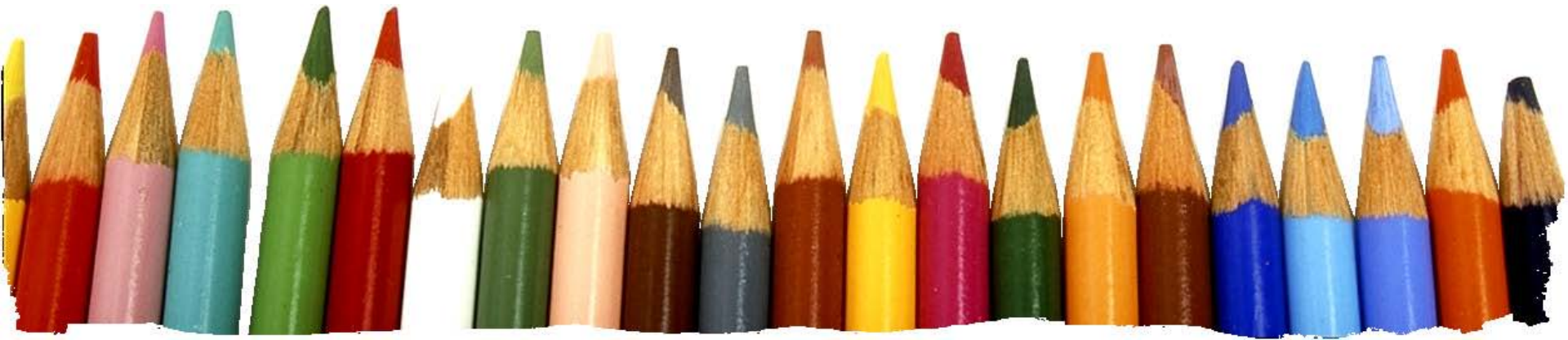


Bilingual/ESL teachers' efficacy,  
attitudes toward native language  
instruction, and perceptions of  
English-learning-students: What do  
we know from the field?

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# Background

- Dramatic increase of English language learners (ELLs) who are not academically successful. (August & Hakuta, 1997)
- In Texas, the ever-changing demographics of teachers have not paralleled those of the ELLs: only around 7.3% of teachers taught ELLs who comprised of 15.5% student population. (Texas Education Agency, 2008)
- An acute shortage of bilingual/ESL teachers has been documented, as has the need to provide quality professional development among those teachers. (Lara-Alecio & Tong, 2007)



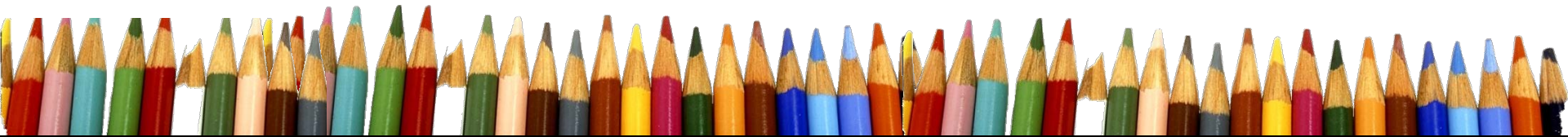
# Background, *cont'd*

- Teacher attitude and self efficacy directly influence instructional behavior, which in turn, promote students' outcomes and success. (DeMesquita & Drake, 1994; Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy, 2001)
- Teachers with more positive attitudes toward ELLs are more supportive of native language instruction, and are more likely to believe that native language learning promotes success in school. (Karabenick & Noda, 2004)
- Little attention paid to bilingual or ESL teachers who work with most of the ELL population.
- A survey of 156 bilingual teachers with over 75% of them teaching in elementary bilingual classrooms revealed that only 34% felt well prepared to teach language minority students; 27% with ELLs. Many of them reported overcrowded classrooms, and 51% were planning to leave their profession in the next 5 years. (Monsivais, 1990)



# Purpose of the Study

- To investigate teaching efficacy, attitudes toward native language instruction, and perceptions regarding ELLs among bilingual and ESL teachers
- To explore differences in these aspects as a result of teacher background (e.g., years of teaching, route to certification, and program type)



# Teacher Efficacy

- Ashton and Webb (1986) and Gibson and Dembo (1984) conceptualized teacher efficacy as having two dimensions: *general teaching efficacy* and *personal teaching efficacy*.
- ***General teaching efficacy*** refers to teachers' general belief in working with hard-to-reach students;
- ***Personal teaching efficacy*** indicates teachers' judgment of their own ability to teach (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990; Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990).



