from the Los Angeles Unified School District. The teacher’s response clearly indicated that teachers have negative attitudes regarding the education of immigrant students:

Many of these kids come to kindergarten ill prepared. They don't even speak their native language well! They are tested in both English and Spanish. We refer to them as “non-nons” (no language at all!) The joke was, “Were they locked in a closet and let out for kindergarten?” Most have no school experience whatsoever; their hands shake when they hold a pencil or crayon for the first time because they haven't developed their small motor skills, and they don't know how to use a pair of scissors. They don't know how to tie their shoes, name colors, any letters, or how to count to ten. (p. 1)

Shuford’s findings are obviously limited in scope, but they do suggest that some teachers are overwhelmed when attempting to provide education to immigrant students. If Shuford’s findings are representative of a teacher force overwhelmed by the rising tide of ELLs, then the reasons must be considered.

This study examined teachers’ attitudes toward ELLs through the theoretical framework of instructional tolerance theory (Gerber, 1988). This framework suggests that because instructional resources are limited, and because diverse learners require more instructional
resources, some teachers will not be able to provide adequate instruction to all students. While many potential instructional resources could be important, Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) and Cook, Cameron, and Tankersley (2007) listed support, expertise, and time as key resources always found in finite quantities. This framework was the basis of the study’s design, including collecting and analyzing data and reporting the findings.

This study is significant primarily because No Child Left Behind (NCLB) regulations hold schools accountable for teaching diverse learners, including ELLs, in a regular education classroom. According to the U.S. Census for 2000, approximately one million school age children speak limited English, while nearly a quarter of a million more speak no English at all. Additionally, most of these students come from homes in which Spanish is the dominant language (United States Census Bureau, 2003). These numbers become even more substantial when considering the fact that illegal immigrant children are not represented in the tally. In California, one of the states most affected by immigration, over 25% of the students are classified as English Learners (California Department of Education, 2006). In the context of instructional tolerance theory, a teacher’s response to the inclusion of these students will likely have great impact upon student learning.

**Statement of the Problem**

While extensive research on effective inclusion practices has been published, the majority of the findings relate specifically to the inclusion of students with disabilities. McLeskey and Waldron (2000) suggested that successful inclusion programs are based on attitudes and begin with teachers thinking differently about their students. However, because there is a paucity of research concerning teacher attitudes toward ELLs (Youngs & Youngs, 2001), little is known
about the specific attitudes that teachers have when teaching an ELL student, much less how these attitudes will impact instruction.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine regular education teachers’ attitudes toward the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom. More specifically, this study sought to understand whether teacher attitudes were influenced by the specific instructional factors of support, expertise, and time as discussed by Cook, Cameron, and Tankersley (2007).

**Research Questions**

The central focus of this study pertained to the attitudes that regular education teachers have toward ELLs. The following research questions are reflective of the researcher’s theoretical framework of instructional tolerance, based on the work of Gerber (1988). Instructional tolerance theory attempts to explain why teachers find some students more difficult to work with, by addressing the fact that these students require increased amounts of support, expertise, and time (Cook, Cameron, & Tankersley, 2007). Specifically, these three instructional factors were used in developing the research questions. This study intended to examine the following four questions:

1. Do teachers who feel they receive adequate support, both formal and informal, have more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom, and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate support?

2. Do teachers who feel they possess adequate expertise in meeting the educational needs of ELLs have more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom, and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate expertise?

3. Do teachers who feel they are provided with an adequate amount of time to work effectively with ELLs have more positive attitudes towards the inclusion
of ELLs in the regular education classroom, and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate time?

4. Are there any first order or second order interactions among the three variables of support, expertise, and time?

**Operational Definitions**

The following definitions of terms are presented to aid the reader in understanding this study. While it is assumed that there are other acceptable definitions, for the purpose of this study, the following operational definitions apply:

1. *English Language Learner (ELL).* As defined by the Education Alliance at Brown University, the term English language learner indicates a person who is in the process of acquiring English and has a first language other than English. Other terms commonly found in the literature include language minority students, limited English proficient (LEP), English as a second language (ESL), and culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD).

2. *Inclusion.* The participation by all relevant stakeholders in a supportive general education environment, where the student with a special requirement receives appropriate academic and social instruction (Bradley, King-Sears, & Tessier-Swetlick, 1997). This term should not be confused with mandatory inclusion practices in the special education context.

3. *Attitudes.* According to Ajzen (cited in Al-Gahtani & King, 1999), a predisposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to an object, person, event, or institution.

4. *Instructional Tolerance.* “A band of permissible error around teachers’ perceptions of what they regard to be the teachable, modal range of students in their classes” (Gerber, 1988, p. 310).

5. *Formal Support.* Encouragement, assistance, or allocation of resources by school administrators that directly influences classroom teachers.

6. *Informal Support.* Encouragement or assistance that a teacher receives from peer teachers, parents, or members of the community.
Delimitations

The researcher recognizes that many factors may impact the study. However, it was determined that the following factors would not be controlled, and thus would be the parameters of this study. Some of the uncontrolled factors are as follows:

1. The study focused on one school district in East Tennessee.

2. The researcher excluded ELL and Special Education teacher groups from the data collection procedures in an attempt to concentrate on the attitudes held by general education teachers.

Limitations

The researcher additionally identified factors that impact the study by potentially biasing the findings. Two factors outside the researcher’s control were specifically identified and are considered as limitations of this study:

1. Attitudes regarding ELLs are potentially influenced by non-school related factors such as political affiliation, religious beliefs, or prior experiences.

2. Because it is likely that some data will be collected from teachers who do not have any ELLs this year, some respondents might be inclined to answer the survey questions based upon their ideals rather than the actual feelings that they would have when actually working with students.

Significance of the Study

In an era of high-stakes accountability, every student should receive a fair and appropriate education. The increasing number of ELLs entering public schools makes the difficult task of integrating these students even more difficult for schools that desire to meet educational needs. While most teachers support inclusion as an ideal, the vast majority do not think they have sufficient tools available to make inclusion work (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). Additionally, teachers’ attitudes are often influenced by their levels of empathy; professional background; and perhaps even demographic features, such as gender or age. These influences
are troublesome if they lead to negative attitudes about integration because teachers’ attitudes about integration have been identified as a major roadblock in successfully integrating diverse learners. Brisk (1998) claimed that a teacher’s attitudes about working with ELLs are just as important as the teacher’s skills and competencies. Evidence of this claim was provided by Schumm and Vaughn (1991, 1992), whose research showed that teachers who do not feel equipped to work with diverse learners are less likely to individualize lesson plans. For a school that is truly attempting to leave no child behind, this lack of individualization is unacceptable and must be addressed.

The first step in addressing this problem is identifying general education teacher attitudes towards working with ELLs. Teacher attitudes regarding accommodation, differentiated instruction, academic and social growth, and classroom behavior and management are essential in this process (Larrivee, 1981). However, little research is currently available regarding teachers’ attitudes about teaching ELLs in a general education classroom. Therefore, this study sought to expand upon the current knowledge by providing data that helps quantify teacher attitudes.

In addition to identifying attitudes, this study examined whether or not limited quantities of support, personal expertise, and time influenced teacher attitudes. The researcher desires that leaders in education will use these results to better equip teachers to meet the instructional needs of ELLs in the classroom.

**Summary of Introduction Chapter**

The impact of immigration in the public school classroom is evident. This is especially true in areas of the country that had not previously experienced large-scale immigration. As more teachers come in contact with ELLs, quantifying teacher attitudes toward ELLs becomes
paramount. Currently little is known about these specific teacher attitudes. The purpose of this study was to examine teacher attitudes toward the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom, and more specifically, the study sought to understand whether these attitudes were influenced by the specific instructional factors of support, expertise, and time.

The study was guided by four research questions which examine teachers’ perceptions of whether they have adequate amounts of support, expertise, and time. Additionally, the research questions explore the factors that teachers would identify as leading to the perception that they do have adequate support, expertise, and time. The final research question examined the potential interactions among the three variables.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

With the constantly changing social landscape of American society, teachers face tremendous challenges in meeting the diverse needs of their students (Torres-Valesquez, 2000). The number of students who speak a language other than English is continually increasing. Meanwhile, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) focuses on the accountability (which relies solely on standardized test scores) of providing a core curriculum for all students. Teachers, unfortunately, are caught in the middle. Best practices in education show that all learners benefit from having individually customized lessons. In working with special education students, individualization is not only best practice, but is law. However, according to Cuban (cited in Willis, 2002), teachers have difficulty to effectively bridging the gap between standardized tests and individual instruction because of the limited resources available to teachers. The purpose of this study was to examine regular education teachers’ attitudes toward the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom from the perspective that there are finite resources such as support, personal expertise, and time. Furthermore, this study intended to examine the relationship between these limited resources and teacher attitudes toward ELLs.

The importance of studying teacher attitudes concerning working with ELLs is significant. Good and Weinstein (1986) discussed the fact that teachers make judgments about future student achievement based on classroom assignments and perceived student ability. Furthermore, teachers’ expectations are a large predictor of how successful the students will be in the future (Youngs & Youngs, 2001). While this observation is true for any teacher working with any student, it is even more critical for teachers working with ELLs. In fact, researchers
have shown that spoken language ability is one of the first determinants in the formation of a teacher’s attitude about a particular student (Bikson, 1974; Choy & Dodd, 1976).

