Teachers' Dispositions and Beliefs about Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

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Abstract   Teachers' beliefs towards their students' cultural backgrounds and languages affect all aspects of learning. Critical consciousness of attitudes and beliefs about the increasing culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) student population is necessary for aligning individual beliefs with effective teaching practices.   Rethinking how to work with diverse students is central to how future teachers will impact academic outcomes of the increasing CLD student presence in schools. There is paucity in current literature that informs us about the dispositions that may have a positive correlation with affirming attitudes toward working in a more diverse schools system.   Additionally, it appears to be a lack of a systematic analysis of the various factors and characteristics of teachers and their attitudinal beliefs about language and cultural diversity in the schools. Consequently, there is a need to identify the efficacy of the integrated and infused ideas related to diversity especially in the attitudes toward CLD students. This study attempted to find factors that may influence beliefs, dispositions, and teaching practices when encountering CLD students among teachers from school districts in a tri-county area in southwest Florida. The information is based on responses provided by 425 participants to the "Beliefs and Attitudes" survey section.

Keywords   Attitudes, Beliefs, Teacher Dispositions, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

1. Introduction

Extensive discussions are found in the educational literature on current views of diversity, multiculturalism, and global pluralism in today's world. Jones [1] reminds us that an ultimate goal of No Child Left Behind [2] is that all children, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, or other differences, will have opportunities to learn. Jordan Irvine [3] addresses schools of education as she calls for change in the processes of educating and preparing teachers for diversity. She contends that the end goal in the affirmation of diversity should be a call to action for social justice and calls for revision and refinement in teacher education. In discussing recommended competencies, an array of voices that support a "multicultural revolution" with educational goals including the liberation of the oppressed and including those that are culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) have been raised [4-6].

Changing demographics in American schools have been widely reported [7-12]. Student populations are becoming increasingly racially, ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse. In one example, Nasser and Overberg [13] reported that 25% of 5 year-olds (incoming kindergartners) in 2010 were identified as Hispanic, a jump from the 19% reported in 2000. Nutta, Mokhtari and Strebel [12] point out that English language learners (ELLs) represent the fastest growing student population in the U.S.; of the estimated 5 million ELLs currently in American classrooms, approximately two-thirds (66%) are in at least one course taught by mainstream teachers.

This abundance of demographics in the literature elucidates the fact that school populations are changing rapidly, more in some areas than others [14]. K-12 CLD student population have increased dramatically in the past 2 decades, thus a need exists to prepare teachers to work within diverse learning environments [9]. Interestingly, as student populations have been changing, the American teacher workforce has not seen commensurate, representative growth. Typically, the teacher workforce in the U.S. consists of white, middle-class and monolingual females [7,9,15,16]. Okpokodu [17] argues that teachers of color are growing in number; however, the overall workforce and emergent teachers continue to come from predominantly different socioeconomic, cultural categories from their students, citing that this is commonly referred to as "cultural mismatch." The challenge of "cultural mismatch" is not relegated to only American schooling. Cruickshank [18] reports similar problems in Australia, and Stadler [19] and Allemann-Ghiondha [20] report the same disparity between the uniform teaching workforce and its increasingly diverse student population in Switzerland.

Clearly, the instructional population and the student population are not comparable and probably will not be

growing in similarity regarding diversity. New teachers will be coming into classrooms to meet, interact, and instruct students whose backgrounds and cultures are totally unknown to them. Trends in changing demographics make it clear that all teachers should be prepared to effectively teach CLD students. In recent decades, educators have sought to define, describe and explain ways of improving CLD (also known as ELL and ESL) student performance in American classrooms. Gay [21] speaks about ideological anchors and how they influence classroom teaching decisions. Thus making a case for how teachers' beliefs towards their students' cultural backgrounds and languages affect all aspects of learning. It is important for teachers to develop the awareness that personal beliefs are embedded in the way they think about the art of teaching and appropriate pedagogical practices. Thus critical consciousness of individual attitudes and beliefs about the increasing CLD student population is necessary for aligning individual beliefs with effective teaching practices [22]. Edwards [8] argues that dispositions to teach effectively are contextual. Defining and describing those dispositions that will meet the needs of various student populations includes issues of "cultural competence" (p. 25). Despite widespread agreement that teacher knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and dispositions impact minority-student education, few studies have focused on mainstream teachers' beliefs towards ELLs nor have many studies sought to identify which attitudes and dispositions most positively impact student success. Such identification could provide administrators and practitioners with a "systematic, cumulative body of research that both identifies significant predictors and provides a sense of their relative importance" in hiring and developing teachers who will best meet and sustain the needs of ELL students [23].