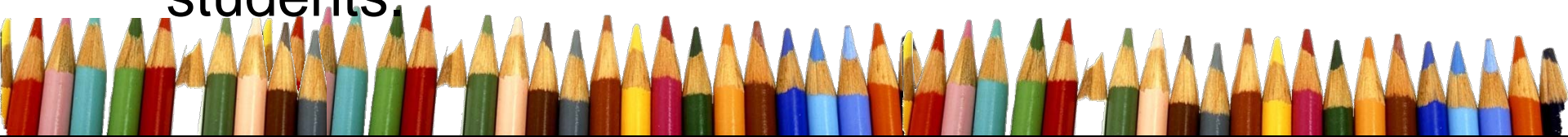
# Teacher Efficacy

- Teachers with a high sense of efficacy demonstrated more confidence in their teaching, exhibiting more positive (e.g., praising, smiling) and less negative (e.g., criticizing, punishing) behaviors while interacting with their students (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Dellinger, Bobbett, Olivier & Ellett, 2008; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Jerald, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).
- Students are more actively engaged in learning, often exceed academic expectations, and achieve better performance if their teachers are caring, hold high expectations and believe in their own abilities as teachers.
- Nevertheless, research has also indicated that teachers are significantly less confident about teaching ELLs as compared to non-ELLs, and many mainstream teachers are not prepared for the special needs and complexities of fairly and appropriately assessing ELLs (Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Lenski et al., 2006).



# Teacher Efficacy

- 20% of pre-service bilingual teachers in the study believed that their students' success in school was determined by external factors beyond the teachers' control (Flores & Clark, 2004).
- Flores (2001) explored in-service bilingual education teachers' beliefs about the nature of knowledge and reinforced that teaching practice is influenced by the quality of teacher preparation. The alternatively certified bilingual teachers in the study reported a sense of powerlessness to change the status quo within the school system and felt inadequately prepared to work with students.



# Teacher Attitudes

- Teachers' attitudes toward the language of instruction carry a message to language minority students about whether their home language and culture are valued or not (Ball & Lardner, 1997; Clark, 1988; Flores, 2001)
- The nature of teacher training and personal experience with languages other than English significantly affects their attitudes toward native language maintenance and bilingualism (Lee & Oxelson, 2006; Ramos, 2001)



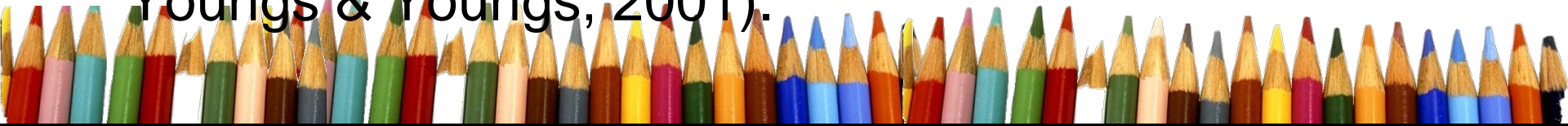
# Teacher Attitudes

- Teachers with ESL/bilingual credentials were more supportive of bilingual education than regular teachers, and teachers with supplemental training more strongly advocated for bilingual education (Shin & Krashen, 1996)
- Frequent contact with ELLs and higher educational levels are associated with positive attitudes (Byrnes, Kiger, & Manning, 1997)
- Teachers with 7 or more years of teaching were more likely to develop negative attitudes toward their students' native language because they had to modify curricula to meet students' needs (García-Nevarez, Stafford, & Arias, 2005)



# Teacher Perception

- Teacher' perceptions of and expectations for ELLs may affect their evaluation of students' language ability and academic performance (August & Hakuta, 1997; Cummins, 2000; Díaz-Rico, 2000; González & Darling-Hammond, 2000).
- Teachers who have a positive perception of ELL students are more respectful of their students' language and culture, more sensitive to students' needs, and take more responsibility for their students' learning.
- The documented negative teacher perceptions have been drawn largely from studies with mainstream teachers serving ELL students (Byrnes, Kiger & Manning, 1996, 1997; Walker, Shafer, & Liams, 2004; Youngs & Youngs, 2001).