This review of literature began by providing an historical overview of the practice of inclusion, including an overview of the legal changes that led to inclusion. The next section of the literature review addressed the following aspects of teacher attitudes: Teacher attitudes towards diverse learners in the classroom, the possible impact of teacher attitudes on student achievement, and the relationship between efficacy and teacher attitudes. In addition, the review examined to what extent pre-service training programs are preparing new teachers to work with diverse learners. Finally, the guiding theoretical perspective of instructional tolerance was discussed.

**Legislative History of Inclusion**

*Brown v. Board of Education*

During the early half of the 20th century, an average public school classroom in America would not have been representative of the American population. While schools were the first step towards the American Dream for many students some were segregated or excluded due to race, nationality, or physical handicap. During the early stages of the Civil Rights movements, however, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) set reform of the public education system as one of its main targets (Smith & Kozleski, 2005). Finally, in 1954, the United States Supreme Court unanimously ruled that segregation in public schools was a violation of the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment. Although it took many years to implement fully, the impact of this case was far reaching, as the doors to public schools were opened to all students regardless of race, creed, or disability. Unfortunately, more litigation and
legislation was required to guarantee all students truly received the opportunity to chase the American dream.

The Inclusion of Special Education Students

After the Supreme Court ruling in the Brown case, advocates for special education students saw an opportunity to pursue their agenda of rectifying an inherently unequal approach to the education of disabled students. In court cases such as Mills v. the District of Columbia and PARC v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the federal court system ruled that students could not be denied an education solely because of their disability (Blanchett, Mumford, & Beachum, 2005). On the basis of these two important cases, Congress passed Public Law 94-142, the Education of the Handicapped Act of 1975, which maintained that students with disabilities must be educated in an environment offering the best opportunity for success with the least restrictions. For most states, this law did not immediately include the regular classroom. Fifteen years later, Congress passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, guaranteeing all students a free and appropriate public education. Subsequent amendments to this law placed on general education teachers even more responsibility for educating disabled students (Ross, 2002). Despite the fact that educating students with disabilities had become federal law, many school districts were slow to conform. In fact, in many instances, school decisions were found to be in direct conflict with the law. For example, in the cases of Greer v. Rome City School District, Oberti v. Board of Education, and Sacramento City Unified School District v. Rachel Holland, district and federal courts ruled that students with Down Syndrome must be included in a regular education classroom (McGregor & Vogelsberg, 1998).
**Educating ELLs**

Currently questions regarding the inclusion of special education students have subsided, as most teachers have accepted that such inclusion will continue. However, the same cannot be said for including ELLs in regular education classrooms. It should be noted that inclusion of ELLs refers more to the practice of providing instruction for these students in a general education classroom than to the idea of an inclusion model as mandated by special education laws.

According to Haas (2005), the first landmark case regarding education of ELLs was *Lau v. Nichols*, in which the Supreme Court held that an equitable education is not synonymous with an identical education. The effect of this ruling was that students could no longer be discriminated against due to their language, and that schools offering identical education resources to ELLs were in fact violating the students’ rights. In 1974, Congress passed the Equal Educational Opportunity Act (EEOA), which required that states ensure the rights to equal participation by helping ELLs overcome language barriers. The passage of this law was directly influenced by the Supreme Court ruling in *Lau v. Nichols*; hence, the law is commonly referred to as the Lau remedy. At this time, states were required to take appropriate action to help ELLs overcome the language barriers that prevented them from achieving in school. Congress and the court system did not determine, however, what constituted appropriate action by the states. The Fifth Circuit Court, in a later case, *Castenada v. Pickard*, attempted to correct this oversight by ruling that programs to aid ELL students must be based on “sound educational theory supported by some experts” (p. 361). Problematic to this ruling is the fact that experts can be found to support nearly any action of a school district, as evidenced by the court holdings in *Teresa P. v. Berkeley Unified School District*, and *Valeria G. v. Wilson*. In each of these cases, experts
deemed as “fringe minority” (p. 362) claimed that programs similar to the program denounced in the Lau ruling, were educationally sound.

**Teacher Attitudes Regarding the Inclusion of Diverse Learners**

*Theory and Practice*

As mentioned previously, most teachers recognize that special education law mandates that inclusion be part of the educational process for the foreseeable future, yet not all educators are solidly behind the idea. While citing multiple studies that have found evidence of teachers with welcoming attitudes to inclusive practice, Reeves (2006) also alluded to research that contradicts this claim and shows that teachers view inclusion in a negative light. Youngs and Youngs (2001) determined that while teachers often self-report a neutral to slightly positive attitude towards inclusion, they are personally unwilling to work closely with students who benefit from inclusion. This claim was supported by the works of Lee-Tarver (2006) and McGregor and Vogelsberg (1998), which show that teachers’ philosophical support of inclusion fades when the inclusion program directly affects the individual teacher. Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) suggested a possible cause for this by noting that most teachers agree with inclusion in theory, but do not find it to be practical due to several logistical concerns such as lack of time, instructional resources, and quality training.

Another factor that might affect teachers agreeing with inclusion philosophically but still maintaining negative attitudes in its implementation is the particular disability that must be overcome in dealing with a particular student. Forlin, Douglas, and Hattie (1996) conducted a quantitative survey that found an inverse relationship between positive teacher attitudes towards inclusion and the severity of the disability. This relationship appears to be especially true when teachers are asked to deal with students who have speech and language difficulties (Dockrell,
Lindsay, Letchford, 2006). Marshall, Stojanovik, and Ralph (2002) explained this phenomenon by stressing the importance of communication in a classroom and emphasizing the difficulties in overcoming this type of problem. Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, and Driscoll (2005) supported the validity of this claim about the frustration that comes with the difficulty of overcoming language barriers that teachers experience when communicating with ELLs and their parents.

**Demographic Influence on Teacher Attitudes**

Few researchers have explored the question of how demographic characteristics such as gender, years teaching, or subject area influence teacher attitudes towards inclusion. However, two studies that did address this issue offered contradictory evidence. Youngs and Youngs (2001) found several factors that correlate to teachers’ positive attitudes toward inclusion. Teachers who had coursework exposing them to multicultural issues, worked in humanities or sciences, had some English as a Second Language (ESL) training, had lived outside the United States, had interacted with a culturally diverse population, and were female were deemed the most receptive to ELLs. Van Reusen, Shoeho, and Barker (2001), however, collected survey data from teachers in San Antonio that showed no statistically significant differences between the teachers’ attitudes based on gender, years of experience, and subject area taught.

**Perceived Problems Associated With Inclusion**

Both qualitative and quantitative researchers have sought to discover what teachers find undesirable about inclusion. Smith and Smith (2000) cited four themes to explain teachers’ negative attitudes about inclusion: training, class load, support, and time. Current research is consistent with their findings. This subsection addresses the following perceived problems of inclusion as identified in the literature: (a) lack of time, (b) increased workload, (c) damaging
effect on quality of education for other students, (d) difficulty in communication, (e) feelings of being unprepared to help the students, and (f) lack of administrative support.

Not having enough time is an issue that many teachers face. Researchers have shown that this lack of time often leads to decreased effectiveness as a teacher (Bateman, 2008; Williams & Coles, 2007). This effect is especially true of teachers who are responsible for the instruction of students with diverse educational needs, as these students tend to place higher demands on class time and management (Lopes, Monteiro, & Sil, 2004). In a study of 5,300 California teachers, time was identified as a major concern associated with effectively handling inclusion of ELLs. Teachers claimed that they needed additional time to work with these students, as well as more time to plan for instruction and collaborate with colleagues (Gandara et al., 2005). The concern for time was echoed by teachers in a qualitative study in which teachers stated the need for additional time to collaborate and to meet individually with students having an individualized education program (IEP) (Kamens, Loprete & Slostad, 2003).

Closely related to the time concern is teachers’ perception that an increased workload comes with each student included in the classroom. A study by D’Alonzo, Giordano, and Vanleeuwen (1997) found that teachers were very concerned with the increased amount of paperwork that went hand-in-hand with inclusion. Additionally, Reeves (2006) discussed the increase in workload that is caused by having to modify lesson plans for several students. It should be noted that the increased paperwork is more closely associated with the inclusion of special education students than the inclusion of ELLs.

In the D’Alonzo et al. (1997) study, 70% of responding teachers cited a belief that the overall quality of education in their classroom would decrease for all students as a result of inclusion (p. 10). Van Reusen et al. (2001) listed a possible explanation for this belief when they
reported that many teachers believe the learning environment of the classroom is negatively influenced by inclusion. In a similar vein, Derwing, DeCorby, Ichikawa, and Jamieson (1999) noted that some teachers prefer not having ELLs because they are afraid that the class test scores will be lower and reflect poorly on them.

Another common problem mentioned by teachers is a feeling of not being adequately trained to handle the needs of students whom they consider lazy, culturally deprived, and intentionally disobedient (Sims, 2006; Tsovili, 2004). Kamens et al. (2003) stated that many general education teachers have neither the skills nor the expertise needed to work effectively with a diverse set of learners. Evidence of this can be found in a report from the National Center for Education Statistics (2002), which claimed that nearly half of the teachers surveyed had worked with an ELL, but few had received more than eight hours of ELL specific professional development. This lack of efficacy can often cause a teacher not to support inclusion (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996; Wilson & McCrary 1996). Platt, Harper, and Mendoza (2003) provided evidence of this attitude by documenting qualitative responses of Florida educators whose opinions about the practice of including ELLs were largely driven by whether or not a teacher had the personal expertise necessary for effectively instructing ELLs.