Indeed, there is paucity in current literature that informs us about the challenges or dispositions that may have a positive correlation with affirming attitudes toward working in a more diverse schools system. In addition, it appears to be a lack of a more systematic analysis of the various factors and characteristics of teachers and their attitudinal beliefs about language and cultural diversity in the schools. This study intends to examine and analyze teachers' characteristics, attitudes and beliefs about language minority students in academic settings and how these impact teaching dispositions. There are two important issues that underscore the efforts of the study a) the attitudinal beliefs of teachers regarding diverse populations and b) how personal characteristics influence teaching practices and beliefs regarding diverse students.

1.1. Attitudes and Beliefs about CLD Students

An understanding of attitudinal beliefs is important because it serves as predictors of teacing behaviors [9]. Youngs & Youngs [23,24] examined attitudes of mainstream teachers towards English as a second language. In addition they reported on Penfield's [25] research of surveys completed with ESL teachers describing the nature of

teachers' attitudes when working with ESL students. Other related surveys have reported on teachers' attitudes of ESL and diverse students [26,27] in several regions of the US. Advantages and disadvantages of working with ESL students were identified.

Youngs and Youngs [23] reported that teachers identify both advantages and disadvantages to teaching ESL students in mainstream classes. However, several studies reveal that mainstream teachers often tend to consider teaching CLD students as more onerous and challenging than teaching English-speaking students. Studying the effects of "visioning" as reflective practice for pre-service teachers developing values about culturally responsive teaching, Turner [28] reports two specific "blind spots" that may limit teacher effectiveness with CLD students: classroom management assumptions and beliefs about CLD parental involvement. Results of their study indicated that emergent teachers believed that classroom management difficulties would be eradicated if culturally responsive pedagogical practices were in place, and 85% of respondents perceived CLD parents to be "unsupportive and lacking strong educational values" (p. 82). Furthermore, Turner [28] points out that 15% of those teachers surveyed expected that building relationships with CLD parents to be difficult. Batt's [10] survey of 161 educators in Idaho and Oregon (57% White, 40% Hispanic) indicated that 20% of the respondents considered their colleagues as lacking an understanding of diversity and multicultural education practices and in some cases holding negative attitudes towards CLD students and families. Flores and Smith [9] identify this deficit belief as a falling into the category of a "Responsibility/Culpability" construct, meaning that some teachers hold the antagonistic belief that CLD student failure or success is entirely determinant upon family and student effort in spite of systematic problems at the school level.

Some researchers have conducted case studies to determine the breadth and depth of teacher beliefs, attitudes and dispositions toward CLD students. Hertzog [22] considered to what extent and outcome an ESL teacher who holds deficit beliefs about CLD students could be successful, concluding that certain sound pedagogical practices can offset potential harms of such deficit thinking. Lee, Butler and Tippins [11] worked collaboratively with one, experienced teacher to deeply articulate her "practical knowledge about culture and linguistic diversity" by coding themes evident from evaluation of two, hour-long interviews; ultimately, this study presents a seemingly effective teacher whose ideas are generally in line with best practices for culturally responsive CLD/ELL education. Additionally, Youngs & Youngs [23] determined models of predictors that would help in explaining reasons for teachers' attitudes, positive or negative. Categories such as personal contact with diverse cultures, specific training, college courses, prior contact to the diverse students before having them in the classroom, educational experiences related to diversity, personality, demographic characteristics, ability to use more than one language to communicating, multicultural

knowledge emerged.

