VITA

Pamela S. Hardy

EDUCATION

2014   Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana
            Ph.D. in Educational Leadership

2010   Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana
            Ed.S. in Educational Leadership

2001   Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana
            Elementary Administration and Supervision Licensure

1997   Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana
            M.S. in Curriculum and Instruction
            Specialty Area: Literacy and Language

1992   Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana
            B.A. in Elementary Education

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2009-Present Principal of Garden City Elementary
              MSD of Wayne Township, Indianapolis, Indiana

2004-2009   Principal of Spencer Elementary
            Spencer-Owen Community Schools, Spencer, Indiana

2003-2004   Principal of Gosport Elementary
            Spencer-Owen Community Schools, Gosport, Indiana

2001-2003   Assistant Principal of Spencer Elementary
            Spencer-Owen Community Schools, Spencer, Indiana

1996-2001   Reading Recovery Teacher Leader
            Spencer-Owen Community Schools, Spencer, Indiana

1992-1996   Fifth Grade Teacher at Spencer Elementary
            Spencer-Owen Community Schools, Spencer, Indiana

HOW A PRINCIPAL'S KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE IMPACT LITERACY

ACHIEVEMENT FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

_____

A Dissertation

Presented to

The College of Graduate and Professional Studies

Department of Educational Leadership

Indiana State University

Terre Haute, Indiana

_____

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

_____

by

Pamela S. Hardy

May 2014

Keywords: Principal's knowledge, experience, best practice, literacy, instruction, achievement,

leadership, English language learners

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Committee Chair: Todd Whitaker, Ph.D.

    Professor of Educational Leadership

    Indiana State University

Committee Member: Steve Gruenert, Ph.D.

    Associate Professor of Educational Leadership

    Indiana State University

Committee Member: Lisa Lantrip, Ed.D.

    Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

    MSD Wayne Township, Indianapolis, Indiana

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the impact of the knowledge and experience of elementary principals in the area of best practice in literacy instruction for English language learners (ELLs) and the potential impact on student achievement of ELLs. This study explored the principals' experience in education as a predictor of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and found it was not a predictor. Additionally, this study examined the principals' experience as a building leader as a predictor of the level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and found it was not a predictor. This study also examined the relationship between principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the level of implementation of these same best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs in the principals' schools. Using a Pearson's correlation, this study found a strong correlation between the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the schools' level of implementation of this same best practice. Finally, this study examined the impact of the principals' experience in education, the principals' experience as a principal, the principal's experience in the current school, the level of the principal's knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs on ELL achievement, as measured with the Grade 3 Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination (I-READ-3) statewide reading assessment. This study found no impact of these factors on student achievement as measured with the I-READ-3 assessment. This study provides additional

information to principals who serve student populations with ELLs. It contributes to the growing

body of research in identifying factors of principal characteristics that contribute to student

learning and achievement. This research provides additional information to educators about the

significance of principals being instructional leaders who serve all students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Because non-native English speaking student populations continue to rise across the state

of Indiana, it is increasingly imperative that educators are prepared to teach all students,

including students whose native language is one other than English. School leaders play a

critical role in many aspects of school learning and achievement. This study looked at the

impact of the knowledge and experience of elementary principals in the area of best practice in

literacy instruction for English language learners (ELLs) on student achievement.

Over the last decade, the number of ELL quadrupled in Indiana to nearly 50,000

(Batalova & McHugh, 2010).

> According to the Indiana Business Research Center, tasked with analyzing the 2010
>
> Census, there are now about 100,000 fewer White children in Indiana than in 2000. In
>
> addition, there are also about 120,000 more non-White children than in 2000. In 10
>
> years' time, the number of Hispanic children more than doubled in Indiana; the number
>
> of Asian children and children classified as "multi-race" jumped by nearly 90 percent.
>
> The number of Black children grew by 8 percent. (Hayden, 2011, para. 8)

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (2011),

> The Nation's Report Card^{TM} informs the public about the academic achievement of
>
> elementary and secondary students in the United States. Report cards communicate the

findings of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a continuing and nationally representative measure of achievement in various subjects over time. (NAEP, 2011, para. 1)

Indiana performed as well as most states in the United States on Grade 4 reading for ELL. Arizona and California had lower average-scaled scores in comparison to Indiana for ELL in Grade 4 reading. Overall, most states were not significantly different or have a lower average score compared to Indiana. As reported by the U.S. Department of Education in 2011, Table 1 reflects how ELL students in Indiana performed compared the national average.

Table 1

Average ELL Scores for Grade 4 Reading

Year	Indiana Average Score	National Average Score
2011	197	188
2009	190	188
2007	198	188

Prior to 2007, there were not enough ELL students to gather an average reading-scaled score on this national assessment, reflecting again the recent increase in this special student population. However, although the scores in Indiana were above the national average, a deeper look reflects the majority of ELL students were below level in the area of reading as measured by the NAEP, as presented in Table 2. Proficient and advanced students are also reflected in the basic group in this table.

Table 2

Percentage of ELL at or Above NAEP Reading Achievement Levels

Year	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Advanced
2011	58	42	1	2
2009	69	31	6	1
2007	60	40	8	-

Statement of the Problem

As school populations become increasingly diverse with all types of learners, educators must respond quickly, implementing best practice to achieve success with students. As ELL students enroll in schools across the state, they may find schools ill-equipped to handle their special learning needs.

> The problem with schools is not that they are no longer as good as they once were; the problem is that they are precisely as they always were, but the needs of society and the needs of students have changed significantly. (Urbanski, 1991, p. 29)

Educators have an obligation to stay current of effective instructional practices that meet the needs of the learners in their schools.

> As the cultural and linguistic diversity of U.S. school children grows and as federal legislation mandates greater accountability in school districts, states are feeling a sense of urgency to support successful outcomes for English learners. Over 5 million students are learning English in America's public schools, accounting for more than 10% of the K-12

population. That's an increase of over 50% in the last decade alone. (Cook, Boals, &

Lundberg, 2011, p. 66)

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the experiences of elementary

principals, the knowledge of elementary principals in the area of best practice in literacy

instruction for ELLs, the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for

ELLs in a school, the relationship between the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy

instruction for ELLs, the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction

for ELLs, and the potential impact on student achievement of ELLs. This quantitative study

explored the principals' experience in education as a predictor of the principal's knowledge of

best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs. Additionally, this study looked at the principals'

experience as building leaders as a predictor of the level of implementation of best practice in

literacy instruction for ELLs. This study also examined the relationship between principals'

knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the level of implementation of

these same best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs in the principals' schools. Finally, this

study examined the impact of principals' experience in education, the principals' experience as a

principal, the principals' experience in the current school, the level of the principals knowledge

of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the level of implementation of these best

practices in literacy instruction for ELLs on ELL achievement as measured with the Grade 3

Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination (I-READ-3) statewide reading assessment. Data

were pulled for third-grade students on the 2012 I-READ-3 assessment for any school with an

ELL population of 10 or more students. The percentile score of this special population from

each school was compared to the school principal's self-reported survey. The purpose of the I-

READ-3 assessment is to measure foundational reading standards through Grade 3. Based on the Indiana academic standards, I-READ-3 is a summative assessment that was developed in accordance with Public Law 109, which "requires the evaluation of reading skills for students who are in Grade three beginning in the Spring of 2012 to ensure that all students can read proficiently before moving on to grade four" (Indiana Department of Education [IDOE], 2011, para. 1). Principals of these schools were invited to participate in a survey used to measure their knowledge of best practice in ELL literacy instruction and the level of implementation of these practices in the school.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this quantitative study:

1. Do the years of experience in education of a principal predict the principal's level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL?

2. Do the years of experience of the principal of a school predict the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL?

3. Is there a relationship between the principal's level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL and the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL?

4. What impact does the principal's experience in education, the principal's experience as a principal, the principal's experience in the current school, the level of the principal's knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs have on ELL achievement as measured with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment?

Research Question Analysis and Null Hypotheses

H_01. The years of experience in education of a principal does not predict the principal's level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL.

H_02. The years of experience of the principal of a school does not predict the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL.

H_03. There is no relationship between the principal's level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL and the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs.

H_04. There is no impact from the principal's experience in education, the principal's experience as a principal, the principal's experience in the current school, the level of the principal's knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs on ELL achievement as measured with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment.

Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004) defined the basic core of successful leadership as

- Setting directions for the organization–Developing shared goals, monitoring organizational performance, and promoting effective communication.

- Developing people–Enabling teachers and other staff to do their jobs effectively, offering intellectual support and stimulation to improve the work, and providing models of practice and support.

- Redesigning the organization–Creating a productive school culture, modifying organizational structures that undermine the work, and building collaborative processes. (pp. 73-74)

Definitions

Bilingual is a term that describes "a person who speaks more than one language" (Syrja, 2011, p. 232).

Biliterate students are fully literate in two languages. "They can read, write, and speak fluently in two languages" (Syrja, 2011, p. 233).

Best practice is researched-based instructional practices reflecting the most current understandings of learning acquisition. Additionally, best practice refers to "serious, thoughtful, informed, responsible, state-of-the-art teaching" (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 2012, p. 2).

Elementary principal, for the purpose of this study, an elementary principal is a school administrator in a school building serving third grade students.

English learner is defined by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), (formerly Limited English Proficient Student)

> as a student whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English may be sufficient to deny the individual (i) the ability to meet the states' proficient level of achievement on State assessments. . . , (ii) the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or (iii) the opportunity to participate fully in society. (Cook et al., 2011, p. 66)

English language learner is "a student learning to understand, speak, read, and write in English" (Syrja, 2011, p. 231) whose native language is a language other than English.

Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination (I-READ-3) is a summative state assessment given to Grade 3 students to measure reading skills.

Leadership is "professional learning that increases educator effectiveness and results for all students requires skillful leaders who develop capacity, advocate, and create support systems for professional learning" (Marcellus, 2012, p. 10).

Literacy instruction, for the purpose of this study, is instruction relating to reading, writing, listening, speaking, and thinking.

Non-native English speaker, for the purpose of this study, is one whose native language is not English.

Student achievement, for the purpose of this study, is the acquired knowledge of learning.

Limitations

The data from the I-READ-3 assessment were limited to information provided by the database from the IDOE. Furthermore, these data did not distinguish the language acquisition levels for each student participating in the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment. For the survey component of this study, a limitation was that principals may overstate their knowledge and implementation of best practice in literacy instruction, and, therefore, skew the relationship between this knowledge and student achievement. Additionally, the survey items were limited to a list of effective best practices drawn from current research. Marzano (2009) cautioned schools and districts to "move beyond simple lists to a comprehensive framework or language of instruction that is the basis for professional dialogue" (pp. 36-37). Davis (2008) warned of other limitations: "Even the most objective and analytically rigorous quantitative research design will miss important explanatory variables, and can rarely (if ever) provide irrefutable causal explanations" (p. 47).

Delimitations

The data for this study were age-specific to Grade 3 students in Indiana public schools. Additionally, only data with schools having 10 or more ELLs in Grade 3 were used. Only principals from these schools were invited to participate in the survey. As Bean (2006) stated, "The quality of the research depends on the quality of the data analyzed; data analysis has only a secondary influence" (p. 360).

Significance of the Study

ELLs are commonly underperforming on standardized tests. English learners are nearly twice as likely to drop out of high school as their native English speaking peers (Rumberger, 2011, p. 2). The significant difference in the achievement gap with this special population of students must be addressed. With this student population growing across the state, how can we better serve the needs of these learners? This study explored the potential relationship between principal knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction and the impact on student achievement for ELLs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the experience of elementary principals, the knowledge of elementary principals in the area of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs in a school, the relationship between the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the schools' level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the potential impact on student achievement of ELLs.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review encompassed two areas of the research. The first was best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs. The second was the role of the principal in implementation of best practices and effective school leadership.

Best Practices in Literacy Instruction for ELL

The term literacy has taken on a broad definition to cover the basic reading and writing skills to computer and media literacy. The review of this research focused on the reading and writing skills for ELLs on the continuum from emergent to advanced proficiency levels. Best practice refers to "serious, thoughtful, informed, responsible, state-of-the-art teaching" (Zemelman et al., 2012, p. 2). The term ELL refers to "a student who speaks English with limitations or not at all which prohibits the student from participating in the mainstream English instruction" (Li & Edwards, 2010, p. 16).

Learning to read in general is "a complex process involving many cognitive skills and visual processes ranging from decoding words to the integration of ideas with the reader's global knowledge" (Nassaji, 2011, p. 173). There are key differences when an ELL begins to learn to read in English including "linguistic processing differences, educational and developmental differences, and institutional and cultural variables" (Nassaji, 2011, p. 176). When a native English speaker decodes a word, and the word is in his or her existing vocabulary, there is a

point of recognition that allows the reader to know he or she has been successful. "When an ELL student decodes a new word, that rich vocabulary is not available. So when the student gets close to the correct pronunciation there is no moment of recognition, there is no 'aha' experience" (Graves, Juel, Graves, & Dewitz, 2011, p. 431). Children come to school with lots of skills "honed in their everyday experiences in a variety of multilingual contexts to deal with school literacy tasks" (Rockwell, 2012, p. 401). These are important considerations when reviewing best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs.

In 2006, the National Literacy Panel on Language Minority Children and Youth published a 669-page report reflecting current research from experts in the areas of reading, language, bilingualism, research methods, and education. There were five major findings from this report:

1) Instruction that provides substantial coverage in the key components of reading—identified by the National Reading Panel (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development) as phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension—has clear benefits for language-minority students.

2) Instruction in the key components of reading is necessary—but not sufficient—for teaching language-minority students to read and write proficiently in English. Oral proficiency in English is critical as well—but student performance suggests that it is often overlooked in instruction.

3) Oral proficiency and literacy in the first language can be used to facilitate literacy development in English.

4) Individual differences contribute significantly to English literacy development.

5) There is surprisingly little evidence for the impact of sociocultural variables on literacy achievement or development. However, home language experiences can have a positive impact on literacy achievement. (as cited in August & Shanahan, 2006, pp. 3-7)

The best evidence in literacy practices for ELLs indicated that the highest levels of achievement come from literacy instruction in the primary language of the student (August & Shanahan, 2006). In many schools where there is a significant number of ELLs with the same native language, bilingual education is the preferred instructional approach, resulting in biliteracy (Zacarian & Hayes, 2012). Bilingual education is "used to describe instructional approaches that teaches academic skills, such as reading and writing, in the native language of the student, in addition to teaching students academic skills in English" (Li & Edwards, 2010, p. 20). Many states, including Indiana, require instruction in English only. In these cases, best practice in literacy instruction carry over to best practice in ELL instruction as well (Li & Edwards, 2010).

Another highly regarded approach is a dual-immersion program where every student is immersed in learning to speak two languages simultaneously (Syrja, 2011). In this approach, ELL students maintain their primary language while they also learn English. Much of the ELL research has found that "bilingual and dual-immersion programs have the best long-term impact on ELL achievement" (Syrja, 2011, pp. 29-30). Both of these practices can facilitate "diverse, deep, and challenging meaning-making opportunities for ELLs" (Pacheco, 2010, p. 314).