In addition to not being adequately trained, many teachers also believe that they lack the necessary support from their school administration (Derwing et al., 1999; Kamens et al., 2003; Treder, Morse, & Ferron, 2000). Additionally, Knivetson (2004) noted that many teachers are not provided with the resources, such as training or instructional tools, they need to be successful. For teachers, the result of these problems is an increased amount of job-related stress (Lee-Tarver, 2006), and subsequent negative attitudes about inclusion. Ultimately, the students will suffer.
Manifestations of Negative Attitudes

When teachers have negative attitudes toward inclusion, certain behaviors towards students often accompany those attitudes. Tsovili (2004) documented examples of poor behavior that include violence and discrimination towards students with disabilities. While negative behaviors are not typically this extreme, they are often just as dangerous. One prime example of more subtle negative behaviors are identifying students as either “mine” if they receive no additional services, or “yours” if they receive extra services, and thus refusing to take full responsibility for the success of the included students (Friend & Pope, 2005; Treder et al., 2000).

The Impact of Teacher Attitudes on Student Learning

Importance of Teacher Attitude for Students Overcoming Obstacles

Without question, all students must overcome any obstacles they might face in order to succeed in school. However, undoubtedly, minority, disabled, low SES, and ELL students often have the most difficult hurdles. It is in working with these students that teacher attitudes have the most serious impact (Love & Kruger, 2005). Diamond, Randolph, and Spillane (2004) asserted that teachers’ attitudes have a more powerful influence on black students than on whites. This assertion is supported by Sims (2006) who explained that minority students are more heavily influenced by the amount of confidence or doubt held by an authority figure. Furthermore, negative attitudes from authority figures might lead to low academic self-esteem and long-term failure.

Sometimes negative attitudes can appear positive on the surface. A qualitative study of urban community leaders uncovered the fact that many teachers who focus on the perceived deficits in students’ home lives are guilty of babying the student in an effort to compensate for the lack of support the student receives at home. The consequence of this perception is that
teachers act upon a belief that the students need love more than they need to learn how to read (Blanchett et al., 2005). Hatch (1992) coined the term “benevolent conspiracy” when describing this phenomenon of denying students the full opportunity for academic growth by placing a higher emphasis on providing comfort (p. 67).

**Impact of Teacher Attitude in the Inclusive Classroom**

Teacher attitudes are important in all classroom settings and have an impact on student learning. However, the impact of teachers’ attitudes in the inclusive setting is even more vital. Kniveton (2004) discussed the importance of positive teacher attitudes in reaching individual students who are included because of their particular disability. Likewise, D’Alonzo et al. (1997) and Treder et al. (2000) asserted that inclusive programs simply would not be successful in the absence of positive teacher attitudes. The two subsequent sections discuss evidence that support this claim.

**Emotional and Psychological Impact of Teacher Attitudes**

Positive teacher attitudes have been linked with student success in several studies. Tsovili (2004) discussed the relationship between positive attitudes such as understanding and empathy and students who form a positive personal identity. Similarly, negative attitudes are often detrimental to student success. In a study of Arizona teachers’ attitudes toward ELLs, Garcia-Nevarez, Stafford, and Arias (2005) claimed that the effect of negative attitudes could even extend into the emotional and psychological realms. Tsovili (2004) reported that disabled students who have teachers with negative attitudes toward them would experience school as a dangerous environment where they are discriminated against, humiliated, and sometimes even physically abused. Sims (2006) suggested the long-term effect of this type of schooling is often a life characterized by unemployment or even prison.
Low Expectations as a Self-fulfilling Prophecy

Far too often, teachers fail to hold students to high expectations (Jones, 2002). Diamond et al. (2004) posit that this occurs more frequently with economically challenged minority students, and described findings from their qualitative study of teachers’ expectations, which discovered that some teachers were inclined to believe that minority students’ backgrounds prevented them from being capable of doing difficult work in the classroom. The lack of challenge often is accompanied by a lack of academic growth. Jones (2003) stated that low expectations also occur frequently with ELLs. The voice of parents in the study cried out that Hispanic students are “uncut diamonds, but no one wanted to polish them” (p. 86), and other parents noted, “I don’t believe I’ve ever heard a teacher say they expected a lot from our kids, that they expected them to go on to college” (p. 87).

Tauber (1998) described the above situation as the Pygmalion effect, which is when students’ performance conforms positively or negatively to their teachers’ expectations. When Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) described the Pygmalion effect in their book, they were essentially expanding upon the sociological theory known as self-fulfilling prophecies. Rosenthal (cited in Tauber, 1998) describes the four factors of the self-fulfilling prophecy as climate, feedback, input, and output. Teachers tend to influence the learning climate through their nonverbal cues such as smiling and nodding, or conversely frowning and shaking the head in disapproval. Students will also either prosper or suffer depending on the amount and type of feedback they receive. When teachers have high expectations, the feedback tends to be effusive and detailed. The factor of output is characterized by teachers encouraging or discouraging student response based upon preset notions of how competent the student is. Perhaps the most
important factor, however, is that of input. Teachers simply teach more when they believe the student is more capable of learning (Tauber, 1998).

The results of self-fulfilling prophecies are devastating when teachers hold low expectations for students. Tauber (1998) discussed a longitudinal study completed by Jussim and Eccles that reported that teacher expectations affect both student achievement and behavior, regardless of the students’ previous success and motivation. This study is supported by the quantitative work of Kenealy, Frude, and Shaw (1990) which claimed teachers’ beliefs about student intelligence at ages 11-12 were effective predictors of how the students would perform on standardized examinations at the age of 18. Clearly teachers’ attitudes about the students they work with are powerful predictors of student achievement and thus worthy of further study.

The Impact of Efficacy on Teacher Attitudes

Teachers Do Not Feel Competent to Work in an Inclusive Environment

One area of research that holds promise for improving teacher attitudes is the study of the relationship between teacher efficacy and attitude. When Horne (as cited by Wall, 2002) asked teachers to rate which type of student they would least prefer to work with in the classroom, the teachers identified visually impaired students most frequently. One of the main reasons given for this is that teachers simply lack confidence to teach a blind child. In a national survey of teachers, discussed by Jones (2003), over half of the teachers responded that they teach a culturally diverse group of students. More importantly, though, only a fifth of the teachers believed they were competent in meeting the needs of the diverse learners. The gap is enormous, and according to Gandara et al. (2005), is more prevalent among secondary teachers. The possible impact that this would have on graduation rates around the country is monumental.
**Competency is Developed Through Adequate Training**

If teachers truly lack confidence to work with diverse learners, the paucity of adequate training is likely the reason. Hasslen and Bacharach (2007) and McGregor and Vogelsberg (1998) both cited the impact that effectively training teachers has on feelings of competence. Furthermore, several studies show a correlation between teachers who feel competent to meet the educational needs of diverse learners because of thorough training, and the teachers’ positive attitudes regarding inclusion (D’Alonzo et al., 1997; Lee-Tarver, 2006; Ross, 2002). These studies indicate that this is especially true with students who are considered mildly disabled. Byrnes, Kiger, and Manning (1997) indicated that the same holds true for teachers who teach language minority students.

The positive impact of training on attitudes has been examined in other areas of education, and has been shown to be consistent with the above findings. In a study of pre-service teachers’ attitudes regarding the integration of health education into respective curricula, most pre-service teachers felt unprepared due to lack of pre-service training. However, after an extensive series of inservice training, the same teachers reported a greater comfort level and loftier intentions of teaching health to their students (Myers-Clack & Christopher, 2001). Likewise, increased training helped modify teacher attitudes in working with technology in an instructional setting. Milbraith and Kinzie (2000) reported that many teachers are extremely nervous about utilizing technology in the classroom because they lack both training and experience, and Yildirim (2000) echoed this sentiment in stating that a lack of technology training is the biggest reason that teachers refuse to incorporate technology. However, the presence of effective training tends to reverse the cycle, as teachers overcome fears, increase
their confidence, and develop positive attitudes about classroom technology (Benson, Farnsworth, Bahr, Lewis, & Shaha, 2004; Milbrath & Kinzie, 2000; Yildirim, 2000).

Pre-Service Teacher Training

Addressing the Inadequacy of Pre-Service Training for Working with ELLs

Although the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students continues to increase rapidly in the United States, the typical pre-service teacher candidate continues to be a White, middle-class English speaker (Jones, 2002). The importance of training these pre-service teachers to deal with diverse learners is substantial (Brown, 2005), yet according to a survey of 417 colleges and universities, only one out of six require general education teachers to take classes specific to ELL instruction (Menken & Antunez, 2001). Brown (2004) suggested that state agencies should intervene at this point and mandate credentialing programs to require pre-service teachers to take courses in ELL methods, rather than solely focusing on general education theory and content specific instruction. As this has yet to happen, Meskill (2005) asserted that new teachers tend to feel just as unprepared as veteran teachers when dealing with culturally diverse students. This should be considered as evidence that teacher education programs are not successfully training pre-service teachers.

In attempting to determine the exact shortcomings that must be addressed in reforming pre-service programs, researchers have identified problems with textbooks used in college classes, development of cultural competency, and ability to understand specifically the unique needs of students learning a new language. Watson, Miller, Driver, Rutledge, and McAllister (2005) examined 25 commonly used teacher-training textbooks in an attempt to determine how pre-service teachers are being introduced to the various facets of working with ELLs. The study showed that many books do not give adequate coverage to the issue, while other books present
the material in a negative light and offer few strategies for dealing with the problems encountered by teachers of ELLs. The researcher recognizes that individual professors may overcome this by utilizing supplementary resources to prepare future teachers to meet the educational needs of ELLs.

