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CHILDREN OF MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS: NEGOTIATING SCHOOL IN A TWO WAY SETTING ON THE TEXAS-MEXICO BORDER

A Dissertation

by

DIANA MARIA RAMÍREZ

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Texas-Pan American
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

May 2002

Major Subject: Educational Leadership

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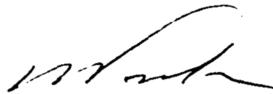

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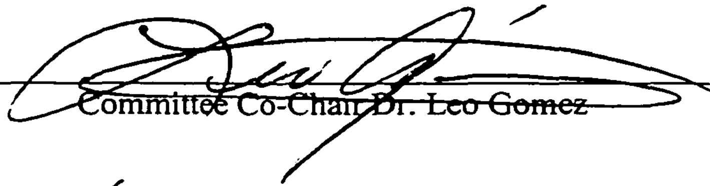

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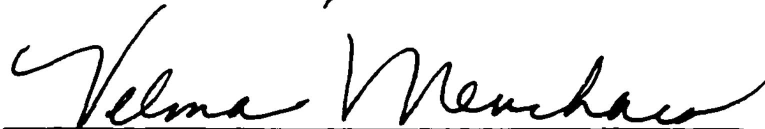

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May, 2002

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ABSTRACT

Ramírez, Diana Maria., Children of Mexican Immigrants: Negotiating School in a Two Way Setting on the Texas-México Border. Doctor of Education (Ed. D.), May, 2002, 234 pp., 1 table, 2 figures, references, 89 titles.

This problem under investigation was the schooling process of children of Mexican immigrants in an American school. The participants for the study included the 56 faculty members and 17 children of Mexican immigrants in school implementing a Two-Way Immersion Program.

An ethnographic-like qualitative method was used to investigate the problem. Data was gathered through field immersion, participant observations, and unstructured interviews.

Findings revealed diverse characteristics of the children of Mexican immigrants. The school's ethos of reception included numerous attributes that served to accommodate the children and their parents. The practices in the Two-Way Program facilitated the adaptation of the children through the use of Vygotskian-based practices.

The conclusion was that the particular program served the children of Mexican immigrants well. The implications were that changes in our educational system can be implemented to better serve all students.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the women who came before me: Matilde Ramírez, Severa Hinojosa, Cleotilde Hinojosa and María Ramírez.

Matilde and Severa were my grandmothers, both illiterate women with much to offer in life. From these two *abuelitas* (grandmothers) I learned that humility and kindness toward others would produce quality relationships in life. With their teachings I was able to enter the lives of the children in this study.

Cleotilde was my beloved aunt who taught me that faith and prayer are essential for maintaining one's balance in life. With her teachings, I was able to remain focused and steadfast in this dissertation process.

María is my mother. Her invincible spirit has been a source of strength and inspiration. Inspired and supported by her, I was able to research, write and complete this dissertation process.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge Mrs. Gloria Wendt, the Hispanic Border Leadership Institute, Dr. Henry T. Trueba, Dr. Leo Gomez, Dr. Velma Menchaca and Dr. Maricela Oliva for their contributions to my attainment of this goal.

Gloria Wendt, my former principal and friend, was the catalyst for this process. By nominating me to the Hispanic Border Leadership Institute (H.B.L.I.), Mrs. Wendt began the process of doctoral level schooling for me.

The Hispanic Border Leadership Institute's (H.B.L.I.) fellowship allowed me the freedom of participating in doctoral level work. H.B.L.I.'s national meetings, networking and exposure to Hispanic issues supplemented the educational experience.

Dr. Henry T. Trueba provided the resources and motivation for narrowing the topic of research. His positive nature and support of the topic have been constant. Dr. Gomez and Dr. Menchaca's support of the topic and research have been constant. Dr. Maricela Oliva was a never-ending source of ideas and advisement. Her availability and accessibility to meet and discuss dissertation issues were most helpful.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Immigration into the United States from Mexico and other countries is one of "the most important social developments of our time (p. 1)" assert Carola Suárez-Orozco & Marcelo Suárez-Orozco (2001). Immigration—just the word brings to mind the images of Mexican men and women swimming across rivers, scaling fences and searching for jobs in the United States.

Social development is not what most Americans think of when the subject of immigration is at hand. According to McLaren (2000), this "subaltern" class or underclass of people is "morally marked in such a way that dropping out of school, becoming teenaged mothers, taking drugs, and so on [have] become habitually associated with people of color" (p. 13). Anti-immigrant sentiment is widespread and is more often than not, quite derogatory. Immigrants of color have become the target of political action as is evident in Propositions 187 and 209 in California. Proposition 187 sought to curve education and health services to "illegal" immigrants and Proposition 227 would limit children's native language support to just one year.

The reality of the situation is that Mexican men and women sometimes travel as families; children make up integral parts of those families. C. Suárez-Orozco & M.

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Suárez-Orozco's (2001) research also tells us that children of immigrants are a significant portion of the incoming population and "make up 20 percent of all youth in the United States..." (p.1). Children of immigrants, hidden behind their parent's woes and economic and political turmoil are the focus of this study. Children of immigrants are present in the classrooms of mainstream American schools and are the key to a nascent generation of citizenry. Larson and Ovando (2001) remind us that public schools have long been termed "the great emancipators" of society, making schools a critical institution for the changing and diverse communities. C. Suarez-Orozco and M. Suarez-Orozco (2001) note that, "We focus our attention on their [children of immigrants'] schooling because schools are where immigrant children first come into systemic contact with the new culture" (p.3).

Bartolomé and Trueba (2000) expound that schools *should* be a place where there is a "commitment to educate immigrant and low-status populations" (p. 277). Schools, however, have not been consistent in the education of immigrant students. How is it that school seems to serve its "function" for some populations and not for others? The "functionalist theory" (Larson & Ovando, 2001) of schooling can be interpreted as one who enables youth to break the cycle of poverty. Based on a merit philosophy, the schools hold the belief that the fittest will rise to the top and reap the benefits of schooling. School administrators and teachers who believe this is a fair system of operation then become enablers of this institutionalized "sorting machine", rather than enablers of children. This philosophy, based on individual merit contradicts the role of schools that constantly tout: "All children can learn." Larson and Ovando (2001) expand:

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> Public schools are frequently advertised as egalitarian and fair enterprises that promote equal, social, cultural, economic, and educational opportunities for all students; but in reality they are too often efficacious talent-sorting machines that track students for low-, middle-, and high paying occupations. With few exceptions, most students end up replicating the social hierarchy of their parents. (p. 23)

Immigrant children must face certain hardships as they enter American schools. There are three strikes immediately against them. The first and most significant strike against immigrant students is the fact that they arrive at school with a language other than English. English is the language of instruction and most immigrant students may not have been exposed to it. The second strike against immigrant students described by Larson & Ovando is the "all too familiar history of [their] past generations' tendency toward failure in the classroom" (p. 17). Teachers and others within the school perceive these children as failures. The issue of parental involvement is the perceived third strike against immigrant students since American schools have different expectations of Mexican-American parents. Guadalupe Valdés (1996) found an immigrant parents' perception of parental involvement is not what the school envisions it to be. This notion came across more as a parent's *responsibility* rather than a parent's *involvement*. Parents simply transferred their perceptions of Mexican schools to the unfamiliar American schools.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to describe the characteristics and "incoming resources" of the children of Mexican immigrants. Children of immigrants from México

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may have similar or dissimilar characteristics from the "picture" of the diverse immigrant groups provided in the literature. Most of these "pictures" have grouped all of the immigrants from Latin American countries together and concentrate mostly on immigrant students at the secondary level of schooling. This study will address the children of Mexican immigrants, specifically. Secondly, this study will explore the "ethos of reception" of a school implementing a Two-Way Program model. The Two-Way Program model is one that addresses the Spanish and the English languages for the purposes of instruction and communication. The description of this particular school climate or culture may reveal factors that inhibit and/or facilitate the children's accommodation, acculturation, or assimilation to schooling in the United States. Finally, this study will examine the practices that compose Two-Way setting instruction and their approximation to Vygotsky's theories of learning. The study will take place within the context of a Two-Way school and Two-Way classrooms using an interpretive naturalistic approach with ethnographic-like characteristics. Children of immigrants refer to U.S.-born and México-born children; the commonality is that they are children of immigrants.

Research Questions

1. What are the characteristics of the children of Mexican immigrants as perceived by Two-Way schools?
2. What is the "ethos of reception" within a Two-Way school that facilitates or inhibits the accommodation, acculturation, and assimilation of children of Mexican immigrants?
3. What are the "best practices" that compose Two-Way instruction?

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4. To what extent do the practices in the Two-Way setting approximate Vygotsky's theories of learning?

Conceptual Framework

Three theoretical concepts lay the foundation for this study. The first is that immigrant children have "incoming resources" (M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco, 2000). The children possess qualities or strengths that contribute to the context of their new schools. Some of these characteristics may include: a) parental education/literacy/socioeconomic status, b) monetary resources, c) physical health, d) psychological health, e) Students' prior schooling/reading levels, f) English language proficiency, and g) immigration documentability. These resources often take on a negative connotation and are called "deficits."

The second theory is that schools have an "ethos of reception" to include "...not only the opportunities available, but also, just as importantly the general social and cultural climate they encounter" (C. Suarez-Orozco & M. Suarez-Orozco, 2001, p. 36). This ethos of reception shares similar characteristics with Valenzuela's (1999) "caring theory" and Deal & Peterson's (1998) elements of school culture. Basically, these terms describe the social and educational climate of the school.

The third theory is based on Vygotsky's (1978) theories of learning, which seem to correlate with the effective practices in the literature on teaching immigrant and bilingual learners. As will become clearer in chapter 2, most of these practices are part of the Two-Way philosophy. Two-Way programs view the students' language, home, parents and community as helpful in the maintenance and development of the first language. This is not a "technical" or utilitarian use of the first language, but rather a

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validation so that both languages can hold equal status. Gomez (2000) adds, "The two-way bilingual model is based on additive bilingualism as a form of enrichment where children are given the opportunity to add one or more foreign languages while fully developing their own primary language" (p. 47).

Significance of the study

The literature on the children of Mexican immigrants is quite limited. Researchers have traditionally written about immigrant issues from the perspective of different countries of origin. The issues that engulf these students are often over-generalized. This study will explore characteristics of the children of Mexican immigrants to develop an awareness of their incoming characteristics. This population is significant in that there is a "constant replenishment through more or less uninterrupted immigration flows" (C. Suárez-Orozco & M. Suárez-Orozco, 2002, p. 51).

Children of Mexican immigrants are often enrolled in a school that may or not be receptive to their needs. More than just a "feeling" the culture of organizations has been linked to productivity, academic achievement and performance of students in schools and overall improvement attempts (Deal & Peterson, 1999). The culture of the school is important as it may determine the success or failure of these students. The variables that impact the subsequent accommodation, acculturation or assimilation of the children of Mexican immigrants need to be investigated.

The "border phenomenon" is one that has received much attention. There happens to be a 2000-mile shared border between México and United States. In spite of efforts to close the immigration flow, there are people from México who make their way into the United States everyday. While some immigrant families may continue further

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into the United States, others many remain in the border zone for fear of being detained at the various "check points" (Richardson, 1999). The border schools, as well as others across the United States, also share the responsibility of educating the children of Mexican immigrants.

As children of immigrants are enrolled in schools, education becomes extremely critical. Educational reform seems to be the only answer. This idea is problematic in that the American educational system has continuously promoted what Halcón & Reyes (1992) call "differentiated schooling: one for mainstream and the other for non-mainstream children" (p. 305). The literature on effective educational practices for second language learners is extensive. Many of these practices share a similarity to Vygotsky's theories of learning while others differ. However, the extent to which these practices are used and the extent to which these practices are effective with children of Mexican immigrants may inform practice.

Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations to the study is the number of children of Mexican immigrants that will be studied. Seventeen third grade children of Mexican immigrants is a small sample size. For the objectives of this study, a large sample size would have provided breadth, but not the depth needed to describe individual characteristics. Secondly, as the site for this particular study is a school that is 98.5% Hispanic, the results of the study may be most applicable to a similar schools.

Methodology

For the purpose of this study, qualitative research allows the reader to experience the schooling of the children of Mexican immigrants. The following strengths of

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"ethnographic like" qualitative research serve this particular study: (a) its inductive approach, (b) its focus on specific situations or people, and (c) its emphasis on words rather than numbers.

Ethnographic methods rely mostly on participant observation and can be attributed with the following features: a) emphasis on the exploration of particular social phenomena, b) unstructured data that has not been pre-coded from an a priori set of analytic categories, and c) analysis of data involving interpretation of meanings and functions of human actions (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998). Interpretation is then made possible as the researcher sets aside his or her orientations and focuses on what is learned from the field.

In the study of children, it is necessary for the researcher, or "field worker" to change his or her frame of reference and acknowledge that he or she has become the learner while the children have become the teachers; that is the only way to "know" how it is that children are experiencing school. Any child-adult relationship usually implies authority, so the researcher's adoption of a role that diminishes that barrier is necessary. Holmes (1998) suggests that the researcher adopt a "friend role" during the time in the field.

Data collection. The gathering of data, through the processes of participant observations, thick descriptions and unstructured interviews supports the ethnographic-like design. Through an immersion in the students' daily process of schooling, an understanding of "the complexities and interrelationships" (Campbell-Evans, 1992, p.2) of the schooling situation is facilitated. Documentation of everyday happenings and unstructured interview responses allow for a creative and interpretive approach to data

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that is not immediately ready to be presented or reported The field notes, or text "...is [are] then re-created as a working interpretive document that contains the writer's initial attempts to make sense out of what he or she has learned (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 30)."

Denzin (1998) describes the process of managing impressions, documents, and field notes as an "art of interpretation." The process begins with field notes from the context and interviews, moves to the text and ends with the reader. The art of interpretation is comparable to the art of storytelling in that it describes "happenings" and sequences. Denzin (1998) adds, "Field-workers can neither make sense of nor understand what has been learned until they sit down and write the interpretive text, telling the story first to themselves and then to their significant others" (p. 317).

The study of the children of Mexican immigrants addresses critical issues in the educational process of children of color and perceived low status. Their schooling process is observed and questioned as they negotiate their way through a school implementing a Two-Way Immersion model. Their characteristics, schoolwork and daily school life tell the story of how they experience education in a Two-Way school on the Texas-México border.

In the chapters that follow, the study of the children of Mexican immigrants will be addressed in a more detailed manner. Chapter 2 will address the concerns and need for interventions on behalf of these students as well as the literature on best practices and Vygotsky's theories of learning. Chapter 3 will lay out the methodology and research design for studying the children in the context of a Two-Way Program. Chapter 4 will describe the school setting, addressing all of the key components of the school. These

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include the principal, the teachers and the Two-Way Program. Chapter 5 will present the data as it relates to each of the questions in the study. Finally, chapter 6 will provide a summary of the questions and answers, as well as a discussion of implications and recommendations derived from the study.

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The children of Mexican immigrants that contribute to the more than 20% of immigrants in American schools are a population of learners surrounded by critical and political issues. It seems as if these children are fighting an uphill battle. To begin with, those who feel territorial about the United States bombard these children and their parents with anti-immigrant sentiment. Their perceived low-status as "illegals" place them in unstable situations of fear. The issues of poverty add to the uncertainty of "making it" in the United States. The Spanish they speak is a language other than English, and English is the language of instruction. Schools then become a place where failure seems to be the only option. These and other issues surround the plight of the children of Mexican Immigrants in United States schools.

Immigration

Immigration into the United States from Mexico and other countries is one of "the most important social developments of our time" (p.1) assert Carola Suárez-Orozco & Marcelo Suárez-Orozco (2001). Immigration—just the word brings to mind images of Mexican men and women swimming across rivers, scaling fences and searching for jobs in the United States. Social development is not what most Americans think of when immigration is the subject at hand. Anti-immigrant sentiment is widespread and is more

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often than not, quite derogatory. Immigrants of color have become the target of political action as is evident in Propositions 187 and 209 in California. Proposition 187 sought to curve education and health services to "illegal" immigrants and Proposition 227 would limit children's native language support to just one year.

Propositions 187 and 227 were successful, as "illegal" immigrants are perceived to be criminal and immoral people who need to be controlled. Latinos, as a group, are perceived as prone to abuse the welfare, medical, educational, public housing and other social systems while not contributing to the economy (Trueba, 1999). This widespread "view" of Latinos not only fosters marginalization and exclusion of Latinos, but also serves to hinder their adaptation. This sentiment may be attributed to the fact that "Anglos who see themselves as 'conservative'...are opposed to cultural diversity and the use of languages other than English..." (Trueba, 1999, p. 8). Historically, this anti-immigrant sentiment is most prevalent during times of economic hardship in the United States.

The reality of the situation is that Mexican men and women sometimes travel as families; children make up integral parts of those families. C. Suárez-Orozco & M. Suárez-Orozco's (2001) research also tells us that children of immigrants are a significant portion of the incoming population and "make up 20 percent of all youth in the United States..." (p. 1). Children of immigrants, hidden behind their parent's woes and economic and political turmoil are the focus of this study. Children of immigrants are present in the classrooms of mainstream American schools and are the key to a nascent generation of citizenry. Larson and Ovando (2001) remind us that public schools have long been termed "the great emancipators" of society, making schools a critical institution for the

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changing and diverse communities. C. Suarez-Orozco and M. Suarez-Orozco (2001) note that, "We focus our attention on their [children of immigrants'] schooling because schools are where immigrant children first come into systemic contact with the new culture" (p. 3).

Schools

The school is the place where the socialization and cross-cultural adjustment process for minority students should begin. This process may not ever begin to take place, depending on the school and its hegemonic practices and ideals. From Larson and Ovando's (2001) perspective, there is a " politics of resistance and mistrust" that is pervasive in the history of the United States and within schools. Historically, there has been resistance and mistrust of indigenous groups as well as immigrant populations. This notion is reflected in the classrooms and schools where indigenous and immigrant populations have remained marginalized. "As purveyors of consensual values, teachers and administrators tended to implement culturally and linguistically incompatible classroom practices in minority communities" (Larson & Ovando, 2000, p. 9). As the aforementioned populations were not able to 'melt' into the mainstream, the traditional response has been to 'blame the victim'.

Bartolomé and Trueba (2000) expound that school *should* be a place where there is a "commitment to educate immigrant and low-status populations" (p. 277). The schools, however, have not been consistent in the education of immigrant students. How is it that school seems to serve its "function" for some populations and not for others? The "functionalist theory" (Larson & Ovando, 2001) of schooling can be interpreted as one who enables all youth to break the cycle of poverty. Based on a merit philosophy,

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the schools hold the belief that the fittest will rise to the top and reap the benefits of schooling. School administrators and teachers who believe this is a fair system of operation then become enablers of this institutionalized "sorting machine", rather than enablers of children. This philosophy, based on individual merit contradicts the role of schools that constantly tout: "All children can learn." Larson and Ovando (2001) expand:

> Public schools are frequently advertised as egalitarian and fair enterprises that promote equal, social, cultural, economic, and educational opportunities for all students; but in reality they are too often efficacious talent-sorting machines that track students for low-, middle-, and high paying occupations. With few exceptions, most students end up replicating the social hierarchy of their parents. (p. 23)

Public schools then become a specific concern for immigrant learners. There are three pitfalls repeatedly mentioned throughout the literature on immigrants and their schooling. A baseball analogy seems appropriate, as these pitfalls are all perceived "strikes" against the immigrant students. In the game of baseball, when you have three strikes you are out and this concept can be similarly applied to immigrant students. The first and most significant strike against immigrant students is the fact that they arrive at school with a language other than English. English is the language of instruction and most immigrant students may not have been exposed to it. Teachers may feel empathy for these children and are not able to see their primary language as a resource or as medium to learn another. It is often difficult and frustrating for teachers to deal with these learners since basic communication is may not be possible. The second strike against

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immigrant students described by Larson & Ovando is the "all too familiar history of [their] past generations' tendency toward failure in the classroom" (p. 17). It is too easy for teachers to pinpoint their "deficits"—they do not speak English—*and* so many others like them have failed.

Parental Involvement

The issue of parental involvement is the perceived third strike against immigrant students since American schools have other expectations of Mexican-American parents. Guadalupe Valdés (1996) found an immigrant parents' perception of parental involvement is not what the school envisions it to be. This notion came across more as a parent's *responsibility* rather than a parent's *involvement*. Parents simply transferred their perceptions of Mexican schools to the unfamiliar American schools. The longer these families remained in the United States the more they discovered the many differences between Mexican and American schools. Valdés (1996) comments on the families in her study, "All 10 mothers, however, believed that they had prepared their children well for school. They had taught them to be respectful, and they had taught them to behave" (p. 148). These mothers were unaware that their American counterparts had taught colors, letters, and numbers at home to prepare their children for school (Valdés, 1996). These differences demonstrate that the focus of the homes is in two distinct areas. The immigrant parent has focused on social behavior while the American parent has focused on readiness skills and pre-reading activities. What does the receiving school expect or prefer?

The schools' vision of parental involvement is based on its experience with white middle-class and white working class parents. Valdés (1996) describes the

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misunderstandings: "These had to do with expectations that teachers had about what families should be, how they should view education, and how they should behave because of these beliefs" (p. 148). One of the larges differences is how Mexican parents did not embrace beliefs whereby the individual's achievement and success were more important than the collective success of the family. An explanation of the children's role in the family provides more insight into this collective aspect of the family:

> However, as *buenos hijos* (good sons and daughters), they had an obligation to be considerate, obedient, and appreciative of their parents' efforts. As little children, they were not expected to contribute directly to the family in any large sense. However, they were expected, even at a very young age, not to behave in a manner that would result in more work for their parents. They were expected not to be selfish, to look after their siblings, and not to draw energy away from common family goals. (Valdés, 1996, p. 131)

The mismatch between American schools and Mexican families is obvious. This explains why many of the families in Valdés' study felt inadequate in dealing with school personnel. It must be noted that many schools do make an effort to assist the parents in helping their children. Many times the school's solution takes the shape of outreach programs and parental training. Schools bring parents into the school and attempt to train the parents to be teachers at home. From Valdés' perspective, "Simply bringing parents to schools will not change the racist or classist responses that teachers may have toward them and their behaviors. Parenting classes alone will not equalize outcomes" (p. 39).

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Well-meaning teachers and administrators create outreach programs based on what Valdés (1996) calls "deficit cultural models."

Deficit cultural models stem from deficit thinking theories. Deficit theories have been used to explain the failure of students in schools. Valencia (1997) explains, "The deficit thinking model, at is core, is an endogenous theory—positing that the student who fails in school does so because of internal deficits, or deficiencies" (p. 2). This is a well-documented tradition of blaming the victim. Habitually, the deficits in students have been ascribed to a lack of intellectual ability, lack of linguistic ability and lack of motivation to learn and function in schools. As a result, the schools implement programs and reach out activities that attempt to "fix" the faulty parents. Schools look outward to the sources of these "alleged deficits" instead of looking inward to the nature of the school's organization. Valencia (1997) rewords, "How schools are organized to prevent learning, inequalities in the political economy of education, and oppressive macropolicies and practices in education are all held exculpatory in understanding school failure" (p.2).

Although many schools view them as otherwise, Mexican immigrant parents and their children do not have a deficit, only a different perspective and lived experience. The difference in parental involvement perceptions is due to the many differences between the American and the Mexican public school systems. Immigration means relocation and adjustment; immigrants will apply their previous knowledge to the new system of education. Learning more about the various immigrant groups represented in the schools may help to inform policy so that the proper assistance may be provided for Mexican immigrants and their children.

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Mexican Immigrants

Looking at the immigration phenomenon from an exclusively "Mexican" angle, Maciel and Herrera-Sobek (1998) describe it as a "controversy and debate...[that] include[s] economic, political, social, legal, cultural, and human rights considerations" (p. 3). It is an issue that has been at the center of politics during election times at the national, state, and local level. Pressure groups such as big businesses and civil rights organizations are also factors in determining immigration policy. There are those groups who would like to build a wall along the United States-Mexico border to deter immigration while others see a "regularized" immigration policy as meeting the needs of both the U.S. and Mexican countries. The immigration quagmires as well as "The English Only" movement are the two conflicts that most affect immigrant youth.

Those who possess a xenophobic sentiment ignore or perhaps are unaware of the contributions that Mexican immigrants make to the United States. Maciel & Herrera-Sobek (1998) discuss the value of Mexico's population flow by highlighting their "positive ethic". As put by Maciel and Herrera-Sobek (1998), "Immigrants are often individuals with initiative who 'see' into the future and are willing to take risks" (p. 34). Rather than concentrate on the negativity generated from a perceived "take over" by Mexican immigrants, it is likewise important to recognize the value of Mexico's labor flow. Undocumented Mexican workers are willing to fill certain job descriptions that are not desirable by many North American workers, especially those jobs that are at or below the minimum wage level. Immigrant workers fill the service sector of the U.S. economy, a sector that is showing tremendous growth and expansion. This sector of the U.S. economy offers low-paying jobs with little or no stability. Additionally, Mexican

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immigrants fill a critical need in the areas of agriculture, domestic, construction and textile industries. The fact that these "set-wage" jobs offer few or no benefits allows employers to maintain stability for their goods and services (Maciel & Herrera-Sobek, 1998).

For Mexican immigrants, the situation in Mexico is one of accelerated population growth, erratic job creation, unemployment, recurring economic crises, peso devaluations, high inflation, and an ever increasing gap between the upper and lower class (Maciel & Herrera-Sobek, 1998). Instability in their own country moves them to look for avenues of improvement. It is very common for immigrant parents to verbalize the need for a better life for themselves and their children. C. Suarez-Orozco and M. Suarez-Orozco (2001) describe the situation as involving economic, social and cultural factors that eventually contribute to the decision to leave, therefore immigration cannot be attributed to one single factor, as is often the case. Chavez (1998) focuses on the need for the undocumented worker's labor contributions to the areas of agriculture, industry and tourism. He muses, "Nevertheless, they are feared, even loathed, in some quarters by those who see them as dirty, disease ridden, amoral, and capable of any desperate or disgusting act" (p. viii). As long as there is a need for their labor, they will continue to make their journey into the United States. Mexican *labor* is welcome, but are Mexican *people* welcome?

The White population's fear seems to be growing as they witness the "browning" of America firsthand. Changing demographics, mostly due to the large numbers of immigrants from Asian and Latin American countries, could mean drastic changes in many aspects of American life. Larson and Ovando (2001) name a few areas that will

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possibly be affected by immigration: policy, education, business sectors, marketing, the birth of ethnic leadership, and sociocultural, political, and economic changes at all levels of society. Changes are inevitable and the fear that accompanies change has been transformed into a "politics of hate". This is evident in the many beatings and abuse of immigrants crossing into the United States by the Border Patrol. The politics of hate is in the schools, classrooms, organizations, social service providers, colleges, universities and academia (Trueba, 1999).

In the middle of the "politics of hate", there are the children of immigrants that need to be educated. Immigrant children enter the United States' political battleground because of their families' economic or political decisions. Children are "unconsulted" participants in their parents' decision to immigrate as was concluded in a Texas case. Plyler v. Doe (1982) is a case that questioned whether the public schools should deny undocumented school age children access to free public education. This case was in response to the 1975 Texas legislature's decision to withhold from schools the state funds for children not "legally admitted" into the United States. Appellants argued that immigrant students did not have a right to equal protection of the laws because of their "illegal" status. The court's decision was that the Fourteenth Amendment was applicable to all within the boundaries of a state, including "aliens unlawfully present." One of the main points was that immigrant children were not responsible for the actions of their parents and should not be punished as a result of those actions.

Cultural Mourning

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The decision to leave their home country is a difficult and painful one because of the extended families that remain in Mexico. Once the immigrants find themselves in the new country they are not able to refer to their previous ties of support; these may include people, resources or previously effective coping strategies. "They must face a whole array of challenges in the new setting often without cultural competence or the necessary social supports" (C. Suárez-Orozco & M. Suárez-Orozco, 2001, p. 70). Children and adults may experience sadness as they find themselves trying to survive without their loved ones in an unfamiliar context. Their loss adds to the stress of immigration. This loss, termed "cultural mourning is defined by Ainslie (1998):

> The immigrant simultaneously must come to terms with the loss of family and friends on one hand, and cultural forms (food, music, art, for example) that have given the immigrant's native world a distinct and highly personal character on the other hand. It is not only people who are mourned, but culture itself, which is inseparable from the loved ones whom it holds. (p. 287)

This emotional state called "cultural mourning" is not one that can be defined or treated clinically, rather it may help others to understand the immigrant individual's "motivation and engagement" (Ainslie, 1998). Ovando and Larson similarly allude to cultural mourning when they (2001) affirm, "...they have left behind memories, loved ones, familiar cultures, language, food, climate, geography and religions—a truly painful undertaking for many" (p. 13). Cultural mourning is part of the process of leaving "home" to a country that may not be anything like home. This process is a difficult undertaking for those immigrants who have hopes of settling in the United States.

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Chavez (1998) describes the act of crossing the border as a "monumental event". It is an act that takes resources such as getting help in crossing the border; this may be quite expensive. A successful crossing is hoped for, wished for, and prayed for. Arrival does not mean that all is well, as Chavez (1998) speculates:

> For undocumented migrants, crossing the border is a territorial passage that marks the transition from one way of life to another. No matter how similar it may seem to the way of life left behind, or how many relatives and friends await the new arrival, life in the United States is different for the undocumented immigrant. (p. 4)

Obviously, the process of immigration is difficult for adults, but what about the children? Children, like adults will mourn their losses while learning to adapt to schooling in a new country. Children, like adults will find that life and schooling in the United States is different from life and schooling in México. For children, Igoa (1995) refers to this as an "uprooting experience". This experience is then followed by culture shock. This shock can be cushioned though the care and concern of peers and teachers. The children's losses are similar to those described by the Suárez-Orozco's (2001), and Ainslie (1998)—cultural beliefs, cultural identity, but most of all the loss of language proficiency.

Adaptation

In the field of sociology, adaptation signifies a gradual change in behavior to conform to the prevailing cultural patterns. As the term is applied to immigrants, "successful adaptations…may relate to the patterns of cultural, economic, and social capital immigrants are able to deploy in the new land" (M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-

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Orozco, 2000, p. 19). Theoretically, it is difficult to explain the adaptation or lack of adaptation of the new wave of immigrants. The theoretical assumptions derived from European immigration in the earlier decades may not be applicable to the diverse populations that compose immigration today. The assimilation and acculturation concepts that traced and explained upward mobility in American society have not been a viable option for many immigrants, especially immigrants of color. This is evident in the pockets of poverty and marginalization within the American society and economy. López and Stanton-Salazar (2001) have identified four barriers to upward mobility:

> We believe that these four distinctive characteristics—disproportionate poverty, group size, historical depth, and racist stereotypes—interact to create special barriers to upward mobility for Mexican American youth in such a way that their school performance and socioeconomic trajectories cannot be explained by the analysis of individual characteristics. (p. 60)

M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco (2000) discuss a "trimodal" pattern of adaptation whereby the returns on immigration investment are not always similar. The first part of this pattern represents those immigrants who "are achieving extraordinary patterns of upward mobility—quickly moving into the well-remunerated knowledge-intensive sectors of the economy in ways never seen before in the history of U.S. immigration" (M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco, 2000, p. 18). M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco (2000) turn to Portes and Zhou (1993) to describe the second part of the pattern as "large numbers of low-skilled immigrants of color [who] find themselves in increasingly segregated sectors of the economy and society—locked into low-skill service jobs without much promise of status mobility" (p. 18). Finally, the last part of the

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pattern describes those immigrant groups who simply "disappear" into American society and culture.

This "trimodal" pattern of adaptation is similar to the adaptation of immigrant children in American schools. Studies on the performance of immigrant students in the American school system reveal conflicting information. This data also reveals a "trimodal" pattern. There is data to support that immigrant students not only do well in school, but also are able to surpass native-born students. Other data reveals an "overlap" with native-born students. Still, there are those immigrant students who achieve well below their native-born peers. Of course, there is an academic concern for the latter group. As C. Suárez-Orozco & M. Suárez-Orozco (2001) describe:

> Disconcertingly high numbers of these children are leaving schools with few skills that would ensure success in today's unforgiving global economy. At a time when the U.S. economy is generating no meaningful jobs for high-school dropouts, many children of immigrants are dropping out of school. (p. 2)

Within the school system, children of immigrants are often the brunt of jokes or teasing by other children, especially if they are of a darker complexion or speak with an accent. This negative treatment is a hindrance to their adaptation and participation within the new school setting. M. Suárez-Orozco & C Suárez-Orozco (2000) "argue that hostile attitudes and social exclusion also play a toxic role in the psychosocial lives of immigrant children" (p. 26). The Suárez-Orozcos (2000) also ponder how it is that a child internalizes "the notion that he or she is 'an alien', 'an illegal', unwanted and not deserving of the most basic rights such as education and healthcare" (p. 26). The manner

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in which these children are welcomed, treated or received describes the school's attitude toward minorities, immigrants, languages, and their documented or undocumented status.

Ethos of Reception

C. Suarez-Orozco & M. Suarez-Orozco (2001) identify an "ethos of reception" to include "...not only the opportunities available, but also, just as importantly the general social and cultural climate they encounter" (p. 36). This climate applies to the community inside and outside of the school. Children and their parents must contend with the climate that exists inside and outside of the school. Many times they are one and the same. These attitudes and beliefs that are held by those within the school community permeate the school organization and eventually are perceived by students as they are making adjustments in their new lives. If these attitudes and beliefs are positive, then there is no harm done. These are harmful when they are negative. The Suarez-Orozco's (2001) warn that, "These attitudes trickle down to the children and affect their perceptions, developing identities, and behaviors" (p. 36).

The notion of "mirroring" is one of the factors that contribute to child development and adaptation of immigrants in schools. Other contributing factors are the social system and the culture in which these children are learning and developing. D.W. Winicott's (1971) theory (as cited in M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco, 2000) of mirroring in self-other relations is based on extensive research that focuses on the mother-child relationship. According to Winicott, the child receives clues and responses from the mother that help to form the child's sense of self. Paradoxically, the child whose actions are viewed favorably may feel more valued than the child whose actions are not. Perhaps one negative or "non-response" from the mother may not have a

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significant effect, but that an accumulation of these is quite significant. M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco report, "When the reflection is generally negative, it is extremely difficult to maintain an unblemished sense of self-worth for very long" (p. 27).

Angela Valenzuela's (1999) study in an American high school illustrates the concept of negative social mirroring. Immigrant students within the school often received messages that were subtractive in nature. Valenzuela (1999) raises the issue that "...subtractive schooling encompasses subtractively assimilationist policies and practices that are designed to divest Mexican students of their culture and language" (p. 21). The fact that most students arrive with schooling experiences, language, knowledge, relationships, dreams and motivation is often overlooked. By overlooking these experiences, students are stripped of the social and cultural capital with which they enter school. Schools seem to make "null and void" that which forms the students' self-identity. Looking at this issue closely, Valenzuela holds that "...the erosion of students' social capital is evident in the presence and absence of academically oriented networks among immigrant and U.S.-born youth, respectively" (p.20). The obvious solution would be to build caring relationships within the schools to further enhance a students' individual progress. For immigrant students, it takes teachers who can empathize with their language and culture, but who also see the need for these children to break barriers of academic achievement.

Eugene García (2001) calls these assimilationist practices "Americanization". These practices are a process whereby students are supposedly "acculturated and socialized" to the mainstream culture. García (2001) muses at the simplicity of these attempts: teaching the English language and American values. Unfortunately, as García

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writes, "Coming from a sociological theory of assimilation, 'Americanization' has traditionally been recognized as a solution to the problem of immigrants and ethnicity in the modern industrialized United States" (2001, p. 49-50). This assimilationist perspective does not provide a healthy outlook toward culturally and linguistically diverse students. Again, this view is based on deficit models of thinking, as previously discussed in parental involvement. García (2001) describes the skewed assimilationist perspective:

> By changing the values, language, and so on of the group, we will have the solution to the educational underachievement of students who represent these groups. In essence, the groups should "melt" into one large and more beneficial "American" culture. (p. 52)

As García further emphasizes, it is more important to understand the diversity the students bring with them, rather than attempt to "Americanize" them. García describes this act as an act of responsibility on behalf of the educational institution. Valenzuela (1999) suggests yet a more in depth understanding with specific attention to the Mexican culture in "caring theory". Valenzuela underscores the following sources of caring: caring theory, Mexican culture, and the concept of social capital (1999). Caring theory is a form of pedagogy that sustains the student-teacher relationship. It takes a special kind of teacher to provide the support needed for "making adjustments", especially during the immigrant students' first encounter with the school. One basic adjustment may be the purpose of schooling, which is education. For example, in the Mexican culture, the word *educación* (education) implies respect, responsibility and sociality. Valenzuela (1999) explains that the term "*bien educado*" (well educated)

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means that a person is able to hold respectful relations while the term "*mal educado*" (poorly educated) means that a person is not respectful toward others and may have socially unacceptable behaviors. This simple word, "educated" implies a respectful and mutual relationship of trust, not just the cut and dry knowledge that one possesses. We can say that "being educated" in the Mexican culture is a different kind of "learning" that involves much more than the internalizing of information.