Research indicates that learning to read depends on two basic ideas: first that written language is meaningful and second that written language it is different from spoken language. (Smith, 2012). "The least complicated entry into literacy learning is to begin to read and write in

the language already spoken" (Smith, 2012, Chapter 13, para. 4). For students entering school in the United States with a native language other than English, learning to read in the native spoken language is likely not an option. This complicates the introduction to the literacy process, as the initial steps to becoming literate are matching the spoken language to the printed language (Clay, 1991, p. 158). It is critical for ELL to connect instruction with meaning (Routman, 2012).

As ELL students enter schools, they must not only learn the English language and develop their oral language skills, they must additionally develop the same literacy skills as their native English speaking peers. "Students who grow up in poverty—many of whom are also English-language learners—often enter our schools with limited, academic oral language, which makes learning to read and write more difficult" (Routman, 2012, Chapter 88, para. 1).

> The literacy instruction for ELLs must be aligned with intensive instruction in oral proficiency, including provision of additional practice, direct guidance, and focused feedback as they learn new grammar structures, vocabulary, rhetorical patterns, cultural references, social meanings, and inferences. (Romanova, 2009, p. 2)

As their English speaking peers learn to match their speech to the print in the text, ELL students must be supported as they "bridge the understanding of matching their speech to print in text of a language they are still learning" (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007, p. 123).

> Language is far more than grammar and vocabulary (although a good deal of instruction in reading, in English, and in other languages, seems to assume that this is what language consists of). Knowledge of grammar and vocabulary gives no one a mastery of language, either in producing or in understanding it. By far the greatest part of any language, the "working" part of it, is idiom, the way people actually speak, and by definition idiom can't be accounted for by vocabulary and grammar. (Smith, 2012, Chapter 3, para. 56)

Because there are two types of English students must learn, the informal oral language and the formal academic language, classroom teachers are faced with teaching both types for most ELLs due to the fact that the informal language used outside of school with families is typically not English. Academic English refers to the more abstract, complex, and challenging language associated with academic subjects (Li & Edwards, 2010).

> There is no exact boundary when defining academic language; it falls toward one end of a continuum (defined by formality of tone, complexity of content, and degree of impersonality of stance), with informal, casual, conversational language at the other extreme. (Snow, 2010, p. 450)

A more concise definition was formulated by Nagy and Townsend (2012): "Academic language is the specialized language, both oral and written, of academic settings that facilitate communication and thinking about disciplinary content" (p. 92). "English language instructional programs that support English learners in American schools have shifted emphasis from supporting social English to emphasizing more Academic English. This shift is strongly supported by research on English language development in schools" (Cook et al., 2011, p. 67).

In general academic English is typically not used outside of school and includes new vocabulary for ELL students. As a student progresses through the grades, academic English increases in difficulty and complexity. Therefore, it takes an ELL more time to become proficient in academic English (Li & Edwards, 2010).

> All learners—regardless of proficiency in their dialect or Standard English—must be proficient in Academic English to be successful in academic settings. The fact that *all* students need to learn academic English, regardless of their native/home language, levels the playing field in the classroom. In other words, regardless of whether the student is

speaking Spanish, Chinese, Hmong, black dialects, rural dialects, or standard English, teachers must focus on academic English instruction in the classroom while at the same time valuing and using the students' native/home language. (O'Neal & Ringler, 2010, p. 51-52)

Instructional practices that are highly effective with ELL students include clear learning goals and objectives, well-designed and structured lessons, appropriate paced instruction, active engagement and participation of students, opportunities to practice, transfer and apply new learning, feedback and monitoring, formal and informal assessments, and reteaching. Whitaker and Breaux (2012) recommend beginning each lesson by telling the students exactly what they will know or be able to do by the end of the class, use clear, measurable terms in order to help plan an effective lesson around that objective.

Effective instructional practices for all students should be the foundation for instructional practices with ELL students as well (Li & Edwards, 2010). Well-designed literacy practices include

- active engagement in meaningful, purposeful literacy across the curriculum (listening, speaking, reading, writing);

- daily activities to inform teaching (ongoing assessment); inviting spaces that nurture literacy (environment);

- flexible structures in varied settings (organization);

- quality resources to support and reinforce literacy; and

- a willingness to create a positive culture that will help students view literacy as a pleasurable pursuit (motivation). (Howard, 2012, p. 27)

ELLs, like all students, benefit greatly from explicit instruction in the five basic components of literacy: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and writing (Howard, 2012). Additionally, other instructional practices that have been found to be beneficial include cooperative learning, mastery learning, interactive learning, and direct instruction (Howard, 2012). According to Allington and Gabriel (2012), there are six elements of effective reading instruction that need to happen daily in order for all students to be successful:

1) Every child reads something he or she chooses.

2) Every child reads accurately.

3) Every child reads something he or she understands.

4) Every child writes about something personally meaningful.

5) Every child talks with peers about reading and writing.

6) Every child listens to a fluent adult reader. (pp. 10-14).

Intensive Reading

The amount of reading any student engages in on a daily basis has a direct impact on achievement. Students need to read volumes of text and engage in deeper levels of reading. Rereading familiar texts is also beneficial to all students.

Various studies recommend a number of techniques for scaffolding reading, including: building on prior knowledge, using hands-on inquiry activities, introducing key vocabulary in context, developing students' graphic literacy, vocabulary skills, and academic vocabulary, and using a variety of comprehension checks, including verbal and nonverbal tasks. These techniques can be integrated into a lesson format with distinct prereading (preparing to read), reading (reading the text) and postreading phases (follow-on activities). (Collins, 2009, p. 8)

Scaffolding strategies run the gamut in the academic literature. Two models seem useful to begin addressing the linguistic and academic needs of ELLs: one aims to integrate language development and content instruction in sheltered instruction programs, while the other targets the improvement of students' reading comprehension skills (Rojas, 2007).

Phonemic Awareness

Developing phonemic awareness is a fundamental step for all learners. "Children learning English may acquire literacy skills in English in a similar manner as native speaking children, although their alphabetic knowledge may precede and facilitate the acquisition of phonological awareness in English" (Chiappe, Siegel, & Wade-Woolley, 2002, p. 369). Picture sorts, where students sort pictures based on the initial sounds, and other game like activities associated with phonemes in words are activities that support the phonemic awareness of ELL students (Li & Edwards, 2010).

Phonics. All students must understand the sound and letter relationship to have early success in literacy. Many activities and games support this type of learning including picture sorts, word sorts, making words, and building word families (Li & Edwards, 2010).

Fluency. "Fluency is usually equated with speed but reading specialist look for smoothness and expression as well as conversational speed" (Fielding, Kerr, & Rosier 2007, p. 75). Repeated readings of texts supports fluency for ELLs. "These activities lead to and strengthen reading, oral fluency, and comprehension" (Herrell & Jordan, 2012, p. 218).

Vocabulary. In terms of content reading, two types of vocabulary must be developed with ELL students, content, specific vocabulary and academic vocabulary (Collins, 2009). An ELL can experience slow progress as the content knowledge and vocabulary become more

academic in nature. Special attention must be given by the learner to not only acquire the skill, but also understand the content.

It is critical that teachers worked to develop ELL's English oral language skills, particularly vocabulary, and the content knowledge from the time they start school, even before they have learned the reading 'basics.' Vocabulary development is, of course, important for all students; but it is particularly critical for ELLs. (Li & Edwards, 2010, p. 29)

Visual representations of key concepts provide ELL students with non-linguistic supports for new vocabulary learning (Li & Edwards, 2010). Cooperative learning is also an effective strategy for learning new vocabulary for ELL students (Lewis-Moreno, 2009).

Teachers need to provide high-quality vocabulary instruction throughout the learning day. Teachers need to be intentional and purposeful during instruction by layering in various synonyms for words, moving from basic to more sophisticated vocabulary. Essential content words need to be taught in depth and preferably before the lesson. This frontloading provides additional support to students (Rojas, 2007; Routman, 2012). Additionally, instructional time needs to be used to address the meanings of common words, phrases, and expressions ELL students have not yet learned. "For our English-language learners and students who struggle, understanding and applying key vocabulary words are vital. It is often a lack of academic vocabulary that severely limits students' understanding of content and concepts" (Routman, 2012, Chapter 68, para. 1).

Vocabulary instruction is essential in teaching English learners to read. It is rare that core reading programs include adequate guidelines for vocabulary instruction for English learners. "We cannot continue to simply fine-tune existing programs and practices in order to address

literacy learning difficulties many students now experience in our schools" (Allington & Walmsley, 1995, p. 257). Districts need to provide teachers with tools that will help them support vocabulary development. Researchers converge in noting that effective vocabulary instruction includes multiple exposures to target words over several days and across reading, writing, and speaking opportunities. A small but consistent body of intervention research suggests that English learners will benefit most from rich, intensive vocabulary instruction that emphasizes *student-friendly* definitions, that engages students in the meaningful use of word meanings in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, and that provides regular review. The goal of rich vocabulary instruction is for students to develop an understanding of word meanings to the point where they can use these and related words in their communication and as a basis for further learning (Gersten et al., 2007).

In order for ELLs to attain "rigorous content standards, intensive Instruction of academic vocabulary and related grammatical knowledge must be carefully orchestrated across the subject areas for these students to attain rigorous content standards" (Syrja, 2011, p. 160). Syrja (2011) suggested addressing ELL vocabulary needs in the following ways:

- *Encourage wide reading.* Vocabulary grows as a consequence of independent reading and increasing reading volume.

- *Direct-teach important individual words.* Students learn new words using various teacher-directed instructional strategies.

- *Teach word learning strategies.* Students independently learn new words when they use strategies such as exploring context and analyzing prefixes.

- *Foster word consciousness.* Vocabulary develops when students engage in various activities to increase language play, word choice in writing, and sensitivity to word parts. (p. 160)

Reading Comprehension

As ELL students work to make sense of texts, they must build on prior knowledge (Li & Edwards, 2010). Comprehension is the most important reading component for ELLs and that "comprehension be given priority to ensure that they see reading and writing as meaningful and functional activities" (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan., 2009, p. 41). Other strategies to support comprehension include

1. Prediction. Students use background knowledge, cover illustrations, and/or text to predict what might happen in a story. For informational text, students may peruse illustrations, maps, charts, and so on to get a sense of the topic before reading.

2. Monitoring and Clarifying. Students realize when they are confused by text and reread to clarify passages that do not make sense. The important part of monitoring and clarifying is rereading to fix up comprehension issues.

3. Questioning. Students spontaneously form question about the content of text before, during, and after reading. These questions are not the typical comprehension questions to which the teacher already has the answer. These are questions that help the reader focus closely on text in response to his or her questions.

4. Summarizing. Students understand the most important content shared in a passage or text.

5. Visualizing. Students create mental images of the text during and after the reading. (Li & Edwards, 2010, pp. 92-93)

Writing. "The primary goal for writing instruction for ELLs is to motivate them to write and help them develop an enjoyment of writing" (Xu, 2010, p. 197). ELL students need many opportunities to write in a variety of genres and settings to effectively develop writing skills. Ideally, ELL students would engage in writing activities in their primary language and then transfer these ideas to English (Li & Edwards, 2010). There are six principles for writing practices with ELL students:

1. Providing students with opportunities to write about their experiences enhances their understanding of themselves in new contexts.

2. Providing students with opportunities to keep open-ended journals allows them to develop critical awareness of who they are.

3. Opportunities to write in multiple genres across the school day are key to enhancing students' development as writers.

4. Responding to students' writing is essential for improving their writing and validating their development.

5. Allowing students to write in their native language builds successful English writers.

6. Talking to children about similarities and differences between languages facilitates metalinguistic awareness. (Li & Edwards, 2010, pp. 104-120)

Modifications to English only instruction are critical to the success of ELLs. There are many generic scaffolds and supports to learning that are beneficial to all students, including students who need additional learning supports. These modifications include the following:

- Predictable and consistent classroom management routines aided by diagrams, lists, and easy-to-read schedules on the board or on charts, to which the teacher refers frequently.

- Graphic organizers that make content and the relationship among concepts and different lesson elements visually explicit.

- Additional opportunities for practice during the school day, after school, or for homework.

- Redundant key information (e.g., visual cues, pictures, and physically gestures) about lesson content and classroom procedures.

- Identifying, highlighting, and clarifying difficult words and passages with texts to facility comprehension and, more generally, greatly emphasizing vocabulary development.

- Helping students consolidate text knowledge by having the teacher, other students, and ELLS themselves summarize and paraphrase.

- Giving students extra practice in reading words, sentences, and stories to build automaticity and fluency.

- Providing opportunities for extended interactions with teaching and peers.

- Adjusting instruction (teacher vocabulary, rate of speech, sentence complexity, and expectations for student language production) according to students' oral English proficiency.

- Targeting both content and English language objectives in every lesson.

- Use of reading materials that take into account students' personal experiences, including relevant aspects of their cultural background, which aids their reading comprehension. (Li & Edwards, 2010, p. 34)

To assist ELLs categorize and classify information, graphic organizers are an essential literacy tool (Rojas, 2007). Additionally, graphic organizers can be used to assist students in

comparing and contrasting information. These instructional tools help ELLs build vocabulary, build background knowledge, and support understanding (Rojas, 2007).

Sheltered instruction. The sheltered instruction observation protocol (SIOP) model is a common approach to ELL instruction. In this approach, instruction is delivered in English and explained in the primary language as needed. This instruction model is usually used in schools when there are speakers of many different languages and not enough of any one language to support bilingual education (Zacarian & Haynes, 2012). This approach is organized around eight components essential for making grade-level content accessible for ELLs and for helping them develop academic and language skills: preparation, building background, comprehensible input, strategies, interaction, practice/application, lesson delivery, and review/assessment. These areas are further divided into a total of 30 strategies.

> The SIOP instructional model is an all-inclusive lesson planning and delivery model that is ideal for every student, not just for ELLs. The use of this comprehensive model results in effective content-based ELL teaching practices that, when implemented systematically, ensure success for all learners. (Dumas-Landisi & Honigsfeld, 2010, p. 74)

Six principles for teaching ELL students drawn from the SIOP model include

- Joint productive activity: Providing an opportunity for group work in which there is a definite product, with participation and scaffolding by the teacher.

- Language and literacy across the curriculum: Providing opportunities to develop and use oral and written language in all content instruction, including mathematics, science, and art.

- Curricular connections: Building curriculum around students' backgrounds, cultures, interests, and linguistic strengths.

- Rigorous curriculum and teaching: Taking special care not to dumb down the curriculum for ELLs, but to keep the content at the grade level provided to the other students through adapted texts, high-level questioning, multimodal texts, and more.

- Instructional conversation: Implementing carefully planned conversations around content, so that students have an opportunity to learn, develop, and practice the language of disciplines, while constructing new understandings about content.