1.2. Dominant Social Attitudes

Valdes [29] continued a conversation about the role played by teachers' attitudes in determine the educational outcomes of CLD students. Additionally Walker, et.al, [30] discussed results based on the extent to which negative attitudes exists among teachers working with CLD students and provided commonalties that contribute to the development of these attitudes. Documented as possible forces influencing negative attitudes are societal attitudes towards CLD students [31,32,]. Thus Walker, et.al, [30] discussed the need to look to the wider community in order to determine how local dominant social attitudes may be influencing teaching practices. Salient factors that increased these attitudes included the increasing number of CLD students in our schools lack of cultural and linguistically specific training, and diaspora of immigrant families to less populated areas that have limited exposure to diversity [33,26,34]. Due to the increasing numbers of CLD studnets in the school systems, there is an increased pressure placed on teachers and schools to be accountable of student performance [35], thus there is a great potential for an increase of negative attitudes towards this student population to surface. Misinformation about CLD potential is common throughout communities [36]. Educational deficits beliefs can lead to severely impaired educations services. Thus school leaders need to lead the ways in minimizing those factors leading to negative teacher attitudes including time and teacher burden, lack of training, influence of administrative negative attitudes demystifying the myths about effective CLD education, ethnocentric bias [30].

1.3. Impact of Experiences on Teacher Attitudinal Beliefs

Three studies found in the literature examined the nature of teachers' attitudes toward working with CLD students as well as two other studies sought to explain more deeply those attitudes. Youngs and Youngs [23] conducted a survey of 143 junior high/middle school mainstream teachers in a Midwestern community of 80,000 in order to identify predictors of teacher attitudes that affect CLD learning. Youngs and Youngs [23] report several predictors that positively affect CLD student learning; these include "completion of foreign language or multicultural education courses, ESL training, experience abroad, work with diverse ESL students and gender" (p. 97).

Flores & Smith [9] argue that teachers who have greater exposure to diversity training hold more positive views on CLD student potential. Furthermore, Flores & Smith [9] claim that a teacher's language ability is a stronger predictor of positive dispositions for working with CLD than mere multicultural experience or exposure. Youngs and Youngs [23] confirm this finding, stating that teachers who have had coursework in foreign languages and/or multicultural education are better positioned to work with CLD learners.

Arguing that pre-service teacher beliefs and dispositions are important, Bodur [7] administered a survey to 88 pre-service teachers to determine how beliefs and attitudes change as a result of university preparedness. Bodur [7] points out that extant literature on changes in teacher attitude towards working with CLD students is inconsistent; he adds his own research to those with positive results of emergent teachers gaining appropriate dispositions through completing coursework and field experiences. However, Bodur [7] contends that field experiences without theoretical underpinnings are not sufficient. Cabello & Brustein (in Flores & Smith [9]) contend that teachers who receive training are more inclined to emphasize the importance of language enrichment activities. Youngs and Youngs [23] also confirm this finding; however, their study could not identify which type of ESL training was most optimum.

Again, Youngs and Youngs [23] contend that teachers who have had exposure to diverse cultures through travels abroad have an increased chance of holding positive dispositions and attitudes towards working with CLD students. Sharma, Phillion & Malewski [37] described a study abroad program they developed in order to better prepare emergent teachers in becoming culturally competent, focusing especially on developing a research-based rationale for cross-cultural field experiences as a strategy for improving teacher dispositions towards CLD students. In a broad literature review, Sleeter & Owuor [38] concur with conclusions from studies conducted by Hollins and Guzman [39] and Siwatu [40] that a teacher's cultural awareness is not necessarily a predictor that a teacher will integrate culturally relevant pedagogy in the classroom. However, Polat [41] reports that exposure to ELLs mediated the variance among teacher belief patterns. This concept is further supported by Youngs and Youngs' [23] belief that increasing teachers' contact with diverse cultures will result in teachers holding more positive dispositions towards working with CLD; however, their study also measured contact purely in terms of frequency.