Taking it even further, a teacher who shows little regard for his or her immigrant students will demonstrate that he/she is "mal educada", or poorly educated because he/she lacks the ability to hold respectful relations. This teacher will not be seen in a positive light and as a reaction; his or her students will not demonstrate "care about" school. Valenzuela (1999) questions students' ability to demonstrate "care about" school when the "...curriculum either dismisses or derogates their ethnicity and ...[there are] school officials who often hold their culture and community in contempt" (p. 25). Logically, when students did now show "care about" school, teachers also assumed that the students were not capable of meeting the requirements of a basic education. Teachers soon learned to expect very little of their students. Immigrant students were soon perceived to have a "deficit". The presence of this social capital between teacher and students is necessary. It highlights the exchange network of trust and solidarity that helps individuals to adapt and achieve goals that would otherwise be unattainable. Its existence will encourage immigrant youth as they form their new identities.

Immigrant youth are forming new identifies as they grow and learn in their new country. Their experiences are shaped by the culture of the school, the teachers, the curriculum, their home life, and many others mitigating variables. These variables are

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not stagnant and the formation of one single identity is no longer viewed as an end to a developing process. M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco (2000) explain their view of immigrant identities "as multiple and fluid constructions in constant formation and transformation as children attempt to manage their daily migrations from the world of home and neighborhood to the world of peers and schools and, eventually, the world of work" (p. 29). These "spaces" that immigrant children travel may be paved with discontinuity, cultural differences, political interference and economic hardships. As a result of this struggle, the children may gravitate toward a particular style of adaptation in their identify formation. M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco describe the three dominant styles as: (a) ethnic flight, (b) adversarial, and (c) bicultural. Children may, at different times of their formation, lean toward more than one style at different times of their development or social context.

The "ethnic flight" style is where the child struggles with the identity of his or her own ethnic group and seeks to flee from it. The dominant culture is so desirable that the child may "often struggle to 'mimic' the dominant group and may attempt to join it, leaving their own ethnic groups behind" (M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco, 2000, p. 29). There is denial of the negative social mirroring as these students find comfort in being around the dominant culture. Learning the English language not only has a utilitarian purpose, but it is almost a "status symbol" which again, identifies the student with the dominant culture. For this group, academic success serves a twofold purpose: to move up and to move *away from* the ethnic family. As the ties to their ethnic culture are loosened, these students find that their parents' ways and traditions are not in synchronicity with those of the new country. M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco

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observe that this style of adaptation was used successfully by early waves of immigrants "whose phenotype allowed them the option of 'passing'" (p.30).

The "adversarial style" style of adaptation is a reaction to the negative social mirroring that the children experience within the institutions of the dominant culture. While many call this type of student a "drop out", he or she can also be called a "push out". Generally, the parental authority for these students is not in place. These students have found a "niche" among their peers. Valenzuela's (1999) lunchroom interviews found three "preliterate" youth—Lupita, Carolina, and Estaban--who had found solace in each other's friendship. All three of them had erratic schooling in México and as a result, were classified as "preliterates". This means that they did not have literacy in either Spanish or English. Two of them dropped out or were pushed out before the school year ended.

Valenzuela (1999) documents these students' reactions to the social mirroring they encountered. Esteban shared that he often felt *avergonzado* (embarrassed) due to his lack of literacy skills in either language. Carolina shares that "her teachers spend more time feeling sorry for them—or wondering why and how they ended up in their classes—than they do teaching them anything" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 134). One of the girls, Lupita, shared that her math teacher informed her principal that she (Lupita) did not belong in that particular math class. As Lupita described it, this complaint took place in front of her class. When Valenzuela (1999) questioned the teacher, she did not remember the incident, but responded, "When they can't even write their names, makes you wonder why they even come to school at all" (p. 135). After that incident, Lupita was left in the math class for six more weeks as her teacher continued to ignore her. Lupita, Esteban

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and Carolina had dire academic needs, yet perceived that they were not a priority in the school. Valenzuela (1999) recounts, "Esteban interjects that none of them had entered Seguin [pseudonym of high school] expecting special treatment. It is the unexpected and uncalled-for mistreatment that has been so difficult to bear" (p. 135). Lupita and Carolina dropped out the following semester.

The "bicultural style" describes children who are able to adjust themselves within the context of their former identity and their emerging or developing identity. M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco find, "These children typically emerge as 'cultural brokers' mediating the often conflicting cultural currents of home culture and host culture. These youth respond to negative mirroring by identifying it, naming it, and resisting it" (p. 31). Generally, these students will be bilingual and have bicultural competencies. The authority of the parent will remain the same as will their respect for elders. Similar to the "ethnic flight style", success in school will have a two-fold purpose. The first is instrumental-self advancement, better job opportunities, and independence (M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco, 2000). The second will be expressive in that their success represents the "payback" for their parents' struggles and sacrifices.

Before the children begin to show any mode of adaptation to the school community, there is one characteristic that Igoa (1995) finds is shared by almost all immigrant students. Igoa describes the silent stage as influencing all immigrant students regardless of their country of origin or their socioeconomic status. The silent stage is a time "...when their inability to communicate with peers is caused by a language or cultural difference" (p. 38). During this time children are experiencing many emotions,

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one of which is fear. In her work with immigrant students from different countries of origin, Igoa (1995) found that this silent stage might last up to two years. Igoa perceived the silent stage as follows:

> The silent stage need not be a negative experience; it may even have advantages. While some children are trapped in helpless silence by their inability to communicate in the dominant language, they become insightful observers of their own human condition and of life around them. In that silence, they develop strong listening skills. (Igoa, 1995, p. 38)

For any successful intervention to occur, it is necessary to understand the plight of the immigrant student and then to be able to pedagogically and ideologically meet their needs. To begin with, teachers should be able to understand the child's context, which may include his/her country of origin, previous schooling, family life, socioeconomic background and other factors that affect children in their schooling (C. Suarez-Orozco & M. Suarez-Orozco, 2000). It is likewise important to evaluate the students incoming academic skills so the or she is able to continue academic growth. The result of not doing so will cause the immigrant child to remain stagnant while he or she struggles with learning language rather than content.

Incoming Resources

The framework used by Carola Suárez-Orozco and Marcelo Suárez-Orozco (2000) in their study of immigrant children is composed of multilevel factors that take into consideration the child's incoming resources, host culture variables, social support networks, family cohesion, maintenance of culture of origin, peer orientation, teacher expectations, race, gender, students' attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors. The Suárez-

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Orozcos (2000) predict the outcome of these factors to be grade point average, number of class failures, disciplinary incidents, college applications and dropping out. Incoming resources, host culture variables, maintenance of culture of origin and teacher expectations are the components that are most visible in the classroom setting. These will be discussed in more detail.

Under the umbrella of "incoming resources" M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco (2000) have grouped the usual predictors of schooling: a) parental education/literacy/socioeconomic status, b) monetary resources, c) physical health, d) psychological health, e) Students' prior schooling/reading levels, f) English language proficiency, and g) immigration documentability. Documentability defines the immigrant students' status in the United States. This issue happens to be one of the undocumented immigrant child's greatest fears. Immigrant students fear that the "migra" (Immigration and Naturalization Service) will come and take them away. Hunter and Howley (1990) discovered that immigrant children fear deportation and separation from their parents. It is difficult to fathom a child being able to participate and learn while wondering if anyone is "coming to get him or her". If not for English language proficiency and documentability, the list would apply to almost any native-born student in school.

School Culture

Under the realm of "host culture variables" are factors that contribute to strategies for schooling, yet upon closer inspection, their applicability seems to address the immigrant adults rather than the children. Indirectly, these factors can influence the schooling strategies of immigrant children. For example, living in a threatening

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neighborhood will affect the child's attitude and school performance on a daily basis. As with any type of learner, conflicts outside of the school or in the home environment cause stress that will somehow be reflected in the classroom. M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco (2000) report host culture variables as: a) occupational opportunities, b) neighborhood safety, c) neighborhood ethnic relations, d) quality of school, and e) social mirroring. Other considerations for adults and children are the "...recognition of traits shared with members of the larger culture, such as those acquired through acculturation' (García, 2001, p. 48). This recognition would take time to develop in the immigrant adults as well as the children. Acculturation, as explained by García, is not a linear process:

> The process may be characterized by more complex patterns of combination and by ongoing recombination than by simple substitution and, in addition to the fact of degrees of acculturation among individuals, would contribute to the cultural heterogeneity of the Hispanic population, that is, the relative uniqueness of its members. (Garica, 2001, p. 48)

It is then, quite difficult to speak of a culture. There is the general culture shared by large groups and then there is the "unique" culture shared by individuals. The Mexican culture would address that culture which is "uniquely" shared by Mexican immigrants, although this may vary according to their states of origin. "Maintenance of the culture of origin" would seem an easier task to achieve in a world that keeps getting smaller. Proximity in some areas, as well as modern technology facilitates communication between México and the United States. Internet access, faxes, and the availability of telephone cards are options for communicating with family in Mexico.

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Ainslie (1998) describes the new immigrants' ability to retain their ties to Mexico through various communicative means. He ascertains, "In this context, emotional ties remain rich and potent longer after immigrants from other, more distant, countries have been forced (by time, distance, and cultural tensions) to dilute or relinquish them altogether" (p. 293). M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco's (2000) "Maintenance of Culture of Origin" is composed of: a) transnational contacts, b) language of origin maintenance, c) contact with members of country of origin, and d) television/radio exposure.

Quality of school and social mirroring, which are factors in the Suárez-Orozco's "host culture variables" allude to the culture of the school. The literature on school culture takes many shapes and forms. It may describe the administrator's actions, the teacher expectations, the artifacts in the school, the focus of the school, and many other variables. One of the most obvious components of the school's culture is the receiving teacher's expectation of the student. This is due to the face that most of the child's time in school will be spent in the company and presence of his or her teacher. The teacher then becomes a key player in "social mirroring" as was previously defined by Winicott (1971). Other adults that surround the students' school context may include administration, counselors, paraprofessionals, and other support personnel such as cafeteria and custodial workers. The quality of the school and the degree to which maintenance of the culture of origin are sustained are closely related to how children may adapt to their new lives.

The culture of the school is distinctive in that it communicates "something" about the school to its parents, teachers, principals and students. Bartolomé and Trueba (2000)

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expound that school should be a place where there is a "commitment to educate immigrant and low-status populations" (p. 277). In other words, the culture of the school should embrace the philosophy that it is their job to educate these learners. School culture may be positive or negative as it defines the climate or ethos of the school. It describes the undercurrents of everyday happenings within the schools. More than just a "feeling", the culture of organizations has been linked to productivity, academic achievement and performance of students in schools and overall improvement attempts (Deal & Peterson, 1999). A school's culture permeates all aspects of its existence:

> We believe the term *culture* provides a more accurate and intuitively appealing way to help school leaders better understand their school's own unwritten rules and traditions, norms, and expectations that seem to permeate everything: the way people act, how they dress, what they talk about or avoid talking about, whether they seek out colleagues for help or don't, and how teachers feel about their work and their students. (Deal & Peterson, 1999, p. 2).

One of the key players in culture of the school is the principal. As the instructional leader, the principal sets the tone for the school and the teachers. Symbolically, the instructional leader who is in touch with his or her school's mission and goals can be described as a "living logo". Living logos, as described by Deal & Peterson (1999) are "Principals and leaders [who] convey powerful symbolic messages as they go about their daily routines. They transmit meaning and values in all the seemingly mundane things they do" (p. 65). These leaders transmit messages through their symbolic actions, which include words, actions and other nonverbal cues (Deal &

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Peterson, 1999). How these leaders spend their time tells about what is important to them. A principal who spends time connecting with students and talking to parents is sending a powerful message to the school community. Deal & Peterson also allude to what is called a "school tour". A school tour is the act of walking the hallways. This act allows school leaders "to connect to the organizational core of the schools—the classroom—and make time to interact with students and staff" (Deal & Peterson, 1999, p. 66).

A school leader also communicates the school's purpose through other forms of communication such as their actions, intellectual conversations, ideas, advocacy, collegial sharing, warm greetings, and being able to laugh and have fun (Deal & Peterson, 1999). It is through these actions that the purpose of the school is shared and communicated to the faculty and staff. Deal & Peterson have found that schools have different definitions of success or purposes. For some schools, achieving extracurricular success is their definition of success. Hence, these schools thrive on having the best football team, the best band or the most trophies in other athletic competitions. There are those schools that pride themselves in "learning for the elite". For them, the number of students who are accepted at Ivy League Schools measures these schools' success. The most noble school purpose put forth by Deal & Peterson (1999) was "Learning for all students".

Learning for all students describes schools that "...give their heart and soul to seek high standards of learning for all students. In these cultures teachers focus on the learning needs of everyone from the most highly succeeding to the furthest behind" (Deal & Peterson, 1999, p. 26). This purpose translates as the leader, the faculty and the staff

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coming together for the purpose of improving learning—for everyone. A school with this definition of success would seem to be the most appropriate one for children of immigrants and other marginalized learners. As explained by Deal & Peterson, it begins with the principal and his or her willingness to accept the challenge. Today, the biggest challenge is the leadership of schools with increasingly diverse populations. This has implications not only for the children within the schools, but for the communities of diverse parents that must be reached. It is the principal's job to be able to build a cohesive community from the diverse 'subcommunities' that it serves. Larson and Ovando (2001) suggest:

> A community approach to school leadership and the use of community-based funds of knowledge and efforts to begin teaching and learning with the lives and experiences of children provide two promising alternatives to closed systems of schooling. These community-inclusive practices offer significant insight into and effective strategies for building learning communities. However, these and other inquiry-driven processes require an adequate level of cultural sensitivity on the part of the practitioners. (p. 199)

Runn Elementary School is an example of a "community approach to school leadership". It is located in Donna, Texas--one mile from the Texas-Mexico border and is exemplary of the impact that positive school culture and leadership can have on its students. The student population lives in colonias, or pockets of poverty without running water, sewer service or the basic commodities expected in the United States. Parents have been observed carrying children on their shoulders to get them to school when the

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roads and fields are flooded. It is a school that is the center of its community (Rips, 1999). After visiting the school's surrounding areas, Rips (1999) describes the homes that the children come from:

> Some live in cinder-block houses, some in trailers, or old school buses, some in houses of plywood and tarpaper with rooms added on as necessity demands. All are poor. Most come from homes in which only Spanish is spoken. Many spend the first and last two months of every school year on the migrant farmworker trail. They do not fit the standard profile for school success. (p. 8)

Runn Elementary is a Texas Education Agency (TEA) Recognized School. This means that a minimum of 80% of the school's population has passed the state mandated T.A.A.S. (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills) examination. The teachers credit the principal for the school's success while the principal highlights the teachers' belief in the kids. Ofelia Gaona, the principal of the school emphasized, "The parents truly want their children to get a good education...They see it as their salvation—that we're going to take their children out of these conditions. It's an overwhelming responsibility" (Rips, 2000, p. 11). There are lessons to be learned from this school that serves children of immigrants. The factors that have enabled them to be successful are part of the caring ethos, maintenance of culture of origin, and positive school culture. They read like this:

1. An empathetic, driven principal
2. Caring teachers working long hours
3. A deep understanding of the students' lives
4. Close collaboration among administrators, teachers, and parents

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5. Small school size which allows for individual attention
6. Parents dedicated to their children's education
7. The building of community within the school
8. High expectations for all students
9. Dual language program (Rips, 2000, p. 11)

A "community approach to school leadership" cannot be achieved without a team. The school "team" lead by the principal is composed of teachers who may or may not like working with immigrant students. Teachers who work with immigrant students report that they are often pleased with their attitudes as well as their work ethic and positive nature. This correlates with the finding that immigrant students arrive with extremely positive attitudes toward their teachers and school administrators (C. Suárez-Orozco & M. Suárez-Orozco, 2001). Student interviews revealed that immigrant students respect and appreciate their teachers more, have positive associations with their principals, and associated school with statements more positive than their second-generation Mexican-America counterparts (C. Suárez-Orozco & M. Suárez-Orozco, 2001). Valenzuela (1999) looks at this characteristic of the immigrant learner through another lens, "Their 'politeness' is perhaps as much about deference as it is about powerlessness or an expression of their belief that they are not 'entitled' to openly defy school authority or assert their own vision of schooling"(p. 140).

Teacher ideology

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Non-Latino teachers' unfamiliarity with the culture of immigrant students may cause them to deny their students the opportunity to engage in the social relationships within the classroom and with him/her as their teacher. This would obviously be in conflict with the students' cultural definition of an education. Teacher's views of students in Valenzuela's study (1999) alluded to the perception that the high school age immigrant students did not care about schooling. From this perception, the person that immigrant children call *maestra or maestro* (teacher) has the power to build or to destroy. He or she can attend to or completely ignore the needs of the immigrant learner trying to survive the adaptation process. This makes the teacher's role in the education of immigrant students extremely critical. Bartolomé & Trueba (2000) express, "The commitment to educate immigrant and low-status populations constitutes the heart of American democracy" (p. 277). So, what does this commitment to education look like? First of all, teaching is not a science, but an art. It is a balance of "know-how", also called pedagogy and a building of relationships with the learner.

Sonia Nieto (1999) suggests "education is also about political commitment and social responsibility" (p. 131). This idea goes beyond the extensive literature on the teaching-learning process, which focuses mainly on "best practices". Bartolomé and Trueba (2000) find, "This narrow focus often neglects the fundamental role that teacher ideology plays in the instruction of culturally different students" (p. 278). In essence "best practices" are not enough because they usually focus on what is wrong with the students. Best practices teach teachers how to best teach "them" to read or to help "them" learn to problem solve in mathematics. This is not to imply that best practices are not valid—they do provide teachers, especially preservice teachers with 'tools' for

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addressing skills, however they are not sufficient. Teachers need an understanding of the political process of which he or she is a part of. As part of the educational institution, Bartolomé and Trueba (2000) put forth the idea of a teacher's ideology, which is based on his or her "ideological clarity":

> Thus, ideological clarity refers to the process by which individuals struggle to identify both the dominant society's explanations for the existing socioeconomic and political hierarchy and their own explanations of the social order and any resulting inequalities. Ideological clarity requires that teachers' individual explanations be compared and contrasted with those propagated by the dominant society. The juxtaposing of ideologies, hopefully, forces teachers to better understand if, when, and how their belief systems uncritically reflect those of the dominant society and support unfair and inequitable conditions. (p. 288)

Perhaps less political or obvious is the expectation that teachers have of their students. Most people would assume that any person who pursues a career in education is doing so because he or she has expectations of the students as well as of their own capabilities to reach children. Lindholm (1994) forewarns, "Language proficiency and immigrant status are characteristics that produce the lowest expectations overall" (p. 198). Lowered expectations lead to differential treatment and subsequently to differential student outcomes. The students who receive preferential treatment such as praise, attention, opportunities and positive feedback will continue their high achievement as was similarly proposed by Winicott (1974). The students perceived as low achievers do

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not receive what the high achievers receive and are likely to receive more criticism than praise (Lindholm, 1994).

This 'self examination' of ideological positioning, clarity, and student expectations are applicable to all teachers, not just those who are assigned to work with immigrant students or the perceived low-status populations. As the demographics continue to change in the United States, diversity in language, culture and class will continue to be a part of classrooms across the United States. This has implications for teacher education programs in that the teaching of immigrant students may not be limited to bilingual or ESL teachers, but rather to all teachers. One or two multicultural classes on a degree plan may not be sufficient preparation. Regardless of the students' background (culture, socioeconomic status, language, ethnicity), teachers must be able to discern and practice that which is an "authentic dialogue" between teacher and student. "True dialogue unites subjects together in the cognition of a knowable object that mediates between them" (P. Freire, 2000, p. 20). This dialogue cannot be achieved until a teacher discovers his or her own ideological standing within the realm of the teaching institution. It is as if this learning process for teachers may include the shaping and reshaping of a new identity, one that may need to differ from the reproductive institution. The reshaping of teacher identities and ideologies may foster a true educational concern and challenge for the learners that have traditionally been kept out of the loop.

Best Practices

Love, however, is not enough. A bright welcome banner that depicts a positive school climate of reception on behalf of the principals and well-meaning teachers addresses only the beginning of the immigrant students' adaptation process. This is not

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to minimize the "caring theory," "ethos of reception," and school culture previously discussed. They remain important as affective variables in the initiation of and the adaptation to the schooling process that follows. All affect the relations and the motivation necessary for successful schooling and completion. However, the purpose of schooling is schooling. The academic achievement of immigrant students and Latino youth determines whether they graduate or not and furthermore influences whether they will continue into higher education or join the ranks of the service sectors. As C. Suarez-Orozco and M. Suarez-Orozco (2001) explain, "Formal schooling has become a high-stakes goal for the children of immigration. For many of them, schooling is nearly the *only* ticket for a better tomorrow" (p. 124).

Immigrant education then becomes so extremely critical that educational reform seems to be the only answer. This idea is problematic in that the American educational system has continuously promoted what Halcón & Reyes (1992) call "differentiated schooling: one for mainstream and the other for non-mainstream children" (p. 305). Halcón & Reyes (1992) add that any national reform movements (A Nation at Risk, A Nation Prepared, Tomorrow's Teachers, and College: The Undergraduate Experience in America) do not take into account either minorities or minority needs. Not one of these documents mentioned the Hispanic dropout rate, immigrant schooling or the language issue for minority students. To ignore the differences in students makes it possible for national policy to not address their needs. Halcon & Reyes (1992) describe the process: "The homogenization of student educational needs in tough economics times allows reformers to minimize the present crisis in minority education, assuring that majority students are the intended, principal beneficiaries of the reform" (p. 305). If minority

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students happen to benefit from national reform policy, it is because some aspect of the policy has "trickled down to them" (Halcon & Reyes, 1992). This "trickle down" may affect only a few students at a time, if any. Immigrant students need interventions that address their unique needs and that protect them against the pitfalls that have previously caused them to fail.

Trueba (1999) affirms that there are many ways that teachers can begin making positive changes in the classroom. He writes, "One possible intervention can be the creation of heterogeneous learning groups for the purpose of modifying low status roles of individuals and groups" (p. 51). There must be "thought" put into this configuration of classroom structure. It should be purposeful and socioculturally congruent to promote the maximum achievement for all of the learners. Trueba warns against this type of intervention taking on a mere "technical" arrangement. To develop this point further, any intervention can take on a "technical" façade. Any intervention can be written into policy, lesson plans and training. However, it is the correct and consistent use of interventions with accountability and follow-through that is most effective.

Trueba (1999) attributes Latinos' underachievement to "...the lack of cognitively, culturally, and linguistically appropriate teaching methods..."(p.48). This infers that interventions should capitalize on the students' existing culture and language. These interventions focus on the students' incoming skills, rather than on their perceived deficits. Some successful interventions have been: (a) cooperative learning, (b) native language instruction, (c) immersion in a literacy environment, and (d) whole language instruction. These practices capitalize not only on the individual learner's skills, but prescribe the responsibility of the individual learners to the learning configurations that

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teachers implement in their classrooms. Use of these practices is an acknowledgement that students are not blank slates to be filled with a prescribed curriculum. Their prior experiences and schooling can be an avenue for them to make cognitive gains in the new setting. Specific methodology does not guarantee success, but rather the teaching-learning process that takes place between the teacher and the student. Trueba (1999) states, "Teachers and students jointly construct knowledge, building on what the students bring to class. Teaching is not "fixing" the students, but discovering with students new ideas, new values, and new worlds of hope" (p. 58). It is a critical time for educational leaders who see the urgent need for intervention in the public school system (Trueba, 1999).

Eugene García (1994) describes immigrant learners as "linguistically and diverse students [who] find themselves in a vulnerable situation on entering U.S. schools" (p. 87). García's research on effective practices with Latino students is a result of interviews and classroom observations in schools where language minority students have met academic success. Attributes identified as effective with immigrant learners are a) functional communication, b) thematic units, c) transition from writing in the native language to writing in English, d) highly committed teachers, e) principals who supported their staffs, and f) both Anglo and non-Anglo parents involved in the supporting school activities (García, 1994). García is careful to say that these practices are neither a finite list, nor an educational "solve-all". These ideas are presented as contributions to the foundation of sound educational practices and as a springboard for new initiatives.

Upon observing these classrooms García (1994) reports that they were generally noisy due to the cooperative nature of the assignments and the need for communication

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and clarification between teacher and students. "This organization minimized individualized work tasks, such as worksheet exercises, and provided a very informal family-like social setting in which the teacher either worked with a small group of student…"(p. 89). During the collaborative activities García (1994) discovered that the students were harder on each other when questioning and perhaps felt a little more at ease in that they challenged each other's answers more. The high degree and opportunities for student-student interaction within the groups were what allowed the students to mediate the content. García's observations support Vygotsky's reference to learning as a sociocultural activity.

Vygotsky-based Instruction

"Vygotsky regarded education not only as central to cognitive development but as the quintessential sociocultural activity" (Moll, 1990, p.1). In addressing the zone of proximal development, the assisted performance was a role that could be carried out by an adult, the teacher or more competent peers. This "mediation" was most emphasized as it related to the child and adult within the "social organization of instruction" (Moll, 1990, p. 9). Within this sociocultural activity called learning, children are active participants in the teaching-learning process, not just recipients. The focus then shifts to those actions and activities that promote or facilitate thinking and mediation of content and away from those that would constrain the process. It is a shift away from what Cole (1990) calls the "instructional discourse" as witnessed in many American classrooms.

According to Cole (1990), "One of the distinctive indicators of instructional discourse is the presence of the initiation-reply-evaluation sequence. This pattern starts when the teacher initiates an exchange, usually by asking a question; a student replies,

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and then the teacher provides an evaluation" (p. 105). This is almost a scripted discourse; it leaves little room for discussion or exploration of topics. This type of discourse makes language minimal, limits the development of content, and provides little stimulation for students, not to mention to second language learners. Language and literacy are of the utmost importance for immigrant students. Language will be necessary to mediate the content and literacy is needed for more than just 'reading', but for understanding and communication.

Margarita Calderón (1994) used the BCIRC (Bilingual Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition) model during her study of bilingual or language minority students in various settings. The underlying philosophy of the model is Vygotskian in that "It is a belief that the social development of intelligence is the mechanism that ultimately produces observed benefits" (Calderón, 1994 p. 101). As others have mentioned, Calderón warns that the simple placement of students in groups is again, a "technical" arrangement. To be able to fully implement cooperative learning, teachers need not only continuous, but effective staff development. Once this is in place, the results are amazing. Calderón (1994) reports that the cooperative groups allowed for students to "naturally correct" each other and the different patterns of communication assisted the students in developing their own "self-correction devices".

The cooperative groups gave the Spanish and English learners opportunities to listen to the "other" for accuracy and information processing. The nature of the questioning for these students was "real" and related to the content, which they were negotiating. As previously cited by Cole (1990) teachers are accustomed to generating "scripted dialogue". This is probably due to the fact that the teacher guides, which

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accompany student textbooks, provide a list of questions for the teachers to illicit feedback from the students. As these are meant to check for basic comprehension, they are usually at the lower level of the critical questioning spectrum. Finally, it was observed that each of the students' first language, whether English or Spanish, acquired a higher status; as each of them was an expert in his or her own language.

The whole language approach is an intervention based on the premise that the teaching of language is meaning and authenticity. There are language programs that concentrate on repetition drills and rote memorization. Whole language is precisely the opposite. The whole language approach has two premises; the first is that meaning and experience are interrelated and the second is that all of the components of language ultimately constitute a "whole" (Leone & Cisneros, 1994). All of the phonemes (sounds) in a word are meaningless in isolation while a word, a sentence and a story have increasingly more meaning. Teaching through the whole language approach lets students see and transfer the literacy competencies from one language to another. This transfer takes place because literacy skills such as main idea, context clues, and skimming for information are cognitively the same process in either language. Leone & Cisneros (1994) explain:

> A whole language approach urges that literacy be developed through activities involving writing and reading of authentic whole texts which allow the learner to explore and learn from rich, integrated experiences, not from fragmented, meaningless exercises or artificial texts based on reading level formulas. (p. 134)

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Whole language as an effective practice for learning is Vygotskian based as "each students' language and cognitive growth is the main goal, not the mastery of pre-determined, skills, or content" (Leone & Cisneros, 1994, p. 137). Whole language teaching, according to Goodman & Goodman (1990) is the immersion of children in a literacy environment. Print, not letters and sounds in isolation usually surround a child's environment. This is the essence of Vygotsky, that skills will develop in the context of their use (1978). This "holistic" manner of teaching called for the learner's "need to be immersed in language for literacy learning to be easy" (Goodman & Goodman, 1990, p. 223). Furthermore, the use of whole language activities promoted a real purpose for learning. Goodman and Goodman (1990) expand:

> The whole language view of literacy development is thus an immersion view. Children growing up in literate societies are surrounded by print. They begin to be aware of the functions of written language and to play at its use long before they come to school. School continues and extends this immersion in literacy. (p. 225)

Vygotsky addressed the concept of "whole activities" as opposed to those that are taught in segmentation and or isolation. Moll (1990) tells us that of Vygotsky's contributions, this is one of the most neglected aspects of his work. Moll (1990) cites Vygotsky's (1987) opposition to breaking concepts into small pieces whereby these small pieces were studied in isolation. Vygotsky's (1987) analogy was that if you studied water by breaking down to its two components, hydrogen and oxygen, the "essence" of water would be gone. The implication is that learning may lose its focus; words,

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sentences and stories lose their meaning by being reduced to minute skills denying the child the "essence" of the concept that is being studied.

The effective practices previously mentioned support the Vygotskian theory of learning as well as describe some of the attributes of Two-way Bilingual Immersion programs. L.S. Vygotsky was a Russian psychologist whose contributions to modern psychology in the early 1900's are applicable to education and theories of learning today. Vygotsky was an educator throughout his life and his pedagogical implications for teaching and learning seem to correlate to Two-way programs. His untimely death in 1934 cut short his establishment of "a unified theory of human psychological processes" (Cole, M., John-Steimer, V., Scribner, S., & Souberman, E., 1978, p. 5). Vygotsky's most known contribution is the "zone of proximal development" which refers to the learning process and its context of interactions within optimal school-based instruction. The zone of proximal development is: "The distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Cole et al., 1978, p. 86).

The zone of proximal development is applicable to learning for all students, Mexican immigrant students included. Vygotsky's concept was born of his issue with intellectual testing. With intellectual testing, the results are a measure of those skills that have matured. To Vygotsky those skills which were in the process of maturation, were more important:

> These functions could be termed the 'buds' or 'flowers' of development rather than the 'fruits' of development. The actual developmental level

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> characterizes mental development retrospectively, while the zone of proximal development characterizes mental development prospectively. (Cole et al., 1978, p. 86)

When teaching to the "zone" the teacher must establish a level of difficulty because the child does not need to be taught a concept that he or she already knows. Teachers usually call this a "challenge". Secondly the teacher may provide assistance with the novel concept or idea. The child is then being guided to his or her zone. Finally, the child's independent performance is evaluated in whether the child is able to "perform independently" (Moll, 1990, p. 7).

Vygotsky's concept of the zone goes against the previously mentioned perceptions about immigrant learners and their "deficits". The transfer of Vygotsky's knowledge to the classroom that serves immigrant students would move the teacher to find the immigrant students' zone of proximal development. It would be a matter of, "Where is he or she now?" The next step would be, "Let me assist him or her to get them where they need to be." The matter is not as simplistic as it sounds, for educators and Vygotsky have a different perception of "skills" and learning. "Skills" can be an elusive term. The skills needed for writing are many. An example would be the use of a capital letter at the beginning of a sentence. A child may be drilled into taking the sentences on a worksheet and capitalizing the first word of each and every one. This "skill" then has been learned, in isolation and totally out of context, but it has been learned. It is questionable whether the holistic concept of writing has been taught. Vygotsky's zone of proximal development would not apply to this situation because the students have not used the skill in an activity that carries out the process of writing. Language, reading and

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writing should be learned holistically in the context of speech, literacy and writing activities. These, not their subskills, should be the focus of instruction.

Two-Way Programs

Cloud, Geneese, & Hamayan (2001), experts in Two-Way Language Immersion Programs view language and literacy development as two of the primary goals of educators. They write, "These are skills students will not acquire without our assistance" (p. 1). This idea ties to Trueba's aforementioned intervention that teachers must provide the context for meaningful learning to take place. Language programs have taken on different shapes to enrich students with additional language and culture. Two-way immersion programs, also called "dual language", serve both language minority and language majority students in the same classrooms. Lindholm (1994) calls Two-Way programs "the marriage of bilingual education for linguistic minority children and immersion education for linguistic minority children. This model promotes the academic achievement that is direly needed for immigrant students and language proficiency in two languages" (Lindholm, 1994). The optimum setting is a class composed of 50% from each of the language groups. This program is different from other bilingual programs in that it incorporates instructional strategies to facilitate cross-cultural relationships, cooperation and learning (Cloud et al., 2001).

While the Two-Way model suggests cross-cultural classrooms, the gap between minority and majority students cannot be overlooked. Lindholm (1994) makes the point, "...language minority students are more likely than language majority students to be placed in lower school tracks or assigned to special education classes" (p. 198). This placement affects their level of instruction as well as academic level of attainment.

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Lindholm uses Allport's (1954) instructional treatments to reinforce the importance of student expectations of each other. Students with only 'incidental' exposure to each other may experience and reinforce negative views of the other. Allport's (1954) conditions have a dual purpose; the first is to assist and improve inter-group relations. The second purpose is beneficial to both in that it is to maximize the achievement of the majority and minority student. The conditions are:

1. Minority and majority students have equal status in the classroom
2. Minority and majority students work interdependently on tasks with common objectives.
3. Minority and majority students have opportunities to interact with each other as individuals.
4. The effects of these contacts are enhanced when teachers support them and other school personnel/authority figures. (Allport, 1954)

The underlying goals of a Two-Way program take into consideration language, culture and the need for second language learners to achieve academically. Cloud et al. (2001) present them as: (a) attainment of challenging, age-appropriate academic skills and knowledge, (b) advanced levels of functional proficiency in English along with an additional language, and (c) understanding and appreciation of cross-cultural differences (p. 6). Of these Two-Way Program attributes, the one causes the most disturbance is the second one. The idea of teaching a language other than English in a school is threatening to those who possess an anti-immigrant sentiment as previously discussed. González (2001) surmises that this is due to "The ineffable link of language to emotion, to the very

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core of our being..." (p. xix). González' point dually explains why English is important to some and why the Spanish language is important to children of Mexican immigrants.

Cloud et al. (2001) report that for second language learners, the most consistent predictor of second language acquisition is the students' proficiency in their first language. This is a problematic issue when children have had limited exposure to schooling and language rich environments. Children of migrant or immigrant families may have erratic school enrollment or both their parents work with little time to devote to their children. Other issues are that the parents may not be literate and are thus unable to provide pathways to literacy development. According to Cloud et al. (2001), "Others, especially those who are sensitive to the low status their language may have in the larger society...may be reluctant to speak the language in which they are fluent" (p. 53).

All of the issues presented seem too heavy, political, complicated and impossible to tackle. There are immigrant families, most of whom are poor economically. There are issues of language and a lot of theories on "what doesn't work". There are issues of teachers' prevailing attitudes and low expectations of Latinos as well as issues on culture, assimilationist practices, subtractive schooling, etc. Teaching immigrant and bilingual does not look as bleak for those who are truly interested in their success. Gomez (2000) notes that the marginalization of second language learners "...[is] based on deficit theories, segregationist approaches and remediation" (p. 43). Gomez (2000) suggests that Two-way programs are, "...our best attempt yet at providing equality of educational opportunity for LEP (Limited English Proficient) students through an educational process that validates and develops both languages" (p. 43). This program views the students' incoming characteristics as resources for learning.