- Family involvement: Finding new ways to involve families in the education of their students, both in school and out. (Li & Edwards, 2010, p. 66)

As Zacarian and Haynes (2012) warned, "Even well-crafted sheltered instructional practices may not serve beginning language learners well. This instructional model may work better with intermediate-level English learners" (Zacarian & Haynes, 2012, p. 43).

Grouping configurations. "The importance of English language learners having regular interaction with their English-speaking peers in a variety of settings cannot be underestimated; the latter serve as language models and an important source of feedback" (Lewis-Moreno, 2009, p. 19). Students, particularly ELLs are more likely to interact in small group settings or working with partners. These opportunities allow students to use specific vocabulary and practice oral language in a less threatening environment (Marzano, 2004). Productive group work, in a school setting, which results in new understandings, leads to academic and social growth (Frey, Fisher, & Everlove, 2009, p. 13).

One strategy for grouping ELL students with native English speakers is the "Think-Pair-Share" grouping. With this strategy, students are engaged with the learning and have "an opportunity to rehearse their responses in a safe space before responding in front of the entire

class and teacher" (McTighe & Wiggin, 2013, p. 53). "Additionally, this strategy provides students with more wait time to formulate responses" (McTighe & Wiggins, 2013, p. 53).

The value of using cooperative learning strategies in linguistically mixed classrooms is clear. Students have opportunities to use new vocabulary in meaning ways in an inclusive setting. The social interaction that is required benefits ELLs who are adjusting to a new school setting. (Lewis-Moreno, 2009, p. 20)

Engagement. The most highly effective teachers are those with the highest levels of engagement (Li & Edwards, 2010). There are a number of engagement strategies that can be used in the classroom to increase the engagement levels of all students, but are particularly supportive to the ELL student. These strategies include

1. Sharing by Partners. Students are formed into partners by the teacher to make sure the partnerships are appropriate.

2. Numbered Heads. Students, sitting at tables, are each given a number. Teacher calls for responses to topics by number.

3. Whole-Class Response. Students have whiteboards or response cards. All students show their responses.

4. Written Response. Students write responses on sticky notes or paper. Students share comments with other students or partners.

5. Four Corners. The teacher uses the four corners of the classroom to group students into sharing responses by varying categories.

6. Cast Your Opinion. Students decide their viewpoint on a topic and move to one side of the room with other like-minded students. Then they try to convince the others of their opinion. (Li & Edwards, 2010, p. 98-99)

To ensure that all students are fully engaged in the reading, writing, or listening process, they need to understand the three rules to engagement—before, during, and after. Building student background knowledge and establishing the expectations for active involvement are essential when presenting new material. Each step of the Three Rules to Engagement process requires that students do something physical: read, write, move, act out, or express in some capacity to demonstrate that they understand the objectives of the lesson. Being mentally engaged in a lesson is not sufficient; being actively engaged is the primary goal. We believe that in addition to activating students' background knowledge, it is essential to consider their learning styles and to adjust one's teaching style to the needs of the students. We ask ourselves, "What do my students need to achieve the goal of the lesson?" (Dumas-Landisi & Honigsfeld, 2010, p. 76).

Differentiation. In working with ELLs, there are eight key strategies that work well with differentiating instruction. These key strategies focus on making modifications to instruction, building on background knowledge, determining key concepts, and modifying vocabulary instruction. Additionally, implementing cooperative learning and incorporating technology are also beneficial (Zacarian & Haynes, 2012, p. 74). Below are the eight key strategies for English learners (ELs) as referenced in Zacarian and Haynes (2012):

1. Provide information that beginning ELs can understand.

2. Link new information to students' background knowledge.

3. Determine key concepts for the unit, and define language and content objectives for each lesson.

4. Modify vocabulary instruction for ELs.

5. Use cooperative learning strategies.

6. Modify testing and homework for ELs.

7. Differentiate instruction for ELs with technology.

8. Teach thinking to ELs. (p. 74)

Reciprocal Teaching

In this method, the teacher and the student take turns in the role of the teacher, leading the discussion about the reading (Syria, 2011). This approach can be used to engage ELLs and make them more confident in their abilities. It has been found to be "particularly beneficial for English learners because of its systematic teaching and practice of strategic reading strategies" (Syrja, 2011, pp. 148-149). There are four strategies that constitute reciprocal teaching.

1. *Prediction,* which activates prior knowledge about the text and helps readers make connections between new information and what they already know.

2. *Clarifying,* which promotes deep comprehension as students share their uncertainties about unfamiliar vocabulary, confusing text passages, and difficult concepts.

3. *Questioning* or *question generating,* which encourages readers to engage with text rather than responding only to teacher questions.

4. *Summarizing,* which collaboratively enables all readers to increase their comprehension of difficult texts. (Syrja, 2011, p. 149)

Providing explicit instruction to ELL students and teaching in ways that are culturally and linguistically responsive to students' needs are indicators of effective ELL instruction (Haager, Klingner, & Aceves, 2010, p. 154). Other characteristics of effective instruction included

1. Keep a positive, can-do attitude.

2. Be tenacious and stay committed.

3. Provide a supportive learning environment.

4. Be responsive to your students.

5. Teach to the whole child and build relationships.

6. Excel at classroom management.

7. Set high expectations.

8. Tap into and build on students' prior knowledge.

9. Provide explicit, focused instruction.

10. Focus on vocabulary and oral language development.

11. Emphasize reading comprehension.

12. Make connections across the curriculum.

13. Encourage strategic use of students' native language.

14. Set up classroom learning centers.

15. Implement cooperative, collaborative learning.

16. Conduct ongoing assessments.

17. Develop instructional plans.

18. Work well with colleagues.

19. Develop partnerships with parents and the community. (pp. 154-160)

In conclusion, the best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs center around three basic

findings:

1. Teaching students to read in the first language promotes higher levels of reading

   achievement in English.

2. What we know about good instruction and curriculum in general holds true for ELLs

   as well.

3. English learners require instructional modifications when instructed in English. (Li & Edwards, 2010, p. 22)

Therefore, bilingual education and biliteracy for all students should be the gold standard for best practice in improving achievement for ELLs (Li & Edwards, 2010; Zacarian & Haynes, 2012). "An understanding and appreciation of what it means to be bilingual and biliterate is imperative to understand the lives of these children and how to support their growth" (Reyes, 2012, p. 308). Educators need to understand the value of providing this more effective approach to instruction and to recognize the "more nuanced strategies for evaluating children's biliteracy knowledge" (Reyes & Azuara, 2008, p. 393).

ELL students should be provided instruction in their primary language. ELL students should be helped to transfer what the learning tasks from their primary language to English. Adjustments and modifications are necessary for successful learning. English language development instruction, targeting academic English, must be provided. Finally, academic content instruction must be provided to support and promote academic content knowledge (Li & Edwards, 2010).

Role of the Principal in Effective Instruction

School leadership can have a significant impact on student achievement. "Effective instructional leaders observe, monitor, provide critical feedback, and work toward continuous improvement. They also provide coaching support and opportunities for reflection and growth" (Carney, 2010, p. 61). "School principals play important roles in creating school climates conducive to the success of ELLs" (Li & Edwards, 2010, p. 250). "Effective leaders have a sense of the dynamics in their organization" (Whitaker, 2010, p. 723). There has been a shift from management to leadership and "today's principal needs to focus on improving teaching and

learning" (Gill, 2012, p. 25). "Effective leaders focus laser-like on the quality of instruction in their schools" (Mendels, 2012, p. 56).

The caliber of leadership in a school can have a dramatic effect on student achievement. According to Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003), the average effect size between leadership and student achievement is .25. Waters et al. (2003) explained this correlation as follows:

Consider two schools (school A & school B) with similar student and teacher populations. Both demonstrate achievement on a standardized, norm-referenced test at the 50th percentile. Principals in both schools are also average—that is, their abilities in the 21 key leadership responsibilities are ranked at the 50th percentile. Now assume that the principal of school B improves her demonstrated abilities in all 21 responsibilities by exactly one standard deviation. Our research findings indicate that this increase in leadership ability would translate into mean student achievement at school B that is 10 percentile points higher than school A. (p. 3)

Because leadership has such a significant impact on student achievement, state and district policymakers are shifting leader preparation programs toward a dual focus on leadership skills and management training. Principals need core knowledge, as well as management skills, to inform and lead change. Too, as districts and schools move toward increasingly data-driven systems, it is critical that principals understand how to interpret research findings and evaluative data. (Miller, 2006, p. 5)

Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom (2004) defined the basic core of successful leadership as

- Setting directions for the organization–Developing shared goals, monitoring

  organizational performance, and promoting effective communication.

- Developing people–Enabling teachers and other staff to do their jobs effectively,

  offering intellectual support and stimulation to improve the work, and providing

  models of practice and support.

- Redesigning the organization–Creating a productive school culture, modifying

  organizational structures that undermine the work, and building collaborative

  processes. (pp. 73-74)

Instructional Leadership

Instructional leaders are knowledgeable about best practice in education. The concept of instructional leadership focuses on classroom practices (Leithwood & Seashore-Louis, 2012, p. 6). "In the school building, the principal is expected to understand the tenets of quality instruction, and to have sufficient knowledge of the curriculum to ensure that appropriate content is being delivered to all students" (Seashore-Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010, p. 39). A principal who is an instructional leader makes a positive impact on student learning and achievement. "Research shows that consistent, well-informed support from principals makes a difference, and principals accordingly face increasing pressure to deliver (or at least promote) better support for instruction" (Seashore-Louis et al., 2010, p. 40). To be an instructional leader, the principal must become the leading learner and focus attention on what students are doing. When principals lead learning in their buildings, the school culture transforms (Brookhart & Moss, 2013, p. 13, 17).

According to the Wallace Foundation and over a decade of research on school leadership, there are five key functions to the building principal. These include

- Shaping a vision of academic success for all students, one based on high standards.

- Creating a climate hospitable to education in order that safety, a cooperative spirit and other foundations of fruitful interaction prevail.

- Cultivating leadership in others so that teachers and other adults assume their parts in realizing the school vision.

- Improving instruction to enable teachers to teach at their best and students to learn their utmost.

- Managing people, data, and processes to foster school improvement. (Wallace Foundation, 2013, p. 6)

"The principal who fosters a culture of academic achievement takes a stand for equity and excellence both in words and in actions" (Alford & Nino, 2011, p. 265). Some students may feel unwelcome in a school due to language barriers or differences in culture that may prevent them from connecting with peers and school programs (Casoli-Reardon, Rappaport, Kulick, & Reinfeld, 2012).

The principal can have significant impact on creating a school culture where all students feel welcome. As educators, "we have the power to determine whether students feel included or excluded in our schools" (Christensen, 2008, p. 61).

A positive school culture that promotes academic achievement for English language learners (ELLs) can be seen in tangible ways, such as words of welcome written in the first language of the students, banners celebrating academic success, and interactive learning boards reflective of cultural diversity. (Alford & Nino, 2011, p. 224)

Creating a positive culture in the school depends on building positive relationships. As so many elements of education change, one constant is the success of schools hinges on the

ability to build relationships with students (Alford & Nino, 2011; Sterrett, 2012). It is a critical role of the building principal to create and sustain a school culture that fosters academic success for all students (Brooks-Rallins, 2012, p. 56). "Effective leaders establish cultures where all stakeholders are personally invested in the success of the school" (Barker, 2013, p. 3).

Principals are responsible for securing resources essential to effective instruction, including staffing highly qualified teachers, providing professional development, curriculum resources, and other related materials. "Principals can foster academic support by providing the resources teachers need to provide quality instruction to ELLs" (Alford & Nino, 2011, p. 345). Principals continuously monitor the implementation of instructional practices and programs that support ELL students. Principals are responsible for creating a welcoming school environment for all families and community members. The school culture will reflect if ELL instruction and programming are fully integrated in the school learning community (Alford & Nino, 2011).

As school leaders work with local leadership teams to implement school improvement practices, it is essential to have a clear, laser-like focus on instructional practices. By narrowing the focus of school goals, school leaders set educators up for success in the classroom by providing clear directives on what is essential for improvement. "If the leader can paint a clear picture of what the challenges are and what the vision for the school is, it becomes a lot easier to motivate people to learn because they see it in proper context" (Crow, 2012, p. 17).

It is essential that school leaders have a balance between focusing on a few key outcomes that relate to increased student achievement and building the capacity for improvement in the teaching staff (Hattie, 2012). As Covey (2004) reminded us, always "begin with the end in mind" (p. 97). Principals must think in terms of what they want to accomplish and achieve. There are nine essential practices for improved outcomes in schools:

1. High expectations for all students;

2. Strong personal connections between students and adults;

3. Greater student engagement and motivation;

4. A rich and engaging, formal and informal curriculum;

5. Effective teaching practices in all classrooms on a daily basis;

6. Effective use of data and feedback by students and staff to improve learning;

7. Early support with minimum disruption for students in need;

8. Strong positive relationships with parents; and

9. Effective engagement with the broader community. (Levin as cited in Hattie, 2012, p. 151)

As principals work with teachers to increase student achievement, developing and creating high expectations for all students should be of top priority. Marzano (2007) stated, "A teacher's beliefs about students' changes of success in school influence the teachers' actions with students, which in turn influence students' achievement. If the teacher believes students can succeed, she tends to behave in ways to help them succeed" (p. 162). Additionally, highly effective teachers and principals not only have high expectations for students, they also have higher expectations for themselves (Whitaker, 2012).

Two essential questions must be asked each time school leaders seek to improve instruction. The first question is what to we want to accomplish in terms of student learning and the second question is what evidence will reflect the achievement of those outcomes (Guskey, 2012).

Effective leadership adds value to the impact of classroom and teacher practices and ensures that lasting change flourishes. Awareness of the school and teacher practices that

impact student achievement is critical but without effective leadership, there is less

possibility that schools and districts will address these variables in a coherent and

meaningful way. (K. Miller, 2003, p. 5)

"The only thing we know for certain that positively affects and sustains student

achievement is the highly knowledgeable and effective teacher. Better yet is the highly effective

teacher who is supported by strong leadership and a collaborative school culture" (Routman,

2012, p. 213). Highly effective educators understand that they are the variable in student

learning and achievement (Whitaker, 2011).

Because leadership has such a significant impact on student achievement, state and

district policymakers are shifting leader preparation programs toward a dual focus on

leadership skills and management training. Principals need core knowledge, as well as

management skills, to inform and lead change. Too, as districts and schools move toward

increasingly data-driven systems, it is critical that principals understand how to interpret

research findings and evaluative data. (K. Miller, 2003, p. 5)

Two critical areas for principals to address in improving student learning are content of

instruction and delivery of instruction. Schmoker (2011a) discussed the essentials of clarifying

what is taught each day in classrooms and how it is taught: "What we teach—a guaranteed and

viable curriculum—matters immensely" (p. 25). The taught curriculum may be the single largest

factor that determines how many students in a school will learn (Marzano, 2003).