# Teacher Perception

- In Walker et al.'s study
  - 70% of the teachers were not interested in having ELLs in their classroom due to a deficit belief regarding these students, which reflected their low teaching efficacy;
  - 87% had never received any professional training in working with ELLs, with half of them expressing no interest in receiving any training;
  - 20% refused to adapt their classroom instruction to accommodate the students.
- Such negative perceptions resulted from a lack of training, a misunderstanding of bilingual education, and racism and prejudice. The authors called for attention to improving and changing teacher attitudes through professional development programs.



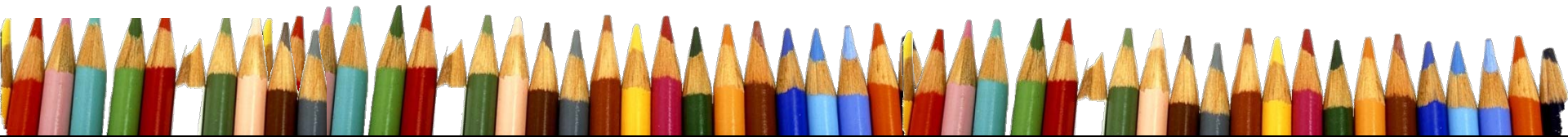
# Research Questions

1. Do bilingual/ESL teachers differ in teaching efficacy as a result of type of certification, years of teaching, and route to certification?
2. Do bilingual/ESL teachers differ in their attitudes toward native language instruction as a result of type of certification, years of teaching, and route to certification?
3. Do bilingual/ESL teachers differ in their perceptions of ELLs as a result of type of certification, years of teaching, and route to certification?
4. Is there a significant relationship among teaching efficacy, attitudes and perceptions among bilingual/ESL teachers?



# Method- Participants

- A random sample was selected from among bilingual/ESL teachers in a large urban school district in southeast Texas. In the 2007-2008 school year, the district had a concentration of 29.7% ELLs, and a majority of students (79.5%) qualified for free or reduced lunch. Both of those numbers are higher than at the state level.
- The survey was distributed at the district's bilingual/ESL teacher conference. Participation was completely voluntary and anonymous. Neither the names of the teachers nor the schools were included in any part of the survey. The return rate was approximately 66% (n=133).

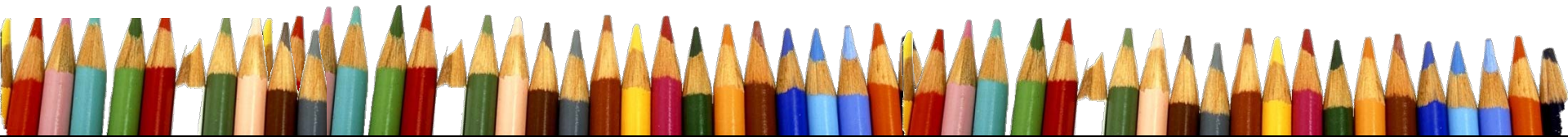


## Breakdowns of Teacher Demographic Background by Type of Certification

		ESL (n=40)		Bilingual (n=88)	
		%	n	%	n
Ethnicity	Hispanic	23	9	82	72
	White	35	14	5	4
	African-		13		4
	American	33		5	
	Asian/Pacific		1		1
	Island	3		1	
	Native American			1	1
Years of Teaching	1-5 years	8	3	16	14
	6-10 years	38	15	28	25
	11-20 years	28	11	40	35
	>21 years	25	10	13	11
Route to Certification	University-based	60	24	42	37
	Alternative	33	13	57	50

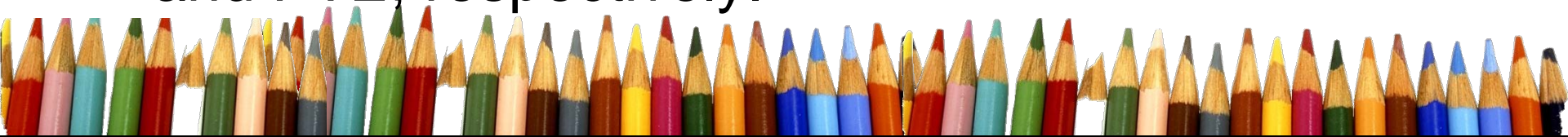
# Method- instruments

- Three scales as well as four demographic questions were used.
- The three scales measured bilingual/ESL teachers' sense of their teaching efficacy, attitudes toward native language instruction, and perceptions of ELLs .
- The demographic items asked for ethnicity, years of teaching, type of certification held/program taught, and route to certification.