Cultural competency is often described as the ability to recognize cultural differences, and to respect the specific needs of individual students based upon those cultural differences. Blanchett et al. (2005) cited findings from their qualitative study of urban school stakeholders in which a common complaint is that teachers are not given the opportunity to develop cultural competency in their teacher education programs. In an effort to confront this problem, Jones (2002) admitted that many programs have begun to require at least one course in multiculturalism. However, as new teachers continue to espouse feelings of being unprepared, it is apparent that more needs to be done. Cummins (2001) claimed that multicultural classes only give brief mention to the needs of ELLs, and Jones (2002) proceeded to state that pre-service programs must move beyond exploring multiculturalism and instead focus on helping teachers navigate the difficult waters of diversity so that they can make positive impacts all learners. Sims (2006) agreed and voiced the opinion that teachers must be taught how to develop instructional strategies that incorporate the strengths of different cultural learning styles.

Just as teachers must be adequately trained to recognize cultural differences, they must also be exposed to best practices of dealing with language learners. Meskill (2005) asserted that teachers must be taught that there is a strong bond between language and culture, the theories behind language acquisition, the impact of culture in the learning process, the additional responsibilities that come with teaching ELLs, and effective strategies for communicating with parents of ELLs. This list is expanded upon by Solomon, Lalas, and Franklin (2006), who
focused more on the pedagogy of working with ELLs. Among the topics listed as most important for new teachers of ELLs were instructional strategies, assessment practices, and effective modifications.

**Changing Teacher Attitudes Through Pre-Service Training**

In addition to training new teachers to feel competent, pre-service programs also are uniquely positioned to influence heavily teacher attitudes toward diverse learners. Pajares (1992) claimed that teachers’ beliefs are at least partially related to pre-service teacher training. Likewise, Smith, Moallem, and Sherrill (as cited by Garmon, 2005) noted that four of the most influential factors of changing student beliefs are exposure to individuals of different cultural background, education, travel, and experiencing discrimination personally. Of these, education was listed as the second most vital. Garmon cited the Smith et al. study in support of his theory that a teacher’s attitudes about diversity are the result of their dispositions and their experiences. Garmon proposes that effective pre-service education is one of the more important experiences that teachers will have, and thus has great potential for changing attitudes. Furthermore, pre-service programs can help to instill empathy, which is one of the key factors influencing how a teacher will treat ELLs (Dong, 2004).

**Effective Models for Pre-service Training Reform**

Historically, pre-service training programs have been very compartmentalized, with regular and special education teachers taking separate curricular paths on the journey towards licensure. Because of this compartmentalization, regular education teachers have not always received the proper training needed to deal with special education students included in regular education classrooms (Villa, Thousand, & Chapple, 1996). This phenomenon is equally reflected in the differences between the training programs for regular education and ESL
teachers. Meyer and Biklen (as cited by Villa et al., 1996) discussed one successful attempt by Syracuse University to rectify this situation. By combining its regular and special education programs, Syracuse ensured the needs of all teachers could be adequately met through the Inclusive Elementary and Special Education Teacher Preparation Program. It makes sense that if inclusion worked for integrating regular and special education, it might also be effective for integrating regular and ESL education.

Meskill (2005) described another successful model for infusing the important issues of ESL education into the curriculum of regular education pre-service programs. As part of the Training All Teachers (TAT) project, teachers are not just exposed to the theory of ESL education, but also are involved in partnerships with practicing school personnel in an environment where they will deal with ELLs. Feedback from participants revealed that the TAT program was successful in providing competency to teachers. More importantly, however, was the fact that teachers’ attitudes about ELLs changed.

Theoretical Framework

Instructional Tolerance

In designing a study, one of the main difficulties that a researcher must overcome is the narrowing of a broad topic into a set of concise research questions that can be thoroughly examined. Miles and Huberman (1994) claimed that this process is most readily accomplished using a theoretical framework, which describes in detail “the main things to be studied – the key factors, concepts, or variables – and the presumed relationships between them” (p. 18). Maxwell (2005) further described the theoretical framework as being important in not only the selection of research questions, but also the designing of the methodology of the study. As the researcher reviewed the literature on teacher attitudes regarding diverse learners, several potential
theoretical frameworks emerged, but only two were given serious consideration. Initially, consideration was given to theories of empathy (Dong, 2004; Rogers, 1975) due to the role that empathy plays in the formation of attitudes toward people who are considered to be different. The researcher decided to eliminate this theory because an examination of empathy would work best as a qualitative study. Because the researcher preferred to conduct quantitative research and analysis, the following theory of instructional tolerance was selected.

Congressional legislators and federal judges have opened the doors for all students to receive a free, appropriate education, but Gerber (1988) stated that this does not necessarily ensure that diverse learners will receive a valuable education because teachers rarely treat all students equally. Silberman (1969) claimed that there are four distinct attitudes that teachers will have toward students: Attachment, Concern, Indifference, and Rejection. The first attitude, attachment, refers to the bond that teachers form with students whom they enjoy. Concern, is an attitude that implies the teacher is sympathetic to the needs of a student who is struggling for a specific reason. Indifference, as the name suggests, leads to a lack of involvement or interaction between the teacher and the student. The final attitude, rejection, occurs when a teacher deems a student unworthy of the teacher’s professional energy. Each of these attitudes will influence whether or not a student receives a fair education.

This contention is based on the idea that in an inclusionary environment, teachers are expected to achieve joint outcome production simultaneously for students with varying personal and academic characteristics (Cook, Gerber, & Semmel, 1997). Gerber (1988) recognized that in this environment, not all students will be treated equally by the teacher. It should be accepted that this is the case because every teacher is different, and has different biases, abilities, dispositions, and access to resources. Additionally, each student is unique in his or her abilities.
and personalities as well, thus, each student would not need to be treated equally to achieve equity. However, problems arise when the students who have the most need, receive the least from the teacher.

In an attempt to explain why teachers treat some students better than they treat others, Gerber (1988) theorized that teachers operate within a standard instructional tolerance. Only students who fall within this tolerance are deemed teachable. Gerber (2005) stated that teachers create this range of tolerance through “conscious, contingent, or forced choices under conditions of resource scarcity” (p. 516), and that often the tolerance of an individual teacher is based primarily on social construction. This idea builds on Silberman’s (1969) belief that a teacher’s decisions on how to treat students is based more on feelings than on logic. Thus, the range of instructional tolerance will vary for each teacher and class of students (Gerber, 1988).

In synthesizing the work of both Gerber (1988) and Silberman, Cook, Cameron, and Tankersley (2007) noted that even if the teacher wants to attain both excellence and equity, it is nearly impossible to teach each student to the fullest potential due to a scarcity of resources such as time, personal expertise, and support. Additionally, because students who are perceived as having some disability that impedes instruction often fall outside the range of a teacher’s instructional tolerance, the teacher is more likely to be indifferent to or reject them than to accept them or show concern.

Gerber (1988) noted that while the instructional tolerance is varied for every teacher, it is not resistant to change. Based on his findings, he claimed that the range of tolerance will increase as teacher resources increase, and likewise will decrease as teachers have fewer resources. Additionally, school leaders are able to affect the tolerance positively or negatively based on how they allocate school resources (Gerber, 2005).
Summary of Review of Related Literature Chapter

In this literature review, the researcher has familiarized the reader with six areas. First, a brief outline of the history of the movement towards inclusion in the United States was presented. The movement has progressively opened the doors of educational opportunity to all students regardless of race, disability, or language status.

Second, some of the attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs held by general education teachers in regards to the inclusion of diverse learners were discussed. The analysis of attitudes showed that teachers support inclusion in theory, but often reject it in practice due to a variety of factors. Among the perceived problems of inclusion are a lack of time, fear of increased workload, a lowering of educational quality of all students, and an increase in stress.

Third, the potential dangers of negative teacher attitudes, especially as they pertain to diverse learners have been examined. These dangers include, but are not limited to, emotional and psychological damage to the student, and a lower set of expectations that results in a lower level of academic achievement.

Fourth, a discussion of the fact that negative teacher attitudes are quite possibly the result of inadequate training in how best to work with diverse learners was presented. Additionally, the researcher described several studies that showed the impact that effective training has on teacher attitudes. The increased need for training in either the pre-service or the in-service realm is apparent.

Fifth, this review of literature focused on changes that might be addressed by pre-service teacher training programs. In making the necessary changes to textbooks, teaching methods, and curricular requirements, colleges and universities have the opportunity to influence positive
attitudes with future teachers. Additionally, a program that currently meets many of these
guidelines is discussed as a possible model for other pre-service programs.

Finally, this review discussed the foundational principles of the theory of instructional
tolerance. This theory purports that teachers are forced to work under conditions of resource
scarcity and thus will make decisions about which students are worthy of those resources. This
theory was the guide in selecting the research questions.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses upon the methodology of the study, including the design and the procedures of collecting and analyzing relevant data. The first section will restate the research questions and the design of the study. Section two examines the reliability and validity of the survey instrument that was used in the collection of data, and will discuss the origins of the instrument. The third section describes the population that was studied. Section four will present the methodology procedures for collecting data. The procedures of analyzing the data will be described in section five. The final section is a summary of the methodology.