In order to be successful, students need daily experiences with authentic literacy,

adequate time in essential core subjects, and additional time to use critical thinking skills

(Schmoker, 2011a). A majority of a student's learning day should be spent on good academic

content and intellectual thinking. "It is impossible to overstate the importance of literacy"

(Schmoker, 2011a, p. 34). Students need regular practice in deep reading of continuous texts and rich discussions about what they are reading. "Literacy is integral to both what and how we teach; it's the spine that holds everything together and ties content together in every subject" (Schmoker, 2011a, p. 37).

In working with ELL students, the principal must also support teachers as they work to provide responsive, scaffolded instruction. Scaffolding, just as the metaphor suggests, is building instructional structures "to support English language learners as they advance to higher-level proficiencies, skills, concepts, and understandings" (Rojas, 2007, p. 23). This means that objectives are taught with the awareness of different language proficiency levels. Teachers use different resources or parameters in order to achieve the learning objective (Alford & Nino, 2011). Principals must set this expectation in working with ELL students, in addition to providing teachers support to understand and implement this type of differentiation (Alford & Nino, 2011).

How the curriculum is taught in the classroom is essential for student learning. Effective lessons center around; a clearly defined lesson objective, teaching, modeling, demonstrating, guided practice, and check for understanding (Schmoker, 2011a). When teachers create and deliver well-designed lessons, student achievement increases. The principal's role is to ensure this happens in every classroom, every day. By observing teachers, a principal can mentor, coach, and evaluate teachers to support effective practices take place on a daily basis. These practices include the teacher circulating, observing, and listening to students as they work; calling on a random sample of students to check for understanding; implementing all student responding; creating student accountability; and providing opportunities for students to share their understandings with each other.

According to Williams, "Lessons that include effective use of formative assessment and checks for understanding:

- Would have *20 to 30 times* as much positive impact on learning than the most popular current initiatives.

- Are about *10 times* as cost effective as reducing class size.

- Would add between *6 and 9 months* of additional learning growth per year.

- Account for as much as 400 percent "speed of learning differences" (as cited in Schmoker, 2011a, p. 186)

"These tremendous impacts on student learning and achievement must be harnessed by classroom teachers and school leaders in order to address the needs of children and close the achievement gap" (Schmoker, 2011a, p. 61).

Principals do indeed make a difference in student learning, and the most powerful strategy for having a positive impact on that learning is to facilitate the learning of the educators who serve those students through the Professional Learning Community process. (DuFour & Marzano, 2011, p. 64)

According to DuFour and Marzano (2011), the best strategy for improving schools is to develop educators to function as members of a professional learning community. DuFour and Mattos (2013) outline five steps to success on the professional learning community journey:

1. Embrace the premise that the fundamental purpose of the school is to ensure that all students learn at high levels and enlist the staff in examining every existing practice, program, and procedure to ensure it aligns with that purpose.

2. Organize staff into meaningful collaborative teams that take collective responsibility for student learning and work interdependently to achieve shared goals for which

members hold themselves mutually accountable.

3. Call on teams to establish a guaranteed and viable curriculum for each unit that clarifies the essential learning for all students, agree on pacing guidelines, and develop and administer common formative assessments to monitor each student's learning at the end of each unit.

4. Use the evidence of student learning to identify

   - Students who need additional time and support to become proficient.

   - Students who need enrichment and extension of their learning because they're already highly proficient.

   - Teachers who help students achieve at high levels so team members can examine those teachers' practices.

   - Teachers who struggle to help students become proficient so team members can assist in addressing the problem.

   - Skills or concepts that none of the teachers were able to help students achieve at the intended level so the team can expand its learning beyond its members to become more effective in teaching those skills or concepts. The team can seek help from members of other teams in the building with expertise in that area, specialists from the central office, other teachers of the same content in the district, or networks of teachers throughout the United States that they interact with online.

5. Create a coordinated intervention plan that ensures that students who struggle receive additional time and support for learning in a way that is timely, directive, diagnostic, precise, and most important, systematic. (p. 39)

The effects of leadership on student learning are outlined in a study by Leithwood et al. (2004): "(a) Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn; and (b) Leadership effects are usually largest where and when they are needed most" (p. 7). In general, the impact of leadership on student learning and achievement is underestimated. Therefore, it is critical that the role of leadership in schools and districts is examined for potential ways of increasing results.

Furthermore, in the study, Leithwood et al. (2004) outlined other issues with leadership:

1. Many labels used in the literature to signify different forms or styles of leadership mask the generic functions of leadership.

2. Principals, superintendents and teachers are all being admonished to be "instructional leaders" without much clarity about what that means.

3. "Distributed leadership" is in danger of becoming no more than a slogan unless it is given more thorough and thoughtful consideration. As Jim Collins claims, having the right people in the right seats of the bus. (p. 41)

Most importantly in leadership are three basics: (a) setting the direction, (b) developing people, and (c) redesigning the organization.

Successful educational leaders develop their districts and schools as effective organizations that support and sustain the performance of administrators and teachers, as well as students. Specific practices typically associated with this set of basics include strengthening school cultures, modifying organizational structures and building collaborative processes. (Leithwood et al. 2004, p. 7)

Researchers Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) conducted extensive analyses of previous research and found strong links between effective leadership and student achievement.

In their review they identified 21 specific responsibilities—representing important knowledge, skills, and practices of effective principals—linked to higher levels of student performance. Of the 21, seven were positively correlated with deeper school change, requiring principals to challenge prevailing norms and teachers to learn new knowledge and skills. These seven are:

1. Change agent (challenges the status quo, leads change)

2. Flexibility (comfortable with major changes, open to new ideas)

3. Ideals and beliefs (holds strong professional beliefs about teaching and learning, shares those beliefs, and demonstrates behaviors consistent with those beliefs)

4. Intellectual stimulation (up-to-date on current research, exposes staff to new ideas)

5. Knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment

6. Monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of curriculum, instruction, and assessment

7. Optimizer (inspires teachers, portrays a positive can-do attitude, drives major initiatives) (Marzano et al., 2005, p. 120)

Many of these responsibilities require "not just skill and knowledge, but also orientation and dispositional qualities such as flexibility and specific beliefs" (Cheney & Davis, 2011, p. 6).

Professional Development

One role of the principal is to provide opportunities for professional development for staff members. "The role of the principal in building capacity in the school through quality professional development is critical in creating positive instructional improvements to meet the needs of ELLs" (Alford & Nino, 2011, Chapter 4, para. 3). In terms of professional development for ELL students, effective professional development must be "comprehensive, sustained and intensive" (Zacarian & Haynes, 2012, p. 115). Furthermore professional development includes:

- Professional development content must focus on specific classroom strategies.

- Professional development structure must engage teachers in active learning.

- Professional development must be sustained, on-going and continuous.

- Professional development must include language-related knowledge and skills and effective teaching strategies.

- Professional development must promote collaboration between general education teachers and ELL teachers.

- Professional development must help teachers address cultural diversity.

- Professional development must promote inquiry-based, reflective practices. (Li & Edwards, 2010, p. 356-369)

It is a key role of the building principal to provide learning opportunities for the adults of a school. There are essential features of this professional development that have an impact on student learning and achievement. These features include coaching, the use of data teams, a focus on how students learn content, collaboration and monitoring student learning (Hattie, 2012). Coaching can be "one of the most positive and effective ways to make a great school even greater" (Whitaker, Whitaker, & Lumpa, 2008, Chapter 3, para. 24). "We can no longer afford to be innocent of the fact that 'collaboration' improves performance" (Schmoker, 2004, p. 431).

Collaboration between the ESL teacher and mainstream teachers in a school is crucial. The ESL teacher should be an onsite resource for content-area teachers, able to share and model a wide repertoire of reading, writing, vocabulary, and note-taking strategies to scaffold instruction. Scaffolding instruction for ELL students does not mean simply modifying a few practices, such as reducing the number of answer choices or questions or replacing grade-level texts with simplified material. Content and ESL teachers need to

take time to plan together and look at grade-level standards to determine the depth and type of understanding expected before developing a unit plan. (Lewis-Moreno, 2007, p. 774)

As principals work with teachers, communication and collaboration are essential to improve instruction and to ensure that all students receive the support they need. There has been a shift from the traditional roles of the principal and teachers from manager and instructor to team builders, working toward a common goal (Yurkewecz & Wilson, 2013).

Conclusion

One can glean from the research is that the more skilled the building principal, the more learning can be expected among students. Stated differently, the research now supports what practitioners have known for decades: powerful school leadership on the part of the principal has a positive effect on student achievement. (DuFour & Marzano, 2011, p. 48)

With much of the focus in education today on literacy, it is important for principals and teachers to remember to monitor the amount of time spent on reading. In the September edition of *Kappan*, Schmoker (2011b) called it putting "first things first" (p. 68). Educators need to

1. Massively increase the amount of purposeful reading, writing, and discussion students engage in every day.

2. Create and ensure the implementation of decent, coherent curriculum in every course.

3. Ensure that teachers consistently observe the most fundamental elements of a good lesson—a clear, curriculum-based learning target, multiple segments taught in short cycles of instruction, checking for engagement/understanding by all students before moving on. (Schmoker, 2011b, p. 69)

Strong instructional leadership is essential for a school to be successful. . . . Our studies

have found that growth in valued school outcomes comes more from organizational

management for instructional improvement that it does from principals' time observing

classrooms or directly coaching teachers. School leaders influence classroom teaching,

and consequently student learning, by staffing schools with highly effective teachers and

supporting those teachers with effective teaching and learning environments, rather than

by focusing too narrowly on their own contributions to classroom instruction. (Horng &

Loeb, 2010, p. 69)

"School leaders need to remember that they are in this business because it's important. Students

deserve educators' best efforts, from the principal on down" (Good, 2008, p. 50).

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the experience of elementary principals, the knowledge of elementary principals in the area of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs in a school, the relationship between the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the schools' level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the potential impact on students' achievement of ELLs. This quantitative study explored the principals' experience in education as a predictor of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs. Additionally, this study looked at the principals' experience as a building leader as a predictor of the level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs. This study also examined the relationship between a principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the level of implementation of these same best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs in the principal's school. Finally, this study examined the impact of the principals' experience in education, the principals' experience as a principal, the principals' experience in the current school, the level of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs on ELL achievement as measured with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment.

Through this exploration, the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs were self-reported on a web-based survey and were then compared to the achievement scores of ELLs on the IREAD-3. Data were pulled for third-grade students on the 2012 I-READ-3 assessment for any school with an ELL population of 10 or more students. The percentile scores of this special population from each school were compared to the school principals' self-reported survey. The purpose of the I-READ-3 assessment was to measure foundational reading standards through Grade 3. Principals of these schools were invited to participate in a survey used to measure their knowledge of best practice in ELL literacy instruction and the level of implementation of these practices in the school.

A linear regression was conducted to determine if the experience of a principal predicts the principal's level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs. A linear regression was conducted to determine if the experience as principal in the current building predicts the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs. Pearson's correlation was conducted to determine the relationship between the principals' level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the schools' level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs. A multiple regression was used to examine the impact from the principals' experience in education, the principals' experience as a principal, the principals' experience in the current school, the level of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs on ELL achievement as measured with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment.

The overall design included two linear regressions, Pearson's orrelation and multiple regression. This study invited the principals of the 206 elementary schools in the state of Indiana

with at least 10 ELLs in Grade 3 during the 2012 I-READ-3 administration. The survey looked

at the principals' experience, knowledge of best practice in ELL literacy instruction and level of

implementation of best practice in ELL literacy instruction. This information was voluntarily

collected and analyzed from these schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the experience of elementary

principals, the knowledge of elementary principals in the area of best practice in literacy

instruction for ELLs, the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for

ELLs in a school, the relationship between the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy

instruction for ELLs and the schools' level of implementation of best practice in literacy

instruction for ELLs, and the potential impact on student achievement of ELLs based on the I-

READ-3 assessment. This statewide reading assessment is a summative assessment that

measures foundational reading skills through Grade 3. Three major Indiana standards are

assessed including

Standard 1: Reading: Word recognition, fluency, and vocabulary development

Standard 2: Reading: Comprehension and analysis of nonfiction and informational text

Standard 3: Reading: Comprehension and analysis of literary text

This study investigated the extent to which a principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy

instruction for ELL students and the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy

instruction for ELL students in a school impacts student achievement.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this quantitative study:

1. Do the years of experience in education of a principal predict the principal's level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs?

2. Do the years of experience as the principal of a school predict the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs?

3. Is there a relationship between the principal's level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs?

4. What impact does the principals' experience in education, the principals' experience as a principal, the principals' experience in the current school, the level of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs have on ELL achievement as measured with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment?

Null Hypotheses and Research Question Analysis

$H_0 1$. The years of experience in education of a principal does not predict the principal's level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs.

$H_0 2$. The years of experience as the principal in a school do not predict the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs.

$H_0 3$. There is no relationship between the principals' level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the schools' level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs.

$H_0 4$. There is no impact from the principals' experience in education, the principals' experience as a principal, the principals' experience in the current school, the level of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the level of

implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs on ELL achievement as measured with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment.

Population, Sample, and Participants

The data for this research were limited to Indiana elementary administrators with a minimum of 10 ELLs in Grade 3. According to the IDOE (2012), there were 206 elementary administrators with 10 or more Grade 3 ELL students who participated in the I-READ-3 assessment. Data were pulled for Grade 3 students on the 2012 I-READ-3 assessment for any school with an ELL population of 10 or more students. Principals of these schools were invited to participate in a web-based survey used to measure the principals' experience in education, the principals' experience as a school principal, the principals' experience as the school principal in the current school, the principals' knowledge of best practice in ELL literacy instruction, and the schools' level of implementation of best practice in ELL literacy instruction. A copy of the email invitation can be viewed in Appendix A. A follow-up email was sent to the participants one week prior to the survey window closing. A copy of the follow-up email text can be viewed in Appendix B. Once the survey information was collected and compiled, a multiple regression was run to compare the survey elements to the overall average ELL score on I-READ-3 for each school and principal. The responding sample was considered a representative sample of administrators in Indiana for the purpose of this research.

The purpose of the I-READ-3 assessment is to measure foundational reading standards through Grade 3. Based on the Indiana Academic Standards, IREAD-3 is a summative assessment that was developed in accordance with Public Law 109 which "requires the evaluation of reading skills for students who are in grade three beginning in the Spring of 2012

to ensure that all students can read proficiently before moving on to grade four" (IDOE, 2011, para. 4).

Data Collection

Through a web-based survey, qualifying principal's data responses were collected. Principals were contacted through email with a link to the survey provided. Data for the correlating ELL reading achievement were pulled from the Indiana Department of Education database (IDOE, 2012). The percentage of ELL students who passed the I-READ-3 for each school was used to measure the impact of each element of the web-based survey instrument as reported by the school building principal.

Data Collection Procedures

1. Using the IDOE database, elementary schools were identified with at least 10 ELLs in Grade 3 during the 2012 administration of the I-READ-3 assessment.

