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teachers' perceptions of students' barriers, teaching practices and
strategies, and teaching supports**

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Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

TEACHING FIRST-GENERATION NEWCOMERS IN CHARTER HIGH
SCHOOLS: TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS' BARRIERS,
TEACHING PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES, AND TEACHING SUPPORTS

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, Administration and Policy

by

Daniel Loh

February, 2024

Molly McCabe, Ed.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to all the educators who want to positively impact their students' lives. Even though it seems like our day is a constant rush and sprint to get things done, the journey to impact our students is a marathon. Our journey is a test of endurance, patience, and unwavering determination in the hope of preparing our students for the challenges they may face in the complex world.

Furthermore, this work is dedicated to every individual engaged in the battle against Cancer. Your courage and will to face the challenge give many of us hope and a powerful reminder for us all to persevere in our day-to-day battles.

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Dr. Paul Choi, thank you for your friendship and encouragement throughout my dissertation and professional journey. Thank you for taking the time to connect and guide me even though so many other people seek your help and guidance. You are a role model to many teachers and students in the Los Angeles County area.

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ABSTRACT

Teachers in the United States are experiencing challenges linked to the increasing number of immigrant students entering schools. Los Angeles County Charter schools are among the country's most diverse, with many immigrant students. Although first-generation and immigrant students' education barriers and teacher challenges are documented, little is known about teachers' experiences with newcomer students, a particularly vulnerable group. This phenomenological study explored charter high school teachers' lived experiences concerning their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for first-generation/newcomer immigrant students, their descriptions of the strategies and practices used, and their perceptions of the support they receive. Twelve teachers from 3 high schools participated in one-on-one interviews with 10 questions. Virtual interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed using coding and thematic analysis, emphasizing a phenomenological multiple perspectives approach. Bandura's self-efficacy theory was used to interpret the findings for three research questions and the related literature. Three themes were developed: (a) meeting the learners where they are to understand their challenges and barriers to learning; (b) purposefully, responsibly, resiliently, and collaboratively building learning strategies and reflecting a multicultural school climate; (c) recognizing the benefits and needs to improve professional development: the champions and the discontented. Three conclusions were found: (a) teachers need more training on overcoming barriers and challenges to teaching first-generation students, (b) teachers need support in using teaching strategies and engaging first-generation students, and (c) teachers need more time for collaboration. Recommendations for teachers included (a) finding ways to build their resiliency and self-efficacy, (b) taking responsibility for their classrooms and creating a positive environment, (c) showing empathy toward newcomers, (d) embracing multicultural learning, (e)

collaborating, and (f) using multiple and multimodal learning strategies. Among the several recommendations for administrators and site leaders were (a) communicating with the families, (b) creating teacher professional development, (c) dedicating time for collaboration, and (d) sharing a clear vision for a multicultural climate and educational environment. The recommendations for policy and practice were (a) to have teachers discuss concerns for first-generation immigrant students, (b) to provide dedicated time to address newcomers' needs, and (c) to provide strategies and support for teaching newcomer students.

Chapter 1: Background

An emerging phenomenon of the last several decades is the rising diversity in school classrooms in western countries due to the influx of immigrants (Forghani-Arani et al., 2019). Historically, the United States has experienced more waves of immigration than some other developed countries (Cohodes, 2018). However, current immigration trends present new challenges for teachers, such as the diversity and number of languages that might be taught in their classrooms (Barba et al., 2019; Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020). Other challenges include the changing United States immigration policies, the influx of immigrants into regions that received fewer newcomers in the past (Rodriguez et al., 2020; Zarate & Gándara, 2019), and significant numbers of unaccompanied children (Rodriguez et al., 2020). Newcomers are immigrants who have recently entered the United States and were born outside its borders (IGI Global, 2022). Thus, newcomer students are new arrivals to the United States and the school system (Drake, 2017; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018; Potochnick, 2018). Late arrivals or newcomers to high school have a short time to master the skills, such as the English language, and graduate on schedule (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Potochnick, 2018).

The issues related to the increasing numbers of immigrant students for both students and teachers vary across states and localities. Immigrant students face barriers and educational challenges depending on their family's immigration history, immigration status, language abilities, financial resources (Drake, 2017; Potochnick, 2018), and local schools and communities (Rodriguez et al., 2020). However, regardless of their school location, the cumulative effect of challenges on these students includes a considerable process of adapting to academics and their teachers' task of shepherding them into achieving members of the school community (Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018; Potochnick, 2018). Integrating immigrant students and

promoting success for immigrant students can be an acute problem in high schools. Teachers are faced with finding ways to enhance newcomer-first generation immigrants' progress, particularly late-arrival students' progress when their education has been interrupted (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Potochnick, 2018). These students have less time than middle and elementary school students to regain ground before graduation (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020; Potochnick, 2018).

Although some novel programs have been introduced for newcomers, particularly in states with a higher influx of immigrant students, some teachers remain unaware or lack the resources to initiate such programs (Barba et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020), even in states such as California which contain a high proportion of immigrant students (Barba et al., 2019; Migration Policy Institute, 2019). Scenarios for these teachers include feeling underprepared, particularly in high school, when students are from first-generation immigrant households (Barba et al., 2019; Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Gutentag et al., 2018; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018). Gutentag et al. (2018) found that teachers burn out and suffer low self-efficacy when they “feel unprepared” to address multicultural issues in the classroom. Gutentag et al. used a term from Tatar and Horenczyk (2003) to describe the phenomenon of *diversity-related burnout* as teacher burnout linked to stress and loss of well-being due to chronic coping with culturally diverse classrooms. This study is aimed to understand teachers' experiences teaching linguistically and culturally diverse students. Existing programs that positively affirm teachers and students include those with strength-based practices. These asset-based programs comprise ample consultation among teachers to supplement teacher resources and students' needs (Barba et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020) and can engage teachers and students (Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018).

However, little is known about teachers' perspectives on these issues (Barba et al., 2019; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018).

Teachers may not be aware of the barriers for students, which include a lack of financial resources, fluency in the English language, and understanding of cultural assimilation (Evans et al., 2019). Immigrant students' difficulties with language barriers can lead to disengagement and put them at higher risk for lower achievement scores, grades, and higher dropout rates than students born in the United States (Barba et al., 2019; Burriss et al., 2019). Many immigrants feel excluded, marginalized, and alienated, leading to low self-esteem (Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018; Villavicencio et al., 2021; Wiltgren, 2020). Immigrant children are overrepresented in larger high minority schools. They tend to do worse because these schools are often disorganized and have relaxed academic standards (Feliciano, 2017).

Jaffe-Walter and Lee (2018) suggested that teachers with a positive view of immigrant student identities create classroom materials and use references to their culture to encourage dialogue on differences. Rincón (2020) addressed immigrant students' lack of facility with English, a crucial barrier to learning. Lower achievement in the English language is especially acute for newcomers (Burriss et al., 2019; Flint et al., 2018). For example, teacher challenges include helping first-generation students with lower language skills to meet basic literacy and pass the state achievement standards (Burriss et al., 2019; Drake, 2017; Trahey & Spada, 2020). However, most teachers outside of language arts and English courses are unprepared for this problem, primarily when these students have diverse first languages (Barba et al., 2019; Burriss et al., 2019; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018). These concerns point to a need to understand teacher perspectives when working with the first-generation student population of interest in this study.

In the United States, children of immigrant families comprise 26% of the 68.9 million children under 18 years old, up from 19% in 2000 to 13% in 1990 (Migration Policy Institute, 2019). However, across the nation, children of immigrant families often attend low-resourced and unsafe schools (Glock & Kleen, 2020; Jiménez-Castellanos & Garcia, 2017; Zarate & Gándara, 2019). Moreover, some teachers have lower expectations for economically disadvantaged students in general, thus compounding the issues for students of immigrant families, particularly first-generation students (Glock & Kleen, 2020). Alternatively, Rodriguez et al. (2020) noted that these students more often perform better when viewed positively by teachers. As noted below, in California, these first-generation students are sometimes from economically disadvantaged families (Migration Policy Institute, 2019). This status is suggested by the rates of free lunch supplements they receive (California State Department of Education, 2021a; Population Reference Bureau, 2022). Thus, understanding how teachers experience these issues could promote teacher efficacy via more effective engagement and instruction of students (Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2020).

In 2016, California led the nation with the most significant percentage of immigrant students and the second-largest immigrant population growth between 2000 and 2016 (California State Department of Education, 2019). More recently, the growth of immigrants, and hence students, has slowed in California compared to a few other states; however, California still leads in the percentage of total immigrants with 27% in 2019 (Johnson et al., 2019). California state's percentage of immigrants in the total population is followed closely by New Jersey, with 23% immigrants; New York, with 22%; Florida, with 21%; Nevada, with a 20% immigrant population (Migration Policy Institute, 2019). In addition, California continues to lead many states in the number of English learners. About 19% of all English learners in the nation are enrolled in

California public schools; thus, it remains the state with the second-highest concentration of English learners in K to 12 schools (Zarate & Gàndara, 2019). These statistics suggest that California's educational system remains challenged to meet the needs of this student population.

The student population of Los Angeles County high schools is one of the most diverse in the nation, with many students from immigrant households (California State Department of Education, 2021a; Zarate & Gàndara, 2019). The California State Department of Education and nonprofit organizations offer the most available statistics for California state, county, and district-level information about charter schools.

Across the country, first-generation students more often attend urban schools (Cohodes, 2018). Thus, this study utilized available data to reflect the diversity of the student body and linked these data to Los Angeles County information to support understanding and the significance of the study. The state's detailed data includes statistics across demographic subgroups and charter schools. Many of these students are English learners. Notably, 43% of 5 to 17-year-olds in California speak only another language at home. In 2017, California had 18.6% of all English learners' student enrollment nationwide (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). Historically, Los Angeles County charter schools enrolled a disproportionate fraction of immigrant and first-generation immigrants in the state. Thus, these schools have the potential to include many newcomers.

The student population of Los Angeles County high schools contains many students from immigrant households (33%, California State Department of Education, 2021a). A significant percentage is socioeconomically disadvantaged. The status is reflected in California state statistics showing that the percentages of free and reduced lunches range from 18% to 84% among charter school students. Overall, 68.7% of charter students in Los Angeles County receive

free and reduced lunch programs. (Population Reference Bureau, 2022). The 2020 graduation rate for English Learners in California is 69.1%, comparable to Los Angeles County English learner students at about 69%. The rate for students identified as from socioeconomically disadvantaged households at the state level is 58.8%. The proportion in Los Angeles County is higher, with about 69% of students receiving free and reduced lunches (California State Department of Education, 2021a; Population Reference Bureau, 2022). Thus, the high rates of economic disadvantage and low English achievement in charter schools suggest that despite high graduation rates for charter school students (89%; California State Department of Education, 2019), newcomer students are likely to make up a significant segment of those who do not graduate high school.

High school students are at promise for achievement and graduation because they have less time than younger middle and elementary school students to make up their graduation progress (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020; Potochnick, 2018). Not obtaining a high school diploma may lead to lower social and economic outcomes for the individual and potentially a lifetime of consequences (Volante, 2016). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021), in 2020, individuals who had not obtained a high school diploma were unemployed at a rate of 11.7% versus 9% of those who graduated from high school. Over the past two decades, individuals without a high school degree earned 55% to 62% of the wages of all individuals in the workforce (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). Members of the low-wage sector, such as those in a career as a laborer or service worker, cannot maintain a desired lifestyle or save for retirement (Temin, 2018). High school graduation and attainment enable individuals to earn a higher income and access better living conditions, healthcare services, and healthier foods (Healthy People 2020, 2020).

Statement of the Problem

Teachers of high school students from first-generation immigrant households and relative newcomer/late-arrival students experience challenges meeting these students' social and academic needs (Barba et al., 2019; Flint et al., 2018; Trahey & Spada, 2020). These teachers' complex tasks and challenges include a lack of knowledge of cultural and social differences among students and communication with students with minimal English-speaking skills. Additionally, these students are often at promise academically, and teachers have low resources or support within schools for meeting these challenges (Potochnick, 2018). Consequently, students with limited language skills tend to disengage in school (Barba et al., 2019). When students feel disconnected from school, it contributes to poor academic performance, attendance, and disruption, negatively affecting the individual's perception of school (Parker, 2019; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018).

As noted above, California and Los Angeles County schools, including charter high schools, are among the most diverse in the country (California State Department of Education, 2021b). Also, California has few dedicated resources or programs to support these teachers and their students (Barba et al., 2019). Thus, these issues are likely affecting teachers in these charter schools.

Moreover, teachers may lack the skills to cope with the diversity of students and languages before entering the classroom. Teacher preparation programs tend to offer only one course focusing on multiple topics related to immigrant and diverse students. These issues intersect, for example, race/ethnicity, immigration status, and language barriers, and deserve more profound attention concerning the compounding impacts on students and teachers (Gutentag et al., 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2020). The phenomenon of growing newcomer and first-

generation immigrant student numbers increases the complexity of multicultural school settings with English learners presenting language barriers and challenges for teachers; thus, teachers could be at risk for burnout and turnover as well as maintaining self-efficacy (Gutentag et al., 2018; Woodcock & Jones, 2020) and resiliency (Daniilidou et al., 2020) may drain under the stress. Teachers experience burnout and low self-efficacy when confronted with multicultural issues for which they are unprepared; in other words, they experience diversity-related burnout (Gutentag et al., 2018). The challenge of working with a complex context for first-generation students is not easily approached in teacher preparation courses without encouraging understanding of the multiple issues unique to diverse student backgrounds (Barba et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020). These teachers could benefit from professional development and in-school programs to support and enhance instruction (Barba et al., 2019).

Researchers have shown that teachers lack self-efficacy and have negative attitudes toward inclusion and multicultural education. These attitudes can contribute to teacher burnout (Gutentag et al., 2018; Woodcock & Jones, 2020) and loss of student engagement (Buzzai et al., 2022). Moreover, teachers with lower self-efficacy tend to use practices that demotivate students. In contrast, positive attitudes toward multicultural education and higher self-efficacy predict teachers' use of practices that motivate students (Buzzai et al., 2022). Teachers have reported feeling unprepared and lacking self-efficacy when working with newcomer/late-arrival immigrant students and could face burnout (Buzzai et al., 2022; Gutentag et al., 2018). Thus, the influences of teacher self-efficacy and teaching methods are pivotal for educating immigrant students.

Although these quantitative studies have examined teacher beliefs and attitudes related to a lack of self-efficacy (Gutentag et al., 2018; Tatar et al., 2011) and teaching practices (Buzzai et

al., 2022), few qualitative studies have explored the lived experiences of the teachers' challenges when teaching these diverse students (Barba et al., 2019; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Moreover, none of these studies have been set in southern California (Barba et al., 2019). More specifically, no studies have included the teachers' experiences and perceived challenges and barriers for students from first-generation immigrant households and perspectives on support for them in this study's setting. Therefore, a need exists to understand teachers' lived experiences of their teaching challenges and views on the barriers for first-generation immigrant students, teachers' descriptions of the strategies and practices they use, and their perceptions of the support they receive when teaching these students in charter schools.

Purpose

This phenomenological study explored charter high school teachers' lived experiences concerning their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for first-generation/newcomer or late-arrival immigrant students, their descriptions of the strategies and practices used, and their perceptions of the support they receive. The teachers' descriptions of their strategy included those used with students from low-income families and whose first language is not English. In addition, teachers' perceptions concerning existing supports and those they might prefer but are not currently in place. These teachers likely face unique and specific challenges that have not been documented concerning teaching methods and the support they need to be effective with these students.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: How do teachers describe their lived experiences at charter high schools in Los Angeles County concerning their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for students from first-generation immigrant households?

Research Question 2: How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County describe the practices and strategies for instructing students from first-generation immigrant households, including those from low-income families and whose first language is not English?

Research Question 3: How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County perceive the existing supports and those they might prefer but are not currently in place while teaching and engaging students from first-generation immigrant households?

Theoretical Framework

Self-efficacy is essential to teachers' effective teaching and quality experiences (Barba et al., 2019; Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018). This study's theoretical framework was Bandura's (1977a) self-efficacy theory. Bandura reflected on self-efficacy as self-belief regarding individuals' capabilities and sense of personal agency (Bandura, 2008). Bandura (2009) described that self-efficacy could influence individuals' cognition, beliefs, feelings, and motivations. As consistent with constructivism and social learning theory, Bandura (1977b, 1986) suggested that learning occurs within a social context. This learning is influenced by individuals' reciprocal interactions, observations of others, and the environment in which social interactions occur. More recently, Bandura (1977a, 1997) extended the theory by marrying the social cognitive learning theory and self-efficacy theory to bridge these cognitive and learning theories. This theory emphasizes the interactions between individuals, others, and their environment, as well as self-efficacy and motivation.

The social cognitive and self-efficacy theories were developed from the five constructs of the social learning theory, which emphasized self-efficacy. A primary distinction of social

cognitive learning theory from the initial social learning theories is the emphasis on self-efficacy. The six complete re-stated tenets of the social cognitive learning theory are (a) individuals learning from experience; (b) ability to perform a behavior using knowledge and skills; (c) observation of learning others as a part of internalizing learning, including social interactions, and modeling; (d) reinforcement of individuals' behaviors; (e) the anticipation of consequences of their actions; (f) their sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977a, 1986). As noted above, belief in personal capabilities is central to developing self-efficacy. Bandura further described that the more robust individuals' self-efficacy, the more they take on problematic, stressful situations.

A theory focused on self-efficacy is pertinent for understanding teachers' lived experiences of the barriers that students face (Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Mainly when teachers work with students from first-generation immigrant families and must find practices teachers to use for these students (Gutentag et al., 2018; Tatar et al., 2011), these teachers can offer perceptions of self-efficacy and the support or professional development that could be vital to overcome the challenges when teaching these newcomers/late-arrivals students (Szelei et al., 2020). These approaches to using the theory are consistent with the research questions for this study. The study problem concerned the growing numbers of these students and how it compounds teacher challenges. Thus, insights into how they could become more self-efficacious could be crucial to teachers thriving despite the challenges.

Self-efficacy can be developed in a social context and through individuals' internal experiences of agency and success. Friedman (1993) and Dellinger et al. (2008) further developed Bandura's concept of teacher self-efficacy, emphasizing teachers' self-understandings and knowledge of their abilities to execute classroom skills and tasks. Teachers' acumen with practices intended to engage and motivate students as autonomous learners are linked to

teachers' high self-efficacy, agency, and observations of teachers' effectiveness (Lauermann & Berger, 2021). Moreover, results related to multicultural teaching and other practices that address student diversity are most relevant to the current study. For example, Gutentag et al. (2018) found that teachers with positive attitudes toward cultural diversity, inclusiveness, and pluralistic practices rated themselves as having higher self-efficacy. Other studies recommended an understanding of developing student autonomy and positive teacher attitudes regarding inclusion, multiculturalism, and self-efficacy (Woodcock & Jones, 2020).

The social context for learning holds for both students and teachers. Jaffe-Walter and Lee (2018) and Rodriguez et al. (2020) have indicated that teachers' active engagement with students using the students' cultural backgrounds can enhance student belonging and achievement. Approaches and programs that support teachers include newcomers' programs (Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018), teacher collaboration (Barba et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020; Trahey & Spada, 2020), and strength and asset-based models for interactions among teachers (Barba et al., 2019), which could be valuable for teachers (Barba et al., 2019; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2020). The study's results concerning teacher perceptions of support were interpreted regarding how their suggestions might resemble existing and non-existing programs and the relationship to teachers' self-efficacy. Thus, using the self-efficacy and social cognitive theory, as well as these conceptual models of teacher development and improvement for this student population, could help the researcher interpret the study's results.

Potential Importance of the Study

Educators nationwide and in California must cope with the growing number of immigrant students in schools (Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Migration Policy Institute, 2019; Zarate & Gándara, 2019). The topic of this study concerned students from first-generation families who

are often newcomers to the education system and have considerable barriers to engaging and achieving in school. Significantly, high school newcomers have barriers to overcoming their interrupted education, and teachers must find ways to speed their progress toward graduation (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Glock & Kleen, 2020; Jiménez-Castellanos & Garcia, 2017; Potochnick, 2018). As noted above, teachers face low self-efficacy and burnout when challenged with students' cultural and linguistic diversity (Gutentag et al., 2018). Thus, understanding their perspectives is essential for improving teacher retention and student achievement scores, grades, and graduation rates. More information on teachers' perspectives concerning their strategies and practices with first-generation, newcomer students is needed, particularly regarding teachers' understanding of students' barriers and needs. This knowledge could enhance teachers' abilities and increase student engagement (Poulou et al., 2018; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Also, teacher professional development could improve the outcomes for students and teachers (Barba et al., 2019; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). The literature is sparse concerning teachers' lived experiences in these circumstances (Barba et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020), including support for these teachers (Barba et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020). As pertinent to the study, little information is available for educators and researchers concerned with the issues in California (Barba et al., 2019). Thus, the interested stakeholders might include researchers, teachers, state administrators, universities, parents, and students.

Given the diversity of students and the continued influx of immigrants into California schools, charter high schools remain among the most diverse in the country (California State Department of Education, 2021a). However, California has few resources or programs to support these teachers and their students (Barba et al., 2019). In addition, preservice teacher preparation does not emphasize topics related to immigrant and diverse students. Issues intersect, such as

race/ethnicity, immigration status, and language barriers, and deserve more profound attention due to the compounding impacts on students and teachers (Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Thus, many teacher preparation courses do not address the challenges of working with the complex situation of first-generation students. These courses do not encourage understanding the multiple issues for diverse students and immigrants of different backgrounds (Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2020). More information from the teachers' perspectives could support their professional development and skills in classroom culture and instruction (Barba et al., 2019). Thus, the study outcomes could be significant in assisting charter school teachers and first-generation late-arrival immigrant high school students.

Identification of Key Terms

Asset-based model: This approach for teachers and school psychologists combines team consultations on instruction and uses cultural asset identifiers. The framework identifies multicultural responses and interventions individually tailored to support teachers and students (Barba et al., 2019; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2020).

At-promise students: In the California educational system, these students are considered those who do not attain a high school diploma. The reasons for failure to graduate include low motivation and inconsistent attendance, economic disadvantage, continuing underachievement, and low scores on standardized English and mathematics tests. (Samuels, 2020).

Interrupted learners: Students entering the United States from other countries experience a discontinuity in their education (Drake, 2017; Glock & Kleen, 2020; Potochnick, 2018).

Diversity-related burnout: Teacher burnout threatens teachers' well-being and is linked to stress in culturally diverse classrooms (Gutentag et al., 2018; Tatar & Horenczyk, 2003).

First-generation immigrant students: Students whose parents were born in another country and have relocated to the United States (Child Trends, 2018).

Immigration-related self-efficacy: The concept is linked to teachers' beliefs that they can affect the success of immigrant students (Tatar et al., 2011).

Late arrivals: Newcomer immigrant high school students who have a short time to master the English language and other skills to graduate from high school (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018).

Newcomer students: Students who are recent arrivals to a new country from their country of origin must enter a school system where they have arrived (IGI Global, 2022).

Socioeconomic status: An individual or group's socioeconomic status depends on their position on the socioeconomic scale; the status is determined by a combination of factors, including social and economic, such as household income, education level, occupation or job type, and its prominence, location of residence, and in some communities and cultures, racial/ethnic or religious backgrounds (American Psychological Association, 2022).

Teacher burnout: Burnout is due to teachers' frustrations, discouragement, and growing intentions to leave their jobs as performance, wellness, and quality of life decline (Dellinger et al., 2008; Friedman, 1993).

Teacher self-efficacy: The definition of self-efficacy has been honed to teachers' contexts in a school setting. Self-efficacy has been described for teachers as their self-awareness, understanding, and knowledge of personal capacities to execute skills, practices, and tasks at a specified quality level (Dellinger et al., 2008)

Delimitations

This study was delimited to charter high schools in Los Angeles County. The investigation concerns the lived experiences of high school teachers in charter schools. The selection criteria for participants were delimited to teachers with a secondary teaching credential obtained after teaching for 2 years. These selection criteria included that they had been teaching for at least 3 years and were currently teaching at a charter school. Additional criteria delimitations include agreeing to consent to participate and having their responses used as part of the study. The consenting participants also agreed to be interviewed via a virtual Zoom meeting.

Limitations

Limitations include the researcher's potential lack of knowledge concerning not knowing the participation level of respondents due to the use of online or phone interviews. The researcher could not see the participant's body language to evaluate if the individuals were listening, being truthful, or disengaging (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019). The sample of teachers included volunteers for the study. Therefore, the teachers selected might not include those with negative perceptions of teaching students from the population of interest. These teachers may fear revealing negative perceptions of their schools and students. Also, the teacher participants might not represent the teacher demographics within the charter schools of interest. Finally, the participants may not be truthful due to a lack of trust in the researcher, who attempted to establish trust during the interviews. All these factors can bias the results of the study.

Assumptions

In this qualitative study, the researcher expected the interviewees to provide open, accurate, and truthful responses (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019). The researcher assumed the interviewees could comprehend each question and provide clear and direct responses. The interviewees were considered to have participated freely and were not coerced. In this study, the

interviewees were teachers from schools serving first-generation immigrant and newcomer students, many of whom could be from low socioeconomic households. The assumption was that they did not feel pressured to reveal information about their employer or the students.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 provides the introduction and background. Next, the problem was described, and the purpose and significance of the study were discussed. Next, the research questions were enumerated along with the theoretical framework. Key terms were defined, and the delimitations, limitations, and assumptions were detailed. The remaining portions of the study were organized into a literature review in Chapter 2 and the methodology in Chapter 3.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This study was a phenomenological study to explore the lived experiences of teachers at charter high schools within Los Angeles County concerning their perceptions of the barriers for first-generation, newcomer, and late-arriver immigrant high school students, the strategies and practices these teachers use, and their perceptions of the support they need and receive in teaching these students charter schools. The study was focused on high school teachers and their perceptions of first-generation immigrant students who are late arrivals/newcomers into the United States education system. These students are typically pressured to catch up academically (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020; Salinas, 2006). The review included a discussion of the theoretical framework and self-efficacy theory. A review of research concerning the relationship among self-efficacy, teacher attitudes and beliefs, burnout, and inclusive teaching practices in a multicultural setting was also included. The review continued with historical background on charter schools and trends in the education of immigrants. Specifically, the barriers for newcomer-first generation immigrant students were emphasized, incorporating teacher challenges and practices, professional development, and supports that could effectively enhance teaching.

Historical Background

Charter schools' history is intertwined with education reform and as educational alternatives ostensibly meant for underserved communities that provide equal opportunities for specific needs within a local community (Cohodes, 2018; Kane & Lauricathella, 2018; Nathan, 1997). Although the role of charter schools and their value to the community has been debated (Cohodes, 2018; National Education Association, 2019), some have argued that charters are succeeding academically, and others believe they add little value to student achievement

(Cohodes, 2018; Swaak, 2019). This study focused on teachers of first-generation immigrant students in Los Angeles County, where charter schools have experienced significant growth (California State Department of Education, 2019). The growth of immigrant populations in the Los Angeles area parallels the expansion of charter schools that often serve these immigrant students. Moreover, many have suggested that because charter schools have flexible missions and curricula compared to most public schools, they can have a beneficial role in meeting the differentiated needs of some children; for this study, those needs of teachers and students were considered in the charter school environment.

The section reviews charter schools' origins and purposes. It includes student demographics in the United States, California, and Los Angeles County. Understanding charter schools' history gives insights into the setting and context of charter school teachers, i.e., the participants in this study. In addition, a review of the historical trends in student demographics is essential to understanding the current pressures on schools and teachers to meet the needs of the growing immigrant population in the United States. In particular, the recent statistics on the student body in charter schools and their demographics were reviewed, along with data on the functions and performance of public charter schools in Los Angeles County.

Charter Schools in the United States and California

The purpose of charter schools originated in the 1970s as a part of a movement to evolve public education for the needs of local communities. Although academic educators had proposed the charter concept as a testing ground for new practices, and some local school systems had experimented with instituting "charted" public schools around the same time (Cohodes, 2018; Nathan, 1997), Minnesota is credited with forming the first charter schools in 1993 (Kane & Lauricnathella, 2018; Nathan, 1997). Forty-five states and the District of Colombia have policies

and laws permitting charter schools (Education Commission of the States, 2020), with about 7,200 charter schools serving approximately 7.2% of students. Since 2018, these schools have been growing by about 400 per year (White & Hieronimus, 2022). The California legislature passed the Charter School Act of 1992, which entertained the formation of charter schools. The passage of the legislation made California the second state in the country to offer these schools to communities (California Charter Schools Association, 2019). In 2021, California had more than 1,300 charter schools (California State Department of Education, 2021b), which serve about 11% of the state's public school students. Los Angeles County has 373 charter schools that serve over 200,000 students in kindergarten through Grade 12 (California State Department of Education, 2021a, 2021b). In California public schools, 57.8% of students receive meals on the federal free and reduced lunch program. According to the Population Reference Bureau (2022), almost 69% of charter students in Los Angeles County received federal free and reduced lunch, a significant fraction relative to the state-wide statistics for those receiving federal free and reduced lunch across all students in the state.

At a functional level, charter schools are public schools. Still, they have autonomy granted by states that allow them to operate independently from traditional school districts. As a result, they have flexibility regarding curriculum, day-to-day operations, such as school day and annual structure, and financial management and budgeting. However, depending on the state, these schools are held accountable by the state education agencies, authorized universities, special boards, and sometimes school districts. These oversight bodies can potentially revoke school charters if local standards are unmet. California charter schools have state, county, and district oversight. Charter schools receive district funding based on uniform grants determined by

the units of average daily attendance of the students (California State Department of Education, 2021b); the individual charter schools have some latitude in administering their budgets.

Because public charter schools are governed and held accountable by an independent governing body and receive state funding, they must be free and open to the public (Baude et al., 2018). In many states, if a charter school is at capacity and more students seek to attend than available seats, admission is by lottery (Cohodes, 2018). In contrast to traditional public schools within a district, individual charter schools are usually managed by teachers, parents, community-based groups, or charter management organizations (Baude et al., 2018; Cohodes, 2018). The authorizing, overseeing, and managing groups for charter schools are expected to uphold the mission of charters, particularly as tailored to local communities. The history of charter schools is intertwined with multiculturalism and equal opportunity for education (Cohodes, 2018; Kober & Rentner, 2020); thus, the shifting United States demographics toward increasing diversity in schools due to immigration juxtaposes charter school missions with serving immigrants' needs.

Historical Immigrant Student Demographic Trends and The Education of Immigrants

The changing demographics of the United States have increased the challenges on school systems nationwide, but none so much as the increasing numbers of immigrant students in some areas of the country. Understanding the immigration trends and their impacts on schools and teachers is essential to interpreting the current perspectives of teachers and their support needs, a central focus of this study. Examining these issues also illuminates the roles of charter schools and their role at this current point in history. This section discusses demographic trends for immigrant students nationally, emphasizing California, particularly the Los Angeles area.