1.4. Development of Proactive Teaching Dispositions in Teacher Education

A large number of pre-service and in-service teachers still find themselves ill-prepared for working with CLD [9]. Data also reflect that CLD students and students speakers of other languages are perceived by pre-service teacher as burdensome [42], as well as perceived to have limited ability to perform at the same level of monolingual speakers [43]. Rethinking how to work with CLD students and families is central to how future teachers will impact academic success and performance of the increasing CLD student school population [44,45]. Pre-service teachers need to learn how to effectively work with this student population. There are many ways for developing the teaching skills and dispositions needed in the profession [46], however, for pre-service teachers, it is important to experience these possibilities and as many pre-professional development

experiences during their teacher training [47,48]; thus dispositions to work with CLD populations will emerge as part of their process of becoming a teacher.

Rike and Sharp [49] explained the process by which they developed a "checklist" of 18 critical "dispositions" for early childhood educators to exhibit before being hired to work with children. Their instrument focused on class behaviors, practicum behaviors, communication skills and general dispositions; it primarily serves teacher educators in helping emergent teachers develop a self-reflective practice and as a means of assessing pre-service teachers' readiness for employment. Which attitudinal beliefs and dispositions should be developed in teacher prep programs to promote a workforce of culturally responsive teachers? Effective teacher behaviors include caring, fairness, and respect; enthusiasm and motivation; reflective practice; positive attitude toward teaching; and friendly and personal interactions with students [8]. Specifically, culturally relevant pedagogy should provide teachers with specific examples of appropriate dispositions for working with CLD students [8].

2. Material and Methods

2.1. Rationale for the Study

Rethinking how to work with diverse students and families is central to how future teachers will impact academic performance outcomes of the increasing CLD student school population [44]. There is paucity in current literature that informs us about the challenges or dispositions that may have a positive correlation with affirming attitudes toward working in a more diverse schools system. In addition, it appears to be a lack of a more systematic analysis of the various factors and characteristics of teachers and their attitudinal beliefs about language and cultural diversity in the schools. Consequently, there is a need at this point to clearly identify the efficacy of the integrated and infused ideas related to diversity especially in the attitudes toward working with CLD student populations.

2.2. Study Design and Context

For the purpose of this study, the researchers used and modified a survey [27,9] in order to address specific needs of teachers in the southwest Florida school districts. The study attempted to find out specific factors that may influence beliefs, dispositions, and teaching practices of teachers who encounter the increasing number of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Intended outcomes of the data analysis was threefold: a) to generate information that adds to the systematic analysis of factors and characteristics that may have a significant impact on teachers beliefs and dispositions to work with CLD students; b) to corroborate how the model used for teacher training supports those attributes and characteristics that have a

positive correlation with attitudes and beliefs needed to support CLD student populations; c) to provide specific recommendations to schools systems that may enhance and strengthen their professional development training for teachers.

Data for this research were gathered using a 62-item survey based on the work of Byrnes et al. [26] and Flores and Smith [9]. The survey was distributed among teachers from school districts in a tri-county area in southwest Florida. The survey was created using an online tool and was disseminated digitally through school district personnel and through social media.

This study examines data gathered from Phase I efforts. In Phase I, the attitudes/beliefs about CLD students of teachers who graduated from a southwest Florida postsecondary institution were compared to those of graduates from other teacher preparation programs. The following questions established the focus:

1. What are southwest Florida teachers' attitudinal beliefs towards culturally and linguistically diverse students?
2. How do teachers who graduated from a SW Florida higher education institution score on measures of teachers' attitudinal beliefs when compared to teachers who completed their teacher training in other teacher education programs?