2. A list of email contact information for these building principals was requested from the IDOE.

3. Building principals of these schools were contacted with an email (Appendix A) explaining the study and inviting them to participate in the research study. A follow-up email was sent one week prior to the survey window closing (Appendix B).

4. A thank you email was sent to the building principals again with a final opportunity to participate in the research study (Appendix C).

5. Results were used to examine the research questions found within this study.

Instrumentation-Principal Survey

The Principal Survey (Appendix D) was used for school principals to determine their knowledge of best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs. Additional demographic data,

including gender, school size, and school setting, was collected for each principal to describe the sample. The best practices in literacy instruction were compiled after reviewing the current literature, establishing content validity. Additional practitioners' views and field-testing the instrument provided face validity by having the survey reviewed by peers in the field. The instrument consists of six demographic elements, including gender, number of years of experience in education, number of years as a building administrator, number of years in current building, school population, and school setting in addition to 10 best practices in literacy instruction for ELL students and a Likert scale for the level of knowledge based on the principals' self-perceptions and a Likert scale for the level of implementation in a school of these 10 best practices in literacy instruction for ELL students based on the principals' self-perceptions. Survey responses were given a composite score calculation by adding the 1- to 10-point Likert scale responses for the 10 items in each category, knowledge and implementation. Composite scores ranged from a minimum of 10 points to a maximum of 100 points in each category, knowledge and implementation.

Procedures of Data Analysis

Procedures of data analysis for this research used both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The descriptive data were analyzed by looking at frequencies, means, and standard deviations. Inferential testing consisted of linear regressions, Pearson's correlation, and multiple regression tests.

Methodology of Analysis

This study explored the extent to which a principals' experience in education serves as a predictor of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs using

linear regression. Additionally, this study looked at the principals' experience as a building leader as a predictor of the level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs using linear regression. This study also examined the relationship between the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the level of implementation of these same best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs in the principals' schools using Pearson's correlation. Finally, this study examined the impact of the principal's experience in education, the principal's experience as a principal, the principals' experience in the current school, the level of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs on ELL achievement as measured with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment using multiple regression. The purpose of the I-READ-3 assessment is to measure foundational reading standards through Grade 3. Data were pulled for third grade students on the 2012 I-READ-3 assessment for any school with an ELL population of 10 or more students in Grade 3. This average school percentile was compared to the survey results self-reported by the building principal. This quantitative study encompassed two linear regressions, Pearson's correlation and multiple regression to analyze the data collected.

For the purpose of this research, a quantitative mode of inquiry was utilized. Based on the literature review, logical hypotheses were formed and variables were identified. These remained fixed throughout the study. The purpose of this quantitative study was to develop generalizations that allow this researcher to explain and understand the hypotheses being researched (Creswell, 2009).

For Research Question 1, linear regression examined the extent to which a principals' experience in education serves as a predictor of the principals' knowledge of best practice in

literacy instruction for ELLs. For Research Question 2, linear regression looked at the principals' experience as a building leader as a predictor of the level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs. For Research Question 3, a Pearson's correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the level of implementation of these same best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs in the principals' schools.

For Research Question 4, multiple regression examined the impact of the principals' experience in education, the principals' experience as a principal, the principals' experience in the current school, the level of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs on ELL achievement as measured with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment. Examination of any significant predictors unstandardized partial regression coefficients demonstrated the overall impact each predictor had on the criterion variable.

Summary

In summary, the purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the experience of elementary principals, the knowledge of elementary principals in the area of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs in a school, the relationship between the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the schools' level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the potential impact on student achievement of ELLs based on the I-READ-3 assessment. Principals serving in schools with at least 10 ELL students in Grade 3 were invited to participate in this study. A web-based survey was used for principals to self-report their information which was linked to the percentile ELL scores for the Grade 3 I-

READ-3 assessment. Two linear regressions, a Pearson's correlation and a multiple regression were conducted to analyze the results and possible impact of each element.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter provides a description of the data and presents the results of the study. It is organized into the following sections: descriptive data, findings and analysis of the hypotheses, and summary of findings. The descriptive data section addresses the characteristics of the respondent principals. The findings and analysis section addresses the results of the Null Hypotheses 1-4. The summary of findings section summarizes the results for each hypothesis.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the experience of elementary principals, the knowledge of elementary principals in the area of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs in a school, the relationship between the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the schools' level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the potential impact on student achievement of ELLs based on the I-READ-3 assessment. This statewide reading assessment is a summative assessment that measures foundational reading skills through Grade 3. Three major Indiana standards were assessed including

Standard 1: Reading: Word recognition, fluency, and vocabulary development

Standard 2: Reading: Comprehension and analysis of nonfiction and informational text

Standard 3: Reading: Comprehension and analysis of literary text

This study investigated the extent to which a principal's knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students and the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELL students in a school impacts student achievement.

Statistical analysis of the data explored the extent to which principals' experience in education serves as a predictor of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs using linear regression. Additionally, this study looked at the principals' experience as a building leader to determine if it could be used to predict the level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs using linear regression. This study examined the relationship between principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the level of implementation of these same best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs in the principals' schools using a Pearson's correlation. Finally, this study examined the impact of the principals' experience in education, the principals' experience as a principal, the principals' experience in the current school, the level of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs on ELL achievement as measured with the Grade 3 I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment using multiple regression. Data were pulled for students on the 2012 I-READ-3 assessment for any school with an ELL population of 10 or more students in Grade 3. This average score within the school was compared to the survey results self-reported by the building principal. This quantitative study encompassed two linear regressions, a Pearson's correlation and multiple regression to analyze the data collected.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide this quantitative study:

1. Do the years of experience in education of principals predict the principals' level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs?

2. Do the years of experience as the principal of a school predict the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs?

3. Is there a relationship between the principals' level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the schools' level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL?

4. What impact does the principals' experience in education, the principals' experience as a principal, the principals' experience in the current school, the level of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs have on ELL achievement as measured with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment?

For Research Question 1, linear regression examined the extent to which principals' experience in education serves as a predictor of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs. For Research Question 2, linear regression was used to look at the principals' experience as building leaders as a predictor of the level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs. For Research Question 3, a Pearson's correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the level of implementation of these same best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs in the principals' schools.

For Research Question 4, multiple regression was used to examine the impact of the principals' experience in education, the principals' experience as a principal, the principals' experience in the current school, the level of the principals' knowledge of best practice in

literacy instruction for ELLs, the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs to determine whether enough variance could be explained in ELL achievement as measured with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment. Examination of any significant predictors unstandardized partial regression coefficients was used to demonstrate the overall impact of each predictor had on the criterion variable.

Descriptive Data

All Indiana elementary principals with a minimum of 10 ELLs in Grade 3 were invited to participate in this study. Of the 206 elementary principals with 10 or more Grade 3 ELL students who were invited to participate in this study, 103 principals responded with submitted surveys. The analysis data set contained 63 complete records ($N = 63$), representing 31% of all the principals in Indiana with at least 10 ELLs in Grade 3 who participated in the I-READ-3 assessment.

The population of principals who participated in this survey represented districts from across the state of Indiana. The following are characteristics of the principals who were included in the sample. Within the sample of principals with at least 10 ELL students in third grade, there were nine principals (14.3%) from rural schools, 18 principals (28.6%) from suburban schools, and 36 principals (57.1%) from urban schools. Within the sample, there were 26 male principals (41.3%) and 37 female principals (58.7%). Within the male sample of principals, there were five principals (19.2%) from rural schools, 10 principals (38.5%) from suburban schools, and 11 principals (42.3%) from urban schools. Within the sample of female principals, there were four principals (10.8%) from rural schools, eight principals (21.6%) from suburban schools, and 25 principals (67.6%) from urban schools.

Within the sample of principals, the years of experience in education ranged from 9-42 years, with an average of 22.62 years of experience in education ($SD = 8.43$). Within the sample of principals in a rural setting, the years of experience in education ranged from 10-42 years, with an average of 22 years of experience in education ($SD = 9.50$). Within the sample of principals in a suburban setting, the years of experience in education ranged from 9-42 years, with an average of 23.78 years of experience in education ($SD = 10.21$). Within the sample of principals in an urban setting, the years of experience in education ranged from 9-38 years, with an average of 22.19 years of experience in education ($SD = 7.32$).

Within the sample of male principals, the years of experience in education ranged from 9-38 years, with an average of 21.46 years of experience in education ($SD = 9.18$). Within the sample of female principals, the years of experience in education ranged from 9-42 years, with an average of 23.43 years of experience in education ($SD = 7.88$). Within the sample of principals, the average years of experience as a building principal was 9.11 years *($SD = 6.58$).*

Within the sample of principals in a rural setting, the average years of experience as a building principal was 8.22 years ($SD = 6.48$). Within the sample of principals in a suburban setting, the average years of experience as a building principal was 11 years ($SD = 8.85$). Within the sample of principals in an urban setting, the average years of experience as a building principal was 8.39 years ($SD = 5.15$).

Within the sample of male principals, the average years of experience as building principals were 11.08 ($SD = 8.29$). Within the sample of female principals, the average years of experience as building principals were 7.73 ($SD = 4.70$).

Within the sample of principals, the average years of experience as building principals in their current building was 5.52 ($SD = 3.81$). Within the sample of principals in a rural setting,

the average years of experience as building principals in their current building was 5.22 years

(*SD* = 4.94). Within the sample of principals in a suburban setting, the average years of

experience as building principals in their current building was 6.67 years (*SD* = 4.09). Within

the sample of principals in an urban setting, the average years of experience as building

principals in their current building was 5.03 years (*SD* = 3.47). Within the population of male

principals, the average years of experience as building principals in their current building was

5.96 (*SD* = 4.34). Within the sample of female principals, the average years of experience as

building principals in their current building was 5.22 (*SD* = 3.42).

Descriptive Summary of Level of Knowledge of Best Practice in Literacy Instruction for

ELL Students

The first section of the survey asked each principal to indicate his or her level of

knowledge of best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs using a 10 point scale with 1 point

indicating *no knowledge*, 5 indicating *adequate knowledge*, and 10 indicating *expert knowledge*.

A total of 63 principals responded to the survey items. Respondents indicated "key vocabulary

emphasized" as the practice principals had the most knowledge (*M* = 8.27, *SD* = 1.70). "Content

objectives clearly defined, displayed, and reviewed with students" was the second most

knowledgeable practice principals indicated (*M* = 8.00, *SD* = 1.30). The third highest

knowledgeable practice was "assessment of student comprehension and learning of all lesson

objectives" (*M* = 7.98, *SD* = 1.39). Table 3 illustrates responses to the 10 items on the survey

regarding level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs.

Table 3

Principals' Level of Knowledge of Best Practice in Literacy Instruction for ELLs

Literacy Practice	*N*	*Range*	*M*	*SD*
1. Content objectives clearly defined, displayed and reviewed with students	63	5-10	8.00	1.30
2. Adaptation of content to all levels of student proficiency	63	3-10	7.41	1.54
3. Supplementary materials used to a high degree, making the lesson clear and meaningful	63	4-10	7.76	1.38
4. Key vocabulary emphasized	63	5-10	8.27	1.17
5. Speech rate appropriate for students' proficiency level	63	3-10	7.30	1.70
6. Scaffolding techniques consistently used assisting and supporting student understanding	63	4-10	7.65	1.53
7. Grouping configurations support language and content objectives of the lesson	63	1-10	7.67	1.65
8. Activities integrate all language skills	63	4-10	7.70	1.42
9. Pacing of the lesson appropriate to student proficiency levels	63	4-10	7.75	1.40
10. Assessment of student comprehension and learning of all lesson objectives	63	4-10	7.98	1.39

Each respondent's scores for all knowledge questions were added together to serve as a composite score for principal's knowledge level. Within the sample of principals, the range of scores of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL was 44-95 with an average of 77.49 ($SD = 11.80$).

Within the sample of principals in a rural setting, the range of scores of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL was 65-90 with an average of 77.67 ($SD = 8.63$).

Within the sample of principals in a suburban setting, the range of scores of knowledge of best

practice in literacy instruction for ELL was 51-95 with an average of 79.22 (SD = 9.66). Within

the sample of principals in an urban setting, the range of scores of knowledge of best practice in

literacy instruction for ELL was 44-95 with an average of 76.58 (SD = 13.50).

Within the sample of male principals, the range of scores of knowledge of best practice in

literacy instruction for ELL was 51-95 with an average of 77.23 (SD = 10.92). Within the

sample of female principals, the range of scores of knowledge of best practice in literacy

instruction for ELL was 44-95 with an average of 77.68 (SD = 12.53).

Descriptive Summary for Implementation of Best Practice in Literacy Instruction for

ELL Students

The second section of the survey asked each principal to indicate the school's level of

implementation of best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs using a 10 point scale with 1

point indicating *no implementation*, 5 indicating *some implementation*, and 10 indicating *full*

implementation. A total of 63 principals responded to the survey items. Respondents indicated

"content objectives clearly defined, displayed and reviewed with students" as the practice

schools had the highest levels of implementation (M = 8.11, SD = *1*.94). "Key vocabulary

emphasized" was the second most implemented practice principals indicated (M = 8.03, SD =

1.73). The third most widely implemented practice was "assessment of student comprehension

and learning of all lesson objectives" (M = 8.02, SD = 1.48). Table 4 illustrates responses to the

10 items on the survey regarding level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction

for ELLs.

Table 4

Schools' Level of Implementation of Best Practice in Literacy Instruction for ELLs

Literacy Practice	N	Range	M	SD
1. Content objectives clearly defined, displayed and reviewed with students	63	1-10	8.11	1.94
2. Adaptation of content to all levels of student proficiency	63	2-10	7.57	1.54
3. Supplementary materials used to a high degree, making the lesson clear and meaningful	63	3-10	7.54	1.59
4. Key vocabulary emphasized	63	1-10	8.03	1.73
5. Speech rate appropriate for students' proficiency level	63	2-10	7.33	1.77
6. Scaffolding techniques consistently used assisting and supporting student understanding	63	4-10	7.65	1.48
7. Grouping configurations support language and content objectives of the lesson	63	1-10	7.90	1.58
8. Activities integrate all language skills	63	4-10	7.83	1.51
9. Pacing of the lesson appropriate to student proficiency levels	63	1-10	7.70	1.66
10. Assessment of student comprehension and learning of all lesson objectives	63	4-10	8.02	1.48

Each respondent's scores for all implementation questions were added together to serve as a composite score for building implementation level. Within the sample of principals, the range of scores for implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL was 40-100 with an average of 77.68 ($SD = 13.55$).

Within the sample of principals in a rural setting, the range of scores for implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL was 69-90 with an average of 80.33 ($SD = 6.98$).

Within the sample of principals in a suburban setting, the range of scores for implementation of

best practice in literacy instruction for ELL was 51-97 with an average of 78.89 ($SD = 12.84$).