Education for Immigrants. During the immigration waves of the 19th and early 20th century, part of the public school mission was to teach English to children of first-generation families, many of whom were foreign-born (Kober & Rentner, 2020). However, the bias against these children often led to assimilation at the cost of losing their cultural identity and native language. In contemporary education, the advent of multicultural curricula and bilingual education means democratizing education and supporting student success (Rodriguez et al., 2020; Salinas, 2006).

The inability to communicate is a primary barrier for newcomers and late-arrival students, who arrive with little literacy skills in their native language. These students have steep barriers to attaining English skills quickly enough to succeed in a new environment (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020). Current thinking is that learning a language becomes more effective and democratic when bilingual and trans-language education is provided and respect is shown for all cultures (Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020). As discussed below, teachers' challenges are understood better when considering the diversity of languages, cultures, and sheer numbers of non-English speaking students entering the system (Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). The current immigration dynamics create pressure and challenges for multicultural education teachers (Rodriguez et al., 2020). Communication between teachers and language learning students has been a primary barrier, and these conditions can contribute to teacher burnout and loss of resiliency (Gutentag et al., 2018; Woodcock & Jones, 2020).

The Congressional Research Office (2022) reported in 2020 that about 14% of the United States population is foreign-born, an increase from about 5% in 1970. In 2019, immigrant children accounted for almost a quarter of approximately 70 million children under 18 years old.

This number increased to 19% in 2000 from 13% in 1990 (Migration Policy Institute, 2019). In 2016, White people were the largest racial-ethnic group in the United States population (61.3%); however, by 2060, the United States will become a racial/ethnic majority-minority country (estimated 56% to 60% race/ethnicities other than White non-Hispanic; Colby & Ortman, 2015; Statista, 2022). In other words, by 2060, there will be a higher percentage of students of non-White races/ethnicities than White students who have historically dominated the public student population. Although these trends mean that White people will remain the largest racial/ethnic group in the population, the country will be majority-minority. As pertinent to this study, the 2060 projection is that the population aged 18 and under will be 20%, a decrease from 23% in 2014, and about 56% of those under 18 years old will belong to a racial and ethnic minority other than White non-Hispanic (Colby & Ortman, 2015). Because the native-born United States population will decrease by 2060 due to immigration, the foreign-born population will grow faster than native-born people by 2060 (19% growth rate by 2060 versus 13% in 2014). Thus, the number of children in the United States in 2060 will likely include a significant number of foreign-born and native-born first-generation coming into the United States school systems over the next several decades. Potentially, teachers will continue to experience language issues and other barriers for these students into 2060 (Vespa et al., 2018).

Newcomers and first-generation students of immigrant families represent a significant and growing proportion of students of low socioeconomic status in inner-city schools. Nationally, they tend to have higher dropout rates than other status groups (Archambault et al., 2017; Obinna & Ohanian, 2018). In 2016, the dropout rate for 15 to 24-year-olds was almost double for foreign-born immigrants over first-generation students of immigrant families (McFarland et al., 2018). Additionally, Pivovarova and Powers (2019) found that first and

second-generation students demonstrated lower school achievement than third-generation students unless the outcomes were controlled for gender and socioeconomic status. The differences disappear when these controls are added to the analysis, suggesting that socioeconomic status considerably impacts immigrant students' lives into the second generation. Low socioeconomic status immigrants often attend low-resourced and unsafe schools (Glock & Kleen, 2020; Jiménez-Castellanos & Garcia, 2017; Zarate & Gàndara, 2019). These issues also impact teachers, and this review explores the problems created for teachers of first-generation immigrant students and their students.

The California State Department of Education conducts an annual population data collection of immigrants in public and private schools in California. In the fall of 2020, 20,575 students identified as immigrants. California has led the nation in the number of immigrant students in the past. Still, more recently, the growth rate for immigrant students entering the school system has slowed compared to other states (California State Department of Education, 2019). Among all states, California holds the highest percentage of total immigrants at 27%, followed by New Jersey at 23%, New York at 22%, Florida at 21%, and Nevada at 20% (Migration Policy Institute, 2019). In addition, as of 2022, the number of immigrant students entering over the last several decades made California the state with the second most English language learners. California has 18.6% of all English learners in the United States enrolled in their schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). These statistics suggest that California's educational system remains challenged to meet the needs of these students.

Pertinent to the current study, Potochnick (2018) assessed the academic performance of immigrant students at a national level with interrupted schooling (Potochnick, 2018). According to this author, the emphasis should be on teachers' practices. Still, not enough is known about

teachers' approaches and strategies for these students. Hence, more knowledge is needed concerning teacher practices that could close the accelerated achievement gap for late-arrival students, particularly those disadvantaged economically (Karakus et al., 2023). Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act requires the California State Department of Education (2020) to set aside funds to enhance outreach to families and support their educational opportunities for immigrant students. Thus, multicultural education appears consistent with California's broad Title III mandates; it is unclear how well these schools meet the mandate for outreach and support. More information about school-level and teacher practices in California is needed to understand policy and practice ramifications.

Performance of Charter Schools

Although charter schools comprise a relatively small fraction of schools in the United States, the impacts of charter schools on students have been a significant part of the conversation regarding education policy over the past two decades. Some of the debate centers on charter schools' likelihood of impacting the public school system; various arguments have been put forth, ranging from charter schools are adverse and a drain on resources and financing for traditional public schools to the debate about whether charter schools' students excel versus their public-school counterparts (Cohodes, 2018; Torres & Golann, 2018). California has endorsed the argument that successful charter schools raise the bar for all schools and that competition and choice for parents could improve the system overall. Assembly Bill 544 defined guidelines and requirements for charter schools to move towards a performance-based approach and encouraged competition within the public school system. As a result, charter schools and their performance are discussed below at a national level and in California, specifically in Los Angeles County.

In a review, Cohodes (2018) described charter schools' performance as similar on average to traditional public schools. However, Cohodes conceded that the impacts of specific schools could vary widely. The review indicated that urban charter schools with primarily low-income and minority students and a "no excuses" approach were among those to demonstrate more significant gains in student achievement. Cohodes suggested that these charter schools provide a window into improving achievement for vulnerable student groups.

Performance of California and Los Angeles County Charter Schools and Students.

The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress exams evaluate students' English and mathematics proficiency. About 41% of 11th-grade charter students in Los Angeles County met or exceeded standards on the Smarter Balanced English Language Arts assessment in the 2021 to 2022 academic year compared to statewide charter school students (English proficiency, about 54%). Only about 11% of the county's charter school 11th-graders met or exceeded grade level in mathematics versus 23% from charter schools across the state (California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress, 2022). Students in Grade 11 in Los Angeles County traditional public schools met proficiency standards in English language arts at about 47% and math at about 33%. In traditional public schools statewide, 55% of English language arts students met grade level. In math, about 28% met the requirements (California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress, 2022). Charter school 11th-graders appear to be underperforming other students of the same grade statewide compared to traditional public schools.

The California Charter Schools Association (2022) reported that in 2020, 48% of all graduating high school students in Los Angeles County charter schools were college and career-ready. Additionally, 91% of charter schools met one or more state criteria for academic

performance. These percentages mirror students and schools in traditional Los Angeles County public schools, where about 48% of students were college and career-ready. Among these public schools, 91% met one or more standard criteria. Thus, in this county, the charter students and their schools and students and schools in the traditional public schools perform similarly regarding college preparation. However, California state charter students do not perform better than students in traditional public schools, with 39% of charter school students and 51% of traditional public school students meeting the college and career readiness criteria. Concerning school-level performance, compared statewide, Los Angeles County schools perform comparably to charters across the state, with 91% of all state charter schools and 88% of traditional schools exceeding the school academic criteria. In Los Angeles County, the graduation rates for charter students are about the same as in traditional schools at 89% and 90%, respectively, for 2020. However, these student and school-level data for graduation and those above for comparison of career/college preparation may mask the story for first-generation, new-arrival immigrant students. For example, in Los Angeles County, the dropout rate for English learners was over 18% in 2020, higher than any specific racial-ethnic or other demographics except students in foster care (27.9%) and notably, higher than socioeconomically disadvantaged students in all groups (10.8%). Moreover, the percentage of English learners dropping out of high school has been about 9% and, thus, about double the dropout rate of students who are not English learners (California State Department of Education, 2021b).

According to the California State Department of Education, the graduation rate of English learners was 69.1% in 2020, comparable to Los Angeles County. Still, English learners made up 18.7% of school enrollment in Los Angeles County. In 2022, across grade levels, only 23% of the English learners in charter school students in Los Angeles County were classified as

fluent in English. Additionally, socioeconomically disadvantaged students had about 50% proficiency in English language arts and 23% in mathematics (California State Department of Education, 2021b). The statistics specific to first-generation and newcomer students are unavailable for California. However, state-level statistics indicated that immigrant students comprise a significant proportion of students with low socioeconomic status (Population Reference Bureau, 2022). Many newcomer and first-generation immigrant students are English learners and socioeconomically disadvantaged. School dropout rates are known to be relatively high among English learners and socioeconomically disadvantaged. Thus, it appears likely that newcomer and first-generation immigrant students could have a higher dropout rate than any of these groups alone.

Notably, if these students are newcomers/late-arrivals and acculturate to America while remaining connected to their cultural origins, they can develop bicultural perspectives (Drake, 2017; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018). Biculturalism promotes resilience and positive self-identity and protects against dropping out of school (Drake, 2017; Obinna & Ohanian, 2018; Yeung & Bellehumeur, 2021). Some researchers suggested that bicultural students are more resilient than immigrant peers who become westernized, i.e., heritage culture-dominant youth (Yeung & Bellehumeur, 2021).

No information is available for local Los Angeles County charter schools concerning newcomers and, at promise, first-generation students. At the national level, Potochnick (2018) substantiated that immigrant students with interrupted schooling (i.e., newcomers) are typically at promise academic achievement. Usually, when attending charter schools, these students have lower graduation rates than traditional public schools in many states and communities (Potochnick, 2018). In addition, first-generation new-arrival students in California high schools

likely make up a significant portion of English learners and lower socioeconomic students. This idea supports the idea that first-generation new-arrival students increase the dropout rate (Barba et al., 2019).

Swaak (2019) cited several mandates and characteristics that define California charter schools, emphasizing Los Angeles County and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) schools. Swaak summarized some potential advantages of charter schools. These factors could contribute to student success at the post-secondary level. However, Swaak stated, “Schools can set different graduation requirements than traditional public schools.” Thus, head-to-head comparisons of statistics for achievement and completion rates may be unclear. For example, various districts and schools have differing mandates regarding grades required in core courses to graduate. For example, the California State University system requires grades of at least C. However, some charter schools across the county, such as LAUSD, require C’s or better to graduate, but others do not have the same requirements. However, Swaak reported some characteristics of Los Angeles County and LAUSD schools as supporting graduation and college readiness:

- Charter schools tend to develop a college-going culture that supports their matriculation into universities. For example, these schools tend to have lower student-counselor ratios, and counselors have more time with each student.
- Charters can have lower student-teacher ratios. This factor influences student achievement more than any other single issue.
- Charters can set their curriculum, tailor it to student needs, and influence achievement and school climate.

- Charters have detailed academic plans. However, the overseers/managers of a community school have latitude in setting goals that fit their students and community.

Theoretical Framework

This study's theoretical framework was Bandura's (1977a) self-efficacy theory, a component of Bandura's social cognitive theory. This facet of Bandura's theoretical work was chosen because teachers' self-efficacy was central to this study. Teachers' self-efficacy is tantamount to effective teaching, quality professional experiences for teachers, and student achievement (Barba et al., 2019; Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018). The constructivist approach emphasizes that most learning occurs through social interaction, and knowledge is constructed by individuals from this social context (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). The growth of social and cognitive theories spurred Bandura to expand theory by bridging social cognitive learning with self-efficacy theory and learning theories with constructivism. Using a constructivist approach, Bandura (1986, 2001a, 2011) described social learning theory as the social context of learning with reciprocating interactions, observing others' behaviors, and the social circumstances or environment in which interactions occur. This theory comprises the interactions between individuals (Bandura, 1986) and the interplay of biological and cognitive factors, which vary bidirectionally with the environment (Bandura, 2001b, 2008, 2011). These intersections include emotions, self-efficacy, and motivation (Bandura, 2001b, 2008). The social cognitive theory was developed from the five constructs of the social learning theory, emphasizing the additional construct of self-efficacy. A primary distinction of social cognitive learning theory from the initial social learning theories is the emphasis on self-efficacy. The six complete re-stated tenets of the social cognitive learning theory are (a) individuals learning from experience; (b) ability to perform a behavior using knowledge and skills; (c) observation of

learning others as a part of internalizing learning, including social interactions, and modeling; (d) reinforcement of individuals' behaviors; (e) the anticipation of consequences of their actions; (f) their sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977a, 1986).cy (Bandura, 1977a, 1986). Self-efficacy refers to self-belief regarding personal capabilities and agency (Bandura, 2008). A sense of self-efficacy can influence people's thinking, feelings, and motivation (Bandura, 2009). Bandura (2009) further described that the more robust individuals' sense of self-efficacy, the more they are willing to engage in challenging situations that could be stressful.

The self-efficacy theory is pertinent for understanding teachers' lived experiences with diverse students (Bandura, 1997; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). For this study, the focus was on teachers of students from first-generation immigrant families. However, the setting for the study included the highly diverse classrooms in Los Angeles County. Coping with these levels of diversity, including cultural, racial-ethnic, linguistic, socioeconomic, and other issues, such as learning differences and abilities, is stressful for teachers, degrades self-efficacy, and leads to burnout (Gutentag et al., 2018; Potochnick, 2018; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Thus, this theory was a distinctive and appropriate lens for the aims of the study, which include gaining insight into teachers' experiences with student barriers, their perceptions of practices and strategies effective with these first-generation students, and the support or professional development that could be vital in overcoming the teachers' challenges and student barriers, particularly immigrant new arrivals and newcomers to high school. Professional development and academic coursework have been proposed to support teachers in building self-efficacy for teaching first-generation, newcomer, and late-arrival students (Fitchett et al., 2012; Szelei et al., 2020). Thus, the use of the theory is consistent with the purpose and research questions for this study.

The study problem concerned the growing numbers of these students and how the growth compounds teacher challenges. The study phenomenon regards how the increase in newcomer and first-generation immigrant students presents challenges for teachers, particularly in multicultural settings with English learners, to avoid burnout and turnover and maintain self-efficacy (Gutentag et al., 2018; Woodcock & Jones, 2020) and resiliency (Daniilidou et al., 2020). Thus, insights into how they could become more self-efficacious could be crucial to teachers thriving despite the challenges. The lens of social cognitive theory empowers teachers to understand their attitudes and beliefs, enabling them to gain insight and understanding of assumptions about their capacity to teach (Bandura, 1986).

Teacher Self-efficacy Theory, Burnout, and Multicultural Practices

Researchers have extended Bandura's social cognitive and self-efficacy theories to understanding teachers' self-perceptions of efficacy and comfort with teaching strategies and practices (Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Although several factors affect teachers' self-efficacy, teacher challenges with multicultural education and including diverse students are crucial for this study, as these topics are linked directly to immigrant students. Dellinger et al. (2008) refined Bandura's concept of self-efficacy for teachers. They described teachers' self-efficacy as self-understanding and knowledge of their capacities to execute skills and tasks at specified quality. This concept is operationalized in well-known instruments that measure teacher self-efficacy (e.g., Teacher Efficacy Scale, see Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale, see Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). This concept of teacher self-efficacy is consistent with the studies reviewed in this chapter.

Studies have found some teacher self-efficacy predictors over the last several decades. In a seminal study, Tschannen-Moran and Johnson (2011) established that openness to new ideas

and practices was a general mindset associated with self-efficacious teachers. Moreover, the adaptive use of instructional strategies, particularly with diverse students (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), flexibility with subskills (Tschannen-Moran & Johnson, 2011), subject knowledge (Bjerke & Solomon, 2019), and classroom management (Bjerke & Solomon, 2019; Poulou et al., 2018), are associated with higher self-efficacy in the seminal and more recent studies. For example, Poulou et al. (2018) studied 58 preservice and experienced teachers. They found that observations of effective classroom management and adaptive practices were matched with those who scored well on the instructional dimensions of the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale. Teachers willing and able to adapt instructional methods and use methods that engage students had higher perceptions of self-efficacy (Fitchett et al., 2012; Poulou et al., 2018; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Similar to Poulou et al., others showed that teachers' facility to engage and motivate students to be autonomous was associated with teachers' positive self-efficacy perceptions and objective measures of effectiveness (Lauermann & Berger, 2021).

In another recent study, Buzzai et al. (2022) expanded the examination of teacher self-efficacy by including several related variables; among these was the motivation to create student autonomy, attitudes, and teaching styles in multicultural education. In the context of these variables and a high school setting, they found that teaching practices that motivated student autonomy were predictive of self-efficacy. This study's findings are consistent with those of others, such as Lauermann and Berger (2021), Fitchett et al. (2012), and Poulou et al. (2018). As discussed further below, Zee et al. (2018) found that the context of a study and how these related variables are operationalized can affect study outcomes regarding student achievement and

teacher self-efficacy. Thus, the results of Buzzai et al. (2022) are discussed below for deeper comparison with other studies that include these variables in multicultural and inclusive contexts.

Additionally, qualitative studies on teacher self-efficacy are limited; thus, it is unclear if the results are consistent with those described above. However, Jaffe-Walter and Lee (2018) and Rodriguez et al. (2020) have indicated that teachers' active engagement with students using the students' cultural backgrounds can enhance student belonging and achievement. Therefore, approaches and programs that support teachers, such as newcomers' programs (Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018), collaborative (Barba et al., 2019; Blair & Haneda, 2020; Rodriguez et al., 2020; Trahey & Spada, 2020; Villavicencio et al., 2021), and strength and asset-based models for interactions among teachers (Barba et al., 2019) could be helpful for teachers (Barba et al., 2019; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2020).

Teachers who embrace diversity and believe in the effectiveness of inclusion tend to have higher levels of self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Johnson, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). For example, Woodcock and Jones (2020) employed the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) to survey 122 secondary school teachers in Britain regarding their perceptions of inclusion practices and teacher self-efficacy. They directly compared mean scores of self-efficacies of teachers in two groups: those who uphold inclusiveness as an effective practice and those who did not. The results showed higher levels of efficacy for those who believe in the effectiveness of inclusiveness practices than those who do not. Studies concerning teachers' self-efficacy and student achievement have yielded mixed results, depending on grade level, subject, inclusion, and student-centered practices. Nevertheless, some associations between specific measures of self-efficacy and these variables have been reported. For example, Zee et al. (2018) found that

for a sample of 49 teachers, classroom-level mathematics achievement was positively associated with teacher self-efficacy.

In contrast, reading-level achievement at the classroom level was negatively associated with teacher self-efficacy. However, the student-level reading achievement was significantly and positively associated with teacher self-perceptions of efficacy. These student-level results support Woodcock and Jones' (2020) suggestion that self-efficacy may be essential for teachers of the most vulnerable students who need inclusive and individualized practices to support their academic progress.

Woodcock and Jones (2020) have suggested that teaching immigrant students requires teachers to maintain flexibility in their practices and meet the challenges of teaching these students. In a seminal study on this topic, results implied that others might find that teachers with high self-efficacy tended to be more inclusive multiculturally due to positive attitudes toward diversity, willingness to adjust strategies or pedagogy, and fluidity in relationships to positively impact their students (Parker, 2019; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). Similarly, Jordan et al. (2009) found that teachers' attitudes and beliefs, including their understandings and apprehensions regarding inclusive education, might respond to change depending on the context, teaching environment, and school climate.

As described above, immigrant students are often at promise for achievement and graduation; thus, teachers of these students could benefit from a strong sense of self-efficacy to support these students (Tatar et al., 2011). Tatar et al. (2011) coined immigration-related self-efficacy as a concept linked to teachers' beliefs that they can affect the success of immigrant students. Using this idea, Tatar et al. showed that teachers who were immigrants from the former Soviet Union and who held assimilative attitudes versus pluralistic, multicultural perspectives

had lower self-efficacy levels regarding teaching immigrant students (Tatar et al., 2011). In a more recent follow-up to Tatar et al.'s study, Gutentag et al. (2018) found that teachers with positive regard toward cultural diversity or pluralistic practices believed themselves to be efficacious with immigrant students. Woodcock and Jones (2020) recommended further studies of teacher practices, attitudes toward inclusion, and teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy, including longitudinal designs.

As mentioned above, Buzzai et al. (2022) addressed some of the gaps suggested by Woodcock and Jones (2020). Buzzai et al. (2022) contributed to understanding the complicated interactions of teaching styles and practices, teacher attitudes about multicultural education, inclusion, and outcomes for student learning behaviors by using a methodology sufficiently complex to adequately capture the interactions of these variables: a correlative and predictive design with structural equations analysis as the primary methodology. The method allows for examining predictive relationships and the interactions or mediation of variables on known direct predictive relationships, such as teacher attitudes toward multicultural education and self-efficacy. They aimed to understand the precursors of teaching styles in multicultural classrooms and the influences of teachers' attitudes on multicultural education. They specifically examined teaching practices to motivate students and build teachers' perceived self-efficacy. Additionally, they examined specific teaching styles, such as supportive and structured classrooms, to encourage student autonomy and engagement and behaviors that lower student motivation and autonomy, such as excessive control and chaotic classrooms.

Although the study was not longitudinal, as Woodcock and Jones (2020) suggested, Buzzai et al. used a large-scale design with a sample comprised of 474 in-service teachers high school teachers. Among these participants, about 80% were women, and the mean age was

approximately 38 years ($SD = 7.03$). Thus, the sample mainly included experienced teachers who were across the spectrum. This study was particularly pertinent to the current study because it focused on high school teachers in public schools. The outcomes showed that teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy for inclusive practices directly and positively predicted using inclusive practices and motivating teaching styles. These teaching styles inspire student autonomy and engagement using less controlling behaviors and relaxed but structured classrooms. Conversely, those teachers with classrooms hallmarked by controlling behaviors and poor classroom management can demotivate students.

Woodcock and Jones (2020) showed that self-efficacy levels were a predictor of motivating teaching styles but not a predictor of demotivating teaching styles. In contrast, attitudes about multicultural teaching directly and positively predicted demotivating teaching styles. Furthermore, teacher attitudes toward multicultural education mediated the relationship between teachers' efficacy for inclusive practices and motivating teaching styles. This study filled a gap in understanding the relationships among the variables of teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education and self-efficacy. Teachers' attitudes concerning inclusive and multicultural education were predisposing conditions for teachers' choices of styles in multicultural classrooms and their self-efficacy (Woodcock & Jones, 2020).

Woodcock and Jones (2020) also suggested that a better understanding of teacher burnout related to multicultural education and self-efficacious inclusive practices could shed light on teacher challenges in this setting. Notably, a barrier to attaining self-efficacy can be teacher burnout. Burnout has been described in many contexts; Friedman (1993) modified the concept for teaching and school settings. Friedman described teacher burnout as emotions such as frustration and discouragement and behaviors such as turnover intention. Burnout can degrade

teachers' effectiveness at work, wellness, and overall quality of life. Pertinent to this study, Tatar and Horenczyk (2003) suggested that teachers could suffer from *diversity-related burnout*. They specified this form of burnout as a threat to teachers' personal and professional well-being due to pervasive stress and concomitant coping in culturally diverse classrooms. Thus, Gutentag et al.'s (2018) follow-on study to Tatar et al. (2011) included exploring diversity-related burnout and immigration-related self-efficacy. They showed that teachers with lower levels of self-efficacy are prone to burnout. These findings are also consistent with Daniilidou et al. (2020), showing that teacher self-efficacy and resilience were directly and negatively associated with teacher burnout, respectively.

Moreover, Gutentag et al. (2018) hypothesized that teacher beliefs and approaches to diversity predict diversity-related burnout and immigration-related self-efficacy. A sample of 147 teachers was asked to rank their perceptions of immigrant students in the categories of challenges, assets, problems, and nonissues. The results showed that the most frequent ranking was a nonissue, i.e., the teachers tended to ignore student differences. The least frequent responses were asset and challenge. Buzzai et al. (2022) used Gutentag et al.'s (2018) categorizations of teacher attitudes toward immigrant students linked to diversity-related burnout. Buzzai et al. noted that the teachers' style moderated the attitudes reflected in the negative or dismissive categories, such as problem and nonissue. Other moderators included specific variables related to students' characteristics and setting-dependent factors, such as resources available to teachers.

Using multiple regression analysis, Gutentag et al. (2018) showed that if teachers perceived these students as assets rather than problems, they tended to have higher immigration-related self-efficacy and lower diversity-related burnout. According to Woodcock and Jones

(2020), self-efficacious teachers have adaptable strategies. Based on the implications from Gutentag et al., these attitudes contrast with a state of burnout and resemble those of self-officious teachers. Thus, teachers may be at risk for low self-efficacy and burnout when, as some researchers suggested, they are in a setting with diverse students with multiple at-risk needs, such as learning English and few resources or low socioeconomic status. Additionally, teacher burnout appears likely when students in these circumstances could benefit from a multicultural context for learning that stretches teachers' capacities and self-belief in their efficacy (Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020; Woodcock & Jones, 2020).

Barriers to Immigrant Students and Teacher Challenges

Immigrant children arriving in the United States are integrated into the classroom with different educational backgrounds, sometimes requiring teachers to teach basic literacy in high school. However, many high school teachers are untrained in teaching students with these needs (Barba et al., 2019; Drake, 2017; Trahey & Spada, 2020). Compared to their nonimmigrant school peers, students from immigrant families often face the added challenges of attending under-resourced schools with underprepared teachers, violence, and poverty due to parents' unemployment (Sibley & Brabeck, 2017). According to the National Center for Education Statistics, most teachers in American public schools are monolingual and White (79.3% from 2017 to 2018). Thus, some teachers may ignore immigrant students' home languages and lived experiences due to a lack of understanding and knowledge about these students (Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020). As discussed throughout the review, many immigrant students have similar challenges, regardless of individual differences and personal context. However, these contextual issues compound the barriers for newcomers and late arrivals (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Potochnick, 2018).

As suggested by relationships between teacher self-efficacy, attitudes toward inclusion and multicultural education, and teaching practices, diversity-related risk of burnout can present formidable challenges to effective teaching (Buzzai et al., 2022; Gutentag et al., 2018; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Instructional strategies tailored to immigrants' needs (e.g., bilingual instruction, translanguaging, cultural accommodations, and scaffolding) and acknowledgment of immigrants' language and culture positively relate to their performance and acculturation process (Haim, 2020; Trahey & Spada, 2020). However, the schools these students attend often cannot provide such resources (Sibley & Brabeck, 2017).

The barriers discussed in this section are interrelated; some researchers rank and define them differently (Potochnick, 2018). For this study, barriers were discussed individually and relatedly in broad categories that reflect the topics found in the literature. As noted throughout the review, first-generation and new-arrival immigrants (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020; Salinas, 2006) are more likely to have several distinct and compounding factors contributing to their barriers to education (Drake, 2017; Potochnick, 2018). For example, inadequate educational attainment before arriving in the United States and little English ability after arriving are difficult to distinguish when teaching newcomers/late arrivals (Barba et al., 2019; Drake, 2017; Trahey & Spada, 2020).

The barriers for students discussed in this section begin with those long-recognized and historically significant for educating immigrants in the United States: English language learning and loss of link to their cultures, i.e., the language barriers, achievement gap, and difficulties with acculturation. The section also includes research on family assimilation, social connections, and economic and financial barriers. Teachers' perspectives on these issues were threaded throughout the discussion. Teacher challenges emerge from these problems and barriers that

these students face. Thus, for the current study, exploring the literature on student barriers and teacher perceptions of these was essential.

Language Barriers, Achievement, and Acculturation in School

Language barriers permeate all aspects of immigrant student education. Some have argued that a lack of fluency in English is the foremost issue for immigrant students and their teachers (Haim, 2020; Potochnick, 2018). Lower achievement in the English language is especially acute for newcomers and late arrivals (Burriss et al., 2019; Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Potochnick, 2018). For example, teachers reported challenges when helping students who are likely English language learners with lower language skills to meet basic literacy in class and pass the state achievement standards (Burriss et al., 2019; Drake, 2017; Potochnick, 2018). Potochnick (2018) conducted the first broad-scale assessment at a national level of the academic performance of immigrant students with interrupted schooling—i.e., late arrivals. Language barriers lead to disengagement, leaving students at higher risk for lower achievement scores and grades and higher dropout rates (Barba et al., 2019; Potochnick, 2018). These challenges are notable for teachers and students in California, where the number of immigrant students enrolling in schools is increasing. As a result, educators feel underprepared to address the complex needs of students representing hundreds of languages and cultures (Barba et al., 2019).

Immigrant students often do not receive language education as English learners due to the teachers' unpreparedness to communicate with students in languages other than English. This lack of communication leaves students without opportunities to learn various subject matter areas and English academically (Bjerke & Solomon, 2019; Rincón, 2020). In addition, teachers' and administrators' disregard for home languages can negatively impact the students' relationships with teachers, parents, and peers and their classroom participation (Kiramba & Oloo, 2020;

Parker, 2019). As a result, later-generation bilingual immigrant students are less likely to graduate high school compared to those with native-born parents (Sibley & Brabeck, 2017). In addition, students with low English proficiency experience low graduation rates. They become from peers who are native English speakers due to their cultural and linguistic differences from the dominant student body culture (Sibley & Brabeck, 2017).

Students who are newcomers are often pressed to learn English and become familiar with the beliefs, values, and customs of a new culture and educational system (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Culture is an essential part of an individual's life experiences, which are impacted by the individual's ecological niches through learning and expressed by language (Jiménez-Castellanos & Garcia, 2017). The students whose families are new to the United States often enroll in schools in communities with much poverty and low resources. Anguiano (2017) found that low levels of family cohesion and high tensions at home were strong predictors of depression, suicidality, and substance abuse. These students experience a lack of academic and socioeconomic support. Students with many newcomers often have fewer teachers, support staff, and counselors with language skills to interact with students using their first language and culture (Rodriguez et al., 2020). When learning and content are not linked to students' lives, they find it more challenging to connect implicitly and explicitly to their existing knowledge and understand the content (Chykina, 2021; Trahey & Spada, 2020). Often, children of immigrants serve as linguistic and cultural intermediaries between the families and community (Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020). In a study by Anguiano (2017), students with more significant family obligations reported higher academic achievements and personal responsibility.

Adolescent English learners must acquire an academic language, which could take 5 to 7 years to achieve competency at a basic level of English proficiency (Carhill et al., 2008; Gray-Nicolas & Miranda, 2019; Obinna & Ohanian, 2018). Acquiring a second language later in life impacts students' receptiveness to new vocabulary and phonological awareness (Kalia et al., 2018; Trahey & Spada, 2020). Many newcomers lack sufficient English competency to thrive in their studies. They have inadequately developed language skills, leading to lower grade point averages, repeating grades, and lower graduation rates (Carhill et al., 2008; Potochnick, 2018). Immigrant students who arrive during their high school years have less support for learning English in school, encounter more complex content in their academic classes, and have less time to catch up with their native-speaking peers (Barba et al., 2019; Carhill et al., 2008; Drake, 2017; Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020). Educators often focus on the students' need to learn English sufficiently to pass a standardized test and complete courses to graduate (Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020). Second language acquisition research affirms that the English learner's output in speaking and writing in the target language needs large amounts of comprehensible input in the targeted language (Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020).