Design of the Study

This study required primary data, and was developed in a survey design format, inquiring of general education teacher attitudes towards English Language Learners (ELL) students in regular education classrooms. A survey instrument measuring teacher attitudes was administered to a sample of full-time, regular classroom teachers to elicit their attitudes regarding educating ELLs within a regular education classroom. Additionally, the instrument sought relevant demographic information that would be useful in examining subsets of the population when examining the following four research questions:

1. Do teachers who feel that they receive adequate support, both formal and informal, have more positive attitudes towards including ELLs in the regular education classroom, and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate support?

2. Do teachers who feel that they possess adequate expertise in meeting the educational needs of ELLs have more positive attitudes towards including ELLs in the regular education classroom, and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate expertise?
3. Do teachers who feel that they are provided with an adequate amount of time to work effectively with ELLs have more positive attitudes towards including ELLs in the regular education classroom, and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate time?

4. Are there any first order or second order interactions among the three variables of support, expertise, and time?

**Survey Instruments**

During the course of reviewing relevant literature, the researcher examined several studies that utilized a survey instrument to collect data on teacher attitudes regarding the inclusion of diverse learners. In each case, the researcher attempted to modify the survey to fit the needs of this study. Survey instruments such as Cook, Semmel, and Gerber’s (1999) Regular Education Initiative Teacher Survey (REITS), D’Alonzo, Giordano, and Vanleeuwen’s (1997) instrument, and Antonak and Larrivee’s (1995) Opinions Relative to Integration (ORI) of students with disabilities were the most relevant to this study. The researcher eliminated the D’Alonzo et al. because it had 53 statements to respond to and was deemed too lengthy. The researcher recognized that the remaining two instruments were very similar in content, but preferred the wording of the ORI, and thus selected it for use in this study.

The survey instrument (Appendix A) used in the study was adapted from the ORI. The original version of the instrument was the Opinions Relative to Mainstreaming Scale (ORMS), and was developed by Larrivee and Cook (1979). In 1995, the instrument was revised by Antonak and Larrivee in an attempt to measure teachers’ attitudes towards the inclusion of students with disabilities in a mainstream classroom. For the purpose of this study, the concept of “students with disabilities” was replaced with the concept of “ELL.” Written permission to modify the ORI was obtained from Barbara Larrivee prior to data being gathered.
The original ORI contained 25 opinion statements that are scored on a six-point Likert scale, with a possible response range from -3 to +3, and with corresponding answer choices of “I disagree very much” to “I agree very much.” The opinion statements are worded in both positive and negative formats, and cover the following broad topics: (a) benefits of inclusion, (b) management issues when dealing with special students, (c) teachers preparation to work with disabled students, and (d) global measure of attitudes about inclusion. In scoring the ORI, the scores of the 12 negatively worded statements are reversed from either positive to negative, or negative to positive. The sum of the 25 responses is then added to 75 to eliminate negative scores. The final possible scores range from zero to 150, with higher scores indicating more favorable attitudes toward ELLs in the regular education classroom. In this study, the dependent variable was each respondent’s score on the adapted ORI.

The ORI has been used in studies both in its original format, and in a modified format, however, both the original and modified format were administered in studies specifically examining teachers’ attitudes regarding special education, whereas this study focused strictly on teachers’ attitudes toward ELLs. According to Antonak and Liveneh (1988), psychometric characteristics of the ORI have been satisfactory. A split-half reliability as determined by the Spearman-Brown reliability coefficient of 0.92 was reported in 1979 and 1982. The most recent revision of the instrument occurred in 1995 and the mean of the Spearman-Brown corrected split-half reliability estimate was 0.87, and a Cronbach’s coefficient alpha homogeneity coefficient of 0.83 was reported. Within the ORI, there are four factor scores and a total score that globally measures teachers’ attitudes about integration. The four subscale scores (a) benefits of integration, (b) integrated classroom management, (c) perceived ability to teach students with disabilities, and (d) special versus integrated general education have not been consistently
established according to Antonak and Larrivee (1995), and thus will not be considered in this study.

In addition, a background component of the instrument (Appendix B), developed by the researcher, was added to the adapted ORI instrument to ascertain factors of professional experience and key demographic characteristics of the participants. This instrument requested information about the teacher’s perceived levels of support, expertise, and time. These questions were designed to allow the respondent to answer subjectively on a four-point Likert scale, and the independent variables in this study were derived from the respondents’ answers to these questions. Teachers who responded positively to each of the three questions regarding support, expertise, and time were also asked to identify factors that contribute to having a positive perception of the aforementioned variables. Additionally, the instrument required respondents to identify the school in which they currently are working, and to state whether they have worked with an ELL student in the past three years.

**Content Validity**

In an attempt to ensure content validity, the researcher brought together a panel of teachers representing elementary, middle, and high schools for examining the survey instruments. This panel of teachers was given the survey packet with instructions to complete the packet, record the amount of time required for completion, and to complete an item-by-item analysis of the instrument with a focus on uncovering any unclear or misleading statements. Additionally the panel was asked to examine each of the 25 statements on the ORI for determining the appropriateness of the statements for ELLs. After thorough review, members of the panel made several recommendations that focused on improving imprecise or unclear
wording of statements, as well as the inclusion of an additional question. The researcher had no concerns with any of the suggestions, and the adapted ORI was further amended for clarity.

**Population Studied**

Purposive sampling was utilized for this study. In the course of designing the study, the researcher worked closely with the English as a Second Language (ESL) Supervisor of a local school district to determine which schools would be most likely to have had a significant number of ELLs within the past three years. Then this list of schools was further examined to guarantee representation of urban, suburban, and rural student populations. For this study, the population consisted of approximately 800 full-time elementary, middle, and high school regular education teachers from a Tennessee school district, which is one of the largest metropolitan school districts in the nation. This school district is comprised of nearly 53,000 students in 50 elementary schools, 13 middle schools, and 12 high schools, and as shown in Figure 1, has experienced large growth in the ELL population over the previous five years.

During the 2007 school year, 1,358 ELLs comprised approximately 2.5% of the student population in this district. Figures 2, 3, 4, and 5 display the 35 different languages which are spoken by ELLs in the district. While Spanish was the dominant language in each level, a strong likelihood existed that teachers would encounter students representing languages that are less frequently spoken in the United States.
Figure 1. % increase in ELLs since 2003-2004 school year.

Figure 2. Active languages in primary schools.
Figure 3. Active languages in intermediate schools.

Figure 4. Active languages in middle schools.
Data Collection Procedures

The researcher continued to work closely with the school district in the data collection process. This professional relationship originated in 2006, when the researcher was asked to create a survey instrument, and analyze subsequent data assessing teacher opinions about a pilot instructional program that offered greater support to ELLs. At that time, the researcher gained permission to utilize the data from the survey, as well as permission to conduct further research if necessary.

After the researcher had created and adapted the ORI survey instrument to be used in this study, the ESL supervisor for the school district was asked to review the instrument to see if it would yield data that would be both helpful and relevant in the fulfillment of district goals. It was determined that the data collected from this study would be mutually beneficial to both the school district and the researcher, and thus the district proceeded to administer the survey instrument.
As the school district had elected to gather the data, it was decided that the survey would be administered in a web-based format. In terms of structure and content, the web-based survey was essentially identical to the printed version, except that respondents marked their choices by clicking radio buttons rather than marking a Scantron sheet with a pencil. The printed version of the survey instruments are found in Appendix A and Appendix B.

The web-based approach to administering surveys has rapidly expanded (Dillman & Bowker, 2001) at least in part due to the well-documented advantages cost savings and time efficiency (Kaplowitz, Hadlock, & Levine, 2004). Additionally, researchers have determined that web based surveys are more effective in terms of item-completion rates (Fraze, Hardin, Brashears, Smith, & Lockaby, 2003), and that they increase respondents giving a socially desirable answer (Bruce, Hawkins, Sharp, & Keller, 2008). Dillman, Tortora, and Bowker (1998) explained that while web-based surveys have many benefits, researchers need to consider the following potential drawbacks: variation in computer literacy among respondents, processing power of computers, screen configurations, connection speeds, and respondents’ access to computers. The researcher determined that because all respondents have access to computers, which must meet school district standards, and since the school district has previously utilized web-based surveys with success, these potential issues were not be problematic.

The lone concern the researcher had with a web-based survey was the response rate. Bruce et al. (2008) outlined several suggestions researchers should follow to improve response rates. Among those were maintaining a concise survey which can be completed in less than 15 minutes, and sending reminders to those who have yet to respond. Kaplowitz, Hadlock, and Levine (2004) also recommended that researchers send reminders to participants, and state that
increased contacts lead to increased response rates. In an attempt to boost the response rates for this survey, the researcher took the following steps. First, a teacher panel was asked to examine the survey to determine how long it took to complete the survey. Panel members ranged from 4 minutes to 15 minutes, with a mean of 9 minutes and 23 seconds for completion. Secondly, the researcher worked to communicate fully with respondents throughout the survey. Principals were asked to alert their teachers that they would be receiving a survey from the district office. Teachers were then sent the survey via e-mail, and a follow-up reminder email was sent to teachers who had not responded within three days. The decision was made to send the follow-up reminder via e-mail as well, which is consistent with research by Schaefer and Dillman (1998) which found that e-mail notices were more effective than paper notices when working with web-based surveys.

The respondents were allowed to remain anonymous for the purposes of the study, but were requested to respond to the survey by both the school principal and a district supervisor. Confidentiality of respondents was ensured by the fact that while the survey was administered by the school district, an off-site assessment company was used to host the survey and store the results.