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These Two-Way programs view the students' language, home, parents and community as helpful in the maintenance and development of the first language. This is not a "technical" or utilitarian use of the first language, but rather a validation so that both languages can hold equal status. Gomez (2000) adds, "The two-way bilingual model is based on additive bilingualism as a form of enrichment where children are given the opportunity to add one or more foreign languages while fully developing their own primary language" (p. 47). Two-way models differ in that the implementing schools "custom design" the program to fit the school's specific needs and resources. Gomez (2000) lists the following characteristics used in 12 schools within 5 districts in the Rio Grande Valley:

1. Heterogeneous instructional grouping
2. Separation of languages for content area instruction
3. Learning and resource centers
4. Language of the day (non-content area language use)
5. L1 and L2 computer support
6. Instructional staff (team-teaching models: pairs and triads)
7. L1 and L2 conceptual refinement (p. 49)

The gap in equity and achievement between mainstream learners and immigrant/bilingual/Latino youth is an issue that cannot be allowed to continue. It is a generation hindering gap that must be addressed and closed for good. There are no easy answers. The Two-way model is an attempt to validate students' incoming resources and address achievement, identity and language in the setting where students first come into contact with systemic culture. Perhaps the Two-Way is or isn't the educational solve-all

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for Latino youth, perhaps it is a step in the right direction…we won't know until we study immigrant children in the context of Two-Way Programs along the Texas-Mexico border.

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CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative researchers "study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 3). This study of the children of Mexican immigrants will take place in the natural setting of their schools. The researcher will then interpret the data collected from the children's context. As a part of this process, qualitative researchers should begin by recognizing that research is an interactive process shaped by personal histories, biographies, gender, social class, race, ethnicity, languages, cultures, professions, and senses of "right and wrong" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Researchers are in a sense, their own lived experiences. Recognition of these variables within the researcher's history may be valuable as tools for knowing and understanding.

My personal history includes eleven years of classroom teaching experience with different school populations. Most of the eleven years were spent in a bilingual class where the recent immigrants from México were placed. From this experience I learned that schools are often ill-equipped to deal with the uniqueness and special needs of learners that are recent immigrants. This experience contributed to my development as an advocate and voice for the recent immigrant students in my school and district. As a result of my student advocacy, I have spent over four years providing consultation to

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schools in the forms of staff development, on-site classroom lessons, and prescriptive evaluations. Within those schools I have found immigrant students placed in the back of classrooms, behind bookshelves and in segregated material-less classrooms. The primary focus of my consultation has been literacy, language development, classroom management, and effective planning of instruction for all learners, especially those perceived as "not teachable."

I am a female who grew up at the lower end of the socioeconomic level through migrancy and early childhood poverty. As a Mexican-American woman I feel a sense of responsibility for the children of Mexican immigrants. As a teacher, I feel a sense of urgency and despair at the ineffective practices that plague the classrooms of children of Mexican immigrants. As the daughter of a Mexican immigrant, I feel it is my duty to build roads so that others may travel the selective roads that I have traveled. I must echo Norma González' (2001) words as she seems to explain my choice of theory and method in a way that I possibly could not:

> I have chosen a narrative format because I believe ethnography tells a story. I am also a character in this story. I am not a disinterested or neutral party. I have tried not to remain invisible in this text [field], without becoming intrusive. Yet I can only offer a partial perspective because my voice, with its own location, implies the exclusion of other voices. I do not have the whole picture. And yes, I am biased: these children are children of promise. They are not "at risk"; they are not disadvantaged. Their struggle is the struggle of children everywhere—to grow and develop in a world that is sometimes confusing, sometimes

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> harsh, sometimes ambivalent, but within which they are uniquely endowed to grow. (p. xix)

Qualitative Research

For the purposes of this study, qualitative research will help the reader experience the "worldview" of the children in the study, rather than impose "apriori" judgments or perceptions on them. This study will be naturalistic, inductive, holistic and rich in thick descriptions and personal contacts. The "qualitative" term is used in many ways, however for the purpose of this study the term refers to the collection of data in order to "understand the complexities and interrelationships of a situation" (Campbell-Evans, 1992, p. 2). It will be naturalistic, as the children of Mexican immigrants will be observed in their natural process of schooling. As a researcher, I will not manipulate or control the schooling situation in anyway, but rather participate with the children in the process of schooling.

The qualitative method is appropriate for this study, as I will immerse myself in the schooling culture of the children. The children are schooled in an institution that is composed of structures, practices, conventions, particular languages, and decision makers at many levels of the system. As Miles and Huberman (1994) expand, "Human meanings and intentions are worked out within the frame works of these social structures—structures that are invisible, but nonetheless real" (p. 4). How these children negotiate the schooling process within this realm of their schooling structure is the focus of this study. The social phenomena of language and decisions within this structure can only be reached through a qualitative approach.

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The strengths of the qualitative approach will advance the purpose of this study as well as the research questions themselves. Maxwell (1996) identifies five strengths of qualitative research. The first strength is the concept of understanding meaning. Maxwell expands, "I am using 'meaning' here in broad sense here to include cognition, affect, intentions, and anything else that can be included in what qualitative researchers often refer to as the 'participant's perspective'" (p. 17). The second concept is the concept of understanding the particular context of the participants. Qualitative researchers generally study a small number of individuals. The individuals of this particular study are the children of Mexican immigrants. To the best extent possible the focus is to "...preserve the individuality of each of these in their analyses..." (Maxwell, 1996, p. 19).

The third strength of qualitative research is the identification of unanticipated phenomena. Although the literature on characteristics of the children described some of their incoming characteristics, it is safe to say that not all is known that can be known. The fourth strength involves understanding the process of events and actions. There seems to be a certain emphasis on the process that leads to the outcomes (Maxwell, 1996). The fifth and final strength is the development of causal explanations. This seems to be a disputed strength among qualitative researchers. However, Maxwell finds that the nature of most qualitative questioning involves some sort of causal relationship. "Qualitative researchers, on the other hand, tend to ask *how* x plays a role in causing y, what the process is that connects x and y" (Maxwell, 1996, p. 20).

These strengths of understanding meaning, context, identifying unanticipated phenomena, understanding processes, and developing causal explanations will be factors

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in addressing the nature of the research questions in this study. Furthermore, the holistic attempt of ethnographies is to cover "...as much territory as possibly about a culture, subculture, or a program..." (Fetterman, 1998, p.11) and the subject's perspective. Thus, it is the children's words that will tell the tale of their schooling in a Two-Way program.

Ethnography

"Prolonged fieldwork" or extended time in the field is an attribute of ethnographic studies. Stewart (1998) explains, "However, the less time for fieldwork, the less the ethnography will be an ethnography" (Stewart, 1998, p. 20). Fetterman (1998) affirms the use of extended time in the field when he writes, "Ideally, the ethnographer lives and works in the community for 6 months to 1 year or more learning the language and seeing the patterns of behavior over time" (p. 35). As this is the case, this study cannot be termed "ethnography" due to the shortened amount of time in the field. The proper term then becomes an "ethnographic-like" qualitative study, as the methods of data gathering are those of ethnography, minus the prolonged time in the field. The following strengths of "ethnographic-like" qualitative research will serve this particular study: a) its inductive approach, b) its focus on specific situations or people, and c) its emphasis on words rather than numbers (Maxwell, 1996).

The ethnographic method involves the process of describing a group of people or a culture. Fetterman (1998) compares this process to the job of an investigative reporter. The difference between this kind of researcher and reporting is that "... the journalist seeks out the unusual—the murder, the plane crash, or the bank robbery—the ethnographer writes about the routine, daily lives of people" (Fetterman, 1998, p. 1).

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Fetterman notes an ethnographers' ability to keep an open mind about the group or culture that is the focus of the study. He does clarify, "The ethnographer enters the field with an open mind, not an empty head" (Fetterman, 1998, p. 1). The ethnographer does not enter the field without preparation. As with other methods, ethnographers address the issues of a problem, a theory or model, a design, data collection and tools before entering their fields of study. The ethnographer also acknowledges his or her own biases and notions about the people that will be studied (Fetterman, 1998). In an ethnographic study, the ethnographer is the human instrument, or data-gathering tool. Fetterman (1998) puts forth, "Relying on all its senses, thoughts and feelings, the human instrument is a most sensitive and perceptive data gathering tool" (p. 31). As a tool, this human instrument is employed in doing what is called fieldwork.

Research Questions

For the particular study, the research questions to be explored are:

5. What are the characteristics of the children of Mexican immigrants as perceived by Two-Way schools?
6. What is the "ethos of reception" within a Two-Way school that facilitates or inhibits the accommodation, acculturation, and assimilation of children of Mexican immigrants?
7. What are the "best practices" that compose Two-Way instruction?
8. To what extent do the practices in the Two-Way setting approximate Vygotsky's theories of learning?

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Research Design

There are three methods that will be used for data collection. The first of these is a daily immersion in the field requiring thick descriptions or notes. The second is participant observation and the third is unstructured interviewing. As the subjects of this study are children, special considerations must be taken for their particular age group.

Data collection

Daily immersion. Daily immersion in the field will allow for what is called contextualization of the study and its participants. "Contextualization of data involves placing observations into larger perspective" (Fetterman, 1998, p. 19). As an example of his own study of a program designed for dropout education, Fetterman (1998) found students merely "hanging" outside of the school building and teachers who were absent for days at a time. It was not enough to count the four students and absent teachers and then report them. This would have simply led to the assumption that the program was un-motivating for teachers and students. Upon questioning, Fetterman (1998) discovered from the students that there were no materials in the school for them to work on. Further questioning revealed that the teachers had not received any funds for materials. More questioning revealed that the problem was "...an argument between the program's federal sponsor and its federal or monitoring agency" (Fetterman, 1998, p. 19). The contextualization of the problem was aided by the researcher's ability to remain in the field, speak to the participants and ask questions to clarify issues.

This concept has also been addressed at the "child" level of research. To study children in context means paying close attention to the children and their surroundings. "A context is a culturally and historically situated place and time, a specific here and

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now" (Graue & Walsh, 1998, p. 9). Children cannot be separated from the context or areas of the school in this particular study because their specific context may reveal why they act or speak the way they do. There may be differences in how children behave and speak on playgrounds as opposed to libraries. Local contexts in the school would be the classroom, the playground, the cafeteria, the hallways and the library. These are physical and social places where the children happen to be. This local context may be a part of a larger context or may overlap with other larger or smaller contexts. For example, within the context of the classroom there may be centers, a library, or a learning center. The classroom is part of the larger context of the school and also overlaps with the gymnasium where the students must go to exercise. Connections, relations and links need to be made across and beyond these different contexts.

Most observations with children have traditionally resulted in numbers that reveal little about the day-to-day interactions of children. Children have consistently been used as indicators of treatment effects because they provide pre- and posttest scores to aid in the evaluation of programs or teaching methods. Children have less often been studied in their "here and now", in *their* context. As Graue & Walsh (1998) explain, "Those aspects of children's lives that cannot be readily measured, but that instead must be described in text and interpreted, have been ignored or operationalized in a very suspect fashion" (p. 4). Graue & Walsh's research with children informs the practice that their interactions are just as important as where they find themselves and how they negotiate the spaces that they occupy.

Participant observations. Participant observations are the one attribute characterizing all ethnographic studies. Participant observers may take different roles as

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they gather data. "Three membership roles appear to predominate: the complete-member- researcher, the active-member-research, and the peripheral-member-researcher" (Adler & Adler, 1998, p. 84). The compete-member-researcher role describes the role of the researcher of a community or scene where he or she is already a member. The active-member-researcher is the researcher who becomes involved in the setting to the point where responsibilities to advance the group are carried out (P. A. Adler & P. Adler, 1998). Finally, the peripheral-member researcher is the one that:

> ...feel[s] that an insider's perspective is vital to forming an accurate appraisal of human group life, so they observe and interact closely enough with members to establish an insider's identity without participating in those activities constituting the core of group membership. (Adler & Adler, 1998, p. 85).

The peripheral-member-researcher seems to be the most appropriate for this particular study in that the subjects are children. This role allows the researcher to converse with and interact closely with the subjects, thus buildings a trusting relationship the children. The children's age group requires further consideration of the researcher's role. This method--observation of children in their natural setting is not a widely used method of data collection for children. Grau & Walsh (1998) cite research where children were the focus, and point to the fact that the outcome of the research dealt with everything but children. Descriptions of the outcomes looked like institutional characteristics, public concerns, academic outcomes of the students as measured by tests, their teacher's educational backgrounds, and "other measurable aspects" of the particular setting (Grau & Walsh, 1998). Grau and Walsh's findings underscore the importance on

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keeping the focus of the study on the children. As participant observes it would be too easy to begin to look at what happens around the students versus what happens to them.

Participant observations with children require a role that is particularly oriented to children. Graue and Walsh (1998) make clear, "The goal of working with children should be to explain facts while preserving the manifold richness of their lives" (p. 17). To achieve this, there are many subtleties that should be addressed. The first of which is the role of the researcher. The researcher, or "field worker" must change his or her frame of reference and acknowledge that he or she has become the learner while the children have become the teachers; that is the only way to "know" how it is that children are experiencing school. Any child-adult relationship usually implies authority, so the researcher must also adopt a role that diminishes that barrier. Holmes (1998) suggests that the researcher adopt a "friend role" during the time in the field. When the researcher is not seen as an authoritarian or disciplinarian the trust relationship will be present. However, it is recommended that the researcher hold a "dual status" and not hesitate when there is possibility of a child being hurt (Holmes, 1998). An example would be an altercation or unsafe playing among students where the researcher may have to intercede.

Interviews. Interviews as research methodology are a way of knowing. Interviewing "...is not to get answers to questions, nor to test hypotheses, and not to 'evaluate' as the term is normally used" (Seidman, 1998, p. 3). More than seeking answers, interviews communicate an interest in understanding people and the sense they make of their experiences. In describing the interview process, Seidman (1998) tells that the researcher needs be distanced from their ego. This is necessary since listening, rather

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than speaking is the most important skill in the interviewing process (Seidman, 1998). The listening process involves three levels on the part of the researcher:

1. First they must listen to what the participant is saying. They must concentrate on the substance to make sure they understand it and to assess whether what they are hearing is as detailed and complete as they would like it to be.
2. On the second level, interviewers must listen for an "inner voice", as opposed to an outer, more public voice. An outer, or public voice always reflects an awareness of the audience.
3. On the third level, interviewers—like good teachers in a classroom—must listen while remaining aware of the process as well as the substance. They must be conscious of time during the interview; they must be aware of how much has been covered and how much there is yet to go. (Seidman, 1998, p. 64)

As these interviewing procedures have been written primarily for adult populations, special considerations should be taken for younger subjects. While interviews with adults can last up to one and a half hours, interviews with children should take less then 30 minutes' time (Holmes, 1998). A less rigorous form of interviewing, called unstructured interviewing has been shown to be more effective with young populations. Holmes (1998) discourages structured interviewing with young children for many reasons. The first and most obvious is the noise level in classrooms, cafeterias, playgrounds and general "kid" areas. Fieldwork within this context has revealed that children do not always understand the researcher's questions and language

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comprehension may become a barrier to the study. Language comprehension varies among children and some adults may not possess enough "kid" language to rephrase questions on the spot.

Holmes (1998) has found that "unstructured interviewing" works best because children are functioning at an "informal" level. It is not instructional time and they are not constrained by having to sit up straight and speak clearly to the tape recorder. Holmes suggests that the best times for the unstructured interviewing are during free play in the classroom, at the playground, or anywhere in between. The optimum time for unstructured interviewing was during what Holmes calls "draw time." Here, children were drawing and coloring while the field worker sat with them and asked questions. The field worker sits with the children and uses the "kid tools" such as colors and scissors. This "busywork" allows for relaxation and "freeflow" conversations whereby anyone of the participants can just "jump into" the conversation. The researcher should approach the subject as: a) Can we talk while we are playing this?, b) If you're not busy right now, I would like to ask you..., c) Can we talk while we color? (Holmes, 1998).

Other considerations. There are other considerations that need to be taken when interviewing children. The nature of children's lives is that they do not really have control over the contexts in which they are placed. Children find themselves in contexts where they may feel uncomfortable or threatened, and unlike adults, they cannot remove themselves from such situations (Graue & Walsh, 1990). Research with children then, should be driven by a desire to work and be around them. This relationship should be the least threatening as possible so that the researcher is not perceived as an authoritarian figure that would inhibit their words and actions. The children's identities will be

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protected through careful selection of pseudonyms. Likewise, location of the study, including the city and district will be assigned pseudonyms.

Holmes (1998) posits an opening activity with the children to preface the study. The researcher should introduce him/herself and provide a "developmentally appropriate" explanation of the research. Basically, they should be informed that the researcher wishes to go to school with them and learn about them and their context. It is likewise important to communicate that there are no right or wrong answers to any questions that they may be asked. As the children should be able to have some control during the field study, they will be informed that they do not have to speak to the researcher if they do not feel like it on a particular occasion. Finally, Holmes recommends some type of reciprocity with the children, especially when working with students of lesser means than others. Holmes (1998) suggests "treats and goodies" on occasion as well as a small reward after the children have provided help in "drawing" during the informal interviews.

Sampling

The sampling was purposeful for this study as two classrooms with 17 children total were identified in having the optimum number of children of Mexican immigrants. Patton (1990) describes purposeful sampling: "Information rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research…"(p. 169). Participants in the sample included the principal, teachers, and all the children of the in the two classes.

Data Analysis

The data generated from the previously mentioned data gathering techniques was kept in small notebooks. These notebooks were used for thick descriptions of the

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classroom and campus situations as well as the unstructured interviews. As suggested by Holmes (1998), the use of a tape recorder was minimized, as it tended to make the children feel "formal", rather than relaxed. The children's responses were jotted down as quickly as they shared their thoughts and opinions. The categories that emerged from observing the students were reached inductively through the exploration of hypotheses and explanations. The thick descriptions described the children, their context, actions and words as they negotiated their context and instruction. Personal contact was necessary for the unstructured interviewing that took place. This personal contact allowed the researcher to share the schooling experience with the children.

It is important to note that qualitative research is both creative and interpretive as the collected data is not immediately ready to be presented. The field notes, or text "...is then re-created as a working interpretive document that contains the writer's initial attempts to make sense out of what he or she has learned" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 30). Ethnographic methods rely mostly on participant observation and are said to have the following features: a) an emphasis on the exploration of particular social phenomena, b) a reliance on unstructured data that has not been pre-coded from an a priori set of analytic categories, and c) an analysis of data involving interpretation of meanings and functions of human actions (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998). Interpretation is then made possible as the researcher sets aside his or her orientations and focuses on what is learned from the field.

Denzin (1998) describes the process of managing impressions, documents, and field notes as an "art of interpretation". The process begins with field notes from the context and interviews, moves to the text, and ends with the reader. The art of

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interpretation is comparable to the art of storytelling in that that describes "happenings" and sequences. This is a complex process that, according to Denzin (1998) can only be learned through doing. Denzin (1998) adds, "Field-workers can neither make sense of nor understand what has been learned until they sit down and write the interpretive text, telling the story first to themselves and then to their significant others" (p. 317).

The writing process includes interpretation, as it is inevitable for the writing process to exist without interpreting. Denzin (1998) suggests, "The intent is to create conditions that will allow the reader, through the writer, to converse with (and observe) those who have been studied" (p. 324). As the writing process evolves the writer builds upon what has been described and inscribed. This, in a sense builds an understanding that may be described as authentic, deep or emotional (Denzin. 1998).

Three types of notes were kept as data: field notes, personal notes and methodological notes. The field notes addressed the description of the children in the context of their schooling, the school culture variables, and grade level as well as staff meetings. The personal included self-reflections, impressions and other events that may have influenced the data. The methodological notes addressed questions that that came up with the children on methods such as the ones used in this study. The totality of the data included thick descriptions, interview notes, and documents gathered in the school.

The description and notes were made by hand with pad and pens and then were transcribed. They were saved onto a floppy disk and kept in a secure and locked room After transcription, the data will was loaded into the Atlas.ti computer software program. The data was read and coded for emergent themes. The simplest way to do this was to assign codes or "tags" as concepts were emerging. This process was used to organize all

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of the data. After this process was complete the codes were analyzed for linkages across the data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

Site

Palmitas Elementary (pseudonym), a school in its sixth year of Two-Way instruction was the site for this study. Palmitas Elementary's Two-Way program, called "Language Without Barriers" is the longest standing program in the area. Currently, Palmitas Elementary is in its sixth year of Two-Way implementation.

Gaining Entry

Initial contact was made with the assistant superintendent of schools in order to investigate public school policy concerning the site. The assistant superintendent of schools gave written permission for the study and approved the further contact of other school administrators. The next administrative contacts were with the Two-Way director and the principal of the Palmitas Elementary. All administrators were given a copy of the Institutional Review Board proposal and an overview of the study. The teachers of record for the students were contacted next and they agreed to be a part of the study. All of the adult participants received and signed an informed consent statement. Finally, the parents of the children received two documents--letters in Spanish and English were sent to the parents of all the children in the classroom. One informed them of the purpose of the study and the other was an informed consent statement allowing their children to participate in the study. This was done for all students whether they were identified as children of Mexican immigrants or not, as all of the parents needed to be aware of the presence of a researcher in the room. All of the involved parties assented and the children were quick in returning their signed permission forms. One student who was out

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of town did not receive her permission slip until she returned in December. Her mother gave permission as well.

Participants

Seventeen children of Mexican immigrants were identified through the Two-Way director's office. These children were divided between two third grade teachers. Other participants in the study included the principal, assistant principal, faculty and staff of Palmitas Elementary.

Limitations of the study

One of the limitations to the study was the number of children of Mexican immigrants. Seventeen third grade children of Mexican immigrants is a small sample size. For the objectives of this study, a large sample size would have provided breadth, but not the depth needed to describe individual characteristics. Secondly, as the site for this particular study is a school that is 89% Hispanic, the results of the study may be most applicable to similar schools.

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CHAPTER IV

PALMITAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Palmitas Elementary is located in the city of Las Palmas, on the international border between Mexico and the United States. The city encompasses about twenty squares miles and a population of about 43,000 people. Of this population, approximately 89% is identified as Hispanic. One of Las Palmas' major attractions is its international bridge, which serves as a major link between the people of Las Palmas, its surrounding cities and the people of Mexico (Wilbur Smith Associates with Melden & Hunt, 2000).

The city of Las Palmas, in conjunction with two neighboring cities, forms one large school district that serves approximately 22,000 students. This school district is the second largest in the region. It is comprised of 27 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, and 3 high schools (Texas Education Agency District Page, n.d.). Currently, two of the elementary schools are in their sixth year of implementation of a specific type of bilingual program called Two-Way Language Immersion. Palmitas Elementary is one of the two schools.

Palmitas Elementary School is one of the two district campuses in its sixth year of Two-Way Language Immersion implementation. The school currently has a state

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"Recognized" rating, which means that at least 80% of its students have met the minimum expectations of the state mandated T.A.A.S. (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills) examination. The T.A.A.S. examination is part of Texas' statewide testing and accountability program. Palmitas Elementary School's population is at about 600 students. Of the 600 students, 78.8% are considered economically disadvantaged and 50.5% of them are identified as Limited English Proficient (Texas Education Agency AEIS Report, 2001). In the year 2001, the school's population was 97.3 % Hispanic (Texas Education Agency AEIS Report, 2001). These numbers portray a school with a large Hispanic population, many of whom are economically disadvantaged. The numbers also show that some of the children at the school may not be proficient in English, although many of them have been able to do reasonably well on the state tests. The statistics provided by the Texas Education Agency provide a general understanding of Palmitas Elementary.

To achieve a deeper understanding of the context of this site, there are other variables that can be addressed. What follows is a description of: the principal, the Two-Way Immersion Program, additional programs in the school, the instructional setting, the children's daily schedule, the physical setting, the teachers of record for the children of Mexican immigrants in the study, and an overview of the children within the two classrooms.

The Principal

The principal at Palmitas Elementary is Mr. Sanchez. Mr. Sanchez is in his fifties and in his second year as principal at Palmitas Elementary. He is quite visible throughout the school and it would be almost impossible to visit Palmitas Elementary without

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running into him. Mr. Sanchez was the assistant principal under Mr. García at the time when the campus was investigating the Two-Way Immersion Program. When Mr. García retired two years ago, Mr. Sanchez became the principal. Mr. Sanchez can be found at the turn of any corner, down a hallway, among children in the cafeteria, greeting and shaking hands with parents, opening car doors for the children to go home—in short, everywhere you look. He demonstrates professionalism and friendliness, but mostly a zeal for showcasing his school and the Two-Way Immersion Program to visitors. At Palmitas Elementary, outsider visitation days are the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month. These are the designated days that administrators and teachers from other districts near and far can visit Palmitas Elementary. The visitors come because they are considering the Two-Way Immersion Program for their own campuses. Mr. Sanchez awaits visitors eagerly. When they arrive, he meets with them, and speaks to them about the program and the students at Palmitas Elementary. The visitors are then allowed to visit classrooms at-will and may later reconvene for questions with Mr. Sanchez.

Two-Way Bilingual Immersion Program

The Two-Way Bilingual Immersion Program at Palmitas Elementary began with teacher preparation for implementation in the 1995-96 school year; this was a year prior to campus implementation. Pre-kinder and kindergarten implementation began in the 1996-97 school year. Each subsequent year, a grade level was added to progress with the children as they were promoted to the next grade level (Ramírez, 2001). Palmitas Elementary's version of a Two-Way Bilingual Immersion Program is called, "Language without Barriers" or "*Lengua sin Fronteras*". This program has specific administrative support with a Two-Way Program director and two teacher strategists monitoring

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program implementation. The Two-Way Program director's office is located at the district's Service Center, and not at Palmitas Elementary. Initially, the program began with a 1.4 million dollar grant to develop and implement the language enrichment program. The district received $310,000 for its first year of implementation and $270,000 for each of the subsequent four years. The district has received yet another grant to continue the program into middle school for the 2002-2003 school year (Ramírez, 2001).

The Two-Way Bilingual Immersion program implemented at Palmitas Elementary combines native speakers of Spanish with native speakers of English in one classroom. This combination is for the purpose of cross learning the two languages, which happen to be English and Spanish. The program is implemented in partnership with the University of Southern Texas (a pseudonym for the partnership university). The University of Southern Texas has provided assistance in grant writing, teacher and parent training and program evaluation. Palmitas Elementary serves as a model school for bilingual education majors at this university. The pre-service teachers are able to conduct observations and interviews, as well as plan and model lessons in English and Spanish.

The teacher training that began in the 1995-96 school year included theory, methodology, and skill development around the teachers' ability to address parents' questions and concerns. Teachers who did not feel they could support the program were allowed to withdraw from the project and transfer to another school in the district. Parents who did not feel comfortable with the program were allowed to withdraw their students if they felt the program would not meet their child's needs (Ramírez, 2001). As the program stands today, there is a waiting list of students waiting to enroll. The

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teachers and parents who opted to stay in the project have become outspoken advocates of Two-Way Immersion. The school-age sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, grandsons and granddaughters of the present Palmitas Elementary staff are enrolled in the program (Ramírez, 2001). The classrooms are also filled with children who come from other parts of the district, as well children from out of the district. These children's parents have chosen to enroll their children in a Two-Way Program and thus, have received "special permission" to attend Palmitas Elementary. Program implementation has reached the fifth grade level, making the entire school Two-Way instructional. This can be said, with one small exception, as there is a class of fourth and fifth grade recent immigrants who are receiving specialized instruction in a self-contained classroom.

Additional Programs

In addition to the Two-Way Program, there are other programs and activities in place for the children of Palmitas Elementary. These programs are The Accelerated Reader, The HOSTS (Help One Student to Succeed) Program, an after school tutoring program, folkloric dance classes, choir classes, and recorder classes. Accelerated Reader and HOSTS are nationally recognized programs that are implemented during the instructional day. The tutoring program is a local one and requires funds to pay teachers for extra hours of teaching. The folkloric dance, choir, and recorder classes take place Mondays through Thursdays from 3:00 to 3:30 p.m. and after school.

The Accelerated Reader (Accelerated Reader Software, n.d.) is basically a computer program designed to help students appreciate literature while making reading gains. The program's database contains thousands of books ranging in levels from the most basic to the most advanced readers (Renaissance Learning, n.d.). In the library, the

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books contained in the database are marked so that students can identify them and check them out of the library. When a child reads one of the Accelerated Reader books, he or she logs onto the computer and takes a test on the book. There are usually five questions about the book. The children are given immediate feedback and points for passing scores. The students accumulate points, which are exchanged for prizes. At Palmitas Elementary, the children are able to check out a book, take a test and check out another book as quickly as it is needed. The library is available before and after school as are the computers for testing and conducting research. The library is also available to parents as they assist the children conducting research for their class projects. Parents often visit the library after school to conduct Internet searches with their children.

The HOSTS program at Palmitas Elementary seeks community volunteers to work with children who needed additional assistance in reading and math. Teachers usually recommend children to the HOSTS paraprofessional for assessment. The HOSTS assessment determines the child's instructional level from which an individualized plan is developed (HOSTS Program, n.d.). The HOSTS paraprofessional is able to "match" these students with the volunteers. Many of the HOSTS volunteers are retired individuals from the RV (Recreation Vehicle) parks in the city of Las Palmas. Some of the volunteers donate anywhere from an hour a week to two to three hours every day. The HOSTS room is equipped with books, learning materials, and tables and chairs to facilitate one-to-one mentoring.

The After School Tutoring Program targets children who are in danger of failing the state T.A.A.S. tests in reading, writing or math. Local funds are used to pay teachers an extra 45 minutes of teaching. The target students stay after school and work on tested

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objectives (FAC 12-18). Local funds provide the students with a snack to help the children endure the after school stay. The children remain on campus for tutoring three days a week. Similarly, the campus offered a "Saturday School" in the fall for the purpose of addressing the children in danger of failing their state exams. Teachers are also compensated for giving up their Saturdays (FAC 12-18).

Choir and recorder classes are offered from 3:00 t 3:30 for children who enjoy singing and playing a recorder (OBS 11-14). The choir teacher holds "try-outs" and the children with the most musical ability are able to join choir, recorder club or both. The children practice songs and performances. The choir teacher arranges times and dates for the children to travel off campus to present their talents.

Volunteers conduct folkloric dance and enrichment classes. The folkloric dance club is divided into three groups of girls who practice at 3:30, after dismissal from school (OBS 12-17). There are three dance groups, one each for third, fourth and fifth graders, with the fifth grade group being the most advanced (OBS 12-19). A teacher and a parent volunteer to work with the choreography and musical selections. The school provides the embroidered blouses, colorful flared skirts, hair decorations and flowers. Each girl, however, needs to purchase her own dance shoes.

Instructional Settings

Classroom settings in pre-kinder, kinder, and first grade differ instructionally from those in grades second through fifth. In grades pre-kinder, kindergarten and first, literacy instruction takes place in the child's dominant language. These students receive separate language arts blocks, either English or Spanish, according to their particular language needs. For example, if a child is Spanish dominant, then he or she will receive

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language arts instruction in Spanish. Likewise, the child who is English dominant will receive his or her language arts instruction in the English language. Math is taught in English while Science and Social Studies are always taught in Spanish for all grade levels, regardless of their language dominance. The division of languages for the purpose of instruction is to allow for the development of academic language in the particular content areas.

Classroom settings address the informal use of the language through two separate practices. The first of these is termed "language of the day" and the other is termed "daily news". Language of the day is the use of Spanish and English alternately in morning announcements, informal talk and day-to-day communications. The faculty, staff, and students participate in the separation of the languages for this purpose. Classrooms have posted signs that announce the "language of the day" to visitors. Upon entry into the office, the clerical or administrative staff will notify visitors of the language of the day.

Daily news is a practice used primarily in pre-kindergarten through second grade. The daily news is a morning activity that begins the school day with an informal discussion in Spanish or English, depending on the language of the day. The teachers guide the students in discussing the date, the weather, seasons, school happenings and particular events in the children's lives (Ramírez, 2001). This information is written on a chart tablet as a group activity with the teacher.

In grades second through fifth the students are not separated for language arts, but receive two language arts doses, one in English and the other in Spanish. Much like the early grades, Math is taught in English while Science and Social Studies are taught in

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Spanish. Resource centers and activities are used to extend the content area instruction by providing additional resources (Ramírez, 2001). These resource centers may include, but are not limited to a literacy center, a math center, and a science center. The classrooms were well stocked with books, anthologies, as well as math and science manipulatives.

Lunch, though not part of the instructional day is conducted in a manner that requires explanation. The large cafeteria at Palmitas Elementary is divided into two sections. Only the right side of the cafeteria was used for consuming the school lunch. Upon entering the cafeteria, the children would line up against the right wall and wait to be served. The tables ran the length of the cafeteria and this is where they sat to eat. Upon finishing their lunch, the children would go to the left side of the cafeteria. On the left side of the cafeteria, the class leader placed the class' activities in their designated seating section. For example, Mrs. Salas' class always took the containers with games. The children sit and do the activities that have been provided for them. Directly in front of this left side was the school's snack bar. The children are able to purchase large bags of chips for a dollar. Ice cream was also sold, though it was not as popular as the chips. Ice cream novelties such as Popsicles and ice-cream sandwiches sold for fifty cents each. There was also a very small cup of ice cream sold for twenty-five cents.

The Daily Schedule

Teachers work and teach in pairs. As shown in Table 1, the children's schedule is divided between two teachers. One teacher delivers the Spanish instruction, while the other delivers the English. Although this is a third grade schedule, the division of subject matter between the two teachers is representative of the schedules in grades second

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through fifth. The times for transitioning between teachers, P.E. and lunch would differ for each teacher pair.

Table 1

Children's Daily Schedule

Time	Subject/Activity
8:00-8:30	Breakfast in the classroom with teacher
8:30	Change classes/heterogeneous mix
8:30-11:10	Mrs. Salas-English Language Arts and Math with Group 1 Mrs. Torres-Spanish Language Arts, Social Studies and Science with Group 1
11:10-11:20	Children transition back to their homeroom
11:20-11:45	Lunch in the cafeteria, snack bar, games
11:45-12:00	Class bathroom break with homeroom teacher
12:00	Change classes/heterogeneous mix
12:00-1:00	Mrs. Salas-English Language Arts and Math with Group 2 Mrs. Torres-Spanish Language Arts, Social Studies and Science with Group 2
1:00-1:45	Physical education outside and in the gym
1:45-3:00	Continue with instruction-Mrs. Torres and Mrs. Salas-Group 2
3:00	Transition back to homeroom
3:00-3:30	Extensions, games, notes home, paper passing, choir and recorder clubs, housekeeping, and dismissal.

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Physical Settings

In terms of furniture, classrooms at Palmitas Elementary were not equipped with desks for teachers or students. As Mr. Sanchez explained to visitors, "Desks imply isolated and independent learning activities." Round tables were used throughout the school to emphasize cooperative and group learning activities. The classrooms at Palmitas Elementary encourage "child-centered" activities, as well as paired, cooperative and group learning. The use of tables, rather than desks facilitated this type of work. Instead of a teacher desk, each teacher has a kidney-shaped table for the purpose of working with small groups of students. Classrooms, as a general rule, devoted one or two walls to build "word walls" or to post learning charts. Word walls (*palabras a golpe de vista*, in Spanish) were an additive list of words that had been encountered either in the daily news or in content area instruction (Ramírez, 2001). When the children finished the daily news they circled new words and added them to their word wall. The letters of the alphabet divided the word wall into sections; there was an "Aa" section, a "Bb" section, a "Cc" section, etc. The new word was written on a piece of sentence strip under its corresponding letter. The children then used the wall as a "visual" dictionary of words they had experienced in reading, content instruction, or daily news. Many classrooms had two word walls; one list contained words from the daily news and the other was composed of words from content instruction. For example, a list from content instruction would have words related to a reading on mammals from the basal reader. The children and teachers decided which words should be added to the word wall.

Most classrooms also had an extra rectangular-shaped table for the purpose of displaying student projects. These tables were often placed outside the classroom against

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the wall. As student projects were an integral part of instruction at Palmitas Elementary, the tables supported the projects that were three dimensional in nature. Students generated projects in their daily work as "in class" assignments and at home as "homework" projects. Generally speaking, the homework projects were not assigned as overnight homework, but were given extended time and a specific due date. The projects generated during school hours allow students to "negotiate meaning" through content area instruction.

The Teachers

The teachers at Palmitas Elementary were paired for the purpose of delivering instruction. An example of teachers working in pairs is Mrs. Torres and Mrs. Salas. Their classrooms were right next door to each other. Mrs. Torres and Mrs. Salas were the teachers of record for the children of Mexican immigrants in this study. Mrs. Salas was a native born Mexican American who had lived in the Las Palmas area all of her life. She was a product of the University of Southern Texas and was currently enrolled in a Master's Degree program there. Mrs. Salas was in her third year of teaching. Mrs. Salas, whose strongest language was English, was responsible for the teaching of Language Arts and Math in the English language. The language arts block included reading comprehension and decoding, writing and spelling.