The system often hampers immigrant student achievement (e.g., potentially through mainstreaming, Trahey & Spada, 2020) and sometimes leaves their achievements unrecognized (Jiménez-Castellanos & Garcia, 2017). For example, English language learners are frequently relegated to a status of still learning English (Jiménez-Castellanos & Garcia, 2017) and at promise, even if their achievement in some subject areas, such as math, meets grade-level standards (Barba et al., 2019; Bjerke & Solomon, 2019). Rincón (2020) addressed immigrant students' lack of understanding of the content material while learning a second language; thus, the researcher supported bilingual and translanguaging as alternatives. However, subject matter

teachers' lack of training in multiple languages or support from teachers of English as a second language increases this barrier for students and challenges teachers (Barba et al., 2019). Some researchers advocate bilingual and translanguaging education because it is democratic and respects all cultures (Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020; Rodriguez et al., 2020). Nevertheless, immigrant students are faced with a language barrier. They are expected to meet the Common Core State Standards to graduate high school and college entrance requirements if they want to pursue higher education (Drake, 2017). On-time graduation for high school is defined as four years in policy and practice. However, some states consider six-year graduation rates as some students are held back (Gray-Nicolas & Miranda, 2019).

Language learning for immigrant students and their families can affect their education beyond learning in the classroom. In a study by Obinna and Ohanian (2018), they found that a lack of English fluency is a barrier to school engagement and involvement for immigrant parents and students. Parents' and students' lack of fluency in English mar their interactions with administrators and teachers concerning system procedures, such as school registration, parent-teacher conferences, and trouble with cultural assimilation (Evans et al., 2019). Furthermore, parental involvement in their student's education was identified to close achievement gaps, maximize their potential and participation rates in advanced courses, motivate toward schoolwork, and value education (Gonzalez et al., 2013). However, parents with little or no English-speaking abilities cannot efficiently perform that role. Burris et al. (2019) found that home environments could accelerate literacy when parents with low English skills speak English with their children as they progress at school. Alternatively, late arrivals students typically cannot ameliorate gaps in English learning by speaking English at home if family members have poor skills.

In contrast, children who have learned English in school at younger ages and over time become navigators of the educational system, social connectors, and assistors in assimilation for their parents (Anguiano, 2017; Burris et al., 2019). Students from first-generation immigrant households face a lack of financial resources, fluency in English, and trouble with cultural assimilation (Evans et al., 2019). However, parents with little or no English-speaking abilities cannot effectively support their children when facing these barriers.

Students learn to socialize at school (Bondy et al., 2016), where they assimilate the values, beliefs, behaviors, norms, and social and cultural roles of American society (Bondy et al., 2016; Jiménez-Castellanos & Garcia, 2017). Schooling practices, such as segregation and tracking, increase social isolation, stigmatize and minoritize students, and may engender psychological damage and physical violence (Blair & Haneda, 2020). Murillo et al. (2023) found that students with problems with their immigration status were more likely to expect lower vocational outcomes and encounter more external barriers to education, such as working while going to school, unplanned pregnancy, family problems, and financial issues. In addition, these immigrant students from lower socioeconomic status backgrounds are more likely to experience stigmas, stereotyping, and prejudice (Bondy et al., 2016; Hernandez et al., 2021). These social barriers may threaten the individual's social identity and impair the students' self-value, well-being, motivation, and achievement (Hernandez et al., 2021). Moreover, lower socioeconomic backgrounds tend to influence the development of their identities and selves to develop characteristics such as cooperativeness, the drive to be social, empathy, and resilience (Hernandez et al., 2021).

Moreover, teachers tend to have lower expectations for economically disadvantaged students, thus compounding the issues for students of immigrant families, particularly first-

generation students (Glock & Kleen, 2020). When students who are members of minority groups are reminded that their group has not performed well on an academic test, their performance on tests tends to decrease (Chykina, 2021). When high school students experienced positive relationships with their teachers, they developed higher levels of self-efficacy and were less likely to drop out (Parker, 2019; Potochnick, 2018). Rodriguez et al. (2020) described that these students perform better when viewed positively by teachers. Bullying from peers and teachers may exist due to the immigrant student's language barrier and not being accustomed to the American culture (Murillo et al., 2023). Researchers have found a connection between school funding levels and academic achievement for students enrolled in schools with fewer resources (Roksa & Kinsley, 2018; Zarate & Gándara, 2019). Researchers found that schools serving students from low-income families have less well-maintained facilities, less experienced teachers, and fewer advanced course offerings (Thompson et al., 2020). Thus, students from families with low socioeconomic status often underperformed compared to students from higher socioeconomic households (Glock & Kleen, 2020).

In a Canadian study, Archambault et al. (2017) found that generations of immigrant students who remain in low socioeconomic schools do not follow a path to assimilation and become marginalized. Instead, they tend to experience a decline in achievement. Students from lower socioeconomic households tend to score lower on standardized tests than their more affluent classmates. The economic context of these students compounds their language and assimilation issues (Burriss et al., 2019; Glock & Kleen, 2020; Potochnick, 2018). Obinna and Ohanian (2018) found that language is a barrier to school engagement and involvement for immigrant parents and students. Parents of lower socioeconomic status may be unable to support

their students with exposure to language and providing reading material at home (Burriss et al., 2019).

To address the causes of immigrant families' historical, cultural, and structural inequalities, schools and community stakeholders must be more aware of societal disparities and commit to social justice (Blair & Haneda, 2020). A newcomer student who acquires or accultures to the novel surroundings of a new culture while retaining connections to their native culture can become bicultural and gain a stronger connection to their new surrounding (Drake, 2017; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018). They are shown to have higher resiliency and success as adult citizens than new arrivals without acculturation. However, schools and education are crucial to achievement, and these students can thrive if given a chance (Yeung & Bellehumeur, 2021). Teacher strategies and practices tailored to these students are critical to providing them with the best education possible (Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Moreover, given the challenges teachers face with immigrant newcomers and late arrivals, proper preparation and support can increase the opportunities to give these students the best education and support possible. The following sections provide a literature review of these topics, beginning with professional development and programming that helps teachers.

Supports for Teachers, Professional Development, and Programs for Students

Several researchers stressed the need for support and professional development for teachers to facilitate diversity inclusion (Woodcock & Jones, 2020), relevant to this study for teachers of immigrant students (Barba et al., 2019; Forghani-Arani et al., 2019). In a quasi-experimental study of professional development designed for teachers of English learners, Tschannen-Moran and McMaster (2009) developed a four-way model using several levels of interventions that they directly compared among groups of teacher participants. The study

explored increasing teachers' sense of self-efficacy using one or more of these interventions. The model includes providing information to increase knowledge, modeling behaviors and practices, introducing new approaches, and coaching to enhance learning and sustain practices. The coaching intervention with follow-up strongly influenced teachers' self-efficacy concerning instruction and implementation of new strategies. A significant fraction of the participants who took part in instructing students and engaged in planning and practice sessions reported decreased self-efficacy. However, those teachers who participated in the continuing coaching sessions maintained or increased their self-efficacy regarding reading instruction.

In particular, collaboration and teamwork have been found to support teachers in their efforts to include English language learners. Due to the demands on teachers to be broadly prepared to work with diverse immigrants, particularly newcomer students, researchers have recently considered professional development that emphasizes collaborative strategies (Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Collaboration was shown to be beneficial for teachers. Professional development supporting teacher collaboration also enhances teachers' ability to focus on individual students' needs (Rizga, 2019; Villavicencio et al., 2021; Woodcock & Jones, 2020).

Most teachers' professional development is at the pre-service level. Often, the instruction includes a cursory introduction to multicultural education; therefore, some researchers have emphasized multicultural education and cultural sensitivity training (Rodriguez et al., 2020). In addition, some have advocated expanding bi-lingual and translanguaging training for preservice teachers. For example, Rodriguez et al. (2020) advocated that multicultural education and cultural sensitivity should be expanded during preservice training, and as Philpott et al. (2010) recommended, training in these areas should be ongoing for experienced teachers. They stressed

that professional development incorporates multicultural perspectives, allowing teachers to use their existing skills while cultivating new skills. Specifically, they emphasized teachers developing supportive relationships and collaborative practices to bridge instructional gaps and promote student inclusion. Others have asserted that acquiring second language skills and teaching English as a second language is often impractical for experienced content-specialist teachers. Instead, they have supported collaborative approaches to circumvent language obstacles, allowing subject matter teachers to de-emphasize English in their classrooms. As a result, these subject matter teachers can support bridging the students' native language with English by using translanguaging practices along with their English language teachers (Dávila & Linares, 2020).

Notably, teachers can be trained in multicultural education to improve students' connection to school and learning regardless of whether they are multi-lingual. However, teachers need encouragement from school administrators before and after professional development to participate in and implement change after they have a learning experience (Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Thus, some professional development approaches have emphasized collaborative and team teaching to address the diversity of languages spoken in schools and as a part of acculturation.

Villavicencio et al. (2021) emphasized that collaboration strengthens professional learning communities. Thus, continuing professional development continues long after teachers participate. Professional learning communities can support activities that resemble coaching as a part of professional development, as stressed by Tschannen-Moran and McMaster (2009) and Woodcock and Jones (2020). For example, Barba et al. (2019) developed a model for implementing learning and professional development opportunities. They aimed to encourage

teachers to work in teams to support asset-based views of immigrant students, which are known to enhance teacher effectiveness. They focused on the needs in California to raise teachers' awareness of newcomer students' acculturation, language acquisition, and crosslinguistic influences on social and academic English language learning. They developed an asset-based consultation model centered on school psychologists, including multicultural instructional consultation and collaboration. The researchers proposed a tool to identify cultural assets within a response-to-intervention framework. The aim is for school psychologists to provide information, education, and support to teachers for multicultural education. These outcomes include assessing English learners' cognitive needs and other strategies based on the special needs of newcomers. Collaboration is a recurring theme in the literature on professional development for teachers of diverse students seeking to use multicultural approaches (e.g., Barba et al., 2019; Villavicencio et al., 2021).

Teacher Practices and Strategies for Immigrant, Newcomer, New Arrival Students

Teacher self-efficacy is among the few constructs that predict teacher choice of strategies (Gutentag et al., 2018; Poulou et al., 2018; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Based on the literature reviewed above, a fundamental theme emerged: self-efficacy is a core influence on the choice of teacher strategy. Self-efficacy supports inclusiveness and attitudes toward multicultural education. Moreover, attitudes toward multicultural education can predict teacher self-efficacy and student success (Gutentag et al., 2018). These latter variables, in turn, affect teachers' choices of strategy and classroom practices (Buzzai et al., 2022). For example, when teachers accept that immigrant students are an asset rather than a problem, challenge, or nonissue, they tend to use more inclusive and supportive techniques toward diverse students. The approaches that address students' needs include actively recognizing and validating their language and

cultures (Gutentag et al., 2018; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2020). In a qualitative study of teacher practices with high school English learners, Dávila and Linares (2020) found that two themes emerged as primary practices for teachers of English as a second language when teaching and reaching out to other teachers and newcomer students. First, pedagogical reflexivity, shown by their commitment to teaching across cultural and linguistic borders, and second, a translanguaging stance, as demonstrated by promoting students' first language regardless of their language background. This reflexivity included collaborating to support other teachers communicating with students whose first language is not English and suggesting practices and modifications for these students. The translanguaging stance promoted engagement by finding ways for students to show content comprehension while establishing a welcoming classroom atmosphere. The goals included creating pedagogy for students to use their full linguistic abilities across languages to facilitate learning in one or more languages.

Blair and Haneda (2020) extended such collaborative approaches to include parents in bringing elements of all languages that students experience into their school and home lives. Cárdenas-Hagan (2018) examined cross-language strategies at the intersection of teacher practices for multicultural education and students learning English with other specific learning disabilities. Cárdenas-Hagan stressed oral language teaching as the foundation of these approaches. For example, the emphasis for students with these language and learning disabilities should be on phonology, morphology, semantics, syntax, pragmatics, or academic use of terms. The author gave very specified techniques to exercise each language facet.

Cárdenas-Hagan (2018) used discrete steps to learn these language dimensions. Finally, Barba et al. (2019) reported a model for teachers and school psychologists to work collaboratively to create strategies tailored to the teacher and individual newcomer students. As

described above, the approach was based on using positive views of newcomer immigrant students that intend to empower students with reflections on their culture and language. In addition, the process includes well-defined steps to collect data from students and teachers; the data are tailored to students' strengths and teachers' knowledge, supporting teachers in using instructional strategies tailored to students' needs and multicultural education.

These steps in the studies above are more explicit than proposed in other studies in this review. For example, Gutentag et al. (2018) described teacher behaviors and practices according to broad categories or paradigms. As described above, Gutentag et al. examined teacher practices by categorizing distinct attitudes toward multicultural education and immigrant students. They used a tool to assess their attitudes and self-efficacy toward immigrant newcomer students. They used descriptive categories for attitudes and associated the consistency of teachers' attitudes toward students with broadly stated multicultural practices. Thus, they outlined no specific steps to implement strategies but emphasized that favorable views of multicultural practices are consistent with flexibility that creates student motivation. Positive attitudes toward diverse students are correlated with teachers' adaptability. Adaptability is often linked to encouraging student autonomy; furthermore, the tendency to promote student autonomy is associated with student engagement and motivation, learning, and acculturation (Buzzai et al., 2022; Lauermann & Berger, 2021; Poulou et al., 2018; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009; Woodcock & Jones, 2020).

Finally, Jaffe-Walter and Lee (2018) have taken an asset-based approach to immigrant and newcomer education, similar to Barba et al. (2019). Jaffe-Walter and Lee emphasized that many schools and teachers take an assimilationist view. In their literature review, Jaffe-Walter and Lee supported that students' ties to their culture and their families' home culture can

strengthen their ability to acculturate to the new surroundings in the United States. In addition, these authors found evidence from other studies that exclusionary practices are often used to segregate immigrant youth and lower the standards for these students' achievement. Thus, their qualitative study examined practices of culturally relevant pedagogy that support teachers in instructing 12th-grade newcomer students. They detailed practices teachers used that directly engaged students in describing their home culture and lives before entering the United States. These exercises, such as writing essays and sharing with the class, helped the newcomers develop their identities in their new environment. In addition, these practices helped other students understand the experiences and challenges of these newcomer students. Overall, the participants in this study expressed that using techniques to engage the newcomers using their own experiences creates bonding with classmates. The key to success with these practices is that the lived experiences of all students are included in the classroom. This inclusiveness supported the ability of teachers to provide multicultural education to the whole class without singling out only some students for attention or leaving others out.

Summary

This chapter contains a literature review consistent with the purpose and design of the study. This study was a qualitative phenomenological study to explore the lived experiences of teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County concerning their perceptions of the barriers for first-generation immigrant high school students, the strategies and practices these teachers use, and their perceptions of the support they need and receive in teaching these students. The emphasis was on high school teachers of students from first-generation immigrant households. High school students have limited time to complete their studies and graduate. As a result, they are considered late arrivals into the United States education system. As a result, many

are unprepared for high school and the pressures of catching up academically while learning a new language (Barba et al., 2019; Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020; Potochnick, 2018).

The historical background reviewed the roles of charter schools and historical trends in charter education and contained a section on immigration. Established charter schools evolved from advances in school reform and are integral to understanding the history of public schools (Cohodes, 2018). Charter schools were developed as mission-oriented schools where new methods could be attempted and developed. During the early waves of immigration to the United States, charter schools did not exist. Immigrants were mainly forced to assimilate into the dominant culture of public schools by emphasizing learning English (Evans et al., 2019; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2020; Salinas, 2006). The history of charter schools and their use of multicultural education suggests they are oriented to serve immigrant students.

Student demographics show that the national trend in immigration has been growing steadily since the 1970s after the charter school movement began to grow (Cohodes, 2018; Nathan, 1997). States such as California continue to lead the country in new immigrants. The state's school system is under pressure from this influx (California State Department of Education, 2019; Migration Policy Institute, 2019). Thus, the context supports that California teachers are experiencing various pressures due to the influx of these students, their cultural differences, and the many languages they speak (Barba et al., 2019).

The study's theoretical framework was Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory. The theory served to understand the perspectives and beliefs of teachers who faced challenges concerning inclusion, multicultural education, and teaching practices with diverse immigrants who are English learners. Several studies have shown how the theory developed and yielded recently

emerging concepts pertinent to this study, including the immigration-related self-efficacy of teachers (Tatar et al., 2011; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). This concept is linked to teachers' beliefs that they can affect the success of immigrant students but also to teachers' diversity-related burnout (Gutentag et al., 2018; Tatar & Horenczyk, 2003). The latter term concerns teacher burnout due to the demands from highly diverse classrooms that degrade teachers' well-being with ongoing stress and intensify the extraordinary coping needed. In the literature concerning self-efficacy and teacher burnout, teacher practices mediated self-efficacy (Gutentag et al., 2018). Teacher perspectives on immigrant students, inclusive practices, motivating practices, and multicultural education are all pivotal to teacher efficacy and teachers' ability to avoid burnout (Gutentag et al., 2018; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Researchers in this area support inclusivity, flexible practices, and multicultural education to support late-arriving immigrant students and their teachers, who could gain greater self-efficacy (Jordan et al., 2009). Teacher self-efficacy appears essential to many approaches to supporting teachers and students (Gutentag et al., 2018; Woodcock & Jones, 2020).

The final section of the review concerned the barriers related to immigrant students' pursuit of education. As most pertinent to this study, evidence supports that students who are newcomers and late arrivals have more significant challenges in learning English quickly (Barba et al., 2019; Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Potochnick, 2018)). For this study, the focus on barriers centered on language barriers, achievement, and acculturation in schools. The roles of teachers and parents and the consequences they face were elaborated. Teachers' feelings of unpreparedness and the speed that newcomers/late-arrivers to high school must face are two critical issues that create barriers for these students. Underlying these factors is that English language acquisition is the fundamental issue. Other factors, such as acculturation by students

and parents, also pivot on the need to acquire the English language and learn about American culture. The likelihood of low socioeconomic status for these families compounds the other barriers to student learning and the potential for upward mobility. Consistent with the teachers' self-efficacy literature, inclusive and multicultural education and bilingual and translanguaging methods are suggested as appropriate for the student population in this study. Support for teachers included team teaching with teachers with a background in language learning (Barba et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020; Trahey & Spada, 2020).

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methods

This phenomenological study explored charter high school teachers' lived experiences concerning their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for first-generation/newcomer or late-arrival immigrant students, their descriptions of the strategies and practices used, and their perceptions of the support they receive. In interviews, the researcher obtained the teachers' descriptions of their strategies, including those used with at promise students from low-income families and whose first language is not English. In addition, teachers' perceptions of the supports included existing ones that might be preferred but are not currently in place. The settings for this study were charter schools with a relatively high percentage of first-generation students from immigrant households in Los Angeles County. Unfortunately, there is a lack of information about how teachers experience and express the challenges they perceive these students to face. Similarly, little is known about their strategies and teaching practices to help students overcome these barriers and challenges. Furthermore, no studies included the teachers' experiences and perceptions of existing supports or those they might prefer when addressing students of different backgrounds with different needs.

To address this problem, the study focused on charter high school teachers serving in Los Angeles County who currently teach immigrant students and reported teaching students from first-generation households who are late arrivals or newcomers as they enter high school. These newcomer students have a short time to assimilate and master the necessary skills, such as the English language, while learning new content to graduate high school (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018). The emphasis was on schools-with a high immigrant population and the potential for sampling teachers in schools with more newcomers and late arrivals in urban charter schools.

To address this purpose, three research questions were considered:

Research Question 1: How do teachers describe their lived experiences at charter high schools in Los Angeles County concerning their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for students from first-generation immigrant households?

Research Question 2: How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County describe the practices and strategies for instructing students from first-generation immigrant households, including those from low-income families and those whose first language is not English?

Research Question 3: How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County perceive the existing supports and those they might prefer but are not currently in place while teaching and engaging students from first-generation immigrant households?

Research Design and Rationale

The design for this study was qualitative, using a phenomenological approach. Researchers use qualitative inquiry to explore and make meaning of respondents' lived and shared experiences (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). The settings for qualitative studies are often in the participants' natural environment. Therefore, the research questions for these studies are characterized as open and broad (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). The purpose and questions developed for this study require that the researcher develop insights and interpretations of teachers' experiences in their natural environment. Exploring practitioners' experiences, thoughts, and emotions in their natural context can make supporting evidence-based practices and inventions more valuable and effective. The purpose of the study was consistent with understanding practitioners in their environment, and the questions were devised as open and broad; thus, qualitative research was appropriate for the proposed study.

Phenomenology is appropriate when focusing on how individuals experience and make sense of their world (Korstjens & Moser, 2017; Smith et al., 2021). The approach emphasizes the individual level (Larkin et al., 2019). In particular, interpretative phenomenology stresses developing the essential meaning of participants' experiences. Interviews are the preferred method for data collection in a phenomenological study (Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

Interpretative phenomenology involves questioning participants as individuals within their specific context and emphasizing interpreting rather than describing their experiences. However, the design can consist of a multiple-perspective approach with room for analysis to integrate, synthesize, and discover reverberation among participant experiences (Larkin et al., 2019). Consistent with these descriptions of phenomenology, interviews were the primary method for collecting data from multiple teachers working in charter high schools; these methods supported the analysis of various perspectives in a phenomenological study.

The current study aimed to understand teacher experiences working with students in charter schools who are children of first-generation immigrant parents. In addition, teachers' experiences were sought in various charter schools with students of different ethnic and national origins, academic preparedness issues, English speaking ability, and differences in family income levels. Thus, the homogeneity of teachers' environments and their interactions with diverse students with some commonalities can provide a deep and rich dataset consistent with phenomenological research. These teachers were likely to have distinctive insights due to their individuality. Still, some significant similarities exist in their natural environments. These conditions optimize a multiple perspectives approach (Larkin et al., 2019); thus, this approach was part of the design of this study.

Qualitative designs differ substantially from quantitative designs. Quantitative designs and methods are used with inherently quantified or numeric data; thus, they are used to test hypotheses (Vogt et al., 2012). The purpose and questions for this study did not require collecting quantified data and testing hypotheses—the data collected concerning a phenomenon experienced and lived by all participants in their environment. Furthermore, qualitative research does not include generalization as a primary aim (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). Thus, a qualitative study was more appropriate than a quantitative one because the availability of charter schools and teacher participants was limited. Consistent with qualitative research, phenomenological research aims to understand the natural world of participants as they lived it and, therefore, is descriptive and not explicitly measured (Vagle, 2018). Therefore, qualitative phenomenological design and methods were best suited for this study versus quantitative methods.

Setting

The research was set in public charter schools in Los Angeles County, which contains over 300 charter schools (California State Department of Education, 2021a, 2022). The researcher initially proposed to use the racial-ethnic profiles of the schools to select schools that meet or exceed the demographics of Los Angeles County. The rationale was that schools with relatively higher percentages of students in minority racial-ethnic groups likely have more students from first-generation immigrant households. For example, Table 1 shows the racial-ethnic demographics of charter schools in Los Angeles County. Los Angeles County has 373 charter schools with a combined enrollment of 207,557, making up about 15% of the county school enrollment as of 2022 (California State Department of Education, 2021a). Therefore, the demographics of these 373 charter schools were examined to find which had higher profiles of minority students that likely contain immigrant groups. Although schools high on the list for

diversity would have been preferred, only three school principals offered permission; these were accepted to ensure that the study went forward.

Table 1*Racial-Ethnic Demographics of Charter Schools in Los Angeles Districts*

Locality	Total	Black	Native Am or Ak Native	Asian	Filip	Hispanic /Latino	Pac Isl	White	MR	NP
LA Co.	1,390,342	7.1	0.2	7.9	2.2	65.7	0.3	13.4	2.7	0.6
State	6,002,523	5.2	0.5	9.5	2.4	55.3	0.4	21.7	4.1	0.9

Note. Numbers for all racial-ethnic groups are in percentages. LA Co. = Los Angeles County, State refers to the state of California, Total = the total number of enrolled students, Black = African American, Native Am or Ak Native = Native American or Alaskan Native, Asian = Asian American, Filip = Philippines American, Pac Isl = Pacific Islander, MR = multiracial, NP = not reported. Adapted from *2020-21 Enrollment by Ethnicity*, California State Department of Education, DataQuest, 2021a.

(<https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/dqcensus/EnrEthLevels.aspx?cds=19647330122606&aggllevel=School&year=2020-21>). In the public domain.

Participants, Sample, and Sampling

Phenomenology is founded on criterion sampling, a form of purposive sampling in which participants meet predefined criteria. The most prominent criterion is the participant's experience with the phenomenon under study. The researcher chose the participants using a typical purposeful sampling technique. The goal is to include sufficient participants to yield a deep and rich understanding of the phenomenon; thus, the primary criterion is that the participants know the phenomenon under study (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). The researchers using this approach seek participants who have shared an experience. Still, as mentioned above, they can vary in

some characteristics and individual experiences. Particularly for interpretative phenomenology with multiple perspectives, the respondents should be somewhat homogeneous; they have shared experiences of the phenomenon of interest. In addition, the sample should include participants whose individual experiences bring depth and breadth (Larkin et al., 2019).

Larkin et al. (2019) described a sampling method for multi-perspective interpretive phenomenology, “directly related groups” (p. 186). The groups of subjects should be immersed in the same phenomenon but likely have distinctive perspectives. According to the teachers' responses in this study, as detailed in Chapter 4, they had experiences with student bodies that likely differed in race, ethnicity, and national origin profiles; thus, their experiences would have some differences. The teachers were likely to have diverging perspectives due partly to differences in their students' cultural backgrounds and academic needs. Moreover, as shown in Chapter 4, the teacher demographics showed some diversity. However, the phenomenon they experienced had commonalities; these participants were selected for their experience teaching students from first-generation immigrant families. The percentage of students in specific schools from first-generation families was not available for Los Angeles County. Thus, the researcher judged whether specific candidate participants meet this criterion, as is typically done in purposive sampling for qualitative studies.

Recruiting began with finding participants who met the study's criteria. Although the researcher aimed to recruit participants from multiple charter schools in Los Angeles County, recruits responded from only three schools. Nonetheless, 12 teachers were recruited using purposeful sampling and participated. Most importantly, the qualitative study sample size relates to the potential to reach data saturation during analysis. However, the exact number cannot be known a priori; saturation rests on obtaining data that yield no new concepts or themes as the

analysis proceeds (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Thus, the estimated sample size differs for each study and type of design (Fusch & Ness, 2015). However, Moser and Korstjens (2018) asserted that phenomenological studies require about 10 interviews; similarly, Starks et al. suggested this approach is viable with 1 to 10 participants. De Gagne and Walters (2010) suggested that 5 to 12 participants could be adequate for a phenomenological study in an educational setting. They planned their study for 6 to 10 participants to analyze the multiple perspectives among them. They reached saturation with 11 participants, thus illustrating the need to recruit participants as needed and not as expected. The research includes 12 interviews, and saturation was achieved. Issues associated with recruiting, collecting, and analyzing data and ethical considerations are discussed in more detail below.

Participants and Recruitment

The selected participants were Los Angeles County charter school teachers with at least 3 years of experience at a charter high school. The participants were teachers with at least 3 years of experience teaching in a charter high school. These participants held secondary school teaching credentials after teaching for 2 years. They must be between 18 to 65 years old. In addition, they currently had at least one first-generation or newcomer student.

Although not mandatory, some may have experience teaching within the past 1 to 5 years with immigrant newcomers or first-generation students from low-income households or whose first language was not English. Each participant need not have experience with students in the latter two categories; however, the researcher sought some teachers with students in these groups. In addition, these participants were fluent English speakers. These requirements do not rule out teachers with experience from more than one charter school. Consistent with purposive/criterion sampling, the researcher can exercise discretion in selecting teachers with

more experience than others. These participants were willing to participate in an online interview and had access to the Internet and Zoom applications.

Once schools were identified, an email was sent to the principal requesting permission (Appendix A) and assistance in recruitment. If they agree, the principals emailed the researcher a response. These principals then sent the researcher's letter requesting participants (Appendix B) using a blind copy email to all teaching staff. The principals' roles in the study ended with these activities. The researcher's letter informs teachers of the opportunity to participate and describes the study and the requirements to participate (Appendix B). The principals remained unaware of which teachers responded with interest in the study. A sufficient response to initial contacts was such that the researcher did not need to follow up with additional schools.

The teacher recruitment email (Appendix B) included the researcher's contact information, the study's description, and the participants' criteria. Participants contacted the researcher by email if they were interested in participating. In addition, the participants were given ample opportunity to ask the researcher questions before and after giving informed consent to participate. After participants agreed to join the study, the researcher sent them a link to a Qualtrics platform containing informed consent (Appendix C). The Qualtrics platform allowed the participants to give informed consent after reading the form. They were then forwarded to a demographic survey only if they consented. All Qualtrics assigned numbers, false names, and other documentation were on a master list stored securely, as described below. They were not asked to schedule an interview until after consent and the demographic survey were completed. If participants agreed to member checking, pseudonyms were assigned to the participants' data and other records after these steps were completed and member checking was performed. These false names were used in the final paper.

Data Collection Procedures and Strategies

Seidman (2019) asserted that understanding phenomena in education could be better ascertained when school personnel consist of participants who directly describe their experiences in interviews. The primary data source was one-on-one interviews with teachers. This choice of methods was consistent with the design and aims of a phenomenological study (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). After principal permissions were obtained and participants consented to participate (Appendices A and B), the researcher scheduled interviews with the participants. The interviews were conducted online using Zoom and scheduled at a time convenient to them and outside the workday and when adequate privacy and confidentiality were assured.

The interviewer documented all correspondence with the participants using university email, secured by a password on the university server. Security for the emails is described further below. These participants had ample opportunity to ask questions before and after the interview. These interviews were planned for 35 to 40 minutes. Permission to audio record the interview was sought with informed consent before the interview (Appendix C). The recordings were stored on a password-protected computer to which only the researcher has access, as further described below.

The informed consent, including a summary of the study, was discussed again on Zoom before the start of the questioning (Appendix C). The researcher took field notes, including the responses of the interviewees and the researcher's internal reactions to these responses. These notes were in addition to the recording of the interview, but the notes included the reflexive responses of the researcher. Importantly, these notes were considered as much or more a part of the data analysis than a part of the interview data collection (Groenewald, 2004). Both steps support trustworthiness (see the Data Analysis and Trustworthiness sections).