Within the sample of principals in an urban setting, the range of scores for implementation of

best practice in literacy instruction for ELL was 44-95 with an average of 76.41 ($SD = 15.16$).

Within the sample of male principals, the range of scores for implementation of best

practice in literacy instruction for ELL was 42-100 with an average of 81.31 ($SD = 13.08$).

Within the sample of female principals, the range of scores for implementation of best practice in

literacy instruction for ELL was 40-100 with an average of 75.14 ($SD = 13.46$).

Findings and Analysis of the Hypothesis

$H_0 1$. "The years of experience in education of a principal does not predict the principal's

level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs." This hypothesis was tested

using linear regression to examine the extent to which a principals' experience in education

served as a predictor of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for

ELLs.

The assumptions for linear regression were tested and met. To ensure independence of

residuals a Durbin Watson test was utilized. The assumption was met as the test statistic

approached 2. The assumption of linearity was tested by examining a scatterplot to ensure a

linear relationship existed. The assumption of heteroscedasticity was tested by examining the

plot of regression standardized residuals versus the regression standardized predicted values.

This assumption was met as the residual distance did not increase or decrease as the value of the

criterion variable increased.

In order to ensure the accuracy within the regression model, it was examined to ensure no

outliers were included. By examining the standardized residuals it was evident no outliers were

in the regression model as all standardized residuals fell within 1.5 standard deviations. The assumption of normality was met as the residuals on the normal p-p plot of regression Standardized Residuals aligned with the diagonal line. As previously stated, all assumptions were met within the regression model.

The average years of experience in education from the respondents was 22.62 years (SD = 8.43). The range of scores of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students was 44-95 with an average of 77.49 (SD = 11.80).

There was a small relationship between the years of experience in education and the knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students, with the correlation coefficient (R) equaling .215. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was .046. Therefore, 4.6% of the variance in the knowledge score can be explained by the years of experience in education. The adjusted coefficient of determination (adjusted R^2) indicates 3% of the knowledge score can be explained by the years of experience in education when adjusted for the sample size. The standard error of the estimate is the average residual distance from the prediction line of data points (11.62).

The years of experience in education did not serve as a predictor of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students because it was non-significant with $F(1,61) = 2.946$, $p = .091$. Based on this, the null for $H_0 1$ was retained.

$H_0 2$. "The years of experience as the principal of a school do not predict the schools' level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs." This hypothesis was tested using linear regression to examine the extent to which the principals' experience as the principal in a school served as a predictor of the schools' level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs.

The average years of experience in the current school from the respondents was 5.52

years ($SD = 3.81$). The range of scores of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction

for ELL was 40-100 with an average of 77.68 ($SD = 13.55$).

The assumptions for linear regression were tested and met. To ensure independence of

residuals a Durbin Watson test was utilized. The assumption was met as the test statistic

approached 2. The assumption of linearity was tested by examining a scatterplot to ensure a

linear relationship existed. The assumption of heteroscedasticity was tested by examining the

plot of regression standardized residuals versus the regression standardized predicted values.

This assumption was met as the residual distance did not increase or decrease as the value of the

criterion variable increased.

In order to ensure the accuracy within the regression model, it was examined to ensure no

outliers were included. By examining the standardized residuals, it was evident no outliers were

in the regression model as all standardized residuals fell within 1.5 standard deviations. The

assumption of normality was met as the residuals on the normal p-p plot of regression

standardized residuals aligned with the diagonal line. As previously stated, all assumptions were

met within the regression model.

There was a small relationship between the years of experience as the building principal

and the level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students, with the

correlation coefficient (R) equaling .158. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was .025.

Therefore, 2.5% of the variance in the knowledge score can be explained by the years of

experience as the building principal. The adjusted coefficient of determination (adjusted R^2)

indicates less than 1% of the knowledge score can be explained by the years of experience as the

building principal when adjusted for the sample size. The standard error of the estimate was the average residual distance from the prediction line of data points (13.49).

The years of experience as the building principal did not serve as a predictor of the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students with $F(1,61) = 1.558$, p = .217. Based on this, the null for $H_0 2$ was retained.

$H_0 3$. "There is no relationship between the principal's level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs." This hypothesis was tested using a Pearson's correlation to examine the relationship between a principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the level of implementation of these same best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs in the principal's school.

For the third hypothesis, all assumptions for the Pearson's correlation were tested. All assumptions were met. The Pearson's correlation requires both variables to be at least interval. The two variables within this test were both at least interval. The Pearson's correlation also requires a linear relationship between the two variables. This was evident as the scatterplot formed a straight line pattern. The test also required examination of the scatterplot to ensure no outliers were impacting the test. No data point was removed from the rest of the data set. The assumption of normality was tested using a Shapiro-Wilk test. The assumption was met as $p >$ .05. As previously stated, all assumptions were met for this test.

The score of the principals' knowledge of best practice of literacy instruction for ELL students ($M = 77.49$, $SD = 11.80$) was significantly related to the score of the school's level of implementation of best practice of literacy instruction for ELL students ($M = 77.68$, $SD = 13.55$)

with a significant Pearson correlation. These two variables demonstrated a strong relationship

with a correlation value of .693 and $p < .001$. Based on this, the null for $H_0 3$ was rejected.

H$_0$4. "There is no impact from the principals' experience in education, the principals'

experience as a principal, the principals' experience in the current school, the level of the

principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the level of

implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs on ELL achievement as

measured with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment." This hypothesis was tested using

multiple regression to examine the impact of the principals' experience in education, the

principals' experience as a principal, the principals' experience in the current school, the level of

the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, the level of

implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs to determine whether any

of these variables explain enough variance in ELL achievement as measured with the I-READ-3

statewide reading assessment.

For the fourth hypothesis, all assumptions for multiple regression were tested. All

assumptions were met. The assumption of independence of residuals was tested and met with a

Durbin-Watson score around 2. The assumption of linearity for collective linearity and

individual linearity was tested. For collective linear relationship to be determined the plot of

standardized residual versus unstandardized predicted values was examined and assumption was

met as residuals formed a horizontal band. The individual linearity looked to ensure each of the

predictor variables had a linear relationship with the predictor variable. This was met as the

partial regression plots demonstrated a linear pattern.

The assumption of homoscedasticity was met as the plot of standardized residuals versus

the unstandardized predicted values did not demonstrate any residual spread as values of the

criterion variable increased. The assumption of no multicollinearity ensured none of the

predictor variables were too closely related which could result in being unable to determine

which variable was explaining the variance in the criterion variable. All tolerance levels were

above the .2 level indicating no evidence of multicollinearity.

The model did not have any outliers as evident by examination of the standardized

residuals. There were no standardized residuals more than 1.5 standard deviations. The

assumption of normality of residuals was tested by examining the normal p-p plot of regression

standardized residuals. The assumption was met as the residuals fill along the diagonal line of

the plot. As previously stated, all assumptions were met for this test. The average number of

years in education and experience as a building principal are reflected in Table 5.

Table 5

Principals' Average Experience and ELL Scores

Variables	Mean	*SD*
Years of Experience in Education	22.62	8.43
Years of Experience as a Building Principal	9.11	6.58
Years of Experience in Current School	5.52	3.81
Knowledge of Best Practice Score	77.49	11.80
Level of Implementation of Best Practice Score	77.68	13.55
Average I-READ-3 ELL Score	67.80	17.65

There was a medium relationship between the predictor variables and the criterion

variable, with the multiple correlation coefficient (R) equaling .282. The multiple coefficient of

determination (R^2) was .080. Therefore, 8% of the variance in the I-READ-3 score can be

explained by the predictor variables. The adjusted multiple coefficient of determination (Adjusted R^2) indicates less than 1% of the I-READ-3 score can be explained by the predictor variables when adjusted for the sample size and the number of predictors. The standard error of the estimate is the average residual distance from the prediction line of data points (17.66).

The years of experience in education, the years as the building principal, the years of experience as principal in the current building, the principal's knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students, the level of the school's implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students did not serve as a predictor for the I-READ-3 ELL score because the model was non-significant with $F(5,57) = .985$, $p = .435$. Based on this, the null for H_04 was retained.

Summary of Descriptive Data

During May and June of 2013, 206 elementary principals in Indiana who had a minimum of 10 ELLs in Grade 3 were invited to participate in this study. Of the 206 elementary principals who were invited to participate in this study, 103 principals responded with submitted surveys. The analysis data set contained 63 complete records ($N=63$), representing 31% of all the principals in Indiana with at least 10 ELLs in Grade 3 who participated in the I-READ-3 assessment. Within the sample of the population, there were characteristics specific to the principals that were analyzed.

- In the sample group, 41.3% were men and 58.7% were women.

- From the perspective of geographical location, 14.3% were from a rural setting, 28.6% were from a suburban setting, and 57.1% were from an urban setting.

- Within the sample group, more men were principals in rural and suburban settings, with 19.2% and 38.5% respectively.

- Within the sample group, more women were urban principals with 67.6% serving in this setting.

- Within the sample group, the average years of experience in education were 22.62 years.

- Within the sample group, the average years of experience in education for female principals were 23.43 years.

- Within the sample group, the average years of experience in education for male principal were 21.46 years.

- Of the respondents, the average number of years as a building principal was 9.91 years, and the average number of years in the current building was 5.52 years.

- Of the female respondents, the average number of years as a building principal was 7.73 years, and the average number of years in the current building was 5.22 years.

- Of the male respondents, the average number of years as a building principal was 11.08 years, and the average number of years in the current building was 5.96 years.

- From the sample, the average I-READ-3 ELL score of the respondents was 67.80%.

- From the sample, the average I-READ-3 ELL score of the female respondents was 65.78%.

- From the sample, the average I-READ-3 ELL score of the male respondents was 70.68%.

- From the sample, the average I-READ-3 ELL score of the respondents from rural settings was 72.57%.

- From the sample, the average I-READ-3 ELL score of the respondents from suburban settings was 72.13%.

- From the sample, the average I-READ-3 ELL score of the respondents from rural settings was 64.44%.

- From the principal respondents, the average number of years of experience in education in for principals in a rural setting was 22 years.

- From the principal respondents, the average number of years of experience in education in for principals in a suburban setting was 23.78 years.

- From the principal respondents, the average number of years of experience in education in for principals in an urban setting was 22.19 years.

- From the principal respondents, the average number of years of experience as a building principal in a rural setting was 8.22 years.

- From the principal respondents, the average number of years of experience as a building principal in a suburban setting was 11 years.

- From the principal respondents, the average number of years of experience as a building principal in an urban setting was 8.39 years.

- From the principal respondents, the average number of years of experience as a building principal in the current building in a rural setting was 5.22 years.

- From the principal respondents, the average number of years of experience as a building principal in the current building in a suburban setting was 6.67 years.

- From the principal respondents, the average number of years of experience as a building principal in the current building in an urban setting was 5.03 years.

- From the sample, the average score respondents reported about knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students was 77.49 (of 100 possible points).

- From the sample, the average score female respondents reported about knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students was 77.68 (of 100 possible points).

- From the sample, the average score male respondents reported about knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students was 77.23 (of 100 possible points).

- From the sample, the average score rural respondents reported about knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students was 77.67 (of 100 possible points).

- From the sample, the average score suburban respondents reported about knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students was 79.22 (of 100 possible points).

- From the sample, the average score urban respondents reported about knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students was 76.58 (of 100 possible points).

- Respondents rated themselves most knowledgeable about "key vocabulary emphasized" with an average score of 8.27 (of possible 10 points).

- Respondents rated themselves least knowledgeable about "speech rate appropriate for students proficiency level" with an average score of 7.30 (of possible 10 points).

- Male respondents rated themselves most knowledgeable about "key vocabulary emphasized" with an average score of 8.23 (of possible 10 points).

- Male respondents rated themselves least knowledgeable about "speech rate appropriate for students' proficiency level" with an average score of 7.12 (of possible 10 points).

- Female respondents rated themselves most knowledgeable about "key vocabulary emphasized" with an average score of 8.30 (of possible 10 points).

- Female respondents rated themselves least knowledgeable about "adaptation of content to all levels of student proficiency" with an average score of 7.41 (of possible 10 points).

- Rural respondents rated themselves most knowledgeable about "key vocabulary emphasized" with an average score of 8.67 (of possible 10 points).

- Rural respondents rated themselves least knowledgeable about "adaptation of content to all levels of student proficiency" with an average score of 7.22 (of possible 10 points).

- Suburban respondents rated themselves most knowledgeable about "key vocabulary emphasized" with an average score of 8.44 (of possible 10 points).

- Suburban respondents rated themselves least knowledgeable about "speech rate appropriate for students' proficiency level" with an average score of 7.41 (of possible 10 points).

- Urban respondents rated themselves most knowledgeable about "key vocabulary emphasized" with an average score of 8.08 (of possible 10 points).

- Urban respondents rated themselves least knowledgeable about "adaptation of content to all levels of student proficiency" with an average score of 7.19 (of possible 10 points).

- From the sample, the average score respondents reported about level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students was 77.68 (of 100 possible points).

- From the sample, the average score female respondents reported about level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students was 75.14 (of 100 possible points).

- From the sample, the average score male respondents reported about level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students was 81.31 (of 100 possible points).

- From the sample, the average score rural respondents reported about level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students was 80.33 (of 100 possible points).

- From the sample, the average score suburban respondents reported about level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students was 78.89 (of 100 possible points).

- From the sample, the average score urban respondents reported about level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students was 76.42 (of 100 possible points).

- Respondents rated the school's highest level of implementation of "content objectives clearly defined, displayed and reviewed with students" with an average score of 8.11 (of possible 10 points).

- Respondents rated the school's lowest level of implementation of "speech rate appropriate for students' proficiency level" with an average score of 7.33 (of possible 10 points).

- Male respondents rated the school's highest level of implementation of "content objectives clearly defined, displayed and reviewed with students" with an average score of 8.46 (of possible 10 points).

- Male respondents rated the school's lowest level of implementation of "speech rate appropriate for students' proficiency level" with an average score of 7.73 (of possible 10 points).

- Female respondents rated the school's highest level of implementation of "key vocabulary emphasized" with an average score of 7.86 (of possible 10 points).

- Female respondents rated the school's highest level of implementation of "speech rate appropriate for students' proficiency level" with an average score of 7.05 (of possible 10 points).

- Rural respondents rated the school's highest level of implementation of "key vocabulary emphasized" with an average score of 8.56 (of possible 10 points).

- Rural respondents rated the school's lowest level of implementation of "speech rate appropriate for students' proficiency level" with an average score of 7.44 (of possible 10 points).

- Suburban respondents rated the school's highest level of implementation of "content objectives clearly defined, displayed and reviewed with students" and "key vocabulary emphasized" both with an average score of 8.33 (of possible 10 points).

- Suburban respondents rated the school's lowest level of implementation of "adaptation of content to all levels of student proficiency" with an average score of 7.56 (of possible 10 points).