Mrs. Torres was born in Mexico and immigrated to the United States with her family as a teenager. Mrs. Torres attended a local high school and found it to be quite difficult, mostly because learning a new language was so difficult. She graduated from high school and subsequently attended the University of Southern Texas. Mrs. Torres described the university experience as challenging, due to her difficulty with the English

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language. Mrs. Torres' English language production can still be described as developmental, but her Spanish was verbally and academically proficient. Due to the advanced development of her Spanish language, Mrs. Torres was responsible for the teaching the Science and Social Studies in Spanish. Mrs. Torres also used a Social Studies anthology to integrate Spanish language arts with Social Studies content.

Working in teacher pairs required constant communication between Mrs. Torres and Mrs. Salas. When the children transitioned between them, Mrs. Torres and Mrs. Salas keep each other abreast of any child who needed particular attention from either one of them. They shared grades, test results and parent conferences. This constant communication kept the children aware of their responsibilities as students. Though Mrs. Torres and Mrs. Salas do not plan together, they communicated curriculum needs and concerns during their conference times and after school.

The children began and ended their day with their homeroom teachers. In the middle of the day, they reconvened in their homeroom to go to lunch. They were heterogeneously mixed for the purpose of instruction at 8:30 a.m. and then at 12:00 p.m.. as was evident in the daily schedule. This heterogeneous mix was not a "set" one; groupings were flexible and both teachers made changes when the need arose. When a student was not functioning well in one group, he or she was moved to the other group. Both teachers were careful to keep the configurations fifty percent English dominant and fifty percent Spanish dominant. In other words, at each round table (during content area instruction) there were almost always two Spanish dominant students and two English dominant students. This of course, was done to the extent possible. At times there may have been an uneven mix.

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The Children

Mrs. Salas' third grade class included only six children of Mexican immigrants. Much of her class was composed of identified gifted and talented learners who had been in the program since pre-kinder and kindergarten. Three of Mrs. Salas' students were children of teachers; two were teachers at Palmitas Elementary and another was a teacher at a middle school in the district. Also included in Mrs. Salas' roster also was the grandson of a veteran teacher on campus. Some of the children who did not belong to the district had received "special permission" to attend Palmitas Elementary. The children on "special permission" were mainly the children of professionals who had opted to enroll their children in the Two-Way Immersion Program. It was obvious by their name brand shoes and clothing that Mrs. Salas' class was more "affluent" than Mrs. Torres class.

Mrs. Torres' third grade class included children who were visibly less affluent children than Mrs. Salas' class. Her class was composed of children who were more Spanish dominant and labeled "limited English proficient". Four of Mrs. Torres' students were children of teachers; three were teachers at Palmitas Elementary and another at a nearby school in the district. Additionally, one of Mrs. Torres' students was the son of an elementary school principal in a neighboring district. There were a total of eleven children of Mexican immigrants in Mrs. Torres' class, with one having arrived from Mexico only three weeks prior to the study. In the homeroom and seating charts that follow (Figure 1 and Figure 2), an asterisk next to their names denotes the children of Mexican immigrants:

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Figure 1
Mrs. Salas's Homeroom

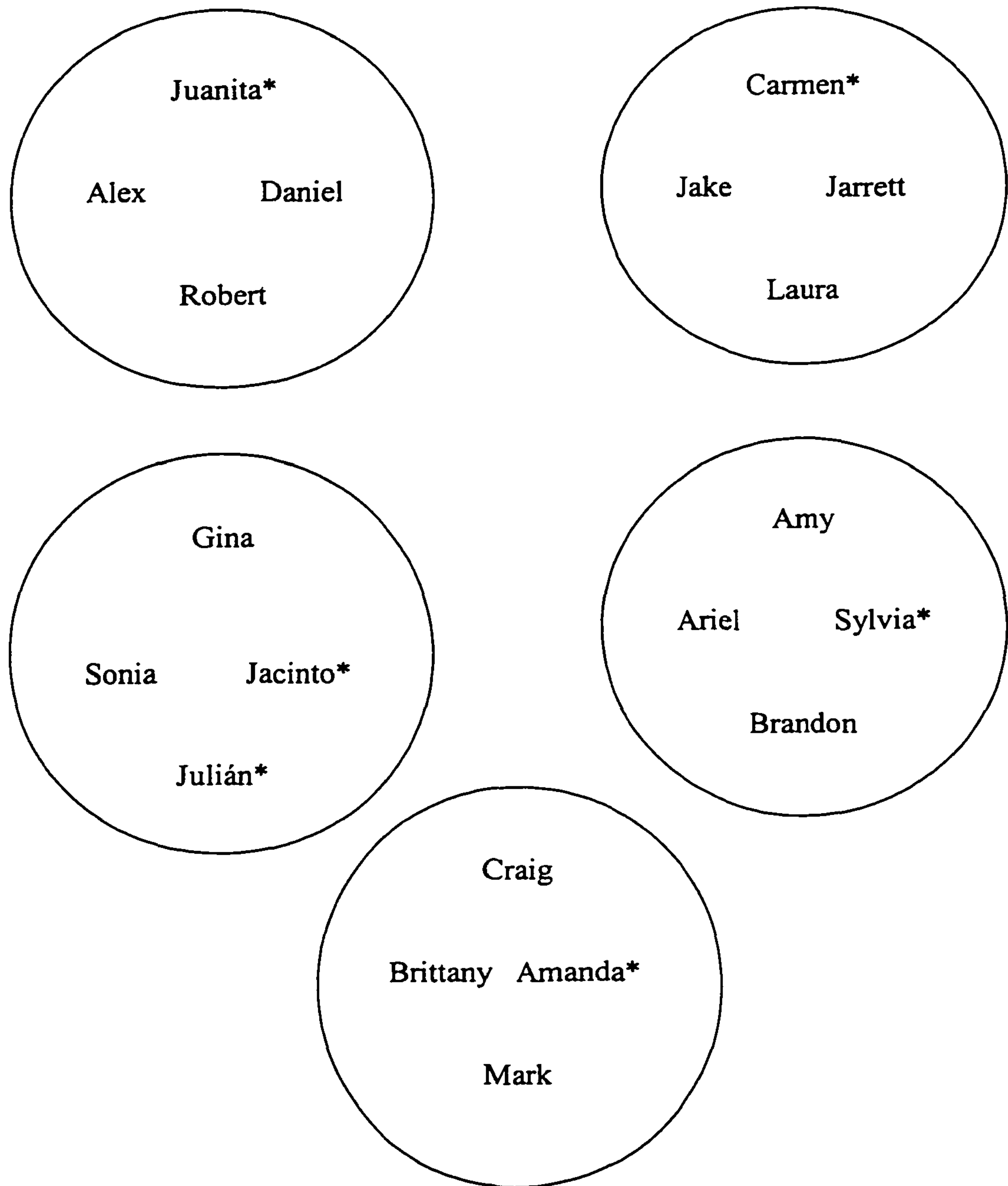

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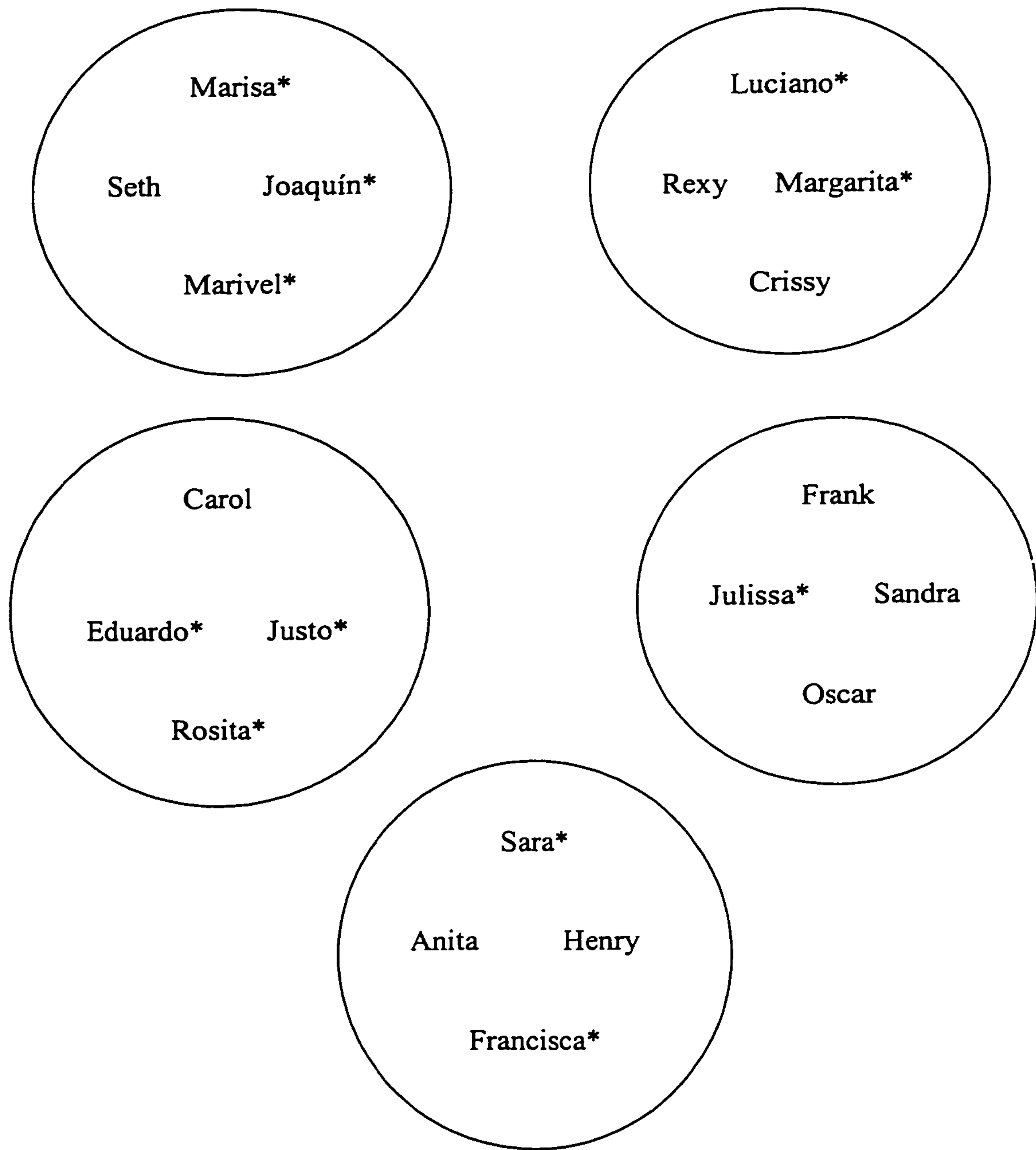
Figure 2
Mrs. Torres' Homeroom



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The children in Mrs. Salas and Mrs. Torres' classes were eight and nine-years old. There were a few exceptions as three of them were retained in previous grades; these students were ten years old. They had become friends and knew each other well. They knew each other to the point that when anyone of them left behind personal belongings, everyone knew to whom it belonged. When they needed assistance in a second language, they felt comfortable asking each other. The children also share the same field trips and celebratory activities. When planning celebrations, both teachers planned the same menus, activities and games so that the students did not feel they were missing out by being in one room and not the other.

Palmitas Elementary and all its' components was the site for the study of the children of Mexican immigrants. Within this context, the children experienced academic and social schooling. In the chapter that follows, the interactions that took place within the campus will be reported and interpreted.

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CHAPTER V

DATA AND INTERPRETATIONS

The idea that immigrant children have incoming resources (M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco, 2000) provides a contrast to the pervasive "deficit model". The deficit model posits that minority students, and in this case immigrant students, are to blame for their failures because of internal deficiencies (Valencia, 1997). Consideration of incoming resources accentuates the child's context, which may include the country of origin, previous schooling, family life, socioeconomic background, reading levels and English language proficiency, among others. This view of immigrant children examines each child's previous experiences as individuals. The literature on children of Mexican immigrants revealed two important characteristics: the first being the Mexican immigrant's "positive ethic" (Maciel & Herrera-Sobek, 1998, C. Suárez-Orozco & M. Suárez-Orozco, 2001) and the second one a period of their adjustment called the "silent stage" (Igoa, 1995). Igoa (1995) detailed the silent stage as a time when the immigrant students "become insightful observers of their own human condition and of life around them" (p. 38).

The receiving schools' culture is a critical aspect of the immigrant child's ability to adjust to schooling, as it encompasses "...not only the opportunities available, but also,

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just as importantly the general social and cultural climate they encounter" (C. Suarez-Orozco & M. Suarez-Orozco 2001, p. 36). More than just a feeling the culture of organizations has been linked to productivity, academic achievement and performance of students in schools and overall improvement attempts (Deal & Peterson, 1999). This culture of organizations, as applied to school settings is visible through the principal, teachers, students, faculty meetings, parent conferences and contacts, as well as through the school vision (Deal & Peterson, 1994 and 1999). These elements together describe the overall functioning of the school as an entity. Working together or not in some cases, many of the aforementioned variables may lead to individual processes of acculturation, accommodation or assimilation on behalf of the immigrant student.

As with any instructional program, there are elements that make the Two-Way Immersion Program unique. Cloud, Geneese, & Hamayan (2001) differ this program from others because they found it to incorporate instructional strategies that facilitated cross-cultural relationships, cooperation and learning. The program's instructional strategies can be modified to meet a school's particular needs. Gomez (2000) emphasizes the instructional strategies for the Two-Way Immersion Program used in the Rio Grande Valley of the state of Texas as follows: (a) heterogeneous groups, (b) separation of languages for content instruction, (c) learning resource centers, (d) language of the day, (e) first and second language support, and (f) team teaching models.

Instructional practices, such as the ones that describe the Two-Way Program, exist because they are meant to assist students with cognition. Vygotsky's theories of learning focused on those actions and activities that would promote or facilitate thinking and mediation of content, thus achieving maximum student learning. Vygotsky's

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theories included learning the zone of proximal development and learning as a sociocultural process.

In chapter 3, I indicated that I would study the characteristics of the children of Mexican immigrants, the ethos of reception of the school, the practices in the Two-Way Program, and their approximation to L.S. Vygotsky's theories of learning. For the characteristics of the children of Mexican immigrants I studied the children in the classroom during instructional and non-instructional time, taking into consideration the variables that constituted their contexts. I also spent time with the children, participating in group work and conducting unstructured interviews when there was an opportunity to do so. For the ethos of reception, I studied the general school and climate which included: (a) classrooms, (b) faculty and staff meetings, (c) announcements, (d) memos, (e) notes home, (f) hallway activity, (g) cafeteria activity, (h) school functions and (i) student work on display. For the practices in Two-Way Programs I studied the instructional strategies used by the teachers and students during the school day. For their approximation to Vygotsky's theories of learning, I examined these activities against Vygotsky's theories of learning, which included the zone of proximal development and learning as a sociocultural process. Within the zone of proximal development, I analyzed the subcomponents of (a) an established level of difficulty, (b) assisted performance, and (c) collaboration with a more capable peer.

As I specified in chapter 3, the purpose of this dissertation study is to describe the characteristics of the children of Mexican immigrants, the ethos of reception, the practices that compose Two-Way Programs and to study the extent to which they approximate Vygotsky's theories of learning. In the following sections, I will provide

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answers to the four research questions that helped me accomplish the objectives of this endeavor. First I immersed myself in the school with the children of Mexican immigrants by attending school with them on a daily basis. Second, I analyzed the observations, interviews, documents, artifacts, conversations and reflective notes. Third, I explored how the data fit together to form the conceptual idea of this study. Fourth, I explored the implications of the findings as they related to the future study and schooling of the children of Mexican immigrants.

The Characteristics of Children of Mexican Immigrants

Armed with a theoretical framework, I entered the field to discover that these children had their own ideas about the study. While in the field, I kept small notebooks with me at all times. Inside the cover of each of them I taped the list of questions for the unstructured interviews. This was for the purpose of having the questions readily available to me. I realized almost immediately that the students were engaged most of the time, so I needed to capitalize on the moments their teachers were not instructing them or timing their group work.

The very first time I found the students with a little free time, I took out my notebook, perused the questions, closed the notebook and began a dialogue with the children. Sylvia, a focus student, stopped me almost immediately and asked to see the questions taped inside my notebook. "My first unstructured interview, and I did not get to the first question!" (REF 11-15) I hand her my notebook and she read the questions to herself. Sylvia says, "*Yo tengo una idea. ¿Por qué no también nos pregunta lo que nos gusta comer? La comida es muy importante porque te dice lo que le gusta a la persona*"(CON 11-15). (I have an idea. Why don't you ask also us what we like to eat?

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Food is very important because it tells you what a person likes.) I am amazed at Sylvia's insight. Sylvia recognizes that I wanted to know about them because she feels her suggestion will give me more insight about them as "persons" (REF 11-15). Secondly, she reasons that the food a person likes constitutes part of their identity.

The overall organization at Palmitas Elementary, as explained in chapter four, describes the schooling scenario for the students. The children's schooling context is in the environment described in chapter four. For the first question in this study, I explored the characteristics of the children of Mexican immigrants. Some of these children were also Mexican immigrants, as they had migrated with their family. I explored the students' characteristics by immersing myself in their culture, attending school with them, conversing spontaneously and conducting unstructured interviews. Their individual characteristics will be addressed using pseudonyms for the each of the participants, as was mentioned in Chapter 3. The data sources are participant observations (OBS), interviews (INT), reflective notes (REF), documents (DOC), artifacts (ART) and conversations (CON). Conversations differ from interviews in that I was not questioning the children or the teacher at the time; these happened as either they or I engaged the other in a conversation. During these occasions, the children or teachers just decided to share something with me or I may have asked them a question. What follows is a description of each of the 17 children described as son or daughters of Mexican immigrants.

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Amanda

Amanda was a student in Mrs. Salas' class. Although Amanda was born in the United States, her mother was a Mexican immigrant. She lived with her mother, brother, and six sisters. A cousin with a three-year old daughter also lived in the household. When describing her household, Amanda said, "*Son muchas*" (INT 1-15). (They are many!) All of her schooling had been at Palmitas Elementary. When describing what she liked to do, Amanda said, "*A mí me gusta aprender, estar en la escuela*" (INT 1-15). (I like to learn, to be in school.) Amanda's favorite foods were pizza, ice cream, rice and beans.

In the classroom, with the rest of the children Amanda was extremely quiet and shy (OBS 11-13, 11-14, 11-15). She knew a lot and had become somewhat of an "expert" at English language and grammar. She quickly found mistakes in the two daily sentences that were to be corrected as part of their morning assignment. She participated eagerly during that portion of the language arts block. I noticed that Amanda could not always explain what was wrong, but she knew the sentence was not correctly written. In the following example Amanda corrected two mistakes, even though she was unable to come up with the word "apostrophe" for the missing punctuation mark. It was obvious she knew "something" was missing.

Mrs. Salas: Can we go on to the next word?

Amanda: Put an "o" on [instead of] the "u".

Mrs. Salas: Now, can we go on?

Amanda: No, wait...it needs...ah...something, something. (OBS 1-9)

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When I began to ask Amanda questions about her work or what she was reading, she smiled and looked down at her hands (OBS 12-5). She was very shy and often came near me, but rarely spoke to me without my initiating the conversation. When it came to sharing and reading her journal responses aloud, Amanda opted not to volunteer in either language (OBS 11-28). Amanda seemed to be doing well and demonstrated competency in both languages. She was a dutiful and conscientious about getting her work done on time (OBS 12-3, 12-5). When asked about her language preference, she answered, "*Me gusta más o menos, más o menos el español*" (INT 1-15). (I like, more or less, more or less, the Spanish.) She did not sound too convincing that she preferred Spanish instruction (REF 1-15).

Carmen

Carmen was a student in Mrs. Salas' class. Carmen was born in Mexico and began her schooling in Houston, Texas in the first grade. She describes her family, "*Yo vivo en Las Palmas con mi mamá, mi hermana, y mi tía. Debíamos de ser tres niñas, pero mi mamá perdió una niña*" (INT 1-15). (I live in Las Palmas with my mother, my sister and my aunt. We should have been three little girls, but my mother lost a little girl.) When describing what she liked to do, Carmen reports going to the library and playing on the computer as her favorite pastimes (INT 12-13). Carmen's love for Mexican food was evident when she said, "*A mí me gusta comer tamales, enchiladas, menudo, spageti, quesadillas, coctel de camarón y pollo asado*" (INT 1-15). (There really is no translation for some of Carmen's favorite foods: I love to eat *tamales*, *enchiladas*, *menudo*, spaghetti, *quesadillas*, shrimp cocktail and barbecue chicken.)

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Carmen's best friend was Sylvia (also a focus student), who often spoke for her when Carmen was feeling embarrassed or shy.

Carmen was extremely quiet and shy in the classroom, to the point that she was not able to communicate her needs. As an example, I observed her on a day when Brandon had taken her chair, which usually faced the front. Carmen had to move to the next empty chair that faced the back of the room. She was obviously uncomfortable and distressed (OBS 1-9) and kept turning around to copy the sentences on the board. This seemed to bother her, but she did not say anything. Mrs. Salas caught me observing Carmen and asked her if she needed to move. "Carmen put her head down and turned red. She nodded in embarrassment, changed seating and then seemed confused as she tried to continue working in her new placement" (OBS 1-9). She could not look up after that. It was as if bringing attention to herself was too embarrassing. Carmen's English language was still developmental and she always spoke to me in Spanish. On testing days, Mrs. Salas allowed the children to test in the language of preference, and Carmen opted for Spanish during the district testing in December (OBS 12-10, 12-11, 12-12, 12-13, 12-14).

Mrs. Salas modified the weekly Spelling list for Carmen and only gave her 8 of the 15 spelling words from the class list. This aided Carmen as she was still learning the language. She studied her reduced list of words and was able to earn lollipops for her hundreds in Spelling (OBS 1-14). When I congratulated her, she blushed, smiled and put her eyes down.

When I asked Carmen about her language preference, she surprised me by saying, "*Yo digo que todo aquí es bueno, que haya [haiga] de los dos idiomas porque a mí me*

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toca esto. Quiero aprender más, yo vivo aquí y yo debo aprender" (INT 1-15). (I say that everything here is good, that there are the two languages, because this is what I get. I want to learn more, I live here and I should learn.) I grew especially close to Carmen as she often sought me out. When Mrs. Torres or Mrs. Salas were teaching, Carmen would turn around to look back at me quite often. I am not sure if she was checking to see what I was doing, or checking to see if I was still back there.

Eduardo

Eduardo was a very verbal student in Mrs. Torres class. He was probably the first student that I noticed because he talked a lot, made humorous remarks, and chose to answer all of the higher level questions. He sought both positive and negative attention from the both of his teachers. Eduardo was born in Mexico and attended school there in grades pre-kinder, kinder and first. When he came to the United States, he was placed in first grade, and thus repeated that grade again (INT 1-17). Eduardo was quite bilingual and responded in both languages, "I live with my stepdad, *mamá, dos hermanitas-una tiene ocho meses y la otra tres años. Lo que más me gusta hacer es asustarlas porque lloran, se cansan y luego se van a dormir*" (INT1-17). (I live with my stepdad, mom, two sisters-one is eight months old and the other three years old. What I really like to do is to scare them because they cry, get tired, and then they go to sleep.) After Eduardo tells me this, he watches me for a reaction and I have to laugh after the rest of the children at the table laugh at his answer. Then Eduardo laughs as well, more for having made us laugh, I think.

Eduardo likes to watch movies and television. When questioned further, he described his favorite shows on Mexican television. "*A mí me gustan las películas. Me*

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gustan las novelas cómo El manantial. En la television me gusta ver Complices al rescate y jugar béisbol" (INT 1-17). (I like the movies. I like soap operas like El manantial [mexican soap opera]. On television I like to watch *Complices al rescate* [Mexican kids' adventure show] and to play baseball.) Eduardo's favorite foods were macaroni and cheese and hot wings (INT 12-14). Though Eduardo seemed to have a connection with Mexican television, I did not observe him discussing episodes with other students. (Other children often discussed what they had watched the night before.) He did not have any specific friends, and seemed to enjoy being around a lot of children.

In the classroom Eduardo was involved and aware of all of his surroundings. He liked to answer questions, and often gave a reason for his answers. Many times, I think he provided more information than the teachers were looking for. Some examples of Eduardo's answers are:

Mrs. Torres: *Si pensamos en la tierra, ¿qué colores se ven desde arriba*? (If we think about earth, what colors can we see from above?

Eduardo: *Azul, porque hay muchos oceanos*. (Blue, because there are many oceans. (OBS 1-15)

Mrs. Torres: *¿Qué está mal con la palabras teatro*? (What is wrong with the word theater?)

Eduardo: *En ves de "i", debe de ser "e" y ese es un error de ortografia.* (Instead of an "i", it needs an "e" and that is a spelling error.) (OBS 1-16)

When asked about his language of preference, Eduardo responded with the fact that his aunt taught him to read in Spanish at home. Of course, he had to extend his

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answer. "*Esa es la misma tía que me corta el pelo para no verme como ahorita, parece que traigo peluca*" (INT 1-15). (That is the same aunt that cuts my hair so that I do not look like I do now, it looks like I am wearing a wig.) Everyone, including myself, laughed as he tugged at his mass of unruly hair and moved it back and forth (It really did look like a wig and he really did need a haircut). Eduardo became serious and told me that he really liked English better, especially reading it. From what I had observed of him, Eduardo was a child who became bored easily, especially when the content being addressed was something he already knew or it was some type of review. Perhaps that is why he said he preferred English (REF 1-10).

I often observed Eduardo get "off task" during times where the instruction was not new. This usually happened during a re-reading of a story, or during math review lessons. During these times, the teachers were not questioning, but merely repeating information. There seemed to be too little interaction to keep Eduardo engaged. In this example, Mrs. Salas was reading a story and stopping to make sure everyone understood the new vocabulary. "Eduardo is completely lost after all the stopping and discussing. He has found eraser and dust particles on the table and has grouped into a little pile. He is pushing these around and around to make different formations" (OBS 1-14). During a re-reading of the same story, two days later, I observed Eduardo moving a lot, his hands were all over the table and his feet were sliding all over the floor making noise to entertain himself (OBS 1-16). In my opinion, Eduardo needed to be placed with the faster group, but his teachers did not always see him in a positive light. This was probably due to his excessive talking and humorous nature.

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Francisca

Francisca was a student in Mrs. Torres' class. She stood out immediately because my list of students designated her as a limited English proficient child. Her biliteracy was amazing. I observed her working with the Spanish content, then explaining it in English to someone who did not understand. Francisca functioned as easily in the Spanish dominant as in the English dominant group. Francisca's parents were both Mexican immigrants and Francisca began schooling in the United States by attending the Head Start Program (INT 12-20). Francisca tells about her home life in English, "I live with my mom, my dad, and my older sister" (INT 1-18). When I ask her if she was the baby of the family, she smiled and she said she was. When asked about her likes, Francisca responded in Spanish, "*Lo que más, más me gusta es calentar tortillas y lavar los trastes en mí casa. Me gusta leer. Yo aprendí a leer en* Headstart. *Yo me sentaba sola con los libros y les apuntaba las palabras*" (INT 1-18). (What I most, most like to do is to warm up tortillas and wash dishes at my house. I like to read. I learned to read in Headstart. I would sit alone with the books and point to the words.)

Francisca was a good student with many qualities, however there are two that stood out while observing the class. Francisca liked to take leadership role during group assignments and she seemed to serve as a "bridge" between the Spanish- and English-dominant groups. When Francisca took the leadership role, she made sure that the group work was done almost perfectly. Francisca's products were always neat and colored beautifully. During paired work with Marisa, Francisca directs her, "I'm telling you what I find and you write it" (OBS 1-14). Francisca proceeded to finds facts in the Social Studies book and guided the equal sharing of work by telling Marisa when to look for a

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fact or when to write (OBS 1-14). Carmen talks about Francisca, "*Un día Brandon no me quiso ayudar con la lectura. Francisca sí, ella sí te ayuda*" (INT 12-17). (One day Brandon did not want to help me with reading. Francisca will, Francisca will help you.) Francisca often helped the Spanish-dominant children with questions or clarifications. It seemed that they felt more comfortable asking her, since she was one of "them".

I often caught Francisca observing my work as a researcher. She was interested in who or what I was watching. I became aware of her looking at me and then tracking my vision to see who had my attention. When I caught her doing this she would laugh quietly and get back to work. She took me by surprise on many occasions as I visited the tables during group work. I would hear something that interested me and then realize that I had left my field notes at the back of the room. As if by magic, Francisca would appear right next to me, handing me my notebook and pen. Once she asked to read my field notes and I gave her permission. She wrote my name and her name on a page. Then she concluded, "Miss, what you are writing is like a play." (OBS 12-6)

Jacinto

Jacinto was a student in Mrs. Torres class. Jacinto stood out as a very positive child and a very hard worker. From the onset of the study, he sought my attention and smiled big when he had it. Jacinto's biliteracy skills had placed him at the forefront of his English and Spanish content classes. He was often Mrs. Torres' top scoring student and demonstrated the competency that Mrs. Salas' gifted students demonstrated. He, along with some of her most gifted students, scored the highest grades on assignments. His teachers found him to be an excellent student, however, they often expressed concern over Jacinto's competitive nature. Mrs. Salas and Mrs. Torres felt that Jacinto often

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made careless mistakes in his zeal to "finish first" and "beat the others"(CON 11-16). The very first day that I was in the classroom, Mrs. Torres assigned the class a journal prompt and I wrote, "Jacinto 'just took off' with the topic and wrote to fill up the page. When I went by him he kept smiling at me. He would move his body so that I could see how much he had written" (OBS 11-12). Jacinto was born in Mexico and maintains ties with the Mexican culture, especially during festivities and celebrations (OBS 12-19, 12-20). Jacinto began schooling at another school in the district where he attended kindergarten and first grade and then transferred to Palmitas Elementary in second grade. During the unstructured interviews, Jacinto often chose to answer me in English. Jacinto tells about his family:

> I live here in Las Palmas. I live with my dad, mom, three sisters and three brothers. Miss, I am right in the middle. I have a smaller brother who is 8 years old, two little brothers, one is a baby boy-he is one year[s]old. (INT 1-14)

Jacinto's favorite foods were pizza and hamburgers. One of his favorite activities was reading and playing on the computer, as well as playing football outside with his brothers (INT 1-14). As for language preference, Jacinto explained, "I like both, I like English and Spanish" (INT 1-14). In the classroom, Jacinto was observed to participate easily in both the English and Spanish subject matters. He would consistently volunteer to read his journal responses to the class, "One time my brother made fun of me a lot. He just kept laughing and pointing at me. I got mad and I punch him because he gave me stress" (OBS 11-12). This reading was related to a story in the basal reader where the

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main character wanted to "get even" with another. Jacinto was able to identify with the character.

During science projects, for example, Jacinto was the organizer. In an activity that involved measuring the volume of objects by water displacement, it was Jacinto who put all of the objects in order of size for his group. Once the children had weighed the objects; Jacinto placed them on the other side of the table (OBS 11-13). I asked him why he did this and he said, "So we know which ones we already did" (INT 11-13).

Joaquín

Joaquín was a student in Mrs. Torres' class. Joaquín immigrated to Mexico with his mother and father after his first grade year. Joaquín shared his prior schooling experiences, "*Yo también aprendí en Nuevo León, allá en Mexico. Yo estuve allá en kinder y primero*" (INT 1-17). (I also learned in Nuevo Leon, over there in Mexico. I was over there in kinder and first.) Joaquín reported his favorite foods to be pizza, hamburgers and shrimp cocktail (INT 1-18). At the time of this study, Joaquín had attended second grade at Palmitas Elementary and was beginning his second year of schooling in the United States. Specifically, Joaquín had been in a United States school for a year and three months. The biggest difference between his Mexican school and new American school was that, "*Aquí hay más reglas y no juegos. Tambien hay comida*"(INT 1-17). (Here there are more rules and no games. Also there is food.) Joaquín was probably referring to the fact, that after lunch, the children remained in the cafeteria and there was no recess. His other reference to the cafeteria food was probably because he enjoyed cafeteria food so much. Unlike his American counterparts, Joaquín remained on the eating side of the cafeteria until his entire plate was clean. While the other children

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threw away most of their food, Joaquín ate his. It became an ongoing joke between us that he would feed his shirt. I would tell him, "*Aver, dejame ver que comió Joaquín hoy.*" (Let's see what Joaquín had for lunch today.) After this I would examine his shirt and find chocolate milk, ketchup, or enchilada stains. He seemed to enjoy the attention, as his stains seemed to get bigger as he came looking to show them to me.

Joaquín's strongest language, of course was Spanish, so therefore all of his communications were in his native language. When speaking of his family, Joaquín explained, "*Yo vivo con mi mamá, mi papá. Tengo dos hermanas, pero ya están casadas y no viven en mi casa*" (INT 1-17). (I live with my mother, my father. I have two sisters, but they are married and do not live in my house.)

Joaquín had been "taken in" by the rest of the students who were quick to assist him during his Spanish and English assignments. Joaquín did not seem to have a strong literacy foundation in his first language, probably due to the family's immigration to the United States at a critical point in his literacy development. When asked to spell the word "inventor" which is a cognate, Joaquín was not able to say letter names. (A cognate is a word with similar spelling and meaning in two languages.) Joaquín would make letter sounds, rather than say letter names during the spelling games (OBS 1-11). Generally speaking, when any one of the other students was done, they looked to see where Joaquín was and what he needed. Here is an example of Oscar, an English dominant child assisting Joaquín:

> The writing prompt today is, "What do you want for Christmas?" When Oscar finishes his response, he looks around and notices that Joaquín has

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not begun his response. Oscar goes to help Joaquín since the prompt is in English. Oscar asks Joaquín what he wants in Spanish, "*¿Qué quieres*?" Joaquín answers, "*Un* (A) Nintendo." Miguel probes for more, "*¿Qué más*?" (What else?) Joaquín adds, "Un 'packpack' y un carrito." (A backpack and a little car) (OBS 11-28)

The most amazing thing about Joaquín was that he was at a stage of English cognition rather than production. While he was beginning to understand the language, he was not speaking it yet. His stage of language development became very clear to me on a day we were coloring and cutting ducks. To get ready for the school's fall festival, Mrs. Torres and Mrs. Salas had a group of children (including myself) mass produce duck cutouts to decorate the Duck Pond booth. Laura, Francisca, Rexy, Joaquín and I sat at a table and talked as we cut. The language of the day was English, so that is what we spoke. Joaquín was able to respond to everything that was said in English:

DR: Look, I have already cut out five ducks! (I did this to motivate them cut more.)

Joaquín: *Yo más*. (I've cut more.)

Laura: Yes, but Miss Ramírez' ducks are pretty and yours are weird.

Joaquín: *¡A que no*! (No, they're not!)

Rexy: Miss Ramírez, look at the ugly green marker he is using to trace them.

Joaquín: *Pos, ¿dónde está el otro que estaba usando yo*? (Well, where is the other one that I was using?

Rexy: Miss Ramírez has it.

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Joaquín: *Préstemelo y le doy este.* (Loan it to me and I will give you this one.)

Anita: That one is ugly!

Joaquín: (laughs as he looks at the frayed point of the marker) (CON 11-15)

Juanita

Juanita was a student in Mrs. Salas' class. Juanita came to the United States with her family and began school in kindergarten. There were six members in Juanita's family, "*Somos seis, mi mamá, mi papá, mi hermana, mi hermana, mi hermano, yo y mi hermanita de cuatro años*" (INT 1-15). (We are six, my mother, my father, my sister, my sister, my brother, me and my little sister who is four years old.) Juanita's favorite foods were rice, beans, taquitos, and enchiladas. When asked if she recalled her school in Mexico, Juanita thought Palmitas Elementary was a better school. "*Está escuela es mejor que allá, porque aquí los baños están limpios y estamos aprendiendo dos idiomas*" (INT 1-15). (This school is better than over there, because here the bathrooms are clean and we are learning two languages.) Juanita was a student who was painfully shy. She rarely volunteered an answer during teacher questioning, though I suspect she knew many of them. She was an attentive student who seemed to enjoy reading and could often be seen devouring books during her spare time (OBS 12-10). While at home Juanita confessed an addiction to Mexican soap operas, "*Yo llego a las cuatro y veo todas las novelas hasta que se acaban a las diez. Y veo El manantial, Salomé, Amigas y rivales y El derecho de nacer*" (INT 1-15). (I get home at four and I watch the soap operas until they finish at ten. Juanita then names all of the soap operas she watches.)