Instrument and Semi-Structured Interviews

The interview consisted of 10 semi-structured questions, and the online questionnaire contained seven short demographic questions (Appendix D) developed by the researcher. An interview guide ensured that questions were asked in the same order and wording for each participant. This method reduces researcher bias (Seidman, 2019). Furthermore, the techniques include developing interview questions that address the research questions and providing some prompts for participants who need support to provide fulsome content for each question. Using a list of prompts supported the researcher in exploring lived experiences unique to individuals and provided additional content. The prompts were considered carefully to guide the participants and allow these respondents to express their experiences in their own words (Turner, 2010).

Unscripted questions follow-up may also be used if the researcher realizes an opportunity to enrich the content. One professional in the field reviewed the questions and prompts. One field test was conducted to ensure clarity and link to research questions. The development of the interview questions considered the type of participants (teachers in an educational environment; Table 2 and Appendix E) and minimized the potential for researcher bias in influencing the participants' responses (Seidman, 2019).

Table 2*Instrument Validity*

Research Questions	Interview Questions	Literature Sources
1. How do teachers describe their lived experiences of charter high schools in Los Angeles County concerning their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for students from first-generation immigrant households?	<p>What challenges and barriers do you perceive your first-generation newcomer students face when entering the school system?</p> <p>What have been your experiences with language and other cultural barriers with these students?</p> <p>How do you perceive the students' barriers and challenges you mentioned have created challenges for teaching these students?</p>	Barba et al., 2019; Burris et al., 2019; Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Haim, 2020; Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020; Potochnick, 2018; Sibley & Brabeck, 2017
2. How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County describe the practices and strategies for instruction of students from first-generation immigrant households, including those at promise, from low-income families, and whose first language is not English?	<p>How do you use teaching practices and strategies to address the challenges you mentioned for teaching first-generation/newcomer students?</p> <p>How do you and the school support a multicultural learning environment?</p> <p>How do you and your school expect to address language skills and barriers for these students?</p> <p>What specific strategies and practices related to the content area you teach? For example, have you experienced collaboration with other teachers at your school to support you and the students?</p>	Barba et al., 2019; Cárdenas-Hagan, 2018; Blair & Haneda, 2020; Buzzai et al., 2022; Dávila & Linares, 2020; Gutentag et al., 2018; Poulou et al., 2018; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009; Woodcock & Jones, 2020

Research Questions	Interview Questions	Literature Sources
3. How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County perceive the existing supports and those they might prefer but are not currently in place while teaching and engaging students from first-generation immigrant households?	<p>What have been your experiences of professional development offered to you?</p> <p>Are there support efforts specifically for teachers in your school to help you address the needs of first-generation immigrant/newcomer students?</p> <p>What professional development that you do not have now that could help you better serve these students? Why?</p>	Barba et al., 2019; Dávila & Linares, 2020; Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009; Villavicencio et al., 2021

Data Analysis, Management, and Trustworthiness

Mitigating researcher bias concerning their knowledge of a phenomenon or pre-suppositions is essential to interpretative phenomenology (Larkin et al., 2019).

Phenomenological researchers should work to observe and interpret participants' lived experiences without judgment and assumptions (Larkin et al., 2019; Moser & Korstjens, 2018; Smith et al., 2021). In this process, the researcher should engage with their pre-suppositions to maintain open-mindedness toward the participants' descriptions of the phenomena (Moustakas, 1994). Bracketing, or the epoché process, was used (Larkin et al., 2011; Moustakas, 1994). In this process, the preconceptions and assumptions of the researcher are bracketed to extend their conception of the phenomenon through the participants' eyes (Groenewald, 2004; Moustakas, 1994). Moreover, openness to the participants' descriptions of their lived experiences should be foremost in interviewing and analyzing data (Larkin et al., 2019; Moustakas, 1994).

Interpretative phenomenology has the participants' sense-making or understanding of the meaning of participants' experiences as its basis (Larkin et al., 2011). Taking interview notes is

an approach that allows researchers to reflect on the behavior and words spoken by the respondent (observational notes) and their reactions to those words (theoretical notes; Groenewald, 2004). When analyzing data, the researcher can check the accuracy of the recordings versus the field notes, audio recordings, and the researcher's recollections of the interview. Taking notes during an interview is a step toward analyzing the data (Groenewald, 2004). Thus, the analysis process begins during the interviews and includes the researchers' reflections on their internal responses to the narrative. Also, the researcher was careful to avoid categorizing or grouping ideas during notetaking by using the verbatim expression of the participant and noting the researcher's reactions and interpretations, if any. This process began with bracketing as the researcher used the interview notes reflectively and journaling to document the analysis process.

The researcher listened to the audio recordings, read the notes, and transcribed the data into text verbatim. Transcription and analysis software were unavailable, and all analyses proceeded manually. This step includes supplementing the notes using the audio transcript of the interview before further analysis proceeds. Two rounds of listening to the audio tapes and reading transcripts while comparing them to notes ensured the researcher appropriately captured each participant's words and connoted meanings (Groenewald, 2004). After transcriptions of each interview were completed, the respondent was contacted to participate in member checking. Member checks entail sending each participant's transcript to review and make corrections to the narrative presented by the researcher; this step was performed once and was part of supporting trustworthiness (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). Next, the researcher de-identified the notes, audio tapes, and transcriptions using gender-neutral pseudonyms assigned to each participant before

further analyzing each interview. De-identification could not be carried out until the member-checking step was completed.

Overview of Analysis Steps

The coding process began with the first three interviews immediately after transcribing them. The researcher manually coded the data. The goal of coding is to identify units of meaning for each participant and across all of them (Saldaña, 2021; Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007). The coding process led to categorizing or sub-theming the data per the researcher's judgment. While the interview data were coded, the researcher took notes concerning personal responses to the interviewee data and reasoning related to coding and analysis. The entire narrative of all interviews was re-read, and the researcher reviewed and retook reflexive notes to compare to the initial field notes and coding notes (Saldaña, 2021). The data codes were grouped into categories, and subthemes emerged from the patterns in the codes, phrases, and categories. Data codes and phrases were categorized for each of the three research questions, and these supported several subthemes. From the subthemes for each research question, a single theme emerged for that question.

Detailed Basis for Coding and Theming Methods. The researcher emphasized the multiple perspectives approach in the following analysis phase. First, the interviews were decomposed by questions. Thus, the coding and categorization were repeated by question across all participants. The initial results from reviewing each participant's data were compared to results from coding, categorizing, and theming across each question to support the next cycle.

Larkin et al. (2019) outlined several sequential steps when developing multiple perspectives:

1. The researcher examines explicit areas of potential consensus and whether differences in context support the commonality of experiences or an implicit meaning underlying the responses. These implicit meanings can, in particular, support emerging themes.
2. Apparent conflicts across participants' experiences and underlying meanings can provide a roadmap for theme titles that capture multiple perspectives. For example, in the current study, teachers could have different perspectives on best practices for supporting students from first-generation families.
3. The researcher should recognize potential complementary concepts from various responses; for example, in this study, complementary responses could involve similar teachers' experiences in different schools and across students with families from different countries of origin or distinct socioeconomic backgrounds.
4. In contrast to the third approach, sometimes participants could express different meanings for shared experiences or similar meanings for their distinctive experiences.

Larkin et al. (2019) considered the first three steps above as revealing the emerging themes; they termed these steps as identifying paths of meaning. The potential comparisons in this step could become complex. However, understanding could be aided by the researcher's intent to compare the coding and categorization or sub-theming to those that arose when the analysis was performed initially over each participant's entire interview and aggregated to develop the first round of codes, categories, or subthemes, and potential themes. Finally, in step four, the researcher directly compared participants' responses for commonalities and outlier responses—this was the core of the multi-perspective approach.

Larkin et al. (2019) suggested identifying lines of argument by creating a story or final narrative of the results developed from the preceding steps. Hence, as mentioned above, the

researcher developed narratives from the data as the cyclic process unfolds. As each cycle was undertaken, the codes, categories or subthemes, and emerging themes can be re-examined, and notes taken to document the process and outcomes. These comparisons support the development of narratives for each participant and contrast across participants. As the multi-perspective approaches conclude, the narratives initially developed by the researcher were examined again for the final codes, categories, or subthemes. The emerging themes converged across analysis cycles.

As the data analysis proceeds, the researcher remained vigilant to the emergence of repetitious codes, categories, subthemes, and eventual themes. When no new codes, categories, subthemes, or themes appear through the interviews, the interview process can be halted if the interviewer is reasonably sure of the results. Overall, final themes should emerge from coding, categorizing, journaling, and cyclically examining the narratives (Larkin et al., 2019; Saldaña, 2021).

Trustworthiness

The evaluation of qualitative research rests on its trustworthiness, including credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Shenton, 2004). The current study included strategies to support the trustworthiness of the results, and the researcher used reflexivity to ensure transparency, reduce bias, and uphold the quality of the research (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). These criteria, such as generalizability, internal validity, and reliability, were used rather than those associated with quantitative studies. The criteria for quantitative studies have little applicability to qualitative results (Shenton, 2004).

Credibility. Credibility corresponds to internal validity in quantitative studies (Korstjens & Moser, 2018). In other words, credibility comprises the steps for enhancing accuracy in

recording the phenomenon (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Shenton, 2004). This process includes well-established research methods (Shenton, 2004), such as those described in this study. In addition, prolonged respondent engagement is suggested to cultivate accuracy and obtain a thick, rich description of the participants' experiences (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

The researcher used follow-up questions that extend answers from the interview questions and serve an iterative function. The researcher was mindful of allowing participants to respond in their own words. Korstjens and Moser (2018) suggested persistent observation of the data. In this study, the researcher engaged in cyclic analysis techniques that required reading and re-reading the narrative from the transcripts and inspecting the coding and theming analysis for consistency. The researcher used the reflective process described above during the interview, examined the field notes, and journaled during the analysis process. The researcher worked to establish trust using an interview protocol that included the participants' role in the study, how their confidentiality and responses were protected, and showed respect to them. Establishing trust supports the participants in giving truthful and accurate answers (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Shenton, 2004).

The researcher used member checking, where the respondents could review their interview transcripts to ensure the data's accuracy (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Shenton, 2004). Member checking was performed one time before the start of the analysis. The researcher compared the study's findings to the literature and expected theoretical outcomes to check the interpretation of the findings and uncover novel findings. The prior findings can enrich the interpretations of the results. Finally, as Shenton (2004) suggested, the researcher should know the respondents' culture. The researcher, as a teacher in a charter school with students from

immigrant families, was familiar with the culture of the interviewees and reviewed information about the schools where the participants work.

Although some researchers use more than one data source in qualitative studies, the researcher did not use this technique to triangulate the data. Others have suggested that interviews are pivotal and preferred for phenomenology, and other sources are less helpful in this design (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Thus, the researcher used only interviews as the primary data source and relied on many other strategies to ensure trustworthiness.

Transferability. This strategy for trustworthiness resembles checks for external validity in quantitative studies (Shenton, 2004). In quantitative research, results can be generalized; however, this idea is less meaningful in qualitative studies because the result pertains to a small number of participants in a specific setting. Transferability refers to how findings might relate to other settings and participants. Researchers can support other investigators in transferring results to their studies by describing the phenomenon in the study context (Shenton, 2004). Supporting transferability is the goal of the current research, as exemplified by the details included in the methodology. Ultimately, transferability is in the eye of the reader, and the researcher can provide information for readers to make such an assessment (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

Confirmability. Confirmability reduces potential bias injected into the study. Confirmability strategies ensure that the findings reflect the participants' experiences, not the researcher's (Shenton, 2004). Because phenomenology stresses the researcher's acknowledgment of pre-suppositions and bias in thinking about the phenomenon of interest, the study design included bracketing and other steps to reduce bias. These include field notes, reviews of the notes against audio recordings, and journaling of the analysis process as an audit trail for data analysis (Shenton, 2004). Thus, the researcher's reflective commentary develops and reinforces

the accuracy of the data, as discussed in the credibility section. These procedures were also crucial to confirmability.

Dependability. Shenton (2004) described dependability as similar to obtaining repeatable findings in quantitative studies. Moreover, the definition of dependability includes consistency in findings, in that studies with similar designs and contexts might yield consistent results. In this sense, credibility and dependability are similar as both concern obtaining the phenomenon's accuracy and results. Dependability and confirmability also have some similarities. According to Korstjens and Moser (2018), dependability concerns maintaining acceptable standards for the chosen design and analysis. They stressed a focus on consistency in the study process.

In contrast, confirmability means keeping a neutral stance and reducing bias. In Korstjens and Moser's (2018) view, researcher transparency and steps linked to an audit trail become central to dependability and confirmability. Therefore, the study design included measures for the researcher to uncover personal predispositions and suppositions. Moreover, the plan consists of clearly outlined steps explained above that provided transparency and sufficient detail in the methods and planning for a dependable study.

Human Subjects Considerations

Per Pepperdine University IRB, the research was conducted in a manner consistent with the Belmont report by observing respect, justice, beneficence, and compliance with the requirements for conducting research with human subjects. These requirements include no harm to the participants, and individuals' rights are respected and protected.

After obtaining IRB approval for the study, the recruitment of participants began with attention to the rights and protections of the potential participants. All required permissions to recruit participants were obtained from principals (Appendix A). In the recruitment email, the

participants were informed of the study's purpose and the participants' requirements. Potential participants had access to an informed consent form (Appendix C), including the tasks required for the study, the time to complete them, and the criteria for participation. These tasks include the response to a demographic survey, an online interview, and a review of their transcript. The potential participants knew the risks and possible discomforts related to the interview and participation. The informed consent included that the recruited teachers were voluntary participants (Appendix C). Thus, they were aware that the information they provided concerned their experiences in the workplace and that no one associated with their school or district had access to their data.

The informed consent also includes reassurances that participants' responses remained confidential and that no one had access to them except the researcher, the dissertation chair, and Pepperdine IRB (Appendix C). The researcher linked identifying information associated with their responses to the survey and interviews and then de-identified the data. Participants' names were not included in the study, and pseudonyms were given to each participant after informed consent, transcription/member checking, and completed interviews. Individuals were notified that their employer would not know about their participation. They were aware that only the researcher knew of their involvement. Furthermore, the informed consent notified respondents that they could voluntarily cease their participation and refuse to answer any questions they chose (Appendix C). Finally, the volunteer participants received no compensation.

The participants were assigned gender-neutral pseudonyms to keep their identities confidential. A master list containing the names, schools, and pseudonyms linked and a list of all documents collected for each participant were kept and protected using the same steps as the data below. To further ensure confidentiality, other steps included that principals only used the

researcher's recruitment letter in a mass blind copy email. The participants used the researcher's Pepperdine email address to respond with interest in the study. In addition, the participants' school personnel, and importantly, the principal, will have no role in the recruitment as all questions about the study were directed only to the researcher's email. Thus, the participants can contact the researcher with questions before giving consent and scheduling an interview.

A very slight possibility existed that the researcher was acquainted with some teachers in the selected schools because the researcher is a teacher in a charter school in the setting chosen for the study; however, the possibility was slight given the number of charter schools in the vicinity and the researcher knew none of the participants.

All data and a master list of the participant acronyms, names, and schools were protected by the researcher. All records concerning permissions were documented and protected. In addition, other communications with participants by email or phone were documented. These emails were downloaded and secured the same way as the data. The digital and hard copies of these records and the documentation generated during the analysis were stored on a password-protected computer with encrypted files. The documentation was accessible only to the researcher. A locked filing cabinet, to which only the researcher has a key, was used for hard copies of the documents. The list of participant names and the code names were secured with the data. The digital and hard copies of data will be destroyed after the retention years required by the university.

Summary

This qualitative phenomenological study aimed to understand teachers' lived experiences with first-generation and newcomer high school students in Los Angeles charter schools. Selected teachers must have taught children of first-generation immigrant parents and potentially

be newcomers. The research questions addressed the purpose of the study concerning how these teachers describe and perceive the challenges and barriers for their students. Additionally, the questions include teachers' instructional practices that might improve student achievement, for example, practices that deter disengagement. Lastly, the questions concerned how teachers perceive support and professional development and their preferences for those that do not currently exist. The participant teachers were recruited from charter schools in Los Angeles County. Data were collected using remote interviews, and these data were analyzed using coding and theming methods. Steps were included to ensure the trustworthiness of the data. The researcher adhered to all ethical procedures established by the Pepperdine IRB.

Chapter 4: Findings

This phenomenological study explored charter high school teachers' lived experiences concerning their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for first-generation/newcomer or late-arrival immigrant students, their descriptions of the strategies and practices used, and their perceptions of the support they receive. Using interviews, the researcher obtained the teachers' descriptions of their strategies, including those used with students from low-income families whose first language was not English. In addition, teachers' perceptions of the supports included existing professional development and that they might prefer but were not currently in place.

The study focused on charter high school teachers serving in Los Angeles County who teach immigrant students and self-identify as having taught students from first-generation households who are late arrivals or newcomers as they enter high school. These newcomer students have a short time to assimilate and master the necessary skills, such as English, while learning new content to graduate from high school (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018). The emphasis was on county charter schools with a high immigrant population and the potential for sampling teachers in schools with more newcomers and late arrivals in urban charter schools. Unfortunately, a lack of information exists concerning how teachers experience and express the challenges they perceive these students to face. Similarly, little is known about their strategies and teaching practices to help students overcome these barriers and challenges. Furthermore, no studies included the teachers' experiences and perceptions of existing supports or those they might prefer when addressing students of different backgrounds with different needs.

Research Questions

- *Research Question 1:* How do teachers describe their lived experiences at charter high schools in Los Angeles County concerning their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for students from first-generation immigrant households?
- *Research Question 2:* How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County describe the practices and strategies for instructing students from first-generation immigrant households, including those from low-income families and those whose first language is not English?
- *Research Question 3:* How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County perceive the existing supports and those they might prefer but are not currently in place while teaching and engaging students from first-generation immigrant households?

Participant Profile

The settings for this study were charter schools with a relatively high percentage of first-generation students from immigrant, first-generation households in the Los Angeles area. Twelve teachers from three schools gave informed consent and qualified to participate. The data were de-identified by assigning a pseudonym (P1-12). Demographic data are presented in Table 3.

Table 3*Participants' Demographic Data*

Participant No.	Race/Ethnicity	Age Range	Yrs of Service	Yrs at Current	2 nd Language	Fluent in English	% 1 st Gen Students
P1	White	36 to 45	2	2	No	Yes	20-30
P2	Asian	26 to 35	3	3	Yes	Yes	20-30
P3	Asian	36 to 45	10	6	Yes	Yes	50
P4	Black	36 to 45	10	10	No	Yes	1
P5	White	46 to 55	7	5	No	Yes	20-30
P6	Asian	26 to 35	7	5	Yes	Yes	1
P7	White	55 to 65	7	2	No	Yes	75
P8	Asian	36 to 45	10	4	Yes	Yes	2-5
P9	Hispanic/Latino	26 to 35	6	5	Yes	Yes	5-10
P10	White	36 to 45	11	6	Yes	Yes	50
P11	Asian	36 to 45	6	6	Yes	Yes	40-50
P12	Hispanic/Latino	26 to 35	10	10	No	Yes	50

Note. Black = African American, Yrs of Service = number of total years teaching, Yrs at Current = number of years teaching at current school, %1st Gen Students = the percentage of first-generation immigrant students taught in a year.

Results

The results were organized by research questions, and themes were discussed for each question. The discussion is further organized by subthemes and categories for the data. Three emergent themes are associated with these research questions (Table 4).

Table 4*Research Questions and Major Themes*

Research question	Themes
Q1. How do teachers describe their lived experiences at charter high schools in Los Angeles County concerning their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for students from first-generation immigrant households?	Teachers meeting the learners where they are to understand their challenges and barriers to learning.
Q2. How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County describe the practices and strategies for instructing students from first-generation immigrant households, including those from low-income families and whose first language is not English?	Purposefully, responsibly, resiliently, and collaboratively building learning strategies and reflecting a multicultural school climate.
Q3. How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County perceive the existing supports and those they might prefer but are not currently in place while teaching and engaging students from first-generation immigrant households?	Teachers recognizing the benefits and needs to improve professional development: The champions and the discontented.

Research Question 1

The first question was, how do teachers describe their lived experiences at charter high schools in Los Angeles County concerning their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for students from first-generation immigrant households? The three interview questions linked to this research question concerned their perceptions of student barriers, specific barriers linked to language and culture, and how these student barriers created challenges for teachers. The responses led to three subthemes with associated categories and responses that supported a major theme for the study. The findings for this question were organized by theme and subthemes.

Theme 1

The first theme was teachers meeting the learners where they are to understand their challenges and barriers to learning. The participants were asked in an open-ended way to comment on their observations of the barriers that first-generation immigrant students face. They were then asked a narrower but open-ended question about their personal experiences with language and culture barriers for these students. Finally, they were asked how they experienced teaching challenges linked to these student barriers. Three subthemes emerged from the responses: language, learning, and culture; navigating and adjusting to new social and school systems; teacher challenges: student language, comprehension, and engagement barriers (Table 5). The findings were further discussed by subthemes and categories. Table 4 and the further discussion revealed that all participants contributed (12/12) to the development of the subthemes and thus to the overall theme. A binding idea across the subthemes emerged that teachers were observing the issues their students faced, and they noted the contexts in which barriers arose for them. Moreover, the teachers were considering where their challenges lay and how they could meet the students at their level of attainment.

Table 5*Theme 1: Subthemes and Categories*

Subthemes	No. of Respond.	Categories	No. of Respond.
Language, learning, & culture	12/12	Language barrier	9/12
		Financial/family responsibilities	4/12
		Significance of cultural barriers	7/12
Navigating and adjusting to new social and school systems	12/12	Learning the system	4/12
		Communicating	3/12
		Social-cultural adjustment	6/12
Teacher challenges: student language, comprehension, and engagement barriers	11/12	Language & education level	9/12
		Family history & economic status	5/12
		Engagement & comfort levels	11/12

Language, Learning, and Culture. The first subtheme reflected the most frequent responses to observed barriers. Participant responses fell into three categories associated with this subtheme: language barrier, financial/family responsibilities, and significance of cultural barriers (Table 5). While all participants included language and speaking English as barriers, nine mentioned language as the primary barrier (Table 5). Some participants' responses contained more than one type of student barrier, and these were included under the relevant categories, depending on which barriers dominated the response and its context.

Language Barrier. Language was the most frequent focus among participants as they considered barriers (9/12, Table 5). For example, P6 responded, “So the first barrier I can think of is language because everybody's not coming from an English-speaking country.” P1 concurred, “International students who have that language barrier with English is [are] tough to communicate.” Similarly, P11 suggested that language is a significant barrier, especially for recent arrivals. P11 stated, “My ESL students who have come here very, very recently have a big issue with communicating.” P2 emphasized language barriers and adapting to school, “They’re

[not] going to feel comfortable being in a situation where not everyone speaks the same language. . . [they are] probably going to be required to speak English when they struggle [in class].” P7’s response resembled P2 by suggesting, “we have English-only mandates. So, if you’re not a native speaker of English . . . that’s going to be a serious detriment or impediment to your education.” P9 discussed students’ language barriers as the most “difficult challenge.” P12 reflected on the language barrier the primary one students face. They described, “speaking and writing and listening in class would be their barrier.”

Financial/Family Responsibilities. Another barrier concerned parents, family responsibilities, and financial resources (Table 5, 4/12). These issues relate to the subtheme because financial considerations impact learning and cultural assimilation. P11 did not emphasize language barriers immediately but stressed family pressures. P11 considered, “because they were carrying more responsibility in the home . . . than other students might.” The response suggested that these responsibilities impeded student learning and adaptation to school. P11 suggested, “[acclimation depend[s] on the cultural background, and also their socioeconomic background, to be honest.” P11 emphasized parental resources and mentioned that parents with higher education levels could lower students’ barriers by providing resources. P6 remarked that educational resources and parental support were essential and emphasized family financial status. P6 stated, “I should also mention financial barriers because I have students that come from different financial backgrounds.” P6 described that these differences in financial status affected students’ academic progress.

P5 responded consistently with P11 and P6 but additionally detailed the educational advantages for those from higher-income households. P5 remarked, “[advantaged] students are more likely to be better in English. For example, they can get translations from a tutor . . . and

usually won't fall [behind]." P5 concluded, "coming from a poor family, they might have less resources . . . for learning a language, or even for college applications." Similarly, P4 discussed the disadvantages students have when coming from a background of poverty and that those students typically come to school with little or no English capability. P4 and P5 elaborated further on these financial barriers when discussing their challenges under the second subtheme below.

Significance of Cultural Barriers. Teachers gave mixed responses to cultural issues as a primary barrier (7/12, Table 5), with 2 of 12 participants stressing some impacts of these barriers and 5 of 12 suggesting cultural barriers were nearly non-existent relative to school climate (Table 5). P2 focused on stress that students face from cultural and social issues. P2 emphasized, "the culture shock that they get coming from wherever they're from to the United States, meeting friends." In direct response to this question about observed barriers, only P2 emphasized cultural differences above other potential barriers.

In contrast, other participants' replies were less emphatic or did not view culture as a barrier. P5 offered, "I think they might have a language barrier, as well as maybe they need to adjust some of the cultural differences," However, P5 de-emphasized cultural and social barriers more than some other teachers. P5 stated, "They have barrier[s] when communicating with other students, but fortunately, at our school, the students accept students from other cultures." Including P5, 5 of 12 teachers did not perceive significant cultural barriers for first-generation students (Table 5). P7 agreed with P5 and downplayed cultural and social barriers. P7 remarked, "I don't note cultural barriers at our school because there are so many diverse cultures, and it's sort of a community of diversity. I find the students to be very accepting of one another's cultures," Moreover, P12 questioned whether these barriers exist, "Cultural barriers? Our school

is of a diverse nature, so we have many opportunities to learn each other's cultural backgrounds." Consistent with others, P12 implied that the school culture minimized cultural barriers. Similarly, P9 did not note cultural barriers for students. P9 described, "I haven't found the cultural barriers to be that great in my classroom as far as being able to see how it's impacting students." Consistent with these other participants, P11 did not observe that cultural barriers stymied students, "I think most of them are pretty westernized so that I don't really see an issue [at school] . . . I do notice that they have cultural barriers with their parents, especially if they are from more traditional backgrounds."

However, some teachers mentioned cultural differences as a barrier in response to other interview questions in various contexts throughout the interview. For example, in response to other questions, P6 and five other participants mentioned cultural barriers in the specific context of acclimating to a new school system (see subtheme below, Navigating and Adjusting to New Social and School Systems). P6's response and these findings demonstrate that teachers have somewhat differing perceptions about how much cultural differences affect first-generation immigrant students (7 of 12 participants, Table 5). The topic appears framed differently from other questions, supporting the notion that it may be context dependent.

Navigating and Adjusting to New Social and School Systems. Teachers in this study recognized that students must acclimate to the structure and culture of the American school systems and the specific schools where they worked. Data coding produced three categories under this subtheme: learning the system, communicating, and social-cultural adjustment. Most participants alluded to a need to learn or acclimate to the school system, climate, and culture; many responses were represented in all categories. Overall, every participant gave responses that fit into one or more categories and contributed to the subtheme (12/12, Table 5). Three

categories, learning the system, communications, and social-cultural adjustment, were created because most responses pertained to one more than others, but most included various contextual issues from all three categories. Moreover, directly or indirectly, responses in all categories sometimes imply that these factors impede education.

Learning the System. Four of the 12 participants specifically mentioned learning the school system and the challenges or barriers to students in that context (Table 5). For example, as consistent with the category and subtheme, P1 described, “[students] face coming into a new school system . . . as well as acclimation to a new school environment.” P1 suggested, “Someone can show them around school to get acclimated with the new environment can also help them acclimate to the new school environment if they’re coming from another school or they’re speaking a different language.” Other participants offered suggestions and positive outcomes to these issues as described below. P7 explained that entering an unfamiliar school system carried challenges. P7 stated, “coming to a school system that they are not familiar with the system, and also the language is their second language.” P10 observed some of the issues all first-generation students could have with “understanding grading systems varies from school to school and varies from teacher to teacher, and so I think that can also be a challenge for students that are coming into the school system.” P9 observed, “There’s some social challenges that can come along Anytime you’re new to a school. . . . and new to a country, that’s a big bite to chew on.”

Communicating. Not surprisingly, communication was an issue observed for these immigrant students entering a new school system (3/12, Table 5). P9 stressed the language barrier when navigating the system. P9 stated, “Being able to converse with administrations first and then their teachers and even other peers, learning to figure out all of the intricacies.” P9 elaborated, “Students and their parents often face challenges with the bureaucracy, being

enrolled, finding appropriate services, knowing what programs are available, navigating that, how do grades work, accessing school learning tools.” P3 similarly noted that parents’ language barrier contributed to system navigation problems. P3 stated, “A lot of them are on their own trying to figure it out and end up not doing well in school.” P10 perceived that parents of first-generation students could have their issues apart from the students. Consistent with P9, P10 remarked, “A big part of it, I think, is communication. Sometimes that means communicating with teachers; sometimes with needs across campus.”

Social-Cultural Adjustment. Discussion of how these first-generation students navigate their new circumstances at school also contained remarks about the social and cultural context for assimilating and adjusting (6 of 12 participants, Table 5). P6 described how cultural and social barriers impact beyond the school and classroom and into navigating the social system. P6 stated that a barrier is “cultural, like they’re coming from a very different schooling system, different family systems, and when they come to this school, it could be different than what they are used to.” P6 also remarked on social issues for these students. P6 described, “[students cannot] mix up in the system immediately.” P6 continued, “I have seen it mostly because of the language and because of social interactions; they have to make new friends; they have to understand English.” P2 described social acclimation for some students, “You know, a lot of times they can get by with meeting people that speak better English, but also speak the same language as them, but it might be difficult at first for them to meet those people.” P8 noticed students who might be experiencing social alienation. P8 shared, “I watch to see are they eating by themselves, do they have a group of friends, if they are sitting with someone . . . So sometimes it’s tough to watch even outside of the classroom.” P4 had specific concerns about ELD students' alienation and social adjustment. P4 shared, “when you [students] come into your

ELD class, you're in a class that almost feels like a punishment sometimes." The teacher suggested that these students feel forced into a class where they are recognized as deficient. P4 described, "There's a stigma that goes along the ELD class." Although ELD classes are intended to help students adjust, participating could make them feel alienated.

However, P9 and P12 found positive outcomes for students with social adjustment issues. P9 explained, "I see students able to reach out to other students for help with assignments, which followed with students making friends to help them academically and socially." P12 noted that using English in the classroom is more significant than in social situations. P12 explained, "Using English socially was far less a problem than effectively using it during classroom learning." P9 concluded positively, "They do become acclimatized to sort of the school culture relatively quickly." P9 continued, "We have a number of access points to school culture, so it does seem to take in new students in a way . . . that they can easily find some steppingstones for how to succeed in the school."

Teacher Challenges: Student Language, Comprehension, and Engagement Barriers.