- Urban respondents rated the school's highest level of implementation of "key vocabulary emphasized" with an average score of 8.00 (of possible 10 points).

- Urban respondents rated the school's lowest level of implementation of "speech rate appropriate for students' proficiency level" with an average score of 7.17 (of possible 10 points).

Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Four hypotheses were tested with the following summarized results:

1. Through linear regression, the results indicated that there was a small relationship between the years of experience in education and the knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students. The years of experience in education did not serve as a predictor of the principal's knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students. The null for $H_0$1 was retained.

2. Through linear regression, the results indicated that there was a small relationship between the years of experience as the building principal and the level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students. The null for $H_0$2 was retained.

3. Through a Pearson's correlation, the results indicated that there was a significant relationship between the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students and the school's level of implementation of best practice of literacy

instruction for ELL students with a correlation value of .693 and $p < .001$. The null

for H_03 was rejected.

4. Through multiple regression, the results indicated that the principals' experience in

education, the principals' experience as a principal, the principals' experience in the

current school, the level of the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy

instruction for ELLs and the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy

instruction for ELLs did not serve as a predictor for ELL achievement as measured

with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment. The null for H_04 was retained.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS, SUMMARY, AND IMPLICATIONS

FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This chapter is organized into four major sections. The first section is a discussion of the findings of this study including a summary of the descriptive data and a summary of the hypotheses tested along with conclusions. The second section is a summary of the research. The third component discusses implications of the research and its results. In the fourth section, there is a discussion of future research with final conclusions.

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the experience of elementary principals, the knowledge of elementary principals in the area of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs in schools, the relationship between the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the schools' level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the potential impact on student achievement of ELLs, based on the I-READ-3 assessment. This statewide reading assessment is a summative assessment that measures foundational reading skills through Grade 3. Three major Indiana standards are assessed including

Standard 1: Reading: Word recognition, fluency, and vocabulary development

Standard 2: Reading: Comprehension and analysis of nonfiction and informational text

Standard 3: Reading: Comprehension and analysis of literary text

This study investigated the extent to which principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL students and the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELL students in a school impacts student achievement.

The research design involved a population of 63 elementary principals in Indiana with at least 10 ELLs in Grade 3 who participated in the I-READ-3 assessment. Principal responses were collected using an electronic survey. This survey questioned the principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the level of implementation of these best practices in the principals' school. In addition to these responses, demographic information was also obtained about the survey population. Statistical analysis of the data included descriptive statistics regarding the mean, standard deviation, ranking of best practices in literacy instruction for ELL students.

Summary of the Population

Demographic information about the population's characteristics of leadership was collected. Of the 63 respondents, there were 26 male principals (41.3%) and 37 female principals (58.7%). The years of experience in education ranged from 9-42 years, with an average of 22.62 years of experience in education ($SD = 8.43$). The average years of experience as a building principal was 9.11 years ($SD = 6.58$). The average years of experience as a building principal in the current building was 5.52 ($SD = 3.81$). In terms of geographical setting, there were nine principals (14.3%) from rural schools, 18 principals (28.6%) from suburban schools, and 36 principals (57.1%) from urban schools.

Summary of Descriptive Data

All principals with at least 10 ELL students in third grade were invited to participate in this study through an email invitation to take an electronic survey. Principals were asked to rate their knowledge of 10 best practices in literacy instruction for ELL using a Likert scale of 1-10 points. In addition, principals were asked to rate their school's level of implementation of these same best practices using a Likert scale of 1-10. After the surveys were completed, the score were compiled for each principal's response. A summary of the descriptive data findings and the conclusion follows.

Principal's Knowledge of Best Practice in Literacy Instruction for ELLs

The first section of the survey asked each principal to indicate his or her level of knowledge of best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs using a 10 point scale with 1 point indicating no knowledge, 5 indicating adequate knowledge, and 10 indicating expert knowledge. A total of 63 principals responded to the survey items. Respondents indicated "key vocabulary emphasized" as the practice principals had the most knowledge ($M = 8.27$, $SD = 1.70$). "Content objectives clearly defined, displayed, and reviewed with students" was the second most knowledgeable practice principals indicated ($M = 8.00$, $SD = 1.30$). The third highest knowledgeable practice was "assessment of student comprehension and learning of all lesson objectives" ($M = 7.98$, $SD = 1.39$).

School's Level of Implementation of Best Practices in Literacy Instruction for ELLs

The second section of the survey asked each principal to indicate the school's level of implementation of best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs using a 10 point scale with 1 point indicating *no implementation*, 5 indicating *some implementation*, and 10 indicating *full implementation*. A total of 63 principals responded to the survey items. Respondents indicated

"content objectives clearly defined, displayed and reviewed with students" as the practice schools had the highest levels of implementation ($M = 8.11$, $SD = 1.94$). "Key vocabulary emphasized" was the second most implemented practice principals indicated ($M = 8.03$, $SD = 1.73$). The third most widely implemented practice was "assessment of student comprehension and learning of all lesson objectives" ($M = 8.02$, $SD = 1.48$).

Summary of the Study

This study was designed to examine the impact of principals' experience and knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs. There were four major research questions that guided this study:

1. Do the years of experience in education of a principal predict the principal's level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs?

2. Do the years of experience as the principal of a school predict the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs?

3. Is there a relationship between the principal's level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the school's level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs?

4. What impact does the principal's experience in education, the principal's experience as a principal, the principal's experience in the current school, the level of the principal's knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, and the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs have on ELL achievement as measured with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment?

Implications

This study provides additional information to principals who serve student populations with ELLs. It contributes to the growing body of research in identifying factors of principal characteristics that contribute to student learning and achievement. This research provides additional information to educators about the significance of principals being instructional leaders who serve all students. ELLs are commonly underperforming on standardized tests. English learners are nearly twice as likely to drop out of high school as their native English speaking peers (Rumberger, 2011, p. 2). The significant difference in the achievement gap with this special population of students must be addressed.

Research Questions 1 and 2: Principal's Knowledge and School's Implementation

This study illustrated only a small relationship in the principal's experience in education and the principal's knowledge level of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs. In addition, this study showed a small relationship between the principal's years of experience as the principal in the current building and the level of implementation of these best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs.

This finding indicates principals with less experience in education and less experience in the principalship have the same opportunity to positively impact student achievement as colleagues with more experience. As schools and districts search for qualified candidates to fill principalships, this finding is of interest, minimizing the impact of experience in both education and as a former principal. Although experience could have other positive merits, this study indicated that experience does not positively impact the principal's knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, nor did the principal's experience in the current school positively impact the school's level of implementation of these same best practices.

Research Question 3: Relationship Between Principal's Knowledge and School's Implementation

This study reflected a strong positive correlation between the principal's knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs and the school's level of implementation of these same practices. This finding lends itself to the old adage that principals inspect what they expect. This finding is significant because if a principal is knowledgeable about best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs, the principal can ensure that these practices are implemented in a school.

Additionally, this finding is an indicator that principals need to stay informed about best practices in literacy instruction for all learners to ensure there are high quality instructional practices happening each day for all students. This finding is another indicator that principals who are highly effective are life-long learners and seek further understanding in serving their student populations. Higher education learning, professional development and collaboration with colleagues all contribute to principals staying informed about best practices of ELL.

Research Question 4: Impact of Principal's Experience, Knowledge, and School's Implementation on Achievement for ELLs

This study demonstrated there was a small impact from the principal's experience, principal's knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs, school's implementation of best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs on student achievement as measured with the I-READ-3 statewide reading assessment. According to Seashore-Louis et al. (2010), most school variables, considered separately, have only a small effect on student learning. "In order to achieve large effects, educators need to create synergy across the relevant variables" (Seashore-Louis et al., 2010, p. 9).

These factors not having a positive impact on student achievement is surprising, particularly because one would expect the higher level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs would result in higher levels of student achievement. The results in this study found that was simply not the case. As ELL students consistently underperform on standardized tests, more research is needed to determine what factors have a positive impact on their achievement, especially in the area of educational leadership and instructional leadership.

Research Recommendations

Administrators who participated in this study were asked what factors contributed or inhibited these best practices in literacy instruction for ELL being implemented in their school. An overwhelming number of respondents indicated that the classroom teachers and the ELL teachers were the strongest factors in both of these areas. One respondent indicated that a contributing factor is a highly knowledgeable ELL teacher, in addition, is to have staff trained in sheltering instructional practices. Additionally, several respondents named professional development, collaboration, and specific training as factors that positively contributed to the implementation of these best practices. Based on the results of this study of the principals' knowledge and the schools' implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELL, the following recommendations for future research can be made:

1. A study should be conducted to determine the impact of achievement of ELLs based on their language acquisition level.

2. A quantitative study should be conducted to determine if the number of years a school has served an ELL population impacts the achievement of ELLs.

3. A quantitative study should be conducted to determine the principals' leadership in ELL professional development and the impact on teacher practice.

4. A comparison study should be conducted on the achievement of ELLs compared to the number of years individual students' families have lived in English speaking communities.

5. A quantitative study should be conducted to determine if the schools' level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs has an impact on student achievement for ELLs.

Conclusion

The principal as an instructional leader in the school has a positive impact on student learning and achievement. According to Leithwood and Seashore-Louis (2012), leadership in a school is "second to only classroom instruction as an influence on student learning" (p. 3). There is not one case of a school improving student achievement without the presence of "talented leadership" (Leithwood & Seashore-Louis, 2012, p. 3). This study illustrated that there is a strong correlation in the principal's level of knowledge of best practice of literacy instruction for ELLs and the level of implementation of those same best practices in a school. In addition to this finding, the principal's experience in education did not impact the principal's level of knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for ELLs. The principal's years of experience in the current building did not impact the school's level of implementation of these same best practices. Furthermore, these factors did not impact student achievement on the I-READ-3 assessment.

As Fullan (2008) described that "learning is the work" (p. 13) as one of the six secrets to change, he referenced Toyota's science for improving performance. "Toyota's approach to improved performance in all areas of work consists of three components: 1) identify the critical knowledge; 2) transfer the knowledge using job instruction; and 3) verify learning and success"

(Fullan, 2008, p. 78). If principals are informed of the critical knowledge of best practice in ELL literacy instruction and are able to transfer that knowledge to be implemented in a school, learning and achievement will take place. As the levels of ELLs continue to increase in student populations, it is important that principals are knowledgeable about instructional practices for all students, including non-native speakers of English.

Because ELLs are commonly underperforming in schools, including on standardized tests, principals must be informed on how to support these students, especially in the area of literacy. These students are more likely to drop out of school compared to their native English-speaking peers. Educators have an obligation to stay current with effective instructional practices that meet the needs of the learners in their schools.

> As the cultural and linguistic diversity of U.S. school children grows and as federal
> legislation mandates greater accountability in school districts, states are feeling a sense of
> urgency to support successful outcomes for English learners. Over 5 million students are
> learning English in America's public schools, accounting for more than 10% of the K-12
> population. That's an increase of over 50% in the last decade alone. (Cook et al., 2011,
> p. 66)

The principals' role in ensuring best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs is critical. The principals can only monitor what is being implemented if the principals are knowledgeable about these very practices. Principals should visit schools serving ELL populations to learn from other principals. Collaboration and observation of best practices in literacy instruction for ELLs would be beneficial, regardless of the principal's level of experience. If principals collaborate and work together, instructional leadership would be improved. Universities have begun to

redesign educational leadership programs so they are in line with the principals' role of improving instruction (W. Miller, 2013).

Most importantly, "good principals are instructional leaders, providing staff with guidance and a sense of mission, and students with the motivation to succeed" (Spiro, 2013, p. 28). Research shows "instructional leadership by principals has an impact on teachers' classroom practices, which, in turn, affect student learning" (Seashore-Louis et al., 2010, p. 204). As populations of ELLs continue to grow across the state and nation, it is imperative that principals are instructional leaders and continue to learn how to best serve all students.

REFERENCES

Alford, B. J., & Nino, M. C. (2011). *Leading academic achievement for English language learners: A guide for principals* [Kindle version]. Retrieved from http://www.amazon.com

Allington, R., & Gabriel, R. (2012). Every child, every day, *Educational Leadership, 69*(6), 10-15. Retrieved from http://www.ascd.org

Allington, R., & Walmsley, S. (1995). *No quick fix: Rethinking literacy programs in America's elementary.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

August, D., & Shanahan, T. (Eds.). (2006). *Developing literacy in second-language learners: Report of the national panel on language minority children and youth.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Barker, I. (2013). Teacher leader voice and capacity building lead to student growth. *The Learning Principal, 8*(2), 3. Retrieved from http://learningforward.org/docs/learning-principal/lp-w13-voice-capacity.pdf

Batalova, J., & McHugh, M. (2010). Number and growth of students in U.S. schools in need of English instruction. *Fact Sheets, 8*(1), 1-4. Retrieved from http://www.migrationpolicy.org

Bean, J. P. (2006). Light and shadow in research design. In C. Conrad, & R. Serlin (Eds.), *SAGE handbook for research in education: Engaging ideas and enriching inquiry* (pp. 353-371). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Brookhart, S., & Moss, C. (2013). Leading by learning. *Kappan Magazine, 94*(8), 13-17.

    Retrieved from http://www.kappanmagazine.org

Brooks-Rallins, A. (2012). Collaborative culture: If a school wants to transform a culture,

    everyone in it must value conversation. *JSD The Learning Forward Journal, 33*(4), 55-

    56. Retrieved from http://www.learningforward.org/docs/jsd-august-

    2012/scott33407865D0B2B09.pdf

Carney, I. (2010). To have the greatest impact on student learning, every educator needs to be

    an instructional leader. *The National Staff Development Council, 31*(2),

    61. Retrieved from http://www.nsdc.org

Casoli-Reardon, M., Rappaport, N., Kulick, D., & Reinfeld, S. (2012). Ending school avoidance,

    Educational Leadership, 70(2)*,* 51-55. Retrieved from http://www.ascd.org

Cheney, G. R., & Davis, J. (2011). Gateways to the principalship: State power to improve the

    quality of school leaders*. Center for American Progress.* Retrieved from

    http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/teachersLeaders/docs/3Research%20Gateways_to_the_Pri

    ncipalship_Center_for_American_Progress.pdf

Chiappe, P., Siegel, L. S., & Wade-Woolley, L. (2002). Linguistic diversity and the development

    of reading skills: A longitudinal study. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 6,* 369-400.

    Retrieved from http://www.tandfonline.com

Christensen, L. (2008). Welcoming all languages. *Educational Leadership, 66*(1), 58-62.

    Retrieved from http://mresaesolendorsement.wikispaces.com/file/view/

    Welcoming+All+Languages.pdf

Clay, M. (1991). *Becoming literate: The construction of inner control.* Auckland, New Zealand:

    Heinemann.