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Although Juanita never volunteered an answer during class questioning, she did answer questions when they were directed specifically to her. Mrs. Salas would say, "Juanita, what does this word need?" Then Juanita would answer "capital letter" (OBS 11-27). Whenever Mrs. Salas asked Juanita to read her journal response, Juanita would get visibly and physically upset. In spite of all the trouble it took her to read, she complied with Mrs. Salas' request.

> Juanita then closes her eyes, frowns, swallows, opens her mouth and not a thing comes out. She makes another attempt, and it is almost a noise. On her third attempt, Juanita produces a barely audible response, though she is on the verge of tears. Mrs. Salas stands near Juanita, puts her hand on Juanita's back. Juanita's voice begins to crack and she blinks very hard. It is obvious that Juanita is trying to control herself by swallowing and looking at her paper. Mrs. Salas is very patient, as is the class. Mrs. Salas gives Juanita plenty of time and she gets very close to Juanita to hear what she has to say. (OBS 11-28)

Juanita's shyness did not interfere with her love of reading. She read every book in sight, even asking other children for theirs. When she became aware that I had books in my backpack, she began to approach me. At first she would just point, "The book...(pointing and whispering very softly)...because I do not have..." (OBS 12-5). The Accelerated Reading program discussed in chapter four seemed to be Juanita's motivation for reading. She would read a book and then test. After testing, Juanita would ask the computer for her score, she then would cup her hand over the score so that no one can see her grade. Since the books were in English, she may not have been

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scoring well or she just did not want anyone to see her score. When asked about language preference, Juanita answered, "*A mí me gusta leer libros en ingles*" (INT1-15). (I like to read books in English.)

Juanita and I developed a unique relationship. As shy as she was, she followed me and seemed to like being around me. When I was interviewing other children, Juanita would come and sit quietly next to me. After school, as I gathered my things to leave, Juanita stayed behind and at first, shadowed me out of the school. When I realized she would follow me outside, I began to speak to her and wait for her to catch up to me. Toward the end of the study, Juanita and I would walk out together everyday.

Julián

Julián was a student in Mrs. Salas' classroom. Although Julián was very quiet and shy, he was a self-motivated learner. He immigrated to the United States in second grade and was still quite Spanish dominant. He rarely spoke English, due to his short time in a U.S. school. "*Yo aprendí a leer en primer grado en China, Nuevo León…allá en Mexico. Yo vine aquí en el segundo grado. Leer inglés y español me gustan igual!*" (INT 1-17). (I learned to read in first grade in China, Nuevo Leon…over there in Mexico. I came here in the second grade. I like to read both English and Spanish.) Julián lived with his mother and two brothers and was the middle child (INT 1-17). He was a student who worked very hard at everything he did. During the district writing test, he exceeded expectations. The children were asked to develop a three-paragraph composition on the topic. Julián opted to test in Spanish and wrote more than was expected of him.

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> Julián tried and worked so hard on his test. Pressing down on his pencil to make dark letters, concentrating, writing as neatly as possible and reading and re-reading what he was writing. As the other children finished, Julián continued to work. He noticed that I was reading the other children's work and asked if I would like to read his after he finished. At last glance and way after lunch, Julián had written three complete pages while most of the children had filled up one page with their three paragraphs. (OBS 12-10)

Julián's English language was still very developmental, though he had such a positive ethic that he just went forward. During the third month of the study, Mrs. Salas introduced a game for quick recall of multiplication facts after she realized that the children did not know them. The game was fun and exciting, but it seemed that Jake, Brittany, and Jacinto were taking turns winning, as they knew their facts already. One day, while sitting in Mrs. Torres' class, the children brought me "news":

> In between the chapter book and the Science lesson, the children whisper, "Miss, we have something to tell you." They prod Julián to tell me and he finally says, "*Miss, le gané a* Brittany *al juego de* math." (Miss, I beat Brittany at the math game.) John, Brittany and the other children are all nodding yes, that he beat them. They are truly happy. I congratulate Julián and give him a pencil from my backpack. He is beaming, however it seems they are all beaming (OBS 1-16). It is a joyous occasion for all of them as they are proud of him. I felt honored that they shared the event with me. I think it was because I was not in the room when it happened

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and because they are aware that I care about what happens, even when I am not there. (REF 1-16).

Julissa

Julissa was a student in Mrs. Torres' class. Julissa was an immediate concern the day I began to observe the class. She seemed to be a very needy child as she did not work and got into constant arguments with her group members. Her face was in a constant frown because she remained angry after having an argument with other students (OBS 11-12, 11-13, 11-14). Mrs. Torres explained that Julissa had many issues with her home life and thus acted out in school. "I have an older sister, a brother in high school, my mom, a stepdad, my dad died, Miss. Another sister, another sister, my tía (aunt), all together in my house" (INT 1-18). Julissa's mother was a Mexican immigrant who had not lived with Julissa consistently, so her aunt has taken over some of Julissa's care. When her mother had been away, Julissa developed problems in school (CON 11-16). Julissa had scarring on her hand from biting herself repeatedly. She also had Type II diabetes and was supposed to be on a diet (CONV 12-17). Julissa attended another school in the district for kindergarten and then came to Palmitas Elementary in the first grade. She spoke a lot of English, though her academic work was very poor. Mrs. Torres and Mrs. Salas also voiced concerns about Julissa's grades, through notes, report cards and parent conferences requests (CON 11-20).

Julissa reported her favorite activities, "*Leer, me gusta leer, me gusta hacer homework, matemáticas, las times tables y lectura*" (INT 1-18). (Read, I like to read, I like to do homework, math, the times tables and reading.) However, this was not evident

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during class time or with Julissa's schoolwork or testing. During class Julissa spent a lot of time off-task. She was not really "misbehaving", as what she did was very subtle:

> It is a shame, Julissa has pulled out her lower lip and is trying to look at it. She rubs the inside of her lower lip with her hand in some sort of rhythm. She rubs it down, down, down for almost five minutes. Then she puts her head down and stares at her folder for another five. Next she proceeds to pull her shirt up, exposing her stomach. Up, down, up down. It is as if she is in another world. She has been doing this for the past thirty minutes. She has not progressed on her test, as if it does not matter to her. (OBS 12-13)

Whenever Mrs. Salas or Mrs. Torres caught Julissa off-task, they redirected her and she would pay attention for only a few minutes. She waited until she was no longer the teacher's focus and went back to what she was doing soon afterwards. Many times the teachers caught her because they looked at me to see which student I was watching. Thus, they were able to see that I was looking at Julissa. Julissa's behaviors included playing (OBS 12-13), coloring during reading (OBS 1-10, 1-15), playing with her hair (OBS 11-12, 11-12), putting her head down on the table, playing with objects and other subtle misbehaviors. Julissa also took advantage by asking to go to the restroom while the teachers were presenting a lesson. After realizing the length of Julissa's "breaks", I decided to time them. Her shortest one was 17 minutes (OBS 11-27) and her longest one was 22 minutes long (OBS 1-13).

Mrs. Salas gives Julissa a reduced list of spelling words, though Julissa's home life may not have been conducive to her studying at home. During spelling games, which were meant to review the list, Julissa was unable to spell the easiest words on the list:

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> The children begin the game and are very involved as it is boys against girls. Julissa tries to hide by putting her head down low and avoiding Mrs. Salas' direction. Mrs. Salas spotted her eventually and Julissa was unable to spell the word "scold". She gets embarrassed and goes to sit down. While the rest of the children are reviewing their list in case they get called up, Julissa is working at staying out of her teacher's sight. (OBS 1-11)

I made it a point to talk to Julissa, as she seemed to be such an unhappy child. After she got into "fights" with her group, I would go and speak to her. I would say, "Julissa, are you o.k.?" She would say yes, and then I would ask her why she looked angry. She would tell me that she wasn't angry, although her face was frowning and there was a pout on her lips. I would always ask her what happened and she would say, "It's them."

Justo

Justo was a student in Mrs. Torres class until he withdrew only a month after initiation of the study. At the onset of the study, Justo had just emigrated from Mexico three weeks before and was the most recent immigrant student in both groups. On the very first day of fieldwork, I approached the table where Justo was sitting and I asked the children what they are doing. All of the children at the table answered protectively, "Miss, he is Spanish" (CON 11-12). I did not feel they said this to single him out, but because I had asked them a question in English, and Justo did not understand. I explained to the children, in Spanish, that I was bilingual, too. They smiled and looked at each other. Mrs. Torres had assigned a journal prompt about constellations and Justo just wrote and wrote:

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> Every time I walked by his group, Justo would pickup his pencil and shake out his hand. (He was showing me that his hand hurt from all of the writing.) He took the pencil and pressed down very hard to make his letters nice and dark. When Justo filled the page, he took it to Mrs. Torres so that she could see how much he had written. I am taken back by his eagerness to complete the assignment as well his willingness to please his teacher. (OBS 11-12).

Justo demonstrated a positive and hard work-working attitude during the time that I observed him. It was just too soon for him to have comprehension of the English language. While he understood and more than complied with all the directives and assignments in Mrs. Torres' class, his time in Mrs. Salas was different. As hard as he tried, he tended to get a little lost in Mrs. Salas' class, especially during reading comprehension and story problems. "Justo is focusing on what Mrs. Salas is writing on the board as she speaks. Though he cannot understand her, he watches the board intently, as if trying to decipher her code" (OBS 11-27). Justo's math skills were well developed, as he was able to complete the computational portion of the story problems smoothly. He developed a strong friendship with Joaquín, who seemed to be helping Justo adjust to the new school. One day, during math story problems, they asked Mrs. Salas if they could work with each other:

> Mrs. Salas allows them to work together, though neither one of them have the English comprehension needed to read and understand the story problems. Joaquín and Justo motion for me to come over and assist them. I look at Mrs. Salas and she nods that it is o.k. to assist them. I read the

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> problem in English and then translate it to Spanish. Justo immediately understands what he needs to do. It is a division problem and he tells me, "*Ya entendí.*" (I have understood.) Joaquín does not understand what he needs to do, so I draw a picture of the problem with him. (OBS 11-27)

I did not get to interview Justo before he left. However, I was able to observe some of the issues that concern some of the most recent immigrant children from Mexico. The first issue was poverty. Most of the children in the two classes observed, received money on a daily basis. Although the school lunch was free, there was a snack bar open during lunchtime on the side of the cafeteria where the children waited for their teachers. Children were able to buy chips, different types of ice cream and fruit drinks. Justo never had any money to buy snacks, though many of the children attempted to share their chips with him, Justo did not take what was offered (OBS 11-13, 11-14, 11-15).

> Justo was the only child in the room out of uniform. When Mrs. Torres took the daily count of children out of uniform, he was the one who stood up. "*Pónganse de pie los que no traen uniforme*", (Stand up if you are not in uniform.) Mrs. Torres would ask. Justo was obviously wearing second hand clothes. His shoes were about two sizes too big for his feet and his clothes were old and very washed. As I lean over to look at his work, I notice that his shirt has a woman's label on it. (OBS 11-12)

The second concern with Justo was the lack of cultural sensitivity that can be a part of any school setting where the immigrant children may enroll. During the canned food drive collection, Justo often heard Mrs. Torres reminding the children to bring in canned goods "for the poor". As this food collection was a contest, the winning class

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would receive a trip to a local pizza restaurant. This seemed to have put a lot of pressure on the teachers, as each one wanted his/her class to win:

> It is the end of the day and Mrs. Torres hands out a note on the canned food drive. The note is sent home in English and Spanish (DOC 11-13). There seems to be a contest for the classes. Mrs. Torres is a bit frustrated as the class has not been bringing in canned goods and the class collection box is quite empty. She tells them, "*Yo sé que no hay nadie en esta clase que no pueda traer una lata, yo lo sé. ¿Me entendieron? No hay excusa.*" (I know there is no one in this class who cannot bring one can, I know. Do you understand? There is no excuse.) (OBS 11-13)

Another immigration issue is the fact that the schooling and cultural context in Mexico is obviously different than the one here in the United States. There are cultural differences in language, dress, celebrations, music and traditions, etc. Justo, as a recent immigrant student did not have prior experiences with national celebrations in the United States. While some celebrations, such as Christmas were familiar, the Thanksgiving Day celebration and motifs were not.

> Today is early release day and there is not a lot of instruction happening today. Mrs. Torres has assigned the children to draw, cut and color a turkey from two sheets of white paper. One sheet is for the body of the turkey and the other is to make the tail feathers. Mrs. Torres cuts the profile of a turkey from one sheet and forms a tail fan with the other. She tapes the tail to the turkey and shows it to the students. The second part of the assignment is to write a thank you note on the turkey. She proceeds to

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work in her grade book while the children begin their work. It seems that fall-colored crayons are short, so I help students track down the browns, yellows and reds from the crayon tub and from other tables. I spend time helping several children cut the turkey profile and do not pay particular attention to Justo. I see that his head is down and that he is working very hard. Perhaps twenty minutes go by. I hear Mrs. Torres laugh and look up to see her at her table. She asks me to look at Justo's turkey and it is green, yellow and red. Actually, it was a rooster, not a turkey: Mrs. Torres cannot stop laughing and tells him, "*Ni modo, déjalo así.*" (Nevermind, leave it like that.) He looked confused and probably did not understand why she was laughing. His creation was beautiful; he had colored very dark by pressing down on the crayons. She looks at me across the room and asks, "Can you believe he did that?" (OBS 11-20)

Luciano

Luciano was a student in Mrs. Torres' class. Luciano lived with his mother and father (both Mexican immigrants); he was an only child. Luciano liked to play Nintendo 64 and Game Boy Advanced. His favorite foods were hamburgers, *caldos* (soups), shrimp and pizza (INT 1-14). It was not clear whether Luciano was ever schooled in Mexico. Luciano tells me that he began schooling at Palmitas Elementary in the second grade. He explains:

Luciano: Miss, I skipped pre-kinder and kindergarten because my mom didn't want me to come. I learned reading and math with my mom at home.

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DR: Were you here?

Luciano: No, we lived somewhere else. Miss, do you know Chicago?

DR: Yes.

Luciano: That's where I was. Then I came here. This is my second year in third grade, Miss. (He looks at me to see my reaction.)

DR: That's o.k. Luciano. I think you are doing very well.

Luciano: Thank you Miss. You are very nice. (INT 1-14)

Luciano was quite proficient in the English language and seemed to have an extreme preference for it. During the study, Luciano was never observed answering a question in Spanish, only in English. However, it may have happened when I was in Mrs. Salas' classroom and he remained in Mrs. Torres' class. Luciano's best friend in the classroom was Henry, an English dominant child whose mother was a teacher at Palmitas Elementary. Luciano did comply with the assignments in Spanish, and used the Spanish in the mediation of the content. He shares:

Luciano: I like English. I know a lot of English. I know Spanish, but I had this friend named Erik--he only talks English. He became my friend and I talked to him a lot and I kind of forgot a little.

DR: Forgot what?

Luciano: I forgot the Spanish a little. (INT 1-14)

Luciano reminded me of what M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco called "ethnic flight". Luciano tried very hard at maintaining his friendship with Joseph. He also took every opportunity he could to give me a compliment, in English of course. I left campus one day, he and Henry were talking outside and he stopped me to say, "Miss,

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you looked beautiful today" (CON 11-11). At Christmas time, he had his mother buy me a little plastic jewelry box and was very proud when he gave it to me (OBS 12-20). My last day on campus, Luciano's mother visited the classroom:

> Luciano's mother came to look for me while the children were at P.E. I had seen her in the hallways before; she is an older lady. She hands me a large bag and says that Luciano told her it was my last day today. She asks me where I am going next, and I remind her that my study of the children is complete and that I must work at writing what I learned. She blesses me and wishes me well. I do tell her that she should not have bothered. She said that Luciano told her that I was very nice to him. (CON 1-31)

Margarita

Margarita was a student in Mrs. Torres' class. During the first month of the study, Margarita was in Washington with her mother. Margarita's grandmother, who lived there, was very ill. So, Margarita traveled with her mother to visit her and was subsequently absent the rest of the month. Margarita's mother was a Mexican immigrant and it was not clear where her father was. Margarita was very bilingual, and used the Spanish and English languages interchangeably. She told about her home life in Spanish, "*Yo vivo con mi mamá. Tengo una hermana mayor, pero no vive allí. Allí solo vive Margarita y su gato* (laughs)" (INT 1-18). (I live with my mother. I have an older sister, but she does not live there. Only Margarita and her cat live there.)

Margarita was an extremely friendly girl with a very bubbly personality. She smiled a lot. I arrived when they were having breakfast her first day back. She

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approached me and introduced herself before I had even put down my backpack (OBS 12-4). Margarita also had asthma and left the class to take her pump before going to P.E. everyday. She whispered to confide her condition to me, "Miss, I have to go take my 'medicine pump' so I can run at P.E." (CON 12-5). She was thrilled that I walked her to the nurse's office.

Margarita discussed her favorite activities, "*Me gusta jugar con el agua, hacer burbujas con jabón, jugar con el gato, hacer* math, *escribir, jugar tazitas, y comer carne con chile*" (INT 1-18). (I like to play with water, make bubbles with soap, play with the cat, do math, write, play with my little dishes and eat chili with meat.) When asked about her language preference, Margarita says that she likes to speak and read both languages. She answers questions and participates in both her Spanish and English classes. Whenever there was an opportunity to speak or to share a journal response (in English or Spanish) Margarita raised her hand and almost jumped out of her chair to be picked. The journal prompt in Spanish was, "Do you feel proud to be an American?" Margarita answered, "*Yo estoy orgullosa de ser estadounidense porque soy libre. Yo soy libre porque existe la estatua de libertad que nos hace a todos libres. Yo estoy orgullosa de haber nacido aquí*" (OBS 1-16). (I am proud to be an American because I am free. I am free because the statue of liberty exists and makes us all free. I am proud to have been born here.)

Marisa

Marisa was a student in Mrs. Torres' class. Marisa was Spanish dominant child whose Spanish was very advanced. She was usually very quiet, yet she volunteered many answers during Spanish and English instruction. Marisa described her family, "*Yo*

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vivo con mi mamá, mi papá, mi hermano mayor, mi hermano menor. Mi hermano menor, Miguel, tiene dos años, ...ah y mi perro" (INT 1-18). (I live with my mother, my father, my older brother, my younger brother. My younger brother, Miguel, is two years old, ...ah, and my dog.) Marisa describes her likes, "*Me gusta ir a la alberca, ayudar a mamá a cocinar, planchar la ropa*" (INT 1-18). (I like to go to the pool, help mom cook, iron the clothes.)

Marisa was very shy during interviews or times that I sat with her group to speak to her. My presence seemed to bring an attention to her that made her uncomfortable (REF 11-27). I suspected that Marisa had received some schooling in Mexico because of the academic level of her Spanish, but she said she began school at another elementary school in the district. As I probed her prior schooling again, she reiterated the name of the other school in the district. My further questioning seemed to make her uncomfortable, so I decided not to pursue it. Throughout my time in the classrooms, Marisa seemed to be uncomfortable when I asked her questions directly. Perhaps this perception of Marisa was erroneous on my part, or I misread her. On the last day of fieldwork, Marisa handed me a note that said, "*La voy a extrañar Miss Ramírez. La cosa que me gustó fue que me entrevistaba y me preguntaba las cosas que me gustan y no me gustan* (ART 1-31). (I will miss you Miss Ramírez. The thing I liked was when you interviewed me and you asked me things that I like and don't like.)

During English instruction, Marisa was observed working very hard to understand the content. When it came to sentence correction, Mara was able to identify mistakes in the structure of the Spanish, as well as the English language:

Mrs. Salas: Are we finished with the sentence yet?

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Marisa: It's supposed to be house [instead of houses] and you need a period. (OBS 1-14)

Mrs. Torres: *Vamos a ver la siguiente oración*. (Let's look a the next sentence.)

Marisa: *Hay un error en el uso de letra mayúscula al principio de la oración*. (There is an error in the use of capitalization at the beginning of the sentence.) (OBS 1-16)

During math, Marisa often whispered the numbers in English and counted to herself, like self talk (OBS 12-4). Mrs. Salas was aware of Marisa's needs and gave her a reduced spelling list, so Marisa was able to study the list and consistently score a 100 (OBS 1-14). During reading, Mrs. Salas would give Marisa small portions of the text to read aloud. "When Marisa is done reading, she looks up to me and grins. I wink at her and she seems satisfied with how she read her part" (OBS S1-30). During the introduction and reading of new stories, Marisa concentrated on the text and the accompanying pictures:

> Marisa is very quietly tracking the text as Mrs. Salas reads. She is very concentrated and stops to look all over the pages, pictures and all. I suspect that she really enjoys reading, as she is only aware of the text and Mrs. Salas voice. (OBS 1-10)

One of Marisa's most noble qualities was her sensitivity to Joaquín's needs. Marisa was aware of Joaquín's developmental level in both English and Spanish and his short time in the United States. "*Yo le ayudo a Joaquín a leer y a hacer su trabajo*" (CON 11-18). During the times when Joaquín was off task, Marisa was quick to redirect

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him before Mrs. Torres became aware of his behavior. Somehow, he respected her and listened to her. During the times she shared a reading book with him, she made sure he tracked the reading with her (OBS 1-16). Marisa was also aware of the fact that Joaquín did not bring snack money to school. So, she "took care" of him in the cafeteria as well. Marisa received a daily fifty cents from her parents. This means she could not afford the dollar bag of chips that everyone else seemed to purchase. However, she could afford an ice-cream cone, ice-cream sandwich or large Popsicle. Marisa gave up the larger ice cream treats and purchased two very small ice-cream cups on a daily basis. One was for her and the other was for Joaquín. Everyday that I visited the children in the cafeteria (and after Joaquín had finished all of his food), I found them sitting next to each other and eating their little cups of ice cream (OBS 12-10, 12-13, 12-15, 1-10).

Marivel

Marivel was a student in Mrs. Torres' class. Marivel stood out as a self-motivated learner with very well developed bilingual and biliteracy skills. On the third day of observations, Marivel and Francisca called me over to their group and interviewed me. Marivel had many questions, specifically as to why I did not fit the "teacher role" (OBS 11-14). Marivel's father was a Mexican immigrant who had returned to Mexico. Marivel often spoke of him coming back to be with the family:

> My dad is in Mexico right now, but I think he is coming back to live with us. I have an older brother and two younger sisters. Then there is me and another sister and another sister. There are eight of us Miss, well 7 of us with my mom...and then my dad might come back. We also have a French poodle and gallinas (chickens). (OBS 11-18)

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Marivel had many likes, which included sleeping, making tortillas, washing, ironing, combing her father's hair (She said this after telling me that he had not lived with them for some time.), telling jokes, playing with her dog, and playing Monopoly with her family. She also liked to learn and communicated that she liked to speak and read both English and Spanish (INT 1-18). Marivel liked took leadership roles during class activities. During a re-enactment of their favorite holiday tradition, Marivel led the group by taking over immediately. "You're Joseph. Eduardo, you're the cow. I am Mary. This is what we are going to do...Frank, you're the baby. (clap) Let's practice" (OBS 12-19).

On another occasion, Francisca and Marivel ended up in the same group. Their task was to solve a story problem on a large sheet of chart paper. There was a small power struggle between Marivel and Francisca, as they both liked to lead. They decided to share the power while solving the problem, but then had to illustrate the steps on a chart. Marivel assigned each group member a part of the problem to trace with crayons, while she was tracing a section. She gave everyone a section, keeping the largest for herself and including the one she traced while she gave directions. No one noticed. (OBS 11-27)

Rosita

Rosita was a student in Mrs. Torres' class. Rosita was a learner who had a lot of difficulty with subject matter. Rosita demonstrated learning problems in spelling, math and reading. She consistently failed her tests (CONV 12-17) even though she poured her heart into her work. Her work ethic allowed her to complete her assignments, although most of her independent work was often done incorrectly (OBS 1-15). Rosita was in desperate need of a new pair of shoes. Her long hair was never brushed and it looked as

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if brushing it would be impossible. Every morning it was pulled back in a ponytail and all of the tangles stuck out. She seemed to be a very needy child. Rosita's father was a Mexican immigrant who was seeking his American citizenship, according to Rosita (CONV 1-22). The first time Rosita spoke of her family, it was difficult to know what to respond:

> I live here in Las Palmas with my parents, but they are so busy all the time. They do not have time to care for me or my sisters and that is why we have a lot of problems. I have dogs, cats and my brother is moving back with us because he has a lot of problems with his wife. It is because of my parents, they never had time for him. That is why he grew up with lots of problems. (INT 1-18)

Rosita shared her likes, "*Me gusta correr, jugar, aprender, jugar computadoras, pelear, hacer tarea, quedarme a* tutoring *y dormir*" (INT 11-26). (I like to run, play, learn, play computers, fight, do homework, stay for tutoring and sleeping.) Rosita was in the after-school tutoring program for the children who were in danger of failing the state T.A.A.S. tests. Rosita was very happy on tutoring days, often reminding me that she was staying after school. This may have given Rosita time away from home. Rosita was often observed not being able to answer teacher questioning, such as during Mrs. Salas' regrouping lesson:

> Mrs. Salas: Now, what do I do? What is the next step? Rosita?
>
> Rosita: Ah, ah, ah... (Rosita is looking at the board trying to figure out what to say.)
>
> Mrs. Salas: Look at this part. What should I be asking myself right

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now?

Rosita: If I can take 6 from twelve...

Mrs. Salas: Can I? (Rosita does not know what to say.) O.k. Rosita, what is 6 from twelve?

Rosita: (Rosita is thinking, but is unable to come up with an answer. She may not have been taught to count up, to use her fingers, etc. She looks up as if she wants the answer to come to her and it doesn't. (OBS 1-14)

Rosita verbalized a preference for both Spanish and English "learning", as she called it (INT 1-18). One day she told me that she always did her best (CON 1-14). I told Rosita that I knew that because I watched her. I said, "I think you are a good student." After I said this to her, she just glowed. She was beaming for the rest of the day. I wondered how often Rosita received compliments and how much she needed them. The next day Rosita brought me a small apple that was a little dull and bruised. I felt that it was Rosita's way of thanking me for what I said to her. Although Rosita was not able to produce the answers to questioning, she did attempt to locate answers in the text:

> Mrs. Salas asked the children what the word 'serious' meant in the story. Rosita was looking all over the page for a clue. She tried so hard to find an answer until someone else answered and she looked disappointed that she had not found it." (OBS 1-16).

I always made it a point to speak to Rosita and to greet her in the mornings. She

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did not seem to have made close friends in the classroom and kept to herself. I gave her pencils, erasers and small treats whenever she worked hard or succeeded at something in the classroom. I did this for all the students, however it seemed to have more meaning to Rosita. My last day at Palmitas Elementary, Rosita gave me a note:

> Thank you for giving me some pencils and snakes [snacks] and earasers [erasers]. I remember I gave you a [an] apple and Mis. Rames you are rillle [really] fun. The first time you came you were sr [sure?] so good to us like if you [were] my teacha [teacher]. I like it when you say that I am a good stede [student] becous [because] I am a good stude [student]. (DOC 1-31)

Sara

Sara was a student in Mrs. Torres' class. She was a Spanish dominant student who stood out in the classroom because of her 'wanderings". Sara often found reasons to be out of her chair and everywhere else. "Sara seems to be in a daze. She wanders around the room until she finally decides to straighten up the bookshelf. All of the other children are working" (OBS 11-12). Both of Sara's parents are Mexican immigrants, though Sara was born in the United States. Sara tells about her home, "I live with my dad, my mom and my big sister who is eleven. My mom is going to have a baby" (INT 1-18). Sara lived just two blocks from the school and walked to and from school everyday. She described her likes in Spanish, "*A mí me gusta pararle los pelos a mi papá. Me gusta leer, ayudar a mamá, ver le televisión-las caricaturas, jugar* "Twister", *oir el bebe adrentro de mí mamá, y caminar*" (INT 1-18). (I like to make my father's hair stand up. I like to read, to help mom, watch television-cartoons, play Twister, listen

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to the baby inside of my mother, and to walk.) Although Sara did not enjoy learning, she did seem to enjoy music. She was the only student in the study who was in the choir club.

Sara seemed to be a fashion conscious child who often did not wear the school uniform (OBS 11-19, 12-10, 12-8, 1-9, 1-10). She wore what the kids called "cool" clothes. Sara wore low-rise pantss, thick-heeled booths and shirts printed with letters and wording. Her long hair was layered with bangs and she often wore it loose. The rest of the girls either had short hair or wore ponytails and braids. Her clothes and how she looked seemed to be a distraction for her. "Sara is sliding in her chair, fixing her pants and playing with her hair. She continuously looks up and tries to make eye contact with the other children. She whispers to Francisca who is testing" (OBS 12-13).

In the classroom, Sara was not a worker, nor one who studied and completed homework. During the spelling games, she did not know the words and called out any letters, rather than attempt to spell the word correctly (OBS 1-11, 1-14, 1-16). When given an assignment, Sara would piddle and act unmotivated. However, when the work needed to be turned in, she sought assistance either from the teacher or other students (OBS 11-12, 11-13). On one occasion she put her head down, turned it sideways and began to copy Henry's paper (OBS 11-27). Even during group work, Sara failed her partners:

> Sara begins her part of the presentation on facts. She is speaking very slow and methodical. She is pretending that she cannot read Spanish! Sara stops in mid-sentence and smiles at the class. I cannot believe she is

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> pretending to be stuck! Her group begins to help her and she finishes her part. (OBS 11-14)

Sylvia

Sylvia was a student in Mrs. Salas' class. It was Sylvia's idea to ask children about the children's food preferences when interviewing them. She was a Spanish dominant student with a lot of personality. Sylvia, like her parents, was a Mexican immigrant. The family migrated to the United States when Sylvia was ready for pre-kindergarten. Sylvia began her schooling at another school in Pharr. She lived with her mother, father and a little sister who was two years old. Some of Sylvia's favorite foods came from Rincones, a city right across the Mexican border. "*A mí me gusta la pizza, menudo, taquitos de Rincones, licuados de Rincones—allá están bien ricos*" (INT 1-15). (I like pizza, menudo, taquitos from Rincones, milkshakes from Rincones—over there they are very delicious.)

Sylvia was quite talkative with Carmen (her best friend) and myself. However, during class time she was quiet. Like many of the other students, she would answer questions, when either of the teachers asked her directly; otherwise, she would not volunteer. Her favorite pastime was to play with her dolls in a doll carriage. When asked about language and learning preference, Sylvia answers, "*Más o menos, el español. El inglés me gusta, me gustan los dos iguales. Mí mamá me dice que si no aprendo los dos, no es bueno*" (INT 1-15). (More or less, the Spanish. I like the English, I like them both the same. My mother says that it is not good if I do not learn both.)

Although Sylvia was at a stage where she was still very Spanish dominant, she attempted writing the English language by asking other students how to say and spell

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words in English. When responding to the prompt, "What do you want for Christmas?" Sylvia was able to communicate her wants in English. The most difficult part was finding someone in the room who knew what a canopy bed was, as no one could tell what she was talking about with her description. Finally, Mrs. Salas was able to decipher what she wanted and Sylvia wrote her response. "I want a bike because he never bring [to] me a bike. I want a canopy bed and I will leave him a coca cola and cookies" (OBS 11-28).

On the Friday of my first week of observations, Sylvia and Carmen stayed behind and asked if I would be there the following week. I said yes. Then Sylvia asked me again, "*¿Si va venir la otra semana?*" (CON 11-16) (You are going to be here next week?) Again, I answered yes. Then both of them approached me, gave me a hug and a kiss on the cheek. As a former teacher, this was not an unusual act from my immigrant students. More than anything, it is a symbol of appreciation and respect. After this day, Carmen and Sylvia never left without saying goodbye in that manner.

Overall characteristics

The students' individual personalities and life experiences revealed diverse characteristics. While almost all of them displayed the positive work ethic described in the literature, Luciano, Julissa and Sara did not. Although many of them fit the profile of quiet children, those with bilingual and biliterate skills like Jacinto, Francisca, Eduardo, Margarita, and Marivel displayed a verbal, assertive, and participating nature. Their first and second language skills were developed when schooling had been consistent such as with children like Marisa, Marivel, Margarita, Juanita, Jacinto, and Francisca. Their first

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language skills were developed when they had received the foundations of literacy in México such as the case with Eduardo, Justo and Julian. Children with erratic schooling or those that had left México during a critical time in their literacy development did not have strong literacy skills in either language. Examples of these learners were Carmen and Joaquin.

These characteristics did not seem to be perceived by the Two-Way school as "deficits". Rather, it seemed that by addressing skills in Spanish and English on a daily basis, the school was in the process of getting the students to proficiencies in both languages. I never heard any of the teachers describe any of the children as slow or unable to learn. Children's strengths were recognized as they were allowed to test in the language of their choice. Relatives in México or transnational contacts were often discussed as the children felt a comfort and a freedom to speak about those experiences. There seemed to be an acceptance of the children's diversity at Palmitas Elementary.

At least eleven of the children revealed contacts with México and Mexican media. Many of the children watched the after school shows on the Mexican channel. A surprising number of them confessed their addiction to Mexican soap operas. During unstructured discussions, the children discussed Mexican singers and bands that were popular on the Spanish radio stations. On Mondays, the children could be overheard talking about their trips to Rincones, a city across the border. They spoke of food and relatives "on the other side".

Mrs. Salas took into account the fact that some of the children had not yet developed their second language skills. For the purpose of spelling, some of the children were given a reduced spelling list. Usually Mrs. Salas gave these children anywhere

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from seven to ten words of the 15 word list. This gave the children an opportunity to concentrate on their reduced list and to be able to earn a 100. Without this consideration or initial support, many of the children would have experienced failure week after week. When asked about this practice Mrs. Salas answered, "They are not there yet, but they will be" (CON 1-14). Once children were able to spell their complete list, Mrs. Salas challenged them further by adding more words. This consideration was also extended to the English dominant children. Some of them had problems with letter-sound relationships and were also assigned a short Spelling list.

All of the children, from Amanda to Sylvia and including the English dominant children left quite an impression on me. As I transcribed the field notes, I relived my time around them, their faces and their words coming back to me. I recalled the time that each of them warmed up or reached out to me for the very first time. I documented these times because I wanted to know when they began to feel comfortable enough to actively seek me out. While Margarita sought me out her first day back from Washington, it wasn't until my third week in the field that Justo reached out a hand to me as I walked by his chair. Two days after that, Julian walked into the room bringing me a drinking cup made out of layers of foil paper. He said that he made it for me. The first time Rosita sought me out was the Family Reading Day as she wanted to talk about her father coming to school.

It took time for each of the children to begin to trust and feel comfortable with me. Their different times of reaching out to me showed that each of them had their own internal gauges. To conduct a study of children of Mexican immigrants it has been necessary to first build the trust factor. A de-contextualized research design where I

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visited the school on certain days of the week would have not been as effective. By attending school with the children everyday, I allowed them extended time with me. They were able to find the times that they felt comfortable with me. I made sure to wait to interview them after their comfort level had been established.

A subsequent finding was that the children were most comfortable with me when I sat with them. During this sitting time, the children touched me a lot. They touched my hair, my bow, put their hands on my shoulders, and leaned on me. This is when we talked best. When I was standing, it seemed that I created the barrier of adult vs. children. It became very clear that as I walked around the classroom I seemed to be perceived as the teacher looking over their shoulder. I was above them and imposing on their space. This is when they would say, "Miss, sit here." Anyone of them would go to get me a chair and I was immediately transformed to their level.

On my last day in the field, the children planned a surprise breakfast for me. Apparently, I had revealed my love of potato and egg tacos. When I arrived to the classroom that day, there were good luck signs outside of the door, streamers and balloons. A table was set with enough potato and egg tacos for all 41 students, Mrs. Salas, Mrs. Torres, Mr. Sanchez and myself. The teachers had decided they would have a "roast" for me. They explained the concept to the children and they talked about what they should say. Mrs. Torres and Mrs. Salas felt this would make it less difficult for the children to say goodbye.

Together, both teachers and the students had recalled some of the humorous things we had experienced. The day of the Fall Festival, some of them took my little notebook away and put me in the cakewalk game. Marivel had studied me and knew the

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opening line I used before I sat with the groups. Then there was that one particular day they stressed me out because Mrs. Torres had a substitute and they were not being as good as I knew them to be. The following day they told Mrs. Torres that I had acted "responsible" and had helped to settle them down. As ready as they were, the roast did not happen.