Participants responded to a question concerning how they perceive challenges due to student barriers. The responses focused on how teachers were challenged by a lack of knowledge about their first-generation students' language and education level, family history and economic status, and how to create engagement and comfort levels for the students. All participants' responses were grouped into one or more of the three categories derived from the coding. Teachers' recognition of their challenges showed that they understand the need to meet the students at the level they enter the system; thus, 11 of 12 participants contributed to this subtheme and supported Theme 1 (Table 5).

Language and Education Level. A teacher challenge linked to this subtheme concerns understanding students' level of knowledge and teachers' need to know students' first language. Nine of the 12 participants' responses included content for this category (Table 5), and many had extensive responses. P1 addressed a teacher's need to know incoming students' language skills and education levels. P1 stated, "The need to understand what language they speak, of course, and then how they can basically translate what we're teaching to them." P4 echoed, "Another hard thing that I have, particularly with students who are just coming, newcomers, is I don't know where they came from in terms of their level of education." As expressed by P2, "it would be nice if I knew exactly what their level of learning in their first language so that I can make those connections a lot easier for them."

A related challenge concerned the teachers' lack of knowledge about how much students understood a teacher's use of English in classroom instruction. P7 stated, "Our English grammar sometimes doesn't necessarily make sense . . .to second language students." P7 explained, "How sometimes the idioms that we use in the English languages don't translate to some." P7 also mentioned a challenge: "reminding myself that they may not be familiar with certain... customs or certain words in our language." Similarly, P11 discussed challenges regarding crafting language for instruction, "I think that is difficult. In the texts that we read, there's a lot of me having to front load slang or the way things are done." P11 also stressed issues with student vocabulary and how this impacts listening in class. P11 noted that teachers might use "vocabulary words which they may not be familiar with" but are peculiar to American culture. P4 found a disadvantage for teachers who "speak [only] the one language, English," versus multilingual teachers. P12 also speaks only English and expressed, "it's hard for me to tell what

they don't know in class until I have approached them when I walk around during the classroom time."

P4 continued linking lack of knowledge about student skills to challenges for teachers. P4 noted, "When students don't have a good grasp on English, it's very difficult to provide them with materials that they can access. We don't really have translation services. It's mostly left to the students." P9 was also challenged by lack of materials and translation spaces. P9 shared, "Teachers don't have a dedicated place where they can say, hey, I have students that need translation." This and the other remarks under this category suggest that the teachers recognize student issues, and even when challenged, they consider how they can meet the students on their levels. Theme 1 is supported.

Family History and Economic Status. Participants recognized the roles of family life experiences on barriers for students (5/12, Table 5). P4 experienced a "huge challenge" working with economically disadvantaged first-generation students when they had little schooling before arriving. These students also came in typically from a "framework of poverty." P4 explained barriers linked to income and family history. The participant stated, "Parents are fleeing some sort of extreme poverty or . . . did not have access to education." P3 shared, "It's hard for me to communicate with the family sometimes because of the language barrier." Consequently, P3 expressed, "They [students] struggle a lot academically. Parents don't understand . . . so the student doesn't always get the support that they need, and if they do, it's all from the school." This teacher also elaborated on challenges related to language and culture. P3 explained, "[it was] hard to differentiate or make accommodations or modifications to their assignments."

P5 discussed the challenges or advantages for students across income levels, detailing that higher economic status gave these students access to resources such as translation and

tutoring. P5 stated, “They speak English better when the parents have resources.” When discussing the positive and negative impacts of teaching students with varying financial status, P4’s remarks were consistent with P5’s. P4 stated, “Those with economic advantages come in, and they speak English, but that has to do with class and privilege. . . “most don’t have that kind of access [to education] ahead of arrival.” These responses emphasized the significance of this issue for some teachers and the thought they put into considering it. Again, the teachers wanted to understand the level of education and life issues that students might have when entering the school.

Engagement and Comfort Levels. The teachers addressed the challenge of engaging students in class when language and cultural differences deter their willingness to participate (11/12, Table 5). The students' comfort level in class and the school environment were mentioned, along with the difficulties of engaging them. Some teachers found students' reluctance to speak in the classroom challenging. P12 shared, “They’re really quiet and hardly ask questions.” Consistent with P12, P5 remarked that the students are “shy and less likely to express their true selves to other people and less likely to seek help . . . They don’t ask questions when they’re struggling.” However, P5 de-emphasizes language and cultural barriers in other questions. P5 stated, “The things that I teach are going to make sense the same as someone learning in, let’s say, Saudi Arabia.” P5’s response contrasted with other participants' responses, which stressed language as a barrier.

Additionally, P8 discussed the social implications of students’ reticence to talk in class. P8 stated, “They’re very quiet because language is an issue. Everyday conversations become very tedious with their peers . . . it tends to make it kind of hard to meet new peers . . . and accept support from teachers.” Similarly, P9 stated, “First-generation students, especially if they’re

struggling in English, I find they tend to be less participatory. . . lowering the barriers so that they feel comfortable asking questions has been the biggest challenge.” P10 detailed attempts to engage students and experiences with first-generation students. P10 stated:

[Students are] not comfortable reaching out for those things [supports] . . . I can offer the office hours, but they don’t tend to come to me. So, then I feel like I’m throwing all these different aids out without a response.

P10’s demeanor and tone showed passion and frustration when voiced aloud, and they stressed that students were not taking advantage of offers for one-on-one work. P10 had taught a cohort of students for 4 years and found interactions difficult. P10 explained, “*Students were reluctant to interact one-on-one when grades were involved* [emphasis added].” Thus, evaluation and willingness to communicate appear linked to evaluation and perceived social pressure.

Several other teachers described that building a comfortable environment might be crucial for engaging cross-culturally, but they struggled with how to do so. For example, P3 mentioned students’ lack of safety and described this challenge and a strategy to combat it. P3 stated,

It’s the challenge of making that person feel comfortable” and “like they’re not just there being ignored. I like to pay as much attention to them as possible . . . so that they do feel part of the community.

P11 was concerned with cultural inclusiveness in instruction, “But it is hard trying to incorporate the different cultures just because there are so many . . . I don’t want anyone to feel left out.”

Similarly, P8 shared the challenges of working with students from different cultures, “it’s different for different backgrounds and cultures. I think it’s hard if we don’t have the training for

specific groups. How do you approach a student who just came into the country but also from a specific country?" P4 was self-reflective and described putting themselves in the students' place:

I know what it's like . . . [to] go to another country and not speak their language, I know what it's like to feel left out . . . but I don't know what it's like to rely on a skill set you do not have.

Consistent with P4's observation, P2 observed that students seek out people with whom they can relate or be comfortable. P4 stated, "[students] try to find somebody who could translate for them." However, P3 and P4 found these students' efforts were sometimes unhelpful. For example, P4 found that students "become overly reliant on the social circles continuing to speak a specific language, and they're not practicing the English language." This student habit likely did not increase their comfort with speaking in the classroom. P8 purposefully noted students who were socially isolated and concerned about their language development. P8 observed, "[They] were not getting the practice with English that they should. Are they speaking, because if they're not speaking, then are they getting that practice and that sense of community." Thus, the lack of practice outside the classroom presented difficulties in finding ways to engage students in the classroom.

Participants implied that their attempts to draw students in had mixed success. P10 expressed, "What are ways that we can build the comfort because, obviously, the classroom atmosphere could have a huge part in building that classroom ambiance." As P10 described above concerning strategies such as one-on-one work, this teacher suggested the students did not respond to attempts to engage in front of a class of their peers. P10 also described other methods they had used to no avail. P10 exclaimed, "[At] what point do I stop giving the additional help?"

P12 similarly discussed engagement. P12 reiterated, “[They] might be uncomfortable with the new environment. They may not feel safe.” P2 summed up these issues with engagement:

“You’re always there wondering whether or not the student is comprehending what you’re saying . . . you do second guess yourself. It does make you very reflective on different ways that you could *possibly reach that student* . . . but then also will not hinder the rest of the students’ learning as well.”

P9 mentioned throughout the interview that increasing comfort and engagement were difficult; however, P9 believed these efforts could lead to significant student progress. P9 focused on positive outcomes for students. P9 explained, “[The] language barrier [is] the most difficult challenge, where students will come in with English language skills which maybe are 2nd or 3rd grade.” P9 added, “However, the students have been able to make really tremendous progress . . . two, three, four, five grade levels of improvement . . . students getting up to grade level within 2 years.” This teacher attributed the improvement to students’ “personal diligence.” P12 found similar challenges but also some positive outcomes. P12 described, “Sometimes they don’t know what to do during classroom time or how to do it, so I had to meet with them one-on-one.” In contrast to P10, P12’s strategy of engaging with one-on-one support appeared successful. P12 shared, “After a little bit of struggle at the beginning, they get better as they go.”

Overall, many detailed responses that fit into this category were given. Teachers recognized students’ interpersonal and emotional issues. Some sought to improve their performance by engaging students at their level. Thus, the results support the subtheme and theme.

Research Question 2

The second question is, “How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County describe the practices and strategies for instructing students from first-generation immigrant households, including those from low-income families and whose first language is not English?” The interview questions centered on teacher strategies and challenges when working with these students, specifically how strategies address their language skills. Participant responses to these questions supported one major theme and four subthemes, and the results were organized by subtheme.

Theme 2

The second theme was purposefully, responsibly, resiliently, and collaboratively building learning strategies and reflecting a multicultural school climate. The respondents were asked to address their teaching practices and strategies specifically regarding the challenges for teaching that they discussed with research question 1. They were also asked to discuss supporting a multicultural environment, practices to address language barriers, and specific strategies for their content area and first-generation/newcomer students. Some responses narrowed to focus more on teachers' reliance on school expectations and initiatives for strategy. In contrast, some teachers relied more on personal strategies, which were not necessarily initiated and supported by the school. Collaboration was a thread through subthemes that developed, and the collective information supported the emergence of a subtheme regarding collaboration and teachers' reliance on it for their subject matter teaching. Several categories of responses were grouped for each of the four subthemes (Table 6) and were supported by participant responses under each subtheme. Many participants gave responses relevant to the subthemes, supporting Theme 2 (Table 6).

Table 6*Theme 2: Subthemes and Categories*

Subthemes	No. of Respond.	Categories	No. of Respond.
Teachers' mindful use of layered strategies	10/12	Purposed single strategies	7/12
		Multiple & multimodal strategies	10/12
		Multimodal learning for engagement	8/12
Multicultural school climate builds from schools and individuals taking responsibility	11/12	School-led building of a multicultural climate	6/12
		Personal responsibility for a multicultural environment	6/12
		Instructional strategies for multicultural education	10/12
Teachers' reliance on school expectations and personal resilience to address language skills and barriers	12/12	School-led strategies as a foundation for practice	3/12
		Personal strategies and resilience leading the way	9/12
Teachers' level of reliance on collaboration for subject matter strategies	12/12	Relying on chosen practices and collaborating on strategies	4/12
		Range of contexts for collaborative experiences.	8/12

Note. No. of Respond, = number of respondents of 12 total participants

Teachers' Mindful Use of Layered Strategies. The first question associated with research question 2 asked about strategies for meeting their teaching challenges based on student barriers. Most participants intentionally used combined and multiple strategies with these students; however, most started their responses by mentioning single strategies, those they seemed to rely on the most. Processes, such as scaffolding and pacing instruction, were mentioned in the discussions. The responses also often included aspects of how students can be engaged using the strategies they discussed. Three categories were formulated concerning

their strategies and use: purposed single strategies, multiple and multimodal strategies, and multimodal learning for engagement. The third category concerning engagement emerged from comments similar to those in the first two categories regarding specific tactics for engaging students directly. Overall, 10 of 12 participants supported this subtheme (Table 6). Exemplary responses below show how these categorized responses support this subtheme and theme.

Purposed Single Strategies. The single strategy most often initially mentioned was pairing students to work together. Seven of the 12 teachers emphasized a single strategy as their response began (Table 6). Teachers stressed that pairing students, in-class teacher check-ins, seating charts, and student group work/class discussion were their go-to strategies. The use of these methods was a part of social learning strategies. For example, they included pairing or grouping English-speaking students with English learners, first-generation students with others with the same first language, and matching students with similar ability levels. Choices about pairing students varied among the teachers; for example, P2 emphasized “pairing them with people that could help them translate what I’m trying to say to them.” Translation, particularly the lack of it, was an often-mentioned issue regarding student and teacher challenges. P1 discussed formally pairing students with someone who speaks their native language to avoid using translation services. Similar to P1, P4 did not prefer using translation resources. P4 preferred, “really, really highly fluent in a language to put next to a student who’s a newcomer.” However, P4 indicated a need to be flexible when choosing students for a pair or group. These participants used strategies intentionally and mindfully, thus supporting the subtheme.

Similarly, intentional seating arrangements were used to purposefully maximize potential outcomes for students. P8 supported first-generation students by formally seating them near others who could be helpful. This help was encouraged on an informal basis; the helper was not

formally assigned to this role as in a pairing situation. P12 did not mention a seating chart but seated students near suitable partners. P12 stated, “I sit them with peers who can help them out in their own language,” and they often allowed students to pick a partner.

P9 used a formal seating chart. P9 described, “[The] first step of that is the seating chart. I try to be intentional about where a student sits just for direct instruction.” Both teachers also used seating arrangements to create student pairs and working groups for mutual benefit and to reduce teacher challenges. Group work was central to P9 strategies. P9 shared,

I end up doing a ton of group work . . . I try to make real heterogeneous groups try to put students who are generally stronger in a mix with students who may be struggling in a different way.

However, P9 was discerning, “But with specific work groups, I’ll try to match them a little bit more closely, kind of keeping the zone of proximal development.” Similar to P4, P9 constructed groups flexibly according to needs.

Seating arrangements helped some teachers, P8 and P9, for example, with check-ins during class. Using a seating chart, P8 could quickly access students by “circulating during class.” P10 elaborated, “one-on-one check-ins, the checks for understanding . . . doing the short quizzes, . . . quick recaps and summaries of previous lessons, just to make sure that they’re kind of seeing the progression of the lessons.” P4 frequently used check-ins decoupled from pairing and group work while students work independently. P4 explained, “If we’re doing independent work time, independent study time, more check-ins with them,” and P4 offered office hours as check-ins. P4 described having one newcomer student who comes to check-ins often. The thoughtful, detailed explanations of these related pairing, seating, and checking-in strategies were consistent with the subtheme of mindful use of layered strategies.

Multiple and Multimodal Strategies. Most participants (10 of 12, Table 6) mentioned using multiple and multimodal methods for instructing these students; thus, using these strategies supported mindfully constructing layers of strategies. For example, P1 combined multimodal instruction to support learning English by pairing students. When P1 perceived that a student needed translation, another student who spoke the same language was enlisted, and the translating supplemented a multimodal learning method. P1 explained, “having someone translate the information to them. That way, they can really understand it in their own language but also have them write it in their own language and then translate it back into English.” P1 also uses “a lot of visuals, using concepts that everybody understands so that student[s] can somehow [use] what they already learned in their own language.” Thus, visuals, speaking with other students, reading, writing, and translating into their language could stimulate social and multimodal learning. In addition to personal check-ins described above, P12 systematically had students read handouts with summarized material and write in journals. As detailed below, P12 made other comments specific to expectations for first-generation students that elaborated a stepwise writing strategy similar to P1, which also combined verbal communication and visuals.

P4 also engaged in multiple approaches to overcome challenges and stimulate multimodal learning. Above, P4 described one-on-one verbal discussion between students and also with teachers, but similar to P1, these methods also used visual resources. P4 shared, “We use think maps. A lot of my lessons are highly scaffolded . . . for English language learners.” P4 used scaffolding and visual approaches to meet students at their level:

English language learners, or multilanguage learners—who need things repeated more. They need to have sentence frames or sentence starters given to them often. They need those graphic organizers that put the information together in a logical sense for them.

Participants mentioned scaffolding throughout the interviews and highlighted their value when using it with multimodal methods.

P10 also used visual aids in an extensive research paper, thus including visual graphics with reading and writing. This strategy circumvented students' struggles. P10 created "a slide show that I would share with . . . EL students, where every major slide show or lesson that covered a specific topic." This teacher kept the slides concise to "chunk" the material. P10 explained, "[I] kept a bullet-point list of those things, of the day that we did them, and what the lesson covered, and then a hyperlink to the slides that had all that stuff accessible." Thus, students were using visuals, reading content online, and seeing and reading visual material in class. Similarly, P9 presented "material in multiple ways, presenting written text, talking through it, asking them to discuss it, asking them to write about it, giving them a lot of different modalities to access it." Social interactions were linked with demonstrating learning in various ways.

Multimodal Learning for Engagement. Some participants used multiple strategies to support the engagement of first-generation students. Eight of the 12 participants discussed strategies that combined modalities and aimed at engaging students (Table 6). The strategies and their uses led to categorizing remarks as multimodal learning for engagement. The teacher's intentional efforts to enhance student engagement through combining strategies are consistent with the subtheme mindful use of layered strategies. P11 used combination strategies focusing on pairing students but also included task breakdowns such as reading, analyzing, and writing. P11 described strategies that could support engagement. P11 stated, "What I've noticed with the immigrant students and first-generation students is . . .their vocabulary is not as extensive." This teacher was focused:

[On] teaching them skills to analyze and think differently would be my first step, so we do a lot of breaking things down, like simple texts, and then teaching them how to analyze and transfer into writing . . . the step-by-step holds the student's attention.

Thus, peer support, reading, and writing were combined to create a multimodal approach to engage students. P9 described multi-modal strategies for language learning that included a positive classroom climate to enhance engagement. In many responses throughout the interview, P9 stressed an ambiance of safety and comfort. P9 stated, "If they feel comfortable and are motivated to learn how to use English in a classroom, [they] will work with students they're more comfortable with." In addition to pairing students, "I like to use as many visuals [as possible] and things that will help them connect their knowledge from their first language."

P9's approach to creating a positive climate included using students' connections to their first language. P9 stated, "[I include] many scaffolding techniques as possible *that will reach that student* [emphasis added]." Thus, helping students make connections as they learn is a way P9 provides a comfortable classroom where students can engage at their level of learning. P6 also used multiple methods, such as one-on-one office hours and visuals, including graphic organizers. P6 explained, "I believe in providing a lot of extra resources that they can read and that they can translate." The one-on-one time, as described, offers students extra attention to support engagement. P6's use of resources was similar to P9's suggestion that supplemental materials could engage students more readily.

P4 described using multimodal approaches to cultivate student interest or engagement: Encourage more English-speaking. I think the biggest thing for me is, as long as they have a buy-in, they're more interested. And once I have their interest, we can then lock into the skills that we need to focus on . . . reading and analyzing and writing, for them to

be interested in one thing, and for them now to switch it over into writing, it's very different.

Distinct from the abovementioned approaches, several participants mentioned pacing and adjusting instruction to systematic steps to promote student engagement and accomplishment. These processes could be used with many of the other strategies described above. For example, P11 mentioned breaking down complex material step-by-step to transfer their knowledge to writing skills—implying a need for a relatively slower pace as students focus and engage with each step. P6 also mentioned, “I try to give them a lot of scaffolding so they can build onto their knowledge slowly.” P1 remarked, “We’re going through it really slowly here and trying to make sure that I’m walking through with them to really comprehend . . . what the task on hand is.” P7 similarly remarked, “I have to go back a little bit and have them review certain vocabulary words or review their intention.” This suggests that the reviewing process slowed the pace. P4 also mentioned that non-English speakers needed repetition in the classroom, thus suggesting that they need a slower pace.

Consistent with P4, P10 suggested repetition, “I feel like it’s kind of redundant sometimes, but it’s super necessary, is having students repeat back instructions . . . even if it’s step-by-step.” P5 stated, “I even have the details and step-by-step record all my lessons so that students can rewatch or watch it at the slowest speed.” P9 also described the stepwise pacing of instruction:

I think gives them a lot of time to process things, kind of clarify their understanding . . . I think I teach pretty slow . . . so I think that time to allow students to absorb material before we move on is something that I hope allows them to absorb material.

Using multiple learning modes slows the process as students are exposed and re-exposed to the material. Thus, using multimodalities and pacing contributes to multimodal learning for engagement. Thus, when teachers were asked about instructional practices for these students, these strategies tended to reflect the subtheme of teachers' mindful use of layered strategies by illustrating various practice contexts. Consistent with Theme 2, these responses across the categories supported teachers purposefully, responsibly, resiliently, and collaboratively building learning strategies and reflecting a multicultural school climate.

Multicultural School Climate Builds from Schools and Individuals' Taking Responsibility and Self-Reflection. The participants were asked to discuss how the school and teachers support a multicultural learning environment. The first category of responses was descriptive of participation in the school-led building of a multicultural climate. The second category concerns personal responsibility for a multicultural environment, which includes social and learning contexts. The third comprised instructional strategies for multicultural education. The subtheme was supported by 11 of 12 participants' responses; the categories below contain these responses.

School-led Building of a Multicultural Climate. Six of 12 teachers offered responses that fit this category (Table 6). P1 remarked on school efforts toward a multicultural learning environment, "our school has held different events to showcase the diversity in cultures . . . in addition to having multicultural languages being spoken and learned about in our ESL programs." P1's descriptions fall into the school-led building of multicultural climate. P7 remarked on school-led efforts, "For the school, I think they work really hard to constantly discuss and interact with a variety of cultures and make other students aware of the multicultural aspect of the school. P12 shared school-led events, "[our] school is really diverse in nature . . .

we offer many homeroom activities or after-school activities, culture fairs where they introduce their cultural backgrounds and eat their food and learn about their cultures.” P11 also discussed the campus-wide events and programs, “we have a lot of different clubs on campus that students can go to where they can find their place, so to speak, and feel a little bit heard.” P11 elaborated, “we like to showcase our multicultural ethnic backgrounds in the environment . . . we offer students from different backgrounds to set up different booths to celebrate their cultures and backgrounds.”

Some school-led efforts included direct support for teachers. P4 remarked on school-level efforts, “My site has been pretty supportive.” The site allowed this teacher to choose among “various projects for their involvement.” P4 also described:

[A] mentorship program that my site was paying for, so that was pretty helpful . . . some EL coaches who came in and helped out me and my team here with building some lesson plans and doing some of the school culture stuff.

In contrast with other participants, P5 perceived little support from the school and held that activities focused on multicultural climate were unhelpful. P5 explained, “I think our school tries to sometimes our principal or the other administrators talk about it.” However, P5 did not appear to be on-board with building a multicultural climate:

The approach is that they try to incorporate different cultures in different classes, but I don’t think this is the right approach. I think the best thing you can do to the immigrant students is to give them the skills.

P5 continued to explain the emphasis on student skills. P5 remarked, “When they graduate, even though they have a language barrier and are culturally different from the U.S., they can still get a job . . . because they have highly valued skills, instead of just feeling good about themselves.”

Unlike most other participants, P5's response was antithetical to school-led multicultural climate and lacked support for first-generation immigrant students. P5 described, "pretending to tell them we understand you; we value your culture . . . but it's not the things that could truly help the first-generation immigrants." As discussed above and throughout the interview, P5 was primarily focused on teaching strategies that did not involve multiculturalism.

Personal Responsibility for a Multicultural Social and Learning Environment. Some participants described buy-in to school-led building of a multicultural climate, but their responses emphasized responsibility for creating a multicultural social and learning environment (6/12, Table 6). P6 remarked, "Whenever school has any meeting with parents or counselors or anyone else, we always have a translator present if needed. I have asked for a translator personally sometimes when it happened that the student did not speak English." P6's response differed from that of other participants by including parents. The remarks showed that P6 felt responsible for providing a translator to parents. P4 explained that personal efforts and involvement toward social inclusion aligned with the school-led efforts but questioned the school-level success. P4 candidly stated, "One of the things we've been trying to do, talking about the social aspect, is trying to make people feel more included . . . but how do you build that kind of environment?" As an art teacher, P4 has been personally involved with projects that align with school-led initiatives. P4 elaborated, "campus beautification . . . trying to create some murals that have multiple languages and phrases that are our school's student learning outcomes, just some informal colloquialisms and greetings and words of encouragement." P4's remarks were consistent with subject matter-influenced strategies described under Research Question 1.

P3 did not specifically voice negativity toward building the school's multicultural climate using school-led efforts but did not mention any school-led efforts. P3 focused only on personal

involvement and social activities regarding multiculturalism. P3 stated, “We do a council because I have different cultures in my class, and we talk about different things about culture, about their food that they like, about any traditions that they have.” Consistent with P3, P2 focused on creating social inclusiveness through personal involvement with students:

Every single day, I try to make sure that I am celebrating every student in my class, greeting them the same way as everyone enthusiastically with a big smile on my face, just to make sure that everybody knows that this is a community no matter where you’re from or what language you speak, what religion you practice.

P7 discussed personal responsibility and took an introspective approach to enhancing and creating a multicultural social environment. P7 shared, “For me, it’s always a learning process . . . it’s also a learning curve because of where and when I grew up.” This teacher took risks to discuss personal encounters in class by asking students. P7 asked:

Do you know when I first had a conversation, an interesting, long-term conversation with someone who is Asian? . . . Last year with a fellow teacher because where I taught before, there were no Asians. Where I grew up, there were no Asians . . . I grew up in an all-white neighborhood where there was no multiculturalism.

These responses demonstrate self-reflection as P7 considered how to reach students in a multicultural classroom climate. P7 expressed, “These kids teach me something every day, and I learn so much from them.” In contrast, P5 did not endorse multicultural education through school-led initiatives, specifically not as a personal practice. As described below, P5 focused on instructional practices to develop skills other than multicultural understanding and social skills.

Instructional Strategies for Multicultural Education. Most responses from participants regarding instructional strategies centered on their personal choices and level of involvement

(10/12, Table 6). P8 was introspective about personal involvement and included specific instructional strategies addressing multicultural education. Consistent with P7 above, P8 questioned the school and P8's efforts toward instruction, "How can I do it better? One year, we did graphic organizers in my class. I know that a graphic organizer can really, really help certain students." P8 also used scaffolding. P8 explained, "I want them to write an email. It's certainly not an essay, but do I currently have strategies and scaffolds like that." If these activities did not help, P8 elaborated on improving, "What assignments do I need to start including more of them?" P8 described, "with the content, I try to have things that are specifically multicultural." P8 reflected on the best ways to reach students in a multicultural climate.

P9 also invests in instructional strategies for multicultural education in the classroom. P9 stated, "I try to make assignments that are open-ended enough so that they can incorporate elements of their own cultures into their assignments." No participant supported the response categories concerning instructional strategies and personal involvement more strongly than P2. P2 expressed:

From the very first day of class, I'm very, very enthusiastic about the idea of not just accepting different cultures but celebrating cultures. For instance, I have a unit where every student in my class teaches us some kind of game, sport, or activity from their own personal culture . . . we embrace, and we learn from each other and that we celebrate each other's diversity.

In contrast, P1 described pragmatic and specific efforts in classroom education, "I have been introducing careers in which different cultures can get involved . . . and get them interested . . . they can take a look at how they can see themselves in that specific role." The steps these two teachers took toward multicultural education supported the school climate. Thus, the subtheme

was that a multicultural school climate builds from schools and individuals taking responsibility and self-reflection.

However, unlike P1, P12 did not make additional individual efforts beyond those conducted by the school, “personally, I didn’t devote my time to it.” As described below, P5’s response resembled P12’s regarding a lack of personal involvement. P5’s instructional practices reflected little interest in using multicultural approaches in the classroom. Consistent with P1, P5 was pragmatic and emphasized student skills. P5 considered technical skills:

These are all highly valued skills in society . . . They all lead to high demanding jobs . . . the best way to help immigrants, instead of just trying to incorporate more culture into the curriculums . . . which doesn’t really help them for the future because for immigrants . . . the best gift we can give them as [an] educator is . . . the knowledge, the skills to survive, or even maybe try to earn a living.

P5 suggested that multicultural education is not a valuable part of a high school education that provides opportunities for the future.

Unlike P5 and P12, most teachers' responses were congruent with some teaching strategies aimed at personal involvement and intervention for multicultural education and school-led efforts toward multicultural education and climate (Table 6). Thus, these responses supported the subtheme of multicultural school climate built from schools and individuals taking responsibility and self-reflection.

Others specifically mentioned school and department strategies for instruction. P11 described the departmental aim for the curriculum:

[They] encourage us to really include works from sharing different authors, backgrounds, walks of life, whether it be cultural, socioeconomic . . . [this] freedom and flexibility will

allow us . . . to think outside of the box, and we're not just teaching old, dead, White men.

Similarly, at the department level, P9 shared, “we try to cover a bunch of different stories, accessing the content in a way that’s specifically related to different cultures.”

P6 discussed multicultural climate regarding school-led initiatives and strategies:

I think the one thing that I can see very clearly is that we have teachers that speak more than one language, so I have all the same students getting really close to those teachers that speak their home language, and then if they have any troubles in those classes or even other classes, they can fall back to the people to interpret, to translate.

Regarding school-initiated training, P8 was self-reflective when discussing training to implement strategies:

I feel like there were a couple of instances where I’m being introduced to information or training that I’m, like, gosh, I feel like I knew this, but now it’s explicitly being talked about. Moments like that make me feel like I should be doing more of these things in my classroom and taking stock: Do I currently do this?

These responses were consistent with buy-in to school-led building of a multicultural climate and personal involvement; they supported the subtheme multicultural school climate builds from schools and individuals taking responsibility and reflection.

Teachers’ Reliance on School Expectations and Personal Resilience to Address Language Skills and Barriers. The teachers were asked how they and their schools expected to address first-generation students' language skills and language barriers. Some participants perceived school strategies and expectations as the foundation for their practice and relied on school-led efforts to support their strategies. These responses were in the category of school-led

strategies as a foundation for personal practice, and they reflected some continuum of reliance on school-led efforts for support to help them choose strategies and set expectations. However, some set their expectations with more reliance on personal choices using their resiliency, mainly when support and school-led strategy were scant. Responses of this type were in the personal strategies and resilience leading the way category. All 12 participants fit well into one or both categories and support the subtheme, as shown in their responses (12/12, Table 6).

School-led Strategies as a Foundation for Personal Practice. Responses in this category reflected some continuum of reliance on school-led efforts for support. For example, some teachers relied on school-led practice, such as English language development classes, as a platform to support their strategies and instruction and thus set their expectations for practice on this foundation. Three participants emphasized school-led strategies as their foundation (Table 6). P1 mentioned relying on school-endorsed and chosen educational methods consistent with these school-led efforts. P1 emphasized addressing language barriers:

My school and I will offer language classes to introduce new languages to students, and then that way they can learn the new language and be able to speak to others in a respectful manner and then learn about their culture as well.