Cloud, N., Genesee, F., & Hamayan, E. (2009). *Literacy instruction for English language learners: A teacher's guide to research-based practices.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Collins, T. (2009). Developing ELL's reading skills in the content areas. *AccELLerate!, 1*(4), 8-9. Retrieved from http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/files/uploads/17/Accellerate_1_4.pdf

Cook, H. G., Boals, T., & Lundberg, T. (2011). Academic achievement for English learners: What can we reasonably expect? *Phi Delta Kappan, 93*(3), 66-69. Retrieved from http://www.kappanmagazine.org

Covey, S. (2004). *The 7 habits of highly effective people.* New York, NY: Free Press.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crow, T. (2012). Q & A with Anthony Muhammad: Leadership through learning: When people are enlightened, they want to take action. *JSD The Learning Forward Journal, 33*(6), 16-22. Retrieved from http://www.learningforward.org/docs/jsd-december-2012/crow336.pdf

Davis, S. (2008). *Research and practice in education: The search for common ground.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education.

DuFour, R., & Marzano, R. (2011). *Leaders of learning: How district, school, and classroom leaders improve student achievement.* Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

DuFour, R., & Mattos, M. (2013). How do principals really improve schools. *Educational Leadership, 70*(7), 34-40. Retrieved from http://www.ascd.org

Dumas-Landisi, M., & Honigsfeld, A. (2010). ELL instruction that works for all. *Educator's Voice, 3*(1), 74-81. Retrieved from http://www.nysut.org/educatorsvoice_14851.htm

Fielding, L., Kerr, N., & Rosier, P. (2007). *Annual growth for all students: Catch up growth for those who are behind.* Kennewick, WA: The New Foundation Press.

Frey, N., Fisher, D., & Everlove, S. (2009). *Productive group work: How to engage students, build teamwork, and promote understanding.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Fullan, M. (2008). *The six secrets of change: What the best leaders do to help their organizations survive and thrive.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Gambrell, L., Morrow, L. M., & Pressley, M. (Eds.). (2007). *Best practices in literacy instruction* (3rd ed). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Gersten, R., Baker, S. K., Shanahan, T., Linan-Thompson, S., Collins, P., & Scarcella, R. (2007). *Effective literacy and English language instruction for English learners in the elementary grades: A practice guide* (NCEE 2007-4011). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences. Retrieved from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/20074011.pdf

Gill, J. (2012). Strength training: Aspiring principals need fortified programs to prepare them for the challenges they face. *JSD The Learning Forward Journal, 33*(6), 24-26. Retrieved from http://learningforward.org/docs/jsd-december-2012/gil336.pdf

Good, R. (2008). Sharing the secrets. *Principal Leadership, 5*(8), 46-50. Retrieved from http://www.nassp.org

Guskey, T. R. (2012). The rules of evidence. *Journal of Staff Development, 33*(4), 40-43. Retrieved from http://www.learningforward.org/publications/jsd

Graves, M., Juel, C., Graves, B., & Dewitz, P. (2011). *Teaching reading in the 21st century: Motivating all learners.* Boston, MA: Pearson.

Haager, D., Klingner, J., & Aceves, T. (2010). *How to teach English language learners: Effective strategies from outstanding educators.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Hattie, J. (2012). *Visible learning for teachers: Maximizing impact on learning.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Hayden, M. (2011, July 11). Diversity in schools hitting suburbs. *The Herald Bulletin.* Retrieved from http://heraldbulletin.com/local/x357286143/Diversity-in-schools-is-hitting-suburbs/print

Herrell, A., & Jordan, M. (2012). *Fifty strategies for teaching English language learners.* Boston, MA: Pearson.

Horng, E., & Loeb, S. (2010). New thinking about instructional leadership. *Phi Delta Kappan, 92*(3), 66-69. Retrieved from http://www.kappanmagazine.org

Howard, M. (2012). *Good to great teaching.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Indiana Department of Education. (2011). *I-READ3: Purpose.* Retrieved from http://www.doe.in.gov/achievement/assessment/iread-3

Indiana Department of Education. (2012). *School corporation and data reports.* Retrieved from http://www.doe.in.gov/improvement/accountability/find-school-and-corporation-data-reports

Leithwood, K., & Seashore-Louis, K. (2012*). Linking leadership to student learning.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Leithwood, K., Seashore-Louis, K., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004*). How leadership influences student learning.* New York, NY: Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Lewis-Moreno, B. (2007). Shared responsibility: Achieving success with English-language

learners. *Phi Delta Kappan, 88,* 772-775. Retrieved from

http://www.kappanmagazine.org

Lewis-Moreno, B. (2009). Spread the word: Vocabulary strategies for the inclusive mainstream

classroom. *AccELLerate! 1*(4), 19-20. Retrieved from

http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/files/uploads/17/Accellerate_1_4.pdf

Li, G., & Edwards, P. (2010). *Best practices in ELL instruction.* New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Marcellus, A. (2012). Leader voices. *JSD: The Learning Forward Journal, 33*(6), 10-11.

Retrieved from http://www.learningforward.org

Marzano, R. (2003). *What works in schools: Translating research into action.* Alexandria, VA:

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, R. (2004). *Building background knowledge for academic achievement.* Alexandria,

VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, R. (2007). *The art and science of teaching: A comprehensive framework for effective

instruction.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Marzano, R. (2009). Setting the record straight on "high-yield" strategies. *Phi Delta Kappan*,

91(1), 30-37. Retrieved from http://www.kappanmagazine.org

Marzano, R., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. (2005). *School leadership that works: From

research to results*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum

Development.

McTighe, J., & Wiggins, G. (2013). *Essential questions: Opening doors to student

understanding.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum

Development.

Mendels, P. (2012). The effective principal. *JSD: The Learning Forward Journal, 33*(1), 54-58.

    Retrieved from http://www.learningforward.org

Miller, K. (2003, November). *School, teacher, and leadership impacts on student achievement.*

    MCREL Policy Brief, 1-7. Retrieved from

    http://www.bradthiessen.com/html5/m340/4i%20Marzano.pdf

Miller, W. (2013). Better principal training is key to school reform. *Kappan Magazine, 94*(8), 80.

    Retrieved from http://www.kappanmagazine.org

Nagy, W., & Townsend, D. (2012). Words as tools: Learning academic vocabulary as language

    acquisition. *Reading Research Quarterly, 47*(1), 91-108. Retrieved from

    http://www.reading.org

Nassaji, H. (2011). Issues in second-language reading: Implications for acquisition and

    instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly, 46*(2), 173-184. Retrieved from

    http://www.reading.org

National Assessment of Educational Progress. (2011). *About the nation's report card.* Retrieved

    from http://nationsreportcard.gov/about.asp

O'Neal, D., & Ringler, M. (2010). Broadening our view of linguistic diversity. *Phi Delta*

    Kappan, 91(7), 48-52. Retrieved from http://www.kappanmagazine.org

Pacheco, M. (2010). English-language learners' reading achievement: Dialectical relationships

    between policy and practices in meaning-making opportunities. *Reading Research*

    Quarterly, 45, 292-317. Retrieved from http://www.reading.org

Reyes, I. (2012). Biliteracy among children and youths. *Reading Research Quarterly, 47*(3),

    307-327. Retrieved from http://www.reading.org

Reyes, I., & Azuara, P. (2008). Emergent biliteracy in young Mexican immigrant children. *Reading Research Quarterly, 43,* 374-398. Retrieved from http://www.reading.org

Rockwell, E. (2012). Appropriating written French: Literacy practices in a Parisian elementary classroom. *Reading Research Quarterly, 47,* 382-403. Retrieved from http://www.reading.org

Rojas, V. (2007). *Strategies for success with English language learners.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Romanova, N. (2009). Linguistic literacy and ELLs: A conceptual framework. *AccELLerate! 1*(4), 2-4. Retrieved from http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/files/uploads/17/ Accellerate_1_4.pdf

Routman, R. (2012). *Literacy and learning lessons from a longtime teacher*. [Kindle version]. Retrieved from http://www.amazon.com

Rumberger, R. (2011). *Dropping out: Why students drop out of high school and what can be done about it.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Schmoker, M. (2004). Tipping point: From feckless reform to substantive instructional improvement. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *85,* 424-432. Retrieved from http://www.kappanmagazine.org

Schmoker, M. (2011a). *Focus: Evaluating the essentials to radically improve student learning.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Schmoker, M. (2011b). First things first: Hiding in plain sight. *Phi Delta Kappan, 93*(1), 68-69. Retrieved from http://www.kappanmagazine.org

Seashore-Louis, K., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K., & Anderson, S. (2010). *Investigating the links to improved student learning.* Retrieved from http://www.wallacefoundation.org

Smith, F. (2012). *Understanding reading: A psycholinguistic analysis of reading and learning to read.* [Kindle edition]. Retrieved from http://www.amazon.com

Spiro, J. (2013). Effective principals in action. *Kappan Magazine, 94*(8), 27-31. Retrieved from http://www.kappanmagazine.org

Snow, C. (2010). Academic language and the challenge of reading for learning about science. *Science, 328,* 450-452. Retrieved from http://colabradio.mit.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/academiclanguage.pdf

Sterrett, W. (2012). From discipline to relationships. *Educational Leadership, 70*(2), 71-74. Retrieved from http://www.ascd.org

Syrja, R. (2011). *How to reach and teach English language learners.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Urbanski, A. (1991). Real change is real hard: Lessons learned in Rochester. *Education Week, 11*(8), 29. Retrieved from http://www.edweek.org

Wallace Foundation, The. (2013). *The school principal as a leader: Guiding schools to better teaching and learning.* New York, NY: Author.

Waters, T., Marzano, R. J., & McNulty, B. (2003). Balanced leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

Whitaker, T. (2010). *Leading school change: Nine strategies to bring everybody on board.* Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Whitaker, T. (2011). *What great teachers do differently: Seventeen things that matter most* [Kindle edition]. Retrieved from http://www.amazon.com

Whitaker, T. (2012). *What great principals do differently: Eighteen things that matter most* (2nd ed.)*.* Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

Whitaker, T., & Breaux, A. L. (2012). *Making good teaching great: Everyday strategies for teaching with impact* [Kindle edition]. Retrieved from http://www.amazon.com

Whitaker, T., Whitaker, B., & Lumpa, D. (2008). *Motivating and inspiring teachers: The educational leader's guide for building staff morale.* [Kindle edition]. Retrieved from http://www.amazon.com

Xu, S. (2010). *Teaching English language learners: tools for teaching literacy.* New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Yurkewecz, T., & Wilson, B. (2013). How RTI transforms the role of principal: A New York school district's experience. *Reading Today, 30*(3), 19-20. Retrieved from http://www.reading.org

Zacarian, D., & Haynes, J. (2012). *The essential guide for educating beginning English learners.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Zemelman, S., Daniels, H., & Hyde, A. (2012). *Best practice: Bringing standards to life in America's classrooms* (4th ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

APPENDIX A: SURVEY

This survey asks you for demographic information and then asks you to describe your level of knowledge and level of implementation of best practice in literacy instruction for English language learners. You are asked to indicate your level of knowledge AND the level of implementation of each of the 10 best practices in literacy instruction for ELL students.

Demographic Information

1. Name of your school_____

2. Name of your district_____

3. Student Enrollment_____

4. Your years of experience in education_____

5. Your years of experience as a principal_____

6. Your years of experience as principal in current building (including current year)_____

7. What is your geographical setting: rural   suburban   urban

8. Grade levels at your building_____

9. Gender: male   female

Please indicate your level of knowledge of the following best practices in literacy instruction for English Language Learners. For each of the following questions, please rate your knowledge from 1 to 10 based on the following scale:

1 = No Knowledge
5 = Adequate Knowledge
10 = Expert Knowledge

Level of Your Knowledge:

No Knowledge   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   Expert Knowledge

Literacy Practice	Knowledge
1. Content objectives clearly defined, displayed and reviewed with students	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. Adaptation of content to all levels of student proficiency	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Supplementary materials used to a high degree, making the lesson clear and meaningful	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Key vocabulary emphasized	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. Speech rate appropriate for students' proficiency level	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. Scaffolding techniques consistently used assisting and supporting student understanding	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. Grouping configurations support language and content objectives of the lesson	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8. Activities integrate all language skills	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
9. Pacing of the lesson appropriate to student proficiency levels	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
10. Assessment of student comprehension and learning of all lesson objectives	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Please indicate your school's level of implementation of the following best practices in literacy instruction for English language learners. For each of the following questions, please rate the level of implementation from 1 to 10 based on the following scale:

1 No Implementation
5 Some Implementation
10 Full Implementation

No Implementation   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   Full Implementation

Literacy Practice	Implementation
1. Content objectives clearly defined, displayed and reviewed with students	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. Adaptation of content to all levels of student proficiency	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Supplementary materials used to a high degree, making the lesson clear and meaningful	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Key vocabulary emphasized	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. Speech rate appropriate for students' proficiency level	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. Scaffolding techniques consistently used assisting and supporting student understanding	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. Grouping configurations support language and content objectives of the lesson	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8. Activities integrate all language skills	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
9. Pacing of the lesson appropriate to student proficiency levels	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
10. Assessment of student comprehension and learning of all lesson objectives	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What contributes or inhibits your implementation of these literacy practices in your school?____

_____

_____

APPENDIX B: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

June 2013

Dear Administrator:

As a fellow administrator, I am aware of the demands of your time. This is a special request for your support of important research. It will only take a few minutes of your time to complete this brief survey.

You are being invited to participate in a research study about principals' knowledge of best practice in literacy instruction for English Language Learners and the impact on student achievement. My study focuses on the growing need of English language learners in our public schools. This study is being conducted by Pam Hardy and Dr. Todd Whitaker from the Educational Leadership, Administration & Foundations Department at Indiana State University. This study is being conducted as part of a dissertation.

There are no known risks if you decide to participate in this research study. There are no costs to you for participating in this study. The information you provide will add important information to the body of research involving English language learners and the issues faced by administrators on a daily basis. The questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The information collected may not benefit you directly, but the information learned in this study should provide more general benefits. This survey is anonymous. This is a web-based survey, and the information will not be collected as to where the survey originated. However, due to it being a web-based survey, absolute anonymity cannot be guaranteed over the Internet. No one will be able to identify you or your responses, and no one will know if you participated in this survey.

Individuals from the Institutional Review Board may inspect these records. Should the data be published, no individual information will be disclosed. Your participation in this study is voluntary. By completing the survey of short responses available at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/hardydissertation and completing a brief demographics section, you are voluntarily agreeing to participate. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact Pam Hardy at 317-410-0433 or send an email to pam.hardy@wayne.k12.in.us or Dr. Todd Whitaker at 812-237-2904 or send an email to todd.whitaker@indistate.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or if you feel you have been

placed at risk, you may contact Indiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) by mail at Indiana State University, Office of Sponsored Programs, Terre Haute, IN, 47809, by phone at 812-237-8217, or by email at irb@indstate.edu.

Sincerely,

Pam Hardy
Doctoral Candidate

Date of IRB Approval: May 14, 2013
IRB Number: 448295-2
Project Expiration Date: (expiration date is not applicable, this study is exempt)