The children became emotional and decided to thank me for going to school with them. They kept raising their hands and saying nice things, rather than the humorous things they had agreed on. They thanked me for erasers, pencils, trinkets, talking to them, being their friend, and asking them questions. They became emotional and teary and came to hug me after they would express their feelings. Mrs. Salas and Mrs. Torres could not figure out why they changed the program. After transcribing and reviewing all of the data, I can say that I understand it now. Their school, their classroom, their setting was not a place where one student laughed at another. They respected and assisted each other's triumphs, attempts, and shortcomings. The school culture at Palmitas Elementary was one of understanding and mutual respect for other, as will be addressed in the second question.

The Ethos of Reception at Palmitas Elementary

For the second question in this study, I explored the ethos of reception, or school culture at Palmitas Elementary. To answer the question completely, I look different levels of the school to include: the principal, the faculty, the school, school functions and the classroom levels of school culture. There were opportunities to leave the classroom when the children were testing. To remain in the classroom while the children tested was somewhat of a distraction for them. The children tried to show me their work or asked

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for assistance. I followed a process to help me experience the culture of the school. First I would walk the hallways and observe happenings. I often stopped to see the student projects on display for all of the grade levels. I took notes on the assignments and the children's responses. It was easy to tell what each grade level was doing by the projects on display. I would listen to children, parents or adults in the hallway. If something interested me, I would ask questions.

Second, I sought out Mr. Sanchez who often found me before I found him. I did not seek him out to speak to him, but rather to be around him. I observed him with teachers, parents, and students, pulling duty, meeting with visitors and dismissing students at the front of the school. I paid attention to him during the informal times when he was walking the hallways and during formal time when he addressed teachers and visitors to the campus.

Third, I attended the staff monthly meetings that took place in the library after school. These took place once a month, so I was able to attend 3 faculty meetings in all. I also took notes of what was said, who spoke and what were the underlying themes of the meetings. There was only one grade level meeting and I attended that one as well.

Fourth, I frequented the side of the cafeteria where the children waited for their teachers after lunch. The tables on the right side of the cafeteria were for eating only. The tables on the left side of the cafeteria were for sitting, playing games, eating snacks and waiting for the teachers to pick them up after lunch. Once the students finished their food, they went to the tables on the left. I would meet the children there and listen to them as they talked, played games, and ate their snacks. They taught me their card games and I would play with them. I would visit Mrs. Torres and Mrs. Salas' students as well as

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other students from other tables that came to speak with them, and to inquire about me. I was presented as their friend.

Finally the notes and observations in the classroom were supplemented by other data on the school. I listened and took notes on the morning announcements. Mrs. Torres or Mrs. Salas shared their memos with me and I jotted down what they were mostly about. When the "paper passer" passed out the notes home at the end of the day, I tried to get one. I participated with the class in school-wide functions such as the Fall Festival, Christmas Program, awards assemblies and family reading day. The data sources for the elements of school culture were: (a) participant observations (OBS), (b) interviews (INT), (c) reflective notes (REF), (d) documents (DOC), (e) artifacts (ART) and (f) conversations (CON), and faculty meetings/gatherings (FAC).

The Principal Level

The three themes that emerged in relation to Mr. Sanchez were living logo, students first and success for all. The first contact that I had with Mr. Sanchez was over the phone. (I called to request a meeting with Mr. Sanchez when I decided on Palmitas Elementary as the site of my study.) As discussed in chapter 2, a living logo is the type of principal who communicates his or her message as they go about their daily routine. He answered the phone in Spanish and listened. I gave him my name and my purpose for needing to meet with him (in English). He responded in Spanish that he had several district meetings in the days to follow, but could meet with me in two days. I responded in English that it would be fine, and I thanked him for his time. In Spanish, he wished me a good day and said goodbye. At the end of the phone call I realized that he was using the language of the day. I felt embarrassed for not having "caught on". I felt that I

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should have spoken to him in the language that he was using. I also reflected on the fact that he did not explain his choice of language to me. I could have been anyone, a parent, a board member, or the superintendent, and he answered the phone using the language of the day without explanations or apologies. He had been communicating the language of the day on his campus by simply adhering to it as he answered and spoke on the phone.

Mr. Sanchez usually began the school day on or before 7:30 a.m. He went directly to walk the hallways and visit with students, teachers and parents. The number of parents that not only dropped their children off, but also walked them to the classrooms took me back. There was a constant trickling in of families in the morning. Some of them were dressed for work and others wore shorts and warm ups. The teachers who had breakfast with the students in the classroom were available to the parents who wanted to inquire about their children. It was a very relaxed atmosphere, as parents entered and left the building. Mr. Sanchez greeted and spoke to everyone that he encountered. During this time Mr. Sanchez communicated the fact that they were important as he took the time to stop and converse.

> What I saw this morning, can only be described as mom and dad traffic. Each hallway had parents, holding their children's hands and taking them to their classrooms. Mr. Sanchez stopped and said good morning to the parents in English because it was the language of the day. He greeted the parent and the child. One particular parent seemed to be walking very slowly. Mr. Sanchez said, "I cannot believe you are up and around already!" and then he gave her a hug. She proceeded to tell him and me that it had been four weeks since her surgery. (OBS 11-12)

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After school Mr. Sanchez took on the same visible role, but outside in front of the school. Some of the parents drove up, parked and sat in the small lobby at the front of the school. Other parents walked to the school to wait for the students at the benches outside. Stuffed chairs had been placed in the lobby so that parents could wait until dismissal at 3:30. These parents sat and talked while they waited, rocking babies in strollers so they would not cry. After school, these chairs and the benches outside were filled with parents. The circular drive in front of the school was used for parent pickups. Mr. Sanchez personally said goodbye to the children by opening car doors and loading the children into their vehicles. This, however, does not describe the situation completely.

> Mr. Sanchez is opening car doors and sending children home. This is not enough; children turn around to give him a hug before climbing in their vehicle. A green van drives up and the two little girls and small boy give Mr. Sanchez a hug and proceed to climb in. Then the parent in the front seat reaches back to shake Mr. Sanchez' hand, which means Mr. Sanchez needs to almost get inside the vehicle to reach. As he goes to close the sliding door of a the van, one of the two little girls he already hugged reaches back for a second hug. Then her little brother decides he needs another hug as well. ...and there were fifteen more vehicles behind that one. (OBS 1-23)

Though his daily routine, Mr. Sanchez communicated the importance of linking to the community. Parents were greeted and spoken to on a daily basis. Mr. Sanchez, aside from constant modeling and adhesion to the language of the day, demonstrated a staunch

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commitment to the students of Palmitas Elementary. It was clear that his students were first. On my first day of fieldwork, Mr. Sanchez came to Mrs. Torres' classroom to inquire about my day. I mentioned that I was amazed at the English proficiency of some of the children of Mexican immigrants. He said, "It less discernable at fifth grade, because they are all (referring to both groups of learners) so bilingual" (CON 11-12). Mr. Sanchez interrupted my next statement; I do not recall exactly what I was going to say to him.

DR: I noticed that some of the LEP (limited English proficient) students...

Mr. Sanchez: Miss Ramírez, we do not refer to our children as limited in any way. The children at Palmitas Elementary are bilingual, biliterate and bicultural. We do not use the term limited English proficient to refer to any of our students. You will find that our teachers do not use that term either. It's part of the philosophy of a Two-Way Program. We can all learn from each other if we do not consider the other person limited. (CON 11-12)

Mr. Sanchez, by correcting me, had shown his student advocacy. I think he also saved me from future embarrassment, as I later came to realize that no one on campus ever used the LEP term.

During the week of district testing, I was able to spend more time than usual in the hallways. A teacher had stopped Mr. Sanchez in the hallway and asked him for permission to call local businesses for candy donations (OBS 12-13). Her intention was

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to make goodie bags for Santa Claus to hand out to the children the following week. Mr. Sanchez told her that there was money for the students and for her to go ahead and purchase what was needed. When the teacher insisted on calling the businesses, Mr. Sanchez reiterated, "Our students have money, we do not need to be asking for donations for them" (CON 12-13). In both of these instances, Mr. Sanchez used a polite tone. Mr. Sanchez' "students first" advocacy seemed to have been communicated to the students as well:

> I was walking the front hallway when I saw 2-3 boys run out of the boys' restroom. There was a custodian outside of the girls' restroom and two teachers on bathroom breaks with their classes. The children ran past the custodian, the teachers and myself. They ran toward Mr. Sanchez who was coming toward all of us. They ran to tell him that there were bees in the boys' restroom. It was as if they knew Mr. Sanchez would take care of it; they did not take the problem to any of the other adults in the hallway. (OBS 12-6)

After this incident, I thought about the custodian, the teachers and myself. We were all adults, yet the children seem to have trusted Mr. Sanchez (REF 12-6). He immediately said, "Where? Show me", and followed the boys. They solved the problem together by chasing out the bees and closing the doors next to the bathrooms that had been left open.

The faculty level

The themes "learning for all" and "students first" were also evident in Mr. Sanchez' formal time with the teachers. "Learning for all" describes the culture of a school that seeks to meet the learning needs of all its students. It is about

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individual students meeting their potential. The "students first" theme describes the vision and goals of the school. These themes are connected as the faculty meetings and agendas addressed two types of learners: learners in general and those that were not doing well academically. The three faculty meetings and agendas were about special populations, and placing students first. During the November meeting Mr. Sanchez addressed the issue of special education students. He seemed pretty concerned about that specific population of students. He introduced Mrs. Jimenez and asked her to review her communication forms with the staff. Mrs. Jimenez methodically went through each of her forms, often elaborating, "Please, just write the name of the story you are reading in your class. All I need is the math skill you are working on; I'll take it from there. You don't have to write a lot" (FAC 11-27). Mrs. Jimenez was very nice and used a very friendly tone. Then Mr. Sanchez spoke:

> Our special education students have special needs; you already know that. You know they have needs that are met through modifications. You also know that these students show different levels of progress in your classrooms, yet your classrooms are the least restrictive environments for them. That is the law. You as the teacher need to be providing them [special education students] with modifications according to their individual plans. For those of you who are not doing this, I am bringing this to your attention. If you do not follow the modifications, then these are grounds for dismissal. (FAC 11-27)

Mr. Sanchez then reiterated the importance of filling out Mrs. Jimenez' weekly communication form. He reminded the teachers that Mrs. Jimenez needed those forms so

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that she could reinforce the same skills that were being addressed in the classroom. He reminded them that special education forms documented the student' services and progress. After the meeting, I stayed to speak to Mrs. Jimenez. I had been on campus two weeks and was surprised at Mr. Sanchez' tone. Mrs. Jimenez explained that a few teachers were not complying with her forms (CON 11-27), so Mr. Sanchez asked her to address the issue at the faculty meeting. Although Mrs. Jimenez' forms were full of blanks and lines (DOC 11-27), she seemed quite empathetic with the staff. She said, "I know you have a lot of paperwork, so please, all I ask is the story and the math skill" (FAC 11-27). The focus on special education students took most of the meeting time. Other items on the agenda that day also addressed the students' needs: (a) the need to hire a librarian or paraprofessional, (b) Saturday tutoring for students, (c) and extended day tutoring that would begin in January (DOC 11-27).

The agenda item that caused some teachers to get upset was the library issue. As the campus librarian had been transferred to a new position within the district, the teachers did not want book circulation to be interrupted. The need for someone to be in the library before, during and after school hours was especially critical with the Accelerated Reader Program. Many of the teachers were upset and said it did not make any difference whether the person was a professional or not. Some of them then made comments about the prior librarian's work ethic. One teacher became pretty loud, flailing her arms as she spoke, "My children need to come to the library everyday! (OBS 11-27)" Another followed her lead in a similarly loud tone, "My children need to come every week to check out books. I always check out 20 extra books so they can test" (OBS 11-27). I felt as if though they were taking it out of proportion (REF 11-27). I looked at Mr.

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Sanchez and he listened to every single comment. He let every single teacher vent his or her frustration, as at least four more of them spoke in the same upset tones (OBS 11-27).

At the end of the meeting I felt that some of the teachers had been disrespectful by using harsh tones and getting overly emotional over the librarian's position. Since the teachers were advocating, albeit angrily, the need for student library services, Mr. Sanchez allowed them to say what they needed to say. By the following day there was a paraprofessional in the library helping the students check out books. Initially I could not understand why he let the meeting, in my view, "get out of control" (REF 11-27). It wasn't until I analyzed my field notes that I realized those angry teachers were advocating for their students; that is why they were so angry.

The second faculty (FAC 12-18) meeting, in keeping with the "success for all" theme, also addressed two populations of students that needed special attention. The first population, those in danger of not passing the T.A.A.S. test, would be addressed through an extended day. Teachers would need to stay after school and give the children 45 extra minutes of instruction. They would be paid the district hourly wage for teachers, which was $20 per hour at the time. Mr. Sanchez said, "I remind you, all our students need to pass the T.A.A.S." (FAC 12-18). The other population that was addressed was the students who were in danger of not passing to the next grade level. He said, "Look at your class and tell us about those children that are not on grade level, those that are non-readers, specifically" (FAC 12-18). Mr. Sanchez asked for two volunteers per grade level to tutor approximately 32 students per grade level, giving each teacher 16 students to work with three days out of the week. He said, "Do not limit your grade level to a list of 32 students that need help. If we need to pay another teacher, we will" (FAC 12-18).

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Forms were passed out to document the volunteering teachers as well as the names of the students in need of assistance. It seemed that the grade levels had previously discussed who would volunteer to tutor as the forms were quickly passed to the teachers who signed their names (OBS 12-18).

During the meeting one teacher questioned the duty and faculty meeting interference with tutoring. Mr. Sanchez said that those teachers not tutoring needed to cover the duties of those who were. He also said, "I will not schedule faculty meetings on tutoring days, we need to take care of these students" (FAC 12-18). Mr. Sanchez then spoke to the teachers about the new students to the district:

> I thank you for working together. I thank you for your support. You have been in the limelight as we have had lots of visitors lately. You guys are excellent...our school name is out there because of the work that you do. I appreciate that. I realize you are getting new students everyday and that this may be frustrating. (An overflow in a neighboring school was sending children to Palmitas Elementary almost on a daily basis.) It is not good to say, "She's not ours." "He's not mine." "She comes from over there." By the mere fact that he or she is on this campus—that makes them ours. We need to do everything we can to get them on track. (FAC 12-18)

The third faculty meeting was as uneventful as the second one. Had I based my judgment of this school on the first meeting, it would have been a harsh one. The third meeting was to fine-tune the details of the extended day. Teachers asked questions about whether the district would be forthcoming with the children's after school snacks.

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It seemed that many students had been recommended for the program and the district level administration needed a final count in order for the snacks to be sent. I observed many children staying after school in the third grade hallway (OBS 1-17) and rooms with more than 20 per teacher. The teachers didn't seem to have any qualms about the number of students who needed tutoring. At the end of the meeting, other teachers had volunteered to tutor and help with their overload.

My first grade level meeting was after the district test results had been returned to the campus. These were the results of the week of testing in December. "We" had heard a rumor from a veteran teacher that the children had not done well. The meeting was held shortly after the children were taken to P.E. and music. Mr. Sanchez began the meeting by saying, "Here are your results. (He passes the individual reports to each teacher.) I do not think the children are where they need to be" (FAC 1-15). The teachers begin to look at their scores and the room became very quiet. Mrs. Salas and Mrs. Torres looked at their individual printouts and then shared them with each other. Mr. Sanchez reminded the group that last year, the entire grade level had been revamped when their scores had been just as low. He says, "We need to intervene right now and concentrate on reading and math. I am really worried about their math comprehension" (FAC 1-15). The room was still very quiet and no one spoke. He then began to make suggestions. "What about ability grouping? What if you divide the children into five groups and divide the subjects among you five? What if you give them two doses of math and two doses of reading?" (FAC 1-15) He wanted the suggestion to come from the grade level, but they did not speak on the issue.

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Then Mr. Sanchez asked me, as a reading consultant, to provide some suggestions. He said, "Luckily we have an expert on campus, Miss Ramírez is a reading consultant. What is your opinion Miss Ramírez?" (CON 1-15) It was difficult to speak at first, because my role on campus had been as an observer and a learner. To answer questions as a knower made me uncomfortable. I had worked at keeping my pedagogical knowledge on classroom delivery of instruction to myself (REF 1-15). I was able to make several solid suggestions on the teaching of reading objectives and testing strategies, citing examples from classroom practice. He then asked, "Would you revamp the classrooms?" (CON 1-15) I hesitated and then gave him a very honest answer. I said that departmentalized instruction would work if (a) every teacher prepared her lesson very well, (b) there was no time wasted between the five transitions everyday, (c) discipline and classroom management was consistent from classroom to classroom, (d) the instruction was centered on the tested objectives, and (e) the teachers used testing strategies that were consistently used and rewarded from class to class. I wondered if that is what he wanted to hear. When visitors came on campus and Mr. Sanchez asked me to speak to them, it was for the purpose of what I felt to be "public relations". I was called to support the program and the school. This meeting, he defined my role as a consultant, and I answered what a consultant would answer. However, the nagging feeling remains, "Was he seeking my support or my opinion?" (REF 1-15)

Mr. Sanchez' visibility throughout the day and the way he spoke to faculty, parents and students support the theme that he acted like a living logo. He was a symbol of community in the school. The "students first" theme supports the idea that the students overall, were a priority for the teachers and staff. Furthermore, the "success for

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all" theme specifically addressed the principal and faculty's concern for special populations such as those in danger of failing their state exams or not passing to the next grade level. During the times he addressed these populations the teachers were supportive, volunteering to tutor and inquiring about the children's snacks.

I received the opportunity to enjoy the faculty in a less structured setting. I was invited to the faculty party as their guest. I was honored and able to attend. Upon arrival, many of the teachers humorously questioned the location of my field notes. "Where is your little notebook, did you forget it?" (FAC 12-20) The celebration was held in the community center of a gated community where Mrs. Jimenez lived. There was food, music, games and prizes. Mr. Sanchez stood back and let the party committee direct the festivities.

While there, I became aware of a friendly battle among the cafeteria ladies. It seemed that exactly four of them were from the state of Tamaulipas, Mexico and the other four came from the state of Nuevo Leon, Mexico. Each of the groups was asking Mr. Sanchez to hire a ninth cafeteria cook so that the tie would be broken. Of course each of the groups wanted him to hire someone from their native state (12-20). He teased them a bit and went to visit some of the groups. Mr. Sanchez, acting as a "living logo" had managed to build community with his cafeteria staff, as well. Everyone had the most fun when the door prizes were passed out. It seemed that the prizes did not "fit" those who won them. A gentleman won a manicure at a beauty salon. Another gentleman with very little hair won a haircut. He smoothed his the top of his head for all to see and laughed. All of the teachers on diets won the food certificates and everyone laughed at the door prize outcomes. The staff that worried and worked so hard knew how to have a

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good time. They laughed and teased each other playfully. As I began to make my way home, Mr. Sanchez made it a point to thank me for being there and wished me a save drive home (12-20).

Campus level

There was something about Palmitas Elementary that called people to it. On the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month there were usually visitors on campus. They were coming to see what a Two-Way Program looked like. They walked the hallways in little groups looking through classroom windows and entering classrooms in groups of two or three. Sometimes they came from nearby school districts, other times from districts that were quite a distance from Las Palmas. Sometimes there were teachers and administrators visiting and at other times superintendents accompanied their teams of administrators and teachers.

> Today Mr. Sanchez came to look for me. There were four principals and six teachers in the HOSTS room who had come to look at the program. Mr. Sanchez explained to them that he viewed the program as a win-win situation for all learners, as all of them learned a second language. Mr. Sanchez very proudly told them that I was conducting research for my dissertation at Palmitas Elementary. One of the principals asked me, "What is the best thing that you see about this program." I answered with one word, "Parents." I explained to them that the parents seemed to feel a comfort or acceptance in the school. I described some of the school functions where the parents packed the parking lot to the point that they would fill up the open field next to the school. I explained how all

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> parents, humble or not, Spanish or English, immigrant, rich, poor, came through the front doors to see about their children. (OBS, CON 1-16)

After meeting with Mr. Sanchez, the visitors were allowed to walk the hallways and visit the classrooms freely. Mr. Sanchez told them, "The show you see here is the show that we have everyday" (OBS 1-16). The visitors stopped to take notes on the projects and student work on display. It was customary to reconvene with Mr. Sanchez for questions after the visits were complete. Visitors at Palmitas Elementary were a common sight.

The most salient theme that emerges from the school activities is what Nieto (1996) calls cultural continuity and congruence. Nieto (1999) defines cultural congruence as having the same cultural understandings and experience. By attending school functions, the parents communicated a sense of "cultural continuity or congruence" with the school. Identification between the parents and the school seemed to have developed, as will be evident in the two examples that follow.

Family reading day. One school activity that "packed" the school with parents was an activity to celebrate Children's Book Week and National Parental Involvement Week. A note was sent home with the message in English on one side and Spanish on the other side (DOC 1-12). The note was signed by Mr. Sanchez and the "Family and Community Committee" and invited parents to come to school to read to their children. The note asked the parents to bring their children's favorite books. There were designated times for each of the grade levels. Third, fourth and fifth graders would read from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. First and second graders would read from 9:15 to 9:45 a.m. Pre-kinder and kinder would read from 10:00 to 10:30 a.m. (DOC 1-12). The note took into

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consideration that some families had children in more than one grade level. "*Sabemos que algunos de ustedes tienen hijos en diferentes grados, por eso les pedimos que escogan un horario designado para alguno de sus hijos(as)*" (DOC 1-12). (We are aware that some of you might have children in different grade levels. Please choose one of the designated times for one of your children.)

What struck me about this activity was the extraordinary parent turnout without any type of monetary investment on the part of the school. Basically, the cafeteria tables were set up, ready for the children to eat lunch at noon. The school simply provided a sitting space and an schedule for the parents to come to the school. There was no set program and no one visibly in charge of the activity. I paid particular attention to the parents who arrived:

> Many of them have walked to school with strollers and small toddlers in tow. There is also the professional parent who is suited up and obviously coming from work. I follow some of the parents into the hallway and watch them go to their children's classrooms, knock on the door, and walk back to the cafeteria with their sons or daughters to find a sitting space. Some of the parents seem to have arrived without books and I see that the teachers provide these. (OBS 1-15)

The cafeteria was filled with a "buzz" of reading. I looked for a place to sit, but there was no room anywhere. From a distance, the books spread out on the tables gave quite an impression. The tables were filled with people and no one was directing this activity. I spotted Mr. Sanchez in the doorway as he looked over the group. He looked in, saw that all was well and made his way back to the office. This was not a time for

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speeches or greetings, it was a time for family reading and that is exactly what happened (REF 1-15).

> One small family catches my attention. The mother, a very humble Mexican woman has picked up her daughter who looks like she might be in second grade. Hanging on her hip is a baby boy who looks to be about year old. Sitting on the stool between the mother and second grade daughter is another daughter who looks to be about three. All of them, from the baby to the mother to the toddler are listening to the second grader read. She reads, and then turns the page. As I get closer to them, I realize the second grader is reading in Spanish. When the time is up, the second grader kisses her mother, her baby brother, and her little sister before she heads back to the room with the book they borrowed. (OBS 11-15) The lady looks at me and I smile and tell her, "*Qué bueno que vino a leer con su hija*." (It is so good that you came to read with your daughter.) She answers, "*Ya cumplí*." (Loosely translated, "I have met my obligation.) (CON 1-15)) I looked around several times to see if anyone had a camera. I thought that an event of this magnitude with these results needed to be photographed, but there was no one. (REF 1-15)

After observing this family I noticed other aspects of this community. First of all, I observed as many mothers as fathers in the cafeteria. There seemed to be a mix of poverty and affluence in the cafeteria, though no one noticed because they were too involved in the act of reading to their child. The languages that were being used for reading were non-issues; reading in Spanish or English was something that no one really

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noticed or paid attention to (except for me). I spotted Laura's mother and she waved to me; she was sitting and reading with Laura and two of Laura's friends. Other children begin to spot me against the wall and waved.

> Rosita's dad has come to read with her. His clothes are soiled and it is obvious that he is a mechanic. Rita sits on his lap and her older sister sits next to him. Rosita is so proud of his presence that she keeps motioning to me that he is there. Rosita's dad is very humble and keeps his eyes down, his blackened fingernails following the text in the book as his daughters take turns reading (OBS 11-15).

This simple activity invited the parents (in both languages) to go to school and sit with their child to read. The note did not specify what language the child should be read to, only that reading would take place. Furthermore, the note did not specify who would be reading, again, only that reading would be the focus. The activity was not set up as a program with an agenda and a presentation. This made for a non-threatening environment for parents of all socioeconomic and educational levels. The cultural continuity issues of language and acceptance were non-issues in this activity. When Rosita returned to the classroom, it looked as if she were floating on air. The rest of the children seemed happy as well, but Rita seemed the most affected by her dad's presence in the school. She looked for me to talk about the activity and this was the first time she sought me out.

> Rosita: My dad is mechanic, Miss.
>
> DR: Yes Rosita, I saw his uniform.
>
> Rosita: Miss, he was dirty because he went to work at five this

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morning and then he left work to come here.

DR: I think it is awesome that your dad came to read with you.

(CON 11-15)

Just four days later, the school held another activity that brought in the same magnitude of parents again, showing the "cultural continuity" that the parents felt with the school. In observing the "cultural continuity" for the Mexican Immigrant parents, I also began to look at the parents of the English dominant child. Would they feel a "cultural discontinuity" (Nieto, 1999) because Spanish was also used at Palmitas Elementary?

Fall festival. The Fall Festival was an activity where the grade levels set up booths in the cafeteria and gym for the children to enjoy. This activity was also for the purpose of raising money. The students have been able to purchase tickets at twenty-five cents each. Most of the children of Mexican immigrants have a few dollar's worth of tickets, however, the more affluent children in the Mrs. Torres' room like Laura and Henry have been given twenty dollar-bills to spend. The teachers were given tickets for the children who did not have money to purchase them. Mrs. Torres asked, "*Levante la mano el que no tenga boletos para el festival*" (OBS 11-20). José does not have tickets and she gives him about eight of them.

The third grade teachers were in charge of setting up a Duck Pond with a small pool and rubber ducks. Carmen's mom, who does not speak English, had been recruited to run the duck pond when Mrs. Torres and Mrs. Salas returned to class with their students. Other grade levels had different booths such as the penny toss, basketball toss, golf game, make-up booth, nail painting booth, bingo table, etc. Outside there was a

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picture booth for families and students to take instant photographs. Inside the cafeteria was the cakewalk and the stage was literally covered with cakes. Since the second grade teachers sponsored the cake booth, all second graders were asked to bring a cake and there were more cakes than could possible be won.

> The gym is blaring with music. There are parents and children everywhere, speaking English and Spanish to those running the booths. "How many tickets?," they ask. "*¿Cuántos boletos*? One man is dancing his way through the crowd as his daughter gets embarrassed. A family stops and asks me, "*¿En dónde están tomando las fotos*? (Where are they taking the pictures?) Evan, from Mrs. Salas class has his little brother who is in kinder. Evan takes him to all the booths. Like Evan, I begin to see how the older students are taking their younger siblings to the booths. I find José and Jaime who are out of money and I give them some of the tickets that I purchased. (CON, OBS 11-19)

Many of the parents took the opportunity to make the day a family day. Here, again I observe husbands and wives with small children and babies in strollers. It is a day of having fun and I see there are no divisions in this community. Families go from booth to booth and then to sit in the cafeteria to eat. Some of the booths have very long lines, but everyone seems patient. The most popular booth is the nail-painting booth. There are two parent volunteers at two desks with a collection of nail enamels, two or three bottles of polish removers and lots of cotton balls. Each of these ladies has a line of about fifteen girls; their lines do not diminish. As one girl gets her nails done,

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another gets in line. I watch them and discover that all the girls are choosing the blue nail polish.

> These ladies are painting as fast as they can. Their lines do not fluctuate and they do not even have a chance to look up. They both speak only Spanish and this does not seem to matter. There is a father with his daughter at the very back of the line. He asks her if she wants to go somewhere else and she indicates that she wants to wait. What he does next takes everyone by surprise; he leaves his daughter in line and goes to look for a chair. I do not move until I see what he does. He pulls up a chair and begins to paint little fingernails, too. (OBS 11-19)

The day was filled with activity and fun. Mr. Sanchez was barely visible, as he would look into the cafeteria and gym only to make sure everything was going well. Most of the teachers were involved in the running of booths. This would normally mean that students could misbehave. However, this did not happen. Children could be seen everywhere, watching others attempt the games and holding on to the little prizes they won. The school provided rulers, small back scratchers, stickers, and small stuffed animals to the booths for prizes. After walking around the gym, I made my way to the cafeteria with Stephanie and Carmen who took my notebook away so that we could bond. I treated them to Frito pies and drinks. They insisted I join them in the cakewalk game, but the cake prize seemed to elude us after four tries. Jake's mother (from Mrs. Salas' room) came to visit with me.

Mrs. Vega, Jake's mother, recalled getting the letter and giving permission for me to be in the room. She talked about enrolling John in the Two-Way Program. She said,

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"We want him to learn more languages, not just Spanish and English. We're looking for a place to take him in the summer. We want a child who is well rounded, academically and physically. He does a lot of sports." I asked her about how she felt about Jake learning Spanish. She indicated that Jake seemed to be challenged by the Spanish language. Jake, from classroom observations was not a fluent Spanish speaker. Mrs. Vega said that when he was little they had only spoken English to him, but that he would learn Spanish now.

Low-risk activities such as the reading day, Fall Festival and others allowed parents to visit the campus and make themselves visible as parents and guardians. It was truly culture in action. The "cultural continuity" was visible as the music that blared in the gym fluctuated between English and Spanish songs. It was visible as parents, teachers and students communicated, regardless of language dominance. I regretted not having a research design that included photographs, as my words will not do justice to what I have seen (11-20). The use of two languages on the campus was a welcoming aspect of the school because the parents' languages were reflected there. The Spanish-speaking parents would not run into a language barrier while at Palmitas Elementary. The feeling of acceptance at Palmitas Elementary provided a culture where the humblest of parents would feel welcome. I suspect that they did not achieve this overnight. The physical presence of the parents in the school is only part of the school's notable accomplishment. Somehow they have managed to accommodate the immigrant community without alienating the rest of the community of Las Palmas.

Projects and assignments. Another aspect of Palmitas Elementary's "cultural continuity" or "cultural congruence" was its use of "homework" and "in class"

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assignments to link the school to the home or vice versa. The nature of these assignments was usually very "parent friendly". During a particular unit of study or event, the students were given projects to be completed at home. Many times these projects left the language response up to the student. Other times, as was in the case of Science and Social Studies projects, the language was to be Spanish. The school, through the use of projects and assignments was able to involve the parents in the children's work. The projects ranged from simple art projects to writing responses to presentations on different subject matter. This part of the school's culture was always visible outside of the classrooms. It was part of the Las Palmitas culture to display student work outside of the classrooms. Upon closer inspection, many of the displays were credited to multiple names. This was evidence of the paired and group activities that went on in the classroom.

One of the many projects that stood out from the month of November was the project on medicinal plants. This project was observed in the fourth grade hallway (OBS 11-14). The walls were covered with poster boards. Mounted on each poster board were samples of plants. Some of these had been pressed and dried. Others were put in plastic bags with wet paper towels at the roots. As I read the reports it seemed that the students were to investigate local medicinal plants, describe them and explain their purpose or use. The responses were in Spanish and before I knew it, the projects' owners had surrounded me. "Look at mine, Miss", they all requested. Together we examined all of the plants. I learned which herb/plant was good for eyesight, weight loss, blood pressure, diabetes, and so many other ailments. Then I asked the students where this information came from. They answered in unison, "*Abuelitas*." (Grandmothers) One student said, "I had

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to ask my grandmother and then I had to take some of her plants. (OBS, CON 11-14) This assignment had provided the students a connection to their own cultural roots.

In the kinder hallways during the month of December, the teachers had sent home the outline of a Christmas tree. The children were to fill the outline with whatever materials were available to them. I observed trees outlines covered in glitter, pasta shells, different types of beans, candy wrappers, leaves and Fruit Loops. This seemed like an easy project for anyone to be able to respond to. At the turn of a corner, I saw that the children in the first grade hallway had written letters to Santa in class and there were many requests. The requests were in either Spanish or English and in the children's own writing and invented spellings. When the children choose the choice of language response, they are more likely to write more (OBS 12-11). Some of the requests that I jotted down were:

1. I want to be yur hlper. (I want to be your helper.)
2. *Quero [Quiero] una muñeca de bebé cómo[la de el] el nutcracker.* (I want a baby doll like the one in the Nutcracker.)
3. *Quiero una computadora.* (I want a computer.)
4. *Quiero un telescopio.* (I want a telescope.)
5. *Quiero una muñeca de vestido azul.* (I want a doll with a blue dress.) (OBS 12-14)

While only one of the responses was in English, the responses in Spanish showed solid letter and sound relationships. These were obviously children with a first language other than English, but not missing out on literacy development because they did not yet have those skills.

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Not too far from there, a teacher in the kindergarten hallway had the children respond to the rhyme "N*avidad, navidad, ¿qué es lo que ves*?" (Christmas, Christmas, what do you see?). The children had responded in Spanish and with illustrations (12-14). Looking at what is displayed on the walls throughout the school, I realized that there were no worksheets put out on display. These were works produced by the students on clean white paper. There were different levels of literacy in each class, as is obvious by the responses. However, all work is displayed regardless of the differences. This is not copycat work where all of the responses need to be the same to be correct; none of the work was reproduced from samples. All of the answers were original student responses (REF 12-13).

For the Christmas, Christmas what do you see prompt, the children responded:

1. *Veo a Santa mirándome a mí.* (I see Santa looking at me.)
2. Veo los cuetes [cohetes]. (I see the fireworks)
3. *Veo un mono.* (I see a stuffed animal)
4. *Veo los regales [regalos].* (I see the presents)
5. *Veo los foitos [foquitos].* (I see Christmas lights)
6. *Veo las botas.* (I see the boots)
7. *Veo el pino mirándome a mí.* (I see the Christmas tree looking at me.)

(OBS 12-12)

During the month of January there seemed to be a revival of activity after all of the testing that took place in December. Everyday I found more projects and assignments outside of the classrooms. The children in the fourth grade hallway

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responded to Martin Luther King's I Have a Dream speech, kindergarten teachers asked for 100 Day Celebration home projects, and the first grade teachers asked for home projects called "Family Traditions". The project in honor of Dr. King's birthday was bilingual as the children could respond to "*Yo tengo un sueño…*" or "I have a dream". Whether in Spanish or English, the children responding to this prompt expressed their feelings about war, peace and dreams. Some of the responses for the Martin Luther King writing were:

1. No more violence or drugs or people dying
2. No more hate, that people will treat each other the way they want to be treated
3. Peace, freedom, equal rights of the white people
4. Peace in the world like I have seen Martin Luther King give his speech
5. Peace for our nation, no more terrorists, violence, and more respect for each other
6. *Para que las personas de color y los blancos se junten, que ya no peleen* (That people of color and whites unite, that they not fight anymore)
7. *No quiero guerra ni aquí ni en otro país* (I don't want war nor here, nor in any other country)
8. *Yo tengo un sueño de crecer en una nación sin violencia y no morir porque otros te disparan* (I have a dream to grow up in a nation without violence and not to die because others are shooting at you)

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9. *Que no haga guerra ni violencia...nadamas paz. Tambien que todos sean felices con nosotros y que se ayuden unos a otros* (That there would be no violence...only peace. Also that everyone would be happy with us and that people would help each other out)
10. *De regresar al pasado y que el avión que chocó a las torres gemelas no lo chocó* (To return to the past and that the plane that crashed the Twin Towers did not crash into them) (OBS 1-17)

The response to I Have a Dream was an "in class" assignment. The 100 Day Celebration assignment was a "home work" project. During the daily news, discussed in chapter 4, teachers addressed the informal use of the language through a daily opening activity. Daily news counted each school day for the purpose of the One Hundred Day Celebration. On the one-hundredth day of school, the kinder children were to bring in a One Hundred Day Project. The project consisted of showing 100 objects in any format. For this particular project, all of the kinder teachers had their rectangular tables outside, as some of the projects were quite large. The response was phenomenal and quite diverse. Many of the families opted for objects in a jar. There were marbles, glass stones, colored rocks, jellybeans and many other objects in jars. However, others opted for more creative projects (OBS 1-17).

One family built a city map with streets, stop signs, stores and buildings. It was a rather large creation that took up almost half a table. In the city, the family placed little cars traveling everywhere-exactly one hundred of them. Another family built the number 100 out of Lego blocks and small animals. One family built the number similarly with a Mexican brand of bouillon cubes glued onto a poster board. Another response was a

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patriotic scene laid out on a poster board; this included American flags and one hundred toy soldiers in formation. The more I looked, the more than I was amazed at the creativity. I saw a mermaid doll attached to a piece of colored cardboard surrounded with 100 seashells. One family glued 100 pennies on a piece of cardboard in the perfect formation of a star. There were so many projects and levels of response. Some of the projects were simple, but nevertheless, the families had taken the time to count 100 objects. Two of the simpler responses that I noted were 100 very small pebbles in a baby food jar. The other entailed 100 thin sticks glued on a piece of paper (OBS 1-17).

