STUDENTS' AND TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE
TEACHING: A CASE STUDY OF AN URBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Dissertation Prepared for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

December 2002

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Curtin, Ellen Mary, <u>Students' and teachers' perceptions of culturally responsive teaching:</u>

<u>A case study of an urban middle school</u>, Doctor of Philosophy (Curriculum &

Instruction), December 2002, 297 pp., 7 tables, references, 229 titles.

This was a qualitative study that used the procedures of case study design while

incorporating ethnographic techniques of interviewing and non-participant observation in

classrooms with six selected students, six teachers, and eight interviews of selected

administrators and staff members in one middle school in a large Texas urban school

district. The purpose of this study was to understand the educational experiences and

perceptions of selected immigrant students and their mainstream teachers. Following the

method of case study design, the educational experiences of English Language Learner

(ELL) students were examined in the naturally occurring context of the school and the

classroom. Because the goal of case studies is to understand a given phenomenon from

the perceptions of the participants (referred to as "emic" perspective) all participants were

interviewed in-depth in order to understand their unique perceptions. The study took

place during a five-month period in the spring of 2002. Data were analyzed concurrently

during data collection and were framed by Geneva Gay's (2000) characteristics of

culturally responsive teaching.

The findings and interpretation of data are divided into three parts that encompass

the results of the five research questions that guided this study. Part one presents the

teachers' perceptions and addresses the themes that arose from research questions one

and two: what are teachers' perceptions of the academic problems facing (ELL) students

as they enter the mainstream classroom? What instructional practices do regular teachers use to meet the academic needs of students? Part two presents the students' perceptions and addresses the findings from research questions three and four: what are (ELL) students' perceptions of the academic challenges facing them in the mainstream classroom? What are the ELL students' perceptions of the instructional practices used by mainstream teachers to meet their academic needs? Part three addresses the fifth research question that guided this study: What administrative policies and procedures are in place in the school and district to meet the educational needs of ELL students?

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

       Background of the Study
       Need for the Study
       Statement of the Problem
       Research Questions
       Methodology
       Significance of the Study
       Definition of Terms
       Scope and Delimitations of the Study
       Outline of the Remainder of Dissertation

       Historical Analysis of the Education Provisions for Immigrant Students
         in the United States from the Nineteenth to Twenty-First century
       Use of Culturally Responsive Teaching as an Instructional Strategy for
         English Language Learner (ELL students)
       Evolution of Middle Schools
       Use of Culturally Responsive Teaching as an Instructional Strategy
         for ELL Students
       Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students' Perspective of their own
         Educational Experiences
       Conclusion

       Introduction
       Research Questions
       Research Design
       Researcher Identity
       Site Selection and description of setting

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

In her little bag she carried
All her past and history
And her dreams for the future
In the land of liberty
And courage is the passport
When your old world disappears
'cos there's no future in the past
when you're only fifteen years
(Brenda Graham, Acorn Music Limited, 2001)

INTRODUCTION

Annie Moore was the first documented immigrant to pass through the newly-opened Ellis Island on January 1, 1892. Annie was fifteen years old when she arrived in America, and she was alone. Annie left her homeland during the period following the Irish Famine of 1845 when more than one million Irish people died of starvation. Ireland held no future for an adventurous and bright young teenager like Annie. Before Annie left Ireland, her family celebrated her departure with an "Irish Wake" because they knew they would never see her again. Immigration in the late 1800s and early 1900s was one of upheaval, heartbreak, and survival, with no opportunity of returning to one's native land (APN Media, LLC, 2001).

But Annie was not the first immigrant to arrive on America's shores. Immigration began in America with the introduction of the European culture in the 1490s. Since the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus, America today still remains still a haven for immigrants fleeing religious, cultural, political, and economic hardships in their native land. The 1990 national census reported that the U. S. has more than 20 million foreign-born residents, the largest number of immigrants in the nations

1

history. One-third of the U. S. population growth in the last decade is a result of immigration. Three-fourths of all immigrants in the last decade live in California, New York, Florida, Texas, Illinois, and New Jersey. These numbers, however, do not take into account the additional numbers of illegal and undocumented immigrants living in the U.S. (Perkins, 2000).

Today's immigrant children are vastly different from those at the beginning of the twentieth century. They are largely students of color. Students' parents tend to be younger than the native-born population and consequently have more children of school age. The 1965 amendment to the Immigration and Nationality Act has resulted in more than 85% of all immigrants today coming from Asia and Latin America (Perkins, 2000).

Unlike Annie Moore, today's immigrants no longer pass through Ellis Island, nor do they endure many weeks of quarantine, examination and questioning. Legal immigrants today undergo screening and medical examination in their home country before they embark on the arduous journey to America. Immigrants today often arrive on planes, and many are skilled and degreed. Immigrants today come with prior knowledge of American culture and society because of the advancement of technology and telecommunications.

Even though immigration from one's homeland seems more sophisticated and easier today, the emotional upheaval and ensuing psychological stress of coming to a new country is still as prevalent as it was 100 years ago (Igoa, 1988; 1995; National Research Council, 1996). Numerous studies in the last decade still report the alienation and marginalization experienced by immigrant children attending U. S. schools (Olsen, 1997;

Trueba, Cheng, & Ima, 1993).

Even though the demographic profile of the average immigrant has changed from the late 1800s, the education of immigrant children still remains as contentious an issue as in the early 1900s. Public schools have been the battleground of this debate from the birth of the Republic to the present day. Educational literature over the past 160 years reflects this profound disagreement about how best to educate children while building one unified nation from a multitude of cultures, languages, religions, and philosophies (Cushner, McClelland, & Safford, 1992).

The teachers of America meet the daily challenge of addressing the culturally diverse needs of both, immigrant and native students. Numerous researchers have demonstrated understanding the background and culture of immigrant children; this is essential for teachers to provide a more successful educational experience for these students (Banks, 2001; Gay, 2000; Olsen, 1997; Sleeter & Grant, 1991, 2000). Sadly, other scholars have also revealed many teachers are not equipped to work with the various cultures and ethnicities of the new immigrant students (Trueba, Cheng, & Ima, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1994).

When Annie Moore immigrated to America in 1892, she never received a formal education, but history records she "went on to become a true American, later marrying, moving west, and bearing first-generation American citizens" (APN Media, LLC, 2001, p. 1). The United States has evolved in the past 100 years to accommodate the educational needs of immigrants. Even so, the education of immigrant students still remains a widely debated and divisive issue. A hundred years ago, Annie Moore was

forced to leave her native language behind, assimilate to the American ways, and learn English. Today, immigrants must assimilate quickly in U. S. schools if they are to succeed academically. But there is the recognition that connection with an immigrant student's home culture and traditions can be an advantage for that student's academic success in school (Olson, 1995).

How teachers accommodate the needs of immigrant students and how these students perceive their own educational experiences are as relevant to research today as ever. Immigrants today are increasingly culturally diverse (Banks, 2001; Nieto, 2000); thus, teachers and schools must be prepared to meet immigrant students' academic needs, especially as public schools enter the era of accountability and standardized assessment.

Background of the Study: E Pluribus Unum (Out of Many, One)

Immigrants bringing with them a diversity of languages, customs and traditions come to the United States today from all over the world with hopes of a better future. Such cultural diversity continually sparks the great debate of how to create "E Pluribus Unum: Out of many people, one. " The debate is often captured in the opposing analogies of "melting pot" (assimilationist) and "salad bowl"(cultural pluralist), both models for the integration of immigrants into American society.

The term "melting pot" came from a play written by Israel Zangwill in 1909. The goal of creating one homogeneous culture from the many that arrive on the shores of the United States is captured in the following excerpt from the play:

America is God's crucible, the great Melting Pot where all the races of Europe

are melting and reforming! Here you stand, good folk, think I, when I see

4

them at Ellis Island, here you stand in your fifty groups with your fifty

languages and histories, and your fifty hatreds and rivalries, but you won't

be long like that, brothers, for these are the fires of God. A fig for your

feuds and vendettas! Germans and Frenchmen, Irishmen, and Englishmen,

Jews and Russians-into the Crucible with you all! God is making the American.

. . The real American has not yet arrived. He is only in the Crucible, I tell

you – he will be the fusion of all races, the coming superman (Zangwill, 1909,

p. 37).

Those who subscribe to the "melting pot" ideology believe that immigrants and their

children need to lose quickly the ethnic identities they bring with them and assimilate into

the middle class culture and norms of the Anglo-Germanic majority in America. The goal

for assimilationists is for everyone to be "melted" into a homogenous group, as they

believe this to be best for the advancement and future of American society.

Assimilationists presume a "deficit" rather than a "difference" orientation towards

immigrants and the cultural traditions they bring with them.

The opposing ideology is one of "salad bowl," which advocates cultural

pluralism, believing that a diversity of languages and cultures enhances and strengthens

American society. Pluralists presume a "difference" rather than a "deficit" orientation

towards immigrants and the languages and traditions they bring with them to America.

Public schools in America have historically and recently been the battleground on

which the assimilationist and cultural pluralist debate and has been hotly contested.

Banks (1988), a cultural pluralist, researched extensively the differences in these two

ideologies in the educational setting. The assimilationists, explained Banks (1988), contend that the goal of school should be to socialize individuals into the society at large so all can function in a unified and similar manner to support the goals of the nation. Education from the assimilationist perspective strongly supported the immersion of non-English speaking immigrant children as quickly as possible into the English language and American culture. The school's function was to "melt" immigrant students as quickly as possible into American culture without supporting or acknowledging the cultural backgrounds of students. The assumption of the assimilationist was the more the child's school experience is congruent with the majority American culture, the better the child will succeed academically.

Cultural pluralists, such as Banks (1988), view one's racial, ethnic, and cultural identity to be so important that schools must actively promote and recognize the importance of the individual. Education from the cultural pluralist's perspective addresses different learning styles, patterns of interaction, and each child's unique cultural ancestry. Each child's uniqueness and diversity is seen as enhancing the "salad bowl" of America by adding many different flavors and tastes. The assumption of the cultural pluralist is that the more congruent the school experience is with the home experiences of the child, the better the child's educational success.

The first 60 years of the twentieth century had mainly reflected the assimilationist ideology of the dominant Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, and white middle-class group. The plight of Native American children in boarding schools, the non-education and then segregated educational experiences of Black children, and the forced assimilation of

immigrant children in schools without reference to their culture or language are all historical reminders today of assimilationist educational policies prevalent during the first six decades of the twentieth century.

The last three decades of the twentieth century, however, mark educational shifts more closely aligned with cultural pluralism. These shifts were due in large part to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as well as numerous Supreme Court decisions in the 1970s that mandate the provision of education in students' native languages and equal access to educational opportunity for all students regardless of color, race, or creed. These shifts resulted in today's multicultural education movement, which addresses the racial, ethnic, and linguistic needs of students.

Today there is a more conscious effort by schools to cater to individual learning styles of students because it is now recognized that cultures learn differently and schools need to be more congruent with backgrounds of students in order for those students to achieve academic success (Nieto, 2000). However, culturally responsive teaching is not always done well by schools (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Banks (1988) found that many schools pay only lip service to the multicultural ideologies by acknowledging the stereotypical holidays and traditions rather than exploring the deeper meanings of cultural diversity.

Need for the Study

There is considerable evidence to suggest that children who arrive in a new country by age six or seven do better academically in high school than older arrivals (Gibson, 1988). Of course there are exceptions, but in general the older arrivals are at

greater risk of dropping out or of being promoted year by year without ever obtaining the required skills in English to do well academically at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

Haberman (1988; 1991) asserted that students of color attend segregated, under-funded schools and exhibit high dropout rates. Some researchers have established a causal relationship between the increase of children of color and the shortage of teachers of color (Anfara & Brown, 2000; Baker, 1996; Garcia, 1994; Haberman, 1988; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Olsen, 1997). Gibson (1995) asserted ethnographic research on immigrant school success could be very helpful in pointing the way to educational reform. Gibson maintained, research that asks how best to educate immigrant students can help to identify strategies first-and-second-generation immigrant students employ to overcome the barriers they encounter in U.S. schools.

In the last 10 years, the number of non-English-speaking students in American schools has increased 40% (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1994). Asian-language speakers have increased 100%. In reality, 75% of these students are placed with teachers who lack specialized training in second language acquisition, English as a second language, or bilingual education (McKeon, 1994). The increase in non-English-speaking students coupled with a lack of prepared teachers has resulted in several significant problems: 1) a growing pressure on inadequately prepared classroom teachers, 2) diminished classroom resources available, 3) dwindling school district resources for staff development, and 4) continuing debate about the best way to educate limited English proficient students (Crawford, 1991). Teaching language to minority students can

no longer be considered the responsibility of just ESL teachers. The issue affects all teachers. "It is a national priority, one that encompasses issues related to instruction, not only for Latino students, but for those speaking a wide range of languages from Hmong to Vietnamese to Russian to Arabic. There is a great demand for information on promising practices" (Gersten, 1996, p. 217).

Gersten & Jimenez (1996) stress there is need for increased focus and research in understanding critical instructional issues. They argue it is necessary to examine in a way that "fits the realities of the classrooms," what was already known about effective teaching practices, second language acquisition, cognitive research, and cross-cultural communication (p. 219). Goldenberg (1996) contended that past research relating to the education of English Language Learner (ELL) students focused too much attention on language instruction and neglected language instruction within the context of effective instructional techniques (Arreaga-Mayor & Perdomo-Rivera, 1996; Faltis, 1993; Jimenez, Gersten, & Rivera, 1996).

Researchers caution there is little evidence to suggest practice is changing to reflect the best teaching practices for language minority students. In fact, researchers caution that a big gap exists between current understanding of effective classroom practices for minority-language students and actual practice (Fueyo, 2001; Palinscar, 1996; Ramirez, Yuen, & Ramey, 1991).

Studies by Bohn and Sleeter (2000) question the quality of education afforded non-English speaking students far into the twenty-first century, due in large part to an increasing wave of standardized testing and standards being forced legislatively by 17

states in America. The state of Texas, the location of this study, now mandates that all immigrant children be prepared to take the TAAS (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills) test after three years of residence in the United States. TAAS scores and accountability place increasing pressures on teachers because ELL students must perform and do well in school regardless of their English language skills. Abolition of bilingual programs, teacher shortages, and ambiguity about how best to teach ESL students all present a continuing threat to equal educational opportunity for immigrant students.

Bohn & Sleeter (2000) caution, state standards and tests have forced schools to standardize and emphasize content at the expense of any other concerns, which they suggest is not in the best educational interest of the English-as-a-Second Language student. Bohn & Sleeter (2000) state a xenophobic climate is developing again. State standards are operating on the assumption that all students have an equal opportunity to learn even though it is common knowledge that discrepancies exist among facilities and resources. Bohn & Sleeter (2000) use the analogy of the baby, arguing if you want the baby to grow you focus on feeding it, not measuring it. They continue to say, "standardizing 'output' measurements tends to lead people towards standardizing 'inputs' and framing human variation as a problem which is to be contained" (p. 157). For these authors the idea that different social classes even exist in this country remains unacknowledged in concurrently marketed textbooks. A high degree of cultural homogeneity in the teaching profession presents a problem for teachers to be truly culturally sensitive. Bohn and Sleeter (2000) continue, "When a student who is of a culturally different background from teacher, when there is a problem, it is likely that the

10

child and home is [sic] blamed for failure" (p. 158).

Currently there is a need to strengthen our urban schools. As Nieto (2001) suggests, "The myth that access to an equal and high quality education is the birthright of all children regardless of station or rank dies hard" (p. 6). Recent studies in the last decade substantiate Nieto's argument of an educational system that is wrought with examples of unequal access and outcomes as well as low rankings compared to other countries in the world in terms of spending, curricular offerings, student achievement, and teacher quality (Cordasco, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1996; Kozol, 1991; Tyack, 1995). The proliferation of charter schools and schools of choices as well as the impending threat of removal of federal and state funding if students do not achieve academically place great significance on the need to study classroom practices (Nieto, 2001).

English Language Learner (ELL) students remain the "most neglected and shortchanged in the school reform movement with little significant increases, if any, on their achievement levels" (Moss & Puma, 1995, p. 56). The authors described the conditions of ESL education for immigrant students of whom seven percent received an unsatisfactory grade in third grade. Moss & Puma (1995) decried the lack of ESL teachers with the same ethnicity as their students as well as the poor preparation given to teachers regarding the respective multicultural populations they teach. Moss & Puma (1995) reported that immigrant students come to school full of enthusiasm and motivation to learn. Yet these students who have limited English proficiency tended to have much higher dropout rates than English proficient students.

Statement of the Problem

The National Center for Educational Statistics (1994) shows 17 states, including Texas, now require all students to pass minimum competency tests to graduate from high school. The state mandate in Texas also includes immigrant students who have lived in the United States for three years.

Such mandates impact the public education accountability system, especially in Texas, as teachers are pressured to prepare immigrant students to pass the TAAS (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills Test) successfully beginning at third grade. School districts and individual schools are held publicly accountable for how all their students score on this test. Students who have spent three years in English as Second Language (ESL) classrooms are now required to take this test even though Cummins (1986; 1996) & Krashen (1982) demonstrate that it takes eight to ten years for an individual to be completely competent in a second language.

In this dissertation study I shed light on the experiences of both middle school students and regular classroom teachers as they functioned within the limitations that have been state sanctioned. Like it or not, teachers must work more adeptly at meeting the educational needs of English Language Learner (ELL) students so that students will score well on the TAAS test. The question becomes: What instructional and curricular strategies do teachers employ to meet more adequately the academic challenges presented by increasing numbers of immigrant students whose first language is not English?

Research Questions

Questions that guided this study included:

(1) What are teachers' perceptions of the academic challenges facing Limited English Proficient (ELL) students as they enter the mainstream classroom?

(2) What instructional practices do regular classroom teachers use to meet the academic needs of these students?

(3) What are ELL students' perceptions of the academic challenges facing them in the mainstream classroom?

(4) What are the ELL students' perceptions of the instructional practices used by teachers to meet their academic needs?

(5) What administrative procedures and policies are in place in the school and district to meet the educational needs of ELL students?

Methodology

This was a qualitative study that incorporated ethnographic techniques of interviewing, participant observation in classrooms with selected students and teachers, interviewing of related administrators, and document collection and analysis. Following the guidelines of case study design which sheds light on a phenomenon by focusing on selected cases (Stake, 1994) I delineated the educational experiences of selected middle school, immigrant students and their teachers as they were incorporated or "mainstreamed" into the regular classroom setting in a large urban school district in Texas. I examined the phenomenon in the naturally occurring context of the school and classroom for a period of five months.

Because the goal of case studies is to understand the phenomenon from the perceptions of the participants, referred to as "emic" perspective in qualitative research

(Stake, 1994), the participants were interviewed in-depth in order to understand their unique viewpoints. I used questions compiled from the current literature on best English as Second Language instructional practices. The questions were categorized according to Geneva Gay's (2000) characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teaching (p. 27).

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study was that it focused on the middle school level. Policy concerns in bilingual and English as a Second Language education previously have focused primarily on elementary level with little attention paid to the middle school and high school level. The emphasis was understandable, says Olsen (1995), as there were more English Language Learner (ELL) students at the elementary level than at the secondary level, and most of the early research on second language learning research focused on the early elementary years.

Definition of Terms

English as Second Language (ESL): A program designed to teach English to non-English speaking students. In ESL instruction, English is taught by attempting to integrate the student's background and cultural experiences through language learning. In ESL programs, children are kept in the regular classroom for most of the day and are pulled out at various times for English instruction.

English Language Learners (ELL): Students in one of the following categories: (a) those who speak a non-English native language, (b) those from environments with a non-English dominant language, and (c) those born outside the United States and English is not their native language.

Language Center (LC): A sheltered, self-contained ESL program unique to the school district where the study took place. This was designed by the school district for recent arrival of non-English-speaking students. These centers were located on 29 campuses with transportation provided from non-center schools to center schools. English was used to teach basic communicative and academic skills with the aim of equipping students to make a transition to less sheltered ESL instructional settings within two to three years.

Immigrant Welcome Center (IWC): A one-semester to one-year program designed by the school district to orient new beginning-level immigrant students to U. S. Schools and to develop basic communicative and academic skills in English. Students transferred to home Language Center programs upon exiting the IWC.

Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS): A state mandated standardized test in the State of Texas used to measure the basic skills of students from third to twelfth grade.

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The focus of this study was one middle school in Texas. The study focused on ELL students who were spanish speaking immigrants to the United States, were in their third year in an ESL setting, and were being mainstreamed into regular classes for some or most of the day. All these students had to take the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills test during this study.

The study was limited to a group of students in advanced level ESL and who could communicate in English because of the inability of the researcher to communicate in the native language of students.

The study was limited to a select group of students, teachers and administrators

15

because of the in-depth nature of case study design, which focused on depth rather than breadth.

Outline of the Remainder of Dissertation

In Chapter 2, I present a detailed analysis of the educational literature pertaining to culturally responsive teaching, English as a Second Language practices, and instructional practices that best meet the need of linguistically and culturally diverse learners.

In Chapter 3, I outline a detailed analysis of the research design. In Chapter 4, I present findings and interpretation of data throughout the research period. In Chapter 5, I present final conclusions and recommendation for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Historical analysis of the educational provisions for immigrant students in the United

States from the nineteenth to twenty- first century

Horace Mann (1796-1859), known as the "Father of the American Education,"

asserted every child had the right to an education, and furthermore the state held the

responsibility to ensure that every child was provided an education. Mann's report was

instrumental in the adoption by the Massachusetts legislature of the nation's first

compulsory attendance law in 1852 (Gutek, 1991). By 1865 systems of common schools

had been established throughout the Northern, Midwestern, and Western states, with

more than 50% of the nation's children enrolled in public schools (Webb, Metha, &

Jordan, 1995). The educational experiences of the other 50% were non-existent as

children were regarded as economic assets who worked on the farms and in the shops.

These children had a price (Zelizer, 1985). By 1918 all states had enacted laws requiring

full-time school attendance until the child had reached either a certain age or grade

(Webb, Metha, & Jordan, 1995).

By the 1920s assimilation had become federal policy and Americanization in the

schools was in full force. In addition, the 1924 Immigration Restriction Act, which

discriminated against other nationalities besides American was adopted to restrict the

immigration of persons from countries considered difficult to "melt." Because of this law,

only immigrants who looked "white" and easy to "melt" were admitted. This policy resulted in immigrant children during this period being predominantly of European origin (Salvaterra, 1995). By the 1930s most children under the age of fourteen were forced out of the labor market and into the schools (Zelizer, 1985).

The assimilationist view of education continued to be the predominant ideology underlying the educational system in the United States until 1945. During this time military-style assimilation encouraged English-only classrooms, the Anglicization of immigrants' names and of the school community, and discontinued use of the native language, even outside the school environment. Since the "Anglocentric" curriculum was considered standard, all other cultures were viewed as substandard (Stein, 1988). During this assimilationist period of the United States, there were no second language acquisition provisions made for students whose first language was not English. The "sink or swim" policy prevailed (Nieto, 2000). Culturally, in schools the emphasis was on Americanization. Academically, immigrant children were submersed into English with no special support or provisions. This policy created an emotionally and psychologically alienating time for immigrant students as schools adopted a submersion in English-only classes with no recognition of the varying cultural diversities of students. Reports abound during this period that immigrant children were not promoted until they learned English and consequently were often labeled "retarded" (Stein, 1988).

From 1945 to 1968, assimilation policy still continued but it was more "missionary style" and less severe than the "sink or swim" policy of the previous twenty years (Stein, 1988). The "missionary style" assimilation policy implemented in schools

during this period reflected a cultural deprivation theory, blaming immigrant and minority groups' poor school achievement on deficiencies inherent in their own native cultures. The philosophy of this period promoted equal access for both immigrant and minority groups to the values of the Anglo, middle class curriculum, in an effort to improve immigrants' academic successes in school. Programs were also initiated to overcome immigrant students' "language disabilities," and so it was that English as Second Language (ESL) programs emerged in the United States (Webb, Metha, & Jordan, 1995).

ESL had been designed initially in the 1930s for instruction primarily of foreign diplomats, business people, and government officials; but by the 1950s, ESL programs were introduced in many Southern and Eastern school districts to instruct poor Hispanic children. The ESL programs provided instruction in English-only classes. Children from a variety of language backgrounds all participated in the same classes for the purpose of English language acquisition. The most common ESL program was a pullout program, which removed students from the regular classroom daily or several times a week. These ESL programs were not particularly successful with Hispanic children and did not equip them with sufficient English to succeed in their content classes. This pullout method exacerbated their academic deficiencies as they missed out on content instruction in the regular classroom. Many students during this period were forced to repeat grades (Webb, Metha, & Jordan, 1995; Stein, 1988).

During the 1960s, after years of educational discrimination, many minority groups began demanding their rightful share of the American dream. These groups included

Spanish-speaking Americans in the southwest, Puerto Ricans on the east coast, Asian Americans on the west coast, Native Americans on the reservations and in cities, and African-Americans throughout the states. The political struggles for equality resulted in part for the 1965 amendment to the Immigration and Nationality Act, which reversed the previous discrimination against other nationalities. This amendment resulted in large-scale immigration equal to that of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The impact of this amendment is the reason that more than 85% of all immigrants today are immigrants of "color" coming from Asia and Latin America (Perkins, 2000).

The ten-year period from 1963 to 1973 during the civil rights movement, a series of private and governmental studies, hearings, and lawsuits forever changed the education of immigrant students. During this period new programs such as Bilingual and ESL (as we know them today) emerged across the nation.

The 1968 Bilingual Education Act mandated special provisions be made for the education of English Language Learner (ELL) students. According to the Act's provisions schools should: 1) increase English-language skills provisions for immigrant students, 2) maintain and increase mother-tongue skills, and 3) support the cultural heritage of the student (Webb, Metha, & Jordan, 1995).

In 1970, the Office of Civil Rights made efforts to provide ELL students with special educational provisions by mandating that public schools that received federal aid provide educational assistance for ELL students outside the regular classroom. Passage of these laws did not always ensure equal educational opportunity until the *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) Supreme Court decision. With the decision, the Supreme Court justices declared a

San Francisco school district violated a non-English speaking Chinese student's right to equal educational opportunity when it failed to provide English language instruction or other needed special programs. An important consequence of this court decision was that all school districts across the country were forced to provide English as Second Language instruction for all non-English speaking students.

The Supreme Court decision in *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) found submersion ("sink or swim") programs unlawful. Since then, ESL programs in the United States have replaced the submersion approach that had prevailed for over forty years. In ESL instruction today, English is taught by attempting to integrate the student's background and cultural experiences through language learning. In ESL programs, children are kept in the regular classroom for most of the day and are pulled out at various times for English instruction.

The period following the early seventies movement saw a more conscious effort in educational research to understand, for the first time, the psychological, academic, and cultural needs of immigrant students in public school. Researchers Cummins (1984) and Krashen (1982) represented the polarity of views during this period on how best to teach ELL students.

Cummins (1984) identified two levels of language proficiency, which he termed BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) and CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency). BICS is composed of basic language skills and the ability to interact conversationally with peers. This set of skills, according to Cummins, is the fastest and easiest to acquire for ELL students. Mastery of BICS by the immigrant student, however, is not enough to ensure academic success. The ELL student must

master the Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) in order to achieve academically in school. CALP requires higher order thinking in the second language; i.e., the ability to analyze, hypothesize, summarize, and all the other skills required to be successful on standardized tests. Cummins (1984) found successful attainment of CALPS takes a minimum of seven years for the average person. Cummins advocates a longer time spent in language instruction will result in academic achievement for ELL students. Cummins (1984) has found once that non-English speaking students demonstrate the BICS level of language proficiency they are often mainstreamed into regular classrooms with no other second language support. Cummins cautions, many teachers inadvertently mistake the students' ability to converse fluently as total proficiency in English. The reality, according to Cummins, is students still need continual instruction to promote the development of CALPS for five to seven years.

The nativist view (Krashen, 1982; Perez, & Torres-Guzman, 1996) advocates the best way to achieve English language proficiency for ELL students is by building a strong foundation in the native language first. Nativists argue, once academics are developed in the student's primary language, and then transfer automatically occurs in the second. The nativist viewpoint holds there is no direct relationship between the amount of time spent in primary language instruction and achievement in English (Goldenberg, 1996).

The 1980s saw again the resurgence of the old assimilationist ideals. There was a call for "excellence" in the face of "mediocrity" and a return to curricula based on the Western canon. During this period, research reports such as Goodlad's "A Place Called

School" (1984), "A Nation at Risk" (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), and others, all recommended a return to the basics by having students take an increased number of basic courses in English, social studies, mathematics, and science (Webb, Metha, & Jordan, 1995).

The Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 impacted the education of language minority students in the late nineties. As a result, funding for minority students is now available through both Title VII and Title I funds, and ELL students are no longer excluded from Chapter I services (reading intervention). Moving away from a remedial, compensatory, deficiency model of bilingual/ESL education to enrichment and innovation, the new Title VII funding is designed with the following principles, which come directly from the Stanford Working Group: 1) all children can learn to high standards, 2) ELL children and youth must be provided with an equal opportunity to learn the challenging content and high-level skills that school reform efforts advocate for all students, 3) proficiency in two or more languages should be promoted for all students, and 4) bilingualism enhances cognitive and social growth and develops the nation's human resources potential in ways that improve our competitiveness in the global market (U. S. Department of Education, 1995, p. 16).

Because of the 1994 Act, school districts today are encouraged to create comprehensive school reform plans that integrate bilingual and ESL education into the core of the school system, using research-based teaching and assessment practices, year round professional development, innovative curricula supported by interactive education technology, and close partnerships for learning with the linguistically and culturally

diverse school community (Garcia, 1992).

State certification of ESL and bilingual teachers now requires a dual license in elementary or secondary education as well as the additional bilingual or ESL certification. Prior to the 1980s, the focus was more on teaching students English language skills unrelated to the academic content of the student's grade level. Now ELL students must receive access to full curriculum while acquiring English language skills (Collier, 1985).

Some researchers have found the certification changes still have not improved academic success for all ELL students in the United States. In fact, ESL pullout is now viewed as the most expensive, but most commonly used, of all program models and yet the least effective in the nineties (Thomas & Collier, 1997). English Language Learner (ELL) students are still losing access to the academic curriculum because the majority of ESL teachers are not teaching English within the academic content. Several researchers have found ELL students often become ESL "lifers" and remain forever segregated from the academic content in the mainstream classroom (Gamoran, 1990; Oakes, 1985, 1990, 1992; Oakes, Wells, Yonezawa, & Ray, 1997; Wheelock, 1992).

Schools are now encouraged to try alternatives to ESL pullout such as inclusion, team teaching, tutoring, etc. Ovando & Collier (1998) support ESL content teaching more than ESL pullout because students have access to more of the curriculum while learning English. Their research demonstrates that ESL is still perceived by teachers and students as a program of remediation rather than enrichment, a view that hampers the academic standards and expectations set for ELL students in schools today.

There is currently a critical shortage of well-prepared teachers nationwide. Although Spanish-speaking students comprise the largest number of language minority students in the United States, there is a dramatic shortage of teachers coming from Hispanic backgrounds (Crawford, 1995; Delpit, 1995). A review of the educational literature in the new millennium points to the challenges facing teacher preparation programs in addressing the growing mismatch between the background of teachers and the students they will be teaching. In reality teachers in the 21st century will find themselves more culturally alienated than ever before from their students. The demographics and cultural diversity of students has changed rapidly in the past twenty years, but the majority of teachers are still white, middle class, monolingual, and unknowledgeable of the cultural and linguistic diversity of their students. The need for ongoing staff development and training in culturally responsive teaching is more relevant than ever (Applebome, 1996).

Concerns about the education of ELL and culturally diverse students in the 21st century relate to the new wave of standardized testing, return to basics, and, the "no child left behind" theory advocated by President Bush. Current researchers caution the wave of standardization is weakening the education offered to ELL students because as academic demands increase, the children most at risk of failure are those of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (McNeil &Valenzuela, 2000).

The impact of the Proposition 227 in the state of California included the elimination of all bilingual education programs in 1997. The passing of this proposition divided the people of California and created much debate across America concerning the

education of ELL students. Garcia and Curry-Rodriquez (2000) gathered information from eight school districts in California regarding the implementation of Proposition 227 a year after its passage. Their study revealed there was no adverse effect on the test achievement scores of ELL students who were exited from bilingual education programs in the state of California. Future studies are needed to determine any long-term effects.

Research on the effect of standardized testing on public school education in the state of Texas is divided into two opposing camps. Some researchers have found the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) has improved overall performance of Texas schools, and in particular those that educate low-income, Limited English Proficiency, and African American and Latino children (Fuller & Johnson, 2001; Skrla & Scheurich, 2001). McNeil (2000) and Valenzuela (2000) demonstrate the TAAS is unacceptable because it is divorced from children's experience and culture, violates what is known about how children learn, provokes instruction aimed at the lowest level of skills and information, and eliminates other forms of learning, particularly for poor and minority students. Researchers opposed to the standardized testing movement find the TAAS is damaging to students because it promotes teaching to the test and thus weakens the curriculum. Valenzuela (1999) has found teaching to the TAAS deprives students from receiving culturally relevant instruction. Opponents conclude the TAAS is particularly inappropriate for ELL students, given the scarcity of English as a second language courses available in high schools. The TAAS exit test contends opponents are most particularly detrimental and traumatic to ELL students.

So the debate on how best to teach immigrant students continues into the 21st

century. It still remains as contentious an issue today as it did in the 1920s. Once again in 2001, in the wake of the terrorist attacks that demolished the twin towers of New York City on September 11, 2001, damaged the Pentagon in Washington, D. C., and claimed the lives of over six thousand innocent civilians, the need for cultural sensitivity and tolerance in our schools is even more relevant today because anti-immigrant sentiments are again with us in the United States.

Use of Culturally Responsive Teaching as an Instructional Strategy for English Language Learner (ELL) students

Developmentally, middle school students are at Piaget's Formal Operational stage (1936/1952) but are also dealing with hormonal changes and puberty. They are now able to reason, abstract, and understand principles of law and justice. Although early adolescence is a time of great change overall, educators' reactions to those changes shape the ways in which middle level students are influenced (Berk, 1996).

How teachers instruct middle school students is very important but even more critical if the student is also Limited English Proficient and/or culturally diverse. A review of the literature on instructional strategies for culturally diverse and second language learners at the middle school level reveals that many strategies suggested for diverse learners are also excellent strategies for all students. Good teaching for all students at middle school avoids preconceived notions of students and sets high expectations for all learners. Good teaching allows students to do meaningful work in an active learning environment while using a variety of materials and teaching methods. Finally, successful teaching for all students, at this developmental stage, builds upon each

student's success in a non-threatening atmosphere and exposes students to all career

options and subjects for the future (Wiest, 2001).

Some educational researchers recognize that ELL students do well academically if

learning connects with their background and culture. But, age on arrival, length of

residence in the United States, and grade of entry into U.S. schools constitute variables

that must be carefully considered, as well when sorting out the variability in academic

performance among immigrant pupils. So, too, family background in the country of

origin, parents' educational and economic status, prior exposure to Western and urban

lifestyles, and languages spoken in the family all contribute to the cultural and social

capital that newcomers bring with them to this country (Gibson, 1988; Rumbaut, 1990).

The Multicultural Education movement of the 1980s and 1990s has infiltrated

schools in the United States today as a conscious effort to make the classroom experience

more culturally relevant to backgrounds and experiences of students who are not white

and middle class (Banks, 2001; Nieto, 2000). This movement has resulted in many pre-

service teachers taking courses in multicultural education and culturally responsive

teaching. Because culturally responsive teaching consists of specific characteristics,

teachers must receive on-going staff development and support for its successful

implementation (Banks, 2001; Gay, 2000).

Gay (2000) defined culturally responsive teaching (CRT) as:

> ….using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and
>
> performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters
>
> more relevant to and effective for them. It teaches to and through the strengths

of these students. It is culturally validating and affirming (p. 29).

Culturally responsive teaching consists of five distinct characteristics that will organize the next section of the literature review.