P1 did not host this effort; the EL staff carried it out. However, P1 expressed buy-in and reliance on the language classes and used other multiple-chosen strategies mentioned throughout the interview. Consistent with P1, P6 depended on the school's expectation of using specific resources. P6 stated, "The school provides translators . . . and counselors, and parent supports as needed." P6 continued, "I had a student this year who did not speak English at all; the school asked me to pair her with another student who spoke her native language." Thus, the school encourages the strategy of pairing students with first-generation students. P6 also described that

their school expects teachers to address language barriers by hiring diverse teachers who speak languages other than English. When discussing practices in the classroom, P6 described their classroom instruction as extending what students receive from the school-led efforts. P6 addressed:

the language barriers by giving them as much practice as I can . . . students are expected to present in English . . . [but if they were not ready then] as they are progressing, they learn to do that slowly, step by step. Sometimes, I even allow them to present in their native language.

Similarly, P12 remarked that when these students “first come to our school, they’re placed in the ELD class” and “are evaluated for English language placement.” Thus, P12 relied on the school’s structure or foundational practice to work with these students. P12 kept abreast of how student English learning was progressing and used that as part of student instruction aimed just above their current level. P12 explained, “I make handouts with summaries that’s written a little above their grade levels and make sure they understand the concepts in the textbooks.” Thus, the school-led effort aimed at language barriers was the platform for P12’s practices. P12 also detailed some of the multimodal methods chosen for first-generation immigrant students. P12 stated,

In my handouts, I use the written summaries, pictures, and videos, and I give them journal assignments . . . they write it first, and then they have time to understand what it is in a different language . . . When I verbally explain during a class, I use the words and gestures to make it easier to follow.

P12's efforts depend on students’ learning in their language class; thus, P12 uses strategies that rely on school foundational strategies along with some tailored methods.

Personal Strategies and Resilience Leading the Way. Some participants relied much more on personal practices due to preference, using school-led methods as a platform, or because their school offered little foundation for working with student language barriers. This category includes some responses showing resiliency in using teachers' choices when support was insufficient. Some reported no expectation of available support or foundation from the school. Nine of the participants responded in this category (Table 6). In particular, five participants described scenarios focused on their resilience in using their personal choices to frame expectations and student outcomes. Thus, these responses were consistent with the category and subtheme, including personal decisions and resiliency in facing challenges.

In contrast to P1 and others, who mainly relied on school-led strategies as a foundation, P8 focused more on personal strategies when using the school policies and strategies as a platform. For example, the school schedules regular parent-teacher meetings, and P8 integrates parents into plans to support students' language skills and barriers. P8 specifically emphasized encouraging parents to have their students speak multiple languages at home. This teacher found meeting with the parents as the quickest way to find information about the languages spoken in the home:

During parent conferences when I speak to a parent or guardian, it's clear that there's another language spoken at home. Actually, I love when that happens because I always encourage if there's another language being spoken at home—please keep speaking that language. So, I always encourage the family if your son or daughter or your child isn't speaking a second or third language, please encourage them.

P8 is concerned that students “may not get the support from their family as much as if their family were also strong English speakers . . . parents get a little anxious when no one speaks

Spanish to help them with their homework.” Regarding the school-led efforts, P8 suggested that interacting with the parents, as described above, allowed the school to strengthen English language development courses. P8 also chose to use specific techniques, such as graphic organizers. P8 was unclear about administrators’ roles in this strategy but suggested they may be involved in the choice. P8 appeared to use school expectations as a platform to enact their chosen strategies. P8 demonstrated resiliency in leveraging the parent meeting to gain information that, when lacking, could be an impediment.

P2 also relied on school-led efforts but recognized a need for greater personal latitude to address student language issues. P2 remarked, “It’s really important that we give these students as much practice using English as much as possible, whether it be reading or writing or speaking in front of a classroom.” For example, P2 continued, “I know that our ELD program with the ELD teacher, he’s been really awesome with those kids.” But P2 followed up:

Teachers like myself have to come up with strategies that will make sure kids are comprehending exactly what we’re trying to teach them . . . using visuals and scaffolding and techniques that will help what they already know with the English teaching.

P2’s responses suggested a sense of self-reliance and resilience in finding and using their chosen methods.

P3 also began the discussion by mentioning that their school has English language learning classes. P3 directly collaborated with ELD teachers, “so we’re on the same page.” Additionally, these students are “evaluated to see where they’re at.” P3 also described that the “school fosters collaboration with those families and those students and any support staff.” P3 suggested offering input to ongoing efforts expected by the school and using the structure as a platform for furthering language development; thus, their efforts are interdependent. P7 focused

on expectations for developing specific skills for non-English speaking students. P7 responded, “just going back to grammar and spelling and understanding, contextualization of complex ideas . . . of course, some scaffolding [is] involved.” P7 stressed congruence between personal practices and school-led efforts. P7 shared, “it’s important to go back and ensure that everyone understands so that there’s equity and equality. That’s one of the things I try to focus on a lot, and the school does as well.”

P9 was compelled to use strategies and collaborative approaches due to a vacuum in school expectations for addressing language barriers. P9 observed that school policy shifted most of the responsibility for learning to the students. P9 perceived English language learners' courses and other strategies as emerging but not a core foundation for students. P9 described school expectations:

I think the expectation is put a lot on the students. Here’s the bar, and you kind of have to get over it. I think that’s a tough hurdle, but I think that’s the expectation. I think the school is understanding that there is more that we can do to support students in that, so I know we are developing our ELD program for English language learners, but I think students are accommodated by using online translators for students who really need it. But primarily, it’s on the students to catch up.

This response suggests that more is needed than emerging school initiatives. P9 described throughout the interview the personally chosen strategies and expected their personal commitment and teacher and department collaboration to help students compensate for their language skills. Consistent with several other participants, P9 demonstrated resilience using collaboration and personal strategies instead of school foundational support.

Three teachers relied on little or none of the school expectations and foundations. P5 expressed little knowledge of school expectations for these students. Consistent with other responses throughout the interview, P5 assumed addressing language issues is irrelevant when teaching their subject matter. P5 described teaching their subject matter and considered it “technical and analytical,” such that English language problems did not matter. P5 confessed to knowing little about methods used to support students whose first language was not English. P5’s response suggested they rely on the English department to address language skills and barriers. P5 had no expectations for students’ language skills in P5’s subject area. Two teachers said neither they nor the school had specific plans or expectations to address first-generation students’ needs. P4 confessed “no clear answer” for addressing barriers and what the school does to support the teachers and students. P4 stated:

The wide spectrum of student skills was a significant challenge . . . the biggest problems of the ELD classroom is that [students] come in who speak zero English. . . [and some] come in and they speak English at the level of a five-year-old. And some speak great English, but they’re terrible at reading . . . how do you address all that?

P4 suggested taking one-on-one time with those students most in need and encouraging those who can work independently. P4 did not mention school-led efforts or support specifically from the school and showed resiliency in using personal strategies in the face of challenges.

P11 discussed difficulties given the system structure that did not support instructing first-generation and newcomers. P11 described a need to meet them “where they are.” However, these students must “learn English for the first time” in high school. This teacher perceived that the school reinforces that teachers be mindful of students who are newcomers, but the learning environment structure created challenges for teachers. P11 stated:

If I'm completely honest with you, in a classroom of 39 students, . . . I think 38, 39 in a classroom is overwhelming to say the least, but then on top of having to teach the kids who are comfortable with English . . . and one where English is completely foreign to them, that's where I think they fall through the cracks, to be honest, and I think that is where we as a school fail them.

P11 brought up a general barrier they had not explored in other questions. P11 shared, "We only have what, 55 minutes . . . I think [it] is the biggest barrier, classroom size . . . It's almost impossible to reach the ones that you want to reach and that need to be reached." The challenges for P11 had to be, by default, addressed with self-chosen strategies due to a lack of support from the school. Resilience describes P11 and P4's efforts in the face of structural problems in the system.

Teachers' Level of Reliance on Collaboration for Subject Matter Strategies.

Participants were asked about discipline-specific strategies they used with their students, particularly first-generation immigrant students. Although not all offered distinct methods for their disciplines and reiterated fewer specific strategies, all responses were distinguished by emphasizing collaboration (12/12 contributed to the category, Table 6). Two response categories were found: relying on chosen practices and collaborating on strategies and a range of contexts for collaborative experiences. The former category focused on using their preferred strategies and how those were used in or augmented by collaborations. The latter contained descriptions of the diverse ways and contexts in which collaboration occurred. The range of responses included those who experienced little collaboration and the reasons why. These categories also contained responses explaining how they collaborated and sometimes why.

Relying on Chosen Practices and Collaborating on Strategies. The findings showed that teachers used a mix of their chosen practices apart from or in parallel with those shared in collaborative work. Four participants' responses supported this category (Table 6); the focus was on the details of these strategies and collaborating with teachers in the same or related disciplines. For example, throughout the interview, P1 mentioned using multiple methods of instruction. P1 described using these strategies as part of collaborating on similar projects:

[We used] a lot of visuals and writing and reading... not only do I have everything written in English, but then there's also pictures. I have. I've collaborated using these with other teachers, informing congruent projects that, when we teach the same subject, we're going into different aspects of that subject.

In this example, P1 exchanged ideas on preferred strategies and put them into action to inform and align content in similar courses; P1 collaborated with other teachers "to create curricular consistency in their discipline." P6's response was similar but included more details about immigrant student instruction. P6 described, "I usually go with a lot of paper visuals graphic organizers where they can write information, and I try to give them a lot of scaffolding so they can build knowledge slowly." P6 provides "extra resources and translate if they need to." However, when discussing teacher collaboration, P6 stressed designing instruction for all students, and it is not necessarily aimed at non-English speakers and immigrants. However, the goal was to meet any student at their level of knowledge. P6 explained, "We have collaborated to figure out strategies to differentiate our classrooms, not particularly for English language learners, but collaboration to figure out the best way to teach . . . for all students regardless of their previous knowledge." Thus, P6 focused on collaborating with others on methods rather than aligning the curriculum.

P9 mentioned intradepartmental collaboration and stated, “my first collaboration project was with a teacher of a related but distinct subject, one that we used in class.” Through this collaboration, P9 sought to broaden the scope of the topics to a multi-disciplinary level and support active learning. P9 explained, “The tool that I use is trying to make most things projects. Most of my classes are very project-based, so the content is embedded within certain skills.” P9 further described some personal choices in classroom instruction for first-generation immigrant students. P9 stated, “The projects tend to be relatively open-ended, and students are able to show their knowledge in potentially different ways and express themselves.” These projects allowed students from other cultures to express themselves. P9 did indicate that the school provided ample support for first-generation students’ college applications but did not mention school-level efforts on instructional strategy or formal collaboration.

P11 relayed intradepartmental collaboration efforts. P11 stated, “I collaborate ...mostly with teachers in the department” and “We will make lesson plans, unit plans together.” P11 suggested that the school encourages these practices; thus, the collaboration is loosely school-led. Similar to P6, P11 explained further, “we’re looking at specific strategies and practices; it comes from just our discussion of what worked for us, giving each other ideas on reaching students.” P11 mentioned collaborating with other teachers in the department using cultural aspects to engage first-generation and immigrant students. P11 described using excerpts from books to address “deeply embedded social issues and cultural issues that they never think of it but were able to discuss and talk about it.” The aim was to enrich the experience of students and teachers alike. As for instruction, P11 stated, “We were able to share a lot of our ideas and lesson plans . . . to strengthen each other’s curriculum and content . . . being able to do that with other teachers is fun.”

Range of Contexts for Collaborative Experiences. These teachers experienced collaboration in varying contexts and levels, instructing all students and some specifically to first-generation or immigrant students (8/12, Table 6). These experiences ranged from a high-level collaboration to very little or none. Furthermore, they used methods and collaborations that extended from only school-led strategies to combinations of personal and school-led or endorsed instructional methods. For example, compared to those in the prior category, P10's responses to strategies used for their content area were limited to only a school-led instructional program and not with the use of any personally chosen or developed strategies. The goal of the conceptual program was to bring non-English speaking students up to grade level in their specific subject matter. P10 explained:

Our school uses a concept called Reading Apprenticeship . . . It's a practice for reading, and so it's kind of a lot of different skills and strategies incorporate for reading, and it's not English specific. It's meant to be for any classroom.

P10 also explained how this tool is used for “students whose test scores are far below grade level” and that the school had “instituted a class just for those students.” The course is targeted for “students at getting them to a high[er] grade level in terms of reading . . . and we've noticed a huge change in that within just this past year,” P10 ascribed some of this improvement to aligning curriculum across grade levels in English courses.

P10 also emphasized collaboration apart from the Reading Apprenticeship. P10 mentioned,

This year has been probably the most collaboration that we've had in terms of working with other teachers—designated teacher to coordinate etc. coach. So, he works with each teacher. He's looking at each of our units . . . and constantly leaving feedback.

P10 only described this school/department level program and collaboration with the Reading Apprenticeship program and did not describe any personal strategies for first-generation or other students in their classroom. In contrast, P3 stressed, “I collaborate all the time, pretty much every day, with teachers to make sure they’re getting what they need.”

Along the continuum of responses, two participants, P12 and P7, mentioned strategies they used, but unlike the example in the first category above, these strategies were not part of the collaborative interaction. In both cases, these teachers considered passive tracking of their students' language learning process collaborative for them. P12 mentioned checking in with English language development teachers to find out students' level of spoken English, but these conversations were minimally collaborative. P12 reiterated some general strategies for non-English speaking students in their content area. P12 stated, “I use books that are written slightly above grade level and teacher-provided notes.” The approach suggests some personal choices in strategy and lower levels of collaboration than others. P7 also collaborated with “the ELA teacher who knows their English-speaking level.” These collaborations were aimed at strategies for first-generation students and limited to determining their language ability level. P7 has some discipline-specific strategies. P7 stated, “[Students] write and are provided visual aids, like making posters and drawing.” P7 explained, “[I meet with] some other subject area teachers, how they’re doing in their classes, and what strategies work for them.”

P4 experienced little or no collaboration and none in their content area:

Not a lot of collaboration . . . it’s more in terms of classroom management, and it’s in terms of trying to be on the same page in certain areas, but there’s no one that teaches the content at the level that I do.

P4 described a short collaborative training they received from the school. P4 explained, “[The training was in] the intentional use of graphic organizers to support ELs.” P4 did not mention first-generation students specifically. In response to another question, P4 mentioned collaborative efforts and personal involvement with projects related to multicultural school climate but did not suggest that content instruction was collaborative despite the school-wide focus of the efforts. Consistent with P4, P8 mentioned that the opportunity for collaboration was sparse:

The one time where I got to collaborate with people outside of my department, and just having them share examples of what they were doing was super helpful . . . we did collaborate to work on the graphic organizer process and then share out and just kind of hear what people were doing in their classrooms.

P8 mentioned “Listening activities . . . scaffolding, especially some of the harder activities” as personal choices in their classroom.

P2 was the one participant who did not describe working directly with other teachers. P2 remarked, “Well, I think that collaborating with other teachers is definitely something I need to do more often.” P2 further elaborated on some personal practices for their content area, including pictures of activities for non-English speakers. P5 also used little collaboration with others. P5 explained:

I sometimes cooperate with the science teacher for some of my projects, most often, projects in physics. They are very hands-on, so even though someone who does not speak English or has a different culture, they can still have fun with the rest of the class.

P5 expressed that all students could take part despite barriers. P5 explained, “They may have different cultural values, or even the new immigrant students might have a language barrier.”

This response contradicts other remarks by P5, which suggested these barriers are irrelevant in P5's content area.

Research Question 3

The third question is, "How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County perceive the existing supports and those they might prefer but are not currently in place while teaching and engaging students from first-generation immigrant households?" To address this question, the participants first responded about their professional development experiences, then concerning the support offered for teaching first-generation and newcomer students, and finally, about what professional development they would prefer but do not yet receive. As discussed below, a major theme and three subthemes emerged from the data. Many responses aligned with these subthemes supported Theme 3 (Table 7).

Theme 3

The final theme was teachers recognizing the benefits and needs to improve professional development: the champions and the discontented. Participants were asked about their experiences with professional development at their school. The responses suggested that recognizing benefits and insufficiencies could improve training and lead to recommendations. Thus, the first subtheme is improving professional development: benefits, value, insufficiencies, and recommendations. The second subtheme derived from responses to a question about the support teachers received: recognizing, benefitting, and using school support for teaching first-generation immigrant students. When asked about interest in future professional development training, responses centered on interest level and enthusiasm for more professional development; the third subtheme was teachers' level of championing professional development: value and areas of need. As explained under the subthemes below, all participants contributed to one or

more subthemes and categories, supporting the theme regarding interest and need for training (Table 7). The subthemes were discussed with details from the categories of responses to show support for Theme 3.

Table 7*Theme 3: Subthemes and Categories*

Subthemes	No. of Respond.	Categories	No. of Respond.
Improving professional development: Benefits, value, insufficiencies, and recommendations	11/12	High benefits, value, and flexibility	3/12
		Limited scope and value	3/12
		No availability, perceived value, or benefits	7/12
		Benefits for multicultural education	2/12
Recognizing, benefitting, and using school supports for teaching first-generation immigrant students.	11/12	Benefit and satisfaction, recognition, and types of supports	5/12
		Limited supports with lower benefit and satisfaction	3/12
		No perceived value or satisfaction or no supports.	5/12
Teachers' level of championing professional development: value and areas of need.	12/12	Championing professional development and strategies	5/12
		Identifying areas of need with mixed enthusiasm	4/12
		Identifying needs/low enthusiasm or no interest.	3/12

Note. No. of Respond. = number of respondents of the total 12 participants.

Improving Professional Development: Benefits, Value, Insufficiencies, and Recommendations. Under this subtheme, participants described how and why they received professional development and the level of value or benefit they perceived, if any. Some elaborated on the value of professional development for multicultural education. The categories in Table 7 reflect these topics. Participants who responded in the high benefits, value, and flexibility categories exemplified positive experiences with professional development. While others had a limited but positive experience, more participants found low or no value or relevance or had no available professional development. Among those who found training

helpful, they mentioned its utility for multicultural education, forming a fourth category regarding its benefits (Table 7).

High Benefits, Value, and Flexibility. Three of the 12 participants experienced high benefits, value, or flexibility during professional development (Table 7). P12 found professional development to be helpful due to its frequency and flexibility. P12 commented, “We have PD [professional development] time every Wednesday, regularly, and some days we have all-day PDs.” P12 emphasized the usefulness of regularity for professional development. P12 stated, [it is] “helpful for my goals, and one-on-one coaching if I need it.” P12 explained how the coaching worked via an administrator at her site. P12 stated, “She would come to my class to observe and give me some pointers and help me learn how to make my lessons more engaging and inquiry-based, project-based.” P7 Consistent with P12, P7 benefitted from frequent and flexible professional development and described having positive experiences:

What I like about that is you can choose what area you wish to focus on. There are many to choose from. You’re always have variety to choose from. And you can also take what you want. There’s no set structure.

P6 found professional development helpful when collaborating with teachers in related disciplines and departments. However, this professional development was not explicitly targeted to support and instruction for first-generation students. P6 stated:

Most of them are really good and useful because we get a lot of time to collaborate with our peers, with our departments, which is very useful. Sometimes we have time to collaborate with our grade-level teachers, which is even more useful because we have the same group of students. I like the professional developments.

Limited Scope and Value. Consistent with the subtheme, three teachers found professional development beneficial despite its scope and frequency limitations. P4 found professional development beneficial but limited to English learners' issues and not specific to first-generation learners. P4 stated:

For the specific, intentional stuff that the school actually went and found the outside providers to help us, and they were a great benefit . . . [but] limited to general kinds of issues with language learning and not newcomers.

Although P8 found professional development beneficial and targeted to their subject matter, they had no recent experience with professional development; thus, the professional development offered is limited in frequency. P8 explained, "I first started about 4 or 5 years ago; there was a very awesome conference that I was asked to attend . . . and [it was] about strategies in my subject."

P9 found professional development marginally helpful due to the low frequency of opportunities and little opportunity to discuss immigrant students. P9 remarked, "Professional development has been limited. I feel like we maybe have one meeting a year, maybe, where we discuss who the students are that need these services which are coming in from another country."

No Availability, Perceived Value, or Benefits. Five teachers found professional development mostly lacking personal relevance and sometimes low quality, while two others had no access to professional development. Thus, a majority of teachers' responses were classified in this category. P11's experiences with professional development lacked relevance for them and were perceived as unimportant at the high school level. This participant stated that the school offered specific workshops devoted broadly to teacher growth and deepening their teaching experiences. P11 stated:

I guess [this topic] provides a more respectful environment in your classroom . . . “I don’t know that that’s helpful per se, but we spend a pretty good chunk of our time. . . . Do I think it’s necessary at a high school level? No. I think some of it’s very elementary, and I think it’s beneficial for elementary school.

Despite some negative impressions, P11 also remarked, “Yes. I wish we did have more, and I think that’s always the biggest complaint for most teachers is that we’re not given enough time to collaborate and to really build our plan.” P5 had similar views to P11, suggesting that no professional development exists at their school, but then described some available professional development that lacked personal relevance. P5 remarked, “I think they do have some, but they just address the problems on the surface level. It doesn’t truly help the students.” P5 continued by considering professional development to support small group work. P5 explained, “in practice, it’s [small groups] not working that well because if you try to slow down the whole class for one or two students . . . the whole class is suffering. I don’t see how this benefits anyone.”

Consistent with P5, P3 offered that professional development is often unhelpful. “They do provide some key information, . . . but honestly, I don’t feel like PD benefits me at all.” The main concern of these teachers was that the professional development offered did not address their specialty area and role. P3 elaborated, “No support [from] administration, I don’t believe I’ve been supported sufficiently enough to support the students at a higher level.” P10 was candid in describing the professional development s offered on their campus. P10 shared:

I have to say that they are not the best. I’m someone who’s been vocal about a lot of our professional development being a lot of theory and not a lot of practical . . . a lot of big concepts and ideas, but not always immediately applicable to our classroom settings.

Two participants found no professional development at their school. For example, P1 received no professional development. This teacher explained, “None at this time. No professional development for this particular topic.” P2 was offered no professional development in their school but did describe receiving some as a preservice teacher and believed it could be beneficial regarding their subject matter. P2 expressed, “so, obviously, we would need more at our school for that particular subject.”

Benefits for Multicultural Education. Among those who found some benefits from professional development, three participants specifically mentioned its relevance to culture and school climate. P6 stated, “They teach us how to run councils or how to run a classroom in a specific manner.” P6 specifically mentioned the benefits of learning about diversity and multiculturalism. For example, P6 explained, “This year we are learning Anti Bias Anti Racist strategies for our curriculum . . . I think these new strategies are good, and they could be helpful for differentiation, which helps the first-generation students as well.” P7 recalled:

One [professional development] discussing cultural diversity and understanding how to talk and relate to students that are different from you . . . [and found] it was very interesting because there were things that I did not understand . . . It wasn’t a sense of prejudice; it was more a sense of not knowing, so I found it very educational.

P11 described professional development about collaboration among teachers on diversity and inclusion:

Having another brain with you and creatively being able to build together for these students . . . I come from an Asian background; if I met with a teacher who is Middle Eastern or Hispanic . . . we can develop ways to teach diverse texts.

P11 also desired more “time to collaborate with other teachers of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds so we can share.”

Recognizing, Benefitting, and Using School Support for Teaching First-Generation Immigrant Students. The second subtheme focused on the support teachers received for instruction of first-generation immigrant students. The related interview question was whether the school supports teachers when addressing the needs of first-generation immigrants and newcomers. The categories of responses were similar to those linked to professional development, with responders indicating the level of benefit and value perceived regarding supports provided to teachers. These participants' comments were primarily focused on three categories:

- benefit and satisfaction, recognition, and types of support
- limited supports with lower benefit and satisfaction
- No perceived value or satisfaction or no supports

Across these categories, 11 of 12 participants' responses supported the subtheme (Table 7), thus contributing to the major theme.

Benefit and Satisfaction, Recognition, and Types of Support. Five teachers responded unequivocally “yes” when explaining whether school support currently exists for first-generation students (Table 7). This result was surprising given that participants mentioned few school-led efforts for teaching strategies aimed at first-generation students. However, these supports included other ways schools could support these students and their teachers. For example, P1 stressed administrative support for integrating newcomers and enhancing their engagement. P1 stated:

[We] have support from administration to integrate new generation students into our classrooms and ensure that they're understanding and learning the concepts . . . and gauge their interest . . . we can have conversations with parents as well . . . They do offer support to teachers to mitigate the language barriers.

P3 also mentioned support for students and their parents. P3 remarked, "especially by having a teacher that is assigned to dealing with these students, so there are support efforts and reaching out to parents. Parent outreach in all these cases encompassed cultural and language issues."

P7 shared:

Yes, there's always support, whether you want to talk to administration or the head of your department or the head of your grade. They are willing and eager to assist you on an individual or on a group level. I've never been hesitant to ask questions, and I've always gotten support from teachers.

Consistent with P1 and P3, P6 also mentioned support for parents through translators during meetings with the parents of first-generation and newcomer students.

P9 similarly remarked on apparent efforts to support these students and the teachers. P9 replied, "we have ELD classes for students who are learning English. I think this year, for the first year, there's also a Spanish for Native Speakers class, which I think also is in the vein of supporting first-generation students."

P6 discussed instructional support materials for first-generation students. P6 described, "[We have] materials that we can purchase online. . . I am sure that if I ask for some more support, it will be there." However, P6 also suggested that some first-generation students have individualized support based on need, but this support is not available for every first-generation

student. P6 stated, “I don’t think that’s possible to do considering the number of newcomer and first-generation students.”

Limited Supports with Lower Benefits and Satisfaction. Three teachers had mixed responses in which some support for these students was described (3/12, Table 7); these participants found the school-led support inadequate or lacking specificity to first-generation students. For example, P11 explained, “We have [support] for the ESL students, and it’s not a lot. We get maybe one or two emails at the beginning of the year to help us to support first generation, what strategies we can use.” P11 found challenges in working with first-generation students. P11 stated:

There’s just different kids on different sides of the spectrum of first-generation kids. I wish there was more support for those kids because we’re told can you just be on the lookout, but again you have 39 kids times five or six classes . . . I don’t even know where that support would come from, to be honest.

P2’s response resembled P11’s. P2 stated, “There’s definitely lots of teachers who are leaders that we can turn to for that type of advice, but I think that we need some more formal training on teaching ELD students.” However, both P2 and P11 expressed a need for more support and indicated little came from their school administrators and was not targeted to first-generation students.

P8 suggested that more support was needed beyond superficially identifying first-generation students’ languages and cultural differences. P8 also mentioned that professional development was not targeted to first-generation students. P8 mentioned some professional development that supported teachers with immigrant students but not necessarily the first generation. P8 described “[A brief] anti-bias anti-racism [professional development], so that was

the focus to make sure that we are more intentional in how we speak and the content that we include in our classes.”

No Perceived Value or Satisfaction or No Supports. Five of the 12 teachers found no value or satisfaction or had no support (Table 7). P5 found school-led supports and professional development non-applicable to their subject matter. P5’s response was limited to support for immigrant and first-generation students applying to college. P5 explained, “Our school has a college counselor, and we have some teachers who would help them with their college applications so that they would not be at a disadvantage.” P5 also discussed the support the school offers for college applications. P5 remarked, “I do think our school has an amazing team telling them what’s good, what do the colleges want to see. I do think our school is doing really well.” P9 also described support for the college application process but did not describe other valuable support for teachers. P9 shared, “We have a lot of support from our college counselor. I think that’s really helpful for a lot of students, both first generation. newcomer students.”

Some teachers indicated that their school provides almost no support for first-generation students. To begin the discussion, P10 “argued” that first-generation students currently receive no administrative assistance. Although P10 mentioned a current English language development program for immigrants, supports for teachers of the first generation was offered in the past and not so much currently. P10 replied, “We actually hired [staff] for EL to work with first-generation students or students with language barriers. That has not been the case since I’ve been a part of the organization; nothing dedicated to first-generation and newcomer students.” This teacher perceived the current state of support to be inadequate. P10 stated:

Our lowest performing students are almost consistently our English language students, and that's been a point of contention for me . . . I feel like we aren't taking the supports to help these students the way they academically need to be.

Even more definitively than P10, P4 remarked, "I'm going to say a flat no." P4 did mention a mentorship program to support teaching efforts in multicultural education (see Research Question 2) but did not interpret this information in the context of school-led supports.

Regarding administrative support for these students, P12 remarked, "Not specifically for the first generation/newcomer." P12 described a strategy regarding discipline-specific practices and those aligned with first-generation students. P12 stated, "I talk to their English teacher or in some cases the English development teacher about their language level and the ways to connect with the students." P12's support for first-generation students occurred mainly through informal interactions with other teachers, which led to little impact on support for these students but may have yielded mutual support among these teachers. For example, P12 stated, "Some teachers who are immigrants . . . are busy talking about the difficult students that bring the challenges in classroom management, so they didn't talk too much about the first-generation immigrant students but understand them."

Teachers' Level of Championing Professional Development: Value and Areas of Need.

Teachers were asked to recommend professional development to help them with first-generation and newcomer students. Participants provided some specific recommendations, but participants' perceptions or valence toward professional development were embedded in how they responded, although the types of support mentioned did not fall into discrete or meaningful categories. Nevertheless, their responses reflected interest in various strategies, enthusiasm, and interest levels in professional development. Three categories were developed: championing

professional development and strategies, identifying areas of need with mixed enthusiasm, and identifying needs/low enthusiasm or no interest. The data contributed to the subtheme: level of championing for professional development by perceiving its value and areas of need. All participants' data supported the subtheme, and most individuals' responses tended to fall into one category, but with all 12 represented.

Championing Professional Development and Strategies. Five of 12 teachers displayed interest consistent with championing professional development (Table 7). P1 exemplified a robust response that championed professional development for teacher strategies. P1 stated, “The best professional development . . . is to learn more techniques of how we can implement them in the classroom and to help better serve our students, for example, understanding the vocabulary in our content.” P2 also expressed enthusiasm and a need for support. P2 replied, “More refreshers on better ways to use technology to bridge the information gap, the language gap, like set some more formal training on ELD students and especially for first-generation newcomers, would be amazing.” P3 expressed a need consistent with other passionate responses throughout the interview concerning strategies to work with newcomer’s families. P3 suggested, “I would like to have better information on how to collaborate with the families . . . I need parents on board . . . when working with first-generation students.” P9 focused on the unmet needs in their school but indicated a strong interest in pursuing support. P9 stated, “We need PDs on language development . . . there isn’t a lot of support for teachers for the best way to scaffold language . . . [it] is really left to departments to decide if they want to do on their own.”

P9 expressed the benefits of professional development for teachers’ instruction of all students and did not believe that professional development should be specific to teaching immigrant students. P9 championed the need for strategies such as scaffolding. P9 also

encouraged more support. P9 stated, “there’s no top-down support for that at the moment. I can remember one training we had on language development in the last 6 years, maybe two programs.” P10 mentioned staff development to support teachers with first-generation immigrants and all English Learners. P10 stated, “I think [staff] having the training in some kind of professional development in terms of better ways to support would be helpful.” Although P10 perceived no staff development existed in this regard, they were detailed and thoughtful about constructing staff support across grade levels and student language development stages and stepping up checks on student progress. The response showed a deep interest by giving extensive detail on how this training could be configured. Responses from all these participants supported the category linked to championing and the subtheme concerning their level of championing professional development by perceiving its value and areas of need.