These in class and home projects were on display and showed the effort of parents and students in the classroom. The use of home projects provided a connection to the home and an opportunity for the children and their parents to work together on an activity. These projects did not have parameters such as length or language response. It was simply counting to 100 with any objects available to them. I was especially intrigued with a first grade project called "Family Traditions". In this project, the children were simply asked to report on a tradition their family celebrated. This was also due in January. The children had been on break during the Christmas holidays, so many of them reported Christmas traditions. The poster boards had pictures of families eating turkey, decorating trees, and opening presents. One family documented a road trip to visit relatives out of state. There were pictures of a little boy holding the map for his dad. They showed the small car stopping to photograph the snow that was beginning to fall and cover the road. Another picture showed the boy's two sisters crossing the street to buy refreshments for the family. The boy wrote: *Nuestra tradición es visitar familiares distintos y lejanos. Nuestros abuelos están en* Washington. *Nos vamos en el auto y yo le*

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ayudo a mi papá con el mapa. Yo le digo a mi papa por donde vamos. (Our tradition is to visit distant and distinct relatives. Our grandparents are in Washington. We travel in our car and I help my father with the map. I tell my father where we are traveling.) The car in the picture was a very small and not very new model. Yet the family was able to travel to Washington and back. Their trip was on the wall of the first grade hallway for all to see (OBS 1-23). As is evident, the language of response was up to the student, thus providing "cultural continuity" between his life at home and the school.

A few days later I saw that more projects had been turned in. Many of them reported on Mexican traditions in their families. I will mention a few. One reported the Easter tradition in the family. The child wrote that three days before Easter, her entire family neither listened to the radio nor watched T.V. She went on to describe the reason behind the celebration on Easter Sunday, which included confetti eggs and food. Another child reported the Christmas Eve tradition of rocking the figure of a baby Jesus and praying the rosary as a family. Then the family's recipe for *pozole* (a hominy and pork dish) was explained in detail. The recipe was written out for all to see, including the side dishes that needed to be prepared as well. Another child described the Mexican tradition of eating *buñuelos* (fried cinnamon crisps) and popping fireworks on New Year's Eve. All of these projects were written in Spanish (1-28). I specifically chose to report on the Spanish language contributions, as the English contributions were traditional American festivities such as tree decorating, opening presents, and attending church services, etc. These responses show the Mexican culture celebratory activities. Palmitas Elementary was a place where these parents could showcase their traditions. There was plenty of room on the wall for everyone to share their traditions.

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The Classroom level

The culture of the Mrs. Torres and Mrs. Salas's classrooms shared similarities with the culture of the school. The three themes that emerged from the classroom codes were sharing, helping each other, and additive bilingualism. These were overall happenings in the classroom on a daily basis.

Sharing. The first theme that evolved from the classroom culture is sharing. The children demonstrated sharing in many ways. Sharing was most visible during the sharing of materials, but less visible when the children shared work by dividing their labor. One of the practices of Two-Way Immersion Programs is the use of bilingual pairs for learning. This means that at times the children will be working with his or her bilingual pair to read a book or complete an assignment. There were times, in the observation of the classes, that I observed children working in their pairs and wondered if I was seeing things.

> I stand up to walk around and from the adult view, I am able to see the bilingual pairs as they share a copy of the novel, *Las telarañas de Carlota* (Charlotte's Web). Two children share one copy. It is amazing that they know how to share the space between them as well as the novel. One partner looks at the text as the other tracks the reading by pointing to all of the words. Somehow they have designated who will track and who will follow with his or her eyes. I look over the class again and there is no one pulling the book to his or her side. The book is placed between the partners. (OBS 1-16).

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Sharing took place when the children were working on assignments. As group or bilingual pair work was assigned, the children began by deciding who was going to do what. In this example, Francisca and Marisa shared one large sheet of white paper and one social studies textbook. After I see them get started, I decide to question them to see if they will divide the labor, or if one of them will do all of the work.

Francisca: (Telling Marisa) *Aquí John Smith mandó a los inglés a Inglaterra*. (Here, John Smith sent the English to England.

Marisa: *Sí, quería establecer la paz*. (Yes, he wanted to establish peace.)

Francisca: I'm telling you and you say it; I don't know how to write it.

Marisa: O.k. (Marisa begins writing. She is very methodical with her handwriting. She is printing about two-inch letters. Francisca is patient and assists by holding the paper for her and dictating the sentence phrase by phrase.)

DR: How are you sharing your work?

Francisca: We work together. We read it and find the facts.

DR: So, Marisa is one who is going to write?

Francisca: We are going to take turns, I will write the next one and she will read it to me. (OBS, CON 11-14)

Francisca and Marisa explained how they would share the work to meet the objective of the poster they were assigned to do. As the children shared the labor to complete their readings and assignments, they also decided to share my labor of data collection. They quickly became aware that I wanted to see everything that they were doing. After this awareness set in, they began to facilitate my study by sharing what I

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had previously observed over their shoulders. As the following examples will tell, they did not have any qualms about sharing their work with me. For the first example, it is necessary to explain that Mrs. Torres had assigned a writing prompt that said, *¿Te sientes orgulloso de ser estadounidense*?" (OBS 1-16) (Do you feel proud to be American?) Looking back, perhaps it was not the most politically correct writing prompt because some of the children were born in Mexico and may not have identified with the topic. As I sat next to Eduardo, he whispered, "Miss, mine sounds like a poem." Mrs. Torres called on him to read just as he was handing his response to me. Eduardo read it to the class and both Mrs. Torres and I were moved by it OBS 1-16).

> *Aunque yo no soy estadounidense estoy orgulloso de estar en este país tan libre. Y también con reglas muy justas. También la bandera se significa libertad y justicia para todos. Tambien es un país justo y no hay otro país como este. Sobretodo el presidente ayuda a la gente pobre. Y tambien paga el Day Care. Y todos estamos unidos yo creo que se debe llamar Estamos Unidos*. (DOC 1-16)
>
> (Although I am not an American I am proud to be in this country that is so free. And also with rules that are so just. Also the flag signifies liberty and justice for all. Also it is a just country and there is no other country like this one. Overall, the president helps the poor people. And also he pays for the day care. And we are all united, I think it should be called We are United.)

When Eduardo was finished reading his response, the children "wowed" at

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his reading. He looked at me and at my open notebook and said, "Miss, do you want to copy it into your little book?" (CON 1-16). I told him that I had already copied part of it. Then he had another idea, "Miss, why don't you make a copy of it for you?" (CON 1-16) (I liked the idea as it would be in his writing.) Eduardo then folded his response in half and placed inside my notebook. After they got back from P.E. Eduardo I gave Eduardo back his original and showed him my copy. He was very concerned that the pencil had not copied very dark in some areas. He offered to press over his original so that I could make another copy. Somehow Eduardo knew that his piece was important and he wanted to share it with me.

A similar event with an English dominant child showed the desire to share in my work, and also an understanding of what I was doing in their classroom. During this particular event, the children are taking a reading and a language test. Mrs. Torres is sitting at her table as I enter the room. I began to look over Mark's shoulder to see what the test looks like.

> Mark is working on the writing test and realizes that I am looking over his shoulder. Without skipping a beat or looking up, he takes his completed reading test out from under the writing test and hands it up to me. I began to look at the reading strategies that Mark is using when I realize how automatically Mark gave me his test. Then Margarita, sitting next to Mark, looks up at me as I examine Mark's reading test. She hands me her language test as she has already finished it and continues working on her reading test. (OBS 1-11)

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Helping each other. The sharing of their work with each other and with me exemplifies the next characteristic that the children revealed. This characteristic was not evident in the literature. Initially I had called this characteristic "collaboration". However, when I questioned the children on what they were doing, they consistently called it "helping". This helping theme accommodates the children who do not yet have the second language strength. They are not singled out, they just help—as everyone gets help. While observing partner reading with Carol and Justo, I noticed that Carol was unable to pronounce many of the longer Spanish words. When she got stuck on the word "*plastilina*" (clay), Justo sounded out the word for her syllabically. I said to Carol, "Justo is so good at helping you" (INT 11-14). Carol answered, "We help each other Miss" (INT 11-14). Carol made it clear that although Justo was helping her then, she would help Justo later, possible during English instruction. During a spelling assignment, Mrs. Torres asked the children to define the spelling words, find rhyming counterparts, use them in context, divide them by syllables and finally to find multiple meanings of the words.

> The English dominant children are having problems with the section of the paper called "*significados multiples*" (multiple meanings). At this point they approach their bilingual pairs who not only assist them, but also review their work. Amy takes her paper to Francisca who finds a mistake in the definition of the word "*lechuga*" (lettuce). Francisca tells her, "*Es comida, no comer, comer es un verbo.*" (It is food, not to eat, "*comer*" is the verb.) (OBS 11-12)

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Help was also provided when the Spanish dominant children needed assistance. In English language arts with Mrs. Salas it was customary on Monday to introduce the story by reading it aloud. After a short discussion, the children would break up into their bilingual pairs to re-read the story. The partners would alternate reading pages of the story.

> The story ends and the children are assigned to partner read. I walk around and listen to the children read with their partners. As they read, the children help each other when they are stumped by a word and correct each other when a word is misread. Joaquín and Daniel are reading. Daniel is so good with Joaquín, although Joaquín knows a lot more than he lets on. I stop to listen to them. Joaquín is able to decode words that are short, 4-5 letters on the average. Any word longer than that escapes him. I observe Daniel counting up to five on his fingers before providing Joaquín with help. As they take turns reading Joaquín is assisted when he reads and David serves as a model of correct English reading and pronunciation. (OBS 1-14)

Additive bilingualism. Similarly linked to the "helping" theme is the emerging pattern of "additive bilingualism" that was facilitated in the classroom through the actions of sharing, helping, "in class", and "home work" assignments. This theme made everyone in the room a second language learner. At different times of the day these children were challenged by the convections of a new language. Perhaps this is what gave the languages equal status. One of the "home work" assignments in Mrs. Torres' class was to report on a historical figure. The children's assignment was to conduct

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research, create a visual presentation on poster board and an oral presentation using note cards.

> Amy, an English dominant child, volunteers to speak next. Her report is on Harriet Tubman. She just attacks all of the critical points on Harriet Tubman's life with the least reservation. She reports in broken Spanish, "*Ella ayudó 750 esclavos en el ferrocarril subterraneo.*" (She helped 750 slaves in the Underground Railroad.) Then Amy explains every picture on her posterboard. Amy explains, "*Este dije [dice] que ella murió en Nueva York y este dije [dice] de cuando ella se escapó del, del...*plantation. (This one tells that she died n New York and this one tells about when she escaped the, the...plantation.) Amy could not remember the Spanish word for plantation, yet continues with her report. The children then ask Amy questions in Spanish and Amy is able to answer them all. When she comes to sit down (next to me) she finally takes a breath. I congratulate her and she says, "Thank you, I practiced with my mom." (OBS 12-3)

Amy's "additive bilingualism" was evident as she was able to deliver her presentation in Spanish. When Amy and the other English dominant children gave their reports, the children who were Spanish dominant listened intently and asked pertinent questions. There was never a snicker or a sign that they recognized errors in Amy's or anyone else's presentations. It was evident that the children had respect for those learning a new language. In the following example, Jake, an English dominant child shared his journal response in Spanish. Jake's Spanish is more developmental than

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Amy's and he made many mistakes during his oral reading. This was probably due to the fact that Amy's presentation had been practiced and Jake's journal response was spontaneous.

> *Yo está contento de estar en este...este...continente. Yo está contento porque....los estados unidos, yo...vivo aquí...* (I am happy to be on this this continent. I am happy because...the United States, I...live here...) Jake makes a lot of grammatical mistakes and I was not able to record the main idea of his journal response. I was looking at the reaction of the other children to Jake's attempts. No one said anything, so Jake read confidently. It seemed as if there was respect for Jake's attempt. (OBS 1-16)

The additive bilingualism theme contributed to the culture of the classroom so that there was respect for each other as second language learners. The children were able to make attempts that were not always perfect. As no one laughed at mispronunciations or mistakes, it made for a safe environment. In a way, everyone was accommodated, not just the children of Mexican immigrants.

The culture of Palmitas Elementary was multidimensional in nature. The principal revealed a visible leadership role comparable to Deal & Peterson's (1999) "living logo". Mr. Sanchez' "students first" vision and "success for all" definition of school success were evident in his everyday actions. Faculty meetings and agendas revealed a similar "students first" vision as well as the definition of "success for all". Palmitas Elementary's school activities and assignments revealed the "cultural continuity" or "cultural congruence" theme that provided a connection between the home

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and the school. The school wide activities were low-risk in nature and allowed the parents to feel comfortable in the school. The "home work" projects and assignments allowed the students to respond in their native language and culture. These themes underscore the idea that this particular Two-Way School accommodates the children of Mexican immigrants and their parents.

The Best Practices that Composed Two Way Instruction

For the third question in this study, I documented the practices that were used consistently in the daily delivery of instruction. For this particular question, I studied the teachers' direct instruction and the practices employed in their delivery of instruction. I also studied the students' responses to the instruction during and after the lesson. During the teachers' delivery of instruction I remained at the back of the room and was also a "recipient" of the lesson. During the assignment portion of the lesson, I responded in one of Two-Ways. One practice was to visit all of the groups to see how they were responding to the assignment. Otherwise, I joined one group and remained with them until the assignment was completed. When part of the group, I took a "student" role and participated as the other children did. The data sources for the practices were: (a) participant observations (OBS), (b) interviews (INT), (c) reflective notes (REF), and (d) conversations (CON).

The practices used most consistently with the children in the Two-Way Program were "Language of the Day", "Daily News", "Learning Charts" and "Bilingual Pairs". Language of the Day and Daily News were observed throughout the campus and not limited to use during in the third grade classrooms that were the focus of this study. The use of Learning Charts and Bilingual Pairs were practices observed in Mrs. Salas and

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Mrs. Torres' classrooms. Although I did not observe bilingual pairs in other classes, Mr. Sanchez and other teachers spoke of it as a practice used consistently throughout the school. Classrooms observations were conducted only in the two third grade classrooms that were the focus of the study.

Language of the Day

"Language of the Day" is the use of the Spanish and English languages alternately to promote their use in informal communications. In the mornings, Mr. Sanchez could be found greeting students and teachers in either Spanish or English, depending on which one was being used that day. Upon arrival, I was always glad to run into Mr. Sanchez, as I knew the language of the day by how he greeted me. Otherwise, I would ask a child and they would inform me. Initially, it was difficult for me to keep up with the language of the day because I would be observing Math in the English language or Social Studies in the Spanish language. After one of these lessons, I would step into the hallway and not remember which language I should be using. For those who worked at and attended Palmitas Elementary everyday, it seemed to be second nature. Typically, right after the children's breakfast (8:30 a.m.) Mr. Sanchez began daily announcements. Depending on the language of the day, Mr. Sanchez would guide the children in pledging the flag and then in reciting the students' pledge. Afterwards, the students would sit down and listen to the announcements, which usually included birthdays and other relevant happenings.

> *Buenos días a todos. Hoy tenemos muchos niños que están cumpliendo años. En* pre-kinder *tenemos a Juan Muñoz y a Miriam Benitez quienes están cumpliendo* 55 *años. En primero año tenemos a Sabrina Garza quien está cumpliendo* 76 años. *En el tercer grado Miguel Salas cumple*

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> *hoy* 88 *años. Y la anciana del día es* Stephanie Gray *del cuarto año quien cumple hoy* 99 *años. Felicidades a todos y que pasen un buen día.* (OBS 11-12) (Good morning to everyone. There are many children who are having a birthday today. In pre-kinder we have Juan Muñoz and Miriam Benitez who are 55 years old today. In first grade we have Sabrina Garza who is 76 years old today. In third grade, Miguel Salas is 88 years old today. And the old lady of the day is Stephanie Gray in fourth grade; she turned 99 years old today. Congratulations to all and may everyone have a good day.)

Part of Mr. Sanchez' humor included adding the extra years to the children's birthdays. Likewise when he announced teachers' birthdays he would announce ages such as twelve, fifteen or sixteen. The children always laughed at his "miscalculations". In a way, Mr. Sanchez' humor encouraged the children to listen intently to the morning announcements in either language.

Language of the day was also followed in places such as the cafeteria, hallways, and library. In the cafeteria the paraprofessionals on duty would speak to the children in the language of the day. During one of my cafeteria visits, I stopped to talk to a first grade class. I noticed they were drawing and coloring Christmas trees. I stopped and complemented them on how pretty their trees looked. I noticed they are all speaking Spanish to each other. There must have been 5-6 of them within earshot of me after I sat down to help one of them draw a tree.

DR: Why is everyone speaking Spanish?

Many: It's the language of the day.

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Girl: Do you know how to speak Spanish?

DR: *Sí, yo sé hablar español.* (Yes, I know how to speak Spanish.)

DR: *¿Es verdad que aquí aprenden en dos idiomas?* (Is it true that you learn two languages in this school?)

Many: *Hoy es español.* (It is Spanish today.)

DR: *¿Y mañana?* (And tomorrow?)

Many: English.

DR: *¿Qué idioma les gusta mejor?* (Which do you like better.)

Girl: (Looks up from coloring) We're bilingual. (They all nod and continue coloring their trees.) (OBS 12-3)

Similarly in the classroom, the "informal" non-instructional communications took place in the language of the day. On Spanish language day, Mrs. Torres took roll call in Spanish and the children responded with "*presente*" (present), rather than with "here" (OBS 11-12).

The children had a "matter of fact" attitude when discussing the language of the day with me. I felt that what I was asking was not a major issue for them (REF 12-3). The language of the day practice was also used in the classrooms, but during informal times only, as the content area language was dictated by the schedule. This was explained in chapter 4. The use of the language of the day seemed to give the English and the Spanish language equal status, as they were used alternately depending on the day of the week. The children listened and heard adults adhering to the language of the day, so they practiced it as well.

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The Daily News

The daily news is the morning activity discussed in chapter four. This activity was used as an opening activity in grades kinder to second. This practice was not observed in the upper grade levels. The daily news was also conducted in the language of the day as it elicited information from the children. Although this activity was meant to promote the use of informal language, teachers seemed to capitalize on the many skills that the daily news evoked. On occasion, some of the teachers took their children outside to "gather information" for the daily news. One particular morning, I found a class lined up on the sidewalk.

> The teacher directed the children to stand on the very edge of the sidewalk and to face the grassy field. The teacher asked students to look around and feel the weather. She asked them to look at the sky, the clouds, the grass, and all of their surroundings. The children then realized that they could not see the sun. "*Está muy obscuro y no se ve el sol.*" (It is very dark and you cannot see the sun.) Then one of the children pointed to the dew on the grass. "¡Está mojado el zacate!" (The grass is wet!) Another students added, "¡Es sereno!" (It is dew!) After they finished their observations, the teacher said, "Vamos al salón a escribir las noticias." (Let's go back to the room to write the news.) (OBS 12-3)

The daily news was guided and written by the teachers as the children contributed and discussed them. The daily news followed a daily pattern of discussion that began with the date, followed by the weather, then a statement from one of the students, and finally a statement about how many days the children had been in school.

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The teachers wrote the information on chart tablets as the children "dictated" their contributions. It was not unusual to see daily news charts posted outside of the classrooms. Visitors and children on their way to other classrooms could be seen stopping in front of these charts to read them. The following examples are daily news from Mrs. Treviño's kindergarten class.

Spanish daily news: *Hoy es el día martes,* 11 *de diciembre del* 2001. *El clima de hoy es nublado y fresco.* Katarina *dijo—Me gusta mí papa siendo policia. Hoy es el día 78 de los 100 días de celebración.* (Today is Tuesday, December 11, 2001. Today's weather is cloudy and cool. Katarina said, "I like my father being a policeman. Today is the 78th day of the 100th day celebration.) (OBS 12-11)

English daily news: Today is December 12, 2001. The weather for today is cloudy and warm. Mario said, " I like to watch Jurassic Park." Today is the 79th day of the 100th day celebration. (OBS 12-12)

As I visited the hallways, I noticed that the daily news charts had words circled in red, sentences underlined in blue and sometimes a configuration of dots near the number of the day. One day as I copied the daily news, Mrs. Treviño came out of her room to speak to me, so I was able to ask about how the daily news were marked. First of all, Mrs. Treviño explained that the circled words were added to the word walls, as they were "new" words to the children. A second activity related to the daily news was when Mrs. Treviño asked the children to find a sentence in the paragraph. One of the children would then volunteer and point to the beginning of a sentence and trace that sentence all of the way to the end. A sentence in the paragraph was then underlined in

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blue. "This is so they can develop the understanding that a sentence begins and ends at different points in a paragraph (INT 1-17)", Mrs. Treviño explained. Mrs. Treviño also explained that as she wrote the children's ideas, she would say, "I am not finished here, but I do not have any room, so I need to go over here to the next line (INT 1-17)". A final activity was to make dots to represent the number of the days in school. If it were the 79th day of school, the teacher with the students would count to 79 making groups of dots. This was meant to give the children an idea of what the number would look like as it was counted out with the teacher.

This practice was effective in focusing the children to the instructional day. Since it was part of the daily routine, the children were accustomed to the morning discussion. At the pre-kinder through second grade levels it gave students experience with pre-literacy and pre-writing skills such as left to write progression, punctuation, capitalization, and numeracy. The daily news also capitalized on the children's observational skills as the weather was documented each day. Through this activity the children were able to see the writing process in progress. Letter and sound relationships were modeled as well, since the teacher wrote with the students. The finished product was then left up in the room for the children to refer to. A similar activity was observed in the third grade classrooms of the children of Mexican immigrants.

Learning Charts

Learning charts were similar to daily news in that a similar process was used to construct them. In this activity, the students also dictated information to the teacher, however the information came from social studies and science concepts learned in class. This required a higher level of language, which included academic and content

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vocabulary and knowledge. After a period (usually 2 to 3 days) of Science or Social Studies instruction, Mrs. Torres reviewed the main ideas of the previous lessons with the children by asking them for details that supported the topic. It was customary to first write the title on the chart to focus the students' attention to the topic they would construct together. During this activity, the children were not required to raise their hands or wait their turns to speak. It was more like an open discussion where anyone could contribute (REF 12-11).

> After the test Mrs. Torres reviews the concept of energy. She sits on a small chair next to a chart tablet and stand. In her hand, she has different colored markers. She uses these to vary the colors in the chart tablet. She provides the title of the chart they will work on. She writes: *Tipos de energía* (Types of energy). It seems to focus the students as they nod and recall they have been studying concepts of energy. The topic seems familiar to them and they wait for Mrs. Torres to begin asking questions. (OBS 12-11, REF 12-11)

During observations of learning chart construction, Mrs. Torres seemed to have a pre-determined idea of the concepts that she would elicit from the students. After the title, Mrs. Torres would very naturally begin to ask the children to define the concepts that supported the title of the chart. During this time the children would sit on the carpet and openly contribute and discuss the topic. It seemed to be a very low-risk environment, as the children called out ideas at will. What struck me was that the discussion also seemed to be an evaluation (REF 12-11) of what had been taught. By their responses,

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the teacher would know if instruction in that subject matter had been effective or if there were still aspects of the subject matter that required more clarification.

> Under the title of types of energy, Mrs. Torres writes: *sonido* (sound). The she asks the children, "*¿Qué tipo de energía es este*?" (What type of energy is this?) Many children respond, "*Que podemos oir*." (That which we can hear.) After this she draws a squiggly line and reminds the children that sounds vibrate. Then Mrs. Torres writes: *luz* (light). She asks the children, "*¿Qué tipo de energía es este*?" (What type of energy is this?) The children answer, "*Qué podemos ver*." (That which we can see.) Mrs. Torres asks the children if they can think of a source of light energy and they respond with "*el sol*" (the sun) and she proceeds to draw the sun with an orange marker. (OBS 12-11)

As the lesson continued, Mrs. Torres asked the children about other types of energy, such as chemical, electrical and mechanical energy. The children seemed to have trouble defining these more difficult concepts. However, Mrs. Torres would persist and give the children small hints, rather than offer the definition. When questioned on electrical energy, the children drew a blank. Then Mrs. Torres said, "*Acuerdense por donde pasa la energía electrica...*"(OBS 12-11) (Remember what electrical energy passes through....) The children quickly remembered and together said, "*Las descargas eléctricas pasan atravez de los cables* (OBS 12-11)" (Electrical charges pass through cables.) This idea of answering together was also quite amazing. The children would come up with the answer collectively. One of them began the sentence and others jumped in to build the rest of it (REF 12-11).

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Once the types of energy chart was complete, it was hung in clothesline fashion on one of the two strings that ran across the length of the classroom. During the next science lesson, it could be used for review or it could be used to complement another lesson. Mrs. Torres usually focused her lessons with an oral review of one of the learning charts. Mrs. Torres would begin, "*Vamos a repasar un vocabulario que vimos la semana pasada. ¿Quién me puede dar una carácteristica de la materia*?" (OBS 11-14) (We are going to review the vocabulary that we saw last week. Who can give me a characteristic of matter?) Almost automatically, the children look forward or back to the chart titled "Matter" (OBS 12-13). As Mrs. Torres reviewed the vocabulary the children would look to the charts and readily provide the answers to her questions. During a lesson on facts and opinions, Mrs. Torres had the children refer to the charts to give examples of facts. "Hay muchas verades, voltea para allá y dame una" (OBS 12-13). (There are many facts, turn that way and give me one.) The students also used the practice of referring to the learning charts during independent or group work.

After a week of studying simple machines, the children and Mrs. Torres reviewed the concepts and created a chart called "*Maquinas simples*" (Simple machines). (Simple machines) Mrs. Torres asked the children to name the simple machines and then to give examples of them. Next to each type of simple machine, Mrs. Torres drew the example that the children suggested. For the pulley, the children suggested a flagpole. (OBS 1-23) The children really like to watch as Mrs. Torres draws what they request. Although, the drawings are simple, they seem to be very impressed and excited with her ability to illustrate their examples (REF 1-23). At the end of the unit on simple machines, the children are given an assignment to construct a model of a simple machine. Mrs. Torres

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places a box of materials on the floor and assigns the groups to decide which materials are needed before going through the box. Before the children begin construction of their simple machines, they all look to the learning chart on simple machines. They read the chart before one of them decides to retrieve anything from the box on the floor (OBS 1-23).

The use of learning charts at Palmitas Elementary is a practice that served many purposes. This strategy allowed the students to stop and reflect on the content of a specific unit of study. Furthermore, the strategy seemed to "bring together" the collective knowledge to a place where it could be summarized effectively. This strategy may have facilitated clarifications by the nature of the open discussions among the children. Finally, once the learning charts were completed, they seemed to serve as points of reference for the children as they completed extensions of the lesson. The learning chart idea may not be a novel one. Teachers supply stores are packed with learning charts that are pre-printed. Learning charts from any subject can be found—from dinosaur species to parts of speech. However, the practice in the classroom was not just another display, but rather one that the children had contributed to. The class learning chart was the students' own knowledge on display, not someone else's. This practice allowed students to interact with the content and with each other to produce a summary that was posted for all to see and use.

Bilingual Pairs

The practice of bilingual pairs was used in the classrooms throughout the school. An English dominant child was paired with a Spanish dominant child for the purpose of cross learning. Each child then had a person to go to for assistance during instruction,

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independent and group work. Children at Palmitas Elementary had two bilingual pairs. For example, Francisca (a focus student) was paired with Anita during Spanish instruction. Francisca and Anita worked together on projects and work assignments. When Anita needed clarification with the Spanish content, her resource was Francisca. Francisca was paired with Laura during English instruction. Francisca and Laura worked together on projects and work assignments. When Francisca needed clarification with the English content, her resource was Laura (INT 1-18). Though bilingual pairs may seem like a difficult concept to explain, Luciano provides a simpler definition.

DR: What is a bilingual pair?

Luciano: Like a partner, it's a partner that can help you.

DR: Who are your partners?

Luciano: Margarita and Sonia.

DR: How do you help them, or how do they help you.

Luciano: Sonia helps me with the reading book because I need to know some words, or I have questions. In Spanish class, I help Margarita with her questions.

DR: How do you feel about bilingual pairs?

Luciano: Good, because sometimes your best friend may be your partner. (INT 1-14)

In addition to the bilingual pairs providing help, the practice of bilingual pairs seemed to make the children feel good about themselves. Most of the class assignments were either group work or work assigned to bilingual pairs. This seemed to take the "independent" out of independent work. This practice made most of the work

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collaborative work and provided a social aspect to the completion of assignments. When asked about the practice, most of the children responded positively. Jacinto, a focus student, responded as follows:

DR: What are bilingual pairs?

Jacinto: It's like fun to be with your partner...the partner is there to help you.

DR: Who are your partners?

Jacinto: Frank and Carol.

DR: How do your partners help you?

Jacinto: Actually, I help them.

DR: How does this make you feel--to help them?

Jacinto: Good. Carol doesn't know a lot of Spanish, so I can help her in Spanish class. Frank sometimes doesn't know how to do something, so I help him.

DR: And this helping is o.k. with you?

Jacinto: It's good. Helping is good. (INT 1-14)

Although Jacinto did not seem to need assistance during assignments, he seemed to enjoy helping others, possibly because of the social aspect of the practice. During the times that the children were allowed to work in bilingual pairs, talking was allowed and the children could interact with other bilingual pairs to seek assistance. Only one of the seventeen focus children did not agree with the practice of bilingual pairs. Perhaps the incident they share is an isolated one, but Sylvia and Carmen felt it was important to tell about it. It is also important to mention, that Sylvia and Carmen often kept to themselves

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and as best friends, preferred to work with each other. Unfortunately, they were both Spanish dominant and could not provide each other with the assistance needed during English instruction.

DR: *¿Qué piensan de los pares bilingües*? (What do you think about bilingual pairs?)

Sylvia: *Para mí siempre no es bueno, porque hay unos que a veces no te quieren ayudar*. (To me it is not always good, because there are some that don't want to help you.)

Carmen: *Un día Brandon no la quiso ayudar a terminar*. (One day Brandon did not want to help her finish.)

Sylva: *Francisca sí, ella sí te ayuda*. (Francisca does, she does help you.) (INT 1-15)

Bilingual pairs were usually employed at the end of a lesson to read a selection, to complete an assignment or to work on a project. In the case of assignments, the role of the bilingual pair was not to "help", but to collaborate. Many of the in class assignments discussed in question 2 were assigned as work to be done in bilingual pairs. At the end of the unit on simple machines, Mrs. Torres assigned the bilingual pairs to complete a model of a simple machine. All of the children met with their pairs to discuss the assignment. On this particular day, I decided to sit with Luciano and Margarita and observe how they would complete the project.

Margarita and Luciano have been assigned to make an example of a pulley. They are looking through the box of materials and Luciano finds many objects. He brings a string, a baby food jar, clay, and a pipe cleaner

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back to the table. Margarita examines their materials and asks, "*¿Qué es lo que tenemos que hacer?*" (What is it that we have to do?) Luciano reminds her, "*Una polea.*" (a pulley) They take a note card and begin to explain what they are going to make. I sit with them and look at what they write. "*La polea es una rueda alrededor de la cual pasa una cuerda o una cadena. Esta polea cambia la dirección de la fuerza.*" (The pulley is a wheel around which a wheel or rope passes. This pulley changes the direction of the force.) (OBS 12-13)

I was amazed at Luciano and Margarita' use of academic language as they wrote out the note card that would explain their project. Although they did refer to the learning chart on simple machines, they did not copy Mrs. Torres' written definition of a pulley. They were able to write their own definition using the information in the learning chart. After they wrote their definition, they began to examine their materials and were trying to figure out how to get the grooves inside of the lid to the outside so that the string would fit into the grooves. As it is only a model, Luciano decided that they could cover the lid with clay and make grooves with a pencil point. Margarita agreed that was the only way to show grooves on the lid (OBS 12-13). They shared the work by discussing and agreeing on what they would write and in how the pulley would be made.

A deeper aspect of bilingual pairs was the way the children did not always "help", but challenged the partner to achieve more. Perhaps, the children were not able to define this aspect in words. However, I observed this challenge when Daniel was helping Joaquín read his English text. Daniel did not automatically tell Joaquín the word he could not decipher. Daniel counted to five on his fingers as he waited for Joaquín to try

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and sound out the word by himself (OBS 1-14). During a group practice for a presentation on Social Studies facts, I observed Seth having problems with the text that his group assigned him. I sat with the group to see how they would assist him.

> Seth is having major problems pronouncing the phrase, "*Museo de recreación historico.*" (Museum of Recreational History) The children in his group are getting ready to present the facts to the class and Seth is unable to say the first four words. The parts seemed to have been randomly assigned. I sit and wait for one of the other three group members to trade one of their easier texts for Seth's wordier text. Marivel takes the leadership in the group and sits down with Seth. She says, "*Trata.*" (Try.) Then Marivel repeats his part syllabically with him and has him repeat each part until he is able to say it without stopping. (OBS 11-14)

The use of bilingual pairs at Palmitas Elementary provided help when the students needed assistance in completing an assignment. Upon closer observation, the practice provided a sense of collaboration in the completion of assignments. The students were able to check and discuss their ideas with another student. This seemed to provide a closer interaction with the subject matter. The surprising aspect of the use of bilingual pairs was that students had found a way to challenge each other, rather than to "feed" each other. Eduardo, one of the focus students, questioned my questioning of bilingual pairs. He asked, "Why are you asking about that." I explained that the use of bilingual pairs were not a practice used in many schools and that I wanted to know how they felt about it. Eduardo then made sure I wrote his response.

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> Brittany is a good partner, when I ask she helps me. I help her back in Spanish. Partners are good, Miss. I'll tell him for you, Miss. I'll tell him how they help each other here. Some of us are good in English and some of us are good in Spanish, Miss. (INT 1-17)

It was funny how Eduardo wanted to tell a "him" about bilingual pairs. He had understood the concept that I would eventually report my findings to someone. Eduardo assumed it would be a "him". His insistence in my writing his response and his subsequent checking that I had written his response communicated a lot. Eduardo felt that bilingual pairs were a positive practice and probably felt that bilingual pairs would be good for others to use (REF 1-17).

Language of the day, daily news, learning charts and bilingual pairs were practices used in the Two-Way Immersion Program at Palmitas Elementary. These practices contributed to the uniqueness of a Two-Way Immersion Program. The language of the day contributed to the development of an equal status for both the Spanish and English languages. The daily news contributed to the development of early literacy skills as well as to the informal use of the Spanish and English languages. Learning charts were a practice that kept the content area instruction focused in the minds of the students. The learning charts helped to summarize the most important concepts in any unit of study. Finally, the use of bilingual pairs allowed the children to enjoy learning in the context of collaboration, access to help, and a challenging environment.

Approximation to Vygotsky's Theories

For the fourth question in this study, I compared the practices that I discovered in the Two-Way setting at Palmitas Elementary to Vygotsky's theories of learning. As

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presented in chapter two, Vygotsky's theories of learning included the zone of proximal development and the idea that learning was a sociocultural process. Within the concept of the zone of proximal development were the smaller components that included an established level of difficulty, assisted performance, and collaboration with more capable peers (Cole, 1990, Moll, 1990, Vygotsky, 1978). Many of the practices in the Two-Way Program approximated Vygotsky's theories of learning. This was possibly due to the use of practices such as bilingual pairs, learning charts and the students' immersion in a second language. To answer this question completely, I reexamined Vygotsky's theories of learning and compared them to specific observations of children during paired work, direct instruction and content area instruction in the second language. The data on the practices had simultaneously been collected to answer question three.

The zone of proximal development emerged from Vygotsky's issues with intellectual testing. As was discussed in chapter two, Vygotsky (1978) felt that testing measured those skills that had matured in the learner. His "zone of proximal development", however, defined the distance between the students' actual development and the students' proximal or potential development (Moll, 1990). These skills in the process of development were also called "buds" or "flowers" as opposed to "fruits" of development (Cole, 1990). Furthermore, the zone of proximal development included the concepts of an established level of difficulty, assisted performance, and collaboration with more capable peers. The zone of proximal development was observed during the use of the second language, as well as with the teacher's delivery of instruction and the use of bilingual pairs in the mediation of content.