Culturally responsive teaching incorporates the unique cultural heritages of each student in the curriculum (Gay, 2000)

The public school system has its roots in the Greek tradition. Certain characteristics from ancient Greece still remain the same in public schools today. Schools are not immediately established to meet the needs of the individual. From early on, attempts are made to socialize the individual to "fit" the group. The primary role of the teacher in this regard is to unify the individual students in the class. For this to happen, the individual child must develop loyalties outside the family and transfer some of those loyalties to the teacher, thus encouraging independence from the child's primary social group, the family. So in order to succeed in school in the United States, the student must learn to think and communicate by understanding the abstract words and symbols that have been collected from chosen bodies of previously agreed-upon knowledge. This knowledge, which constitutes the curriculum taught in schools, represents the values of the majority white, middle-class and male culture (Sleeter & Grant, 1986). Many immigrant students neither relate to nor understand the necessity for learning about Julius Caesar, Homer or the Iliad, remnants taught in school from the Roman times (Cushner et al. 1992).

Another underlying value inherent in public school today, which derives from the Greek tradition, is competition. Individual success and competition are rewarded and

proliferated by evaluation and assessment measures utilized in public schools. Many immigrant and minority students who value cooperation and family loyalty fail in schools because they are unable to abandon family and friendships required for individualized, competitive, academic success in school (Sleeter & Grant, 1991).

Competence and proficiency in the English language is essential to master the curriculum of the public school. English is the language of the school and an important feature of school culture. Those who are themselves successfully socialized into the group and operate in accordance with the school culture are successful. Public school teachers in the United States have themselves successfully mastered the school culture and curriculum and, in turn, maintain that tradition in the way they teach, plan curriculum, assess students, and structure learning experiences for their students. Many immigrant and minority students have no choice but to be socialized by teachers who do not validate the students' own unique cultural heritages. Because of that practice, many immigrant and minority students experience marginalization and alienation in classrooms. They learn quickly to hate school, resent teachers, and then drop out (Cushner et al. 1992).

Compared with immigrant students, middle-class Caucasian children are well socialized to be ready for school. Caucasian students, because they belong to the dominant group in the United States (European American), are more likely to have their culture affirmed in the curriculum than are students of color (Sleeter & Grant, 1991). LeCompte (1980) has substantiated children from groups that do not have home experiences congruent with school culture do not experience the same degree of

30

academic success.

Making the curriculum content congruent to the cultural backgrounds of all students is vital to ensure academic success for all (Zaslavsky, 1996). Ladson-Billings (1994) writes that culturally responsive teaching is designed not merely to fit the school culture to the students' culture but also to use the students' culture as the basis for helping students understand themselves and others, structure social interactions, and conceptualize knowledge.

Instructional strategies for ELL students must begin with familiar materials for the student and involve students' own cultural background and real-world experiences (Campbell, 1993; D'Ambrosio, Johnson & Hobbs, 1995). Subject-matter integration for minority cultures is important (Campbell, 1993; D'Ambrosio et al., 1995; Zaslavsky, 1996).

In the United States, textbooks provide the basis of 70% to 90% of all classroom instruction (Apple & Beane, 1995; Wade, 1993). Textbooks constitute the curriculum content as teachers and students consider the authority of textbooks to be incontestable and to be always accurate, authentic, and truthful (Gordy & Pritchard, 1995). The reality is information about racial minorities and social classes in the United States are excluded from textbooks used in public schools, and many students never see their unique cultural heritages reflected in the curriculum (Sleeter & Grant, 1991).

Bradley (1984) found substantial mathematical success for Native American students when the teacher used geometric patterns found in Navajo Indian blankets to teach geometry and number theory and measurement processes. Such culturally familiar

patterns helped these students understand the study of geometry by linking their familiarity with geometric shapes and physical objects to an abstract academic content area. Diaz, Moll, & Mehan (1986) also supported an instructional model that used community phenomena and the unique cultural heritages of students as part of the curriculum. Jackson (1994) found immigrant and culturally diverse students were more successful academically when teachers made systematic home visits to discover the cultural heritages of each student and incorporated this information in their curriculum planning and instruction.

Ladson-Billings (1994) and Haberman (1991), who were proponents of the "Progressivist Emphasis," proposed that teachers might use "street" math in K-12 such as penny pitching or sports card trading in order to link the world of mathematics with the real world. They also found the use of rap music was another culturally congruent instructional strategy that played to the strength of some students while also eliminating the alienation that teenagers harbored towards society and school. Ladson-Billings (1994) affirmed teachers who were not locked into a pedagogical ideology and were willing to use whatever methods (traditional or progressive) to help students learn produced learners with greater academic success.

Many qualitative studies support the provision of a risk fee, culturally sensitive, and academically challenging education for all children in U.S. schools. However some studies show that cultural discontinuities such as teachers' intentional or unintentional racism and prejudice towards linguistically and culturally diverse students occur between home and school (Au, 1993; Erickson, 1994; Schmidt, 1998).

Schmidt (1998) followed the progress of an Asian and an Indian student, recently arrived immigrants, during their kindergarten year. Teachers knew they should learn to understand and connect with the cultural background of these two children and families but in reality did very little to implement this knowledge. Schmidt conducted a yearlong qualitative study that interpreted the patterns of exclusion these children experienced in kindergarten classrooms. Schmidt found school personnel acted as if the students lacked both a nurturing home environment and sufficient mental ability. Their pervading attitude translated into either a watered-down curriculum or unintentional victimization. The teachers rarely addressed these students' home cultures or never allowed them to share the way their families celebrated holidays. The ESL teacher never linked lessons with the regular mainstream classroom curriculum. Schmidt found only very superficial attempts were made by the teacher to effect substantive changes in teaching methods and curriculum in order to make appropriate cultural connections for these students. The two students were promoted to the next grade level with no contact by the school with their parents to explain the progress of their children.

Incorporating activities and literature in the curriculum relevant to students' lives is central to connecting home and school (Au, 1993). Erickson (1984) suggested that changing the context of a learning task to incorporate tools, symbols, and social relations familiar to the child was an important classroom feature. Moll & Gonzalez (1994) worked extensively with teachers to show them how to use information obtained from families to develop successful units about plants and herbs, horses, and music and sound, all based on parents' and students' knowledge. Similar projects with teachers have shown

the incorporation of students' unique cultural heritages in the curriculum ensured greater academic success for immigrant and culturally diverse students (Amanti, 1995; Floyd-Tenery, 1995; Hensley, 1995).

McCarthey (1999) found when teachers believed students came from impoverished backgrounds, teachers did not incorporate the cultural backgrounds of these students in the curriculum. In many cases, such teachers did not seem to be knowledgeable about students' backgrounds and experiences but rather operated from a deficit view of children from diverse backgrounds. Valdes (1996) and Valencia (1997) validated McCarthey's findings, i.e., when poor minorities were viewed as having negative norms, values, and practices, there was low academic achievement for these students. McCarthey, Worthy, and Riojas (1999) found several parents believed their children's reading problems were rooted in teachers' lack of value for their children's backgrounds. McCarthey (1995) found teachers' choosing to ignore students' problems was one way of not valuing students' experiences.

Marginalization can be the result of overemphasizing or ignoring students' unique cultural heritages (Glenn & Jong, 1996). Not surprisingly educators and policy makers have started to look for alternative approaches and to recognize the specific needs of language minority pupils without making their needs a basis for segregation (Genesee, 1994; Levine, 1990; Natale, 1994). Some approaches make language minority education an integral part of the school context instead of allowing students to become marginalized. In such approaches, language minority education is defined as a "whole school" responsibility, requiring a sense of ownership for all pupils, curriculum

coordination, and pupil integration (Glenn & Jong, 1996).

Culturally responsive teaching maintains meaningful connections between the home

and school experiences of students (Gay, 2000)

Researchers have demonstrated: 1) communication between home and school is

vital for language minority students' success; 2) teaching parents to promote the native

language helps students to learn English more quickly; and 3) encouraging parents to

understand bilingualism is important and an asset for student success (Faltis, 1993; Perez,

Torres-Guzman, 1996).

Involvement of parents, not only in classroom activities, but also in administrative

decisions in school and policies that affect their children is vital for the academic success

for immigrant and culturally diverse students (Callahan, 1994; Gardner, Hart & Jones,

1994; Scott & Raborn, 1996; Zaslavsky, 1996). There exists a body of literature reporting

home-school discontinuities for Latinos (Valdes, 1996), among students (Trueba et al,

1990), African-American (Dandy, 1992), working-class youth (Lareau, 1989), Native

Hawaiians (Gallimore et al. 1974), and other groups (Cazden, 1986; Erickson, 1986;

Schmidt, 1998). The aforementioned research demonstrates how students of color and

their families experience alienation from the educational process of schools in the United

States because school personnel are unable to make cultural connections with the families

and backgrounds of their culturally diverse students.

The difficulties ELL students experience can be attributed to the mismatch

between the world of the home and the world of the classroom (Guthrie, & Au, 1981;

Jacob & Jordan, 1993; Jordan, 1984; Ogbu, 1992; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Trueba,

2001). In fact, Reese and Gallimore (2000) conducted a case study data analysis of Mexican and Central American immigrant families residing in the greater Los Angeles area. Their work focused on parents' cultural models and practices of early literacy development in children. The purpose of the study was to describe immigrant Latinos' cultural models of literacy, their origin, and changes in the model associated with immigration and experiences with U. S. schools. The researchers also presented a perspective on home-school discontinuities that allowed for within-group variation and dynamic change across time. The researchers demonstrated on-going communication between home and school ensured that both parents and teachers each understood their unique perceptions as they were related to literacy development in the children. The teachers in this study were able to understand the unique cultural perceptions of immigrant families from enrichment rather than a deficit perspective.

Chao (2000), in a study of Asian American parental involvement, identified two types of involvement: structural (controlling students' use of time, purchasing extra textbooks, and providing outside lessons) and managerial (hands-on participation such as tutoring and attending school events). Chao revealed European American parents tended to have higher levels of managerial practices while Chinese parents used higher levels of structural involvement. Desimone (1999) concluded eighth graders from low-income homes did not benefit as much as middle-income students from school and family contacts. Consequently, schools must re-examine policies and practices in order to find different, positive roles for low-income parents to play in their children's education.

Manning (1995) investigated the importance of working with parents and gaining

their support for the schools in helping language minority students succeed academically. Whereas in the past culturally diverse learners were expected to acculturate toward middle-class and Anglo-American perceptions, this trend has changed. Much research has examined how schools should relate to different cultures. Fitzpatrick (1987) and Lum (1986) have explored the unique characteristics of Hispanic cultures and how educators can incorporate this information in the curriculum and instruction of the daily classroom.

Moll and Gonzalez (1994) have established the "funds of knowledge" project to identify community resources for use in classrooms. Receiving training in participant observation, interviewing techniques, and the writing of field notes, teachers are prepared to conduct home visits. Teachers then reflect on their findings and consider how to use this information to develop relevant curriculum for students.

Moll and Greenberg (1990) showed extending the "zones of knowledge" from the school into families and communities had definite implications for curriculum and instruction. Hones and Cha (1999) concluded the immigrant home can and should be a locus for action research by teaching professionals. By examining learning taking place in the home, teachers can challenge common assumptions about "cultural deficits." They offer the example of Shou Cha, who lacked any formal education, yet he contributed to his family and the larger community in educationally significant ways. Hones & Cha (1999) posited there are many such people like Shou Cha in America but the teachers and community have to learn how to reach out to them.

Shou Cha's narrative in Hones and Cha (1999) reminds educators that tremendous cultural resources exist in the homes and communities of diverse students. The narrative

of Shou Cha further shows how schools can tap into these resources and better meet the needs of immigrant students.

Tizard and Hughes (1984) have done much empirical research comparing in-school and out-school cultures and the ways in which these are prone to misinterpretation along the lines of deficit rather than difference. The authors demonstrated how teachers who are unfamiliar with the cultural backgrounds of their students incorrectly assess their students' academic challenges as lack of family support rather than the lack of the teacher's own ability to try to connect the school's culture to that of the student's family. The investigators revealed that teachers' oftentimes blame parents for student failure because of cultural and linguistic differences and consequently never make any curricular or instructional adjustments because they view student failure as a family problem that is beyond the control of the school.

Cazden (1988) suggested familiarity with students' personal and social worlds could help overcome the psychological distance between home and school. Paratore, Melzi, and Krol-Sinclair (1999) argued educators "must understand individuals within the full context of their home and school lives" (p. 111).

Longitudinal studies using interviews and observations of classroom practices of 14 first grade teachers in the process of adopting a new basal text series found that some teachers demonstrated practices that prompted home-school connections, whereas others engaged in practices that created barriers (Hoffman et al., 1996, 1998; McCarthey, 1994, 1995). McCarthey (1997) presented data from ethnographic cases of five students. Through classroom observations and interviews with teachers, students, and parents,

McCarthey found there were "tight" home and school connections for European

American, middle class students but not for students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

McCarthey, Worthy, & Riojas (1999) have found tutors' success with reading

resulted from communications maintained between home and school. According to

Allington (1983, 1994) practices that deterred home-school connection were drill and

practice and teaching skills in an isolated manner. Practices that facilitated connections

were based on "culturally relevant teaching" using dialogue as a scaffold "to build upon

their own experiences, knowledge, and skills to move into more difficult knowledge and

skills" (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Au (1993) suggested culturally responsive teaching

could provide opportunities for student success because it involved adjusting school

literacy practices to follow home and community patterns. These home-school practices

included understanding the individual child within the broader social-cultural context,

altering tasks to include students from diverse backgrounds, using talk to connect with

students' lives, and communicating with parents.

Culturally responsive teaching uses a variety of instructional strategies that connect

with the students' different learning styles (Gay, 2000)

Numerous researchers support the notion that immigrant and culturally diverse

students have different learning styles that are not necessarily congruent with those

required for success in school; i.e. minority and ethnic groups are unsuccessful not

because of a lack of ability but because of lack of training on teachers' parts to teach to

the learning styles of these particular groups (Kagan, Moss & Sigel, 1971; Cohen, 1969;

Hilliard, 1976; Chiu, 1985; Jalali, 1989; Vogt, Jordan, & Tharp, 1987). The closer the

match between a students's learning style and the instructional style of the teacher, the greater the student's success in school. All indications are that students are more likely to learn in an instructional setting that is consistent with their preferred learning style (Jalali, 1989).

Witkin (1962) devised the concept of field-dependent and field-independent learners. Cohen (1969) and Hilliard (1976) identified in their research distinct school-related behaviors by those who are field-dependent (global) and those who are field-independent (analytic). Students who were field-independent were analytical and extracted information embedded in a text, found linear relationships, had longer attention spans and concentration, and had greater perceptual vigilance. Students who were field-dependent worked to find special personal relevance in content, tended to be more global in focus, often found more meaning in text, and tended to devalue linear relationships. Field-dependent students also exhibited emotive behavior, had shorter attentions spans, and used strong and colorful expressions. The dilemma for culturally and linguistically diverse students is that curriculum and instruction in school in the United States is geared more towards the analytic or field-independent learner (Sleet & Grant, 1986).

Many linguistically and culturally diverse students use styles of inquiry and responding different from the standard procedures of many classrooms. Teachers tend to ask more convergent rather than divergent questions. Learning styles of linguistically diverse students tend to be more field-dependent or sensitive as they are more global in their thinking in comparison to Anglos (Sleeter & Grant, 1991).

Using the learning style inventory and the Group Embedded Figures Test, Jalali

40

(1989) compared the learning styles (field-independent/analytic and field-dependent/non-analytic) of 300 culturally different fourth through sixth graders. Results of the study revealed similar findings: African, Chinese, Greek, and Mexican Americans tended to be field dependent.

Chiu (1985) studied the relationship between cognitive style, academic achievement, and emotional responsiveness in fifty analytic and fifty non-analytic Chinese fourth and fifth graders living in Taiwan. Chiu showed that academic achievement was significantly higher for the analytic students than for the non-analytic. The research also revealed that the non-analytic students scored higher on measures of anxiety than the analytic counterparts.

Other researchers have shown linguistically and culturally diverse students generally have a global orientation to learning and are receptive to learning that is relational and holistic and employs thematic approaches (Hatfield et al., 1997; Malloy, 1997; Malloy & Jones, 1998). Visual and tactile learning modes are important for culturally and linguistically diverse students (Presmeg, 1989). Language issues and how the teacher talks are important for language minority students (MacGregor, 1993). How teachers ask questions is vital because in many cultures students are not used to being questioned (Strutchens, 1994). In fact, Patterson (1990) has found sociocultural mismatches in questions can negatively affect ELL learners. Time and waiting are important while asking questions to ELL students (Callahan, 1994; Campbell, 1993; Patterson, 1990). Use of cooperative work and heterogeneous grouping better suits the learning styles of linguistically and culturally diverse students (Brenner, 1994; Callahan,

1994; D'Ambrosio et al., 1995; Hatfield et al., 1997; Malloy, 1997; Zaslavsky, 1996).

Use of technology has also been found to suit the learning styles of minority and

linguistically diverse students (Hatfield et al, 1997; Callahan, 1994; D'Ambrosio et al.,

1995; Patterson, 1990; Yusuf, 1995). Slavin (1995) documented the success of

cooperative learning strategies with all varying groups of students, but especially with the

linguistically and culturally diverse.

Byrnes et al. (1998) examined the practices used by regular classroom teachers

involved in teaching ELL students. Using survey data, the researchers examined teachers'

knowledge about second language learning and their classroom practices. The findings of

the study suggest that teachers have not typically received formal training in second-

language learning, there are inadequate resources available to these teachers, and teachers

often engage in well-meaning practices that are detrimental to the academic and personal

development of language-minority children.

Passive learning constitutes the main mode of instruction in too many American

classrooms with negative consequences for students, especially ELL students. In 1991 a

congressionally mandated longitudinal study was done to assess the effectiveness of three

kinds of programs for ELL students. Classroom observational data were collected from

1984-1989 in 51 elementary schools and 554 classrooms in nine school districts in five

states (California, Florida, New Jersey, New York and Texas). The researchers revealed

ESL classrooms were teacher dominated, with children treated as passive learners and

assigned only cognitively simple tasks (Ramirez, Yuen, Ramey & Pasta, 1991; Billings &

Ramey, 1991) Studies abound showing the correlation between active learning and

academic success for language minority students (Apple & Beane, 1995; Brooks & Brooks, 1993; Harmin, 1994).

Ethnographic and case study research have identified several key instructional strategies important for ELL students: high complexity of lessons, an integrated and thematic curriculum, collaborative learning, and building upon the language-culture-knowledge base that a student brings to the classroom (Au, 1993; Chamot, Dale, O'Malley, & Spanos, 1992; Cummins, 1996b, Dalton & Sison, 1995; Garcia 1991, 1994; Goldenberg, 1991; Henderson & Landesman, 1992; Moll, 1988a, Ovanco, 1994; Panfil, 1995; Rivera & Zehler, 1990; Rosebery, Warren & Conant, 1992; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Thomas, 1994; Valdez pierce, 1991; Warren & Rosebery, 1995). Joyce et al (1989) and Joyce, Murphy, and Showers (1989) found in their studies that by preparing teachers to use a variety of instructional strategies, changing student achievement levels dramatically was possible.

Teacher expectations regarding a student's success are also critical for achievement. Teacher expectations refer to the predictions teachers make about the future behavior or academic achievement of their students, based on what the teacher presently knows about students. Teacher expectations also refer to student outcomes that occur because of the actions teachers take in response to their own expectations (Good & Brophy, 1987). The self-fulfilling prophecy (SFP) is a false belief that leads to behaviors that cause the belief to come true. Much research has been done in the last thirty years on the negative effects of teacher expectations and self-fulfilling prophecy on minority and culturally diverse student achievement (Good & Brophy, 1987).

Researchers have shown that even when innovative practices are implemented, students may have different goals from their teachers. Differential access to academic success for students of color than for middle-class white students may result from the teacher's lack of connection to students' cultural norms or values (Dressman, 1993; Lensmire, 1993; Michaels, 1987; Reyes, 1991).

There can also be a polarity of views among teachers about what is good teaching practice. Researchers investigating teacher effectiveness have shown that there may exist a contradiction between a teacher's educational philosophy, i.e., what he/she believes and what he/she finds himself/herself constrained in actual practice to do. Keddie (1971) has found a teacher may know what is good practice in theory but opt instead to use an alternative practice in the classroom as a response to more practical and immediate concerns such as "How can I get these children to remain quiet?" or "What will other people think about what I am doing?"

Dentler and Hafner (1997) in their examination of districts, successful in meeting the needs of immigrants, found in the low-performing districts, few innovative teaching strategies such as the ones described in the literature of effective practices. High-performing districts offered classes in which students were actively involved in learning rather than passively listening to teacher talk, and classes in which teachers relied on experiences and theme-based approaches. High-performing districts were characterized by classrooms in which, students were encouraged to ask questions, and teachers carried out two-way dialogue with students.

In the high-performing districts, the researchers saw teachers who were in touch

with students' cultural values. For example, there were pictures hanging on walls affirming cultural diversities of students. (Dentler & Hafner, 1997). A capacity-building model, rather than a deficit model, was evident in high-performing districts. Low-performing districts conducted business as usual, lecturing, using worksheets, and focusing on skill building and drills. Teachers in low-performing schools tended to use traditional achievement tests, and very little innovation was observed (Dentler & Hafner, 1997).

Garcia (1992) summarized research studies of effective instructional practices used with linguistically diverse and culturally diverse students. Eight common attributes were identified in the instructional organization of the classrooms studied: 1) high level of verbal communication between teacher and students, and among students, 2) integration of basic skills instruction with instruction in other subjects, 3) organization of instruction around themes, 4) use of collaborative learning groups, 5) students allowed to progress naturally and without pressure from writing in their native language to writing later in English, 6) highly committed teachers who act as student advocates, 7) principal support for teachers, and 8) parents active in school activities.

Culturally responsive teaching teaches all students to understand and validate their own as well as the other students' unique cultural heritages (Gay, 2000)

When reviewing the historical, anthropological, sociological, and psychological literature, one can find hundreds of definitions of the word "culture" (Krober & Kluckholn, 1963). First, culture refers to something perceived by human beings rather than something that occurs in nature. Secondly, human beings in interaction with one

another socially construct culture. Cultural ideas and understandings are shared by a group of people who recognize the knowledge, attitudes and values of one another, and who also agree on which cultural elements are better than others. Cultural elements are usually arranged in a hierarchy of values. Thirdly, culture is nurtured and cultivated in human beings. This theme of culture as growth and development implies that systems of meaning are to be taught to the young as a means of nurturing them and "enculturating" them as members of the social group (Cushner et al., 1992). Within homogenous cultures of the world this process occurs fairly easily. In the United States, however, because of the heterogeneity of cultures, children have to be helped to negotiate the different cultural patterns of all the social patterns in which participation occurs.

Triandis (1972) described two components of culture: Objective components were tangible, visible aspects seen to the eye, such as the clothes people wear, language spoken, and traditions. The subjective components, on the other hand, were the intangible aspects of culture, including attitudes, values, norms of behavior, and social roles. Subjective components of culture are more difficult to study and create the greatest challenge for immigrant children in the United States.

Most people expect that they will be faced with unfamiliar behaviors and customs when interacting with people from another culture. But according to Cushner (1992), they are not as prepared for the impact these interactions will have on their feelings, anxieties, emotions, prejudices, and sense of belonging. In the field of intercultural relations, this is termed "culture shock." Culture shock is not a negative experience; in fact, it is a necessary prerequisite for successful adjustment to a new culture. Culture shock implies a

disorientation that occurs whenever someone moves from their known, comfortable surroundings to an environment that is significantly different in which their needs are not as easily met. All immigrant children experience this. Children adjusting to a new culture have to call upon a wide array of strategies in an attempt to make sense of their world and adjust to the new setting. If the institution can modify and be more flexible to the needs of the immigrant child, then easier adaptation can occur for the child without undue stress. Unfortunately for many children from minority backgrounds, the school, as an institution, tends to be highly resistant to change and relatively inflexible in its approach to differences (Cushner et al., 1992).

Phinney (1991), in an overview of the relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem, concluded that being acculturated was an important condition for psychological well-being and for the ability to function in the mainstream. Phinney concluded that marginalization was the least adaptive mode, as it resulted in minority groups not identifying with either their own or the majority group. Phinney presented the example of Native Americans who, as a result of lacking a clear identity, may have suffered from feelings of hopelessness, alcoholism, and suicide. In school it is vital that teachers validate the cultural backgrounds of all students.

Stress, anxiety and ambiguity are common experiences of the immigrant child. Uncertainty seems to be the greatest cause of anxiety and its accompanying reactions. The probability of uncertainty seems greatest when there is a significant degree of ambiguity in the external situation. Intercultural interactions are fraught with uncertainty and ambiguity (Dibner, 1958).

Often teachers and students misunderstand each other because of lack of information and thus add to the stress level for all. Students from different backgrounds may incorrectly interpret cues from their peers or teachers, leading to misunderstandings. Teachers may misinterpret student behavior. Students, parents, and teachers may all be operating under different assumptions, a situation that can be very confusing and frustrating for all. Prejudice and stereotyping are also part of this psychological process for immigrant students. "Ethnocentrism" refers to the tendency for people to make judgments based on their own standards and to apply those standards to others (Allport, 1979). Another aspect of stress for immigrants is the concept of "in-groups" and "out-groups" where people are either psychologically close or distanced, comfortable or untrusting (Levine & Campbell, 1972).

Ovando and Collier (1998) examined the variation in cultural patterns of the individual personality of each student in reaction to particular classroom situations. They identified five typical patterns: 1) isolation and preferring to be alone in school, 2) refusal to do work, 3) remaining silent and refusing to speak with either students or teachers, 4) acting out aggressively, or 5) being happy and sociable. Teachers trying to validate all students culturally must first understand students may exhibit many responses to the classroom environment. A teacher has to learn to differentiate between reactions that are cultural and those that are psychological. Gabarino (1992) uses the example of immigrant children from war zones whose behaviors may manifest as nervousness or violence in the classroom.

Cultural validation of each student is a vital component of culturally responsive

teaching. School is a place where, without a teacher's knowing and no matter how hard a school tries, children may experience forms of racism. Cummins (1986) and Ogbu (1992) studied the impact of discrimination on self-esteem of immigrant children. Studies conclude that linguistically and culturally diverse children who do not feel in control of their environment may suffer low self-esteem as a result. Feelings of marginalization, alienation, loneliness, inferiority, and not belonging are very real for immigrant and minority students in our schools still today (Igoa, 1988; Nieto, 2000).

Alienation may occur in schools when students are placed in a grade level where they do not belong. Such action results in students eventually dropping out as soon as they can. The "drop out" or "push out" phenomena are all too common at the middle school and high school levels (Trueba, Spindler & Spindler, 1989).

Students may have trust issues with teachers because the cultural home expectations may not match the schools. Trust may also be violated when teachers set lower expectations for culturally diverse students and deny them access to career options in middle school and high school (Ovando & Collier, 1998).

The ethnic composition of school can influence a child's feeling of worth and value in school; a school with a larger proportion of language minority students may provide a supportive environment for the student and consequently positively effect self-esteem. A school with only a small number of ELL students may result in "stigmatization" as well as alienation. The psychological impact of a pullout ESL program for ELL students can often result in marginalization and inferiority (Ovando, 1978).

Discovering the student (Ovando & Collier, 1998) takes a lot of time and is hard for teachers to do with all the pressures in classrooms. Ovando and Collier warned that an emphasis on the traditional culture of the immigrant student, though well intentioned, might not be what validates. The authors cautioned against presenting the stereotypical elements of a student's culture, which may be misleading and can be demeaning. The authors used the example that often children from other cultures want to share their usual toys similar to everyone else's and not the other artifacts that symbolically represent a particular culture.

Noddings (1994) believed that educators have an obligation to adopt an "ethic of caring" in educating young people in America. She argued education is more than just training the intellect. Rather education should also teach students how to understand themselves and others so they can establish authentic relationships with those around them. She described an authentic relationship as one in which the involved parties can and want to acknowledge and respond to one another's need for care and caring. She suggested if educators adopted this ethic of caring, many aspects of our educational system would improve for all students but in particular for the linguistically and culturally diverse.

Zimmerman (2000) accepted Nodding's (1995) notion of "ethic of caring" and stated that ESL and bilingual programs for immigrant students should support a child's growth by recognizing where the child comes from. According to Zimmerman (2000), schools should strive to connect with the child's community and preserve and respect the child's home language and culture, thus enabling the child to avoid cultural alienation.

50

This can be done, according to Zimmerman (2000), via the consultation with adults who share the culture of students.

Manning et al. (1995) found that many educators refused to accept any empathy for linguistically diverse students. Teachers in their study held attitudes that were not open-minded. In fact, nine percent of the teachers believed students speaking a language other than English created a disadvantageous learning environment for other learners; 18% believed a learner's native language should be sacrificed so English could be learned more quickly, 23 % believed that learning English should take precedence over learning subject content, and 32 % believed they should not be expected to work with non-English speaking students. Manning (2000) stated students usually know when teachers have negative or uneasy feelings towards their differences, whether those differences include language, color of the skin, or one's cultural beliefs and mannerisms.

Culturally responsive teaching uses interdisciplinary approaches by incorporating multicultural information, resources, and materials across all subjects routinely

(Gay, 2000)

Curricular reforms stress the interdisciplinary nature of learning and the importance of inquiry, discovery, and collaborative learning (Brophy, 1992; Leinhardt, 1992). Dewey (1902) wrote curricula must be relevant to the lives of students if teaching is to occur. Knowledge is not compartmentalized into separate subject areas in real life, yet when students attend middle school and high school, they study subjects in very discrete time periods. Curriculum integration and thematic units are very common at the elementary level, but not so at middle school and high school where disciplines tend to

exist independently (Murphy, Joyce & Showers, 1989).

Howe (1984) and Ormond (1995) stressed the benefit of an interdisciplinary approach to teaching. New knowledge is learned more easily and retained longer when it is connected to prior knowledge and cognitive "schemata's." Helping students organize and interrelate knowledge are essential skills to maximizing classroom learning (Howe, 1984; Ormond, 1995). The implications for classroom practice are that teachers should support each other's disciplines and find ways to plan together so that learning can be more meaningful for students. The literature, as it relates to interdisciplinary approaches, is more extensive for elementary level where integrated teaching occurs more naturally than at the middle school level.

A Review of the literature pertaining to linguistically and culturally diverse students' perceptions of their own educational experiences:

Fullan's (1991) research on the process of how change in education occurs indicated that students themselves are perceived as the recipients of change rather than active participants in the change process. However, researchers such as King (1996), and Vance (1995) researched what students' believed to be the impact of educational changes made in their schools and classrooms. Results from such research revealed that student' opinions and voice pertaining to such change was indeed a valuable source of research for educational change agents.

Cowart and Rademacher (1998) conducted research with public school students in eight Professional Development Schools (PDSs) in Texas. This research gave voice to public school students in grades four through eight concerning their opinions and

experiences as participants in the Professional Development School model. Professional Development Schools (PDSs) are a collaborative effort between school districts and colleges of education. These PDSs prepare pre-service teachers for the "real world" of education by exposing them to the real classroom, within a "real" school, rather than a university setting. The university professors come to the "real world" of the school to prepare pre-service teachers (Darling-Hammond, Bullmaster & Cobb, 1995). The results of research by Cowart and Rademacher indicated that student voice is an important component to consider for educators in designing and implementing educational innovations.

Tan (2001) gave voice to Mexican American students and their perceptions related to ease of learning, school achievement, intent to stay in school, and post-high school educational aspirations. To gather data for the study, Tan (2001) worked with students in six high schools, using observations, document analysis, focus groups, and in-depth interview protocol. Students were asked what they liked about school and how they would describe a good teacher, whether teachers taught material related to students' native culture, and whether inclusion of native culture in the classroom experience helped them to learn new information. The students chosen for the study were all Hispanic. The results indicated that there was a great deal of inconsistency between teachers and administrators concerning their understanding of cultural diversity. In schools with low dropout rates teachers and administrators demonstrated varying degrees of sensitivity to the needs and problems of Hispanic students. In schools with high dropout rates, teachers and administrators expressed more feelings of resignation and held lower academic

expectations for Hispanic students. The students affirmed that they did better in classes in which the teacher affirmed their culture, gave them choice in assignments, avoided lecture, and used individual activities and whole class discussions. Tan affirmed students did better when there was more interaction with teachers, more cooperative learning, and when the teachers respected Hispanic cultures. This study illuminated the benefit of students' perceptions and the importance of considering their opinions and experiences in the process of educational change.

Tuan (1995) gave voice to the experiences of Korean and Russian students for seven months in one middle school in north Texas. Tuan's was a qualitative study that involved participant observation as well as more than 20 in-depth interviews conducted with teachers, principals, ESL staff, counselors and community workers to develop a fuller picture of the students and the factors influencing their experiences.

The voices and opinions of the immigrant students in Tuan's (1995) study revealed that immigrant students were not passive participants in the processes of socialization and adaptation. Rather, they actively interpreted the meaning of school assimilation and employed strategies suited to their particular circumstances and goals. They were not free to choose and act but were forced to act within the constraints established by the social and material conditions framing their experiences. Schools, Tuan found, were places where immigrant students joined American society, but not necessarily on the terms school authorities preferred.

Ima (1991) conducted case studies of at-risk Southeast Asian refugee students in secondary schools. Ima's was an ethnographic study involving interviews with teachers

and students (Ima, 1991). The students, who were interviewed in the study, spoke about their problems such as truancy, suspension, dislike of teachers, dislike of classes, conflicts with other students, and bad peer influences. In their rare positive statements about school, they mentioned girls or commented going to school was better than staying at home. Only one mentioned the importance of education for a career. When asked what changes they would like to see at Washington High School, their responses were "nothing," "pick my own teacher," "easier work," "no one tell me what to do," "I shouldn't be in the same school as gang bangers," "good-looking teacher," "get rid of the school fence, it looks like a jail," "teacher babbles too much," and "more comfortable chairs."

Ima (1991) found how culturally alienated these students were from the school culture and identified the shortcomings of schools, which included inadequate materials, teachers' negative attitudes, stereotyping of students, and unsafe school environments. Ima concluded that all too often teachers operated from a deficit model of their students, and they lowered their standard for performance in ESL and bilingual classes.

Thompson (2000) carried out a study in Southern California with tenth grade ELL students. The purpose of the study was to determine the teachers' instructional strategies that either helped or deterred students from learning. The data were collected through narratives and questionnaires. All the participants were predominantly Hispanic and were enrolled in honors or college preparatory programs, and English was their second language. Five students were interviewed, but 130 students completed the questionnaire. Literature based activities, oral practice, individual help, peer interaction, games, use of

realia (real objects) constituted the instructional strategies the students perceived as being most helpful to them in the classroom. The students listed the most ineffective strategies that teachers used as being forced to read in front of the class, being corrected publicly, segregating language-minority students from the language-majority students, ignoring language-minority students, embarrassing students, not providing adequate assistance, and covering information too rapidly. The researcher concluded policies mandated what teachers should be doing but in reality the teacher totally controlled what was implemented once the classroom door was closed.

Olsen (1997, 1998) in their interviews with ELL students found they were increasingly isolated from mainstream students, due primarily to their grouping in sheltered English classes. Moreover, Olsen found the sheltered English approach often placed students with the least trained teachers and with few appropriate materials and little primary-language support for instruction. Olsen argued there was a mismatch between the traditional structure of secondary schools and the needs of immigrant students. The school structure lacked the flexibility to allow immigrants to accumulate credits toward graduation and failed to provide a coherent educational approach. Olson's work is further substantiated by studies by Lucas, Henz & Donato (1990) who found similar results in their interviews with English Language Learners.

Nieto (2000) gave voice to students in by presenting her research results in the form of case studies. By giving listening to the voice of these language and culturally diverse students, Nieto developed a conceptual framework for the implementation of culturally responsive teaching in today's classrooms.

Igoa (1995) illuminated "the inner world of the immigrant child" to provide valuable information to inform educational change in the field of culturally responsive teaching. The dialogues, opinions, and experiences of these students provide a perspective that teachers or administrators could never provide. Only the student could aptly express what it was like to be an immigrant and English Language Learner.

This review of research pertaining to ELL students' perceptions of their own educational experiences provides valuable insight into the educational needs of such students. Students' opinions and voices can help inform culturally responsive teaching practices in today's classrooms.