2.3. Sample

This study employed a nonprobability convenient sample comprised 497 respondents. As a result of the sampling method, findings do not provide generalizability to other populations. All respondents provided some useful survey data; however, of the 497 surveys collected, 425 respondents provided full responses to the "Beliefs and Attitudes" section of the survey. These 425 respondents are the focus of this study. Included here is a description of our sample for readers' benefit in making meaning out of our findings. Of these 425 respondents, 25 are either pre-service teacher candidates or graduates of a targeted SW Florida higher education institution, constituting 5.8% of the total respondents under review.

Targeted respondents were teachers from school districts in a tri-county area in southwest Florida. Represented were urban, suburban, rural, poor, and affluent schools, both public and private. The majority of the respondents were white females (which is not proportionately representative of the surrounding student populations). Gender distribution of the teachers in this survey was 79.8% "Female" (n=339), 19.2% "Male" (n=85). Ethnic distribution of the teachers in our survey was 71% "non-Hispanic or Latino" (n = 302), 15% "Hispanic or Latino" (n = 64), 13% "Other" (n = 57). For "Other," 39 respondents identified their ethnicity in ways that would fall under "non-Hispanic or Latino" with write-in examples such as "Anglo-American," "wasp," "middle European," "Caucasian," etc. Only four respondents identified their ethnicity as "African-American" and the remaining 18 respondents identified themselves in

multi-ethnic and racial terms, such as "Lebanese/Croatian/Irish" or "half-Japanese." From the write-in responses, it is evident that determining the difference between the terms "ethnicity" and "race" was confusing for some respondents.

2.4. Measure

A modified version of the Language Attitude Scale (LATS) used by Flores and Smith [9] was used to collect data. The original LATS [27] has 13 Likert-scale items designed to measure teachers' attitudes towards language-minority students. The survey used in this study included 17 items added by Flores and Smith [9], designed to provide measures of teachers' characteristics that may affect attitudes/beliefs towards CLD students; in their study, these items are broken down and coded across "four new constructs": "rights and privileges," "aesthetic caring," "exclusionary/assimilationist" and "responsibility/culpability" (p. 332). For our purposes, we will refer to these four constructs as the Beliefs Constructs Composite (BCC). Unlike Flores and Smith's [9], this study modified their original presentation by employing a 4pt. Likert-scale rather than a 5pt scale with 1= "Strongly Agree," 2 = "Agree," 3 = "Disagree" and 4 = "Strongly Disagree." Additionally, for holistic data understanding,

participants' responses were combined into two categories: "Agree" and "Disagree."

3. Results

To examine the first research question (seeking factors contributing to attitudinal beliefs held by teachers in southwest Florida), two approaches to interpreting the data were taken. First, survey results were analyzed to reveal trends from participant responses. Next, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted using the 17-item, modified LATS scale. The survey results and the factor analysis together describe teacher attitudinal beliefs in this study. Next, survey results were analyzed to reveal trends from participant responses.

3.1. Factor Analysis

To examine how the survey items for the main construct measured teacher attitudinal beliefs, a principal component with Varimax rotation was run. The analysis resulted in a primarily one-dimensional fit of the items (see Figure 1)..
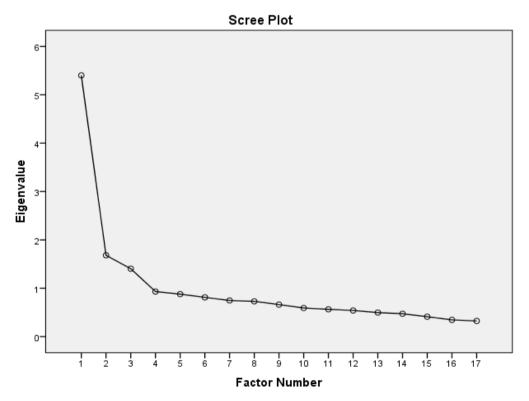

Figure 1.   One-Dimensional Fit of Beliefs and Attitudes Items

Within the overarching Beliefs and Attitudes dimension emerged four sub-constructs, validating the model suggested by Flores & Smith [9]. The researchers found only one minor discrepancy from the Flores & Smith [9] findings (discussed in the following section); thus, the results of the factor analysis are clustered using the same nomenclature for the sub-constructs (1: Culture of Caring; 2: Rights & Privileges; 3: Exclusion/Assimilation and 4: Responsibility/Culpability)

