

Mainstreamed English Language Instruction In A
Low-Incidence Rural School District: A Case Study

M. Rene' Yoesel

ABSTRACT

Classrooms in the United States are changing as the population of the United States becomes more diverse with growing numbers of English language learners (Banks, 2005; Capps, Fix, Murray, Ost, Passel & Herwanto, 2005; Cartledge, Gardner, & Ford, 2009; DeVillar, Faltis, & Cummins, 1994; Diaz, 2001; Dilg, 2003; Hernandez, 2001; Ovando & McLaren, 2000; Sadowski, 2004; Sleeter & Grant, 1994). Immigrants and their families have traditionally settled in larger urban communities, but recent trends indicate a growing number of English language learners are enrolling in rural mid-west public schools. Many rural districts have very little experience or resources to meet the needs of this new diverse group of students. As a result teachers, especially in rural and low-incidence districts, are experiencing academic and cultural challenges of educating students whose first language is not English (Berube, 2000; Hill & Flynn, 2004).

The purpose of this study was to examine elementary teacher perceptions regarding experience with instructing mainstreamed English language learners in a low-incidence district. This study also explores issues these teachers feel most influence their ability to successfully teach students from diverse cultures and who speak a first language other than English. Research examining teacher perceptions should provide important insight to teachers, administrators and policy makers regarding teacher needs and support in the education of English language learners.