# Teacher Efficacy Scale (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993)

- Factor analysis of the instrument produced two independent dimensions of *general teaching efficacy* (GTE) and *personal teaching efficacy* (PTE) (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990)
- Response to each item is along a six-point Likert scale, from 1 for "strongly agree" to 6 for "strongly disagree". For both dimensions, a higher score corresponds to higher efficacy for a teacher. The total score possible is 30 for GTE and PTE, respectively.



# Teacher Efficacy Scale (Short Form, Hoy, & Woolfolk, 1993)

## General Teaching Efficacy Subscale items

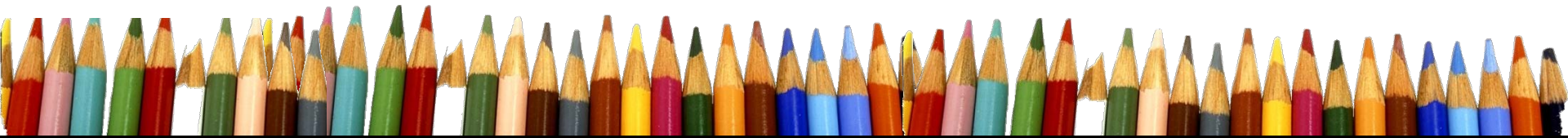
1. The amount a student can learn is primarily related to family background.
2. A teacher is very limited in what he or she can achieve because a student's home environment is a large influence on his or her achievement.
3. When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can't do much because most of a student's home environment is a large influence on his or her achievement.
4. If students are not disciplined at home, they aren't likely to accept any discipline.
5. If parents would do more for their children, I could do more.



# Teacher Efficacy Scale (Short Form, Hoy, & Woolfolk, 1993)

## Personal Teaching Efficacy Subscale items

1. When I really try, I can get through to most difficult students.
2. If a student did not remember information I gave in a previous lesson, I would know how to increase his or her retention in the next lesson.
3. When a student gets a better grade than he or she usually gets, it is usually because I found a better way.
4. If a student in my class becomes disruptive and noisy, I feel assured that I know some techniques to redirect him or her quickly.
5. If I try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students.



# Attitudes toward native language instruction

- This instrument was developed and adapted from ideas and questions that were used in previous questionnaires (Shin & Krashen, 1996).
- A pilot study was conducted to test the reliability of the instrument, consisting of seven items. Each item was measured along a three-point scale: 1 for “No”, 2 for “Not sure”, and 3 for “Yes”, with the total score possible of 21. The survey with all items included had a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of .81, demonstrating its level of internal consistency.



# Perception of English learning students

- This instrument was adapted from Jussim and Eccles' (1992) teachers' perceptions regarding student achievement.
- One item contains a four-point Likert scale from 1 to 4, and the remaining four items contain a five-point Likert scale from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating more positive perceptions.
- After a pilot study, the final instrument included five items. A reliability coefficient was found at Cronbach's alpha = .77.



# Method- Data Collection and Analysis

- Data were collected in the spring of 2008.
- Descriptive statistics were calculated regarding teaching efficacy, attitudes toward native language instruction, and perceptions of ELLs.
- For each of these three measures, group comparisons were conducted based on certifications held, years of teaching experiences and routes to certification. To explore differences between bilingual and ESL teachers, and the interaction between certification and other demographic item, 2 x 4 x 2 (Type of certification x Years of teaching x Route to certification) factorial univariate analyses of variance (ANOVAs) design were implemented with scores from each of the measures as dependent variables. These analyses were followed by contrasts for levels of more than two, using the Tukey test.
- A correlational analysis was carried out to determine the relationships among the three measures.