Conclusion

This literature review illuminated the structural inequalities that effect racial and ethnic minorities and cultural and linguistic minorities in public schools. Such inequities have resulted in ELL students being "ESL lifers," never having equal access to the core curriculum while in ESL. Then upon leaving the ESL classroom, ELL students enter the mainstream academically handicapped with little hope of ever catching up once they are in middle school or high school. Compounding the problem is numerous teachers' own admission of knowing very little about what to do instructionally to deal with these students. Researchers have also highlighted the concerns over the exclusionary disciplinary policies and practices that produce disproportionately high expulsion and suspension rates for children of racial minority communities (Olsen, 1995).

Historically policy concerns in bilingual education and ESL have focused on the elementary level. The emphasis was understandable because there were more ELL

students at the elementary level than at the secondary level (Olsen, 1997). The review of the literature revealed to me that there was not as much research conducted at the middle school level pertaining to culturally responsive teaching. Thus the literature review informed my decision to conduct research at middle school level in an effort to give voice to students and teachers at this grade level.

This review of the literature also shaped my methodological approach to my research study. I wanted to give a balanced view on both students' and teachers' perceptions relating to culturally responsive teaching. The review of the literature substantiated the value of giving voice to participants, especially students, in the process of educational change. The literature relating to Geneva Gay's (2000) five characteristics of culturally responsive teaching also shaped how I structured the interview questions for all participants in my study. My questions were designed to give voice to all participants in an effort to further the research base relating to culturally responsive teaching.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology used in this study and is organized as follows: 1) research questions that guided the study, 2) research design, 3) researcher's background and identity, 4) site selection and description of setting, 5) participant selection and characteristics, 6) data collection procedures, and 7) data analysis procedures.

Introduction

"Qualitative inquiry is an umbrella term for various philosophical orientations to interpretive research" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 9). Qualitative methods are being used more in educational research, especially in the field of second language acquisition. Educational research has traditionally used quantitative survey methods, but during the 80s qualitative research became more acceptable as a valid form of second language research (Politzer, 1981). Whereas the case study has had a secure place in studies of naturalistic language acquisition in children, not until the late eighties was case study design viewed as a major, rigorous approach to research in formal second language settings (Brown, 1988; Spindler, 1974).

According to Glesne and Peshkin (1992), "Qualitative researchers seek to make sense of personal stories and the ways in which they intersect" (p. 1). Qualitative research uses "multiple, socially constructed realities . . . that are complex and indivisible into

discrete variables . . . the [qualitative researcher's] task is to understand and interpret the multiple perceptions of the participants" (p. 6). The qualitative researcher is the instrument for data collection as she/he observes, interviews, asks questions, and interacts with research participants (Howe, 1988; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The study of classrooms as cultural contexts was not begun by psychologists but by sociolinguists and educational anthropologists (Cazden, 1986; Erickson, 1986). Originally called the ethnography of communication (Cazden, 1986), the approach was introduced into educational research by an influential volume edited by Cazden, John, & Hymes (1972). From diverse origins there developed a line of investigation called microethnography, a method useful for obtaining data from a single classroom teacher, a few students, or a single school. Many such ethnographic studies have contributed rich and relevant data to the field of educational research (Erickson, 1986; Tharp, 1989).

Ethnography, based on the work of anthropologists such as Malinowski (1922), is characterized by participant observation, the study of a small number of cases, work with "raw" data such as field notes and audio transcripts, and an emphasis on the particular. This method encourages interpretive analyses that rely more on rich description and explanation rather than statistical data (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994).

For this research study, understanding perceptions of students, teachers, and administrators required time to develop a relationship of trust between volunteer participants and me as researcher. My qualitative research role was that of facilitator working collaboratively with participants (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). The in-depth interviews, and the need to uncover the unique perceptions of each participant, within the

cultural contexts of the classroom and school, required a qualitative method. To do justice to the complexity of volunteer participants' perceptions, I immersed myself three days a week in the school setting for over four months during 2002.

Research Questions

Questions that guided this study were as follows:

(1) What are teachers' perceptions of the academic challenges facing English Language Learner (ELL) students as they enter the mainstream classroom?

(2) What instructional practices do teachers use to meet the academic needs of ELL students?

(3) What are ELL students' perceptions of the academic challenges facing them in the mainstream classroom?

(4) What are the ELL students' perceptions of the instructional practices used by teachers to meet students' academic needs?

(5) What administrative procedures and policies are in place in the school and district to meet the educational needs of ELL students?

Research Design

I used the procedures of case study design while incorporating ethnographic techniques of interviewing and non-participant observation in classrooms with six selected students, six teachers, and eight selected administrators and staff members of the school. Based on the guidelines of case study design, which sheds light on a phenomenon by focusing on selected cases (Stake, 1994), the purpose of this study was to understand the educational experiences and perceptions of selected immigrant students and their

mainstream teachers. Following the method of case study design, the educational experiences of ELL students were examined in the naturally occurring context of the school and the classroom. Because the goal of case studies is to understand a given phenomenon from the perceptions of the participants (referred to as "emic" perspective in qualitative research) all participants were interviewed in-depth in order to understand their unique perceptions (See Appendix A for interview protocol).

Ethnography has a host of characteristics, including the use of participant-observation to study a community for an extended period of time, a holistic approach, the portrayal of the community from the perspective of the participants, a focus on culture, and a focus on context (Agar, 1980; Fetterman, 1989; Spindler, 1982). Following ethnographic techniques I sought to uncover the meanings of behaviors observed in the day-to-day lives of these students and teachers rather than wondering about how frequently a behavior occurred. This study was labor intensive and focused on select individuals.

The sample of participants selected for this study was as a result of "serendipity" which is commonly the case in qualitative research (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Volunteer participants were not identified until permission was procured, in writing, from the school district and I entered the school setting on January 16, 2002.

The decision to be a participant or non-participant is determined by the researcher and the constraints within the fieldwork site (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). For this study, I chose to remain a non-participant researcher in order to maintain objectivity about what I observed, heard, and about what participants revealed to me verbally.

The question of duration and frequency of observations and interviews was critical to this study (See Appendix B for timeline, interview and observation schedule). Valuable qualitative data could not be obtained without rapport between the volunteer participants and me; thus, I spent much time getting to know participants and making them feel at ease before I began interviews and observations. (Bogdan & Biklin, 1992; Spinder, 1992).

To further facilitate the development of this rapport between participants, and me, the interviews and observations were divided out over the research period rather than conducting all interviews at once with one participant at a time. All participants were either interviewed or observed, or sometimes both, weekly or bi-weekly. I also met students casually each day as I always began my day at the Language Center and said "good morning" and chatted informally. I also met teachers casually on a regular basis in the hallways between passing periods, first thing in the morning before the bell rang, or in the evening after school. The decision to divide out the interviews and observations in this manner was integral to the design of the study and ensured that relationships were developed gradually with students and teachers.

I composed the questions following a thorough review of the literature on culturally responsive teaching. I used Geneva Gay's 2000 definition and characteristics of culturally responsive teaching to facilitate the categorization of these questions into themes. Conducting interviews and observations with all participating teachers and students, three days a week over a four month period, enabled me to understand patterns and emerging themes better. This also validated my day- to- day findings and further

substantiated for me which events or phenomena were isolated occurrences and which were regularly occurring patterns and events. This methodological technique also enabled the me to validate what I found, analyze the data concurrently with data collection, and return to ask confirming questions or get answers to questions that were still unclear.

The administrators and staff were only interviewed once and not until the end of the study. I had also built a relationship of trust with them as they met me almost daily in the hallways and office area. The only participant I did not know prior to conducting an interview was the ESL district coordinator. The Language Center team leader initially approached and requested the participation of the district's ESL director on my behalf.

Researcher Identity

In this study I was the primary data collection instrument. I interviewed my participants, observed them, and maintained field notes of my observations. My subjective side is the reason why I chose this topic for research and is also what I needed to keep in check to maintain impartiality and objectivity through the data collection process. My identity as researcher also illuminates my ease and ability to maintain the rapport of students, teachers, and administrators in this study. Understanding who I am will illuminate for the reader what I brought to this research study in the way of life experiences, skills and how these influenced the negotiation and data collection process.

I identify myself as an "immigrant Irish teacher" who made my way to the shores of America at the age of 27 because of sheer "luck." I would probably have never come to the United States if I had not won my 'Green Card" in an immigration lottery in 1989. It is this three fold identify of being (A) Irish, (B) a voluntary immigrant, and an (C)

educator for 19 years in both Ireland and U.S. that encompass my prior experiences and led me to choose my research topic on culturally responsive teaching.

Researcher as Irish

I am proud to be Irish. Many people in the United States identify themselves as being Irish because their ancestral roots connect them to Ireland. These are not the Irish with whom I identify. These are more correctly Irish Americans or "Irish only on Saint Patrick's Day" who sometimes innocently perpetuate the stereotypical aspects of my homeland such as excessively drinking green beer on Saint Patrick's Day or chasing Leprechauns and crocks of gold at the end of the rainbow.

I wish that growing up in Ireland for 27 years were as charming as depicted in many Hollywood movies like the "The Quiet Man" or "Darby O'Gill and the little People" where the sky is blue and the people always drinking and happy. The Ireland I knew was always raining and overcast, economically disadvantaged, divided by religion, wrought with terrorism and friction over land, and sometimes oppressively Catholic and patriarchal.

The Irish educational system that shapes who I am today was very rigid in its structure and pedagogical practices. Competition was the main motivating force for students to do well in school because of a scarcity of places in university. I managed to get one of the coveted spots in college that was only privy to ten percent of secondary school graduates in 1980. I graduated in the top of my class due to the strict discipline and support of my parents that helped me endure eight to ten hours of homework nightly during the five years of my secondary education. Getting a place in college was not luck!

It is said that Irish people are lucky, but for me it was hard work, perseverance, and tenacity that hide behind the lucky breaks that have occurred in my life.

Being Irish for me is one who loves social and personal interactions with people, telling stories, appreciating music and dance from other countries. The Irish educational system instilled these values in me during the elementary years, which was a less severe system than the secondary one.

Growing up in Ireland has afforded me the privilege of speaking three languages and traveling extensively, as an adult, around Europe and other countries. Being raised in Ireland, a country where tourism was then the major economical impetus, has given me the privilege of being exposed to many different people and nationalities.

Being Irish has afforded me a rich ancestral history of folklore and customs that have been integrated into American society today. Being Irish is a positive advantage in America. The Irish brought Halloween to America and many words from the Irish language have been incorporated into American English today (Galore, slew, eejit, etc). The Irish as an immigrant group have climbed the social and political ladder and have come a long way from the early 1900s when being Irish was considered working class, uneducated, and overall inferior. The Irish who faced the "No Irish Need Apply" slogans in 1900s urban America were the pioneers who forged a better future for their children and grandchildren and who consequently today enjoy the status of belonging to a privileged group of people.

It is this researcher as Irish that shapes my personality today. I have tenacity and perseverance that I believe was instilled in me by my strong Irish background and

upbringing in a strict educational system. These qualities assisted me through my immigration experience that was harder than I anticipated. My outgoing and gregarious personality influenced my decision to pursue a research design that allowed me to be the instrument for data collection. Being Irish made me comfortable with the immigration experience because I believe that I assimilated quickly and experienced less prejudice and discrimination than other immigrant groups that come to the United States today.

My Irish cultural background propels my curiosity about understanding the experiences of other immigrant groups. This quality benefits me as a researcher. My tenacity and perseverance that helped me endure through the data collection process to finish this study. My background of growing up in a poor country, at that time, helps me understand, a little, the experience of immigrant people and the reason why they left their own country.

Researcher as Immigrant

My desire to give students voice and expression to their experiences as immigrants in a public school in the United States is shaped by my own personal immigration experiences. This desire to help the public understand the complexity of the educational process for immigrant students has shaped my research in a qualitative design involving extensive observations and interviews of select immigrant students.

My own personal experiences of the difficulty of immigrating and settling into America propel me to give voice to students. My experiences as a degreed immigrant who struggled for two years to figure out how to make it in this country afford me the empathy and the commonality with my research volunteer students.

Although I was lucky to win my Green Card in a lottery, getting to United States and "becoming somebody" took many years for me to attain. I realize that my experience as an immigrant differs from forced immigrants, refugees and others. I chose to come to the United States and I came on my own. Although I did not have much money, I had advantages over many involuntary immigrants. I chose to come, had a bachelor's degree, spoke English, and knew that I could always return to Ireland if I didn't like this country.

My experiences as an immigrant still put me in a position of being an "outsider," which allows me to relate to my immigrant participants. I have experienced frustration as an immigrant as I tried to figure out a new bureaucratic system for attaining a driver's license, opening a bank account, and establishing credit history, etc. I spent two years working as a waitress, checking groceries, and working in a bank because I was not certified to teach in the state of Kansas where I lived at that time. Although I felt frustration at times and often embarrassment in this work, I still persevered to go back to college to earn my teaching certificate. I do know what it is like to have little money or social status but again my tenacity and perseverance always forced me to remain positive and hopeful that things would improve in spite of many obstacles. Because I was an immigrant, I was often vulnerable and naïve in my judgments and sometimes trusted too much. My experience as an immigrant causes me to create a platform for immigrant students to share their own personal stories so that others might understand as I do what an emotionally traumatic experience it is.

My own personal background and experiences as an immigrant introduced the risk of bias in this study. I always had to be conscious that I did not unfairly bias my

research in favor of the students. I overcame this bias by also understanding the teachers' perceptions and ensuring that I did this with equal understanding and fairness. I know what it is like to be an immigrant and to be an immigrant teacher with immigrant students. But I also needed to understand what it is like for teachers who had no such experiences to teach immigrant students.

Researcher as educator

My role as educational researcher has been shaped by my experiences in both the United States and Ireland. My teaching experience made me comfortable in the public school setting. I understood much of the culture of school before I entered the setting. I was aware of the internal workings, bureaucracy and structure of a school setting. This background encouraged me to be comfortable in my research site for the four-month duration.

But my background as teacher and assistant professor brought with it my critical and judgmental eye when it came to teaching practices. My job as an assistant professor requires that I evaluate student teachers and recommend them for teacher certification in the state of Texas. I am also a qualified administrator with extensive background knowledge and training in the evaluation of classroom management and teaching practices. I have been in over eight schools during my career in both Ireland and the United States. I had to be careful as a researcher to describe what I saw without passing any judgment. To ensure objectivity I focused my classroom observations on the interactions between the ELL students I was observing and the teacher. I focused on what the student was doing or facial expressions. I also had the opportunity to talk to the

students that same day or later on in the week and was able to ask for further clarification about what I observed. I was able to confirm my observations with the actual experiences of students. I also had the opportunity to talk to the teachers later, and ask them confirming questions about what I observed. I found that this process ensured that I was in fact reporting actual events rather than judgments.

My own teaching experiences in the United States were the reason I choose this topic for research. I have seen older immigrant students isolated in the back of classrooms cutting and pasting letters of the alphabet for months. Teaching colleagues have expressed their dislike and disdain for immigrant students and have described them as "smelly" and "awful." I have seen teachers' frustrations as they tearfully anticipated the arrival of an immigrant student to their classrooms, as they did not feel equipped or qualified to teach a student who could not communicate in English. All these experiences shaped my research project in seeking to understand why teachers feel this way and how this can be ameliorated for both immigrant students and teachers.

The benefit these experiences brought with it to my research is that I understood the frustrations of both students and teachers. The risk of these experiences for me as a researcher was that I had to temper my pedagogical criticisms and be open to understanding rather than judging the teachers' perceptions and teaching practices.

Site Selection and description of setting

Glesne and Peshkin (1992) caution, it is not "advisable to conduct your study in your own backyard " (p. 21). The site chosen for this study was an urban middle school in Texas. The name "Western Heights" Middle School is fictitious as are all names of all

70

participants in this study. I selected the school for the study because it was located in an economically disadvantaged urban setting, and had an immigrant student population of more than 30%, and had an "acceptable" performance academic rating on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills for the 2000-2001 school year. There are four academic ratings in the state of Texas: exemplary, recognized, acceptable and low performing. To be rated "exemplary", at least 90% of all students and each student group must pass reading, writing and mathematics; the school's dropout rate must be 1% or less; and the school's attendance rate must be at least 94%. To be rated "recognized," at least 80% of all students in each student group must pass reading, writing and mathematics; the school's dropout rate must be 3.5% or less; and the school's attendance rate must be at least 94%. To be rated "acceptable," between 50%-79.9% of all students and each student group must pass reading, writing and mathematics; the school's dropout rate must be 5.5% or less, and the school's attendance rate must be at least 90%. To be rated "low performing" is to have scores below the "acceptable" rating. Western Heights middle school has been low-performing in the past, but thanks to the hard work and efforts of the district has been "acceptable" and closer to the "recognized' status in recent years.

I have an extensive background in elementary education, but not in middle school. I was unfamiliar with this school and had never been on the campus other than to seek permission from the principal to use the school as a potential research site in September of 2001.

Western Heights Middle School

The site chosen for this study was an urban middle school in a large district in

71

Texas. This school is located in an economically disadvantaged urban setting, has an immigrant student population of more than 30%, and has an "acceptable" academic rating on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) for the 2000-2001 school year.

The immigrant students for this study spend a year in the Immigrant Welcome Center (IWC), a service that is supported by local funds from the district. After a year in this academy the immigrant student arrives at the Language Center and spends a minimum of one year in the Language Center developing basic English language skills acquired from the IWC while learning grade level specific content. When the teachers in the Language Center determine that the student is ready, he/she is then mainstreamed into the regular classrooms for some or most of the day. This usually happens during the students' third year in the United States and their second year at the Language Center. The student must also take the TAAS test at the end of the third year. All participating students in this study were in their third year in the United States and actually took the TAAS test for the first time during this research period.

The school serves approximately 1,100 students. The school houses a special interest program (SIP) for the gifted and talented students. There is a regular ESL program for students who were born in America but whose home language is not English. This program serves approximately 200 students. The school also has special education programs serving learning and behaviorally disabled students. There were about 100 students in the Language Center. Only 12 of these fit the criteria for this research study.

There are three full-time counselors, principal, four assistant principals (one in charge of special interest program), police liaison officer, four security officers, and sixty-

seven teachers.

The Language Center is located on the third floor of the building with eighth grade students. The seventh grade students are on the ground floor and the sixth graders in the basement. It is an old historical building with dark windowless hallways. The building was constructed in 1927. There have been several additions to the building and most recently in the fall, prior to my research, the completion of a connecting hallway on the third floor. The ESL and special education classrooms are housed in portable buildings at the back of the school. A grand old marble staircase, reminiscent of the Victorian era, announces the main doorway entrance leading to the main office where the secretaries and assistant principals work.

My first impression of the building inside was that the bright orange lockers were like beacons in the dark windowless corridors. The building smelled of history and age. The students' bathrooms, with the exception of the new wing, appeared outdated and did not have hot water. The teacher's lounge was a small room that could not hold more than twelve people comfortably. This lounge housed a metal detector, a couple of tables and some chairs. Most teachers left the campus to eat their lunch. The only objects that were bright and inviting in the teacher's lounge were the Coke and snack machines.

The brightest wing was where the Language Center students were located and it was also the quietest area. The security officers told me that they preferred to be stationed on the third floor, as there were never any trouble or fights on that floor. The most troublesome floor and the noisiest, according to the security officers, was definitely the basement that housed the sixth graders. A visitor was likely to be "run over" during passing period on any

floor as 1,100 students scramble within a four minute period to get to their lockers and make it to their next class assignment before the tardy bell. Bells were usually "off" during wet weather and did not function unless manually rung by the secretary. The bells were always a topic of conversation daily and often a source of much frustration for teachers. Because the building was old, there were often electrical problems during which time students and teachers had to sit in dark classrooms sometimes for as long as four hours without light, heat or air-conditioning.

The students' dress code allowed them to wear a white top without any logos or markings. This policy had been in force for more than a year and had dramatically improved the "gang" problems and fights. The school served a predominantly Latino population with approximately 20% African American and less than 10% white. Teachers attributed the demographic shifts of an increased Latino population in the past five years to fewer discipline problems in classrooms.

The library, located on the second floor, was where I conducted my student interviews. The librarian always made me feel comfortable and welcome.

The grounds surrounding the school were being renovated at the time of my research. A new parking lot for teachers was needed as the existing one was uneven and gravel and dirt. On a wet day, the students, teachers, and visitors dragged all this dirt into the building. So on a wet day the floor, which I discovered was always shining and clean at 7:00 a.m. in the morning, was usually muddy and filthy by 9:00 a.m.

A new basketball court was constructed for students during my research period and there were plans to create a soccer field for students across the street in the coming year. In

the morning students waited outside in this uncemented area and on a wet day sought shelter under the eaves.

The people in this building created the atmosphere and warmth, which I grew to love and not the building itself. Teachers who had been at this building more than three years told me it was the students who motivated them to stay, and not the material building or administration.

Negotiating the research relationship

I had thought over carefully how I should proceed. I knew that I needed to familiarize myself with the school and surroundings, build a relationship with assistant principals, counselors, security officers, select teachers, and the regular office staff. Although I knew my perseverance and sheer luck were responsible for getting me there, I knew graciousness and diplomacy would be necessary for negotiating the rest of my way.

As researcher I felt a sheer gratitude to be there and the desire not to let anybody down. As I entered the school again on that first Wednesday I had a heavy load in my heart that the real work was only just beginning. I climbed the well-worn marble staircase of this very old and historical building and proceeded down the dark hallway, dotted with bright orange lockers, and met the principal with a wad of "lost and found" clothes in his hand. He shook my hand, beamed ear-to-ear, and said, "Where have you been? We were expecting you last week." To which I replied, waving my letter of permission, from the district, "I could not start without this!" He gave me an all-knowing nod and proceeded to tell me to make myself at home, that the Language Center Coordinator, Mrs. Winters, was expecting me in the Language Lab. I felt such relief. I asked to be introduced to the

four security officers as I had planned.

The principal introduced me to Mr. "Bob," the lead security officer and I asked if I could shadow him for a few days while I familiarized myself with this large school. Mr. Bob replied, "sure, it is almost passing period so this should be an eye-opening experience for you." Mr. Bob explained to me that the third floor of the school was the quietest because that's "where the Language Center is and all the immigrant kids."

I stayed with Mr. Bob, following him around the building. He showed me the school, faculty restrooms, and how to access the elevator with the "key trick." I proceeded to observe the loud and excited behaviors of more than 1,100 students rushing within a four-minute period to get to their classrooms. Contrary to Mr. Bob's predictions, it did not phase me. I was a sixth grade teacher once and felt very comfortable and not at all perturbed by this atmosphere. I kept these comments to myself. I proceeded to follow Mr. Bob and even prevented two boys, who were on their way to class in the portable buildings through the teachers' parking lot, from proceeding to let air out of one of the teacher's car tires.

I met the librarian on the second floor and she was very kind and welcoming. I needed a private place to conduct student interviews, write my field notes, and generally a place to think and "hang out." She provided me with a safe, warm and welcome haven for the four-month period. The library became my place to retreat and became my base where my volunteer students and teachers knew to find me. With the permission of the school secretary, I created a mailbox for myself where teachers could communicate with me as needed. This box allowed me to receive copies of any memos or information

76

distributed to the teachers from the principals' office. This strategy allowed me to keep abreast about upcoming activities, meetings, and events in the school.

<center>Participant selection and characteristics</center>

The participants for the study were selected students, teachers, and administrators from Western Heights Middle School. I used "snowballing" and "networking" sampling techniques to identify participants (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). After I gained official permission from the school district and the principal, I became part of the school culture for four months. The teacher participants were limited to six teachers teaching ELL students in regular classrooms. The teachers were selected from the following disciplines: Reading, English, Math, Science and Social Studies. These disciplines were selected because review of prior research with ELL populations suggested that they had more difficulties academically in these courses because of the level of language and writing skill required for success.

I met with Mrs. Winters, the Language Center coordinator, at the end of my first week in the school. It was clear to me immediately that she was the main "gatekeeper" of both students and teachers. She identified a pool of 12 students and possible teachers who met the criteria for the study. Mrs. Winters suggested that she be the liaison with both teachers and students and she initiated contact with all potential volunteers for me.

By January 23, 2002, I had spent over a week in the field and procured a map of the school with every teacher's name. I introduced myself personally, to every teacher, secretary, assistant principal, counselor, custodian, nurse, and all non-faculty personnel, and explained my presence in the school. Mr. Healy, the custodian, was very instrumental

<center>77</center>

in familiarizing me with the school and community. He grew up in the school community as a little boy when the area was mostly Black and segregated in the late sixties and early seventies.

<u>Teacher Selection</u>

Mrs. Winters approached mainstream teachers who were interested in participating in my study. I met with each one individually and set up a time when I could present my "cover story." (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992), explain their role and benefits of participating in the study. I prepared a detailed proposal to enlist their support and trust. I felt that monetary compensation was important to prevent attrition and to compensate teachers for giving me their planning periods to conduct interviews. I presented my "cover story" to the six teachers individually and negotiated consent from all of them. I gave them background information about myself, clearly delineated what their participation entailed, answered any questions or concerns they had, and assured them of their rights as subjects and my ethical obligations to them in terms of anonymity.

I felt that the teachers were respectful of me and two in particular said it was "nice" to be compensated financially for their time. They said they had not expected it but appreciated it very much. One teacher was impressed with my willingness to come back next year and offer my in kind services to the school. I felt this created a sense of respect between the volunteer teachers and me. I felt that they viewed me as somebody who really cared about their school and not just somebody who came to use them for research purposes.

Personally, I felt I did a good job of recruiting their support. I think the consequences

of my succinct proposal and the benefits that the teachers gained ensured their long-term commitment to the research. My research stance, I believe created a sense of trust, as they saw me as somebody who would be returning to the school next year. One teacher in particular asked if I would be willing to do staff development the following year for the faculty.

<u>Student Selection</u>

Student participants were limited to six Spanish-speaking immigrant students, from eleven to sixteen years of age, who had spent two to three years in English as Second Language classrooms and were integrated into the mainstream classroom setting for most or all of the day.

Mrs. Winters sent home my permission slips in Spanish to twelve students. Parents were also given a Spanish translation copy of the questions to be asked of their children. Parents willing to allow their child to participate were asked to sign the consent form, which was placed in the students' file as requested by the school district.

Six students obtained permission to participate. All met the criteria of being in "partial Language Center" which meant they had advanced English speaking skills, were recent immigrants, and were about to take the TAAS as they were in the country for almost three years. If I had been unable to obtain consent from six students I would have followed up with the other students for participation. As it happened, I received the required number that I needed for my study.

I presented my "cover story" similarly to the students individually who agreed to participate. I clearly explained their role and also offered them monetary compensation

for their participation. I was very concerned about attrition and again believed that this

offer of compensation motivated students to remain committed during the research

period. I arranged a time to meet each student either during lunch or before or after

school. I set up a time with each of them and we established this routine throughout the

research period. I also explained to students their ethical rights as research subjects and

addressed any questions or concerns that they had.

<u>Staff and Administrator Selection</u>

I interviewed the principal, two assistant principals, counselor, Language Center

coordinator, attendance clerk, parent liaison, and the ESL director for the district. I

interviewed these individuals during the months of May and June when TAAS was over,

and as the school year was coming to a close. I procured their permission gradually as I

spent time in the school and developed relationships with them. The ESL director for the

district was the only exception, as I had not met her before the interview but had talked

with her on the phone and procured her permission to participate after Mrs. Winters had

initially approached her on my behalf.

<div align="center">Data Collection Procedures</div>

Qualitative research relies on a variety of methods for gathering data. Multiple

methods data collection constitutes one form of "triangulation" and assists in making the

research trustworthier. In this study triangulation was conducted by gathering data from

many sources: classroom observations; interviewing students, teachers, and

administrators; and select document collection (lesson plans, disaggregated TAAS data,

mission statement of school, year books, etc.). I also maintained extensive field notes

during the research study. These field notes were a valuable source of data during the research period in the school. Field notes are written descriptions of people, objects, places, events, activities, and conversations. The notes supplemented information I gleaned from observations and interviews. My field notes had two basic aspects - - descriptive and reflective (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Jansen & Peshkin, 1992). An important part of the notes were my reactions, reflections, and tentative assumptions or hypotheses.

The notes assisted me in maintaining an accurate audit trail of everything I did during the research period. The field notes allowed me to reflect at the end of each day and look for emerging themes and unanswered questions. The following time frame and timeline emerged from my typed notes of activity during the research period.

Time Frame for Data Collection

Data collection began on January 16, 2002, and ended on June 3, 2002 (See Table 1 for the Data-Planning Matrix). I adapted this matrix from (LeCompte & Preissle 1993) to assist me in clearly delineating what data I needed to collect and how they related to the research questions that guided the study. I referred to this matrix at all times to ensure that I remained focused on the research questions, as it was very tempting at the beginning of the research period to become overwhelmed by much extraneous information that had no bearing on my research questions. The data-planning matrix assisted me greatly in this capacity.

Initially when I began my research, I was told by many individuals that there was a "dark side" to the school. As I spent four months there I was privy to many off the cuff

remarks and shared confidences; I worried a lot during the initial stages of my research about knowing this information, and what I was supposed to do with it. I managed to remain totally confidential in this regard and with the help of the data planning matrix realized much of this negative superfluous information had no bearing on my overall research question. I remained friendly with all teachers and maintained a professional distance.

I audiotaped eight hours of administrator interviews, 18 hours of student interviews, and 30 hours of teacher interviews. I observed for 18 hours in the classrooms. I observed the six participating teachers in the study, two other teachers who invited me to observe them, as well as two teachers in the Language Center. I maintained extensive field notes of all my activities and reflections. I spent time in the teachers lounge, cafeteria, hallways, and around the school in general. All the audiotapes were transcribed and field notes typed. All these sources generated approximately 1,000 pages of written data for deeper analysis by the beginning of June.

Table 1

Data-Planning Matrix for Students' and Teachers' Perceptions of Culturally Responsive
Teaching

What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	What kind of data will answer the question	Where can I find the data?	Whom do I contact for access?	Time lines for acquisition
(1) What are the teachers' perceptions of the academic challenges facing ELL students as they enter the mainstream classroom?	To assess the extent to which the teacher considers period of time student spent in the ESL program prepared him/her for mainstream classroom. To assess the educational gaps/challenges experienced by immigrant student	Criterion – referenced test scores (TAAS); grades on students' report cards; grades on teacher-made tests; samples of students writing and portfolios; Teacher Interviews	Students' cumulative folders in secretary's office; Grades & portfolios in homerooms	Principal; assistant principal; student's homeroom teacher	January 2001: Establish student database of grades; Update each month' May: Include TAAS results January, February, March & April (See Appendix B for schedule of interviews & observations).
(2) What instructional practices do teachers use to meet the academic needs of ELL students?	To assess how teachers accommodate/adjust instructional practices to meet the cultural & academic needs of linguistically diverse students. To assess the degree to which teachers use culturally responsive instructional strategies. To assess the effectiveness of instructional strategies used by teachers to meet the academic needs of ELL students. To assess if teachers' perceive the instructional practices used in a the same way as students do	Classroom observation of teaching practices by researcher. Data from Interviews with students concerning teaching practices used by teachers. Data from Interviews with teachers concerning teaching practices used.	Homerooms classes; teacher's homerooms/offices Principal's office	Principal; assistant principal; volunteer students and teachers.	January, February, March & April (See Appendix B for schedule of interviews & observations).

Table 1 cont

Table 1 cont. What do I need to know?	Why do I need to know this?	What kind of data will answer the question	Where can I find the data?	Whom do I contact for access?	Time lines for acquisition
(3) What are ELL students' perceptions of the academic challenges facing them in the mainstream classroom?	To discover the factors that lead to academic failure/success among immigrant students. To assess if students' perceive the instructional practices used by teachers in the way teachers intended.	Data from Student interviews. Data from Teacher interviews. Data from Classroom observation of student and teacher interactions.	Individual teachers' classrooms.	Volunteer Students; Volunteer teachers	January, February, March & April (See Appendix B for schedule of interviews & observations).
(4) What are the ELL students' perceptions of the instructional practices used by teachers to meet students' academic needs?	To assess the degree to which students recognize/evaluate the quality of instructional practices used by teachers. To assess if teachers use instructional practices that meet the academic needs of students.	Data from student interviews.		Volunteer students.	January, February, March & April (See Appendix B for schedule of interviews & observations).
(5) What administrative procedures and policies are in place in the school and the district to meet the educational needs of ELL students?	To assess the degree to which policies and practices are in place to meet the academic needs of immigrant students.	Disaggregated TAAS data; Mission statement of school; Strategic plan of school; Staff development for teachers in the area of cultural diversity and second language acquisition; Training, background & support given to school personnel to meet the academic needs of ELL students.	School environment; school office	Principal; ESL district coordinator;	January: Collect TAAS data, mission statement & strategic plan for school; Interviews with teachers (every month); May: Interview principal and ESL coordinator; May: Disaggregated TAAS data

Please refer to Appendix B for actual schedule of interviews and observations conducted.

<u>Interviews</u>

I interviewed students and teachers according to the interview protocol in Appendix A. Interviewing enabled me to obtain data in the participants' own words, and gather information about how participants interpreted the situation being observed (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Eisner, 1991). Questions were open-ended with no fixed-response questionnaires or surveys to guide the talks.

I conducted interviews on six occasions for approximately 45-60 minutes per interview with the six volunteer teachers. I audiotaped and transcribed each interview. The interviews with teachers were conducted as unobtrusively as possible without causing disruption to the daily routines of either students or teachers. All teachers were interviewed in their own classrooms, usually during planning time before or after school when the students were not present.

I interviewed the six volunteer students on five occasions, for about 30 minutes per interview. The interviews were conducted as unobtrusively as possible with no disruption to routines of students and teachers. All interviews were conducted during free periods, lunchtime, and before and after school, depending on schedules of participants. The student interviews were conducted in the library in a small private room that the librarian allowed me to use.

I conducted one individual interview of approximately 60 minutes in duration each with the principal, staff, assistant principals and the central office ESL coordinator

concerning policies and procedures in place in the school and district to assist English as Second Language students. These interviews were conducted in the offices of those participants.

<u>Classroom Observations</u>

I observed each teacher and participating students in his or her classroom (classroom periods) two to three times during the research period to gain a greater understanding of the challenges facing the teachers in their daily task of teaching English Language Learner (ELL) students (See Appendix B for observation and interview schedule). For observations in classrooms, I used the techniques of non-participant-observation and maintained handwritten field-notes of observed interactions between the students and their teachers. I observed the students in regular classrooms in the Language Center.

During the course of the research, I developed relationships with other mainstream teachers who were not participants in my study but who invited me to observe my participating students in their classrooms. I availed of this opportunity when requested.

The final sources of data were documents and artifacts, which further illuminated for me the culture of the school (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Eisner, 1991). Written resources such as the mission statement of the school, TAAS (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills) data, students' work, test grades, teachers' lesson plans, and instructional resource materials were requested from the teachers and administrators for examination and analysis (See Appendix B for Schedule of Interviews and Observations).

Problems with Data Collection

The major problems I encountered in data collection was that some teachers forgot about their scheduled interviews, unplanned interruptions or schedule changes. I always kindly persevered, remained patient, and rescheduled. I sometimes rescheduled three times, but eventually got the interview that I needed.

Scheduling classroom observations with one of the teachers was problematic at times as she seemed reticent about having me observe in her room. I eventually offered to help her with students and in that way established her trust in me that I would not be critical of her teaching practices. Building relationships with teachers along with my gratitude for allowing me in their classrooms always ensured me a welcome and an invitation to return.

The classroom observations were not as easy to schedule, as I sensed a shyness and uneasiness from some of the teachers about being observed. I patiently persevered and shared many of my own personal teaching struggles and experiences. This strategy, with time created a trusting relationship where the teachers were more accepting of my presence in the classroom.

Scheduling classroom observations was difficult, as I had to work around district benchmarking testing, and TAAS preparations that were extensive for about three weeks prior to the test dates in February and April. Classroom observations were difficult to schedule with teachers also because they did not perceive TAAS preparation as teaching and wanted me to observe an actual lesson cycle. I negotiated this schedule with individual teachers and assured them that TAAS preparation activities were okay for me

to observe.

Interviewing one of the students, Angel, was at the beginning problematic as he was less communicative and verbal than other students. I always checked that he understood my question by having him restate the question in his own words. Sometimes I had to explain, rephrase, and restate questions until I was sure that he comprehended. My background as a teacher served me well in this regard. I had to revert to these techniques at times with other students for words or phrases that were not clear. I found that this was only a problem with Angel during initial interviews. He was more at ease and relaxed during subsequent interviews.