**Data Analysis**

In order to examine the four research questions, a three-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed on the data set (Support X Expertise X Time), using *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS) version 16. The responses given by each teacher on the Adapted ORI were used to compute an index score, and this index score served as the dependent variable, and the respondent’s reporting to questions regarding perceived adequateness of expertise, support, and time were analyzed as the three independent variables. Only respondents
who selected “I agree very much” and “I agree somewhat” were perceived as having adequate quantities of each respective variable. In interpreting the ANOVA, a .05 level of confidence was utilized.

**Summary of Methodology Chapter**

This chapter explained the survey design nature of the study. A review of the questions being examined introduced the study and was followed by descriptions of the sample population studied, the instruments used for collecting data, and the process in which data was collected. Additionally, a discussion of the statistical procedures that were employed in analyzing the data concluded the chapter.
CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA

In this chapter, the findings regarding teacher attitudes towards English Language Learners (ELLs) are presented, analyzed and discussed. The purpose of this study was to examine regular education teachers’ attitudes toward the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom. More specifically this study sought to understand whether teacher attitudes were influenced by the specific instructional factors of support, personal expertise, and time as discussed by Cook, Cameron, and Tankersley (2007). The following four research questions were used to guide this study:

1. Do teachers who feel that they receive adequate support, both formal and informal, have more positive attitudes towards including ELLs in the regular education classroom, and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate support?

2. Do teachers who feel that they possess adequate expertise in meeting the educational needs of ELLs have more positive attitudes towards including ELLs in the regular education classroom, and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate expertise?

3. Do teachers who feel that they are provided with an adequate amount of time to work effectively with ELLs have more positive attitudes towards including ELLs in the regular education classroom, and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate time?

4. Are there any first order or second order interactions among the three variables of support, expertise, and time?

Description of the Data

The data in this study were collected by the cooperating school district, in conjunction with the researcher. Data was collected using an electronic, web-based survey, which was administered to teachers at select schools during the Fall 2008 semester. The survey, which is an adapted version of Antonak and Larrivvee’s (1995) Opinions Relative to Integration (ORI) of
Students with disabilities, contained 26 opinion statements which were scored on a six-point Likert scale, with a possible response range from -3 to +3, and with corresponding answer choices of “I disagree very much” to “I agree very much.” The opinion statements were worded in both positive and negative formats, and the response values of negatively worded statements were reversed prior to computing the index score. The statements covered the following broad topics: benefits of inclusion, management issues when dealing with ELLs, teachers preparation to work with ELLs, and global measure of attitudes about the inclusion of ELLs. The responses of each participating teacher on this survey were used to compute an index score, which reflected the teachers’ attitudes regarding ELLs, and this index, was utilized as the dependent variable for the study. Possible index scores ranged from zero to 156, with higher scores reflecting more positive attitudes about ELLs in the general education classroom. In this study, teacher index scores ranged from 57 to 156, \(M = 98.75, SD = 18.84\). Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for the index scores of all respondents in the study.

In addition to the 26 statements on the adapted ORI, which were used to generate an index score, respondents were asked to complete questions regarding their professional experience and key demographic characteristics. Information about the teacher’s perceived levels of expertise, support received, and time was also elicited. These questions were designed to allow the respondent to answer subjectively on a four-point Likert scale. Teachers who responded positively to each of the three questions regarding expertise, support, and time were also asked to identify factors that contribute to having a positive perception of the aforementioned variables. Additionally, the instrument required respondents to identify the school in which they currently are working, and to state whether they have worked with an ELL student in the past three years.
In all, 388 teachers chose to respond to this survey. The teachers represented elementary, middle, and high schools, though not in an equal distribution. High school teachers comprised 43% of the respondents. Figure 6 shows the distribution of teachers in each level. It should be noted that some teachers did not respond (DNR) to the question inquiring as to which school they currently teach.

**Response Rates**

The survey was initially sent to 833 teachers who taught at the schools selected for this study during the 2007 school year, and 388 teachers chose to respond. The raw response rate for this study was 46%, but does not take into account the 147 teachers who were included in the e-mail survey invitation but were no longer with the school system. Although these former teachers’ e-mail accounts were still listed as active, the teacher would not actually receive the invitation, and thus would not be able to respond. When adjusted to reflect the 686 teachers that actually received the survey, the response rate increased to 57%. Initially, a higher response rate was anticipated, due to the cooperation of the school system, yet this response rate was deemed acceptable in light of current research on response rates.

The researcher recognized that a low response rate could indicate inadequate data. Biemer and Lyberg (as cited by Johnson & Owens, 2003) claimed the response rate is one of the primary measurements of the quality of a survey based study. However, De Leeuw and de Heer (as cited by Johnson & Owens) have demonstrated that response rates have steadily declined over the past several decades in research conducted in both the United States and the rest of the world. Possible reasons given to explain declining response rates are concerns with privacy, reluctance to participate in non-required events, and skepticism about professional researchers. In an attempt to identify the commonly accepted minimum response rate that would still be
considered valid and worthy of publication, Johnson and Owens studied 18 peer-reviewed, professional journals asking editors if there is a policy regarding minimum response rates. The study revealed that none of the journals examined had a policy that enforced a minimum response rate, and only one journal had an informal policy that set the minimum at 60% with exceptions. This trend is not only evident in research journals, but can also be seen on college campuses, where administrators consider response rates of 25%-35% the norm for college student surveys (Bruce et al., 2008, p. 1). Archer (2008) echoed the idea that this is the new norm in surveys by stating that a response rate of 85% is desirable, but anything exceeding 40% is sufficient; and that the additional time and money required to approach 85% would not be justified. Furthermore, a review of the literature relevant to survey research shows that the delivery format of the survey has a large impact on response rates. In an examination of the effect of delivery mode on survey response rates, Fraze et al. (2003) noted that paper surveys are the most effective with a response rate of 60%, followed by web-based surveys at 43%, and e-mail surveys at 27%. This claim is bolstered by Archer’s (2008) examination of 84 distinct web-based surveys, which had a mean response rate of 48%.
Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Index Scores as computed from the Adapted ORI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive Statistics of Teacher Index Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sample Variance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kurtosis</td>
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<td>Skewness</td>
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<td>Range</td>
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<td>Minimum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6. Respondents by school level.
Data Analysis

In order to examine the four research questions, a three-factor analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed on the data set (Support X Expertise X Time), using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16 (Figure 7). Each respondent’s index score on the adapted ORI was used as the dependent variable, and the respondents’ reporting to questions regarding perceived adequateness of expertise, support, and time were analyzed as the three independent variables. Only respondents who selected “I agree very much” and “I agree somewhat” were considered as perceiving to have adequate quantities of each respective variable. The number of respondents who replied positively for each independent variable is presented in Figure 8. In interpreting the ANOVA, a .05 level of confidence was utilized.

In addition to performing the statistical analysis, the researcher also catalogued responses identifying factors teachers attributed to feeling that they have adequate support, expertise, or time to meet the instructional needs of ELLs. The analyses were based on the following questions:

Research Question 1: Do teachers who feel that they receive adequate support, both formal and informal, have more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom, and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate support?

Table 2 shows that there was no significant difference was found in the mean index scores of teachers who felt they received adequate support and teachers who did not. Overall, 233 teachers responded that they do receive adequate support. Figure 9 reveals that the vast majority identified the presence of an ELL teacher in the building as the primary source of support.
Figure 7. Diagram of a Three-factor ANOVA on impact of Support, Expertise, and Time on Teacher Attitudes toward ELLs.

Research Question 2: Do teachers who feel that they possess adequate expertise in meeting the educational needs of ELLs have more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate expertise?

There were significant differences found in the mean index scores of teachers who felt they had adequate expertise to meet the educational needs of ELLs and teachers who did not (Table 2). The mean index score for teachers who felt they had adequate expertise ($M = 109$) and teachers who did not feel they had adequate expertise ($M = 91$) were significantly different, $F(1, 376) = 4.20, p < .05$. Overall, 165 teachers responded that they do have adequate expertise. Figure 10 reveals that (41%) identified In-service training as the primary source of their expertise.
Figure 8. Positive responses on independent variables.

Table 2: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects (Teacher has adequate Expertise, Support, & Time)

Dependent Variable: Adapted ORI Index Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>638.081</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>638.081</td>
<td>2.625</td>
<td>.106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>1020.000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1020.000</td>
<td>4.195</td>
<td>.041*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>5601.312</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5601.312</td>
<td>23.039</td>
<td>.000*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise X Support</td>
<td>48.667</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>48.667</td>
<td>.200</td>
<td>.655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise X Time</td>
<td>842.970</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>842.970</td>
<td>3.467</td>
<td>.063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support X Time</td>
<td>220.444</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>220.444</td>
<td>.907</td>
<td>.342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise X Support X</td>
<td>32.744</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32.744</td>
<td>.135</td>
<td>.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>89710.664</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>243.118</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>134688.785</td>
<td>376</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

. R Squared = .334 (Adjusted R Squared = .321)
* .05 Significance level
Figure 9. Reasons given for support.

Figure 10. Reasons given for expertise.
Research Question 3: Do teachers who feel that they are provided with an adequate amount of time to work effectively with ELLs have more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate time?

Table 2 displays that there were significant differences found in the mean index scores of teachers who felt they had adequate time to work with ELLs and teachers who did not. The mean index score for teachers who felt they had adequate time ($M = 113$) and teachers who did not feel they had adequate time ($M = 94$) were significantly different, $F(1, 376) = 23.04, p < .05$. Overall, 58 teachers responded that they do have adequate time. Figure 11 shows that (43%) identified having a reduced class size as the primary reason that they had adequate time.