Identifying Areas of Need with Mixed Enthusiasm. Four participants of the 12 endorsed professional development training but expressed less enthusiasm than those who were champions. For example, P11 expressed mixed enthusiasm in responses about the value of professional development for teaching first-generation students. Initially, P11 remarked, “None. I don’t know if there’s necessarily a professional development that would help. I think, again, more of it is we really need more collaboration time with our teachers to share the struggles of these kids.” However, P11 reconsidered when expressing a need to understand these students using a multicultural context. P11 shared:

The PD, I guess, could maybe be geared towards teaching us how to be a little bit more sensitive to different cultures . . . I don’t think all teachers understand . . . if you don’t come from a first-generation immigrant family, it’s hard to understand why your family relies on you so much.

P11 alluded that professional development might not fill the gaps in understanding for teachers. P8 had some mixed enthusiasm for professional development. P8 discussed professional development for teachers in English language development classes but not necessarily with first-generation students. P8 appeared dissatisfied with the lack of opportunities for support, particularly with practical skills but said they would be open to it in the future. P8 recalled, “Before the pandemic, we were being offered more opportunities to do things in person. A lot of those trainings have gone via Zoom; We were talking about very practical skills, but these opportunities are fewer.” P8 suggested picking up where prior meetings had left off. P8 expressed, “I would love to go back to the resource that we had specifically for language in foreign languages.”

P6 discussed professional development targeted at non-native speakers. P6 suggested, “There could be a professional development targeted towards how to help non-native speakers integrate into difficult content, such as sciences.” P6 explicitly limited their interest to support that is subject-specific. P12 considered, “We have strong supports for the first-generation students, but not a strong system for EL students.” P12 had mixed or less enthusiasm for additional professional development supporting the instruction of first-generation students. This mixed response was in contrast to the other teachers' enthusiastic responses in the champion subtheme.

Identifying Needs/Low Enthusiasm or No Interest. Three participants had little to no enthusiasm for additional professional development in teaching first-generation and newcomer students (Table 7). For example, P4 stated, “We did receive from ensemble learning that was a two-year thing, and that was great, but not necessarily for structured professional development.” P4 described prior professional development as limited. P4 stated, “[The training consisted of]

monitoring and specific tailored feedback from the administration. No specific strategies for these students were used, and I don't see any that would help." P7 had no suggestions and replied, "None I'm not sure there is anything . . . There are professional developments on constructivism and using different approaches in the classroom. I don't think that I'm looking for one that will better serve my students." P5 indicated a lack of interest in professional development. P5 commented, "I'm not looking for professional development, but for some software that could help me support the new immigrant students, for example, a translation program." The subtheme was supported because these participants showed little interest in championing the cause of professional development for teaching first-generation students.

Summary

Chapter 4 contains the study's findings obtained through interviews with 12 Los Angeles County charter high school teachers. Three major themes, one corresponding to the three research questions, contribute to the three research questions. These themes were developed from subthemes gleaned from responses to each of the 10 interview questions. Theme 1 was teachers meeting the learners where they are to understand their challenges and barriers to learning. Theme 2 was purposefully, responsibly, resiliently, and collaboratively building learning strategies and reflecting a multicultural school climate. Theme 3 was teachers recognizing the benefits and needs to improve professional development: the champions and the discontented. The several categories align well with the participant responses, and the proportions of respondents in each supported the subthemes. For all three themes, many participants' responses contained relevant information that aligned well with the subthemes and supported each theme. All three themes reflected teachers' perceptions of successful and beneficial aspects and the constraining and problematic issues concerning first-generation immigrant students' education.

Chapter 5 discusses the implications of the findings given the literature and theoretical framework for the study. It also includes limitations, future recommendations, suggestions, practice, and conclusions.

Chapter 5: Conclusions, Implications & Recommendations

Over the last several decades, the proportion of children in the United States who are of immigrant families has been rising steadily (The Congressional Research Office, 2022; Migration Policy Institute, 2019). As the fraction of children from first-generation families has grown within the public school and charter school systems, teachers are facing unique challenges regarding the numbers of students with differing first languages and distinctive cultures, and help them integrate into the school system to begin learning (Barba et al., 2019; Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020). California continues to be one of the states that leads the nation in new immigrant student influx into the system. In particular, Los Angeles County schools are among the most diverse in the United States (California State Department of Education, 2021a; Zarate & Gándara, 2019). The study problem concerned the growing numbers of these students and how it compounds teacher challenges.

Current immigration trends present new challenges for teachers, such as the diversity and number of languages that might be taught in their classrooms (Barba et al., 2019; Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020). Teachers of high school students from first-generation immigrant households and relative newcomer/late-arrival students experience challenges meeting these students' social and academic needs (Barba et al., 2019; Flint et al., 2018; Trahey & Spada, 2020). These teachers' complex tasks and challenges include a lack of knowledge of cultural and social differences among students and communication with students with minimal English-speaking skills.

This study was set in the greater Los Angeles County, California, charter high school system. The student population of Los Angeles County high schools is one of the most diverse in the nation, with many students from immigrant households (California State Department of

Education, 2021a; Zarate & Gándara, 2019). In 2016, California led the nation with the most significant percentage of immigrant students and the second-largest immigrant population growth between 2000 and 2016 (California State Department of Education, 2019). Other states face fast-growing populations of these students, but California remains near the top of the list of states with a high percentage of total immigrants (Johnson et al., 2019). Across the state, California teachers are challenged by teaching immigrants, including many first-generation students, and the system contains a high percentage of English learners relative to the rest of the country (Zarate & Gándara, 2019).

This phenomenological study explored charter high school teachers' lived experiences concerning their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for first-generation/newcomer or late-arrival immigrant students, their descriptions of the strategies and practices used, and their perceptions of the support they receive. The challenges and strategies for these teachers are likely unique and specific, and while the literature has addressed some of these, the lived experiences of these teachers were not well-documented previously (Barba et al., 2019; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018; Potochnick, 2018). Interviews were conducted to collect charter high school teachers' descriptions of their experiences linked to the three research questions for the study:

- Research Question 1: How do teachers describe their lived experiences at charter high schools in Los Angeles County concerning their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for students from first-generation immigrant households?
- Research Question 2: How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County describe the practices and strategies for instructing students from first-generation

- immigrant households, including those from low-income families and those whose first language is not English?
- Research Question 3: How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County perceive the existing supports and those they might prefer but are not currently in place while teaching and engaging students from first-generation immigrant households?

As detailed in Chapter 4, three major themes emerged from the data. Each theme corresponds to a research question devised to meet the purpose as described above. This chapter discussed the implications of findings regarding each major theme/research question per the literature findings and interpreted using the study's theoretical framework, Bandura's (1977a) self-efficacy theory. The chapter then discusses recommendations for practice and future research based on the findings. Finally, the conclusions from the study are discussed.

Theme 1: Teachers Meeting the Learners Where They Are to Understand Their Challenges and Barriers to Learning

Theme 1 developed from participants' responses concerning the challenges and barriers teachers observed for first-generation immigrant students and the challenges created in teaching them; the results were consistent with findings in the literature. The student's language barrier was prominent among teacher responses as reflected by the subtheme language, learning, and culture. The literature shows that newcomers and late arrivals have steep achievement barriers due to English language issues (Burriss et al., 2019; Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Potochnick, 2018). In the current study, this issue was not necessarily the first barrier that all teachers observed and mentioned, but all considered it in responses to one or more other questions during the interview, and clearly, language was recognized as a foremost barrier to achievement.

Consistent with other research, teachers in this study found that language pervades numerous contexts for immigrant students and teachers' challenges, including parental involvement in students' education. In general, parental involvement has been shown to be vital in closing achievement gaps for immigrant students (Gonzalez et al., 2013; Obinna & Ohanian, 2018). For example, Hansen-Thomas et al. (2020) reported that first-generation children of immigrant households bridge the language and cultural gaps between families and communities. Thus, these students can face additional pressures outside of school and not have as much parental support as other students might. In response to barriers and teacher challenges in this study, participants stressed socioeconomic, language, and cultural issues linked to lack of parental support and family responsibilities outside of school as a barrier for their first-generation immigrant students. Much of their emphasis was on parental resources and socioeconomic standing. Similar to results found in other studies (Burriss et al., 2019; Evans et al., 2019), the participants in the current study mentioned that students whose parents were not English-speaking and often had fewer financial resources needed their students to play a more significant family support role at home, thus taking the students away from their academic focus.

In contrast to this current study and past studies, Anguiano (2017) described that students with significant family obligations outside school tend toward higher academic achievements and taking personal responsibility. However, as described by the teachers in this study, resources and socioeconomic status may be critical factors in how students prosper under the various pressures they face. Thus, academic success could depend on parental involvement and resources as a context for students' responsibilities outside of school. As reported by other researchers (Evans et al., 2019; Obinna & Ohanian, 2018), teachers in this study observed that students from lower socioeconomic status homes tended to lack parentally provided resources and experienced

difficulties achieving at school. In response to the linked question concerning teacher challenges, some participants revisited that working with students with poverty backgrounds was incredibly challenging, thus recognizing the student barrier and their challenges in providing resources.

Similarly, in response to the barriers and challenges, several participants in this study emphasized that students with parents with higher education levels and more significant financial resources tended to have better language skills and performed better in school than those who were disadvantaged. For example, these students from advantaged families sometimes had tutors and translation services. The implications are that teachers might have issues creating an equitable learning environment when working with some families with fewer resources. These results support that economic standing may be a decisive factor regardless of the student's challenges and obligations outside school.

Notably, when asked about school climate and first-generation students' cultural barriers, these teachers almost uniformly responded that their school has a supportive environment for these students, and few remarks were made about potential problems and the relationship between cultural barriers and school climate. However, they recognized the discrete barriers and challenges for issues such as language and some specifics for social assimilation in contexts of classroom learning and navigating the system, which intuitively is linked to lived experiences of cultures and their differences. Unexpectedly, when discussing school climate, almost no comments were made with direct bearing on student barriers, specific or in a broader context of culture. For example, many noted the learning barriers concerning socioeconomic status. However, in contrast, the literature is replete with evidence supporting that immigrant students, particularly those from lower socioeconomic status backgrounds, are more likely to encounter prejudices, stigmas, and stereotypes within the school community—from both non-immigrant

students and teachers (Bondy et al., 2016; Hernandez et al., 2021; Volante, 2016). Thus, research reflects that school climate often does not support a positive experience for these students.

Although some teacher responses in this study to other contextualized questions contradicted those concerning student barriers and school culture, the responses regarding school climate and student barriers almost entirely suggested that barriers linked to cultural-social differences were insignificant in their schools. Most emphasized a positive climate at their schools regarding cultural-social issues and described that the student body and school culture were such that no significant problems existed. For example, they described optimistic scenarios in which students supported each other and did not regard mandatory English usage and system navigation problems as relevant to climate and acclimation. These responses contrast with results from other studies suggesting that peers and teachers are known to bully immigrant students with language barriers and those who are uninformed about American culture (Murillo et al., 2023); some studies found that immigrant students who were bullied experienced poorer and negative academic outcomes (Karakus et al., 2023).

Several asserted that these students acculturated well because the school bodies in their schools were diverse. Another suggested that most first-generation immigrants entered their school as somewhat Westernized and did not find issues in the classrooms for these students with language as a barrier. Interestingly, as did some others, this teacher mentioned English language issues as their biggest challenge but did not discuss it as the most significant student barrier. The descriptions from teachers about students' language, culture, and academic barriers varied somewhat by question as the interviews proceeded, and many remarks contradicted the general positive sentiments about the cultural experiences they perceived for their first-generation immigrant students. For example, under Theme 2, some teacher strategies in response to

challenges and barriers aimed at improving comfort and engagement in the classroom, implying they acknowledge language and cultural-social barriers. Interestingly, these teachers recognized English language skills as a student barrier; however, their responses contradict the literature concerning language and culture as integral to each other (Jiménez-Castellanos & Garcia, 2017) and imply that they do not interpret language issues as part of a cultural barrier. As discussed below, these responses reigned concerning student barriers alone, even though they viewed language and social-cultural challenges as intertwined when *facing challenges of teaching these students*.

Navigating and adjusting to new social and school systems was a significant subtheme when elaborating on students' barriers. Furthermore, teachers mentioned parents and school staff as a part of these issues, and the responses were more complex than those regarding student barriers alone. As consistent with Evans et al. (2019), the findings reported in this study showed that teachers and parents faced problems communicating with teachers and administrators and interacting with registration and online learning systems. These results were comparable to Evans et al. (2019) and Obinna and Ohanian (2018), showing that a lack of English fluency hinders parents' involvement in their children's school. Again, the results of this study reflected that those students with home support differed from those without when successfully integrating socially, culturally, and into the school system. They recognize that language, cultural, and social issues are interrelated and potential impediments as they acclimate to their lives and the new school system. Some researchers have noted that newcomers must often acquire English quickly as well as become familiar with the beliefs, values, and customs of a new culture and the educational system. However, some also recognized that the need to learn English and navigate the system as needed early on and hampered by a long and steep learning curve to become

comfortable with English and these other factors, as did other researchers (Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). As discussed above, this study contributes to the idea that parents' socioeconomic background and family history are likely crucial to reducing barriers and easing the process of navigating the system.

Bondy et al. (2016) and Hernandez et al. (2021) described the alienation first-generation and newcomer students can experience; consistent with this finding, one teacher explicitly mentioned their stigmatization when needing additional support when learning English. Despite some descriptions of a welcoming school climate when teachers discussed student barriers, the social barriers appeared to depend on individuals' needs and backgrounds. Some teachers noted the progress of these students as they integrated into the student body socially and in the classroom and showed great sensitivity to students in some regards. Some teachers discussed responses to their teaching challenges to this question and linked throughout the interviews; as discussed under Themes 1 and 2, teachers' responses could depend on the subject matter taught and other school-level variables they experienced in their environment.

Notably, the teachers expressed frustration at not knowing the languages and the level of attainment of these students prior to entering the United States. The teachers in this study commented in detail on their frustrations and challenges as they attempted to gauge how much these students comprehend classroom teaching. Although not discussed as a barrier, these teachers discussed their teaching challenges with students' language difficulties as leading to disengagement. Thus, the teachers' inability to distinguish low achievement in the past and the students' current inability to comprehend could contribute to disengagement; if teachers cannot meet students where they are, improving engagement is more complicated. The interest these teachers showed in knowing the academic levels of their students and meeting their needs

indicated their goal of meeting them where they are. Participants' recognition of these issues was consistent with research, which suggested that language barriers leave students at higher risk for lower achievement and grades, with many who do not finish school (Barba et al., 2019; Potochnick, 2018). These frustrations and others linked to challenges can underlie a sense of loss of self-efficacy. Several participants expressed doubts and questioned their efforts toward meeting challenges and in response to other questions throughout the interview. In the context of self-efficacy theory, meeting challenges such as a lack of information about students' abilities and learning differences can be stressful for teachers, thus degrading their self-efficacy and leading to burnout (Gutentag et al., 2018; Potochnick, 2018; Woodcock & Jones, 2020).

As teachers elaborated on their challenges, the responses addressed more complex and diverse phenomena, including problems students exhibited on higher-order tasks in English usage and how teachers used language in the classroom. As discussed further, the content was often detailed concerning their perceptions of student deficits in using and learning English and how they attempted to meet these. Some consistency with challenges reported in the literature concerning student language, comprehension, and engagement was found. Thus, how the participants in this study described the challenges they faced were most often closely linked to language but contextualized with multiple intersecting challenges. For example, the teachers experienced difficulties knowing the students' language skills in their native language before arriving in class and their English skills. The result was borne out in several other research studies showing that teachers are concerned that they did not know students' skills before entering the United States and if they have poor English ability (Barba et al., 2019; Drake, 2017; Trahey & Spada, 2020). A few teachers relied mainly on English language assessments by their schools to help them assess these students in their classrooms, but most teachers did not seem

concerned only with having students who performed on standardized tests. These respondents mentioned the contexts of testing very little when describing these challenges, and many focused on understanding the students' current attainment and how to engage them.

The teachers' challenges with language and communication were often explicitly linked with student engagement. Some participants went into more detail about which specific language issues impacted their teaching and subject matter. For example, teachers had concerns over students' limited vocabularies and problems they faced when teaching using idiomatic English with meanings bound to cultural contexts. The teachers were concerned about how this apparent lack of English skills, fluency, and comprehension affected student engagement. Their concerns are backed up in the literature. Research shows that a lack of vocabulary and English skills has been linked to a lack of engagement. Their concerns were founded in the literature, which supports that students learning a new language later in their development lack *receptiveness* to learning new vocabulary and mastering pronunciation (Kalia et al., 2018; Trahey & Spada, 2020). Researchers support these teachers' concerns by showing that English learners' speaking and writing productivity rests on receiving considerable and understandable information in English (Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020). The teachers in this study considered their challenges thoughtfully and often described strategies in response here and elsewhere in the interview regarding strategies to recognize and meet the needs of these students and where they stand academically when entering the system. Theme 1 was also well-established in how the teachers elaborated on making students comfortable to induce engagement.

The participants suggested they are challenged to provide a classroom where students feel comfortable socially and culturally and that disengagement can stem from a lack of comfort. This can be inferred as they recognized a barrier for students, but the descriptions of challenges

did contrast with teacher comments about student barriers in that culture, which was not emphasized as a barrier. However, most teachers found it challenging when they noted that first-generation immigrant students were not socially, linguistically, and culturally comfortable and would not readily engage. For example, responses contained descriptions of students' non-participation and shyness about speaking in class. These students were characterized as reticent to engage during class overtly and tended not to reach out or accept individual help. Some teachers recognized that social norms, cultural differences, and language difficulties likely affect first-generation/newcomer behaviors in class; for example, some commented on the reluctance of students to participate in class. While most understood students' difficulties in talking and interacting with others and feeling comfortable in class, several did not consider cultural and social matters relevant to these students or other students or as part of engagement. These statements contrast teaching approaches to these students as discussed in the literature for multicultural education. These same teachers were among those who did not readily subscribe to or have positive thoughts on the usage of multicultural education and are discussed with these topics in Themes 1 and 2 in light of the self-efficacy theory.

In attempting to bridge the gap with engagement, one teacher became very frustrated with immigrant students not accepting their extraordinary efforts to give individual attention. Others noted the difficulties with providing individual extra attention but found some success using these strategies. However, one teacher accounted for some students' aversion to one-on-one attention as a cultural issue linked to authority and grading. Generally, teacher efficacy is associated with teachers' willingness to adapt and engage students where they are; thus, the lack of success with individualized engagement could be due to contextual issues with students. Although teacher autonomy in many contexts is correlated with higher self-efficacy, these

conditions support a loss of self-efficacy for teachers as they expend much energy and gain no traction, leading to diversity-related burnout (Gutentag et al., 2018; Tatar & Horenczyk, 2003) and potential inability to gain or the loss of self-efficacy (Gutentag et al., 2018; Potochnick, 2018; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Notably, findings have shown that teachers' practices can mediate their state of self-efficacy (Buzzai et al., 2022; Gutentag et al., 2018; Lauermaann & Berger, 2021), suggesting professional development aimed at practice to enhance self-efficacy with first-generation immigrant students (Fitchett et al., 2012; Szelei et al., 2020) and student engagement (Rizga, 2019; Villavicencio et al., 2021; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Engaged and autonomous students are more likely to become comfortable culturally and academically, thus improving student success and teacher effectiveness, maintaining or raising teacher self-efficacy, and avoiding burnout (Woodcock & Jones, 2020).

Most study participants recognized that building a comfortable, culturally accepting environment could help their students, but some candidly expressed that they did not know the best way to accomplish this aim. As discussed further under Theme 2, teachers have reported considering these specific strategies to meet the challenges of English learners and all immigrant students (Karakus et al., 2023). These issues are further discussed with strategies and self-efficacy theory under Themes 2 and 3.

Theme 2: Purposefully, Responsibly, Resiliently, and Collaboratively Building Learning Strategies and Reflecting a Multicultural School Climate

Participants respondents were asked to address their teaching practices and strategies, specifically regarding the challenges for teaching they addressed under Theme 1. The questioning extended to how a multicultural environment and the practices to address language

barriers, including the specific strategies for their content area and first-generation/newcomer students, whether they used collaborative methods, and further discussed student engagement. A need for parental support, how to express their positivity and enthusiasm, and how to adapt instruction. Little information is available about teachers' approaches, but some findings showed that teachers considered and integrated steps toward engaging parents, showing enthusiasm, and providing instruction adapted to students' needs (Karakus et al., 2023). Thus, this study has added to understanding specific strategies for immigrant students, particularly first-generation immigrants.

More than half of the teachers' first descriptions of strategies focused on single strategies and were concerned with using strategies that promoted social interaction and support: pairing students and purposeful seating configuration. Pairing students is flexible across learning styles and aids teachers in matching students with others who have skills to particularly help them and match the context to their learning styles (Gilakjani, 2012; Sampson et al., 2023). Teachers often mentioned this technique and group work across many interview questions, and these approaches support learning as described in social learning theories (e.g., Bandura, 1977b, 1986). These strategies could also be considered effective ways to maximize teacher efforts when operating with limited resources (Sampson et al., 2023).

As the discussion continued, most teachers who mentioned pairing initially explained that they combined this strategy with others that facilitated social interaction in class: small group work, class discussion, intentional seating charts, and check-ins or one-on-one time with students. Some described several tactics that they used in combination with a systematic approach. Most teachers described using all strategies with some forethought and mindfulness, which suggests they considered student engagement and instructional efficiency and

demonstrated a sense of self-efficacy. As discussed above, evidence supports that teachers who are flexible and adaptative with their practices tend to have a self-efficacious mindset (Tschannen-Moran & Johnson, 2011), and many of the participants demonstrated this quality when approaching challenges; they described their strategies to meet those challenges.

A critical strategic approach emerged across most participants: multiple and multi-modal learning strategies. Although these strategies have been used for more than two decades, the literature reflects a paucity of perspectives from teachers on how and why they use this approach (Choi & Yi, 2016). Consistent with the current study, Choi and Yi (2016) described that teachers of English learners often used visuals such as graphics, online pictorials, and videos to demonstrate subject matter concepts and learn language/vocabulary specific to their subject matter area. The current study adds value to the literature using the details given by some participants concerning how they incorporated speaking, writing, and visual presentation of material, sometimes in a systematic stepwise manner and various combinations. Moreover, specific challenges teachers discussed also illustrated their use of multi-modal techniques: some often and consciously chose their language in their teaching and used various visual, speaking, and writing components to their strategies to ensure first-generation immigrant students might have an improved understanding of classroom instruction.

These multiple strategies were often described as taking a layered or stepwise form that was mindfully planned. Similar reports of these strategies are given in the literature where teachers use various conceptualizing techniques in discussion after students read and re-read the text to capture complex concepts that exceed the students' reading vocabulary (Rouse, 2014). Participants' descriptions of multimodal methods included insights into how these strategies could engage English learners and all immigrant students. Using these techniques to engage the

students more deeply is consistent with other studies showing a positive association between multimodal learning and engagement (Salamanti et al., 2023; Sampson et al., 2023). More than half of the teachers used multiple/multi-modal techniques to enhance engagement, including pairing for peer support and reading and writing assignments that used stepwise or layered approaches to build skills using several modalities.

Among the teachers in this study, some tended to rely more on school expectations and school-led strategies than others. Some participants discussed school-supported initiatives and strategies as primary to their practice, while others relied on their personally chosen strategies almost entirely or had no expectations of school initiatives or programs as a part of their strategies and practices. The school-led strategies included formal ELD instruction, online learning programs, provision of translators, support for parents, and counselors for students. At least one teacher experienced having an inadequate ELD program to support the immigrant students while they attempted to teach them in subject matter courses. Alternatively, another used a school-led strategy in ELD to support personal strategy and explained that they tracked their students' progress in ELD courses and developed their personal strategy to bring students progressively through assignments that would help them learn subject matter as they developed reading, writing, and speaking skills in English. Thus, these teachers relied on the school as a foundation for their instruction.

In contrast, some participants relied much more on personal practices due to preference or necessity because they did not find a structure or foundation built on school expectations or to support their teaching strategy needs and preferences. For example, one participant's teaching context relied heavily on interacting with parents; this participant extended their use of school-mandated conferences to gain insight and information while establishing relationships and

instilling parental home practices that would support parents and students as aligned with the teachers' educational strategies, beyond the school conference's ostensible purposes. This teacher's stress and job demands were potentially lowered by committing to persisting outreach to parents soon after the students enrolled. Thus, the teacher used a personal strategy based on their persistence and resiliency in the face of a barrier or challenge. Resiliency is a characteristic and personal practice that deters burnout and supports teacher self-efficacy (Daniilidou et al., 2020). Research on the relationships between resiliency and teacher turnover (a consequence of burnout) was available at the time of this study; however, most of the extant literature did not include a qualitative investigation of teachers' experiences (Mullen et al., 2021). The results from the current study are noteworthy because 9 of the 12 participants described their resiliency behaviors as similar to the example above. Mullen et al. (2021) reviewed the literature on this topic and suggested that the links among resiliency, burnout, and self-efficacy might be strengthened with teacher professional development. Even some of the teachers who described the stresses and pressures and lack of surety about the success of their efforts also displayed behaviors consistent with resiliency and some level of self-efficacy when describing instructional practices. The study results suggest that such professional development could promote and strengthen resiliency by providing benchmarks and feedback that allow these teachers to maximize their full resiliency and self-efficacy and establish well-being and resistance to stress and burnout.

Moreover, teachers who do not perceive that they have a school-led structure and expectations underpinning their efforts could experience stress and be prone to lack self-efficacy. In contrast, those who operate well using their preferred strategies effectively and autonomously appear self-efficacious. Self-efficacy is a possible reason why, if given the option, some teachers

might rely more or less on personal strategies; although encouraging choices might cultivate self-efficacy, this possibility appears unexamined in the literature at the time of this study.

When asked about discipline-related strategy use, a few study participants mentioned collaboration for developing and executing teaching strategies, subject matter-contingent or otherwise. However, these examples suggested limited uses of collaboration. The teachers in this study offered few specific examples of discipline-related strategies they used with newcomer/first-generation or other immigrants; however, they did describe collaborative efforts they made to address teaching these students within their discipline and addressing other learning issues with other teachers and staff. Some of those who relied on school-led efforts for strategy did so through interaction with ELD teachers and tracking student progress. A notable example of departmental collaboration concerned teachers of English and literature who had worked toward an integrated curriculum that included ways to directly assess student comprehension and ability to include progressively complex concepts through each year of high school. Discipline-related strategies are found in the literature (Sampson et al., 2023). For example, for ELD teachers' collaborative efforts for immigrant students (Villavicencio et al., 2021), through professional development and learning communities, teachers could learn more about evidence-based practices that include collaboration. In a case study comparing successful and less successful schools, Villavicencio et al. (2021) showed that a school with more successful outcomes for teachers and immigrant English learners used collaboration in two ways: 1) co-designing interdisciplinary curricula and 2) investing in teacher learning and development to serve immigrant English language learners. Some teachers in the current study used the first method but did not suggest that this approach was pervasive in other departments. Crucially, as

discussed under Theme 3, these teachers had few or no opportunities to learn how to support their first-generation immigrant students better.

Participants were asked about collaboration as a part of their school-led or preferred strategies. Most responses showed that those who tended to rely on their preferred strategies in the classroom did so regardless of collaborative work that had specific aims. For example, these aims included working with others performing similar tasks or aligning content and curriculum for distinct but linked courses. In other words, the collaborations did not appear to be open exchanges of their chosen and honed strategies but rather engagement in more complex tasks such as aligning curricula and addendums to strategies for consistency with similar courses or department curricula. These responses yielded information on how they collaborated and the various contexts, most often linked to the specific needs of two teachers aligning their course content and including content for classes to enhance learning inter- and cross-disciplinarily. However, some teachers had very limited or no opportunities for collaboration, informally with other teachers or intra-departmentally. The teachers in this study offered a few examples of discipline-related strategies they used with newcomer/first-generation immigrants; however, they described collaborative efforts to teach these students within their discipline and address other learning issues with other teachers and staff. However, whether school-led programs or teacher-initiated, discipline-related strategies are found in the literature (Sampson et al., 2023), with most of the school-level efforts focused on collaboration for, for example, for ELD teachers' efforts with immigrant students (Villavicencio et al., 2021), suggesting a gap for more research and professional development on collaboration using discipline-specific content teaching. Evidence supports that collaboration benefits teachers in diverse schools (Rizga, 2019; Villavicencio et al., 2021; Woodcock & Jones, 2020), but overall, the teachers in this study experienced little of it.

As with participants' uses of teaching strategies, the responses regarding multicultural education and school climate paralleled those described as school-led efforts, and those participants took personal initiative to use them in the classroom and other contexts. These school initiatives included community events, after-school activities, and organized homeroom activities. Some participants endorsed the various events and school-led efforts as helpful and meeting the needs for integrating students from different cultures. Some school-led efforts included direct support for teachers, such as mentoring that supports learning how to support a multicultural climate and education; teaching strategies and curriculum were mentioned as part of the coaching. Approaches such as these are mentioned in the literature and are purported to yield results for students in the classroom and teachers' self-efficacy. However, some indicated they did not participate in these activities if they were not strictly required and did not voluntarily add more to the efforts, and yet a few others did not believe their school offered activities geared to creating a multicultural climate and education.

Some participants elaborated on their efforts and personally took responsibility for creating a multicultural environment for students and the community. For example, some took time to ensure that translators were available for parents when the school did not have them. Similar to these teachers' tendencies to use preferred strategies for teaching, the tendency to take on responsibility in the classroom, with or without school leadership support, again reflected autonomy. As mentioned throughout the study, autonomy is correlated with high self-efficacy and lower burnout (Buzzai et al., 2022). Traits such as enthusiasm and thoughtful or mindfully selected activities and teaching strategies correlate with a higher interest in multicultural education and multicultural awareness, specifically with higher self-efficacy in effective multicultural teaching (Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Several teachers in this study were self-

critical and reflective about their efforts to create a multicultural climate, particularly how they delivered multicultural education and instruction for immigrant students. These teachers also showed empathy and focused on ensuring students did not feel left out. Some of these reflections involved a perceived lack of knowledge about how to incorporate the best strategies and how to know if they are effective. Most of the described strategies were the same as those they described generally as personal teaching strategies throughout the interview. However, some included techniques beneficial to immigrant students, such as scaffolding based on incoming knowledge, multimodal learning, and stepwise processes intended to build skills as they improve language skills.