<p style="text-align:center">Analysis of Data</p>

The data collection was ongoing and inductive in order to identify emergent themes, patterns, and questions (Maxwell, 1996). The data analysis was conducted concurrently during the data collection period. Merriam (1988) and Marshall and Rossman (1989) contend that data collection and data analysis must be a simultaneous process in qualitative work.

I typed field-notes from classroom observations and transcribed interview tapes from teachers, students and administrators' interviews during the evenings so as to begin generating codes inductively using a "grounded theory" approach as relevant patterns and themes emerge from the data (Glaser, 1965). Coding was used to connect stories and develop themes and patterns to give shape to the data. "Coding is a progressive process of sorting and defining and defining and sorting those scraps of collected information (i.e., observation notes, interview transcripts, memos, documents, and notes from relevant

literature) that are applicable to your research purpose"(Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 133).

I developed codes from a "start list" (Miles & Huberman, 1984) generated from previous studies of culturally responsive teaching conducted by Geneva Gay in 2000. This start list also structured the interview questions for both students and teachers. The units of analysis for the interviews were sentences, words, and phrases that related to culturally responsive teaching. As I identified patterns or themes, I "dimensionalized" and recoded for the developed properties of a given theme related to culturally responsive teaching (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This process was simplified for me as I had already structured the interview questions into the specific characteristics of culturally responsive teaching.

I also relied on the expertise of Huberman and Miles (1994) to analyze my data. They define data analysis as a three linked process of 1) data reduction, 2) data display, and 3) conclusion drawing and verification.

Data Reduction: I used the NUD*IST 5 software program to reduce my participants' answers to each interview question. The computer program allowed me to reduce my interview transcripts to a manageable data set that helped me notice themes and patterns in the participants' answers. The computer program allowed me to focus on specific words and phrases that pertained to culturally responsive teaching practices. The computer program also helped facilitate the comparison of participants' answers to each question. I was able to categorize all interview data by questions so all participants' responses to each question were together, side by side, which allowed for at a glance comparisons. This facility of the NUD*IST program enabled me to look for common

89

themes and patterns in participants' answers. The data analysis process was aided by the use of this software as it helped me to code, sort, and search the collected data. This program facilitated the chunking of data, facilitated ease of retrieval and allowed grouping and regrouping of data as themes developed. In addition, this program assisted me in adding, changing, and searching for key categories, themes, words and phrases relating to culturally responsive teaching.

Data Display: Following the data reduction, with the help of the computer program, I then proceeded to think about the best way to further reduce these data and to create a diagrammatic or visual form that would clearly show all the participants' responses on one page with key words or phrases included. I constructed matrices from the data to identify patterns, comparisons, and trends relating to culturally responsive teaching. Miles and Huberman (1984) urge researchers to create data displays and diagrams to organize data. Using the Microsoft Word program I developed a table/matrix for each question. I categorized the participants' answers for positive and negative responses/examples to each question.

Constant review of collected data occurred weekly. Additionally, I met weekly with Dr. Wilhelm, my major professor and other doctoral degree candidates to summarize status of the research, analyze data, and to discuss emerging themes and concepts. This process assisted me greatly in keeping up to date with data collection and data analysis.

Conclusion drawing and verification: I was now ready for the third step suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) of drawing my conclusions. Here I looked for common themes and patterns in the participants' answers etc. My follow-up classroom observation

provided me with the evidence to confirm or to disconfirm what participants shared with me in the interviews. The classroom observations also allowed me to "see" what was happening and to further substantiate my conclusions and interpretations at this point of the research process.

Finally, the interview data were reviewed at the end of the interview schedule to compare student and teacher perceptions of culturally responsive teaching, as well as to examine whether what the teacher intended was, in fact, what the student perceived as happening.

The unit of analysis for the classroom observations was each teacher-ELL student interaction during each class period. Field-notes were maintained during these observation periods and were subsequently transcribed and coded for emerging themes relating to culturally responsive teaching. I compared teachers' actual intended use of culturally relevant teaching as stated in interviews with observed classroom practice.

Similarly, the units of analysis for selected documents collected (lesson plans, mission statement, and strategic plan, projected staff development goals, etc.) were words and sentences relating to culturally responsive teaching. These words and sentences were coded and categorized with the help of the computer program. Other documents, such as disaggregated TAAS data, volunteer students' grades and portfolios were qualitatively analyzed and used to determine student achievement and progress in school.

Credibility of research

Data triangulation (Denzin, 1978) is a major method in qualitative research for establishing credibility of results. The process of triangulation was on going throughout

this research period. I transcribed and coded all field notes, classroom observations, and interviews as soon as possible, which allowed me to develop themes and emergent patterns. I substantiated what participants told me by my classroom observations.

My themes were developed by data that was triangulated by what I observed, what participants told me, and what was also verifiable in the literature relating to culturally responsive teaching.

The fact that I was in the research field for five months also ensured that the themes I developed were occurring consistently and were not just isolated phenomena. The frequency of observations and interviews was an integral component of this triangulation process and strengthened the credibility of this research study.

The credibility of this research is further strengthened by consistently giving "voice" to participants' words and opinions. Participants words included in chapter four are directly transcribed from interviews. Therefore readers have access to the raw data and can therefore validate for themselves the themes that I developed and the conclusions that I made.

Summary

I used the procedures of case study design while incorporating ethnographic techniques of interviewing and non-participant observation in classrooms with six select students, six teachers, and eight selected administrators and staff members of the school. Based on the guidelines of case study design, which sheds light on a phenomenon by focusing on selected cases (Stake, 1994), the purpose of this study was to understand the educational experiences and perceptions of selected immigrant students and their

mainstream teachers. Following the method of case study design, the educational experiences of ELL students were examined in the naturally occurring context of the school and the classroom. Because the goal of case studies is to understand a given phenomenon from the perceptions of the participants (referred to as "emic" perspective in qualitative research) all volunteers were interviewed in-depth in order to understand their unique perceptions (See Appendix A for interview protocol).

For this research study, understanding perceptions of students, teachers, and administrators required time to develop a relationship of trust between volunteer participants and me as researcher. My qualitative research role was that of facilitator working collaboratively with participants (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). The in-depth interviews, and the need to uncover the unique perceptions of each participant within the cultural contexts of the classroom and school, required a qualitative method. To do justice to the complexity of participants' perceptions, I immersed myself three days a week in the school setting for more than four months.

This chapter described the methodology used in this study and was organized as follows: 1) research questions that guided the study, 2) research design, 3) researcher's background and identity, 4) site selection and description of setting, 5) participant selection and characteristics, 6) data collection procedures, and 7) data analysis procedures. Following in chapter four are those interpretations and conclusions and the supportive evidence.

CHAPTER 4

Findings and Interpretation of Data

The findings and interpretation of this research study are divided into three parts. Part I deals with the teachers' perceptions, which addresses research questions, 1 and 2. Part II concerns the students' perceptions and encompasses research questions 3 and 4. Part III addresses research question 5; policies and procedures that are in place that affect the education of ELL students at Western Heights Middle School.

Part I: Teachers' Perceptions

In this section a profile of each teacher is presented, then the interpretation of themes and patterns that emerged from the following research questions are explored: RQ1: What are teachers' perceptions of the academic challenges facing ELL students as they enter the mainstream classroom? RQ2: What instructional practices do teachers use to meet the academic needs of ELL students?

Profiles of Teachers (Backgrounds, teaching and discipline management styles)

The following table delineates the ethnicity, years of teaching experience, and subject taught by each of the participating teachers.

Table 2

Profiles of Teachers

Teacher	Teaching Experience (including current year of study)	Ethnicity	Subject Taught
O' Reilly (Veteran)	23	Caucasian	Science
Monroe (Veteran)	10	Caucasian	English
Bond	9	African American	Social Studies
Bell	5	African American	Reading
Lockhart (Novice)	3	Caucasian	Math
Montague (Novice)	2	Caucasian	Math

Mrs. O' Reilly was Caucasian with 23 years teaching experience in public school. She taught Science and identified herself ethnically as a Southerner. She recalled:

As far as ethnically, you know I lived a pretty sheltered life. I didn't know that there were so many different races. But because I was pretty much sheltered in white suburbia, and you know, if I saw somebody of a different color it was a rarity. You know it wasn't really until I came here {Western Heights Middle School} that I found out just how exactly how diverse the culture was.

She told me that she felt a relationship with and an understanding of the cultural backgrounds of her ELL students. She explained:

"I am an air force brat so I have a fairly diversified living area…and I think it

95

helps me somewhat with these kids because I understand what it's like to be moving around a lot. I was in seven elementary schools." She did complete her high school education in Texas and has lived here ever since. Mrs. O' Reilly taught in the last four years at Western Heights Middle School (WHMS).

Miss Monroe was Caucasian and taught for nine years at Western Heights Middle School. She described her experience of growing up in Texas in the segregated sixties when there was a "whites only laundromat" and recalled thinking as a little girl:

"All I could think about was what they do with their colored clothes. I had no idea that there was a concept between, you know, black and white and you couldn't you know use this." Miss Monroe felt a close relationship with the cultural backgrounds of her students at Western Heights. She told me:

I was raised on this side of town. So I am from this kind of environment. I am very familiar with the community and a lot of the places that these children talk about are places where I hung out or know about." Ethnically she described herself as Irish and explained to me how her " bad Texas twang" and expressions like "over yonder" often created confusion for her ELL students.

Miss Monroe expressed to me her first memory of Western Heights:

As soon as I walked in the door, up the steps in the front door it was everything I wanted a school to be, nothing modern at all. It was all old and you walk up the big marble steps and you get the "Oh this is a school!"

Mr. Bond was a male, African American, who grew up in the area and taught Social Studies for nine years at WHMS. He told me:

Since I was born in this area and, you know, my vernacular way of articulating to

the kids they found to be unique because you know, I am African American. I do

speak the language that we speak here. You know kids understand where I come

from, from my background, so, you know, we kinda relate to each other and we

get along like well so…the fact is, you know, both since I went to school in this

area also, you know, kids find it funny and strange that I went to the same

schools, elementary school they went to and we can talk about things of that

nature.

Miss Bell was African American, who had been teaching for five years, grew up

in the area and identified herself culturally as "very diverse." She taught Reading and was

ESL certified.

Miss Lockhart was in her third year of teaching math. She relocated to Texas after

graduating from college and became certified as a teacher alternatively. Ethnically she

described herself as "very Irish" and held a lot of responsibilities in her church.

Miss Montague was in her second year of teaching and relocated to Texas upon

graduating from college. She described to me her experiences growing up in mostly white

neighborhoods and told me:

I never experienced a lot of other culture and everything else. I went to college

an hour away where I grew up and then I moved here. It's a big change." She

shared with me her reason for moving to a new state was to "do" and "see"

different things.

The four most veteran teachers (O' Reilly, Monroe, Bond & Bell) expressed that

they understood their students' cultural backgrounds either because they grew up in the area adjacent to the school or because they relocated as children. The two novice teachers, Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague, struggled most with the cultural diversity of the students at Western Heights Middle School. These novice teachers grew up in other states and had relocated to Texas within the past three years.

Spanish Language Inadequacy

None of the teachers could speak languages other than English. They all had taken either required French or Spanish in high school. Four of the teachers considered it a disadvantage to be unable to speak fluent Spanish with their ELL students.

The two veteran teachers, Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly, expressed a reliance on body language, non-verbal communication, and sensitivity when communicating with students who had limited English speaking skills. They did not consider their inability to speak Spanish to be an impediment in their teaching of ELL students. They were both very vocal and verbal individuals who did not perceive a communication barrier with ELL students. They both had a wide repertoire of teaching strategies that they relied upon daily when teaching their ELL students.

Miss Monroe relied a lot on her developed skills of intuition and non-verbal communication to connect with her ELL students. She told me:

> They {students} feel and the more that they become comfortable with you, the more that they'll {students} forget you don't speak Spanish and they'll speak Spanish to you. Most of the time just by their expression or what we're studying or how they approach me, I can pretty much figure out what they want or need

and it sometimes surprises them (ELL students) that I can figure out what they

want and they go, "Oh you speak Spanish?"…You can always sense when

something is going on.

Mrs. O'Reilly expressed to me:

I do see some problems with frustration because of the words, but usually their

body language or their faces tell me, and then I'll go right over to that person and

go, "What seems to be the problem?" and then help them out as much as I can

with that.

I observed both Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly to be very verbal in their

interactions with students. These two teachers always greeted students by name at the

door and had classroom environments that were very relaxing with a lot of humor,

laughter, and informal conversation. These two teachers exuded a lot of confidence with

their students and colleagues. They were held in high esteem by their colleagues and

served as mentors and resources for the novice teachers (Miss Montague and Miss

Lockhart) in this study.

The other four teachers (Miss Bell, Mr. Bond, Miss Lockhart, & Miss Montague)

expressed an inadequacy that they did not speak Spanish. The novice teachers, Miss

Lockhart and Miss Montague, were extremely apologetic for their inability to speak the

language of their ELL students. These novice teachers exuded a lack of confidence in

their abilities to completely meet the academic needs of ELL students because of lack of

Spanish speaking skills.

Miss Lockhart told me:

If I had known back in high school that I was going to be a teacher and I was

going to be working with such ethnically diverse group, I would have learned

Spanish. I have actually looked into it since I've been out here...but it is just too

much time, you know, for me to take out of whatever free time I have…. I would

really like to learn Spanish and not just to help the students but also to make

contact with the parents. That's one of our biggest problems here. There is a lot

of these children whose families speak Spanish only and because I don't speak

Spanish I have to try to run around the building and find someone free who can

speak Spanish and the parent contact is difficult with only Spanish speaking

families.

Miss Montague told me, "I need to though {learn Spanish}. I am going in the

future probably a year or so."

Miss Bell expressed, "Some of them {ELL students} would be able to understand

better if I were able to translate or speak to them in Spanish."

Mr. Bond told me:

"I wish I would have taken a couple of Spanish courses...foreign languages do

give you background knowledge of subject and verb agreements...right now I am trying

to obtain and procure the nuances of the Spanish Language."

Pre-service education

All teachers agreed that their pre-service training did not prepare them to teach

ELL students or to teach in a culturally diverse school environment. Miss Lockhart, the

only alternatively certified teacher, told me that during her training with the district in the alternative certification program that she "learned about the different kinds of cultures we would be working with and how important it is in whatever subject you teach to try to explain it as many number of ways." She did also express to me that although she knew that ELL students learned better as a result of hands-on materials and cooperative learning, she was not comfortable trying these strategies yet. The time that I spent with Miss Lockhart also verified this fact for me as we discussed the difficulties she experienced trying to implement such hands-on lessons in her classroom. She attributed this to her discipline management style that she was still trying to improve and develop.

The other five teachers all agreed that their pre-service education did not prepare them in any way for what they would be dealing with in the classroom. They expressed to me:

> I think they {college} was really misleading, (Monroe) ...they {college} didn't quite prepare to teach me at all, (O' Reilly) ...they {professors} talked about it, we read about it but that doesn't mean a whole lot to you unless you're in the classroom actually doing it, (Montague) …. somewhat it {college} did and somewhat it didn't ….I ended up taking ESL classes {while actually teaching}...so that helped a lot…those courses {ESL} gave me a better understanding of what the kids have to go through and how to relate more with the kids. (Bell)

Mr. Bond told me, "Only one multicultural class gave a lot of useful information." Mr. Bond described the impact this one multicultural class had on him at that time:

There were not a lot of African American students that attended the schools

{meaning college/university} and you like stuck out like a thumb in a class of

fingers and when he {professor} brought this information to the classroom a lot of

students who were white were shocked or amazed or had their own opinions,

strong opinions about things and you know it was kinda amazing to have someone

who came in with a different refreshing perspective other than the ones taught at

the {university} at that time…he {professor} gave a lot of experience and

different viewpoints about being around kids other than his own culture...he did

an effective job and hopefully his teaching changed a lot of perceptions and

ideas and preconceived notions.

All teachers agreed that their pre-service training did not prepare them to teach

ELL students or to teach in a culturally diverse school environment. All these teachers

had participated in the diversity training provided by the district but still felt they needed

to learn more in order to deal with the cultural diversity of their students.

Discipline Management and Teaching Styles

When I began interviews and classroom observations, it became apparent to me

that teachers differed in both discipline and teaching styles. I subsequently conducted a

review of the literature during the research period, as it related to culturally responsive

teaching, and found Dreikurs' (1972) discipline model and Bank's (2002) teaching model

to be closely representative of what I observed in the classroom. Below is an explanation

of each model followed by the categorization I developed of each teacher's discipline and

teaching style.

As shown in Table 3, I interpreted teachers' discipline management styles according to Dreikurs' (1972) three-pronged model of democratic, autocratic, and permissive attributes.

Table 3

Dreikurs' Discipline Management Styles

Discipline Style	Characteristics of teacher
Autocratic	Forces will on students to prove that they have control of the class; motivates students with outside pressure instead of stimulating from within; silence
Democratic	Order, limits, firmness but kindness; respect of students; students involved in decision making; cooperation; competition eliminated; sense of belonging in group
Permissive	Rules and orders inconsistently enforced; off-task behaviors; noise

I interpreted the teaching styles of the teachers using an adaptation of James Bank's (2002) multicultural teaching behaviours as follows in Table 4.

From the hours of classroom observation and teacher interviews I observed that these six teachers had discipline and teaching styles that fit the above models described in the literature. I observed teachers in their classrooms and noted the characteristics of their discipline and teaching styles. I then made a determination of both teaching and discipline styles from my time in the classroom during the research period. See Table 5 for each teacher's specific categorization in regard to discipline and teaching style.

Table 4

Multicultural Teaching Styles

Interactive	Didactic
• Personalized (knew all students by name; greeted students at door; empathized with students; incorporated students' cultural backgrounds; knew backgrounds of students well; communicated with families; used humor well and incorporated classroom interruptions humorously)	• Impersonalised (did not know all students by name; did not greet all students at door; handed out worksheets; blamed students and families for lack of academic progress; did not acknowledge or attempt to address students' cultural diversity; saw students cultural backgrounds as deficits)
• Used cooperative grouping (students in pairs or grouped regularly)	• Individualistic (students in traditional rows and settings; students independently practised skills; grades called out in front of class)
• Child centred (individualized instruction regardless of district or TAAS expectations: individualized testing procedures; planned for different learning styles; forced all students to interact)	• Subject centred (all students on same page and skill; subject watered down to lowest common denominator (Gifted and Talented ELL students suffered here and did not feel challenged); heavy emphasis on TAAS and district testing; worksheets; procedures; did not account or plan for different learning styles)
• Focus on process of teaching (how to teach)- focuses on improving delivery of instruction; views teaching as fluid and ever changing; teacher circulated around the room)	• Focus on what to teach (curriculum and content)-focussed on blanket coverage and covering content; teacher sat behind desk; Heavy emphasis on TAAS skills
• Intuition, empathy, non-verbal communication, classroom wittiness (Knew what all students were doing); made exceptions to rules for students;	• Pragmatic, non-empathy, less likely to pick up non-verbal communication of students, little classroom wittiness (students engaged in off-task behaviors without the teacher knowing); rules enforced equally and no exceptions made
• Students and teachers active and constantly interacting (more conversation and discussion)	• Students and teachers more passive and teacher less active (more silence enforced)
• Classroom Discipline Style (Democratic). less emphasis on silence and behaviors	• Classroom Discipline Style (Autocratic). more emphasis on silence and behaviors of students

Table 5

Categorization of Teachers' Discipline Management and Teaching styles

Teacher	Teaching Experience (including current year of study)	Discipline Management Style (democratic, autocratic, permissive)	Teaching Style (Interactive, Didactic)	Subject Taught
O' Reilly	23	Democratic	Interactive	Science
Monroe	10	Democratic	Interactive	English
Bond	9	Autocratic	Didactic	Social Studies
Bell	5	Autocratic	Didactic/Interactive	Reading
Lockhart	3	In Development (Autocratic/permissive)	Didactic	Math
Montague	2	In Development (Autocratic/permissive)	Didactic	Math

My classroom observations and data from interviews revealed that the two

veteran teachers, Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly demonstrated more interactive and

democratic characteristics than the other teachers in the study. Both veteran teachers

always greeted students by name at the beginning and at the end of class. Both teachers

incorporated the cultural backgrounds of their students conversationally in classes. I

observed Miss Monroe discussing why Hollywood only depicted one side of the truth

when it came to movies of the Civil War. Both teachers used cooperative learning a lot

and always forced students to interact in class. While I observed these teachers, I noticed

that they circulated the room and called on every student. These teachers were very aware

of how students learned in their classrooms. Miss Monroe told me what she did when she

explained a new concept to students:

I may say it four different times, different ways...and you can tell immediately

...when a ELL student gets it...it clicks...it's like you can almost see this light bulb

go off and you go "okay." She continued, "I single them (ELL students) out to say to them, "so you understand?"

I observed both her and Mrs. O' Reilly forcing students to interact and especially "picking" on those who didn't have their hands raised in class.

Miss Monroe did a lot of peer grouping and told me "we do a very informal question and answer session. It's very laid back trying to get how they feel..." I noticed that both Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly had a tendency to "tease" the students and Miss Monroe told me:

Interacting with them (ELL students) in the classroom through the classroom conversation, you start thinking about them socially. You start picking up, you know, on their quirks and who is a friend with who. The teasing helps a lot in making sure that sometimes the shy ones will ask questions.

Miss Monroe told me that she made exceptions to the rules. She told me about a student who had serious medical problems and expressed:

I had a student with medical problems. I literally gave him an 81, which is a B. He had a 40,but I thought in the big scheme of things grades are nothing…for me the grades are nothing. It's not going to keep my job or get me a raise. It's not going to better my life. So if I can help that person feel better by giving him a grade, yeah I'm doing it.

Both Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly had a sense of humor and students were cajoled humorously in class rather than chastised or criticized for off-task behaviours.

When I observed in Mrs. O' Reilly's room, she greeted every student by name.

The students were relaxed and were allowed to converse during assignments provided it was on-task. Students were always in groups and worked cooperatively and were free to ask each other for help as needed. I observed students viewing a slide show Mrs. O' Reilly created following a recent field trip they had shared together. I observed Mrs. O' Reilly teaching a guided lesson on fossils using a videotape and stopping every three minutes to ask questions and check for understanding. I never observed Mrs. O' Reilly or Miss Monroe behind their desks while students completed worksheets or assignments independently. There was always interaction, conversation, and group work in their classrooms.

The two novice teachers, Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague, were didactic in their teaching styles. They always stayed close to the chalkboard or overhead projector. I observed that they both were still developing discipline management styles that were consistent with the literature pertaining to beginning teachers (Joyce & Showers, 1989). I observed that the novice teachers, Miss Montague and Miss Lockhart, tried to implement autocratic styles that became permissive at times as students demonstrated off-task behaviours that resulted in their having to raise their voices to get the class under control. These teachers criticised students for off-task behaviours and did not interact humorously with students. These novice teachers tended to blame the families of students for lack of support in relation to homework and failing grades. Threats of extra homework and detentions were commonplace in these classrooms. These teachers never stood at the door to greet students by name. I observed students being ignored in these classrooms and students who were never called upon in class. The novice teachers tended to stay

close to the overhead projector or chalkboard and did not circulate throughout the classroom like the interactive teachers. Worksheets and the completion of independent assignments were frequent behaviours observed in these classrooms and students rarely, if ever worked in pairs or groups. These teachers struggled a lot with students' behaviours and a lot of interaction with students concerned classroom behaviours like "sit down," "pay attention."

Miss Bell had a very Interactive and warm personality and did greet students at the door. I did observe that she was very popular with the students outside of the classroom. She described herself as being "blessed" in her relationships with students and considered her popularity with them as a "gift." I observed this to be true. While teaching in her classroom she was very strict and set very high behavioural expectations. She did use humor and interacted informally in the classroom when she was direct teaching. I did, however, observe that her students spent a lot of time reading independently and completing TAAS practice reading assignments independently. During these times she was sitting behind her desk rather than circulating the room. Her discipline style was autocratic with strict enforcement of rules and consequences. Her teaching style was didactic in that she tended to remain at the top of the classroom and checked answers with students. She did implement cooperative learning activities on a monthly basis that allowed her to be more interactive in her teaching style during those times. During my observations of her, I noticed that she paid more attention to the male students in her room and during one classroom observation never called on Latino female students. For the purpose of this study, I categorized her discipline style as autocratic and

her teaching style as both interactive and didactic.

Mr. Bond demonstrated the most didactic and autocratic characteristics of the teachers in this group. He placed a heavy emphasis on rigid structure and behaviours and the students clearly knew their limits with him. He did use group work periodically, but even then his discipline management style was very rigid and students were limited to clearly defined directions and behaviours. I observed students completing a group project on a famous African American in his room for three days. The students all followed the same format. Each group had to draw a picture of their assigned individual that they copied in a similar manner from prepared transparencies given to them. Students were given the actual research material and simply had to copy from these packets and for ELL students the information was highlighted. All finished projects at the end were similar except for content. Students entered his classroom silently; he passed out worksheets at the door, and never greeted students by name. He rarely interacted with students on a personal level other than to ask for the correct answers. During one classroom period I observed him ignore a Latino female who had been absent and he never included her in the group work that the rest of the students were doing. I happened to be sitting beside this Latino female student and I told her to ask Mr. Bond what she was expected to be doing in class while the other students worked on their projects. Mr. Bond did not come to her for the first fifteen minutes of class even though her hand was raised. When he finally noticed her, he assigned her to read a worksheet and answer questions. She was told that it was not possible for her to be assigned to a group because the students had already started their projects. He never came back to check on her even once during the

remainder of the class period. Mr. Bond expressed to me later that rules applied to everyone and every student should be treated equally. He never made any exceptions to the rules he told me. Because this student was absent at the beginning of the project period she could not participate, he told me. Students were generally silent in his classroom and worked individually.

The literature pertaining to culturally responsive teaching clearly supports teachers with an interactive and democratic classroom management style tend to exhibit more culturally responsive teaching practices in general than those with a more Autocratic and Didactic discipline and classroom management style (Banks, 2001). My study collaborated these findings by Banks (2002). Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly, who were more Interactive and Democratic, were the most culturally responsive teachers that I observed in this group. The novice teachers, Miss Montague and Miss Lockhart, were the least culturally responsive as their styles were Didactic and Autocratic or Permissive. They were also the least experienced teachers and substantiated the literature as it pertained to beginning teachers and the development of confidence in relation to classroom management styles (Joyce & Showers, 1989). Mr. Bond and Miss Bell whose discipline styles were autocratic tended to have classroom that were very strictly disciplined with students silently completing assignments at their desks. These teachers tended to be strict and students were not as vocal or interactive as they were in Miss Monroe's and Mrs. O' Reilly's classrooms. This finding supports the literature that culturally responsive teachers tend to encourage conversation and participation in class, which is important for language and vocabulary development of ELL students (Banks,

2001).

My classroom observations and data from interviews revealed that the two veteran teachers, Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly, demonstrated more Interactive and Democratic characteristics than the other teachers in the study. Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly talked and interacted with students. They never lectured or taught in front of the room. They teased students humorously for off-task behaviours and did not use threats.

The two novice teachers, Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague, were Didactic in their teaching styles. I observed that they both were still developing discipline management styles that were consistent with the literature pertaining to beginning teachers (Joyce & Showers, 1989) and for this reason I categorized their discipline styles as both autocratic and permissive.

I categorized Miss Bell as both Interactive and Didactic as she demonstrated both interactive and didactic characteristics. Her classroom discipline was clearly autocratic and students knew their limits with her and she set very specific behavioural expectations.

RQ1: What are teachers' perceptions of the academic challenges facing ELL students as they enter the mainstream classroom?

English Language Learner (ELL) students' Academic Readiness for Mainstream

All mainstream teachers perceived that students came well prepared from the Language Center (LC). They all agreed that Math was probably the easiest subject for the ELL student because of the reliance on figures as opposed to words.

Miss Monroe, who teaches English, found:

They have an understanding off what a noun and what a verb is and that there is a sentence structure…their writing is, of course behind, at least a couple of years but the thought process is not. But the writing skills that Texas requires for these children are usually behind around two years. But they always do well in math. Their science if it weren't for the vocabulary they would do well of course. They don't do History well because they don't have the background knowledge. Mrs O'Reilly told me:

…the three that I got {meaning ELL students} have been excellent science students and one is even going to a special interest high school program. So, I have just been really pleased and thrilled with what they do.

Miss Lockhart perceived that the students did better in Math:

I think for me it might be different than other subjects if you know the formulas and you can pick out the numbers. You may not necessarily understand all the words but they can get the right answer. Three out of the four students from the LC are pulling the highest grade in my class. And they just came into my class about eight weeks ago so they have adapted very well. She perceived that "most of them are very quiet. They are still very insecure about speaking the language…they won't raise their hand but I will call on them and they know the answer. They all seem very quiet and they are hard working. She also added that they are "more motivated than her other students.

Miss Montague said of her ELL students "they can participate and keep on level with all the other students." Miss Bell was in similar agreement and so was Mr. Bond

who said:

> They come to us with strong fundamentals; writing skills, punctuation and
> grammar, and when they come to us nine times out of ten they are very prepared.
> I give all the credit to our LC because when the kids arrive in class they are
> usually prepared, used to structure, doing the work in class, and writing essays
> and using punctuation marks.

All mainstream teachers perceived that students came well prepared from the Language Center (LC). They all agreed that Math was probably the easiest subject for the ELL student because of the reliance on figures as opposed to words.

Experiences of English Language Learner (ELL) students learning subject content in mainstream

I found that Interactive and Didactic teachers had different perceptions about how ELL students learned the subject content in the mainstream classrooms.

Interactive teachers such as Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly relied a lot on their sense of intuition and gauging of the faces and non-verbal communication to monitor frustrations of ELL students as they learned their subjects in class. The Interactive teachers were very aware that the ELL students exemplified less frustration when using hands-on materials. They also noticed that the ELL student seemed better at solving problems and thinking critically and were challenged by such activities especially in science. The two Interactive teachers were more aware of the frustrations their ESL students encountered. These two teachers were more conscious about how their students were learning.

When I asked Miss Monroe of her experiences with the immigrant students as they learned in her English class she told me:

Ah, anywhere from frustration to "great, I got it." Mainly there is a lot of frustration with our Asian population. I have a child who cannot understand why we have so many words for bread, because from her background there is only one word for bread. So I say, "I understand that." It's hard for those people to come in, especially the Asian population, because they don't understand all of these predicate adjectives. {Students say to her} "Why don't we just have adjectives and why does it have to be a predicate adjective?" I try to make it as simple as I can for them, and try to tell her, "While it's not important that you not understand why it is called a predicate adjective, it's more important that you understand where it belongs in a sentence and what it does." Miss Monroe told me that "the same student did excellent in math, but in English it's so hard for her. She also described how hard it was for the ELL students to understand formal English as they were so used to hearing English spoken in slang.

Mrs. O' Reilly noticed that the ELL students were good at problem solving and enjoyed the hands on science she did in class. She explained:

Oh, they absolutely love it because it's a hands-on class. A lot of times they see a connection between their work and they are actually doing it so I think they're learning a lot more. Also I'm really impressed with a lot of the Hispanic kids because they seem to me much better about solving problems and making connections and critical thinking. A lot of times some of my other students are

just going 'hah' and they're going "oh this happens so this could happen." I do see some problems with frustration because of the words but usually their body language or their faces tell me and then I'll go right over to that person and go, "What seems to be the problem?" and then help them out as much as I can with that.

I observed that the Didactic teachers such as Mr. Bond, Miss Montague and Miss Lockhart, were not as tuned to the frustrations and body language of their students. These teachers tended to stay in one spot in the classroom, and even if they did walk around I observed them looking at work of students rather than the faces of their students. The Interactive teachers maintained eye contact and monitored, assessed, and gauged the faces of their students. The Interactive teachers constantly interacted, asked questions and involved all students. The Didactic teachers, I observed, tended to give a direction, call on the same students, have students work individually and silently at their desks. The interactive teachers constantly questioned for understanding, clarification and restatement. The interactive teachers never made reference to any classroom behaviours only academic progress.

The two novice teachers, Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague, who had Didactic teaching styles, were unaware of the frustrations of the ELL students in their classrooms. My classroom observations substantiated this finding as I observed ELL students with hands raised, never called upon and rarely invited to participate. The novice Didactic teachers expressed that they chose not to call on the ELL students for at least the first four to five weeks in the mainstream classroom to avoid embarrassment. The novice

teachers tended to spend a lot of time at the front of the classroom and were unaware of off- task behaviours throughout the room. I also observed that these novice teachers contributed to the frustration levels of students' either by not calling upon students, choosing to ignore students who were annoying them, or just progressed too quickly through the lesson without giving enough practice time to students. There was no wait time after the teacher posed a question and all students worked individually at their desks. Following is a classroom observation of one of the novice teachers that demonstrates how frustrations of students were not monitored or appropriately assessed and how ELL students adapted within such a setting.

Classroom Observation: Feb. 27th: 12:55- 1:40p.m.

Subject: Math

Note: Actual conversations that I scripted are italicized. All names have been changed.

Students are seated in traditional rows except for two desks in front with two groups of four. There are 25 students in the room. The two ESL students that I am observing are in the last two seats at the back of the classroom. I am seated very close to them. Students enter the room in a noisy fashion and it takes at least 5 minutes for the class to settle down. Teacher begins by asking all students to copy down the lesson objective, which was on pg. 496 of the algebra text. The students open their notebooks and proceed to copy down the objective as directed. There is rustling of papers but all students are following directions. An African American student blurts out a question and the teacher responds:

Teacher: *Are you raising your hand?* She warns the same student

116

Teacher: *One more time and then you're gone* {meaning out of the room}

I observe the two ELL students are quiet and looking for notes.

The students are given time to copy down objectives and then the teacher

proceeds to discuss their grades from the previous Friday.

Teacher: close your mouths, listen…quiz from last Friday, grades are really

bad…hardly anyone passed. If you got a 30, basically that's what everybody got.

{her voice is shrieking} Manuel spit it out…I think three of you passed….

{student interrupts and asks a question about his grade} I thought we said we're

not going to talk about this...extra credit on quiz…what times what is eight, two

{she gives answer}. I can't believe you people…I hear banging...stop that

tapping…here's another one {failing grade paper}. She hands back a paper to a

student. eight times eight equals eight {students laugh} ELL students very quiet

and say nothing….one ELL #1 (Pepe) is tapping desk….Teacher is passing back

papers and the students, particularly one African American male, is getting very

irate. He is trying to get the teacher's attention and ask her a question about his

paper. Teacher ignores him. The class is getting unruly and out of control. As

teacher walks around the room she says:

Teacher: *I told you not to talk about the grades...this is great behavior {* meaning

inappropriate*}...* I observe that ELL # 1 (Pepe) student is tapping foot and pencil

{looks agitated and annoyed} …Teacher continues and tells students. Teacher is

at overhead projector. Teacher: *turn your book to pg. 147..if you average 50 and*

100 you pass..{I observe that same African American student is upset about

117

grade.

Teacher: *please pay attention…a manomial..*{ tudents listen, teacher explains}.

The lesson of the day has now begun. It is now about 1:15 p.m. All students

appear on-task. There is a lull in the room now as all students are following

directions…the African American male student who was upset about grade has

his head down on the desk {he appears like he has given up}...he is not looking at

overhead or transparency…Teacher: *Rule A is in book on pg. 497*

ELL #2 (Mario) opens book and takes it out now.

Teacher: *a to the power of m times a to the power of n equals a to the power of m*

plus n. We will work examples because this will mean nothing to you.

All Students are confused by symbol of dot rather than X for multiplication. There

is some confusion, talking, and the class is getting talkative. Teacher explains it to

them. I hear ELL student # 2 (Mario) say out loud " *I don't know where it is.*" {he

doesn't know where the teacher is in the book}Teacher directs ELL#1 to show

Mario. Teacher: *what's an integer?* The class answers in unison. Teacher: *Crystal*

give me an integer... {no wait time} …I hear ELL #2 (Mario) answer out loud

with other students. ELL#1(Pepe) and ELL#2 (Mario) are both writing example

from overhead. The African American student who was upset is now writing and

following along too. All students are engaged, taking notes and following along.