# Results – Efficacy

- PTE: significant main difference on certification type,  $F(1, 111) = 5.66, p = .019$ , partial eta squared = .05, with bilingual teachers scoring higher than ESL teachers. The main effect of years of teaching was also significant,  $F(3, 111) = 4.11, p = .009, \eta^2 = .118$ . Post Hoc comparison revealed that the group of 11-20 years scored significantly higher than teachers with over 20 years experience ( $p = .010, d = .66$ ).
- GTE: statistically significant main difference with teachers certified through university-based preparation programs holding higher GTE than teachers through alternative certification,  $F(1, 111) = 4.44, p = .03, \eta^2 = .04$ .



## Results – Attitude

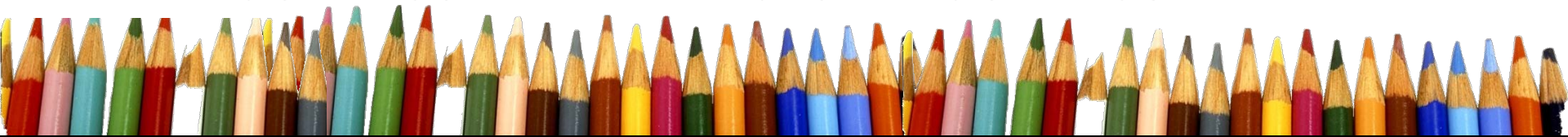
- Significant main effect of certification type,  $F(1, 111) = 19.06, p < .001, \eta^2 = .42$ , with the adjusted marginal mean being significantly higher for bilingual teachers.
- Further examination of Table 2 revealed that bilingual teachers were more inclined to agree with statements that support native language education.
- No difference was evident among teachers according to years of teaching and route to certification.



<b>Item</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>No (%)</b>	<b>Not Sure (%)</b>	<b>Yes (%)</b>
1. If a student is not proficient in English, do you believe he/she should be in a classroom with first language instruction as part of the school curriculum?	ESL	45	20	35
	Bilingual	8	2	90
2. If a student is not proficient in English, do you believe he/she should be in a classroom learning subject matter (e.g. math, science, etc.) in his/her first language?	ESL	52	16	32
	Bilingual	5	5	90
3. Do you believe learning subject matter in the first language helps ELLs learning subject matter better when he/she is instructed in English?	ESL	6	29	65
	Bilingual	0	0	100
4. Do you believe that high levels of bilingualism can lead to practical, career related advantages?	ESL	0	6	94
	Bilingual	0	3	97
5. Do you believe that high levels of bilingualism can result in higher development of knowledge or mental skills?	ESL	11	6	83
	Bilingual	0	5	95
6. If a student is not proficient in English, do you believe the student will do better in school if he/she learns to write in his/her first language?	ESL	33	22	44
	Bilingual	0	5	95
7. Do you believe that if an ELL is in an English-only class he/she will learn English better?	ESL	33	11	56
	Bilingual	66	24	11

# Results – Perception

- Statistical significance among teachers with varied teaching experience,  $F(3, 111) = 3.17$ ,  $p = .023$ ,  $\eta^2 = .05$ .
- Teachers with 11-20 years' teaching experience obtained a higher score than teachers with fewer years in the teaching profession ( $p = .010$ ,  $d = .12$ ).
- No other significant difference was observed among teachers based on type of certification or route to certification.



# Discussion - Efficacy

- Overall strong teaching efficacy among bilingual/ESL teachers
- Comparatively low general teaching efficacy for those teachers who went through alternative preparation program.
- Teachers who are in the middle stage of their careers felt more strongly that they can motivate the most difficult ELLs.
  - less personally efficacious teachers tend to leave the profession at earlier career stages, leaving more efficacious teachers in the field; teachers' professional maturity breeds more personal efficacy. This seems to be supported by the fact that confidence levels have particularly increased when experienced bilingual/ESL teachers became more familiar with ELLs and their families than newer teachers.
- The finding that less experienced teachers are less confident in their teaching capabilities may provide some implications for new-teacher retention, as these newer teachers stand a higher risk of leaving the teaching profession than their veteran counterparts.
- To promote personal efficacy among practicing teachers, schools must create a supportive climate for teachers where “they perceive that their colleagues set high but achievable goals, create an orderly and serious environment, and respect academic excellence” (Hoy and Woolfolk, 1993, p. 365).