Research Question 4: Are there any first order or second order interactions among the three variables of support, expertise, and time?

As displayed in Table 2, no significant interactions were found among the three variables.

Figure 11. Reasons given for time.
Summary of Data Analysis Chapter

Significant differences were found in the mean index scores of teachers who feel they have adequate expertise compared with teachers who feel they do not have adequate expertise. Teachers identified factors such as pre-service training, in-service training, extra-service training, and classroom experiences as the reasons for feeling they have the expertise necessary to work with ELLs. Of these factors, more teachers identified in-service training as the most important factor in developing personal expertise.

Likewise, significant differences were found in the mean index scores of teachers who feel they have adequate time compared with teachers who feel they do not have adequate time. Teachers identified factors such as being provided with additional planning time, provided with a teaching assistant, having a reduced class size, and being excused from additional responsibilities as reasons for feeling they have adequate time to work with ELLs. Of these, having a reduced class size was the most frequently given reason.

No significant differences were found in the index scores of teachers who feel they have adequate support compared with teachers who do not feel they have adequate support. Additionally, there were no significant first or second order interactions among the three variables of support, expertise, and time.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Increasing numbers of English Language Learners (ELLs) in public school classrooms has created a challenge for both teachers and administrators. Current federal legislation under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) mandates that all students, including ELLs, must show adequate yearly progress in core curricular areas such as reading and math. Many educators find this to be a difficult task to accomplish due to the language barriers that often exist between ELLs and the classroom teacher when ELLs are included in general education classrooms.

Research on inclusion practices specifically relating to special education students has shown that overall teachers have a favorable view of inclusion, as long as they are not having to work directly with the included student (Lee-Tarver, 2006; McGregor & Vogelsberg, 1998; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996; Youngs & Youngs, 2001). Similarly, Karabenick and Noda (2004) found that teachers held mostly favorable attitudes regarding ELLs in the classroom, yet did not want to have the ELL in their own classroom.

Design of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine regular education teachers’ attitudes toward the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom. More specifically this study sought to understand whether teacher attitudes were influenced by the specific instructional factors of support, personal expertise, and time as discussed by Cook, Cameron, and Tankersley (2007). The following four research questions were used to guide this study:

1. Do teachers who feel that they receive adequate support, both formal and informal, have more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of ELLs in the
regular education classroom, and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate support?

2. Do teachers who feel that they possess adequate expertise in meeting the educational needs of ELLs have more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom, and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate expertise?

3. Do teachers who feel that they are provided with an adequate amount of time to work effectively with ELLs have more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom, and what factors are identified by teachers as being essential in terms of having adequate time?

4. Are there any first order or second order interactions among the three variables of support, expertise, and time?

In seeking to answer these questions, the researcher did not attempt to define adequate levels of support, expertise, or time. Rather, the researcher relied solely on teacher perceptions of having adequate support, expertise, and time. In order to gather the relevant data, the researcher designed a two-part, web-based survey to be administered to teachers at schools with significant ELL populations. Part one of the survey examined teachers' attitudes toward ELLs and was used to generate an index score, which was subsequently used as the dependent variable in the study. The second part of the survey instrument asked teachers if they felt they had adequate support, expertise, and time to instruct ELLs effectively. Each of these three variables was considered as the independent variables in the study. The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16. No post-hoc tests were deemed necessary.

**Summary of Findings**

The researcher examined teacher responses on the survey instrument, and subsequently analyzed the data. The following were the major findings of this study:
1. There were significant differences found in the mean index scores of teachers who felt they had adequate expertise to meet the educational needs of ELLs and teachers who did not. Overall, 165 teachers responded that they do have adequate expertise, with (41%) identifying In-service training as the primary source of their expertise.

2. There were significant differences found in the mean index scores of teachers who felt they had adequate time to meet the educational needs of ELLs and teachers who did not. Overall, 58 teachers responded that they do have adequate time, with (43%) identifying having a reduced class size as the primary reason they had adequate time.

3. There were no significant differences found in the mean index scores of teachers who felt they had adequate support and teachers who did not.

4. There were no significant first or second order interactions among the three variables of support, expertise, and time.

**Conclusions**

*Teachers who feel they have adequate experience have significantly more favorable attitudes toward ELLs in the regular education classroom.* A teacher who is confident in their ability to instruct ELLs will have more positive attitudes and improved behavior when teaching the ELL (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). However, current research suggests many teachers feel inadequately trained to handle the needs of diverse learners (Sims, 2006; Tsovili, 2004). The results of this study serve as evidence of this, as only (42%) of respondents felt they had that expertise necessary. According to Kamens et al. (2003), these feelings of inadequacy in terms of expertise are legitimate, as many general education teachers have neither the skills nor the expertise needed to work effectively with a diverse set of learners. The National Center for Education Statistics (2002) reported that nearly half of the teachers surveyed had worked with an ELL, but few had received more than eight hours or ELL specific professional development. Karabenick and Noda (2004), listed lack of understanding of ELL specific issues such as the relationship between heritage language and second language mastery in academics, and inability to distinguish between proficiency in oral communication and abilities specific to cognitive
academic language acquisition as being proof of teachers lacking the necessary expertise. If these aforementioned research claims are accurate, it should not be surprising that teachers who feel they lack the expertise to work with ELLs register significantly lower on the index of positive attitudes toward ELLs in the classroom.

If teachers’ feelings of expertise correlate positively with more positive attitudes about ELLs in the classroom, it is of the utmost importance to work with teachers to improve their skills and competencies related specifically to ELL issues. According to teacher responses from the survey, only (21%) of the teachers who responded that they do have the necessary expertise attributed their expertise to their pre-service training. This shows a glaring need that must be addressed, and it is a need that has been identified by researchers such as Brown (2004), who claimed that state agencies should change teacher-credentialing programs to better reflect the needs of pre-service teachers, who will likely have ELLs in the classroom at some point in their career. As such, all teachers would be required to take courses relating to the instructional methods and assessments for ELLs. This focus on the specific needs of aspiring teachers to work with ELLs must go beyond broad based multicultural education classes that are currently being offered in many pre-service programs. Cummins (2001) claimed that multicultural classes only give brief mention to the needs of ELLs, and Jones (2002) went on to state that pre-service programs must instead focus on helping teachers navigate the difficult waters of diversity so that they can make positive impacts all learners. Sims (2006) agreed and voiced the opinion that teachers must be taught how to develop instructional strategies that incorporate the strengths of different cultural learning styles. It is clear that pre-service programs must augment the current way that teachers are being prepared.
However, a total reliance upon changing pre-service programs will not solve the current situation. Teachers, who responded positively that they do have the necessary expertise, largely gave credit for their expertise to district in-service professional development. It is in this that many districts have a tremendous opportunity to directly improve the attitudes teachers have about working with ELLs in the classroom. Studies show a connection between teachers who feel competent to meet the educational needs of diverse learners because of thorough training, and the teachers’ positive attitudes regarding inclusion (D’Alonzo et al., 1997; Lee-Tarver, 2006; Ross, 2002). Byrnes, Kiger, and Manning (1997) indicated that this is true for teachers who teach ELLs. A variety of researchers (Benson et al., 2004; Milbraith & Kinzie, 2000; Myers-Clack & Christopher, 2001; Yildrim, 2000) reported that extensive in-service training programs are effective at both increasing teachers’ feelings of competency and expertise, and improving attitudes. In a specific example that school administrators should consider, Lee, Deaktor, Enders, and Lambert (2008) outlined a three-year professional development program aimed at elementary science teachers who consistently work with large groups of ELLs. The effects of this program were evident, as teachers were able to increase ELL performance on national tests to the point where the achievement gap between native English speakers and ELLs was narrowed.

*Teachers who feel they have adequate time to work effectively with ELLs have significantly more favorable attitudes toward ELLs in the regular education classroom.* The theory of instructional tolerance is built upon the understanding that teachers have access to limited quantities of resources such as support, expertise, and time. Of these three, time is perhaps the one most commonly listed as problematic. At some point, nearly every teacher feels
as if there is not enough time for grading papers, planning differentiated instruction, handling behavior issues, collaborating with peers, and contacting parents.

Researchers have shown that this lack of time often leads to decreased effectiveness as a teacher (Bateman, 2008; Williams & Coles, 2007). This phenomenon can easily be noted when studying teachers responsible for the instruction of students with diverse educational needs, often because teachers perceive these students as placing higher demands on class time and management (Lopes, Monteiro, & Sil, 2004). California teachers, listed time as a major concern associated with effectively handling inclusion of ELLs, claiming that they needed additional time to work with these students, as well as more time to plan for instruction and collaborate with colleagues (Gandara et al., 2005). The results of this survey align perfectly with the current research. Of the 388 respondents in this study, only (15%) felt they had the necessary time to work effectively with ELLs. Nearly half of these cited a reduced class size as the reason they felt they had enough time. However, in the current era of budget cuts and the subsequent reduction in numbers of teachers, it is not probable that this would be an effective solution for most schools. Additionally, while reduced class sizes may equate with fewer assignments to grade, and fewer discipline issues to address, it does little to provide teachers with additional collaboration time with peers.

It seems unlikely that providing teachers with more time will occur with any regularity. However, Karabenick and Noda (2004) discovered a positive correlation between teachers who have negative attitudes about ELLs and teachers who feel ELLs take too much time, and suggest that instead of giving teachers more time, perhaps teachers should be taught through professional development that little extra time is actually needed when an ELL is in the classroom. If their
findings hold true, changing the teachers’ attitudes about the ELLs, would also change teachers’ feelings of having enough time.