Some differences among teachers in their multicultural education strategies revealed teachers' attitudes toward diverse learners, including discussion differences in students' cultures and their own backgrounds, acknowledging their need to learn from diverse students, creating a positive and warm classroom, and acknowledging the levels of student learning without bias. These attitudes reflecting the consciousness of cultural issues and attempts to respect cultural diversity are essential to teachers' cultural competency and self-efficacy in the classroom (Woodcock & Jones, 2020). Although some teachers did mention activities that directly engaged students in their language and culture, as described above, some mentioned strategies consistent with evidence that addressing these students' needs should include actively recognizing and validating their language and cultures (Gutentag et al., 2018; Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2018; Rodriguez et al., 2020).

A few teachers in this study did not express enthusiasm and devote extra time to school efforts or their strategies toward multicultural climate and education—at least one participant voiced no endorsement for multicultural education and believed it was a wasted effort by the

school. This teacher acknowledged no need to overtly change their teaching practice and did not believe that school or individual teacher efforts were helping students. This teacher explained that it did not contribute to success for students from immigrant households in and out of the classroom. Gutentag et al. (2018) found that teacher attitudes toward multicultural education predicted their self-efficacy, but more critically, student success. Potentially, some disciplines require less emphasis on English language facility, and that issue appeared to influence this specific participant's attitude. However, the evidence across subject matter teaching suggests that teacher attitude and multicultural education strongly support immigrant student success. Little mention was made of collaboration regarding multicultural education, and this appears in contrast to best practice in the literature, where teacher collaboration in school with ELD teachers and with parents can help in bringing elements of all languages that students experience into their school and home lives (Blair & Haneda, 2020). Moreover, collaboration and working in teams are known to impact teachers' efforts at inclusivity of English language learners and provide a culturally comfortable environment in the classroom (Villavicencio et al., 2021). In this study, some teachers engaged in collaborative practices regarding multicultural education in school-level awareness programs and activities within their classes, but as discussed above, others did not endorse multicultural education and collaborative efforts for that purpose.

Theme 3: Teachers Recognizing the Benefits and Needs to Improve Professional Development: The Champions and the Discontented

Only three participants very robustly experienced or recognized the benefits of professional development, and two noted that it could benefit multicultural education if offered. Regardless of their perception of professional development, some teachers appeared fully willing to confront their lack of knowledge by participating in professional development for

multicultural education; recognition of the gaps in knowledge and the need for these approaches is essential to its implementation. Others who believed in multicultural approaches did not necessarily believe professional development on this topic would be helpful because they generally found professional development to be of limited value regardless of the topic. Interestingly, some mentioned that professional development concerning diversity and multicultural education welcomed these opportunities if they included collaboration as a component of multicultural educational strategy. These responses are significant because this is considered a hallmark of effective learning communities and multicultural educational environments (Blair & Haneda, 2020; Villavicencio et al., 2021).

Those teachers who found professional development of high benefit valued flexibility in what they could choose and the topics offered. However, most teachers found little benefit or had no and received minimal opportunities for professional development. Among those who felt it was less beneficial or unavailable, some mentioned a lack of practicality for what was offered. Also, the frequency of offering was insufficient for most, even among those who felt it benefited them.

Teachers were prompted to discuss the support their schools offer them regarding first-generation immigrant students. Most teachers did not have support offered by their schools to address first-generation immigrant students' needs in or out of the classroom. Their interpretation of these kinds of supports did not appear to translate to the concept that school-led efforts at multicultural climate and education are linked to school-wide support for these students' acclimation and, thus, support themselves as well among those who mentioned having support concerning leadership who supported their specific requests and were available for discussion. Less than half of the teachers found they had support for working with this student population

through school-led efforts or their department and their relationships with individual teachers. The majority had strong responses concerning the lack of available supports. Some mentioned a lack of support for language barriers, parental participation, and discipline-specific strategies for these students. Teachers who fell across both categories, having some appreciation for support or strong negative feelings about the lack of support, came from among those who described self-efficacy in using their personal teaching strategies as well as autonomy and willingness to seek collaborations on their own. These contrasts support the conclusion that many teachers in this study maintained some level of self-efficacy. The resilience described in other interview areas was displayed as they described a need for more support and potentially more professional development.

Even though most did not have a strong, positive experience with professional development, just under half were supportive; they found benefits and championed the idea of having professional development and the potential support it could provide for working with first-generation immigrant students. Among the champions and less enthusiastic but interested, most identified specific needs: support for working with students with poor vocabulary, refreshers on topics as professional learning moves forward, language development training offered more frequently, sensitivity training to different cultures, and more strategies for involving families. Those who saw limited value in professional development often described that the training should not be confined to topics related to diversity and first-generation students, while a few mentioned the need for support regarding this student population. Three participants saw no value and were not interested in professional development regarding first-generation immigrant education. Again, this contrasts with the literature supporting that

professional development, particularly collaboration, is especially useful for teachers of first-generation and immigrant students (Blair & Haneda, 2020; Villavicencio et al., 2021).

Conclusions

The findings supported several conclusions. These conclusions link directly to the charter high school teachers' responses about their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for first-generation/newcomer or late-arrival immigrant students, their descriptions of the strategies and practices used, and their perceptions of the support they receive.

Conclusion 1: Teachers Need More Training on Overcoming Barriers and Challenges to Teaching First-Generation Students

Teachers need more training on understanding the needs of and teaching strategies for first-generation immigrant students. Teachers in this study felt unprepared for these students because they knew little about their achievement level when entering school. Often, resources were limited when working with students with little facility with English. Theme one developed from participants' responses concerning the challenges and barriers teachers observed for first-generation immigrant students and the challenges created in teaching them; the results were consistent with findings in the literature. The students' language barrier was prominent among teacher responses as reflected by the subthemes language, learning, and culture; these issues created challenges for the teachers. The literature shows that newcomers and late arrivals have steep achievement barriers due to English language issues (Burriss et al., 2019; Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Potochnick, 2018). Although these teachers exhibited resiliency and self-reliance, many expressed frustrations with engaging students with limited language skills and mentioned they needed more support and training.

Consistent with other research, teachers in this study found that language pervades numerous contexts for immigrant students and teachers' challenges, including parental involvement in students' education. Parental involvement is vital in closing achievement gaps for immigrant students (Gonzalez et al., 2013; Obinna & Ohanian, 2018). For example, Hansen-Thomas et al. (2020) reported that first-generation children of immigrant households bridge the language and cultural gaps between families and communities. Thus, these students can sometimes face added pressures outside school without as much parental support as other students. In response to barriers and teacher challenges in this study, participants stressed socioeconomic, language, and cultural issues linked to lack of parental support and family responsibilities outside of school as a barrier for their first-generation immigrant students. Much of their emphasis was on parental resources and socioeconomic standing. Similar to results found in other studies (Burris et al., 2019; Evans et al., 2019), the participants in the current study mentioned that students whose parents were not English-speaking and often had fewer financial resources needed their students to play a more significant family support role at home, thus taking the students away from their academic focus. Educators need to be aware of how these barriers create teaching challenges, and they need strategies to address them. For example, teachers may need added support, such as translators and outreach initiatives, and involve parents in their students' education pathway.

Conclusion 2: Teachers Need Support in Using Teaching Strategies and Engaging First-generation Students

Teachers used multiple and multimodal teaching strategies to reach first-generation immigrant students and build a multicultural school climate. Teachers did this using their responsibility and commitment to teaching while exhibiting self-reliance in various teaching

strategies. However, the findings supported that while many recognized challenges using mindfully chosen strategies, they were often frustrated and needed more support. Some expressed frustration with the workloads they experienced and felt that left them little time to devote to newcomer students. Therefore, they needed more support and training to make them more efficient. Although they often appeared self-efficacious in using their teaching strategies, exhibiting autonomy, and sometimes willing to seek collaborations independently, they far less often found school-level support available and valuable. These strategies and traits were seen across emergent themes as they described a need for more support and potentially more professional development. These teachers in diverse charter high schools were hallmarked by taking personal responsibility regardless of the differences in perspectives on instructing and supporting their first-generation immigrant students. They expressed a need for additional training while also wanting to use their strengths.

Conclusion 3: Teachers Need More Time for Collaboration

Although some teachers described benefits from collaboration, most did not engage nor had an opportunity for collaboration. Most suggested they would benefit from collaboration regarding teaching first-generation immigrant students. Most of these teachers found professional development and learning communities insufficient, even if they were champions of professional development. Thus, the results suggested a need to implement more opportunities for training and development.

Some teachers found paths to collaboration that they forged, but most collaborated less than they would have liked. The literature supports collaboration in building multicultural environments and using consistent strategies to reach first-generation and newcomer students. Tschannen-Moran and McMaster's (2009) model for collaboration and developing teacher self-

efficacy includes providing information to increase knowledge, modeling behaviors and practices, introducing new approaches, and coaching to enhance learning and sustain practices. Most teachers in this study mentioned collaboration as valuable, but they had few, if any, opportunities for professional development.

Recommendations for Teachers

Several recommendations were made for teachers based on the findings in this study and the literature. Teachers are recommended to do the following:

- find ways to build their resiliency and self-efficacy
- intentionally create and create a positive environment that welcomes all students and values their language and culture
- show empathy toward students, particularly newcomer students adjusting to the school system
- embrace multicultural learning by recognizing the various cultures in their classrooms
- select texts and materials coordinated with the planned curriculum to help newcomers connect with the concepts in class
- find other teachers with whom they can form professional learning communities and collaborate
- continue to gauge each student's understanding of the class materials and concepts
- use universal design for learning (UDL) for instruction that allows students to have different ways to show mastery
- use multiple and multimodal learning strategies

The recommendations were based on findings from the study that included the following. Most teachers in this study showed resilience and self-efficacy. Other research showed that teachers

who do not have resilience and high self-efficacy might succumb to burnout and leave the profession. Thus, encouraging them to build these traits can support effective instruction and reduce turnover. Most of the teachers in this study took responsibility for classroom strategies; some explicitly attempted to create a positive and inclusive learning environment for all students. They knew their students and provided opportunities for them to get to know each other. Some teachers in this study were incredibly empathetic toward the students, especially first-generation immigrant students learning English and navigating the system. Not all teachers brought into the need for a multicultural learning environment or recognize various cultures and backgrounds in the classroom. Collaboration strengthened their subject matter teaching in some cases and better supported first-generation students. Some took care to select text and materials and plan the curriculum to better connect the students with the classroom concepts.

Experiences of the participants in this study: some specifically assessed their first-generation students' English language proficiency levels. Most of these teachers attempted to meet the students at their level of understanding. Some used UDL to provide instruction, allowing students different ways to show achievement. Some of the participants in the study mentioned that they used multiple and multimodal learning strategies and that these were effective for first-generation and newcomers.

Recommendations for Administrators and Site Leaders

Several recommendations are made for administrators and site leaders when supporting teachers, first-generation/newcomer students, and parents. An overall recommendation is that leaders should use systems thinking to support teachers and students. More specific recommendations are:

- communicate with the families and create opportunities for parents to participate in their child's education
- make professional development relevant to the UDL framework for learning for teachers
- provide dedicated time for collaboration by creating space for teacher collaboration
- use fiscal resources to offer interventions for first-generation and newcomer students
- survey teachers about the topics and areas they see the greatest need of development
- provide for understanding student language development and sensitivity training for different cultures
- develop and share a clear vision for a multicultural climate and educational environment, inviting all students regardless of background
- allocate resources to develop a mentorship program for teacher
- hire staff that could serve as translators

Some study participants actively reached out to parents of first-generation students, but more effort was needed. Some particular barriers for parents were noted, and support from the administration could help ensure parents' involvement. Some participants in this study experienced limited or no opportunity for collaboration, informally with each other and inter-departmentally. Administrators can play a pivotal role in promoting collaboration. A few teachers in this study gave little attention to diversity and multicultural teaching; administrators can promote strategies to embrace a diverse community and inclusiveness. Additional training for multicultural strategies, cultural sensitivity training, and classroom inclusiveness could be valuable. Participants in this study expressed a need to know more and better understand language development for newcomers; thus, administrators could offer training in these areas to support teachers.

Teacher survey data about the topics and areas of greatest need could be gathered and used for the development and engagement of teachers in various trainings and opportunities. The sessions could promote and strengthen their resiliency and self-efficacy using the teachers' selected growth areas. Collaborating and sharing ideas and receiving feedback could also contribute to their resiliency and self-efficacy while further supporting first-generation immigrant students. These activities could also help administrators share their vision for a school's climate. This vision should include transparency regarding how resources can be used to support teachers' efforts.

Recommendations for Policy and Practice

Based on the findings from this study, four recommendations were made:

- Give teachers a forum to discuss their needs concerning teaching first-generation immigrant students.
- Provide teachers and staff with dedicated time to address newcomers' needs.
- Provide teachers with specific strategies and supports for teaching newcomer students.
- Based on teachers' stated needs, develop professional development to help with strategies and promote collaboration.

Some aspects of these recommendations resemble those detailed above for teachers and administrators. Under the category of recommendations for policy and practice, the first recommendation is linked to the fourth one. Teachers in this study had few whole-hearted responses concerning professional development, and administrators should consider the faculty's stated needs and interests before beginning a new professional development offering. These sessions could also include topics regarding strategies and collaboration.

Most teachers in this study used multiple strategies in ways that provide multimodal learning. However, some teachers were also interested in enhancing their strategies for their subject matter and their first-generation and other immigrant English learners. Notably, one teacher explicitly mentioned using UDL, which was developed to support the needs of all students, including culturally and linguistically diverse learners (Chita-Tegmark et al., 2012), and reduce student barriers while providing students with opportunities for choices in how they learn (Ok et al., 2017). Teachers' tendencies to promote student autonomy are positively associated with self-efficacy (Buzzai et al., 2022). Thus, professional development focused on building teacher self-efficacy could be vital in implementing UDL for teaching first-generation immigrant students.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study involves teachers in charter schools located in Los Angeles County. Los Angeles County has one of the most diverse school systems in the country. Thus, future studies could include,

- Teachers' perspectives in charter schools and other large counties such as Orange, Riverside, and San Diego. The composition of students and teachers in these other counties and districts could yield added insights into the perspectives of teachers with less diverse student groups, and these settings may contribute to their experiences differently than those less diverse populations.
- Future research could also include the perspective of administrators and high school site leaders concerning the barriers teachers face when instructing first-generation immigrant students.

- Self-efficacy was central to the current study, and exploring these core issues in other settings and how self-efficacy and resiliency transform into collective and collaborative attitudes across settings will be of interest also.

The teachers in this study mentioned a few discipline-specific strategies for first-generation and other immigrant students that revolve around teacher collaboration. Additional studies at different sites could further illuminate teachers' strategies across distinctive student populations.

A gap in the literature appears in understanding how self-efficacy and resilience are displayed relative to the collaborative sharing of chosen strategies and how these traits are linked to a school-wide collective form of commitment and collaboration. Thus, it would be interesting to understand how self-efficacy and collaboration might vary across school sites in different locations and how collective commitment develops.

Summary of the Study

This phenomenological study addressed charter high school teachers' challenges when teaching first-generation immigrant/newcomer and late-arrival students. The purpose was to obtain teachers of Los Angeles County descriptions of their lived experiences concerning these challenges and perspectives on the students' barriers, the strategies and practices used, and their perceptions of the support they receive. The teachers' descriptions of their strategies included those used with students from low-income families and whose first language is not English. In addition, teachers were asked to discuss existing supports and those they might have preferred but are not currently in place, including professional development. The research questions were aligned with these facets of the purpose and problem.

This study's theoretical framework was Bandura's self-efficacy theory. The literature review supported that teachers' self-efficacy is essential to effective teaching that promotes student achievement and quality professional experiences for teachers; moreover, evidence supports that the theory of self-efficacy is pertinent for understanding teachers' experiences with diverse students. Teachers are stressed, and their self-efficacy is degraded when they are overwhelmed by classroom diversity and newcomer students, including cultural, racial-ethnic, linguistic, educational attainment issues, and socioeconomic differences. The stress from these factors degrades self-efficacy and leads to teacher burnout. Thus, this theory was consistent with the study's aims.

The significance of the study concerned the need for teachers to cope with the growing number of immigrant students nationwide, specifically in California. Obtaining teacher perspectives is crucial for improving teacher retention, student achievement, and graduation rates. At the time of the study, information regarding the purpose of this study was sparse. However, the available evidence and gaps in the literature did support the purpose and research questions; thus, the study contributed to the literature on this topic.

This study's methods, procedures, and data collection were consistent with the qualitative phenomenological design. The findings from 12 teacher interviews revealed three themes: teachers meeting the learners where they are to understand their challenges and barriers to learning; purposefully, responsibly, resiliently, and collaboratively building learning strategies and reflecting a multicultural school climate; purposefully, responsibly, resiliently, and collaboratively building learning strategies and reflecting a multicultural school climate; teachers recognizing the benefits and needs to improve professional development: the champions and the discontented. A majority of teacher responses supported these themes, with some varying and

dissenting responses for each. Recommendations were made for teachers, administrators, policy and practice, and future research. These recommendations were linked to the findings of the study and the literature.

Several conclusions were developed from the results:

- Conclusion 1: Teachers Need More Training on Overcoming Barriers and Challenges to Teaching First-Generation Students
- Conclusion 2: Teachers Need Support in Using Teaching Strategies and Engaging First-generation Students
- Conclusion 3: Teachers Need More Time for Collaboration

The findings and the literature review supported new knowledge concerning teaching first-generation newcomers in charter high schools: teachers' perceptions of students' barriers, teaching practices and strategies, and teaching supports. Although self-efficacy was not directly measured in this study, teachers demonstrated resiliency and self-reliance indicative of self-efficacy. They have coping mechanisms for the challenges of teaching diverse students, even when some are first-generation, with little English skills. The primary issue is that they need more support and resources to continue to deliver their best to these students. This study outlines some ways to support teachers, and more research should be done to determine when and how these recommendations can be used.

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APPENDIX A

Permission to Recruit Letter of Intent to Principal

Dear [Name]

My name is Daniel Loh, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Graduate School of Education & Psychology at Pepperdine University. I am researching charter high school teachers' views of challenges and barriers for first-generation and newcomer immigrant students. The teachers will describe their strategies and practices. They will also describe teacher support when instructing these students. I ask permission and assistance to contact teachers at your school and invite them to participate. As a principal, you will not participate or be responsible for any part of the study. I will include 10 teachers from several schools.

First, I need your permission to proceed. Please return an email to me with the following sentence, "I give my permission to recruit teachers, and I will send a blind copy email to teachers with your recruitment letter attached." Please use your official school email to reply using your full name and title. Second, I will provide text for you to send to teachers using a blind copy email. Third, I ask you not to discuss the study with teachers. Interested teachers will contact me directly by email; you will not know who participates. Teacher interviews will occur outside of work hours at the teachers' convenience online using Zoom. The interview will take about 35 to 40 minutes. Teachers and school names will not be in the study. As the researcher, only I have access to this information. All data will be stored on a password-protected computer. Please contact me with any questions at Daniel.Loh@pepperdine.edu.

Thank you for your consideration,

Daniel Loh
Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

APPENDIX B

Participant Recruitment Letter of Intent

Dear [Name]

My name is Daniel Loh, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Graduate School of Education & Psychology at Pepperdine University. I am conducting a research study on charter high school teachers' experiences, challenges, and views of first-generation and newcomer immigrant students. I am also interested in strategies and practices you use. I will ask about the support you receive when teaching these students. I will include 10 teachers.

I need your help! If you agree, you are invited to participate. First, I will ask you to accept online informed consent. After consenting, you will answer six brief demographic questions for 20 minutes. I will then meet with you alone in an online interview with 10 questions. It will last for 35 to 40 minutes. If you permit, the interview will be audio-recorded. You can review your data for about 20 minutes. You choose the time and place for all activities.

Your participation is voluntary. Your identity will be protected all through the study. Please do not inform your administrator or other teachers about the study. This ensures your privacy and confidentiality. I will protect your data during the study. I will remove the school name and personal information from documents. I will use false names and gender-neutral pronouns in the paper. All data will be stored in a password-protected computer. Hard copies will be filed in a cabinet that only I can access. I will destroy all data after completing the study.

For questions or to participate, contact me at Daniel.Loh@pepperdine.edu.

Thank you for your consideration,

Daniel Loh
Pepperdine University
Graduate School of Education and Psychology
Doctoral Candidate

APPENDIX C

Informed Consent

My name is , and I am a doctoral student in the Graduate School of Education & Psychology at Pepperdine University. My research is about charter high school teachers' experiences with first-generation, newcomer immigrant students. I will also study strategies and practices for teaching and the support teachers receive. The title of my study is: "Teaching First-Generation and Newcomer Immigrants in Charter High Schools." There will be about 10 teachers in the study.

Authorized Personnel:

Principal Investigator:

What is the reason for doing this research study? Researchers and educators know little about the high school teachers' views of working with first-generation immigrant newcomer students with interrupted education. The aims are to obtain teachers' outlooks on student barriers, teacher challenges, and practices and strategies for these students. Also, an aim is to describe existing teacher supports and preferences when teaching these students in charter schools.

You are invited to take part in this research study. The information in this form is meant to help you decide whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please ask.

Why are you being asked to be in this research study?

You are asked to join this study because the researcher found your charter high school listed in Los Angeles County.

You are asked to join because your school may have newcomer, and first-generation immigrant students enrolled.

You are invited because your principal gave permission to recruit in the school. The principal has no knowledge of who volunteered.

Why you might choose to participate in this study:

You might choose to share your thoughts on teaching first-generation immigrant and newcomer charter high school students in the U.S.

You may wish to share your teaching practices.

You might choose to share how teachers are supported.

You may choose to join the study if you are aged 18 to 65.

You may choose to participate if you currently teach in a charter high school in Los Angeles County.

You may choose to join the study if you have at least 3 years of teaching experience at a charter school.

You may choose to be in the study if you have a secondary teaching credential obtained after teaching for 2 years.

You may choose to take part in the study if you have at least one current newcomer or first-generation immigrant student in the classroom.

You may choose to participate if you have experience teaching within the past 1 to 5 years with immigrant newcomers or first-generation students who are low-income, or students/families whose first language is not English. Every participant need not choose to participate based on experience with students in these categories:

You may choose to participate if you can access the Internet and the Zoom platform.

You may wish to participate in an online interview.

You may choose to join if you are fluent in English.

Why you might not choose to participate in this study:

You might decide not to share thoughts on teaching first-generation immigrant and newcomer charter high school students in the U.S.

You may choose not to share your teaching practices.

You might choose not to share how teachers are supported.

You may choose not to join the study if you are not aged 18 to 65.

You may choose not to participate if you do not currently teach in a charter high school in Los Angeles County.

You may choose not to join the study if you do not have at least 3 years of teaching experience at a charter school.

You may choose not to be in the study if you do not have a secondary teaching credential obtained after teaching for 2 years.

You may choose not to take part in the study if you do not have at least one current newcomer or first-generation immigrant student in the classroom.

You may choose not to participate if you do not have experience teaching within the past 1 to 5 years with immigrant newcomers, first-generation low-income students, or students/families whose first language is not English.

You may choose not to participate if you cannot access the Internet and the Zoom platform.

You may choose not to participate in an online interview.

You may choose not to join the study if you are not fluent in English.

If you agree to participate, the project will involve:

Men and women ages 18 to 65

One online visit and one survey will be completed online.

The visit will take 35 to 40 minutes, and the survey will take 20 minutes

The total time commitment is 55 to 75 minutes.

There are some risks associated with this study. You will receive a copy of this consent form.

Procedures will include:

1. Give informed consent using a link to an online platform.
2. Answer six demographic questions using a link to the short survey online.
3. Schedule and participate in an online interview for about 35 to 40 minutes using the Zoom platform.
4. The interview consists of 10 questions about teaching first-generation/newcomer students and support for teachers with students from this population.
5. You will be asked to have the interview audio recorded, but this is optional.
6. The total time commitment will be 55 to 75 minutes.

What will be done during this research study?

You have received a blind copy email from your principal, who gave permission for teaching staff to participate. The blind email from your principal asked you to respond to the researcher using email. Please do not discuss the study with the principal or other teachers. If you choose to participate, you will follow these steps:

1. The researcher will send a link to an online platform to give your informed consent to participate. The researcher estimates you will need about 5 minutes to respond by email, receive the online link, and provide consent online.
2. The online platform also contains six demographic questions, and you are asked to respond to these. These questions concern information such as your age and racial/ethnic self-identification. The questions will take about 10 minutes.
3. You will be asked to schedule and engage in an interview one-on-one with the researcher using the online video platform, Zoom. You will be asked 10 questions about your experiences with first-generation/newcomer students. The interview will be audio-recorded with your permission. We will hold the interview at a mutually convenient time outside your work hours; the interview will last about 35 to 40 minutes. The time of the interview will be outside your work hours, and you can choose your location/setting for your participation.
4. The interviewer will take notes during the interview. With your permission, you can opt to have your interview audio recorded to facilitate the accuracy of the interview.
5. After completing the interview, you might be asked to review your transcript to ensure accuracy; this is optional. If you agree, the review time is estimated at 20 minutes.
6. The total time commitment will be 55 to 75 minutes.

How will my data be used?

Your name and personal information will not be linked to any data. This includes the audio recording, interviewer notes, and transcripts. While collecting data, no one else will see your responses except the interviewer. The demographic data will be aggregated so that no participant is identifiable. False names will be used after the interview and used in the study. Again, no one else can access your information except the interviewer, Pepperdine IRB, and the dissertation supervisor.

When the researcher completes the dissertation, an online publishing service will publish the study. The public will then have access to the study.

What are the possible risks of being in this research study?

1. The study presents some risk of losing confidentiality with your employer and other teachers. Your principal will not know of your participation because you will respond only with the researcher. Please do not discuss the study with the principal and other teachers. The principal will send out a recruitment letter but will not know who opted to participate. The principals will be aware of their limited role.
2. There is a small risk that others might recognize your responses. Your name and school names will not appear in the study. You will receive a copy of the study.
3. Some questions may feel uncomfortable. You can skip any question you want. You can stop the interview at any time. You can withdraw from the study. Your responses will not be evaluated.
4. You may have some discomfort about privacy and confidentiality during the interview. Your privacy and confidentiality will be protected. You will have a choice of where and when to have the interview. The interview will be online. You will receive your own password to Zoom. No one else can login to the interview. No one will be present on Zoom except the interviewer and participant.
5. You may choose not to have your interview audio recorded. No video recording will be done. Only the researcher will have access to your data. The data will be protected on the researcher's password-protected computer. No one except the researcher will see your emails. The data will be destroyed after the study is completed.

What are the possible benefits to you? You are not expected to get any benefit from being in this study. However, you might benefit indirectly from the knowledge gained in the study. The results will be made available to you. However, you may not get any benefit from being in this research study.

What are the potential benefits to others? This study could benefit teachers, researchers, and the public. New information could be learned about teaching newcomers and first-generation immigrants in high school.

What are the costs to you?

There is no cost to you for being a participant in this research study.

Will you be compensated for being in this research study?

You will receive no compensation for joining the study.

What should you do if you have a problem during this research study?

Your welfare is a major concern for the researcher. If you have a problem as a direct result of being in this study, you should immediately contact the researcher listed at the top of the form.

How will information about you be protected? Reasonable steps will be taken to protect your privacy and the confidentiality of your study data. Your name, school, and location will not be included in the study. False, non-gender-specific names will be given to participants. The data will be kept on a password-protected computer. The files will be encrypted. Only the researcher will have access to the data stored in this way.

The information will be destroyed after 5 years after completion.

You may ask any questions about this research and have answers before agreeing to participate in or during the study.

Hard copies will be in a locked cabinet in the researchers' office.

What are your rights as a research subject? You may ask any questions about this research and have answers before agreeing to participate in or during the study.

For study-related questions, please contact the investigator(s) listed at the beginning of this form.

For questions concerning your rights or complaints about the research, contact the Pepperdine University Institutional Review Board (IRB):

- Phone: (310)568-2305
- Email: gpsirb@pepperdine.edu

What will happen if you decide not to be in this research study or decide to stop participating once you start?

You can decide not to be in this research study, or you can stop being in this research study (“withdraw”) at any time before, during, or after the research begins for any reason. Deciding not to be in this research study or deciding to withdraw will not affect your relationship with the investigator or with Pepperdine University.

You will not lose any benefits to which you are entitled.

Audio recording

Please indicate if you will permit the researcher to audio record the interview. Choose yes to the prompt if you will allow audio recording. Choose no when prompted if you do not want it recorded.

Documentation of informed consent

You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to be in this research study. Signing this form means that (1) you have read and understood this consent form, (2) you have had the consent form explained to you, (3) you have had your questions answered and (4) you have decided to be in the research study. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

APPENDIX D

Interview Protocol With Corresponding Literature

Research Questions	Interview Questions	Literature Sources
1. How do teachers describe their lived experiences of charter high schools in Los Angeles County concerning their teaching challenges and perspectives on the barriers for students from first-generation immigrant households?	<p>What challenges and barriers do you perceive your first-generation newcomer students face when entering the school system?</p> <p>What have been your experiences with language and other cultural barriers with these students?</p> <p>How do you perceive the students' barriers and challenges you mentioned have created challenges for teaching these students?</p>	Barba et al., 2019; Burris et al., 2019; Drake, 2017; Flint et al., 2018; Haim, 2020; Hansen-Thomas et al., 2020; Potochnick, 2018; Sibley & Brabeck, 2017
2. How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County describe the practices and strategies for instructing students from first-generation immigrant households, including those from low-income families and those whose first language is not English?	<p>How do you use teaching practices and strategies to address the challenges you mentioned for teaching first-generation/newcomer students?</p> <p>How you and the school support a multicultural learning environment?</p> <p>How do you and your school expect to address language skills and barriers for these students?</p> <p>What specific strategies and practices related to the content area you teach? For example, have you experienced collaboration with other teachers at your school to support you and the students?</p>	Barba et al., 2019; Cárdenas-Hagan, 2018 ; Blair & Haneda, 2020; Buzzai et al., 2022; Dávila & Linares, 2020; Gutentag et al., 2018; Poulou et al., 2018; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009; Woodcock & Jones, 2020
3. How do teachers at charter high schools in Los Angeles County perceive the existing supports and those they might prefer but are not currently in place while teaching and engaging students from first-generation immigrant households?	<p>What have been your experiences of professional development offered to you?</p> <p>Are there support efforts specifically for teachers in your school to help you address the needs of first-generation immigrant/newcomer students?</p> <p>What professional development that you do not have now that could help you better serve these students? Why?</p>	Barba et al., 2019; Dávila & Linares, 2020; Forghani-Arani et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2020; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009; Villavicencio et al., 2021

Demographic Questions:

1. Please indicate your race as White, not Hispanic, Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander, or none of these.
2. Please indicate your age group: 18 to 25 years, 26 to 35, 36 to 45, 46 to 55, 55 to 65, or over 65.
3. Please indicate your years of service as a teacher:
4. Please indicate your years of service at your current school:
5. Are you fluent in English? Yes or no
6. Do you speak a second language?
7. Approximately what proportion or about how many of your total students have been first-generation immigrants at your current school? Please consider these students whose parents were not born in the United States.