{they all appear on-task}Teacher directs them to now practice examples with her.

Teacher is walking around the room and looking at papers.

1:20 p.m. Teacher says, "*that's pretty good*" {first positive validation I have heard

in class yet}. As students start talking and becoming off task, teacher threatens

Teacher: *Oh yeah, we can have fractions* {this is meant to be a threat to behave}.

Teacher is now at overhead and reviewing the samples the students just did.

Teacher: *Pepe* (ELL#1) *what are the coefficient numbers in front of variables?*
{she calls on Pepe...she told me that she is more conscious about calling on
students since she started interviewing with me…}

1:25 p.m. Students are still doing examples together…

Teacher: *I'm going to give you five examples...Carla stop being rude and
disrespectful…don't start shouting out answers.*

Teacher puts five examples on overhead to be worked out…someone is clicking
with mouth…some student laughs. ELL#2 (Mario) raises hand *"miss"* she goes
over to him, he smiles she says, *"that one's correct."*

She goes to ELL#1 (Pepe) and says *"that one is correct…how did you get 9?*
[it is less than a 2 second encounter...} *"Carla you forgot to…"*

Teacher is walking around as students work problems, some students get out of
seats to show her answers, ELL #2 (Mario) imitates this behavior…he gets out of
seat, walks over to teacher smiling, he is obviously pleased with himself. ELL #1
(Pepe) raises hand *"miss."* The teacher doesn't see him. The African American
student who is out of desk and says, *"come here"* He is more aggressive about
getting the teacher's attention. The teacher goes over to him.

ELL#1 (Pepe) still has his hand up, has not left his desk...his hand is still up, not
seen by teacher, there are a lot of students now beginning to talk...and get off-

task. About 2/3 of all students' hands are now raised…they need help…Teacher makes her way down row, ELL #1 & 2 both have their hands up…Teacher goes to ELL#1 (Pepe)...teacher says "*raise your hands, no talking*."

1:30 p.m. Teacher is now at overhead, going through answers…Teacher calls on students to raise hands.

1:30 p.m. ELL#1(Pepe) has hand up, now down, example has passed and he was not called upon.

ELL #2 (Mario) has hand up too and he is not called upon. Teacher says, "*Be quiet…Andrew.*" ELL#2 (Mario) still has hand up and not called upon...Teacher says "*Yolanda, why am I getting a confused look out of you?*"

1:32 p.m. ELL#2 (Mario) still has hand up, {he never put it down}

Teacher says, "*Who's ready for number 9?*" ELL#2 (Mario) bangs his hand down {he is getting frustrated} he puts his hand up again {he is not called upon} Teacher says: *turn to pg. 498 quickly...quiet…. can I add them and eliminate a variable?* {teacher smiles} *this is way too simple, I'll have to complicate things…. this is different, calm down…*Teacher proceeds to take time to wonder how she will make the problems more complicated. Teacher cannot decide how many problems to give. A discussion ensues among students. Teacher has to quiet the class.

ELL#2 (Mario) mutters [teacher doesn't hear} "you*'re wasting time miss*" {as teacher is deciding how many problems to give students to work on.

1:37 p.m. Students are quiet while teacher is giving directions.

1:39 p.m. Bell goes off and the students clap. Teacher says *"tomorrow rules c &*
d" as students leave the classroom.

What is obvious from this classroom observation is the struggle the teacher had
with classroom discipline. The teacher asked questions, allowed no wait time, and often
just picked on a student to answer. It is clear that the ELL students during this
observation were ignored and did not get the same level of interaction as they would have
had they been in cooperative learning groups. It is clear that the students who
aggressively sought the help from the teacher received it. Passive and quiet students did
not get the same attention or time from the teacher. It is clear that ELL student #2 (Mario)
was more aggressive than ELL student #1 (Pepe) and figured out that the best way to get
the teacher's attention was to leave his seat like the rest of the students started doing.
What is also obvious from this observation is that the students were expected to work
independently without any help from each other.

The novices such as Miss Lockhart told me they did not call on ELL students
when they first come to her classroom for probably five or six weeks because she wanted
to give the ELL students some time to get used to being in her classroom. She perceived
the ELL student as being very quiet, "…if you wanted to get something out of them
{ELL students} it was like pulling teeth." Miss Lockhart focussed on the behaviours of
the ELL students in her room rather than their learning preferences or learning
frustrations. She described how one ELL student, who after only being in her class for
about five to six weeks gave her a Christmas card and said, "Thank you for having me in
your classroom. I really appreciate all the support that you're giving me." Miss Lockhart

continued:

> I guess she is definitely very happy in my room and I guess I'm doing a good
> job…. they just seem very thankful. Sometimes at the end of the year they'll
> make cards in other teachers classes and they're just very appreciative for all that
> we do for them and I'm not even saying it is me, it just happens they're very
> appreciative for all that we do for them and I'm not even saying it is me, it just
> seems that of the Hispanic culture in which they are raised. I believe this is just
> part of their upbringing to appreciate what opportunities they are getting because
> I'm sure their parents have instilled this in them in Mexico. You know they
> wouldn't get the same opportunities as they are getting here.

Miss Montague also seemed to be unaware of any particular learning styles other than behaviours in the room. She told me:

> If I'm asking questions and they're not getting it, they're not raising their hands.
> I'm walking around the room and they're doing their own thing…I walk…
> sometimes they don't understand and sometimes they're nodding their head and
> saying "oh yeah I did it" and I'll kinda ask questions, "You got it?" or ask them a
> direct question.

Mr. Bell and Miss Bond also expressed that they found ELL students to be very quiet and expressed that they found it hard to know whether these students were in fact getting the concept being taught.

Again, Miss Bell did not focus on learning experiences of students but their behaviours in class:

They're very involved and you can tell that they are very eager to learn. I have very little discipline problems from the students. They are very hard workers. They don't ask very many questions. So sometimes you don't know if they are actually getting what you want them to learn, but they do put a lot of effort into the subject.

Mr. Bond never expressed to me any knowledge of frustrations of these students in class. This would be consistent with my classroom observation that revealed that he did not maintain close personal relations with students in the classroom. It would therefore make sense that he would be unaware of frustration levels.

All teachers' perceptions were that the ELL students were very respectful, diligent and hard working. Definitely the two most veteran and Interactive teachers, Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly were most in tune with the needs and frustrations of the ELL students. The other four teachers tended to focus on what the students were doing in class as opposed to their particular learning styles. This finding substantiated the literature on multicultural teaching practices that found that Interactive and Democratic teachers demonstrated more culturally responsive teaching in regard to ELL students (Banks, 2002).

Learning Styles observed among ELL students

The learning styles observed by the teachers among the ELL student population depended on whether their teaching style was Interactive or Didactic.

The two interactive teachers, Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly, were more focused on what students were cognitively experiencing and attempted to try different

instructional methods. They were more able to describe the learning modalities associated specifically with the ELL students, whereas the other four teachers were able to describe behaviors mostly related to discipline and classroom management.

The other four teachers, Miss Bell, Mr. Bond, Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague, described the behaviors of students in their classrooms (what the student was doing) and not how the student learned best (how the student learned). Clearly the Interactive teachers like Mrs. O' Reilly and Miss Monroe, used a greater range of teaching strategies to incorporate different learning styles and modalities. The Didactic teachers did not. The Didactic teachers described behaviors that these students did in class and what they observed them actually doing. These behaviors described by the Didactic teachers were what the ELL students did in response to specific tasks given to do in class. The Interactive teachers allowed more choice in assignments and they were able to tell me specifically that they noticed the ELL students tended to choose certain modalities. The Didactic teachers did not mention modalities, learning styles or learning preferences like the veteran teachers did. Following is a detailed analysis of the differences observed between the Interactive and Didactic teachers. Here the Interactive teachers were Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly. The Didactic teachers were the other four.

Interactive Teachers

The two veteran Interactive teachers, Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly, were aware of how the ELL students learned best. They were able to cite for me the terms auditory, hands-on and multiple intelligences. These veteran teachers specifically described the learning styles of students (How best). Both Miss Monroe and Mrs. O'

Reilly used PowerPoint presentations and real life examples. Mrs O'Reilly described how well ELL students did with creative and critical thinking. Both teachers forced students to work in groups and to interact. Mrs. O' Reilly in particular was aware of all the learning styles and created lessons to fit the varying modalities of students.

Miss Monroe said:

They are very visual, auditory, auditory, music…I tried to get them to see, to figure out that songs are poetry and that poetry is songs. They were really excited. Anything visual…as you can tell. Newspapers we cut out, articles, very visual. Drawing anything they can express in art that they love.

Mrs. O' Reilly explained:

They're mostly kinaesthetic...however when we did the survey a lot of them are visual too…I have these puzzles; let me show you some of these puzzles. You see these are things that I use as enrichment and they love them. And I have noticed that the Hispanics seem to go for the slide puzzles better than these...{3-D puzzles} and these are the visuals where they have to put them in nine squares, three across and three down. And this...a crazy maze puzzle...Hispanics seem to go better with the puzzles where they physically manipulate them and then my other cultures seem to like better the pictures…They work on their visual and spatial intelligence which they don't get very much chance to explore. That's why I try to do this as often as I can…I had some training with Dunn & Dunn in Austin...when I moved to New York we did some training on Howard Gardner. There is now an eighth intelligence you know…also when I was in high school I

tried the first week with the high school kids to really try to develop a learning

style inventory with them you know, where I did the "Cursy temperament", I

call it the CARS (concrete, abstract, random, or sequential.) that was really good

because I was trying to get a handle on how they process information. I need to

do it with these kids because I haven't had a chance to do anything with them.

Then of course the right...and left brain we did that and we also did the traditional

learning styles and the multiple intelligences.

The Interactive teachers were aware of multiple intelligences, different learning

styles and modalities, and they focused on how students learned best cognitively and

planned lessons accordingly.

Didactic Teachers

Miss Lockhart perceived that her ELL students did well in math because they

simply had to plug in the numbers and had difficulty with African American students due

to their attention spans. In response to my question, "have you noticed a pattern with the

immigrant students in relation to learning styles," she told me:

I really haven't...this is one of the things that I need to improve upon. I spend a

lot of time up at that overhead. I try to get around and I do, I usually want to

circle the room probably three or four times a class. I need to get away from that

overhead. I need to spend more time in the classroom and going to the students

and stuff so that's one of the things.

Miss Montague was unaware of any learning differences in her students. "I think

for the LC children I feel that repeating it over and over again where they hear it more the

more familiar they're gonna be with it. But that's really for most children."

Miss Bell noted that her ELL students were more focussed than the Chicano student (American-born to Spanish-speaking parents) and seemed much quieter than the Chicano. She told me:

> My ELL students like I said aren't very verbal. And again some of my Chicano
> students, the ones that have been here that are actually American, born in
> the states are more verbal unlike my ESL students. So they talk out more
> and they need to verbalize. Again my ELL students they'll try to figure it out,
> work it out, and they won't ask many questions. They are very reserved. You'll
> ask them if they understand and they'll say "yah I understand" until you see the
> puzzled look on their face and then they don't or...but they are very accepting for
> help as far as you offering them help they are very accepting of that and they are
> wanting to do it…they're {ELL} the ones that are more reserved and quiet.

Mr. Bond noted that students tended to be kinaesthetic learners and liked to work in groups. He didn't express any knowledge that the ELL students might have a different way of learning from the other kids. I observed this attitude was consistent with his teaching style where all students were always on the same page, and although he modified it, it was more to a lower level rather than a different learning style. He highlighted answers and made it easier for students but not challenging. He explained:

> The LC kids, they're kinetic learners. Well all kids, most of them are kinetic
> learners…getting up and moving around, using their hands and verbally
> communicating in groups and stuff. I found this to be the best way to help kids.

Take a lesson and incorporate that lesson in becoming part of them. Again, with all the moving and stuff, it's hard to tell if they're actually learning, [talking about the subject matter.]

Four of the teachers, (Bell, Bond, Lockhart and Montague), who had mostly Didactic teaching styles and autocratic discipline were unaware of different learning styles of students. They did not express any knowledge or understanding of the different learning needs or styles that the ELL students might have due to varying cultural backgrounds. In general, the Interactive teachers (Monroe and O' Reilly) were more aware of the different learning styles and frustrations of the ELL and immigrant students than the Didactic ones. These findings corroborated the research that Interactive teachers exhibit more culturally responsive awareness (Gay, 2000).

Summary of Findings from RQ1:

All teachers in this study perceived that ELL students were prepared for their classes. They all agreed that math was the easiest subject for students because of the reliance on numbers rather than words. This finding corroborates the research by Jim Cummins (1984) that mastery of CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) for second language learners can take up to seven years.

Teachers' perceptions of experiences of ELL students to acquire subject matter in the mainstream classrooms depended on whether the teacher had an Interactive or Didactic teaching style. Following is a graphical representation of these findings. The literature pertaining to culturally responsive teaching clearly supports that teachers with an interactive and democratic classroom management style tend to exhibit more

culturally responsive teaching practices in general, than those with a more autocratic and

didactic discipline and classroom management style (Banks, 2002). My study

corroborated these findings by Banks (2002).

Table 6

Summary of Characteristics of Interactive and Didactic Teaching Styles

Interactive Teaching Style (Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly)	Didactic Teaching Style (Mr. Bond, Miss Bell, Miss Lockhart, Miss Montague)
• Used Intuition to gauge the frustrations of ELL students. Did not ignore students	• Not in tune with frustrations of ELL students. Ignored students.
• Focused on how students learned cognitively (learning styles)	• Focused on what (content) students learned but made no accommodations for learning styles of students
• Forced ELL student to interact in classroom	• Did not pressure ELL student to interact

RQ2: What instructional practices do teachers use to meet the academic needs of ELL students?

The semi-structured interview questions I developed for teachers and students

were based on Geneva Gay's (2000) five characteristics of culturally responsive teaching

practices. Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) incorporates the following five

elements: 1) culture of students, 2) makes home-school connections, 3) use a variety of

instructional practices that teach to learning styles of students, 4) validates students, and

5) makes interdisciplinary connections. The interpretations and findings from RQ2 are

structured by the preceding five characteristics of CRT.

Incorporation of Culture

<u>Teachers' Concerns about Culture</u>

The teachers with a didactic teaching style all agreed that the ELL students from Mexico were quiet, well behaved and fit the behavioural expectations of the classroom. The Interactive teachers (Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly) never made references to student behaviours or quietness in class. These teachers were very verbal and forced all students to speak and interact in class. These two teachers voiced concerns about the tension their Muslim students felt in the school since the September 11, 2001 bombing in New York.

All teachers had concerns about the conflict between the Hispanic and the African American students. The two novice teachers (Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague) perceived the African American students as behavioral problems and struggled a lot with these students in the classroom. The novices also perceived a lack of family support as a problem with all cultures but especially the Spanish speaking families. Miss Lockhart expressed to me her concerns about her African American students:

> …their personalities are very confrontational, they're very argumentative, they are very loud spoken…the African American students seem to be more disrespectful honestly…The Hispanic students will be chatty, they'll be talking but basically…I don't have to talk to them as much…where Latasha (African American student)…If I tell her to be quiet, I have to tell her five or six times…{Hispanics} they seem to be a little bit more quiet, don't seem to show as much disrespect…she always {African American girl} has to have the last word.

130

There was a definite concern from all the teachers that cultural diversity created conflicts among students.

Perception of Immigrant Student's Culture as a Deficit

All the teachers perceived that the immigrant students needed to change or acculturate to fit their classroom structure to some degree. Students were perceived as being too quiet or having different values or beliefs. All teachers perceived that students brought cultural differences with them to the classroom and perceived that ELL students needed to fit the culture of the school and their classrooms. All teachers perceived the culture of immigrant students as a deficit towards classroom acculturation.

Miss Montague expressed to me that she didn't feel she could relate to her students' different values and beliefs always. Miss Montague described to me an incident that happened in her classroom concerning witchcraft. Immigrant Mexican girls brought in witchcraft materials to school, which resulted in causing a disruption in class among the African American students. Rather than deal with it herself, Miss Montague took the Mexican students to see the Spanish-speaking Hispanic Assistant Principal "who could relate to them better."

Miss Lockhart perceived it to be her teaching responsibility to develop the language deficit of her culturally diverse students. She believed that it was important to help these students develop their vocabulary and help them to use correct English. Miss Lockhart told me:

Most of these students don't have a lot of support at home...a lot of them don't use proper English. I try to correct them and it's almost like they think I am

131

talking white and they're talking black. And I am like "No, I mean this is not

white and this is not black." Please understand that when you grow up, you don't

want to say, "I ain't going to the store." It's not just the correct way to say these

things. So I just try to help them with their language…I put a lot of emphasis on

vocabulary and proper English...spelling is so poor and so low.

Miss Lockhart also perceived that the reason a lot of her students were failing math was

because their homework was not done, which she perceived to be a result of a lack of

parent involvement. She told me: "… you could look at my grades today and see the that

the reason these students are failing is because of homework."

Miss Monroe expressed the following concern:

The hardest part is knowing all the different diversities...about the Asian culture

I've had a hard time dealing with parents…because our Asian population …are so

driven. Their kids are not allowed any free time really …I have an Asian girl

who types all her homework on the computer. I think a lot of our different

ethnicities help the class because we get a lot of different viewpoints. At the same

time you have to very careful about what you say as an adult because you don't

want them to think that you're embarrassed or for them to be embarrassed by their

culture or by their religion or diversity.

Miss Monroe also expressed the cultural deficit of these families not wanting their

children to accomplish academically.

It's probably 25% {neighborhood children} and a lot of it is not that they can't

but it's just that they won't because of the stigma of being in this program. You

know their neighborhood frowns upon accomplishment almost in that area as you

know most poor neighborhoods hate when somebody tries to better themselves

because they know they can't…so it's hard for them {neighborhood kid} and we

have one that is getting a scholarship...he's getting a scholarship because he's

Hispanic and he has those problems in his neighborhood and that he's going to a

private school so he isn't going to have to associate with them at here at school.

Mrs. O' Reilly expressed to me:

I have some concerns about some cultures not getting along for example the

Middle Eastern cultures who are coming in now...some of them don't get along

too well with each other now with September 11th they have problems with us.

And I have noticed that there is a degree of animosity between the black and

Hispanic cultures…I do have strong concerns about ethnocentrism where

everybody says, this is my world and, you know, nobody is going to invade it and

it really concerns me that they can't see the other person's point of view.

Miss Bell shared her concerns:

My concerns are the kids (ELL) don't sometimes speak up when they have

problems (academic). They'll just let it go and they won't say anything. So you

may even ask them if they have it and they'll say, "oh yes we really have it" and

they don't…so my concern is getting them to speak up and say, "I really don't

understand this. Can you explain this a little bit more?"…sometimes you can read

their faces and other times you can't…so you find out then at the end of the day

when you grade their papers or something ….I encourage my kids to ask…you

kinda like have to pull it out of them…once they {meaning students} grade their papers we see what they have missed, we go back over it. And we'll go back over each answer and I'll go, "Who missed this question?" And they'll raise their hand and I'll go, "what were you thinking when you chose this answer?"...and that way I get feedback. But it's not until the end do I get it.

Mr. Bond didn't view cultural differences as a problem as much as the others. While he made references to gang gestures, his way of dealing with cultural diversity was to treat all students the same. His rules, and how he managed his classroom, were the same for all students regardless of cultural backgrounds. Mr. Bond told me:

Basically you just have to treat the kids like kids. You have to have boundaries and rules set. Well, you know, I am aware of gesturing and things that may be different in different cultures and we try to avoid the situation but we go with the stand by rules and we try to teach treating each person individually the same and I think that speaks for itself…if you set up your rules and keep it standard and, you know, keep the parameters the same for everybody, kids fall in line.

All the teachers perceived that the immigrant students needed to change or acculturate to fit their classroom structure to some degree. Students were perceived as being too quiet or having different values or beliefs. All teachers perceived that students brought cultural differences with them to the classroom and perceived that ELL students needed to fit the culture of the school and their classrooms. All teachers perceived the culture of immigrant students as a deficit towards classroom acculturation. The novice teachers struggled the most with discipline and classroom discipline in this regard. The

134

Autocratic disciplinarians, Mr. Bond and Miss Bell, perceived these students to be too quiet. The Interactive teachers, Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly, were aware of the cultural tensions between cultures. All the teachers in this study voiced concerns about cultural differences.

How teachers incorporated students' cultural backgrounds in lessons

The veteran Interactive teachers, Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly seemed to weave the cultural backgrounds of students naturally into classroom conservations with students. Mr. Bond and Miss Mr. Bond made time in their curricula to plan units of study specifically targeted towards different cultures. They did these units towards the end of the year and after the TAAS test. I did observe that Mr. Bond emphasized the African American culture a lot in his classroom throughout the research period. Mr. Bond shared with me:

> I guess it makes sense you want to try to bring out…ah…unique points and emphasis to get the kids interested in what you are doing…ah...for example with the American Revolution it's not a well known fact that Christopher Atkins was the first person to die during the fight for independence and he was African American, and you know these subtle little pointers, or you know, facts are not brought out in the general textbooks you try to bring out for the kids. And so they can say, We {meaning African Americans} do have a part in history. You know, we {meaning African Americans} do have important people who did things…It's like, you know, again growing up in classes {meaning himself when he was in school} you don't hear that type of stuff and it's like sometimes it catches the

135

curiosity and does allow the kids to focus more and become more alert because it's something they can relate to.

Four teachers (Mr. Bond, Miss Bell, Miss Monroe and Mrs o' Reilly) agreed that there were more materials and resources provided by the district to teach students about the African American culture than the Latino.

The two novice teachers (Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague) did not seem to be able to weave in any cultural content with their students. They did not see the incorporation of the cultural diversities of their students as their teaching responsibility. They both expressed to me that they found it difficult to incorporate the cultural backgrounds of their students because of the subject they taught and discipline difficulties.

Miss Montague did not perceive that she had a duty to incorporate the cultural heritages of her students in math. She told me:

> I teach math and we just work with a lot of concrete numbers, I really don't do (incorporate culture she means)…I haven't but it would be a little difficult to, you know, incorporate but really it's something I should.

Miss Montague's level of incorporation of cultural knowledge from students' backgrounds consisted of relying on the computer which used different cultural names. Miss Montague said, "But since the beginning of the year they have been on the computers, and while on the computers hey use different names from different cultures and they use different scenarios."

The novice teachers (Miss Lockhart & Miss Montague) were able, however, to

interact on a one-to-one basis with students after school rather than during their classes. Miss Lockhart told me:

> When I have opportunities to work with small groups of students…earlier in the morning or during lunch...so when you're working with a couple of students or with one student is when you can almost relax a little bit...I have learned what a "quinceanera" is when the Hispanic girl turns fifteen...so I have learned that and just when I am not in a classroom teaching with twenty children…you can't get sidetracked on that.

The Interactive teachers (Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly) interacted well with students in classroom conversation. They were able to engage their students in meaningful classroom discussions without losing classroom control and management. The veteran teachers weaved this information in a natural and unplanned manner. The veterans were able to incorporate it into naturally occurring situations in the classrooms. They incorporated it naturally in the writing and conversations with their students. Miss Monroe told me:

> I just say things like, I'm going to ask this question. If you don't want to answer it you don't have to...we have a student who is Muslim and today is a holiday and I'm not sure what holiday and I know her well enough now that I can say, "So Roe tell me about this holiday, as you know I'm like stupid. So tell me about it?"…So I think kids are good about picking up if you're trying to learn or whether you are trying to make fun of them and they know the difference. And I think they generally like when you ask them questions.

Mrs. O' Reilly expressed:

I've got a good incident that just happened last Friday...birthday cake…and I
learned of a certain Hispanic kind of ritual tradition I'd never heard of before...
when we cut the birthday cake you are supposed to eat a bite of it and then
everybody smashes their head into the cake…I knew that was a tradition…they
knew that if I found out they were lying to me it would have damaged the
relationship…they talk to me. Kids at this age will talk...anytime...in class,
before, during, after {laughs}...they naturally tell me...I run a pretty informal
classroom...so lots of times when we are just talking and discussing something
will trigger...somebody will go this is what we do. They are always telling me
about stuff in Mexico...and then the other day they were trying to get me to move
to Mexico and they were saying…when you retire you need to go to Mexico.
And I go, "I don't know Spanish" and they go, "you can learn." I was going,
"Yeah, you're right." So you see they are trying to get me to understand their
culture a little bit better… I myself if I see if I get along with all cultures then they
are going to know, well it's okay...it's okay to get along with other
cultures…sometimes I try to infuse some culture into my lessons…just trying to
get a general idea of acceptance…after school particularly...and they come and I
mean I talk with them there on the computer and we talk about different problems
and some of the problems I try to relate everything into their work and sometimes
we shoot off into different conversations and I find out a lot about the
students…whenever possible I will use it as an example (something a student has

138

shared about Mexico)...whenever possible I will refer it back to that incident...it just depends on what it is and how to use it. And science is so good about that because we talk about everything...there is always a way to bring some culture into it...classroom is very interactive...no rarely do I just sit up there and just lecture. Or if I am lecturing for a while I always have to ask lots of questions and get their feedback and they're pretty good about that.

I found that the African American teachers (Mr. Bond and Miss Bell) in response to this question to be the most planned in terms of consistently planning and incorporating planned multicultural lessons into their curriculum. They researched stories and talked about buying published materials and resources.

<u>Multicultural resources</u>

Teacher interviews and my observations in the school revealed the need for some kind of established or organized curriculum for the teaching of the Latino culture. There was no unified approach to the incorporation of the Latino culture in this school compared with the African American. Teachers expressed that they had very little materials pertaining to the Latino culture and often they had to "scrounge" for them. Attention to the African American culture was very evident and planned carefully throughout the school. The teachers told me that the district provided them with a lot of materials to teach the African American culture. All teachers expressed the desire that the district should do more to supply them with a unified curriculum approach like that done with the African American culture.

The Interactive teachers (Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly) were the most critical

of the lack of cultural materials available to them. These teachers compensated for the lack of multicultural materials by relying on their students as primary resources. Miss Monroe told me:

> They (students) usually direct which way our literature goes. The district gives us a certain amount. But if we have individual reading that they can choose usually, I let them tell me what they like…. Most of the time they are {meaning students} fairly good about picking up books about their own ethnicity or their own interest. I've learned a lot about soccer... I bought these (books) through my budget, instead of buying a chair, which I need …it's hard to find anything about Latino or African American cowboys. It's hard for these children to connect with history because of how it has been portrayed in our books and in our videos.

The novices (Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague) believed it was not their responsibility to incorporate multicultural materials in their lessons. They viewed multicultural resources as other teachers who assisted them with strategies to teach ELL students. Miss Lockhart told me: "Mrs. Winters (LC team coordinator) is just great and if I do have any problems she's very apt to help in whatever way she can…she often comes over and checks up on them…" Miss Montague expressed to me: "I am always going to meetings and they are always mentioning something about ESL you know, so I get the information." Miss Bell stated:

> As far as Hispanic books they don't have that much…I love poetry and we usually do that closer to the end of the year…a lot of these kids are very reserved and they're not used to speaking up and talking and it also helps the kids to speak

up and learn to talk in front of people. And I think that's very important.

Mr. Bond related:

> When you teach, they give you truckloads of materials that they want you to look
> at and purchase from these different corporations and companies. They send you
> a lot of materials and I go through these and look at the little booklets and try to
> pick out some things that I can use in the classroom. I've got a pretty good
> collection of things and I keep them in the class and try to make little worksheets
> out of them and stuff like that for the kids to use. We make posters, and you
> know, hopefully this year the department has been talking about like doing like
> food fest and stuff like that. So maybe we can get that started this year.

Incorporation of the cultural backgrounds of students is a vital characteristic of culturally responsive teaching (Banks, 2002; Gay, 2000). I found that the Interactive teachers were able to do so naturally and as part of the occurring classroom conversations with students. The African American teachers tended to be more planned in that they developed specific units to use with their students. The novice and least experienced teachers incorporated the cultural backgrounds of their students the least because they taught math and struggled with classroom discipline.

Home-School Connections

Lack of effective connections between the school and the families of ELL students was a weakness admitted by all teachers in this study. The only home-school connections conducted by teachers concerned behavioral and discipline issues with students. The two teachers, who were engaged in after school extra-curricular sports

activities (Miss Bell and Mr. Bond), sometimes visited the homes of students, but they still admitted that parent involvement in the school was a major concern at Western Heights Middle School.

Home-school connections were limited to progress reports and report cards. Teachers relied exclusively on the ELL students to communicate or translate for their parents. Incentives and threats were the main motivations for students to deliver these communications from school. All the teachers expressed that their communications with the families of students were for behavioral and academic problems. Although the school had an open invitation for all parents to visit classrooms with their students, the reality was that only a few parents out of a team of 120 students ever availed of this opportunity to visit. During my five-month research period I observed one parent visiting in the classroom. That mother was monitoring her son who had been having major behavioral problems in class.

All teachers relied very heavily on the limited personnel (four) who could speak Spanish. The Spanish speaking personnel in the school were limited to two assistant principals, one attendance clerk, and one teacher assistant in the Language Center.

Use of Interpreters

I discovered that the veteran Interactive teachers such as Miss Monroe did not express a reticence about asking for help with translators or Spanish speaking interpreters. Miss Monroe told me:

I have more of a "can you help me kind of attitude." It works fine. I think there are teachers who are intimidated, who are not quite as comfortable as I am about

going up to someone who speaks Spanish and going 'can you do some

interpretation for me?... we could always use more {interpreters}.

The two novice teacher (Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague) at times were

definitely intimidated and overwhelmed by this process and expressed to me how time

consuming it was and at times easier not to bother.

Miss Lockhart shared with me:

It is difficult {communicating with ESL families} because the Hispanic students

the only language that the parent speaks at home is Spanish so in order to

communicate with them I have to have an interpreter...our attendance clerk down

in the office...Ms. Beasley interprets and sometimes it's very hard when you have

45 minutes off to try to go down to get the phone numbers ready, have the

students' grades in front of you and then Ms. Beasley might be with a parent or

she might be running an attendance sheet so...it's a lot easier to get a hold of an

African American parent than it is to a Hispanic family...when I know I'm going

to call a Hispanic I ask the student "do they speak English at home." And, you

know, sometimes they do say "yes" and then I will make the call on my own. But

again when they don't speak English at home, it sometimes just takes longer to

make the contact.

Miss Montague referred Mexican students to the Spanish speaking Hispanic

assistant principal because she perceived that the Spanish-speaking administrator could

relate to these students better.

All teachers recognized the value of parent involvement but believed that lack of Spanish speaking skills on their part created an impediment. The novices, in particular, were the ones who considered the lack of parent involvement to be the reason for their discipline struggles with certain students. I found that there was a reticence among the novice teachers (Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague) to initiate contact with the parents. Because of the language difference it became the responsibility of the assistant principals who spoke Spanish or the attendance clerk (Miss Beasley) to contact the parents and usually this was when there was a behavioral or academic problem. Often the ELL and Spanish-speaking students themselves acted as interpreters for teachers who needed to communicate with parents. Getting more parent involvement was a concern for all the teachers. Mr. Bond offered:

> Sometimes you may never contact the parent because their student has a pretty solid home like, you know, stable activities after school and they're a pretty good student. You know, sad to say, but right now with a lot of kids and as many as we do teach in the classroom ah we try to focus on those kids who are needing the most assistance, and who need extra attention. Miss Monroe explained:
>
> When Sept 11th happened that day, we had a lot of Hispanic people in the building that didn't speak English looking for their children. So we had to use our students you know {as interpreters}...we use the resource of the students a lot when dealing with the parents…the problem is in their culture in Mexico parents are not invited to school and not needed in school. They are almost told not to come to

school unless they are called. When they come here they are so intimidated, and

of course you have to think about the fact that the only time when they are really

called to school is when something bad has happened. So they are really

intimidated about coming up to school and going "can I help?"

Mrs. O' Reilly explained to me how she communicated with parents:

I developed a form, gave it to Ms. Fleming (Spanish-speaking assistant principal),

she translated into Spanish for me...I get a lot of responses from it...I just mailed

a note home for a young man that had been missing a lot and I wrote the dates that

he was missing and all of a sudden, the very next day, well the next day but take a

couple of days the father was up here wanting to know why his son had missed so

much school. So you see it does work. His father was up here immediately...like

this one student, I've known him for two years and I take kids home and I meet

the parents, they bring me in you know and I meet the whole family. So I try to

get as involved as possible...makes a very positive difference...soccer games...I

went to the soccer game and just making that little bit of an effort going to the

soccer game. All of a sudden the girls soccer team feels much more connected to

me because I went to one of their games.

Miss Montague wished there were more parent involvement and told me:

I'd like to understand some of the problems they bring to the classroom...so it's

important to know because sometimes you know it can be very frustrating and

you don't want to jump down someone's throat if they are having a bad day. I

know that I'll do that sometimes and I don't mean to and I don't want to but it's

just that I've had a long day also day also you know…a lot of them {parents} have jobs...they're working overtime or the parents are not involved in the kid's lives, it's the grandparents and maybe the grandparents are working two jobs because I have that case too you know.

Miss Bell expressed that she sent notes home, invited parents to her classroom but that very few came. During Reading Parent Night she told me that only ten parents out of a possible one hundred and twenty showed up. The team she told me had even brought in someone who spoke Spanish to interpret for parents. The team of eight grade teachers planned food in the cafeteria but still the parent turnout was very low. This was a source of frustration for the teachers.

All teachers recognized the value of parent involvement but believed that lack of Spanish speaking skills on their part created an impediment. The novices in particular were the ones who seemed considered the lack of parent involvement to be the reason for their discipline struggles with certain students. I found that there was a reticence among the novice teachers (Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague) to initiate contact with the parents. Because of the language difference it became the responsibility of the assistant principals who spoke Spanish or the attendance clerk (Miss Beasley) to contact the parents and usually this was when there was a behavioral or academic problem. Often the ELL and Spanish-speaking students themselves acted as interpreters for teachers who needed to communicate with parents. Getting more parent involvement was a concern for all the teachers.

<u>Resources that assist teachers to communicate with families</u>

There was a heavy reliance on the two administrators in the school who spoke Spanish as well as the attendance clerk parent liaison and teacher assistant in the LC. These teachers relied also on students to translate letters home to parent, which they would give to the assistant principal for editing. Communication with parents took a lot of time from the administrators as well as from the attendance clerk and other personnel who still had to maintain their own job duties. All translating and interpreting done by these four individuals was unrelated to their daily job responsibilities and was done to facilitate and assist teachers. There was not a particular district policy that mandated that there had to be a certain amount of Spanish speaking personnel in the school. One of the administrators was to be moved to another school for the coming year and I was not aware whether there was a conscious effort made by the district to specifically recruit a Spanish speaking person to replace him. All teachers and administrators expressed a need for more Spanish speaking personnel.

The review of the literature relating to culturally responsive teaching stresses the importance of strong connections between the homes of culturally diverse students and the school. Home-school connections in this research study were limited to progress reports and report cards. Teachers relied exclusively on the ELL students to communicate, or translate for their parents. Incentives and threats were the main motivations for students to deliver these communications from school. All the teachers expressed that their communications with the families of students were for behavioral and academic problems. Although the school had an open invitation for all parents to visit

classrooms with their students, the reality was that only a few parents out of a team of 120 students ever availed of this opportunity to visit. During my five-month research period I observed one parent visiting in the classroom. That mother was monitoring her son who had been having major behavioral problems in class.

All teachers relied very heavily on the limited personnel who could speak Spanish. The Spanish speaking personnel in the school were limited to two assistant principals, one attendance clerk, and one teacher assistant in the Language Center. The personnel who could speak Spanish all had other jobs and duties and interpretation for teachers was something 'extra" they did. There was a clear need in this school for personnel whose job was limited to interpreting and translating letters and communications for teachers. There was a clear lack of Spanish-speaking parent involvement and representation in this school.

<center>Learning Styles/Instructional Practices</center>

All teachers were cognizant that they had to do something different in their teaching to incorporate the ELL students in their classrooms. What clearly differentiated the teachers was whether they had an interactive or didactic teaching style. The Interactive teachers (Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly) were more student-centered in their instructional styles. I observed them emphasizing the content of the lesson first as opposed to vocabulary development. The Interactive teachers demonstrated the following characteristics: They were empathetic; used non-verbal cues of students to guide their instruction; understood the cultural differences and learning styles among students; developed techniques to work specifically with ELL students; tried different teaching

strategies, and focussed on concept and curriculum content as quickly as possible in the lesson.