Table 1.   Factor Analysis by Cluster

Factor Analysis by Cluster		Component			
Item		1	2	3	4
	Factor 1: Culture of Caring				
3	It is important that people in the US lean a language in addition to English.	.644	.070	-.127	-.021
6	Teachers should modify their instruction for their students' cultural and linguistic needs.	.659	-.270	-.074	-.110
9	I would support the government spending additional money to provide better programs for linguistic minority students in public schools.	.599	.130	-.457	-.089
12	Regular classroom teachers should be required to receive pre-service or in-service training to be prepared to meet the needs of linguistic minorities.	.723	-.137	-.147	-.026
17	It is important for teachers to reach out to involve parents of all their students.	.536	-.239	.298	-.118
	Factor 2: Rights and Privileges				
1	It is unreasonable to expect a regular classroom teacher to teacher to teach a child who does not speak English	-.254	.587	-.040	.303
5	At school, the learning of the English language by non-or limited English proficient takes precedence over learning subject matter.	.078	.577	.193	.147
10	Parents of ELLs should be counseled to speak English with their kids whenever possible.	.029	.649	.329	.077
11	The rapid learning of English should be a priority…	-.268	.642	.191	.136
15	Having a non- or limited-English proficient student in the classroom is detrimental to the learning of other students.	-.279	.527	-.020	.436
16	Too much time and energy is now being placed on multiculturalism in schools and society.	-.471	.429	.394	.255
	Factor 3: Exclusion/Assimilation				
2	To be considered American, one should speak English.	-.118	.378	.603	.235
7	English should be the official language of the U.S.	-.085	.162	.820	.032
14	Local and state government should require that all government business (including voting) be conducted in English only.	-.258	.341	.665	.262
	Factor 4: Responsibility/Culpability				
4	Most non- and limited-English-proficient children are not motivated to learn English	-.112	.208	.087	.689
8	Non- and limited-English proficient students often use unjustified claims of discrimination as an excuse for not doing well in school.	-.116	.212.	.168	.715
13	Even when they do speak English, minority parents don't participate in school-related…	.024	.088	.092	.761

3.2. Survey Results

Survey results clearly indicate that the majority of respondents share certain beliefs and attitudes about CLD students in southwest Florida. In particular, responses on several items indicate what researchers [9] describe as "Exclusionary/ Assimilationist" attitudinal beliefs about teaching CLD students. Table 2 presents converted responses in terms of percentages.

Table 2. Beliefs and Attitudes Statements

Teachers' Responses on Beliefs and Attitudes Statements by Percentage			
Item #	Beliefs and Attitudes Statements	Agree	Disagree
46	It is unreasonable to expect a regular classroom teacher to teach a student who does not speak English.	73%	27%
47	To be considered American, one should speak English.	57%	43%
48	It is important that people in the US learn a language additional to English.	21%	79%
49	Most non- and limited English proficient students are not motivated to learn English.	88%	12%
50	At school, the learning of the English language by non- or limited English proficient should take precedence over learning a subject matter.	60%	40%
51	Teachers should modify their instruction for their students' cultural and linguistic needs.	9%	91%
52	English should be the official language of the US.	18%	72%
53	Non- and limited English proficient students often use unjustified claims of discrimination as an excuse for not doing well in school.	76%	24%
54	I would support the government spending additional money to provide better programs for linguistic minority students in public schools.	19%	81%
55	Parents of English language learners should be counseled to speak English with their kids whenever possible.	32%	68%
56	The rapid learning of English should be a priority of non-English proficient or limited English proficient students even if it means they lose their ability to speak their native language.	73%	27%
57	Regular classroom teachers should be required to receive pre-service or in-service training to be prepared to meet the needs of linguistic minorities.	14%	86%
58	Even when they do speak English, minority parents don't participate in school –related activities as other parents do.	65%	35%
59	Local and state government should require that all government business (including voting) be conducted in English only.	64%	36%
60	Having a non- or limited English proficient student in the classroom is detrimental to the learning of other students.	88%	12%
61	Too much time and energy is now being placed on multiculturalism in schools and society.	75%	25%
62	It is important for teachers to reach out to involve the parents of all their students.	98%	2%