# Discussion - Attitude

- In agreement with García-Nevarez et al.'s study, findings revealed that attitudinal differences exist between bilingual and ESL teachers.
- Bilingual teachers are more supportive of native language instruction than ESL teachers. A reason for this could be that, although ESL teachers agree with the underlying philosophy of bilingual education and understand the importance of native language instruction, bilingual-certified teachers are comparatively more familiar with their students' native language, have at their disposal resources for addressing language differences among their students, and are better educated on cross-language transfer that facilitates English learning.
- The outcome of this study mirrored that of Shin and Krashen, who claimed that teaching experience has not been shown to be a predictor of teacher attitudes toward minority language—which again implied a generally supportive attitude toward native language instruction, in that modifying curricula to accommodate students' needs was not rejected by teacher participants



# Discussion - Perceptions

- Bilingual/ESL teachers with 11-20 years of experience held more positive perceptions of their students than did teachers with less teaching experience.
- These more experienced teachers demonstrated the belief that their ELL students were competent learners. It is possible that extensive experience working with ELL students has provided these teachers the opportunity to witness that (a) certain instructional approaches are effective, (b) ELL students utilize knowledge gained in their first language to acquire knowledge in English, and (c) when ELL students reach a certain level of native language proficiency, they tend to develop metalinguistic awareness and cognitive ability, as was proposed by Cummins' (1979) threshold hypothesis.



# Discussion- Correlation

- The correlational analysis yielded a strong and positive relationship between teaching efficacy and attitudes toward native language instruction. This finding was validated by the fact that in this study, bilingual teachers were more supportive of bilingual education and therefore, held higher personal teaching efficacy.
- It leads to the claim that teachers with bilingual credentials are stronger advocates for bilingual education which emphasizes on the effectiveness of native language instruction, and are more likely to believe in their competence to teach ELLs.
- Our study confirmed that bilingual and ESL teachers' level of confidence in their responsibility for positive and negative outcomes of ELLs is strongly related to their perceptions of these (Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Walker et al., 2004)



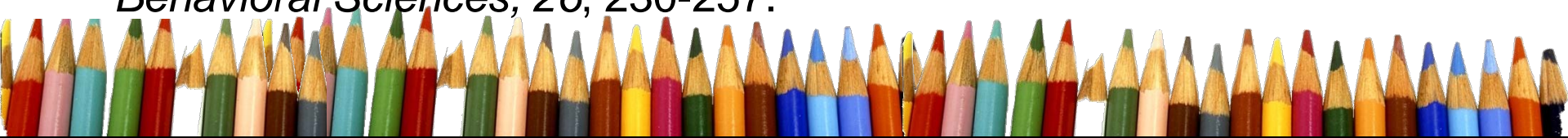
# Conclusions

- Much of the literature to date on language teacher research is primarily theoretical in nature or isolated in investigation with different scholars advocating more or less related pictures for language teacher attitudes and ability based upon a variety of studies (i.e., Brousseau & Freeman, 1988; Jerald, 2007, Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Fewer to date are clear examples of classroom teacher attitudes and perceptions related to concrete instruction practice as reflected by language teachers themselves. This study fills this gap by providing evidence of how teachers' experience and efficacy are correlated; the difference in attitude between bilingual and ESL teachers; as well as the relationship between teaching efficacy and attitudes.



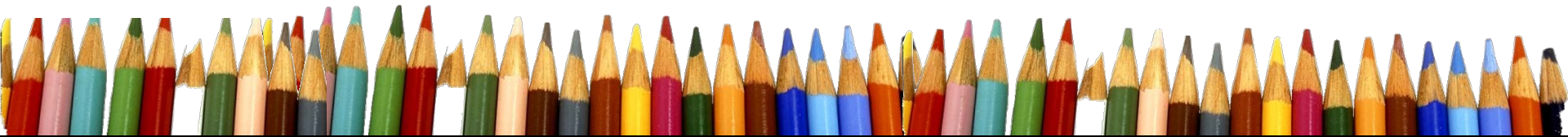
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# Thank you!

# ¡Gracias!

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