I observed that the Didactic teachers (Mr. Bond, Miss Lockhart, Miss Montague, and Miss Bell) tended to display teaching characteristics that were more subject-centered. Some of what I observed them doing were as follows: Slowed down their directions; watered down (simplified) what they taught; put emphasis on vocabulary first before they taught concept; repeated directions several times; expressed that they wished they could speak Spanish in order to teach the ELL students better; used terms like 'spoon feed' and expressed their concern that they were unable to cover the desired content at the pace they would ideally prefer.

Student- Centered Strategies Used by Interactive Teachers (Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly)

Interactive teachers used cooperative learning, pair work, visual cues, hands-on activities, etc. There were specific strategies used to cater especially for the ELL student. The teachers had organized students in cooperative groups; there were numerous activities; the emphasis was on teaching the content of the lesson rather than on slowly repeating directions. Their classrooms were less teacher controlled. The students interacted more with each other. The teacher consciously did something in the planning of the lesson to meet the needs of the students and knew that students would experience less frustration. There was either a group project, choice of assignment, hands-on activity, video, conversation or interaction in the lessons. Their classrooms were more vibrant and were not silent.

The Interactive teachers used non-verbal communication as a way of gauging the frustration levels of their ELL students. They did not ignore their ELL students. These teachers individualized more for the ELL student and were more at ease with incorporating the cultural heritages of the ELL student in a natural and conversational way in the classroom. The Interactive teachers used a variety of different teaching methods, gave differentiated tests, used more kinesthetic activities and tried to involve critical thinking and problem solving. The interactive teachers modified how they were teaching to include the ELL student. Miss Monroe told me:

> I usually make a point to have them {ELL students} up front close to me so I can see facial expressions as well as making sure they're on the right page. Sometimes you can tell by just looking at them, you wanna go "you're not getting this are you?"...I usually always make sure that I ask them...I put them up close to me to make sure that they are at least near me…I single them out to say "do you understand?"...looking to make the eye contact .We do a very informal question and answer session. It's very laid back trying to get how they feel and the first thing is if I give them an assignment and they don't do pretty well on it I pretty much know that it's time for questions and answers. I do a lot of peer grouping so maybe if they're not getting it from me maybe someone else can speak their language so they can get it. Reflective writing helps a lot too ...they're more comfortable writing down what they're thinking rather than everyone listening.

Mrs. O' Reilly explained what she did:

I use a lot of non-verbal communication, hand signals…I look for a lot of

recognition. If it's not there I keep trying to find a word until they understand it. I do a lot of pointing to the textbook and try to get them to understand that way but again non-verbal communication is essential because they understand that. Mrs. O' Reilly further explained to me as follows:

I use multiple intelligences a lot. I attack all of the major modalities, kinaesthetic, visual, and auditory. Of course at this age they are not very auditory but they're more auditory that we think though. So I use that for every single lesson and also I try to use a lot of differentiation and sometimes I'll do it by modalities. There is one lesson that I did knowing which kids were auditory and which ones were visual and which ones were kinaesthetic and had them do the assignment in their modality. Another way is that I find a particular interest in a subject and one particular avenue of interest, divide them into groups like that…I just did this lesson on atoms and to get them to understand all the different subatomic particles. We had different "Reese's Pieces" and I showed them how to make a model and then the yellow ones were a certain thing and then the red. They loved it. And they get to consume it and they thought that was great.

Subject-Centered Instructional Strategies used by Didactic Teachers (Miss Bell, Mr. Bond, Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague)

The Didactic teachers repeated more, slowed down, but did not alter the delivery of instruction. The instructions were still Didactic and teacher controlled. There was nothing specifically done to teach differently to the ELL student. I observed these teachers at the front of the classroom at chalkboard or overhead giving a brief example,

and then requesting that the students practice independently and silently at desks. The teacher did or did not walk around the room, checked in after 10 minutes or so and the assignment was graded together (students usually swapped papers and graded each other's), and grades were sometimes requested aloud in front of class and recorded by teachers in the grade book.

Miss Lockhart explained how she helped ELL students learn best:

Verbally speaking...put it on the overhead…repeat the directions multiple times and always reinforce by saying, "Does everybody understand what I am saying, does anybody have any questions?"...{puts the responsibility on the student to initiate}…walk around the classroom and monitor as much as I can. So I use the overhead a lot but definitely everything I write down, I repeat it multiple times and I always try to walk round the room and I say, "I want everyone to write this down" as they are writing down I say, "I'm gonna walk around the room and make sure we're all writing it down' to keep everybody on task.

Miss Montague used the following strategy:

I try to use terminology like you have to use different terminology…like at a lower level, say it differently to explain things…. I try to praise them if they do something good, if they answer a question or I'll go, "that's great" or, you know, whatever...I repeat as much as possible because I know that they need the repetition of words. I give bonus points, you know, do this work tonight; use this study guide; bring it back tomorrow and turn it in, it's for the test, and it's a bonus.

Miss Bell used specific TAAS strategies to make sure that students passed the TAAS test successfully. She was emphatic that these strategies were not just for ELL students but also for all students.

We have a strategy called the hand plan that breaks things up…if you can give kids chunks instead of the whole big picture it helps them out...I teach them strategies in how to find different things and in a paragraph…they number the paragraph, I have them look at the words that are repeated…it teaches the kids how to find the words that relate to each other, find those words, and that teaches them how to write a summary…if you take those words and combine them you have summary. So they have summary out to the side. A lot of times when our kids are reading a passage, our ESL kids reading a passage,they are not really comprehending what they read. That's where the hand plan comes in because it allows them to stop, think about what they are writing, and write a summary out to the side. And once they get to the end of the passage, a lot of these kids don't remember what they read at the beginning of the passage, but they can go back and read their summary and that will tell them then, it's one step. It'll tell me if they understood or not.

Mr. Bond kept all his students, ELL included, on the same schedule and used a slower pace. He referred to ELL students needing modifications like the Special Education Student. He did not identify specific strategies he used with ELL students. He told me:

Usually those (ELL) students are pretty much set on the same schedule...and it

becomes fairly obvious that some students are from the LC...so I speak to Miss. Winters…she gives us information and sheets about their previous work deficiencies/modifications. In the classroom I go with the standard rules we have set at the beginning of the year…I spend more time going slowly over the information, checking for understanding and walking around the classroom to check and see that they are on the right page, repeat the answers and questions...go at a slower pace, allow group work, things of that nature but pretty much what I would normally do in the classroom but probably at a slower pace and allow more time for note taking, quizzes and things of that nature. Again, pertaining to the instructional strategies you have to slow down the pace giving them more time to copy down the notes. You may have to repeat yourself a couple of times to make sure your students understand what you are asking of them…we receive so much training and it's pretty much all the same thing, just ways of modifications, different ways of modifications, and modifying work for students if they are language students and if they are special education students, all different kinds of modifications that pretty much follow the same path.

The Didactic teachers, I observed, kept all students on same page and schedule and made the work basic so that all students could understand it. That approach became a problem for one of the ELL students (Jaime) in this study who expressed his boredom in Mr. Bond's classroom because he did not feel challenged academically. Mr. Bond, Jaime told me, and I also observed this, highlighted the material to be copied by ELL students and often called out the answers. The strategies Mr. Bond used tended to meet the needs

154

of the challenged learner (Special Education students) but at times were frustrating for

students such as Jaime who were considered to be gifted and talented.

How teachers individualize instruction

Depending on their teaching style, teachers individualized instruction differently for

students. The Interactive teachers used differentiation and choice in assignments and

hardly ever mentioned teaching to the TAAS test. The Didactic teachers and especially

the novice teachers relied heavily on TAAS tutoring for the 26 days before the test.

The Interactive teachers (Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly) adapted instructional

teaching levels, used pre-testing to gauge the level of students and then planned

accordingly, they used different modalities and gauged their perceptions of student

understanding by monitoring face and body language. They also incorporated group work

on a weekly basis.

Mrs. O' Reilly explained:

Besides using the multiple intelligences and the different modality I will also use

a lot of student mentors so that means I will try to pair up a really slow kid with a

fast kid and let them work together. And we do group work and a lot of times I

get answers you know I don't ask.

The Didactic teachers (Miss Montague, Miss Lockhart, Mr. Bond and Miss Bell)

however, emphasized passing of TAAS a great deal and grouping students by ability for

TAAS, using computer programs that already self-paced the students. These teachers

relied mainly on the district provided strategies of mini-assessments, benchmarking, etc.

They drilled and practiced TAAS skills with their students.

155

Miss Lockhart expressed to me:

My goal is to get them to pass TAAS…three levels {of students}...It is a trial to
have all the low kids in one room twice a day especially my lowest…one of my
lowest classes is at the end of the day. Unfortunately they're like animals coming
in here. They just want to leave, they're off the wall, and looking at the clock. So
I understand why they're doing it {administration}, second level is much better
because they're before lunch and relatively early in the morning. They're a little
calmer. So I know why they have been grouped together. The way our scope and
sequence is set up with these lower kids is that we spend more time on certain
lessons, {e.g.} problem solving. I might spend two weeks on fractions. With
regular math I might spend only spend one week. So just I'm moving at a
different pace, basically covering the same material. So and it's just if they were
in a room with the higher level kids it might help to be able to do some peer work
because I can't really leave any of these kids. If I group them together they're all
at the same level with the exception of a few. So they really need ... one on one
help, which I can't do in that room.

Miss Montague explained to me how she individualized instruction for her ELL

students:

I ask students, "Tell me again what it is you didn't understand?"…. So those that
get it can move on and those that don't it becomes a homework assignment…I try
to give them a bonus question, and the bonus question is challenging and it's
something they've never seen before and a less challenging for the ones that have

the ability to look at it, it's easy, you know, with a formula as long as you know how to apply the formula. It's just a formula they have never seen before and they can figure out certain things. That's how I try to figure out the ones that are actually getting ahead. And usually when I am teaching them on the computers it's a self-paced thing so those kids that are higher achievers or already understand get to go ahead and the ones that are lower I try to keep pushing them to get ahead and help them and everything else.

Miss Bell explained her developed TAAS strategy:

A lot of the kids in this school they have problems with concentration and recall so I teach them ways to remember those things. It's the same things as adults we just don't write it down we make a mental note in our minds so it's teaching them strategies...the hand plan it teaches them how to summarize because a lot of kids they don't know what a summary is. Like at the beginning of the year they can't write a one-sentence statement about the whole paragraph. So I teach them how to look at the paragraph and how to underline the words that are repeated that can go in a box. I show them how to label the box, tell me the words that could fit in this box. And once they get those words they put those words into a sentence by adding, you know, their conjunctions 'a' and 'is' and 'the' and they seem to grasp that…lots of time even on the TAAS test they have to summarize every single paragraph. And if there are 16 paragraphs they have to have 16 different summaries, one for each paragraph.

Mr. Bond explained the school policy that assisted the teachers in differentiating

instruction for students. Again he expressed a reliance on school and district policies. He told me:

> At the beginning {of year} I try to do different types of lessons and determine what level kids are on. For example the students do a writing assignment. You take the writing assignment and see where their vocabulary skills are, their grammar, punctuation, spelling etc. Then you make a determination from that, you know, the writing abilities. Then you know, we have quite a few assignments daily where we actually do reading in class. You can determine their reading abilities from that. Plus we had to do a reading course, school wide, two years ago. And the kids are broken up by their reading ability and placed in different homerooms so you pretty much know like being the team leader, you know, the homeroom teacher which curriculum they teach what type of reading assignment they are teaching in there. So, you know, the higher level kids are in one particular homeroom and it's broken up into your lower level kids may be more extensive reading tutorial are placed in a lower homeroom classroom…LC kids are mainstreamed during what they call decoding classes, which are the lower level classes where they get the basic phonics of the words and we go over meanings and pronunciation.

How teachers individualized for students was differentiated between Didactic and Interactive teaching styles. The Interactive teachers used differentiation and choice in assignments and hardly ever mentioned teaching to the TAAS test. The novices relied heavily on TAAS tutoring for the 26 days before the test for their students to gauge

student progress. The Didactic teachers in general taught mainly for the test and relied on districting testing and procedures to assist them in identifying students who were experiencing academic difficulties in their classes.

<u>District Testing</u>

The two Interactive teachers (Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly) did not rely as much on district testing to monitor and control their lesson planning for students. The other four teachers, especially the novices, relied heavily on these tests.

The Interactive teachers actually relied very little on district test results. They told me they did not always find these tests to be truly valid or indicative of students' needs. All teachers shared with me several examples of purposeful sabotage among students related to district benchmarking and mini- assessments. The teachers told me that the mini-assessments were timed unlike the actual TAAS test and because of that some students experienced frustrations. Very often, teachers told me, a student scored lower on the district mini-assessment due to time constraints and not a lack of ability on the student's part.

There was a difference in the assessment procedures used by teachers depending on levels of teaching experience. The veteran teachers tended to use intuition to assess students' needs by observation. They used the data from the district tests but did make their own self-made test and individualized three to four different tests to address the ability ranges in their classrooms.

The novice teachers expressed to me feeling "bogged down" by grading and always being at the copier either creating or running off tests. The veteran teachers

expressed their glee at creating their own tests. The novice teachers seemed unable to relate assessment to their teaching.

Miss Monroe told me that although she used scores district tests to determine which students were eligible for TAAS tutoring (district policy), still used her own intuition and perception to determine what was going on with students. She told me that sometimes students were just having a bad day when they took a district mini-assessment and that it was nothing more than normal puberty issues that affected the performance of that student. She explained:

> I brought her (student) in for tutoring…so she read it fine for me and we got to talking about the class and I say I notice you stumble in class. "What's the deal?"...she said, "I like the boy who is sitting next to me." Once I realized that it all made sense…It's very hard unless...could I do that for 150 kids? No. But I think you have to look at them as individuals in the group setting as much as possible. That's where we lose so many of our kids. We spend so much time on the kids who are having discipline problems; the ones who are very vocal. She discussed assessment:
>
> I use the data that we get from the district. We have a lot of data, and we have benchmark...last year's TAAS…I don't put a lot of stress into it (the data) other than it gives me a sounding board. I have a student who made a 29 and to make a 29 means you really can't read. He reads well he just got numbered off somehow...he got mixed up in his test.
>
> Mrs. O' Reilly explained what she does in relation to testing:

Now that's where I really do individualize. I have at least three to four different tests every single test. Because I just feel like that the kids won't copy number one and number two. It lets me know exactly what they are capable of. So I've got, you know, for the ELL kids limited vocabulary on them, lots of diagrams and so they are good at math and so I will get some math questions in there. So I will try to aim that towards them or something I keep going over and over again and make sure that they know it.

Miss Lockhart told me that she uses the school district mandated tutoring for 26 days before TAAS to individualize for her students who need extra help. She tutored after school but her tutoring really consisted of making up missing homework assignments. She also expressed her concern:

I'm trying to make my quizzes shorter because I just get bogged down with hours and hours of grading. Sometimes I'll give them a worksheet and I'll tell them do five problems and I'll tell them at the end of class, "Oh I'm gonna count that as a quiz grade." Just again to try to cut down on the grading…about five or six per week {grades she takes}. I check their notes every six weeks. I require it and some of them are still fighting it. They're not gonna make it in high school. I have some kids that are so unorganised that I try to make their notes 10% of their grade…and keeping them {notes}. They leave them in here, throw them in the trash…because especially with the boys it's not cool to carry a binder or folder around, which is very difficult.

Miss Montague told me why she didn't create different tests to meet the needs of

her students:

I give one test to all of them. The reason why I do that is that I don't feel like that if I separate them and say, "You take this test," and this child who is actually capable of doing it will say, "I want that test miss" {she mimics a student] you know I couldn't separate them…{in response to my question of modifications she might do}...what I do for them is on the computers, the test they like, for most of the test there's five questions and you can set the test to where there's three or four difficult, three moderate, or three hard, or whatever, you know. And I set them on five and they're all easy. So in that sense it's easy to do on the computers.

For Miss Bell the district mini-assessments dictated how she planned and individualized for her students:

We have mini assessments that are provided four times a year...based on that mini assessment I take a look at the kids to see what area they are weak in. From that area they are weak in I provide them with folders with the things that they need the most as practice. So that is how I individualize the practice and also I have kids that don't get things that are being taught in class as fast. So we work together. I'll sit with them and go over it to make sure that they know what they are doing. They'll practice with me until they understand what I'm expecting and then once we've gone over it then they are able to do it on their own...we work on folders until TAAS. Once they finish in that folder they get another one and go over some more of work on so they can build and get stronger in the areas that

they are weak in.

Mr. Bond described how his assessment procedures individualized to students' needs by assessing their writing and reading ability at beginning of year, allowing extra time for assignments to be copied, walking around the room and checking students' work, and providing opportunities for group work.

Researchers Gay (2000) and Banks (2001) in the area of culturally responsive teaching demonstrate that teachers who use more student-entered testing and teaching methods are more culturally sensitive to the needs of ELL students. In this study the two most interactive teachers who were Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly were the most culturally sensitive in that they differentiated instruction for all their students and used teaching methods that catered to the individual needs of students. The Didactic teachers in this study placed a heavy emphasis on preparing students for standardized tests and were very subject-centered in their teaching approach.

<center>Student Validation</center>

<u>Student/Teacher Relations</u>

The questions concerning student-teacher relations revealed that how teachers got to know their students depended on the teaching style of the teacher and if they were involved in after school extra-curricular activities and tutoring.

The teachers who had interactive teaching styles got to know their students in class. A good deal of conversation and interaction between students and teachers characterized these classrooms. Miss Bell and Mr. Bond were involved in after school coaching and both found that to be a way of getting to know students and build

<center>163</center>

relationships.

The Interactive teachers (Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly), perhaps because of ease of classroom management and years of teaching experience, talked and interacted with students casually in class and throughout the lesson without losing discipline or control. I observed they also maintained eye contact with each student, displayed 'wittiness' (knowing what all students were doing at all times) and, in general, constantly scanned the room. They greeted students at the door and generally the students appeared excited entering their classrooms.

Mrs. O' Reilly explained:

Ask questions and they'll tell you anything. They're amazing at this age, well anybody. Well this particular age you just ask questions and you ask them to explain themselves or something and you get a tremendous insight and then there is a lull…sometimes when there is a day when I don't want to start something but I can't just let them sit, I have these personality tests. A lot of times it tells me a lot about them too… I really try to greet each student as they come in using their name. I really try to have eye contact, that's important, eye contact.

The novice teachers (Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague) could not maintain such interactions during class due to classroom management concerns but expressed that they enjoyed the one-on-one interactions with students either during lunch or after school for tutoring. The novice teachers both expressed to me their classroom discipline management inadequacies as the reason why they were unable to engage students more in cooperative learning or informal conversations in class. I observed when the novice

teachers engaged in any conversation that was non-content or task specific to the lesson of the day lost control and classroom management. These novice teachers told me that they were more comfortable with students on a one-to-one basis after school in small group situations such as tutoring or during lunch or after school. Miss Lockhart explained:

> So the algebra students I seem to be able to relax a little bit more with them and ah…so I just know that they are going to pay attention with me. Like with my lower level kids if we try to go off on a tangent, well all hell breaks loose. I mean we got people looking at pictures; two students will start talking to one another; everybody will start getting up to throw things in the trash and to get Kleenex and sharpen their pencils, so I seem to be able to communicate a little more freely on non-mathematical things you know...ah…with my higher-level students. Again during lunch if they didn't understand an assignment the night before they will come in and ask questions. The best part of working with these kids is working with them in small groups and that's when you get to know them a little bit better and find out more about their backgrounds.

Mr. Bond, the most Autocratic and Didactic of the teachers stood at the door, passed out work, maintained the strictest silence in the room and didn't concern himself at first with building personal relationships with students. He expressed that there were some students 'you never get to know because they are so quiet.' He explained:

> Ah...basically at the beginning of the year you try to maintain a guideline for every student. You don't primarily concern yourself with individual students at

first because you don't know then. So you have a guideline that's basically simple but is based off of mutual respect for yourself, the classroom environment and each student. As you progress you can get to know your students individually and know their strengths and weaknesses, how they react to different situations and you try to you know coordinate your materials, your lessons to the student geared towards the student. You also try to coordinate your discipline towards the student. Some things work well with students and some things do not work well with students…. And some students you may never get to know because they are so quiet and they just come in and do their work and go home and that is just the way it is.

Miss Bell explained her relationship with students as follows:

The relationship that I have with my kids are that they are my kids...I try to tell them that I am here and I really think that we have a good relationship as far as the kids...a lot of them will come to me... a lot of them will skip class and show up to my class so I think that the relationship is important and they know how serious I am about what they do and their future is not in my class … but I try to show them what they have ahead…. a lot of times the kids will do it {work harder} so just I can be happy.

All teachers regardless of years of experience perceived that it was important to have students working in pairs or in teams. The interactive teachers (Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly) cited the importance of teamwork, cooperation, the blending of suitable personalities for discipline as well as group work.

166

The novice teachers (Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague), while acknowledging the value of working in pairs and group work, did tell me that they were less likely to try it on a regular basis due to personality conflicts among students, whining, and their inability to deal with such a group configuration. These novice teachers were more likely to keep their students in rows and have them work individually for the most part.

Although all teachers recognized and acknowledged the value of group work as a way of building relationships among students, the teachers who had perceived their classroom management as still in progress were less likely to actually do it.

<u>Student Validation</u>

I observed two types of motivation being used by teachers, Intrinsic and Extrinsic. None of the teachers mentioned anything they did with their curriculum or lesson presentations to specifically target student validation. All teachers perceived student validation as making the students feel a sense of belonging in their classrooms.

The Interactive teachers (Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly) who were more comfortable with their classroom management styles teased students more to make them feel part of the classroom family. These teachers were highly interactive in the class and used a great deal of praise and called on students. The Interactive teachers called on every student, while the novice teachers (Miss Montague and Miss Lockhart) only called on students when they raised their hands. The Interactive teachers called on all students regardless and jokingly commented, as did Miss Monroe, "I haven't heard from so and so today."

The novice teachers weren't comfortable doing that. The novices also cited that

they created a sense of belonging for their students by having them run errands, praising them, and giving them stickers on their work. The Autocratic-Didactic, Mr. Bond, created a sense of belonging by treating all students the same and subjecting all to the same strict discipline expectations. He expressed that it was necessary to treat all students the same because of 'cultural differences.'

How teachers perceived themselves making students feel successful really depended on their years of teaching experience. The novice teachers who had less than five years teaching experience did not see the correlation between students feeling successful and academic success. They cited using praise, allowing students to take turns to come up to the overhead projector or chalkboard, giving out stickers, and general encouragement as the best methods to make students feel successful in class.

The other four more experienced teachers did definitely cite the connection between academic success and student motivation. They cited actions such as making students feel successful by reteaching to the test; sometimes giving credit grades, providing work on level for students, particularly those with special education needs; keeping samples of work; announcing quiz grades, and posting work on bulletin boards.

I concluded that the more experienced teachers (Monroe, O' Reilly, Bell and Bond) emphasized the work students produced as being intrinsic for their success. Mr. Bond explained:

> It is basic assignments as far as let's say quiz. I always announce the kids who pass the quiz. If it's an assignment they turn in, we also post those kids that did well on those assignments, particularly projects and brochures. Those kids who

made the 100's got their posters in the hall, the abolitionists and social reformers.

Later on in the year we are going to do another project and those who do well are

going to get their project posted. I also ask the kids who wrote an excellent paper

if I could keep the paper to use as an example for next year's group. And kids

feel a sense of pride when you announce their name and tell them that they did

well on a particular assignment.

<div align="center">Interdisciplinary Approaches</div>

My research revealed very strong emphasis on interdisciplinary instruction

evident in the school. The interdisciplinary approaches used in the school were strongly

supported by the district and the school's administrative structures. Such activities as

teaming, department meetings, pullout programs, TAAS preparations such as mini-

assessment and benchmarking, vertical and TAAS camps all strove to create a unifying

effect in the school. Teachers were forced to pull together and plan and team. All teachers

did their best to support colleague's areas. The math teachers had the most difficult time.

I saw this myself in observations.

They all valued planning with other teachers and rookies relied heavily on

assistance from more experienced teachers. Many procedures were in place in the school

to help them plan. All teachers agreed that planning with other teachers was very

important to them. Together, they all agreed the value of planning together helped them

deal with discipline problem students.

<u>Summary of Findings from RQ2: What Instructional Practices do Teachers Use to Meet
the Academic Needs of ELL Students</u>?

Incorporation of student culture in subject content was dependent upon teaching style of the teacher. The Didactic teachers perceived ELL students as very quiet behaviorally. The Math teachers did not feel any responsibility for cultural incorporation due to the nature of math. The novice teachers were unable to weave cultural connections naturally through classroom discussion due to their lack of classroom discipline management. The Interactive teachers were able to weave the cultural backgrounds of students into lessons during informal classroom discussions without losing classroom control. The literature pertaining to culturally responsive teaching clearly supports that teachers with an interactive and democratic classroom management style tend to exhibit more culturally responsive teaching practices in general than those with a more autocratic and didactic discipline and classroom management style (Banks, 2001). My study corroborated these findings.

All teachers viewed the cultural backgrounds of immigrant ELL students as a deficit to be overcome for cultural adaptation to their classrooms. The novice teachers held this view the strongest of all teacher participants. This finding is consistent with the research by McCarthey (1999) who found that when teachers believed students came from backgrounds they considered impoverished or deficit, they were less likely to incorporate the cultural backgrounds of these students in the curriculum.

All teachers perceived that there were cultural tensions between students in general. My study revealed that there was not a conscious approach by the school to address these tensions. Teachers seemed to handle them as they arose but did not do anything specifically to alleviate this tension.

All teachers agreed that it was difficult to find resources and materials for the Latino culture. All teachers agreed that there was a need for a curriculum from the district pertaining to Latino culture. All teachers perceived that the African American culture was well taught in the classrooms. The teachers perceived this was so because of the resources provided by the district pertaining to African American culture. This situation, I conclude was a reflection of the lack of Latino parent involvement. Moll and Greenberg (1990) discuss the need for teachers to extend the "zones of knowledge" from the school into families and communities and to incorporate more cultural resources available in the homes and community of these students in their lessons.

Home-School connections were weakened because of a lack of Spanish speaking interpreters in the school. Home-school connections were for discipline and academic problems among students. Au (1993) stresses the need for the incorporation of activities and curriculum relevant to students' lives to connect between the home and school. Contacting Spanish-speaking families was a major challenge for teachers due to lack of interpreters available. All interpreters in the school had other jobs and interpretation was something they did extra to their jobs.

Attention to varied student learning styles by teachers were either non-existent, and subject -centered or student-centered, in which case some teachers used differentiation, modalities, and multiple intelligences. The veteran Interactive teachers mostly evidenced the student-centered approaches. The novice teachers were unable to try out more student-centered approaches because of discipline management issues.

The Didactic and novice teachers used testing procedures done by the district. The

novice teachers relied on the results of mini-assessments and benchmark testing to individualize instruction for their students and to guide their lesson planning. The veterans, while using the test results similarly, did not rely exclusively or them and developed their own more individualized tests. Novice teachers were overwhelmed by testing procedures, whereas the veterans enjoyed creating their own. The veterans created many tests to suit the individual needs of their students.

The literature on effective culturally responsive instructional practices supports the use of a teaching style that is highly interactive as well as the use of cooperative groups, and individualized testing and assessment procedures (Garcia, 1992). In this study the Interactive teachers proved to be the most culturally responsive of the group and most cognizant of the needs of the ELL student.

Teacher validation of students was either of an intrinsic or extrinsic nature. Intrinsic validation was linked to the academic success of students and to something the student did (grades and achievements). Extrinsic validation was what the teacher did to the student, e.g. praise, stickers, etc. The literature on culturally responsive teaching supports intrinsic motivation and the validation of the cultural background of student (Phinney, 1991). In this study, the novice teachers use more extrinsic motivation than the other teachers. Researchers (Joyce & Weil, 1996) demonstrate this behavior to be normal for novice teachers until they feel more at ease with classroom organization and management.

Interdisciplinary approaches were tried consistently in the school. All the teachers supported each other's subject content areas. The math teachers believed they were in the

least position to support other subject areas because of the nature of the subject. All the teachers valued teaming and planning, especially the novices, who received much guidance and support during team meetings. Interdisciplinary teaching practices and thematic teaching is a vital component in the literature pertaining to culturally responsive teaching (Howe, 1994 & Ormond, 1995).

Part II

Students' Perceptions

In this section I present some background information and a profile of each of the ELL students, who agreed to participate in this study, followed by the themes and patterns that emerged from the research questions that guided this part of the study: RQ3. What are ELL students' perceptions of the academic challenges facing them in the mainstream classroom? RQ4. What are the ELL students' perceptions of the instructional practices used by teachers to meet their academic needs?

Background Information

All students selected for the study came from Mexico. This fact was not purposeful sampling. The Language Center enrolled more than 90% of its students from Mexico at the time of this study. The district director of ESL for the district explained to me that students were not intentionally grouped in this manner. There were five Language Centers (for middle school students) in the district during the time of the study. The decision to place a student at this particular Language Center was based on the geographical location of the student in accordance with the zoning criteria of the district.

Students' Neighborhood

The area surrounding the Western Heights Middle School has shifted demographically within the past forty years. This area was 100% White and middle class up until the early sixties. The 1960s resulted in an influx of middle class African Americans who precipitated lower real estate values. During the 1970s and 1980s the middle class Blacks moved out and the area shifted to 80-90% lower class and primarily African American. A prominent urban commentator described the area during this period: "The community was 'ghettozied', stripped of its physical structures and hovered on the edge of 'urban blight'...it had a high proportion of female-headed households living in poverty. " The area at this time was considered at its worst.

The community has again undergone demographic shifts in the past ten years due to the influx of Hispanics and immigrants. The 2000 census reported some neighborhoods with more than 60% Hispanics. There are many undocumented immigrants who live in the neighborhood also. Police reports show a decline in crime since the turbulent eighties. Nevertheless the neighborhoods surrounding Western Heights Middle School are still visibly impoverished. The area does not attract investors or businesses.

Older people who have lived in the community all their lives tell you: "There is not too much crime here anymore and they {Hispanics} keep their houses neat and take care of their neighbors, they pay their rent on time, buy their houses as soon as they can, and fix them up." However, the elders of the community also report that prostitution and drug trafficking is still a problem and the community receives much negative publicity

due to crime and gang activity.

Profile of Students

The pool of 12 students, who met the criteria for this study were all from Mexico. Permission slips were sent home with all 12 and only six agreed to be in the study, two in seventh grade and four in eighth grade. All were either ten or eleven years of age upon arrival in the United States. They all cited that the thing they missed about Mexico were loved ones or family members who were left behind. All of them cited economic reasons for their parents' decision to come to the United States.

Jaime was achieving well academically. His Language Center teachers reported he needed to be challenged more and they believed he needed to be tested for the Gifted and Talented (G & T) program. Jaime himself expressed to me his boredom in some of his mainstream classes. Jaime talked about his mother and how well she took care of him. Jaime told me: "My mom is always taking care of me and I see that in the United States the moms are always working and everything and they forget about their children." Jaime's best friend was Enrique, who also was in my study. Jaime told me that sometimes he and Enrique got into trouble for their behaviour in the Language Center. Jaime proudly told me that he got good grades. Jaime loved to read about the Greek gods. Jaime was in the eighth grade.

Maria expressed to me the first time I met her that she was unable to be interviewed during lunch because she availed of extra tutoring offered at the Language Center at that time. I interviewed her early in the morning before school began. She told me that she loved reading and learning about other countries and that London was her

favorite city. Her favorite show was "Kate and Ashley Olsen" as they took their trips to far away places. She told me that she wanted to be an actress and a singer when she grew up. At the time I started interviewing her she was earning low performing grades and getting into trouble in class. She told me that she got tired of "being good" and when she entered the mainstream classroom she decided it was more exciting to get into trouble. She explained, "Well I think I got into the bad things because I saw other people in the regular classes doing bad stuff and I said, 'Why can't I do some of those bad things?'" She told me that it was the love she had for her mother, and the fact that her mother was so upset with her, that she decided to stop "messing up" in school. Maria reported she was proud to be Mexican and that others were usually surprised she was Mexican because her skin was very white. She also expressed to me her animosity towards Black students who sometimes got mad at her for speaking Spanish and "sometimes they {black girls}...they tell you, "you have to go back to Mexico" and you feel bad…yeah and we're like getting mad…and you know sometimes I get mad and tell them stuff like, "you have to go back to Africa" just because I'm getting mad and tired of all day long listening to them telling me, "you have to go back to Mexico" Maria was in the seventh grade.

Rosa, on our first meeting, told me that she wanted to become a doctor when she grew up. She was a very hard working student who expected nothing less than 100% on every assignment. She sometimes felt that she wasn't a good student, as she didn't always make 100% on every assignment. Rosa was also very adamant that she not give up her lunchtime for my interviews because she went to tutoring. I interviewed her after school. Rosa told me that she did not like "Chicanos" {Meaning a Spanish-speaking individual

born in America to parents of Mexican origin} because they wore tattoos, did drugs and were in gangs. She also perceived that Chicanos thought they were better than students like her whom they considered to be "wetbacks" {Meaning an undocumented, recently arrived, Spanish-speaking Mexican immigrant}. Rosa was in the eighth grade.

Angel was considered to be very hard working by all his teachers. He always worked hard in class and earned high grades. He told me that he wanted to be an engineer when he grew up. Angel was the least communicative of the six students. Angel was always quiet and cooperative and never got into trouble with his teachers. Angel was in the eighth grade.

Enrique was at risk academically. He was failing many classes and his parents were called in for a conference. Enrique didn't like school and described himself as the person who made the teachers mad because "I just do some jokes to the teacher and they get mad and they tell my family...they {teachers} get all this voice and sometimes they ...kick me out of class." He did not consider himself to be a good student because he was not nice to the teachers. Enrique liked to earn money and on weekends went with his father to the construction site, lifting stones, and earned $20 for a day's labor. When I asked him what he would like to do when he left school he just shrugged his shoulders and told me "maybe army." When I interviewed Enrique he always had a sense of humor and smiled a lot. Sometimes he missed his interviews with me because he was in lunch detention. Enrique skipped classes sometimes, especially science, without the mainstream teacher knowing. He told me that by skipping science he could eat lunch with the eight graders and be with his friend Jaime {who also participated in this study} who was in the

eighth grade. Enrique was in the seventh grade.

Lupe was at risk academically and behaviorally. She was suspended on two occasions during the course of my research. She was very precocious and used a lot of sexual terminology and language around other students. She did not get along with the two other female participants in this study, Rosa and Maria. She loved animals and told me that she would like to become a veterinarian when she grew up. She also expressed a dislike for Black students and shared with me her involvement in faction fights with both Black and Chicano female students in the school. She told me that she didn't like some Black girls because they told her, "You shouldn't be talking Spanish in here. You're in the United States. This is where you should talk English and not Spanish and do things that are Mexican." Lupe was in the eighth grade.

Three male and three female students participated in this study. All students were originally from Mexico and were either in the seventh or eighth grade during the time of this study. Two of the students, Enrique and Lupe, were considered to be at-risk academically and behaviorally. All students were in their third year in the United States and were eligible to take the state-mandated TAAS test during the time this study took place.

Immigration Experience

All students felt sad or both sad and happy at the same time when their parents' decided to come to the U.S. They felt sad because they were leaving family and loved ones behind but also felt happy at the prospect of having a better way of life. Some of the students told me they had to be separated from either their mother or siblings who joined

them later on after several months or sometimes a year in the United States. They shared with me:

Enrique: I like sad. When I came here first I was alone in the house and sleeping in my bed. It feel hard but good because we are going to make a better life on other side.

Rosa: We feel sad because we had to leave our older sister there because she could not get her papers and she was too old.

Lupe: It was in September. I think the 14th. I feel sad inside because I would not be with my mom. But my niece who was crying and I feel sad kinda.

Angel: I feel sad because there was my aunt and my other uncle and my other cousins. And I feel bad leaving them.

Maria: We drove a bus and first my mom..it was the day before my birthday my mom came here. So I was very sad and that's why I remember very well. A week after I came and then after many months my dad came.