For example, 60% of respondents agreed that "the learning of English language by non- or limited English proficient students should take precedence over learning a subject matter," (item #50) and 73% agreed that "the rapid learning of English should be a priority of non-English proficient or limited English students even if it means they lose their ability to speak their native language" (item #56). Most concerning, however, are the results that indicate 88% of respondents report agreement with the statement that "Having a non- or limited English proficient student in the classroom is detrimental to the learning of other students" (item #60).

Additionally, survey results demonstrate that a majority of respondents report attitudinal beliefs about scope of teaching CLD students. These results align with what Flores & Smith [9] call issues of "culpability/responsibility." For example, 73% of teachers surveyed indicated that "it is unreasonable

to expect a regular classroom teacher to teach a student who does not speak English" (item #46) and only 9% of teachers surveyed agreed with the statement: "teachers should modify their instruction for their students' cultural and linguistic needs" (item #51). Finally, 75% of respondents surveyed agreed with the statement: "too much time and energy is now being placed on multiculturalism in schools and society" (item #61). Only 14% of teachers surveyed believe that "regular classroom teachers should be required to receive pre-service or in-service training to be prepared to meet the needs of linguistic minorities."

Despite these concerning results, some items on the survey indicated that teachers held positive attitudes towards CLD "rights and privileges" as Americans. In fact, 43% of respondents disagreed that "to be considered American, one should speak English," (item #47). 36% of respondents disagree with the statement: "local and state government

should require that all government business (including voting) be conducted in English only," (item #59). Most notably, however, are the results to item #52 on the survey. 72% of teachers surveyed report disagreement with the statement, "English should be the official language of the U.S." This last result captures teacher respondents' ambivalence about the language requirements of citizenship and presents the authors of this study with questions about the underlying attitudes and beliefs teachers in southwest Florida hold about changing demographics in American classrooms.

This study also sought to compare the regional results to a subsample of teachers trained at a targeted SW Florida postsecondary institution where courses in diversity issues are deliberately integrated throughout the teacher education program, including multiple opportunities for student teachers to directly engage in work with CLD students. Of the 425 total surveyed teachers in the study, 25 respondents identified themselves as graduates of this higher education institution. For the sake of comparison, the results were divided into three sub-categories: 1) Target SW Florida university, 2) Other Florida universities and 3) All other United States universities.

The second research question explored the extent to which southwest Florida teachers who received training locally differed from those teachers who were trained elsewhere. To analyze any potential difference, the dependent variable (DV) for this section was created as a summative score from the combined 17 "Beliefs and Attitudes" items (termed "attitudinal beliefs score"). The range of possible scores was 17 to 68 for the dependent variable. The independent variable (IV) for this section was the three levels of Universities: target university, other FL school, and all other universities. Table 3 displays descriptive statistics, including the number and percent of participants for each of the groups. Table 4 displays results from an analysis of variance (ANOVA), conducted to examine mean differences between the three groups on the dependent variable. Results showed no significant effect for location of teacher training, $F(2,407)$ = .48, p = .62. Since alpha level was set at 0.05, *post hoc* tests were not examined.

Although results indicated no statistical significance among the groups, the mean for target higher education institution was slightly lower than the other two groups thus indicating that students trained locally were slightly more "sensitive" to the second language learners in their classes.