*Teachers who feel they have adequate support did not have significantly more favorable attitudes toward ELLs in the regular education classroom.* In this study, nearly two-thirds of teachers responded that they have the necessary support to teach ELLs in the classroom. Of the teachers who responded positively, (91%) attributed the presence of an ELL teacher in the building as being the most valuable means of support. Additionally, many teachers cited administrators and peer teachers as having a positive impact on their feelings of support. However, the high levels of support did not translate into statistically significant differences in terms of teacher index scores. The researcher concludes that these means of support most often occur outside of the classroom, and likely outside of the presence of the ELLs. Yet when the teacher needs support the most, the teacher is likely to be left in the classroom, alone with the students. Additionally, as most teachers claimed to have inadequate time, it is likely that teachers are unable to access fully the support provided by ELL teachers and administrators. Furthermore, teachers who lack personal expertise in ELL related issues, may have difficulty recognizing the type of support they need to seek from ELL teachers and administrators.

**Recommendations**

In this study, the researcher sought to examine regular education teachers’ attitudes toward the inclusion of ELLs in the regular education classroom. More specifically the researcher wanted to understand whether teacher attitudes were influenced by the specific instructional factors of support, expertise, and time. Results of the study show that the variables of expertise and time were both significant factors influencing teacher attitudes.
Based on the findings of this study, three recommendations are made. First, pre-service programs must be overhauled so that aspiring teachers are prepared for the challenges of diverse classrooms. Pre-service teachers must be taught relevant methods of instruction and assessment, as well as be familiarized with the basic aspects of language acquisition, and the cultural competencies necessary for working effectively with ELLs. Among these cultural competencies is the attribute of empathizing with ELLs (Dong, 2004).

The second recommendation is that school districts must continually invest in effective professional development for teachers who work in schools with large populations of ELLs. These teachers need the same training that is recommended for pre-service teachers. The researcher recommends that this professional development be led by both qualified experts in the field of ELL instruction, as well as practicing teachers who have developed an effective skill-set for instructing ELLs.

The additional teacher training is essential and could affect teacher attitudes by increasing the range of instructional tolerance within which each teacher functions. Gerber (1988) noted that while the instructional tolerance is varied for every teacher, it is not resistant to change. Furthermore, he claimed that the range of tolerance will increase as teacher resources increase, and likewise will decrease as teachers have fewer resources.

The final recommendation is for further research to be conducted in this area. This study examined teacher attitudes as influenced by instructional factors of support, expertise, and time. However, the researcher recognizes that attitudes are complex in nature and many outside influences such as political or religious persuasion, region of the country, or personal biases could have a strong impact on teacher attitudes. Additionally, the researcher feels it is crucial to determine what the teachers themselves would identify as training that would help them feel they
have the personal expertise necessary to instruct ELLs. Furthermore, the researcher recommends additional research be conducted on types of support that teachers receive, in order to determine if some types of support are more helpful than others.


http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ell/edlite-glossary.html


Appendix A
Opinions Relative to the Integration of English Language Learners

**General Directions:** Please bubble in the number which best describes your agreement or disagreement with the statement. There are no correct answers. The best answers are those that honestly reflect your feelings. There is no time limit, but you should respond as quickly as you can.

### Please respond to every statement.

**Key**
-3: I disagree very much
-2: I disagree pretty much
-1: I disagree a little
+1: I agree a little
+2: I agree pretty much
+3: I agree very much

1. Most English Language Learners will make an adequate attempt to complete their assignments.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O

2. Integration of English Language Learners will require extensive retraining of regular-classroom teachers.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O

3. Integration offers mixed group interaction that will foster understanding and acceptance of English Language Learners.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O

4. It is likely that the English Language Learner will exhibit behavior problems in a regular classroom.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O

5. English Language Learners can be best served in regular classrooms.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O

6. The extra attention English Language Learners require will be to the detriment of the other students.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O
Please respond to every statement.

Key
-3: I disagree very much
-2: I disagree pretty much
-1: I disagree a little
  0: I neither agree nor disagree
+1: I agree a little
+2: I agree pretty much
+3: I agree very much

7. The challenge of being in a regular classroom will promote the academic growth of English Language Learners.
   -3 O  -2 O  -1 O  +1 O  +2 O  +3 O

8. Integration of English Language Learners will require significant changes in regular classroom procedures.
   -3 O  -2 O  -1 O  +1 O  +2 O  +3 O

9. Increased freedom in the regular classroom creates too much confusion for English Language Learners.
   -3 O  -2 O  -1 O  +1 O  +2 O  +3 O

10. Regular-classroom teachers have the ability necessary to work with English Language Learners.
    -3 O  -2 O  -1 O  +1 O  +2 O  +3 O

11. The presence of English Language Learners will not promote acceptance of differences on the part of students who are native English speakers.
    -3 O  -2 O  -1 O  +1 O  +2 O  +3 O

12. The behavior of English Language Learners will set a bad example for students who are native English speakers.
    -3 O  -2 O  -1 O  +1 O  +2 O  +3 O

13. The English Language Learner will probably develop academic skills more rapidly in a regular classroom than in an English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom.
    -3 O  -2 O  -1 O  +1 O  +2 O  +3 O

14. Integration of the English Language Learner will not promote his or her social independence.
    -3 O  -2 O  -1 O  +1 O  +2 O  +3 O

15. It is more difficult to maintain order in a regular classroom that contains an English Language Learner than in one that does not.
    -3 O  -2 O  -1 O  +1 O  +2 O  +3 O
Please respond to every statement.

Key
-3: I disagree very much 3: I agree very much
-2: I disagree pretty much 2: I agree pretty much
-1: I disagree a little 1: I agree a little

16. English Language Learners will not monopolize the regular classroom teacher’s time.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O

17. The integration of English Language Learners can be beneficial for native English speakers.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O

18. Placing English Language Learners in a regular classroom will not have a beneficial effect on the social and emotional development of the English Language Learner.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O

19. English Language Learners are likely to create confusion in the regular classroom.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O

20. Regular-classroom teachers have sufficient training to teach English Language Learners.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O

21. Integration will likely have a negative effect on the emotional development of the English Language Learner.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O

22. English Language Learners should be given every opportunity to succeed in the regular classroom where possible.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O

23. The classroom behavior of the English Language Learner generally does not require more patience from the teacher than does the classroom behavior of the student who is a native English speaker.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O

24. Teaching English Language Learners is better done by an ESL teacher than by a regular-classroom teacher.
   
   -3 O -2 O -1 O +1 O +2 O +3 O
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th>3: I agree very much</th>
<th>2: I agree pretty much</th>
<th>1: I agree a little</th>
<th>-1: I disagree a little</th>
<th>-2: I disagree pretty much</th>
<th>-3: I disagree very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

25. Placing English Language Learners in an ESL classroom has a beneficial effect on the social and emotional development of the English Language Learner.

-3 O  -2 O  -1 O  +1 O  +2 O  +3 O

26. The English Language Learner will **not** be socially isolated in the regular classroom.

-3 O  -2 O  -1 O  +1 O  +2 O  +3 O
Appendix B

Information Questions

1. In which school do you currently teach?
   - West High
   - Central High
   - Farragut High
   - Karns High
   - Gresham Middle
   - Northwest Middle
   - Bearden Middle
   - Farragut Middle
   - Lonsdale Elementary
   - Karns Elementary
   - Norwood Elementary
   - Pond Gap Elementary
   - Cedar Bluff Elementary
   - Dogwood Elementary

Please use in responding to statements 2 through 4.

Key
4: I agree very much
3: I agree somewhat
2: I disagree somewhat
1: I disagree very much

2. I feel I have the expertise necessary for working effectively with ELLs.
   4 O  3 O  2 O  1 O

If you responded with either a 4 or a 3, which of the following factors would you attribute as having the most impact in feeling that you have the necessary expertise to work with ELLs? (You can bubble in more than one)

O Pre-service training

O In-service professional development

O Extra-service professional development

O Other __________________________________________________________
3. I feel I have the support necessary for working effectively with ELLs.

   4 O 3 O 2 O 1 O

If you responded with either a 4 or a 3, which of the following factors would you attribute as having the most impact in feeling that you have the necessary support to work with ELLs? (You can bubble in more than one)

   O ELL teacher in my building
   O Peer teacher in my building
   O Administrator in my building
   O Parent volunteer in my building
   O Other __________________________

4. I feel I have the amount of time necessary for working effectively with ELLs.

   4 O 3 O 2 O 1 O

If you responded with either a 4 or a 3, which of the following factors would you attribute as having the most impact in feeling that you have the necessary time to work with ELLs? (You can bubble in more than one)

   O Additional planning time is given to me when I have ELLs
   O I am provided with a teaching assistant when I have ELLs
   O My class size is reduced when I have ELLs
   O I am excused from additional school responsibilities when I have ELLs
   O Other __________________________
5. Have you worked with an ELL student within the past three years?

YES O     NO O
VITA

Rich Walton McKinney was born April 9, 1975 in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. He attended public schools in Hardin County, Kentucky, and graduated from Central Hardin High School in 1993. After receiving a Bachelors of Arts in Advertising from the University of Kentucky in 1997, he worked several years in a sales and management position. In 2002 he decided to pursue a career in education and enrolled at the University of Tennessee. In 2004 he received his Masters of Science in Curriculum and Instruction. He currently teaches at Knoxville West High School, where he has taught since 2004.