Jaime: I was happy because I thought I was going to have a better life. And I was sad because I left my family, my dad's family, like my grandmother.

Only two of the students considered their first experience of school in the United States positively. What made their experience positive they told me was they each had a teacher who could speak Spanish to them or there were other students in the class who could speak Spanish. I had the following conversation with Enrique, and he told me:

Enrique: It was good because my teacher talk Spanish and English so I could communicate better and I start learning the colors also.

Author: Do you remember the first day of school in America?

Enrique: It was so ...I was so nervous and when I came here I saw my teacher, and old lady, who spoke Spanish and she give me a notebook and colored pencils, crayons and I feel well. And all the people talking in English and I feel, "How am I going to talk like that?"

The other four students found their initial experiences in school to be weird, difficult, sad, strange or frightening because they did not understand anything the teacher or other students said and they did not know anybody.

Importance of Family

The most important thing for all these students about Mexico was not the history or the culture but rather the people. The people they told me worked harder in Mexico and were still poorer. The fact that their family was with them in the United States was important for all these students. As long as their families were with them, these immigrant students felt that they were "at home." Although they missed aspects of Mexico, they all told me that they did not miss the life-style or the economy and were very glad to be living in the United States. All of the students appreciated the materialistic benefits of life here. They talked to me about the big cars, "Six Flags," malls, and that their parents could work and make more money.

School in Mexico

All these students attended school in Mexico. Some, however, seemed to have spent less time in school. They shared with me instances of corporal punishment. Generally, what they all claimed what they liked about school in Mexico was learning history,

science and math. They all pride in their Mexican history. They also mentioned having their friends there at school as a positive aspect of schooling in Mexico. They all expressed similar sentiments that school was more fun because there was not a language barrier.

All the students in this study had similar immigration experiences. Their families immigrated to U. S. for similar economic reasons. The two students who expressed most satisfaction of their first day of school in the United States each encountered a teacher or staff member who spoke Spanish to them. Family was very important for all the students in this study. All students were glad to be living in the United States because as long as their family was with them they felt "at home." All of the students agreed that teachers in the United States were nicer and the schools were more comfortable. They all agreed that communicating in English was their most difficult challenge in school. They missed the ease of language communication that they experienced in Mexico.

RQ3: What are ELL students' perceptions of the academic challenges facing them in the mainstream classroom?

The themes that emerged from this research question are underlined and discussed.

Satisfaction with School in United States

All students agreed that school in United States was very different materially than school in Mexico. They all reported the school was more comfortable, warm, had free lunches, and had scheduled rotations of class whereas they usually had only one teacher in Mexico. They all agreed that they learned faster in Mexico and did not have the challenge of having to learn subjects through a new language. They all agreed school in

the U.S. was definitely different and their answers were in positive terms. All the students liked school in the United States, they all felt safe, and they believed they had good teachers.

Language Difficulty

They all found the challenge of learning subjects in a new language difficult and frustrating. Some of them such as Maria and Jaime, who were top of their classes in Mexico, found it difficult to adjust to being just an "average" student at Western Heights Middle School. Subjects they found easier in Mexico were now difficult because of the language challenge. Lupe explained meeting new people was always difficult for her as was dealing with teachers who think, "you don't know anything." In response to the questions of what was difficult for them about school in the United States the following comments from Maria and Rosa were typical of what all the students shared with me in regard to the language difficulty:

Maria: Learning the language I think…the first year I have been here, the language. It's different because...in Mexico like they teach you in math more fast. And in here like you're already in algebra, I'm in algebra one so in Mexico I would be …in another level more higher.

Rosa: In Mexico it's better because it's harder and they're teaching you in your language and you understand it better than here.

Challenging Subjects

Math was the subject that five of the students agreed was the easiest for them in school. Jaime was the only exception, as he liked Reading and Writing. This information

concurred with what the mainstream teachers told me. Their ELL students did well in Math because they were able to plug in numbers and formulas and did not need a 100% reliance on language for success.

All of the students agreed that Social Studies and Reading were the subjects they disliked the most or found the most difficult in class. For Jaime his dislike of Social Studies had more to do with the personality of the teacher (Mr. Bond), the fact that he did not like working in groups, and that he was separated from his friends in the Language Center. The others expressed a dislike of these subjects because of language difficulty, too much homework, disinterest in the subject matter and the personality of the teachers. Some of the students were not challenged in some subjects. In response to what subjects they liked or disliked the following are samples of what they shared with me:

Enrique: History is boring. (laughs)

Author: Why is it boring?

Enrique: I don't know they just talk about the United States

Author: Why do you like Math?

Maria: Because I like to play with the numbers and plug them in different spots.

Author: Why do you like ESL?

Maria: Because she talks more like about Mexico and we kinda discuss, talk
            about things we don't talk about with other teachers.

Author: What are some of the things you talk about with her that you don't talk
            with other teachers?

Maria: Like the laws of Mexico, you know, the districts and all that. I like reading

and sometimes I don't like reading.

Author: Why do you like it sometimes and not other times?

Maria: Because sometimes she like kinda mad or something and she put us all

this work and I don't like...I don't ...I personally don't like to read...I just

come to the library for lunch because I like to be in peace.

Maria: No I don't like reading.

Author: Why do you think that is?

Maria: Really because the language because they're talking like English but

English from back then and I don't understand the words. But if it was in

Spanish maybe I could…be interested.

Author: Did you like reading in Mexico?

Maria: Yes, I like to read books, fairy tales...cause I like to get all these feelings

inside and I like to think about your prince, you know.

Angel: Oh...math eh…science and ESL.

Author: Why do you like math?

Angel: Because I can learn more and still the square roots and all that?

Author: You like that? Why do you like science? Who teaches you Science?

Angel: Mr. Atkinson.

Author: And why do you like science with Mr. Atkinson?

Angel: Ah.... because we do experiments.

Lupe: Science and math.

Author: Tell me why you like science and math?

Lupe: Math is because it's so interesting.

Author: Yes. And why do you like science?

Lupe: Laughs. ...I dunno, because we make projects…. Because we make

             something, we make something all different and in different times.

Author: What subject do you not like?

Rosa: {Laughs} I think it is reading

Author: Why?

Rosa: I dunno (laughs) because Ms. Sheehan gives us lots of homework

Author: And the books that Ms. Sheehan has for you, are they difficult?

Rosa: They not very interesting, they don't have action.

Author: So you like action books do you?

Author: What other books have you read that you like?

Rosa: Well ….I have read a lot, like Shakespeare's books.

Author: Do you, really ?{Aileen shocked}

Rosa: Yeah, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, Macbeth.

Author: You do? Does it bother you that ah… that do you like to read books that

             characters are from Mexico or characters are Mexican or does that interest

             you or does it make any difference?

Rosa: It doesn't make any difference. It doesn't matter.

Author: Shakespeare doesn't bother even though he's old fashioned and it was

             written a long time ago?

Rosa: No.

Author: It doesn't bother you?

Rosa: No because his books are fun.

Author: Yeah, you like...what do you like about Romeo and Juliet?

Rosa: Their romantic story and how they died.

Summary of Findings to RQ3: What are ELL students' perceptions of the academic challenges facing them in the mainstream classroom?

All students liked school in the United States. They found it materially comfortable and they felt safe. This is consistent with research findings by Gibson and Ogbu (1991) that immigrants have a dual-frame of reference which makes them more appreciative of the life and opportunities they have in their new country because they generally came from more impoverished conditions in their countries of origin.

The difficulty of learning subjects in English was the most difficult challenge for all of them. Social Studies and Reading were the subjects they found most difficult. Math and Science were the subjects they found to be the easiest. They liked Science because they did a lot of experiments. This finding relates to research by Jim Cummins (1984) that mastery of CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) for second language learners can take up to seven years. For the students in this study math did not have a heavy reliance on language and was therefore easier for students to be successful.

The students who did well academically expressed a concern they were not challenged in some subjects. Jaime did not feel challenged in Social Studies. Rosa did not feel challenged in Reading. Researchers have shown sometimes students are excluded from such programs because of language issues and are not appropriately assessed and

identified (Webb, Metha & Jordan, 1995).

<u>RQ4: What re the ELL students' perceptions of the instructional practices used by teachers to meet students' academic need?</u>

The findings to this question are organized by Geneva Gay's (2000) components of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) as was used in RQ2 with teachers' perceptions. The themes that emerged within each category are underlined and discussed.

<center>Incorporation of Culture</center>

<u>Culture for Students</u>

The students defined culture as talking about Mexico and speaking Spanish with their friends and family. All students perceived that culture was something they did with other Mexicans. Culture was also something they did at home. The students perceived culture as something they did in the Language Center and rarely or never in the mainstream classroom. They had no concerns that their culture was rarely discussed or referred to by teachers in the mainstream. The students did get aggravated when other non-Mexican students told them to stop talking in Spanish in the mainstream classes. For all the students in this study, culture was expressed between only Spanish-speaking and Mexican born immigrants. All the students expressed a dislike for the Chicano {Mexican American student} students at Western Heights Middle School. They perceived the Chicanos as having a "superiority complex" because they were born in the United States, spoke English and were more Americanized. The Chicanos also made fun of the immigrant ELL students for speaking Spanish in the mainstream classes and reminded the ELL students that they should be learning the American ways. All the students in my

study understood that they were learning about Native Americans and famous African Americans rather than Mexican culture because they were now in the United States. For these students this was a normal and reasonable expectation of the school.

Culture for them was personal and concerned conversation in Spanish. Culture had something to do with self-expression rather than just talking about famous Mexicans or changing posters on the walls. For these students culture was the validation of themselves through speaking Spanish and being with each other from Mexico.

Significance of Culture for Students

Culture was significant for these students in the Language Center classrooms but was not as significant for them in the mainstream classrooms.

When I asked the students how important was it for the teacher to talk about Mexico, five said "yes" and the one who said "no" (Lupe) could not articulate any reason for her answer.

Jaime and Maria (the two most successful academically) believed the answer was conditional. These two students both agreed although it was nice and they 'liked' it when the teachers talked about Mexico in the mainstream classrooms, again, their expectation for the Language Center teachers to do this was higher than for the regular mainstream teacher. They believed it wasn't necessary for the mainstream teachers to make reference to their culture because they believed it really didn't affect their learning. These two students also told me that the mainstream teachers were not as 'close' to them and they didn't expect the mainstream teacher to know as much about their previous life experiences in Mexico. Maria's interview illuminates this point:

Author: Does it make a difference to you if you go into a teacher's classroom and if she had a picture that was from Mexico or she had things on the wall from Mexico would that make a difference?

Maria: No, I don't think.

Author: You don't expect that in school?

Maria: No I don't expect that, but sometimes it's like I expect it from some teachers.

Author: Now, what teachers would you expect it from?

Maria: From Ms. Bean and Ms. Sheehan {LC teachers)

Author: Yeah, you would expect it from your Language Center teachers?

Maria: Yes.

Author: But you don't think, you think it's okay for the rest of the teachers that they don't do that?

Maria: Yeah that's okay.

Author: Why is that okay?

Maria: Because they don't grow up in Mexico and they don't feel that close to Mexico to put in things that they are from Mexico.

Author: Okay, so you think Ms. Bean and Ms. Sheehan (LC teachers) are because they like Mexico or they teach you?

Maria: Yeah, because they teach Mexican students.

For the other three students, Rosa, Angel, and Enrique, it was important that the teachers know about their previous lives in Mexico for the following reasons: 1) that the

189

teacher be aware of the academic difficulties they had to overcome and not expect too much of them, 2) that the teacher understand that they learned better in class if the teachers got to know them personally, 3) that the teacher understand that they didn't speak fluent English and at times would need help with assignments, and finally 4) that the teacher defend them when non-Mexican students derided them. Rosa told me that it was important for teachers to "protect students from other students who think Mexicans are not as smart and who think that Mexicans are only 'pigs.'" Angel expressed his feelings to the author in the following conversation:

Author: For you Angel, is it important that your teachers know where you came from and what it was like for you growing up in another country?

Angel: I think so.

Author: And why?

Angel: Long pause…ehmn…. because they could think I from here and that I know English.

What emerged from this theme was that the students perceived culture as significant only in the Language Center where they were with other students from Mexico. None of the students perceived it unusual that the mainstream teachers did not refer to their cultural backgrounds. The students did not expect this of the mainstream teachers. The students were happy as long as the teachers in the mainstream were aware they didn't speak English very well and did not have unrealistic academic expectations for them in this regard.

Incorporation of Culture in Language Center

Students' perceptions of what teachers do to include their home culture in lessons revealed that this occurred in the Language Center very consistently. All the students were able to tell me that they did writing assignments comparing and contrasting life in the U.S. with life in Mexico. All students mentioned being able to talk about Mexico and their lives there. All students mentioned being able to talk in Spanish freely without being harassed by other students. All students perceived that their culture should be included more in the Language Center because 1) students were mostly from Mexico and teachers were teaching Mexican students and 2) the teachers in the Language Center knew them better and for a longer period of time than the mainstream teachers.

Incorporation of Culture in Mainstream Classroom

All the students thought that it was important that the LC teachers include their culture in lessons. They all perceived it as natural that it be done in the LC as the majority of students were from Mexico anyway. The students in my study were really indifferent to the mainstream teachers doing this. They all liked references to their culture but only in the Language Center where they were the majority culturally. None of the students perceived that the mainstream teachers should include their home culture in the lessons.

All students agreed although it would be "nice" if teachers talked about their home culture in lessons, they all perceived it was understandable that it did not happen in the mainstream classroom. They all perceived culture as something done on a regular basis in the Language Center. The students shared with me that they sometimes experienced references being made to Mexico in Social Studies in the mainstream

191

classroom. One student (Angel) mentioned references to seasons and volcanic activity in Mexico in his Science class, which stood out in his recollections as important and memorable in regard to Mexico. The students, however, expressed to me that they felt sometimes embarrassed when the mainstream teacher made reference to Mexican culture as this created problems for them with other students. The students shared with me that sometimes the African American students accused the immigrant child of being non-American and often used it for teasing purposes afterwards during lunch and in the hallways.

I observed that these immigrant students wanted to "fit-in" and did not necessarily want to stand out or be treated differently. I believe this to be consistent with the developmental age of adolescents who have the huge need to fit-in and be liked and accepted by their peers. I found this to be fairly consistent throughout the research period.

Home-school connections

Student responses and my observations concurred with what the teachers expressed to me. The students perceived that communication between the school and their parents was only for behavioral and academic concerns. The students also expressed to me that when they get into trouble contact was made by telephone to their parents either by the Spanish-speaking assistant principal or the bilingual teaching assistant in the LC. All of the students told me that it was mainly they themselves who explained to their parents what was on the report card.

All the students said that their parents came to school when requested to do so by school personnel. It seemed to me the parents themselves never initiated any contact

directly with school but only did so when requested by the teachers. All the parents of

these students appeared to be supportive when needed. Jaime in particular, who did well

academically, received a good deal of help from his parents with homework and received

incentives and rewards for good grades. Two of the students (Angel and Rosa) mentioned

their parents came for open house earlier in the year.

All of these students received some academic help at home either from a parent or

an older sibling. Rosa who did not have a good relationship with her parents still received

assistance with homework from an older brother. All of the students perceived they had

help and support from their families if needed in regard to homework. Enrique who was

at–risk behaviorally and academically had parents who periodically showed up in school

just to keep "tabs on him."

Learning Styles/Instructional Practices Used by Teachers

The students perceived the teaching style in the Language Center differently from

the mainstream. My classroom observation in the LC revealed t ESL strategies used by

teachers. I observed that the LC teachers interacted more verbally with the ELL students

and spent more time delivering instructions and making sure that the students understood

what to do. Assignments were more individualized as the students were grouped by

ability into level one, two or three classrooms. The level three students were considered

"partial LC" and were the ones who became part of my research study due to their ability

to communicate and express themselves in English. They were considered advanced level

ESL. I observed differences in the teaching strategies used by the LC teachers and the

mainstream teachers. There was also a difference in ELL students' behaviors in both

settings. The EEL students were more vocal and interactive with their LC teachers than

with their mainstream teachers. I saw some of the behaviors the students had shared with

me that got them into trouble. I saw Jaime and Adderly laughing and giggling and having

to be cautioned by the LC teacher. All the students in this study were more reserved, less

vocal and quieter than when I observed them in the mainstream classrooms. The

mainstream teachers perceived them as being "quiet" and often "shy" as where the

perception of their Language Center teachers was very different. They got into trouble in

the Language Center classrooms for talking out, being "silly," talking to each other,

talking back to the teacher, etc. These students I observed to behave differently in this

regard in the Language Center.

Students' Perceptions of Instructional Practices in the Mainstream

The students perceived that the teaching styles used by the mainstream teachers

were different and less favourable to their learning than those used by the LC teachers.

For the EEL students the mainstream teachers did not explain as well and did not use

enough examples.

The evidence I accumulated from my classroom observations of mainstream

teachers and the student interviews supported the students' perceptions that there was a

difference between the instructional practices used by the majority of the mainstream

teachers and the Language Center teachers. Five students in response to the question

"What does the teacher do to help you understand in class?" responded negatively to the

mainstream teachers techniques and positively validated the instructional techniques used

by Language Center teachers. The Language Center teachers according to five of the six

students gave more examples, explained more, came to their desk to help them, gave more practice items, tutored individually during lunch and after school, talked more slowly, explained more than once, and did not give all the directions at the same time. These five students all agreed that the Language Center teachers helped them understand and learn better than the mainstream teachers. These five students also cited the following negative instructional practices used by the mainstream teachers that did not help them learn best: highlighting answers, calling out correct answers without any explanation or discussion, not coming to the desk when students asked for help, ignoring students who raised their hands, only giving one explanation, giving too many directions, talking too fast, not giving examples, and not giving enough practice items.

My classroom observations of mainstream teachers verified the perceptions that students shared with me in their interviews. I did not observe any language expression and discussion with EEL students in the mainstream. In classrooms where the teachers had strong Didactic teaching styles, the teacher did the majority of the talking, silence was expected from all students, and there was a heavy reliance on worksheets or completed assignments from either the textbook or overhead projector. The EEL students I observed in these classrooms were seated in rows, rarely called upon to answer, and worked independently to complete their seatwork. The class period generally consisted of the following formula regardless of subject being taught: teacher gave quick verbal directions on the assigned material at the beginning of the class period, students worked independently while the teacher sat behind desk or graded papers, teacher went over the answers with students, students graded each other's papers, teacher asked for grades

aloud (sometimes), recorded grades, and then if there was time left in the period the teacher assigned another activity for the students to work on independently.

Examples

All the students stated, particularly Maria and Jaime, that the teachers in the mainstream did not give as many "examples" as those in the LC. The students believed they needed more opportunities to practice and because of this did not perceive they were being taught as well in the mainstream classrooms as they were in the LC.

The concept of "example" first came up in the third structured interview I conducted with students in response to the question, "What does your teacher do to help you be successful in school?" Responses from four of the six EEL students included references to the word "examples."

Maria, for example, in response to the question replied, "Sometimes they {teachers} don't give you examples to understand the lesson better like when you're doing a lesson and you don't understand after you told them {teachers}. to...like show you an example. They {teachers} should do it by themselves not telling...not by the students telling them." For Maria this notion of "example" given by the teacher was extremely important towards helping her understand and do well in class. She also considered a better teacher to be one who gave lots of "examples." This term, "example" I initially stumbled across with Maria and then noticed it with three of the other students in this study. The remaining two students, although not using the term "example," did use the term "explain" to refer to how a teacher helped them understand in class.

I knew that I needed to explore the concept of "example" 1) to understand

whether all the students used the term in the same way, 2) whether my understanding of an example was similar to theirs, and 3) where they acquired this term and 4) why it was of such paramount importance to their understanding of what a good teacher should be doing instructionally to help them learn better. Maria told me:

> In the ESL…she {teacher} give us an example the day before. Like we are writing a how to paper and she like does with us one or something…told us to do one and if you don't understand it you just ask her {teacher} and she will tell you what you have to do. Or if you're writing and you feel like it's not okay you just go ask her {teacher}.

I further probed and asked Maria to pick out a teacher who was not good at giving examples and to tell me specifically what that teacher did. Maria chose the technology teacher who "gives us a guide, a student guide but the guide doesn't explain it very well and then we ask him {teacher} and he says "Did you read, Baby?" and we're like "yes" but you have to read carefully and he doesn't give many examples."

Maria told me, "Ms. Henry who gives us an example like sometimes she gives us homework so we can do maps or something like that and she have one on the wall so we can see it." In this instance Maria implied that an "example" meant a finished product, something that helped her see what she was supposed to be doing. At this point I was confused. Maybe she meant several examples and a finished product also? Maybe they were two different kinds of "examples?" I knew this was something I needed to explore and investigate more.

For Jaime a teacher who helped him understand in class gave him "examples."

He explained, "They, my Language Center teachers usually give us a lot of examples so we can understand… they get us to practice something more than once." When I asked him tell me more about a teacher who never gave examples he immediately talked about his social studies teacher, Mr. Bond, who Jaime told me did 'explain' the assignment but "never gives examples when he gives us work, he goes over the answers."

Now, I had a better grasp of an "example" as being for Jaime not just an explanation of directions or instructions for an assignment. I still at this point of my data collection did not fully grasp the students' meaning of this notion of "example." I knew that it was something the students told me occurred with the Language Center teachers' instruction but not that much in the mainstream classroom. It was something that happened in the mainstream classroom sporadically but not consistently.

For Angel teachers helped him learn better when "They explain about the things we review…" "Homework…and more practice" constituted examples for Angel, doing the same things "over and over" again. In this instance I understood that "example" had something to do with repetition and lots of practice to help learning.

I realized that the concept of "example" was somehow connected to how a teacher explained information to students in class. For Lupe, the teacher should explain something "like two times." Lupe told me, "Not just say one time, you have to do this and this in order" or "I'll no understand what she says." There was a clear connection between explaining more than once and giving examples to help Lupe understand what she was supposed to be doing in class. All students explained to me that they needed to hear something more than once to fully understand.

198

In response to the question, "What do teachers do to help you learn best?" Maria told me, "I think, like examples. I think, the most important, to learn is examples." For Maria an example was something that was done "over and over and over..." Maria explained, "Because, you sometimes do something and the day next the day ...the next day you forgot it or she {teacher} doesn't give any more papers like that. So then like three months later she give us another paper and she {teacher} likes "remember the other day."

Connected to this concept of "examples" for all of these students was the idea of a teacher "getting mad." The EEL students in the mainstream classrooms, they told me, preferred not to ask for more examples or explanations because the teachers, according to Jaime, got "mad." The other students expressed to me that some mainstream teachers never even read and explained the directions to assignments in class. They reported they were left on their own to figure it out and oftentimes as with Angel, just referred to the dictionary if he didn't understand a word or just simply asked the person beside him rather than upset a teacher who might be "busy doing something else." For Rosa, the "better" teachers who helped her the most "never get mad at me if I have trouble with something they help me."

The importance of multiple examples and multiple explanations was substantiated for me when the students told me what they did when they did not understand what the teacher was explaining in class. For Jaime getting the answers highlighted or being told the correct answer was not learning. For Maria "sometimes they just give you the answer and you just put in the answer and you don't know what you are putting in the paper."

This was not challenging for Maria, as she preferred a teacher who "they don't just give the answer, they just try to let you think."

Behavioral adaptations used by students to compensate for lack of examples

For Jaime particularly and the other students, asking "one of my friends or someone next to me" is how he got further directions when he did not understood something in class. Because sometimes, Jaime told me, "they're {teachers} busy doing other things." All the students in the study clearly stated that the Language Center teachers "won't get mad if I {Jaime} ask them" because "I've been with them like two years." All the students complained that even if a mainstream teachers didn't necessarily always get mad at them if they asked for more explanations or examples, they {teachers} sometimes, according to Jaime, "don't do it in a kind way." These students were reticent to raise their hands in class. Jaime told me he raised his hand for help only if his friends beside him couldn't help. But even then Jaime expressed that he was often "ignored" as often "I raise my hand and she don't come to me."

These students learned the culture of "classroom survival" by taking turns to ask the teachers for help so they can all take turns sharing the "unkindness" of teachers or just simply not getting into trouble all the time for talking or being accused of "cheating" as happened to Lupe. Lupe explained to me that she often got into trouble for talking when she was only asking for help on her assignment. She got upset when she was then moved away from other students, as she had nobody to help her.

These students such as Lupe often explained to each other in Spanish what the assignment entailed. I observed Lupe during Science class in the mainstream asking the

200

student beside her in Spanish for help on a graphing assignment. This was done without the knowledge of the teacher. I asked the mainstream teacher afterwards if he was aware of what Lupe had done. He told me "no" and expressed surprise. I asked him if he encouraged EEL students such as Lupe to ask for help in Spanish and he said, "no." I asked this of the other mainstream teachers and they all voiced a similar response that they felt it was their responsibility as teachers in the mainstream to help EEL students "transition" to English and that they did not encourage asking for assistance in Spanish from a classmate in class. When I posed the same question to the Language Center teachers I was told that they encouraged the EEL students to help each other in Spanish as needed. My classroom observations in the Language Center also substantiated this to be the case. I saw this happening all the time and saw that the students were comfortable doing this in Spanish and did not get into trouble with the teacher. These same students "figured out" that it was not acceptable with Didactic teachers. If the students engaged in this kind of behavior in the mainstream, they did it quietly without the teacher's knowledge.

Again all the students concurred that they got more examples and more explanations in the Language Center classrooms. These students behaved totally differently in the Language Center. They were talkative, raised their hands, asked questions and were tutored individually after school or during lunchtime and off periods.

When asked what do teachers do to help them understand if they asked for help, Enrique told me that teachers needed to be a "a little kind" and letting him get his late work out of his locker. For Jaime the teacher sometimes gave another example or go to

the "the second" problem on assignment sheet. For Angel the teacher "says it again"(meaning the second problem, obviously working it out.) For Angel if the teacher "says it again (second time)" he did not ask again but went to the dictionary and figured it out by himself. When I asked him if he spent a lot of time figuring it out on his own his response was "I think so I do." For Lupe the teacher who explained "two times or more" helped her learn best. For Rosa the teacher should "explain it again." Rosa told me that when she had difficulty with math in the Language Center, the teacher gave her "examples" and explained to her with drawings, etc.

"Examples" was an important concept for these students as my text search of their interview transcripts counted 57 references made to the word "examples" in the total interview search. The students who referred to "examples" the most were Maria and Jaime who referred to the term 26 and 25 times respectively in their interview transcriptions. I inferred from the interview transcripts that the concept was more of an issue for these two students. I inferred that the two students were most interested as they were the most motivated academically and the most academically successful in the group of students for this research study. Jaime was tested for gifted and talented and Maria was already in advanced algebra.

For Jaime, being "challenged" was important and just having the answers "highlighted" or going over answers was not helping him learn to the best of his ability. He angrily described to me how the teacher who highlighted the answers for him, while ensuring that he got all the answers right, was not helping him prepare for high school. Jaime figured out that the teacher (Mr. Bond) probably did this to make sure that all

students got good grades and passed the class. This was frustrating for Jaime as he gesticulated to me with his hands, "We don't think. We don't use our brain in that class." Jaime was concerned that he was not being prepared for high school and college.

I would like to illuminate this notion of what the students meant by "examples" by depicting classroom observations I conducted in the mainstream and the Language Center that will clarify this point. These classroom observations will also highlight how the students behaved differently in the Language Center and the behavioral adaptations that they used to survive in the mainstream classroom without the use of "examples."

Classrooms Observations in Mainstream

"Examples," as defined by students were never given by the Didactic mainstream teachers. These teachers never actually did more than one problem completely on the chalkboard or overhead projector, and never alerted students to anticipated difficulties they might encounter in a proposed assignment. The students were told what to do and then proceeded to do their work silently. After approximately 10-15 minutes the teacher checked in and if all students were finished the teacher simply proceeded to call out the answer or have a student call out the correct answer. All my observations of the mainstream teachers, with the exception of two veteran Interactive teachers (Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly), displayed teaching techniques that gave directions with little time for group practice or interaction. The teachers did walk around the room sometimes but generally did not go to students unless they raised their hands. Rarely did I observe the EEL students in this study raising their hands. Below is a classroom observation of a mainstream Didactic/Autocratic teacher that will exemplify the point. I observed Jaime in

this classroom who was actually mainstreamed into this room for the first day. Previously

he had been receiving English language instruction in the LC.

Classroom observation: April 10th-1: 45 p.m. –5th period (Reading)

Jaime's first day with this teacher. I note 6 African Americans, one Latino girl and one

Caucasian boy. Small group because of pullout tutoring in preparation for TAAS. On

overhead is written "take out a sheet of paper and put your name on it." They have 10

minutes to take quiz from social studies. Teacher goes over to Jaime and tells him

something…. The answers are from yesterday's lessons so he should know some she tells

him. {I note that she never introduced him to rest of class} She says, "You don't have to

write compete sentences or questions." The quiz is on the American Revolution. Again,

all the questions are knowledge, what, why, who. Where…e.g., who wrote the

declaration of independence? Who was Paul Revere? Etc.

Teacher works behind her computer. She is e-mailing and tells Jaime he should know

answers to some of these.

1:55 p.m.   I see Jaime looking up, he seems to be on-task. Jaime looks puzzled-he is

not writing anymore-he doesn't probably know any more answers. This lesson I notice is

similar to what students were doing in Bond's class. This teacher normally teaches

English but is supporting the social studies TAAS coming up.

1:55 p.m.   Students switch papers for grading. Teacher says of Jaime's paper out loud

to class to the student who is grading "don't count his five and six wrong" Jaime answers

one of the questions "British wanted to control Americans." Teachers voice is strong,

loud and businesslike.

2:00 p.m   Teacher turns light on and turns off overhead. She asks each student to call out his or her grade in front of class and she writes it in grade book. Students seem embarrassed to be doing this. I wonder why she couldn't just record these later. They are reading along with the tape the story of Lewis and Clark. I notice that the Black kid is not following along. She never introduces the vocabulary words, which I know would be unfamiliar to Jaime. Words like specimen, precedent, delegation, quintessential, sovereignty, prudence, perspective…

2:10 p.m.   I have lost interest in story. I wonder why teacher doesn't stop tape every once in a while to check for comprehension. It is the same Latino girl who seems to be doing most of the responding. They then finish tape, no questions asked by teacher to check for comprehension. They proceed to page 717 and do a comic strip of poem illustrating what happened in poem in chronological order. Teacher shows an example "you have rest of period to work on this." She does go over specifically to Jaime to show him what to do. A student asks, "How does a lantern look?" Teacher verbally explains without ever getting up from behind her desk. I comment to myself that she should have done an illustration on BB. I note that the classroom atmosphere was one of sterility, businesslike, do your work and stay out of my hair. She has no discipline problems because she does not maintain any personal relations with students, culture being inculcated-respect and paper and pencil tasks, individual competition.

I talked later to Jaime about his first day in this classroom. He told me that he didn't like his new teacher. I asked him if he liked having to call out his grade and he said "no." I asked all the EEL students later why they thought teachers did this often and

205

students all replied that the teachers were trying to make them work harder and to earn high grades. I cringed frequently at this practice by teachers. The majority of the teachers in the group did it. I asked the teachers themselves why they did it and they told me it was a motivational technique that forces peer pressure and competition. The teachers told me that they believed it made a positive difference. None of the EEL students liked this practice, but they accepted it as being a well-meaning practice on the teacher's part.

Observation of Science in mainstream (Interactive teaching style)

During science, the teacher went step by step, slowly and clearly gave many directions and the students followed along. Angel, who never raised his hand in Ms. Lockhart's room, was doing so here. Angel was in a group and they were talking and interacting with each other. The teacher was constantly walking around and watching what they were doing. When Angel raised his hand the teacher came and he asked, "We need another one." Directions from the teacher were very specific. As students worked on graphing the amount of water it took to saturate the material, the teacher waited until all were finished, then they got graph paper, and teacher said "on top write your title" "put skinny part to side." The teacher repeated each direction at least four times, and explained the independent and dependent variable. The teacher waited until every student had completed each stage of the graph set-up. I noticed Lupe asking her friend in Spanish to fill in the graph, but the teacher didn't notice. All students were eager and followed directions. The teacher said, "Connect dots as you go." The teacher kept walking around and circulating room. I walked too and observed all students except one had successfully completed the graph. I heard lots of praise from the teacher "You're in good shape,

"Great", "Wonderful." Both Lupe and Angel told me that they got several examples and explanations in Mr. Attenborough's science class. They both liked science.

My observation of Jaime and Rosa with Mr. Bond revealed a class period where Jaime sat doing nothing for the entire class period. His group did not have their computer disk and Jaime just sat and played with the lead in his pencil all period. My later interview with Jaime revealed that he was upset because the teacher had lost the disk and they had to redo the written essay at home again. Conversation afterwards with Jaime revealed to me that the teacher had given each group the information on a person to be researched. This information was already highlighted, and they simply had to copy it down.

A subsequent observation in the same classroom revealed for me the notion of just giving the answers. Students walked in silently and were told to open their "sharpen up" TAAS social studies edition. All students worked silently on a selected passage. No directions were given. When the time was up, the teacher called on a student to read the question and said the answer (African American girl). The teacher quickly said "Correct answer was A." There was no other interaction. Now I understood why Jaime said, "He only gives the answers." The teacher, during this time, did explain the terms "Mercantilism" and "cultural borrowing." The teacher simply defined these terms with no example, no discussion with students, or in any way relating it to experiences of students. The students were then directed to do the next passage independently. The students worked silently for 10 minutes. The answers this time were graded in the same manner. Students were asked to call out the answer and they were told "Correct" or "The correct

answer is…". Students swapped papers and graded each other's work. The bell rang and the period was over.

The students all told me that Science was one of their favorite classes in the mainstream. From the three classroom observations I just described it is clear that the science teacher was the most interactive of the three described. The interactive teaching style of walking around the room, going step-by step was something the ELL students liked a lot. The ELL students did not like being left to work independently where the teacher just sat behind the desk and then went over the answers afterwards. The ELL students also liked the support of being in a group.

The following observation in the Language Center will illuminate what the students meant by the "examples." The students meant by this term a teacher who did a problem step-by-step with them; who did more than one; who had students follow along and who asked lots of questions and restated what was to be done.

Observation in Language Center

To finally investigate this notion of "example" I did question Mrs. Winters in the Language Center and asked her why the students constantly referred to the term "examples." She laughed saying that they {students} are probably spoiled because they are so used to getting examples and she made the point that they {Language Center teachers} do try to "wean" the students off this dependency on examples before they enter the mainstream. In Mrs. Winter's opinion they {ELL students} had to learn to figure it out for themselves, as she believed that the mainstream teachers were unable to give many examples due to shorter periods and classroom management issues. The

students were in the Language Center for two consecutive periods, which according to Mrs. Winters allowed LC teachers, the luxury of spending more time giving "examples" to students. The mainstream teachers only had 50 minutes compared with 120 minutes in the Language Center.

My observation in the Language Center with Ms. Sheehan revealed what the students meant when a good teacher used "examples" and "explained" a lot. I observed the LC teacher eliciting a good deal of speech and conversation from the same students I had hitherto observed sitting silently in mainstream classrooms. The atmosphere in the Language Center classroom was different. I could sense a comfort level among these students not observed in mainstream classrooms. The students were speaking Spanish to one another easily and were not discouraged from doing so. They helped each other and explained in Spanish if the person beside them did not grasp what the assignment entailed. I observed the teacher explaining step by step the assignment that the students had to do in class. Before the students were directed to work independently, the teacher asked several questions to check for understanding and explained many times, step- by- step the assignment. The excerpt from my notes below from a classroom observation during a reading lesson on prefixes and suffixes in the Language Center will illustrate the point.