3.3. Inferential Analysis

Table 3.   Descriptive Statistics of Attitudinal Beliefs Total Scores

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Target University	39.3913	7.32827	23
Other FL Universities	39.6667	4.11377	27
All other US Universities	40.2667	4.89852	360
Total	40.1780	5.00855	410

Table 4.   One-Way Analysis of Variance of Attitudinal Beliefs Total Score

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Corrected Model	24.124a	2	12.062	.480	.619
Intercept	170943.011	1	170943.011	6797.053	.000
Target_NOT2	24.124	2	12.062	.480	.619
Error	10235.878	407	25.150		
Total	672113.000	410			
Corrected Total	10260.002	409			

a. R Squared = .002 (Adjusted R Squared = -.003)

4. Discussion

Certainly, results of this study support the constructs validated by Flores & Smith [9] with four survey items without a best fit and thus under review for interpretation. Four constructs were validated including what our respondents identified as Culture of Care; Rights and Privileges; Exclusion/Assimilation; and Responsibilities/Culpability. Emerging exceptions will be noted under each of the constructs.

In the *Culture of Care construct*, respondents clearly defined the evolution of understanding as part of a culture of change, which embraces inclusiveness, support, and understanding the customs of a culture. This understanding and ideological premise is part of the core vision of the SW Florida higher education institution, thus responses may be reflective of this embedded directive and regional influence. An exception worth to mention is that respondents reported that survey item #17 ("It is important for teachers to reach out to involve parents of all their students") is a stronger indication of culture of care than responsibility. Whereas, Flores & Smith [9] results mapped this onto the responsibility construct.

The *Rights and Privileges* construct was corroborated in the results of this study with the exception as represented by responses to the survey item #8 ("Non- and limited English proficient students often use unjustified claims of discrimination as an excuse for not doing well school"). While Flores & Smith's [9] population saw this issue as a matter of student rights, responses in this study indicate that respondents see this issue as a matter of responsibility rather than a personal right. Perhaps difference in environment, context, and training explain the interpretative differences.

Exclusion/Assimilation was another construct corroborated by the study responses except for when asked if English should be the official language of the U.S. (item # 7). Although Flores & Smith [9] respondents reported this item to be aligned with beliefs about citizen responsibility, respondents in this study indicate transitional beliefs about the importance of a bilingual American citizenry, underscoring a new or transitional paradigm. The respondents indicated competing beliefs about what it means to be American and the use of one language. Additionally, responses to item# 5 ("At school, the learning of English language by non- or limited English proficient takes precedence over learning subject matter") confirm the competing beliefs about what practices schools are more important: learning English or learning content subject. Sixty percent (60%) of our respondents reported that learning English should take precedence over learning subject matter. In the study population, responses to similar questions (items 2, 5, 14) all indicate evenly split beliefs about language and citizenship thus pointing towards a transitional paradigm.

The *Responsibility/Culpability* construct also had a note of exception and was in agreement with item"8 ("Non and limited English proficient student often use unjustified claims of discrimination as an excuse for not doing well in school").

Flores & Smith [9] and Byrnes, Kiger, and Manning [26] suggested that teachers' attitudes toward language diversity may result from regional differences. For Byrnes et al. [26] there is greater likelihood that teachers from regions in which there is a large linguistic-minority population will hold more positive views toward language diversity and consequently how the work with the challenges of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. In this study, additional consideration to factors not considered previously such as ethnicity, training, and linguistically ability of respondents may have contributed to the competing beliefs reposted in the survey results.

5. Conclusion and Implications

The abundance of demographics in the literature elucidates the fact that school populations are changing rapidly, more in some areas than others. The K-12 CLD student population have increased dramatically in the past 2 decades, thus there is a need to prepare teachers to work within the complexities of a diverse learning environment. Interestingly, as student populations have been changing, the American teacher workforce has not seen commensurate, representational growth. The findings in this study extend the discussion of teachers' attitude and beliefs toward the CLD student population and points out to transitional and competing beliefs in terms of clearly defining their teaching role in a changing educational system. Professional development and training is needed to foster a learning environment supportive of the varying contexts of contemporary schools. The information of this study provides information to improve and support those attributes and characteristics that have a positive correlation with the attitudes and beliefs needed to support CLD student populations.

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