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Established level of difficulty

One of the practices employed at Palmitas Elementary was the use of the language of the day. This practice provided an established level of difficulty for the students learning a second language. On a day when Spanish was the language in use for informal communications, the Spanish dominant child was comfortable in his or her native language. This language was the one that had matured at the informal level. This Spanish dominant child did not have any trouble understanding the daily announcements or the teacher's directions to get ready to go home. However, on the day that English was the language of the day, the Spanish dominant child would be in his or her zone of proximal development. As the language of the day would be English, the Spanish dominant child would be challenged by the use of a second language. It was during this time, that the Spanish dominant child would need to work a little harder at understanding the language and its context. The same situation would occur during the times when the children were immersed in either Spanish or English for content area instruction.

> Justo (a focus student) is trying very hard. He sits very still and watches Mrs. Salas as she demonstrates the regrouping process. He looks at every mark that she makes on the chalkboard. Justo looks as if he is trying to decipher her code. (OBS 11-27) As I observe Justo, I wonder how much he understands. I think that he understands the mathematical process, as it is visible. However, when Mrs. Salas reads the word problem, does he understand the problem and the reason for the subtracting rather than adding? (REF 11-27)

As I observed Justo during a math lesson in English, I felt that he was

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understanding the process of regrouping in subtraction problems. This part of the lesson seemed to be in his zone of proximal development as the teacher went through all of the steps sequentially. He never looked away from the board (OBS 11-27). Perhaps, he had seen this type of problem in his school in México. The listening part of the lesson that required understanding of the story problem may have been out of his zone of proximal development as he had been in an American school just three weeks. For Justo to begin understanding of the language, it would be necessary for him to become more familiar with the language.

Similarly, for the children of Mexican immigrants with more developed English skills than Justo, the use of the English language for developing reading comprehension skills also provided them with an established level of difficulty. As discussed in chapter 4, the children experienced separation of languages for the purpose of instruction. The objective of this practice was for the development of academic language. The Spanish dominant students encountered words with multiple meanings in the English reading text. However, as the teacher and others serving in the capacity of the more competent peers and adults, the children were assisted in the comprehension of the multiple meaning words. In the following example, Mrs. Salas is trying to elicit the definition of the word "serious" in the text.

> Mrs. Salas proceeds to read two more pages to the children. They encounter the word serious. In the text, the father is scolding his son and asking him to get more "serious" about his schoolwork. Mrs. Salas then makes a "stone face" and asks the children if she looks serious. They laugh and say yes. Then she asks the children, "Do you think that is how

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> the boy's father wants him to be?" The children answer, "No (still laughing)." "Then how does he want him to be?" she asks. "What does the word serious mean in this story?" She probes and looks at the class. Brittany is almost falling out of her chair as she raises her hand. When Mrs. Salas calls on her, she answers, "His dad wants him to be responsible with his work." (OBS 1-14)

As Mrs. Salas developed the concept of multiple meanings in relation to the word serious, there were children who knew the word to the extent that it was a feeling or emotion. Before Brittany's correct response, Marivel had attempted to answer, "It is like happy, sad, serious." (OBS 1-14) Marivel was trying to infer that the word was simply a feeling or emotion. She was unaware at the time that the word had another meaning. The idea that a word could have multiple meanings seemed to be within Marivel's zone of proximal development as she nodded when Mrs. Salas said, "Words can mean different things. I can say that he (points to Seth) has a serious face or I can tell him to get serious about his work" (OBS 1-14). This discussion of the word allowed for Marivel and others at her level to recognize another meaning for the word serious. Mrs. Salas' awareness of multiple meaning words had facilitated Marivel and possibly others' cognition. This established level of difficulty was understood through Mrs. Salas and Brittany's role as the more capable peers or individuals. This relates to the second concept, assisted performance.

Assisted performance

Assisted performance was visible during group and bilingual paired work. In these instances, the children or more competent peers, assisted their group member or

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bilingual pair in meeting the objectives of the lesson or assignment. Justo, the most recent immigrant possessed very developed skills in Spanish. As Carol's bilingual pair during Science and Social studies, he was able to assist her in the Spanish content. During a presentation on the early settlers, Justo helped Carol present her part. "Justo assists Carol by whispering in her ear when she hesitates and Carol is able to present her part. When she is finished, Justo finishes the presentation and the class claps when they are done" (OBS 11-14). Justo was also able to assist Carol during Spanish reading. Carol seemed to have a lot of problems with the decoding and pronunciations of the Spanish language.

> Mrs. Torres assigns the students a reading on the chemical changes of matter. Carol and Justo begin to take turns reading paragraphs. Carol begins and mispronounces the word "*tomates*" (tomatoes) and Justo corrects her, "*Tomates no tomata.*" As they continue, Justo is able to guide her to successful reading of her section. Then it is Justo's turn. They both listen to each other read and Justo assists her to achieve correct reading of the text. (OBS 11-26)

In this example, Justo is the more competent peer in the Spanish language. He is guides Carol in the correct pronunciation and pacing of the text. When Carol was unable to decode a word, Justo began the word syllabically until Carol could decode it herself (REF 11-26). This activity of reading the text to each other seemed effective as both of the students were studying the chemical changes of matter in the directions for making pizza. Reading, decoding and peer assistance seemed to be a by-product of the social studies activity. The peer assisted reading was teacher-directed as Mrs. Torres assigned

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the bilingual pairs to read the text as part of the lesson. At other times in the classroom, peer assistance happened voluntarily. During the completion of a journal response to what the students wanted for Christmas, Oscar finished his list before many of the students. After Mrs. Salas checked it, Oscar looked to help Joaquín who was not yet writing English. Oscar sat with Joaquín, asking him what he wanted and helping him with the Spelling (OBS 11-28).

> When it is Joaquín's turn to read his response orally, Oscar accompanies him to the front of the room. Joaquín begins to read, "This is what I want for Christmas..." (He stops and smiles at the class.) Joaquín does a perfect reading of his wish list with Oscar whispering the text to him. His pronunciation is perfect, as Oscar is assisting him. Joaquín reads, "I want a Nintendo 64 for Christmas. (Oscar whispers.) I want a backpack for Christmas. (Oscar whispers.) I want a laptop and a toy car. (OBS 11-28)

When Oscar and Joaquín finish, they both return to their seats. I cannot help but notice the smile on Joaquín's face (OBS 11-28). Prior to this day, I had been concerned about Joaquín's lack of English usage. As was mentioned in question 1, this was probably due to Joaquín's short time in the United States. However, the concept of assisted performance was what allowed him not only to respond to the writing prompt in English, but also to be able to read it to the class. In both of these examples, there was a child who needed assistance to meet the objectives of the lesson. Carol needed assistance reading and decoding social studies text. Joaquín needed assistance in responding to the writing prompt and reading it to the class. This was not always the case, as some of the work between bilingual pairs was collaboration and mediation of content.

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Collaboration and mediation

Collaboration differs from assisted performance in that the bilingual pairs or group members are working toward one common objective, rather than assisting the other group member. Mediation within the group members is the use of concepts and tools in sense making. This aspect of Two-Way Immersion Programs allowed the students to work with each other and "mediate" concepts for clarification. This action would less likely take place in school did not advocate paired and group learning. As the children at Palmitas Elementary came across a problem or issue, there was liberty to discuss the issue with each other. These students did not have the threat of being silenced by a teacher who expected a quiet classroom. The process of mediation was observed when one of Mrs. Salas' sentences "stumped" a group of boys. Jacinto, Seth and Frank were correcting a sentence about a "desserted" [deserted] island. I sat at their table and documented their intellectual conversation, as they mediated the correct spelling and meaning of the word. I observed the boys for five minutes before joining their table. Their head were lowered and their intellectual conversation seemed intense (OBS 1-31).

Seth: Jacinto, is it "desserted" or not?

Jacinto: It is wrong.

Seth: Are you sure that is wrong?

Angel: It looks wrong, but why?

Jacinto: It is wrong because I know.

Seth: But, it says, "desserted". (He pronounces it as deserted.)

Jacinto: Look, there is a desert and a dessert. (He writes them both on his paper and shows them.)

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Angel: Oh yeah, the one you eat and the one about the island.

Seth: I like the one with one "s" because I can eat it, right Miss. (He looks at me and smiles.) (OBS 1-31)

The boys all agree to the correction and change the word "dessserted" to "deserted". They continued with the rest of the corrections after the discussion. It seems that all of the boys had gained from the discussion and mediation of the content (REF 1-31). The beneficial aspect of this assignment was that it would be shared with the class after its completion. It was customary for Mrs. Salas to give the students about fifteen minutes to correct two daily sentences. Afterwards, Mrs. Salas corrected the sentences with the whole class. These corrections took place on the chalkboard for all of the children to see. Mrs. Salas systematically went through each sentence from beginning to end, asking the children to contribute their corrections and the reasons for their corrections.

> When Mrs. Salas asked the children what was wrong with the word "desserted", all of the three boys raised up their hands. No one else in the class seemed to know. Mrs. Salas called on Seth and he was able to tell Mrs. Salas the correct spelling and the reason why it needed only one "s". Mrs. Salas was obviously very impressed with him and complimented his answer. However, Seth did not take credit for his answer. He told her, "Jacinto told me." Mrs. Salas asks Jacinto, "How did you know?" Jacinto answers, "I knew." Then he turns to me and says, "Right Miss, right I knew?" (OBS 1-31)

This example of mediation allowed the boys to not only achieve the correct

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answer, but to engage in a discussion and learn from it. It is important to note that the processes of collaboration and mediation would not take place without the time and the space provided for the children to do so. One particular activity that was conducive to mediaton and collaboration was an activity on the effect of water on plants. Mrs. Torres asked the children to bring a small green plant in plastic liter bottle. On the day of the activity, the entrance to the classroom was block by plants in liter bottles. Some of the children brought flowering plants, while others brought ivies and simple cuttings (OBS 1-30).

> Mrs. Torres hands out one thermometer per bilingual pair. She introduces the children to the Fahrenheit and Celsius measurements and informs the children they will be measuring in degrees Celsius. The bilingual pairs are asked to identify the Fahrenheit and Celsius sides of their thermometer to their partners. Next Mrs. Torres introduces the gradation marks on the thermometer. She writes the numbers 30 and 40 vertically on the chalkboard and draws 5 lines or demarcations between them. The children are informed that each demarcation is two degrees and directed to find these demarcations on their own thermometers. The children are given time to study and explore these aspects of the thermometer with their partners. (OBS 1-30)

Guided by Mrs. Torres, the children were able to explore their thermometers and to make sense of their teacher's instructions. Since there was direct instruction at this time, I remained at the back of the room, but I was able to hear the children telling each other, "*Este es el lado que vamos a usar*" (OBS 1-30). (This is the side that we are going

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to use.) Together, the bilingual pairs examined the demarcations on the Celsius side of their thermometer. When Mrs. Torres asked the children if anyone needed clarification on the thermometer, all of the children seem to have clarified the questions with their partners. I reflected on the use of bilingual pairs for exploring the thermometer and imagined the difference in the responses if this had been an individual assignment. Surely, some of the children would have needed clarification without the collaboration of their bilingual pairs (REF 1-30).

> Each bilingual pair is assigned a plant to work with. One of the bilingual pairs is directed to water the plant. After ten minutes, the bilingual pairs take the temperature of the plant by placing the thermometer in what is now very moist dirt. The children, together, are able to take pretty accurate temperature readings. (I generally hear the same temperature readings in the room.) This temperature is documented on a chart. Half of the bilingual pairs are then directed to go outside and leave their plants in the sun. The other half is directed to go and leave their plants in the shade. (OBS 1-30)

Mrs. Torres the writes questions on the board. The questions are asking the children to predict the temperatures of the plants in the shade and in the sun. In their bilingual pairs the children discuss that the outside temperatures will rise, as it was very warm outside. They children also predict that the plants in the sun will have higher temperatures than those in the shade. After ten minutes, the children are directed to go outside, find their plant, take the temperature and make their way back to the classroom

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(OBS 1-30). An outsider would view this activity as lacking structure and teacher direction. The room was very noisy as the children made predictions. The traffic in and out of the room to leave the plants, to go and take the temperature, and to come back to the room looked very disorganized. Children were calculating their temperatures at different times and it took about more than ten minutes to get everyone settled (REF 1-30).

Although an outsider would have viewed this activity as disorganized, it represents the essence of collaboration and mediation. Rather than being teacher directed, it allowed the children to collaborate with each other. The use of the thermometer, plants, water, and space were the tools that the children employed to discover the function of water in plants. The objectives were met, as the children made an exciting discovery that took us all back, except the teacher, of course. As the class finally came together, a class chart was completed. We all learned that the temperature of the plants in the shade rose only two degrees. The temperature of the plants in the sun rose about four degrees. The reason for the plant's ability to remain cool was the water that had been added at the beginning of the experiment (OBS 1-30, REF 1-30).

The practices in the Two-Way Program approximated Vygotsky's theories of learning in that they provided an established level of difficulty, assisted performance, and collaboration and mediation with a more capable peer. Specifically, assisted performance, collaboration and mediation involved Vygotsky's sociocultural aspect of learning. It would be very difficult to achieve assisted performance and collaboration in independent learning activities. The language of the day as well as the separation of languages for content area instruction gave students dual roles. At times they were

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"knowers" and at other times they were "learners". This was true for the student with one dominant language. However, a few of the children had developed competency in both languages. The concept of assisted performance provided a peer support system for the child who was still at the developmental stage of the new language. This concept was observed with Spanish dominant children learning English and with English dominant children learning Spanish. Collaboration between students allowed the children to learn and discover the simple spelling of a word or the function of water in plants. The time and space that the children were provided to mediate concepts made for a type of learning that was quite meaningful.

The data on Palmitas Elementary resembles a school located very far away from where most schools function today. The characteristics of the children of Mexican immigrants were part of the school. Their incoming resources such as literacy and cultural traditions were not only viewed in a positive light, but as tools for acquiring a second language. These children exchanged and shared knowledge and skills with English dominant students. The ethos of reception of the school served to accommodate parents who spoke a language other than English, without disenfranchising the rest of the community. The practices used in the Two-Way Immersion Program created a community of learners who viewed each other with respect. They assisted each other, collaborated on assignments, and challenged each other in the process. The approximation of these practices to Vygotsky's theories of learning was evident in the actions related to the zone of proximal development. There are many lessons to be learned from this school.

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CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The subject of immigration continues to invoke anti-immigrant sentiment across the United States. The negativity surrounding immigration reform has been exacerbated by the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers in New York City on September 11, 2001. As anti-immigrant sentiment grows, the fact remains that many immigrants travel as families, and their children compose a significant part of the school age population in the United States. The presence of the children of Mexican immigrants specifically, leaves educational practitioners in a quandary.

The children of Mexican immigrants are a specific concern for the educational system in general. This concern exists because the children of Mexican immigrants usually arrive with a language other than English. There is a vast difference between the contexts of schooling in México and schooling in the United States. Furthermore, there are issues of poverty and documentation that seem to engulf the children and their families. Upon arrival, it is necessary for the children to adjust to the new system, as well as to the language, culture, and the loss of family and loved ones left behind.

The review of literature brought many other issues to the surface. The children of Mexican immigrants possess incoming variables that interact with the culture of the

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receiving school. The administrators and teachers within the school system hold different ideologies for teaching this particular population of learners. Other issues concern the immigrant community and how they interact or not with the school. There are, of course, best practices that are touted for this population of students. "Best practices" are those strategies or activities that facilitate optimum learning in the educational setting. The Two-Way Immersion Program is one that simultaneously immerses the students in the English language while providing a component of Spanish instruction during specific areas of content instruction. Together, all of these variables have contributed to the study of children of Mexican immigrants enrolled in a Two-Way Immersion Program.

For the study of children of Mexican immigrants in the program, it was necessary to undergo an immersion in the culture of their schooling. The key element was to become a part of their worlds as children of immigrants and as English language learners. As several scholars have written, there are actions to take so that English language learners' needs are met. Of all these actions, the most important one is the educational establishment's commitment to educate all of the students enrolled—students of color, low-status populations and children of Mexican immigrants included.

This dissertation study presented: (a) an exploration of the characteristics of the children of Mexican immigrants, (b) an immersion and exploration of the "ethos of reception" within the Two-Way School, (c) an examination of the practices that composed Two-Way instruction, and (d) an analysis of these practices in relation to Vygotsky's theories of learning. The study was framed under a multi-faceted conceptual framework. The first theory was that immigrant children possessed "incoming resources" (M. Suárez-Orozco & C. Suárez-Orozco, 2000). The second theory was that schools had

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and communicated an "ethos of reception", also called school culture (C. Suarez-Orozco & M. Suarez-Orozco, 2001). This ethos of reception shared similar characteristics with Valenzuela's (1999) "caring theory" and Deal & Peterson's (1998) elements of school culture. The third was based on Vygotsky's (1978) theories of learning, which included the zone of proximal development. These theories provided a valuable lens through which the answers to the research questions came into focus.

In the sections that follow, I will begin by summarizing the questions addressed in this study as well as their answers. Secondly, I will provide some discussion on the implications for schooling of the children of Mexican immigrants. Finally, I will present the conclusion to the study of the children of Mexican immigrants, fully cognizant that their lives and experiences did not end with my dissertation.

Summary of Questions

The questions that guided this dissertation were guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of children of Mexican immigrants as perceived by Two-Way schools?
2. What is the "ethos of reception" within a Two-Way school that facilitates or inhibits the accommodation, acculturation, and assimilation of children of Mexican immigrants?
3. What are the "best practices" that compose Two-Way instruction?
4. To what extent do the practices in the Two-Way setting approximate Vygotsky's theories of learning?

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Question 1: Characteristics of Children of Mexican Immigrants

The 17 children of Mexican immigrants enrolled in the Two-Way Program at Palmitas Elementary revealed diverse characteristics. One of the characteristics consistent with the literature on immigrant students was the positive ethic. Although 14 of the children displayed this positive ethic in relation to their work, three of the children did not. This positive ethic was visible in the manner in which the children began and completed their assignments. Posters and presentations were made with much attention to detail. The children worried about tracing every letter and coloring every inch of their background space. At different times in the study, I observed the way they pressed down very hard on their pencils to make nice dark letters.

A significant number of children (11) also displayed a quiet and non-assertive nature possibly due to their English language development. These quiet non-assertive children did not volunteer their participation in journal responses or during teacher questioning. However, when either one of the teachers addressed a question to them by calling their name, they responded correctly. Their provision of correct answers revealed their understanding of the content and their option to remain quiet. Six of the children who did not display this quiet and non-assertive characteristic shared yet another characteristic in common. .

The six boys and girls who were able to assert themselves and answer questions during Spanish and English content instruction were the most competent with the English and Spanish languages. These six boys and girls had developed bilingual, biliterate and bicultural skills. They were active participants in Spanish and English content instruction alike. Not only did they participate for themselves, they were often observed assisting

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students from either the Spanish or English dominant groups. These six students seemed to share another common characteristic—consistent schooling. Upon interviewing, not one of these students revealed any gaps in their school attendance. Three of them revealed early childhood interventions such as Headstart and school outreach programs.

Twelve of the students demonstrated a strong literacy foundation in their first language. Three of these children completed first grade in México before immigrating to the United States. The student who left México with his family in the middle of first grade did not have a strong foundation in his first language and was often seen struggling in both his English and Spanish languages. Others, because of the two languages addressed at Palmitas Elementary had achieved literacy in their first language in the United States. These children were on their way to developing their second language as their first one was being facilitated. Teachers viewed their first language, not as a detriment, but as an avenue to learn a second one.

The characteristics of these children as viewed by a Two-Way school revealed a non-judgmental and accepting view of the children. There was a great concern for literacy, numeracy and language for all learners. Literacy was seen as a universal skill, regardless of the language. Each of the paired teachers addressed the literacy skills through instruction, assignments, readings, group work and journal responses in both languages. The lack of literacy in either language was not viewed as a deficit, but as a developmental process for each of the students. A Spanish dominant child could not be viewed as having a deficit for not knowing English because the English dominant child who did not yet know Spanish was not seen in that light.

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The students' incoming culture and language were also viewed as resources. Their experiences were used in projects and assignments. Their languages were used to tell the stories of their cultural celebrations. These stories and projects were displayed on the school walls as a symbol of the cultures represented there.

Question 2: The Ethos of Reception

The ethos of reception or school culture at Palmitas Elementary was one that accommodated the children of Mexican immigrants as well as their parents and families. The key player in this accommodating culture was the principal, Mr. Sanchez. His leadership was one that advocated and practiced a "students first" mission with a special focus and intervention for the special populations in "his" school. As the school leader, Mr. Sanchez was the "living logo" for speaking two languages. He spent every morning greeting all parents, teachers and children in the language of the day.

The faculty at Palmitas Elementary also demonstrated an accommodation for the students enrolled in the school. Faculty meetings addressed the specific needs and interventions for students who were not functioning on grade level. Teachers volunteered to tutor the special needs students during their conference times and after school. The faculty resonated Mr. Sanchez' mission for the students at Palmitas Elementary.

Activities and assignments at Palmitas also revealed an accommodation for students and parents of a different culture and language. School activities were "low-risk" in nature, thus allowing the Mexican immigrant parents to visit the school freely and participate in the activities. Teachers were available to speak to parents every morning and afternoon. Their bilingual ability seemed to help the immigrant parents overcome the usual barriers of communication. The homework assignments

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encompassed the use of traditions and folklore, allowing the students and parents to respond and share their own experiences.

The classrooms at Pharr Elementary embraced the students' incoming resources, allowing the children to learn by collaborating in groups and pairs. The assignment of a bilingual pair allowed any student with one language the support system of a buddy who would provide assistance in the mediation of instruction. The separation of languages for the purpose of instruction gave students the opportunity to be experts in their language part of the day and learners of a second language the other part of the day. This cognition of being experts and non-experts created an atmosphere where shortcomings were ignored and attempts (even failed ones) were applauded and celebrated.

Question 3: The Best Practices in Two-Way Instruction

Two of the best practices, language of the day and daily news, were inter-related in that they each addressed the informal use of the language in practice. Language of the day was the designation of either Spanish or English as the language of informal communication on alternate days of the week. Mr. Sanchez, teachers, custodians, cafeteria staff, students, and visitors adhered to either the English or Spanish on their designated days. This in itself was a notable practice because it developed bilingual communication and listening skills. From a different perspective, this practice spoke volumes to the status of the Spanish language. Whereas before, this language may have been associated with low-status populations, students now observed principals, visitors, and central office administrators and directors speaking and communicating in Spanish. Children were also privy to the attempts of native speakers of English with the Spanish

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language, communicating to them that initial language production in any language would not be perfect.

Daily news, like language of the day, facilitated the use of informal language. In this case, the teacher documented the informal communications on a chart tablet. This modeling by the teacher allowed the students to observe the convections of the second language, thus learning similarities and differences between the two. Daily news was especially valuable in the early grades as the students were exposed to early literacy skills such as left to write progression, letter-sound relationships, and initial concepts of punctuation.

A third best practice was the consensual building of class learning charts. This practice was employed after a few days of initial exposure to a unit of study. The teacher titled the chart and questioned the students on key points that supported the main idea of the unit. The students were able to bring together the class knowledge of the subject matter as the teachers wrote their contributions and illustrated them with simple pictures. These charts were posted in the classroom for future reference and oral reviews. The consistent use of these charts communicated the importance of recall and study of subject matter.

Possibly the most effective practice was the use of the bilingual pair in the Two-Way classroom. As the children were paired with a partner whose language strength was different than their own, all of the children had the opportunity to function as an expert in their language. As a fringe benefit, each child then also had a resource or expert in the language that was not their own. The first advantage to having a bilingual pair was the availability of a partner who could translate and clarify teacher directions almost

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immediately. The second advantage was that assignments were completed in collaboration, rather than in isolation. There seemed to be camaraderie in getting things done as the students divided and shared the labor. The third and final advantage was that these students expected a lot of each other and did not give each other breaks, but found a way to challenge each other's learning.

Question 4: Approximation to Vygotsky's Theories

Within the zone of proximal development is the concept of an established level of difficulty that addresses the skills in the process of maturation. The established level of difficulty was addressed when the children were immersed in a second language for instruction. For most of the children, this time of the day was one where they had to strive a little harder to make sense of the teacher talk and happenings in the room. It did not come easy for many of the children as they were exposed to instruction, text, assignments and production in a second language. A small portion of each of the language populations were very close to the maturation of their skills in the second language, due to another of Vygotsky's concepts—peer assisted performance.

Assisted performance was observed in the practice of bilingual pairs. As the children had become accustomed to needing and providing assistance, they were cognizant of other's needs. Some of the more developmental children in the classes were "taken in" by those who possessed stronger skills. Even when they did not possess stronger skills, they felt empathy for their struggling classmates. Vygotsky's concept was visible when one student finished his writing response early and went to help another complete theirs. It was visible when one student faltered in oral reading fluency and the other sat and guided the partner through sounding out and syllabication. It was more then

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obvious when the students presented in pairs and one whispered the correct pronunciation of difficult words into the other's ear.

Vygotsky's concept of mediation was evident during the times when the bilingual pairs were given their assignment. As a rule, assignments were made to the pairs, not to individuals. It was during this time that the students began collaborating to meet the objectives of their lesson or assignments. This differed from assisted performance in that one was not helping the other. In this instance, they were both working toward the completion of common goal. To do this, the content of the assignment needed to be discussed until it made sense to both partners. The children used the tools available to them to make sense of their work—rulers, thermometers, maps, dictionaries and textbooks. Two critical elements of mediation were time and space. The children were able to mediate content when give the opportunity to do so. When the teacher provided the thermometers, water, plants and the freedom to explore temperature changes, the students mediated the concepts before them.

The findings in this study have critical implications for schools that serve children of Mexican immigrants and perhaps those who serve immigrant children in general. There is a dire need to: (a) develop educators' awareness and understanding of the children of Mexican immigrants, (b) change the culture of educational institutions to accommodate different populations, (c) change the culture of classrooms to accommodate all learners, and (d) employ the use of effective practices in the teaching and learning process.

The development of a teacher's awareness and understanding of children of Mexican immigrants is easier said than done. This act implies training and discussion of

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issues prior to the arrival of immigrant students. It also implies a teacher coming to terms with his or her ideologies as they pertain to students of color and low-status populations. The pervasive deficit model of thinking would be addressed and hopefully dissolved as understanding grew. This awareness involves an examination of the self in relation to the overall culture and goals of the educational institution that also happens to be the employer.

To change an educational institution or school would require multi-level reform. Whereas educational institutions have previously served and accommodated a white population, these powers that be would then be asked to accommodate rather than assimilate communities of color. These accommodations would translate as actions—actions that would now represent the language and culture of immigrants. These actions would look, feel and sound like a sincere reaching out to immigrant communities in order to better serve their children. This accommodation would mean an acceptance of language other than English being used for instruction, parent conferences, school functions and school to home communications and notices. These accommodations, with time, would lead the visibility of immigrant parents on campuses to see and inquire about their children...and the reality of these accommodations could also inflame the anti-immigrant sentiment once again. The key again, lies in the leadership of the schools.

The way that schools have traditionally touted individualism in our classrooms has been exacerbated by the culture of testing. These concepts imply a type of learning that takes place in isolation. To change the culture of the classroom would require a change in teacher training programs as well as a re-education of parents and students. A school where children assist each other in the development of languages and skills is

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almost utopian. Such a school would facilitate a cooperative sense of education for the children of Mexican immigrants and the rest of the populations represented thereof. The added dimension of collaboration during the teaching-learning process would allow students to discover learning for the sake of learning, not for the sake of a grade.

The use of tried and true effective practices in the classrooms where the children of Mexican immigrants and others learn is yet another major issue. The use of effective practices requires preparation on the part of teachers. This extra effort is more than an "awareness" of what works best. Teachers must be allowed the time and materials to employ activities and create learning environments that are positive and meaningful for the students. Sadly enough, the use of effective practices needs to be monitored by school leaders. It is too easy for teachers to resort to assignments that are limited to reading text and answering questions. However, these assignments require little preparation, students are generally quiet and there are no messes to clean up.

The implications from the findings are ideas that would make improve schooling context for children of Mexican immigrant students. However, upon closer inspection, the implications would improve the schooling for students in general. By developing the educators' awareness of these students' characteristics, it would allow for a more pluralistic context of learning. The change in institutions and classrooms to accommodate multi-cultures would allow society's youth to experience a more global view of the world and society in general. The best practices are those that take into account diverse learning modalities. Teacher preparation with these in mind would contribute to a more meaningful learning process.

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Implications for Children of Mexican immigrants and Schooling

As I summarized the findings of this study, I delineated four implications that emerged from the children's experiences in a Two-Way Setting. In a sense, these implications do not apply to the schooling context where the children are now enrolled, as this context was the spring of the implications. The Palmitas Elementary setting was not a traditional school setting for children of Mexican immigrants. Today, Two-Way programs are still considered a nascent bilingual education philosophy among other programs that have been in existence longer.

Customarily, children of Mexican and other immigrants are immersed in the English language without support. Mainstream programs meant for the majority population do not offer first language support and instruction while adding the second language, nor do they address the child's incoming characteristics and variables. Teachers in these settings do not receive adequate training in the cultural aspects of teaching diverse populations. Most of all, the schools are not equipped with the necessary ideologies, resources, and human capital needed to meet these students' education goals. The four implications that follow may address some of the issues that children of Mexican immigrants encounter in American schools.

A Need for Awareness and Understanding

The limited amount of literature on the characteristics of children of Mexican immigrants described the children as possessing a positive work ethic. Other literature on immigrants described initial silent periods and sense of cultural loss because of their immigration to their new country. As these are valuable in explaining the children's actions in the classroom, there are other variables to be considered.

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The purpose of school is schooling. As such, the school's function is to educate. Without an awareness of the students' incoming resources, there would seem to be no starting point to begin the educational process for children of Mexican immigrants. Without this acknowledgement, there cannot be any type of participation on behalf of the children. A child who left México at a critical stage of literacy development would not be able to participate in the act of reading. Ignored by a teacher who has twenty-some other children who can read, the gap between this student and others can only widen.

In order to meet the needs of immigrant students, it is vital to document and address the incoming characteristics of the children of Mexican immigrants. Namely, there are some basic questions about schooling and literacy that are crucial in guiding interventions on behalf of these students. Knowledge of prior schooling is important as it tells about erratic schooling and gaps. Literacy evaluations diagnose the student's place on the literacy continuum.

Understanding of the quiet non-assertive nature of some of the children of Mexican immigrants informs practice. Their preference for not raising their hands to contribute answers does not mean they are "in the dark". When called upon, many of these children possessed the answers that the teachers were looking for. However, there is a very fine and critical line between questioning to see if students know and questioning to show that students do not know.

A Need to Change the Culture of Educational Institutions

Educational institutions expect the parental involvement of Mexican immigrants to be similar to that of white middle class working parents. With the cultural discontinuity experienced by immigrant parents in the school, it is almost impossible to

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form a coalition for students. It is necessary to accommodate the different languages, education, and socioeconomic levels that are visible out in the school community.

This is possible by providing parents access to teachers and administrators who speak their language. The types of activities promulgated by schools define parental involvement. When asked to attend school, parents need to feel and experience a risk free environment where they will not be humiliated for their perceived shortcomings. Activities such as the family reading day at Palmitas Elementary brought parents into the school to read with their children. There were not speakers or formal agendas, only the time and space to read or be read to by their children. To achieve the type of parental turnout that was visible at Palmitas, it is indispensable that schools begin reaching out to immigrant communities almost immediately.

These changes will not take place overnight and parents will not enter the schools immediately. This change is slow process that begins with the transformation of teachers, administrators and the educational institutional in general. The immigrant community must be viewed in a light that shows their struggles and potential. The change must begin with each person and then the institution. As everything in life, we must be educated before we know. A re-education of school personnel may assist in some individuals making changes. If some are unable to make these ideological changes, at least they will be aware of the schools' new mission for educating children of Mexican immigrants.

A Need to Change the Culture of the Classroom

To change the culture of a classroom it is necessary to deviate from the competitiveness of individual achievement. Individual achievement implies winners and

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losers in the game of learning. A collaborative classroom implies a team effort so that all of the students are able to achieve, regardless of their placement in the classroom. After a deviation from individual achievement has been initiated, it is necessary to begin using activities and assignments whose goal is the discovery of a concept, the synthesis of a lesson, or the production of a poster, report, model or presentation. The collaboration of students in meeting learning goals should also include the concept of assisted performance.

Small children, given the opportunity will collaborate in school and in play. It is the adults who divide the children and ask them work individually and quietly. Through the actions of teachers who plan effectively, changes can be made in the classroom that allow students to work together on projects and activities. Paired and group learning can be achieved by careful training of children in the processes of taking turns, helping others, asking others for help, and sharing materials and tools equally. By placing less emphasis on grades, children may begin to learn for the sake of enjoying and acquiring knowledge. This concept also requires a re-education of school personnel and a change in teacher education programs.

Effective Practices in the Teaching-Learning Process

Effective practices in the teaching-learning process are constantly reported in education journals. Many of these practices are not really new to the field of education. Cooperative learning, for example has been a part of staff development trainings for years. Newer strategies are reported or "old" concepts are revived and teachers receive training on a yearly basis. However, it seems at times that what happens in classrooms does not change unless it is accompanied by a test.

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The use of effective practices is needed as they provide for optimum learning in the school environment. The use of the bilingual pair, the learning chart and opportunities to mediate content were effective strategies observed in the Two-Way school. These strategies should be used because they allow the students excellent opportunities to learn in a socio-cultural setting. However, it is difficult to write that teachers should use these strategies. It takes a very special human being to be the type of teacher that does what is good for students on a daily basis. Teachers, as human beings need to have a support system such as the teacher-pairs in the Two-Way program. As teachers continue to teach in isolation, they will close the door after the morning bell and open it in the afternoon before dismissing students.

Recommendations

Palmitas Elementary can be described as a model school as the children of Mexican immigrants seem to be receiving adequate support in many critical areas of learning. There are many positive aspects of the school as well as many sound practices within the school. The following recommendations can only help Palmitas Elementary and other schools like it to become more apt at serving diverse populations. The separation of languages for instruction addressed the use of language in an academic sense. The use of daily news and language of the day addressed the informal use of the language. Perhaps the use of a more dynamic and culturally relevant use of the second language would allow for the students to develop the bicultural aspect of a Two-Way Program. This "dynamic and culturally relevant" use of the language could possibly be reached through the use of pop music from both of the cultures represented. This activity

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would allow the students exposure to Mexican and American music role models, thus taking the students into the other's culture.

A second recommendation would be the use of accountability measures to monitor classroom implementation of the program. While on campus, I became aware of teachers who did not fully implement the model of Two Way Immersion. While these teachers adhered to the most visible practices of Two Way instruction, other more critical ones were not incorporated into their classrooms. Visibly, these classrooms looked like Two Way classrooms. Upon closer inspection, they were not using bilingual pairs, cooperative learning, or separation of languages for instruction. A consistent monitoring of these classrooms with support from the grade level team would assist in the full implementation of the Two Way model for all students.

Conclusion

The New York Times recently reported, "The number of foreign-born residents and children of immigrants has reached the highest level in history..." (Scott, 2002). Scott (2002) reports that in the last three decades the immigrant population has increased from 34 million to 56 million. This article would have those who oppose immigration literally "up in arms". For the rest of us, it is a realization that immigrant children are in the school system and that even if the borders were completely sealed off today, they would still be there. Furthermore, it is a realization that the only way for these children to have an opportunity to break out of their cycles of poverty and oppression is to educate them.

Schools hold the key to the education of immigrant students. The key for these students is the acknowledgement of their resources in the schools. It is recognition of

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their unique characteristics and educational needs. These children require an accommodation on behalf of the schools—an accommodation that looks at their needs and attempts to provide intervention. It is necessary for the students to adjust to their new settings, begin to learn a new language, and be able to participate in the schooling process with their parents' support. It is almost obligatory that these students be taught using the most effective strategies available to teachers. However, there is no one answer, no one program, no one idea that will fit everyone, as generalizations about immigrants and the immigrant experience are difficult to make.

The Two-Way Immersion Program at Palmitas Elementary was effective for the children of Mexican immigrants in the study. It embraced the children's characteristics and used these as points of departure for future learning. Mr. Sanchez and his "students first" mission infiltrated the staff and the decisions made about students who required extra help. The use of two languages in the classrooms, in language of the day and in home to school communications facilitated the presence of parents in the school. The use of effective practices allowed students to assist each other and collaborate in projects and assignments. There are pieces of Palmitas Elementary that may be taken and re-shaped to help other schools with immigrant populations.

For this nascent generation of Americans there remains but hope. Hope for a brighter future, a better tomorrow, and an opportunity to achieve the Great American Dream.

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