Language Center (Ms. Sheehan)

April 10th- 8:00 a.m. (two periods)- students are clustered outside, nice day. I noticed that there are fewer students in the hall and that security in general in the school appears more organized. The students are turning homework in, Erica tells me that Lupe

209

was suspended {I learn that she told the security officer to fuck off and was making some lewd sexual gestures in the hall/classroom}. They are going over their homework, "A new dawn for Metropolis." The teacher is speaking very slowly while homework is being collected the students are casually talking to each other in Spanish. Students are seated in traditional rows. I notice the posters around the room- Greek creation Poster, Norse Mythology, the Alphabet strikes me as being something to expect in an elementary school, and the "city of gods." Teacher says, "Enrique you have to trust yourself more"…Rosa {whom I have never observed speaking in class} asks, "what if they put...?" [She is checking homework and answers ...once homework is checked {the students have been checking each others} they transition, I hear Spanish spoken {teacher makes no attempt to stop them from doing this}. Homework is passed back to individual students. Maria is upset that one of her answers was marked wrong. The teacher says, "she will check this later…" and I notice how vocal Rosa and Enrique are. The teacher speaks very slowly, she tells Enrique, "Watch your language..." The teacher is young and is asking lots of questions. She is explaining minimum wage. There is an argument about what it is. Teacher is wrong, she says $5., but students immediately correct her that it is $6.50. Teacher asks me how much, I don't know, but the kids know and I am sure they are correct. They have a very lively discussion about minimum wage and how it is designed to protect workers…the students have a hard time understanding that some people would be willing to work for 50 cents a day, Maria pipes up "there are a lot of jobs…." Enrique pipes in " I make $20. a day" Teacher explains that her father doesn't have wrinkles but people who work very hard particularly outdoors usually do.

210

It is now 8:55a.m. and the students are very animated and captivated by this discussion. They are discussing how Metropolis was destroyed, Jaime pipes up "like New York after September 11th." This is a futuristic story. Their assignment is to do the summary of the story. Teacher writes on chalkboard what she wants included, title, author, setting, main characters {she jokes and says only main characters or you'll be writing forever}, main conflict, solution, and resolution. Teacher continues to explain exactly what she wants. "I want a sentence, for characters I want a paragraph..." She uses the character Maria from the story, the leaders of the workers and explains how that would look in paragraph form, how much detail etc. Teacher gives very clear and specific directions. Jaime even corrects her at one point. The sense of community and ease is palpable. Teacher says, "I have given you more answers than I should" {I am getting a good sense of what the students now mean by examples}.

9:00 a.m. All students are working quietly and on task.

9:10 a.m. Jaime leaves for TAAS tutoring in gym. I follow Jaime and learn that Ms. Bell is coordinating this.

9:25 a.m. I enter room again in LC and Ms. Sheehan tells me that students, in her opinion, get too relaxed in LC. Angel enters and teacher asks him if he has a social security number. He answers "maybe" and she is helping him fill out his application form for high school. She tells him "you don't have grades for honors." Rosa, Maria and Enrique are chatting away. Angel will go to Rocksbury High School and he is upset and says, "It's faraway miss."

9:30 a.m. Teacher says "Enrique turn around...at the rate you're going you're not going to

make it to High School...wipe that smirk off your face." He follows directions fast. Teacher is still counseling Angel and advising him on what subjects he should take. 9:35a.m. Teacher procedes to chalkboard and explains their 'practically predictable' assignment. She says, "they gave no instructions so we will have to wing it…You have to write prefixes and suffixes-you will add 'es' to words up there..." She refers to vocabulary pocket with a little flag of Mexico on it...Teacher waits for them to write it down. She writes on the chalkboard – how many prefixes and suffixes will you find in the first chapter of Metropolis? She directs them, "look at first chapter-before you do, look at number three, make a prediction...student says 'like one and a half'" She puts on chalkboard – I predict that I will find----of the word have prefixes and ----. She tells them exactly what to do. The prefixes and suffixes are already in the pocket folder, she double checks "what will you do?" She elicits the steps from the students "you have to count them", she gives hints "can a word have a prefix and a suffix?" {she is preparing them for any difficulties they might encounter, she is reducing the frustration level}. "you will count words first, then you will count words that have prefixes." She takes them through the following example and works it out on the chalkboard. For example if we have 1,200 words and 300 have either a prefix, suffix, or both. She takes them through the division process and warns them "by way your numbers won't be this pretty." She asks can you give me a percent? She checks '*do you understand*?' she says, "*if* your prediction is wrong it doesn't matter." One student doesn't understand and the teacher says she will explain to her again after everybody starts working. (Note: The teacher spent at least 10 minutes explaining the "practically predictable" assignment.)

It is now 9:45 a.m. or so. Enrique is asked to face the wall as he is making trouble. She calls on Victor to go in front of her as "I saw you staring off in space." She gets him motivated to start and begin his assignment…

This classroom observation in the Language Center illustrates how differently the ELL students behaved and acted compared with their mainstream classes. The ELL students' sense of ease and comfort level was very different in the mainstream classroom. The ELL students in the LC classroom talked more, asked many questions, and at times even had to be directed as in the case of Enrique for off-task behaviors. The teacher spent much more time going over an example to be done by students. The teacher spent longer explaining, elicited more responses, and actually completed a finished example similar to the one the students had to complete on their own. The teacher walked the students through the assignment on prefixes and suffixes. The students had all the prefixes and suffixes listed on a chart to refer to and the teacher constantly asked questions to check for understanding. As the classroom observation notes show this process took at least ten to fifteen minutes. In the mainstream classrooms I observed the teacher going quickly through one example and then letting the students practice independently. In the Language Center the students were following along in their own notebooks at the same time as the teacher explained at overhead. It was only when this long process was over did the students in the Language Center work independently.

I concluded that the ELL students in this study perceived an "example" to be step-by-step directions with student following along with teacher and student not just passively listening and watching. The students were generally writing or doing the

"example' at the same time as teacher; an example was a finished outcome which could be referred to later by the student if needed; constant elicitation and questioning by the teacher; more than one example worked by teacher and students before the students completed their own independently. This process did not happen in the didactic mainstream classrooms. The Didactic mainstream teachers did one quick example on the overhead projector or chalkboard, asked few questions, and students had to pay attention and watch the teacher. Students then worked independently for ten to fifteen minutes, and the teacher checked answers on the overhead projector or chalkboard. Many times students just called out the correct responses.

"Examples," as defined by students, were never given by the Didactic mainstream teachers. These teachers never actually did more than one problem completely on chalkboard or overhead projector, and never alerted students to anticipated difficulties they might encounter in the proposed assignment. The students were told what to do and then proceeded to do their work silently. After approximately 10 to 15 minutes the teacher checked in and if all students were finished, the teacher proceeded to simply call out the answer or have a student call out the correct answer. All my observations of the mainstream teachers, with the exception of two veteran Interactive teachers (Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly), displayed teaching techniques that gave directions with little time for group practice or interaction. The teachers did walk around the room sometimes but generally did not go to students unless they raised their hands. Rarely did I observe the ELL students in this study raising their hands.

The ELL students in this study had figured out some behavioral adaptations to

help them understand better in classrooms where the teacher did not give "examples." In these instances the students learned to rely on each other for help, take turns asking the teacher for help, etc. The ELL students liked working with the teacher in a step-by step process.

<div align="center">Student Validation</div>

In response to the question of the importance for teachers to talk about students' home culture in class, they all agreed that it was important. They all gave reasons of national pride and self-validation for why a teacher should do this. Again it was evident that this was something the students perceived happened more in the Language Center than the mainstream classroom.

Self-validation: how the students felt "inside" about themselves when a teacher asked them to hare either about where they grew up or what it meant to be Mexican. The identity in this case was with "self." Mentions of Mexico also reminded students of positive home memories of friends and families. The following excerpts from Maria's interview demonstrated this concept:

Maria: Well you feel very good how can you speak, a very good feeling when they talk about your home country.

Author: How does it make you feel?

Maria: Like butterflies and I feel excited when they talk about it, I remember when I was in Mexico.

National Pride: related to moments in which a student felt proud of Mexico, of where he/she grew up. The identity was with place rather than self. But this identity with

<div align="center">215</div>

place positively affected the students' sense of self and consequently resulted in self-validation. Here are examples of what students shared with me to illustrate this point:

Author: How does that make you feel when a teacher asks you questions like that?
            and things like that about you?

Rosa: Comfortable. I feel like I am Mexican.

Jaime: Yes. Because I feel proud of Mexico.

Author: Right so that's very important. Do you think when teachers do that you
            like them better?

Jaime: Yes.

Author: Why?

Jaime: Because they don't be selfish they just don't think about the United States.

Validation of Culture in Class

None of the students perceived that they were encouraged to talk about their Mexican culture in the mainstream class. Five of the six students perceived that they studied other cultures in these classrooms. They all reported studying about African Americans, and two mentioned the Native Americans also. When I probed them why they thought this was so, their explanation was that because they were now in the United States they had to study about the African American culture. All the students perceived that it was natural that the LC teachers discuss Mexican culture as they were teaching mostly Mexican students. The ELL students thought it was acceptable that the mainstream teachers talk more about the African American culture as they were living in the United States. The ELL students were not offended that the Mexican culture was not

216

referred to or discussed in the mainstream classrooms.

Students Perception of Self

The students who did not consider themselves good students were those identified by their teachers as being at-risk both behaviorally and academically. These two students were Lupe and Enrique. Enrique perceived himself as being mean with teachers. I observed this behavior too in the classroom.

The other three good students (Jaime, Rosa and Maria) perceived themselves as both "good" and "not so good." They believed that although their grades were good they could do better behaviorally in class. Rosa considered that she was not a good student because she was not making all 100's in classes.

Relations with other Students

In response to whether they would tell other students about where they came from three said "yes" and three said "no." The three who said "yes" had conditions that if other students were other Mexicans only and only two said that it didn't matter to them. But the others were all emphatic that it had to be other Mexicans, as they perceived that they didn't want students making fun of them and they perceived that the other students wouldn't understand unless they came from Mexico.

In response to question, "Do students get along?" The response was definitely "no." The only students perceived as getting along were the ELL students in the LC because all spoke the same language and understood each other. The perception of the ELL students was that the Chicanos were into gangs and drugs did not like immigrant Mexicans. The ELL students told me about a lot of discipline problems in the mainstream

classrooms and Blacks and the Hispanics not getting along. The ELL students talked about having to be careful about who they spoke Spanish with, as the African Americans got upset when they spoke Spanish in the hallways or in class.

In response to what teachers do, all students agreed that teachers addressed the issue by having group work or giving infractions. Most of the actions initiated by teachers appeared to be of a reactionary rather than preventative nature to issues of how students got along with each other.

I observed students when first mainstreamed appear to get into trouble because they were imitating the behaviors of mainstream students. The students shared with me:

Maria: Well you know sometimes all the kids get a little bad. And sometimes
           you're like tired of being bad. Like last semester I was so really bad, you
           know, I laughed all day long. I was not getting the appropriate education I
           should have. But then I started thinking about what if I'm not a good
           person when I grow up, you know, a person of success. I was thinking to
           myself and I think I bring up my grades and all that. I had ...I'm
           embarrassed to say this, but I had a 78 on my progress report last semester.

Author: And that's embarrassing for you? You prefer to have higher grades?

Maria: Yeah, and now my teachers are saying that I am doing very well and I got
           a...I think most of the things are nineties and eighties. I straightened up
           and I was thinking if you're bad you're supposed to be good too. And I
           say which side is better, the good one or the bad one.

Author: Why do you think you went through that period? What do you think

218

caused it and what do you think got you out of it?

Maria: Well I think I got into the bad things because I saw other people in the

regular classes doing bad stuff and I say, 'Why can't I do some of those

bad things?'

The Language Center teachers also shared with me that they noticed a difference in behaviors from the ELL students once they started mainstreaming into the regular non-Language Center classrooms. Five of the six students in this study got into trouble when they were first mainstreamed. The teachers in LC weren't sure whether the ELL students learned inappropriate behaviors from other students or just became more confident in their ability to speak English. My interviews with students revealed that they perceived inappropriate behaviors to be more "fun" like Maria and tried it out. In the case of five of the six students, parents were informed and the behaviors ceased. I did however observe that the ELL students got into more trouble with their Language Center teachers than the mainstream teachers.

Summary of findings from RQ4: What are the ELL students' perceptions of the instructional practices used by teachers to meet students' academic needs?

Culture for students was what they did in the Language Center. Talking Spanish with their friends and being with Mexicans was what they viewed as culture. The ethnic composition of school can influence a child's feeling of worth and value in school; a school with a larger proportion of language minority students may provide a supportive environment for the student and consequently positively effect self-esteem. A school with only a small number of ELL students may result in "stigmatization" as well as alienation.

The psychological impact of a pullout ESL program for ELL students can often result in marginalization and inferiority (Ovando, 1978). The students in this study did not express cultural isolation because they had the comfort and security of each other in the Language Center. This I conclude explained why the students did not seem to mind too much that the mainstream teachers did not talk about or validate their culture. This also explained why students perceived that teachers in the LC talked more about Mexico than in the mainstream.

All students acted as the main liaison between school and home. Thy explained and translated for the parents as needed. Researchers corroborate that there is currently a critical shortage of well-prepared teachers nationwide. Although Spanish-speaking students comprise the largest number of language minority students in the United States, there is a dramatic shortage of teachers coming from Hispanic backgrounds (Crawford, 1995; Delpit, 1995). A review of the educational literature in the new millennium points to the challenges facing teacher preparation programs in addressing the growing mismatch between the background of teachers and the students they will be teaching. In reality teachers in the 21st Century will find themselves more culturally alienated than ever before from their students. The demographics and cultural diversity of students has changed rapidly in the past twenty years, but the majority of teachers are still white, middle class, monolingual, and unknowledgeable of the cultural and linguistic diversity of their students. The need for ongoing staff development and training in culturally responsive teaching is more relevant than ever (Applebome, 1996).

All parents were supportive of school when requested to do so by teachers. This

220

finding supports researchers who found that schools tend to perceive many immigrant families as non-supportive of teachers. McCarthey (1999) found when teachers believed students came from impoverished backgrounds, teachers did not incorporate the cultural backgrounds of these students in the curriculum. In many cases, such teachers did not seem to be knowledgeable about students' backgrounds and experiences but rather operated from a deficit view of children from diverse backgrounds. Valdes (1996) and Valencia (1997) validated McCarthey's findings, i.e., where poor minorities were viewed as having negative norms, values, and practices, there was low academic achievement for these students. McCarthey, Worthy, and Riojas (1999) found several parents believed their children's reading problems were rooted in teachers' lack of value for their children's backgrounds. McCarthey (1995) found teachers' choosing to ignore students' problems was one way of not valuing students' experiences.

Students perceived that the instruction they received in the LC was better than the mainstream. They perceived the mainstream teachers ignored them, didn't call on them, and didn't give enough examples. Students perceived a "good" teacher as one who offers help first to a student. Students were reticent about asking for help. They believed a good teacher should know without having to be asked. This finding is again consistent with the literature on culturally responsive teaching and supports Interactive instructional practices that work well with ELL students (Gay, 2000. Banks, 2001).

Students had to make behavioral adaptations in the mainstream classroom to ask for help and to avoid making a teacher "mad." Students had 'figured' out strategies such as taking turns among themselves to ask for help or asking the person beside them for

221

help when the teacher wasn't looking. This finding is also consistent with the research by Nieto (2000, 2001) and other culturally responsive researchers.

Students liked to be self-validated by teachers and also liked it when their national identity was validated. Cultural validation of each student is a vital component of culturally responsive teaching. School is a place where, without a teacher's knowing and no matter how hard a school tries, children may experience forms of racism. Cummins (1986) and Ogbu (1992) studied the impact of discrimination on self-esteem of immigrant children. They concluded that linguistically and culturally diverse children who do not feel in control of their environment might suffer low self-esteem as a result. Feelings of marginalization, alienation, loneliness, inferiority, and not belonging are very real for immigrant and minority students in our schools still today (Igoa, 1988; Nieto, 2000).

Students' self-perception of selves as "good" students encompassed grades, and behaviors in class. Five out of the six students all got into trouble behaviorally when they first mainstreamed. Their behaviors also changed in the LC once they were mainstreamed.

<div align="center">Part III</div>

<div align="center">Administrative Policies and Procedures</div>

RQ5: What are the Policies and procedures in place in the school to meet the needs of ELL students?

Interviews at the administrative level were conducted with the District ESL and Language Center coordinator, campus level administrators, and the campus LC team-coordinator and support office personnel.

Teachers' Perceptions of Policies and Procedures

The interviews with teachers revealed five of the six were unfamiliar with school and district policies and procedures pertaining to placement, testing, and exiting of ELL students from the Language Center. These five teachers deferred to the LC team-coordinator, Mrs. Winters, for information. The only teacher, who was familiar with the district policies and procedures, was the grade level team leader, Mr. Bond, who had more administrative contact than the other five. This is fairly consistent with the research in the literature in that many mainstream teachers view ESL programs as separate from what they (regular mainstream teachers) themselves do in the classroom.

The principal shared with me that he strove to maintain communication and cohesiveness between all the programs in the school. He explained:

> For my teachers I wanted to bring awareness that first you need to know each
> other as individuals and not just as teachers. Because I think they don't always
> respect each other not because they don't respect what each other do but they
> don't respect who each other are.

The teachers in this study acknowledged this effort on his part. The principal also shared with me that one of his objectives was to ensure that "We had to first get a knowledge of what the Language Center was so that they {mainstream teachers} wouldn't have the impression that it was Special Education or something of that nature."

The veteran teachers, Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly, had more to say about the district level policy and procedures. These veterans expressed that the district should do more to 1) communicate with families in Spanish, 2) provide a ready-made curriculum

223

for Hispanic Heritage month comparable to that already provided for Black history month in February and 3) provide teachers with more skills and training to deal with the needs of the ELL students.

The novice teachers cited misconceptions and a lack of understanding of policies and procedures in relation to ELL students. The other two teachers, Miss Bell and Mr. Bond, relied heavily on the LC coordinator, Mrs. Winters, and trusted her implicitly. This strategy worked for Western Heights because the coordinator, Mrs. Winters, maintained extra communication, was organized and implemented all policies and procedures appropriately. The Central Office ESL coordinator emphasized the contributions of individuals like Mrs. Winters who "have been here long enough and are strong advocates…and they know how to continue and develop it…and go the extra mile." This central office administrator was very supportive of the time and effort the Language Center teachers devoted to the education of ELL students in the district.

<u>Interdisciplinary approaches</u>

In terms of interdisciplinary planning, the school had in place many strategies that enabled teachers to plan across curriculum and grade level. The teaming concept was very effective and liked by all the teachers in this study. The teaming concept grouped 120 students among six core teachers. These teachers met on a daily basis and discussed concerns with students, curricula, and pedagogy. The novice teachers (Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague), in particular, expressed the support and help they received during team meetings from the more veteran team members. The LC teachers however, were not involved with the teams. They believed their students would benefit by their (the LC

teachers) being able to team also with the mainstream teachers.

Under the leadership of the principal the concept of interdisciplinary planning across grade levels began. He explained:

So if there is something that I think I've done and that I want to say I'm proudest of is at least put them {teachers} into a consciousness that you are not by yourself.

You know you get in that classroom and you think you're just it, you're it but ah…the team concept was already here but the concept of sharing outside your team, inside your content subject matter, social studies or science I think really I brought an awareness of that to all my teachers so that they knew why should we, why should I drill myself to come up with things when I got a partner right across the hall who is not in my team but in the same subject matter and ask them what they do. I think that I did that.

The principal ensured that the teachers were given the opportunity to vertically plan curricula together across the three grade levels to ensure continuity and to avoid overlap and repetition across grade levels. This planning was done with Social Studies, Reading and English. Teachers were given release time at the beginning of the year to plan across three grade levels. The math curriculum was controlled by the district and amended yearly based on TAAS results across the district. The department meetings, pullout programs, as well as the TAAS theme camps were all effective procedures in place in the school to meet the academic needs of low performing students.

The interdisciplinary approach was evident to me during the five months at this

school. All the research teachers supported each other's subjects as much as they could. The teachers of math who found it difficult to integrate Social Studies or English in their areas, did consciously integrate Science and Reading as much as they could. All teachers implemented vocabulary development daily in their classes and all had to do reading with their homeroom students. This procedure ensured that all teachers regardless of subject taught were responsible for reading and vocabulary development with their students. The math teachers in particular expressed that they were very well supported. All the teachers had vocabulary words posted as well as TAAS objectives and it was clear to me when I visited classrooms what the lesson objective for the day and week was. Again this was a procedure implemented and reinforced by the administration in the school.

Staff Development and ongoing education:

All interviews with teachers revealed that they did receive mandatory Gifted & Talented training with diversity training. However, according to teachers, this inclusive approach to incorporating ESL strategies with G& T did not prepare them enough to deal specifically with the academic needs of ELL students. Although the diversity training was mandatory in the district, one of the teachers expressed that it helped her more to deal with and understand her co-workers rather than specifically helping her with ELL students. Although all teachers agreed that the diversity training was helpful in understanding cultural differences, it did not provide them with enough specific pedagogical strategies to teach ELL students in the classroom. This training, although inclusive in its approach of teaching all students, was not considered enough training by the teachers to deal with the needs of ELL students.

The teachers cited one, on-site training that the LC coordinator, Mrs. Winters, provided them during the spring that was most helpful. As one of the teachers expressed, "knowing just to look at the ELL student in the eye while talking to him/her" was a very worthwhile strategy that Mrs. Winters gave to this teacher. These are the kinds of strategies I observed that the novice teachers lacked. Greeting the ELL students by name, calling on them in class and forcing them to interact and be involved in the classroom conversation was vital for language development in these ELL students. Instead the novice teachers expressed that the strategy of not calling on ELL students for four to five weeks as a way of saving these students from unwarranted embarrassment. As well intentioned as this was it was not in the best interest of these ELL students. These teachers lacked the background knowledge of second language development as it pertained to the teaching of ELL students.

The one Interactive teacher (Mrs. O'Reily) who exemplified several CRT practices received much of her own knowledge and training in this regard (Mrs. O'Reilly) from another district. The novice teachers told me that they used Mrs. O'Reilly often as a resource for help with their ELL students. I believe the diversity training gave the teachers a superficial knowledge of cultural understanding but not specific teaching strategies. These teachers could benefit from more ESL teaching strategies to use in the classroom.

All administrative participants agreed that there was a need to train all teachers in ESL strategies. The quality of the training of the ESL and bilingual staff was most definitely not of the "same caliber" as that given to the regular teachers, the central office

227

administrator told me. The regular classrooms teachers received training that was intermittent and infused and included across all general staff development training. The district level coordinator explained the inability of the district to mandate compulsory training for all their teachers even though they did pay for those teachers who elected to have an ESL endorsement. Among the teacher participants only one of them had elected to do that training. It was obvious from my observations that it benefited this teacher. From the district's perspective, teachers preferred faster training and were very reluctant to go to a university to acquire that endorsement. Better incentives for teachers or policies needed to be in place in this regard to make this happen. The Central Office administrator told me:

> The Language Center is the most highly trained group that we have. We have two the Language Center teachers I would say are very well trained and our bilingual teachers. Outside that realm, and when you start talking about the regular teacher, our training is certainly not at the caliber, I don't think. Because for one thing even though we may offer the training for content area teachers or to so called regular program teachers, they don't have to come to our in-service. It's not a district requirement that they do so. It's offered but it is not necessary for them to come. Therefore they {teachers} don't get the same number of hours or the same level of training ... opportunities are there but I wouldn't say that it comes close to what it would for the Language Center or bilingual teachers. … So many teachers are being assigned who are new and who lack training that it's almost impossible to keep up with the ESL endorsement requirements for the teachers being

assigned new to ESL. When you compound that knowing that you have three,

four or five times that number of teachers in content areas who also need training

not for endorsement purposes but they need training in how to work with these

kids. It's just an impossible task for those of us in this office because we do not

have staff, we don't have anyone other than ourselves, the coordinators who work

with the programs ... In an urban school district I guess it just goes with the

territory, but we are training now, I would say between 300 to 400 newly assigned

ESL teachers per year in {name omitted} ISD, that's elementary and secondary.

And 80% of those teachers will be elementary and not secondary. And you figure

that number of people that you have to train annually. The turnover rate for one

reason or another they leave the district, they get another job, they move on,

whatever happens, they are not assigned to ESL. Then the increase of students

who are coming in and you put all of that together, that's quite a number of

teachers to be training annually for endorsement. Our problem is getting teachers

to go to the colleges for endorsement is problematic even though the programs are

good and we will pay the tuition if teachers would just go for

endorsement. They very often don't want to do that. They want to do something

that's done in a shorter time span and something that the district does. Catch 22.

Obviously you can see the entire curriculum and staff development challenges

that come along with that and it's just a matter of just trying to keep up and

making sure things are done in a quality fashion.

The administrators on campus concurred that there was not enough trained

bilingual staff or faculty. My observations confirmed that these administrators were inundated with translations and interpretations and that it was obvious that more Spanish-speaking personnel were needed. The bilingual administrators had to do their regular work as well as carrying out all these translations and interpretations, which were outside of their normal duties. The administrators believed there was a need for the district to recognize the value of bilingual administrators and personnel. One bilingual administrator shared with me:

> We take parents, we guide them, we point the way, and we educate them. We go beyond with our bilingual skills to accommodate a population that has been very poorly accommodated in the past. Is that still in existence? Yes it is. Are they hiring administrators that are fully bilingual? No ... We have to act like teachers, like administrators, like counselors. So we need the staff. This is one of the reasons why bilingual skills should be valued at its highest and I know there is great opposition that says why should they get in because they're bilingual. So maybe they not necessarily get in for that reason but value it at it's highest. Everything else people can be trained.

Policies and Procedures most strongly supported by action

The district ESL coordinator told me that the district emphasized equality for all students. The implementation of mini-assessments, benchmarking and TAAS tutoring all ensured that the needs of the subgroups, which hitherto had been ignored, were met. The Immigrant Welcome Center (IWC) was the place where newly arrived immigrant students were placed upon initial entry into the district. The student placement center was

a service provided to immigrant parents to ascertain where children should be placed. The

IWC took the burden off the schools and the immigrant children by placing them in a

place where they received initial acculturation into the country and were then placed in

the respective LC after a year or two or whenever they were deemed ready. The district

promoted an inclusive policy with respect to all students. The district also promoted ESL

strategies throughout all the staff development in the district. Overall from my research I

could tell that the immigrant child was well supported and served by the district. The

district coordinator was emphatic in her praise for the district school board in always

providing the financial support necessary to maintain the ESL and bilingual programs.

The LC coordinator praised the support from principal and district as a vital component

in the success of the LC concept. This was not the case in other districts she told me:

> Not all districts have the support of the school board or whatever it happens to be
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> and {name omitted) ISD is lucky to have it. But if school districts don't have that
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> kind of fundamental support it's almost impossible for people in the offices like
>
> mine for example to be able to bring about changes if they don't have the
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> financial support of the school district itself. I have seen so many when we have
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> gone to so many meetings like the international TESOL or the NABE meetings or
>
> whatever and programs have been crippled because there ... the local district has
>
> not provided the kind of financial resources necessary.

The principal's perspective was that all TEA (Texas Education Agency) directives

were directly implemented in the classroom. This I observed myself by visiting the

classrooms. The TAAS objectives and the TEKS were always clearly posted and taught

in the classroom by teachers.

The bilingual administrators had a different perspective. Their perception was that they weren't sure what was really supported by action. They perceived that the students didn't really see themselves reflected in the faculty or staff of the school. The sense of powerlessness of the Hispanic and ELL families was very palpable in their concern. Although they believed the district treated all students equally on paper, applied discipline to all, and enforced all modifications and ESL strategies, the shortage of bilingual personnel and the devaluation of the Hispanic culture was an underlying theme of the district. These administrators viewed the Hispanic culture as being devalued because the district, in their view, paid lip service to quotas. They perceived the reality was that in terms of promotion and advancement, the Hispanic parents did not get their fair share of political representation. These administrators believed the Hispanic culture of trust and turning the other cheek resulted in these people not demanding more for their children. They expressed:

It's not just this district, I've seen it in other districts where.. we almost have a 70% Hispanic population but yet we have only two Hispanic teachers. It's sad because you see students up and down the hallways because they want to find somebody who models something like mom and dad for guidance, for protection, for assistance for ...if they don't find it, in my opinion they would much rather isolate themselves. Why do they fail? They fail because the system is failing them…. We are raised in terms of turning the other cheek and we do not fight and do this...we are humble and that is the other reason why when the parents bring

their children into the system, they trust enough to do what we are supposed to be doing. But we are not doing it. It's a different story. But the trust is there. Once they ...the trust is broken and the parents find out that we have not being this or what we should have been doing then they will never trust again. So how do you turn a huge population to give up their trust and start questioning?

At the classroom level the Language Center team leader believed they themselves (the teachers) often had to become advocates for their own students. The teachers of the ELL students themselves had to champion for the rights of their students. They themselves ensured that only nurturing teachers were placed in the LC and they often fought for the rights of ELL students to be tested for G & T and special education. The LC personnel told me that the rights of the ELL child were often masked as being problems of lack of English speaking language skills rather than being tested for special education or gifted and talented programs. They used the example of students, such as Jaime and Maria, who were not allowed to enter the SIP (G & T) program unless they had the TAAS portion of the test passed. But yet students they believed were forced to take TAAS too soon thus ensuring their failure and consequently denial of access to the G & T programs. The LC teachers went over and beyond what was required by them in the district to cater to their students. They often devoted lunchtime and time after school to tutor ELL students individually so that they would pass the necessary TAAS test to allow them access into more advanced classes.

From the support office staff perspective the attendance policy was very strictly enforced but again in a way that alienated the parents of these ELL students and Hispanic

students who did not speak English. These staff members said immigrant parents were not cognizant of the district's attendance policy and took students to Mexico for weeks at a time not realizing the legal repercussions for themselves and their children when they returned and had to appear in court, make up missed days, etc. and maybe missed important tests. The support staff believed that the school did not do enough to communicate at a local level with the families of these students. It was this support staff person, Mrs. Beasley, who was used so much by teachers for interpretations and translations and who knew first-hand the frustrations as she dealt first-hand with angry parents. Mrs. Beasley told me the parents felt alienated because they perceived very few school personnel could speak Spanish even though 60% of the student body in the school was Hispanic.

Challenges in meeting needs of ELL students

The challenges perceived in meeting the needs of ELL students varied in level depending on the location and position of the administrator. At the district level the challenges were the implementation of state policies rather than local. The district was expanding bilingual and LC programs to meet the demands of the eight percent yearly increase in the immigrant student body. The difficulty at the central office level was keeping all teachers ESL certified in compliance with the state guidelines and regulations. The new accountability system TAKS, which will replace the TAAS, has new standards and guidelines, which was already forcing the district to rethink classroom practices for the near future. The district was aware that it was accountable for the test scores of all immigrant students after three years of residence in the United States. This

policy impacted the accountability ratings of the school and placed a great deal of pressure at the district level to ensure that ESL teachers were suitably trained and endorsed to deal with this body of immigrant students and to ensure these students were on grade level academically to take the state test after three years. The district had to keep expanding programs and adding programs, which resulted in larger yearly budget expenditures. So the challenge at the district level was keeping such programs funded and staffed with equipped and properly trained personnel.

At the campus level the administrators, the principal and assistant principals, dealt first-hand with the state accountability system and finding teachers who cared about these students and making sure that the needs of the ELL student were met with the limited bilingual staff available. The Hispanic administrators believed the curriculum, though forcing accountability on the teachers' part for the ELL student, did not "reflect what they {students} know and what they see at home." The administrators who themselves grew up in Hispanic backgrounds and spoke Spanish to parents and students expressed a cultural mismatch between the world of school and home for these students. Again they stressed that the limited amount of bilingual and Latino staff and faculty did not truly reflect the culture of these students at Western Heights Middle School.

At the classroom level the challenges for the LC personnel were meeting the needs of the gifted and talented ELL student who were unable to be placed accordingly due to English language inadequacies rather than cognitive abilities. The lack of identification for remediation was an issue that concerned the Language Center teachers. Access to programs denied to ESL students was a real issue for the LC teachers. The LC

personnel also believed curriculum was forced on them due to TAAS and that they were forced to prepare these students earlier than necessary to take the state mandated test. Usually these students spent a year in the IWC and then had only two years at the LC to prepare for the TAAS test. The three-year deadline period placed great demands on LC faculty who often had to teach content subject as low as third grade before they could begin preparing students to take the eighth grade or seventh grade TAAS test. The Language Center teachers perceived at times nobody acknowledged or understood the difficulties of teaching ELL students who had very little education and schooling in their home countries.

At the support staff level, in the attendance office, the lack of communication with parents was a real issue for staff who dealt with angry parents before the administrators and teachers did. Communicating school policies and helping immigrant and Hispanic parents understand how school worked was an important gap and an area that needed improvement from the perceptions of office staff. Nobody in the main office spoke Spanish. The attendance clerk who spoke Spanish was located in a separate office that was just for attendance. Spanish-speaking parents, who entered Western Heights Middle School, upon ascending the marble staircase, were never greeted in their own language. This was a school that had over 1,100 students and only one attendance clerk who spoke Spanish. This attendance clerk went "the extra mile" in translating for teachers and acting as interpreter in their parent-teacher conferences. All this extra translating she did was not in her job description and not rewarded financially. She did this, she told me, because she liked to assist them. I witnessed her personal interactions

with parents in the office and noted that the parents somehow knew that she was their first point of contact in the school. All Spanish-speaking only parents checked in with her first even if their need had nothing to do with attendance. I observed her in her office assisting Spanish-speaking parents with the documentation necessary to take to INS (Immigration and Naturalization Office) office regarding their children.

<u>Home-School Relations</u>

Communicating with families of these students from the district office perspective was well done through the service provided at the student placement center. This service helped families upon initial entry to the area to find the appropriate school and placement for their children. This was a service that was working effectively for the district. If an immigrant family just showed up to any school, they were immediately directed to the student placement centre for assistance. This office was advertised and from the district's perspective was working well. All the administrators and personnel interviewed for this study concurred and praised this office. Affiliated with this office was the student-testing center where any child who had a Latino last name was screened and assessed and past records examined to ensure the correct and best placement for the student. This was an invaluable service that removed many administrative nightmares for the personnel at the campus level. The district also saw its role of connecting to families of ELL students in its willingness to consistently expand such programs to serve their needs. Many other districts do not provide the same services to their immigrants as this district does. The district coordinator believed that the superintendent and school board were always consistent in their support and budgeting requests for the expansion of such programs to

meet the needs of the ELL student.

From the principal's perceptions the bilingual personnel and faculty in the school who were available to the faculty to connect with the families of these students were adequate. He did not seem aware of the lack of communication mentioned by the other administrators or staff.

The assistant principals agreed that communication with the families of these students (ELL) was "sporadic." In response to my question of what structures were in place to communicate with these families I was told, "can't think of a one." They told me "It's us that translate letters." The bilingual administrators who set up the calling system, which was dependent on a Spanish- speaking administrator. They still had to deal with all the regular students in the school but felt overwhelmed and taken-for-granted by the district. The bilingual assistant principals felt overburdened and underpaid for their bilingual skills. They cited that their job was very different from that of other administrators in non-Latino areas, as they had to do more to assist their faculty and students with Spanish interpretations and translations. These bilingual administrators viewed their Spanish-speaking skills as a talent they could provide and although glad to be able to assist families and teachers, they did feel that their bilingual abilities were not always acknowledged or valued by the district.

At the LC level none of the ESL teachers spoke Spanish but they did have a bilingual teacher assistant who was their main liaison with parents. Because there were over 100 students in the LC, this teacher assistant was kept busy and often drove in her car to meet the parents of the students, as needed. Parents were only contacted about

behavioral or academic concerns. The students and teachers themselves substantiated this for me in their interviews.

From the support office staff perspective there was the feeling that there were not enough open houses and overall communication with parents. The families of these ELL students, according to the attendance clerk, were reticent about coming up to school. The reality was that many parents worked two jobs, worked late hours and were unable to take the time to specifically come up to the school.

The bilingual assistant principals shared their own experiences of growing up in a Hispanic culture that trusted educators to do the job and the belief among the Hispanic community that it was not their role to interfere in the schooling process. So there was a clear need on the behalf of the school and personnel to reach out to these parents and teach the community the connection between parent involvement and academic success. So the need to educate at the parent level was important. The need to involve parents at this level was vital for the future success of Latino students. It was important that teachers and personnel understand that these parents were very involved and supportive of their children's education even if they didn't necessarily show up to school. This was substantiated for me by all of the students involved in my study, who described parents who were very concerned about behaviors and work in school.

There was no doubt that if the bilingual administrators were not in this school, there would be even less communication with families of students. The teachers relied very heavily on them for communication and translation. All the students in my study knew the assistant principals by name and these administrators had been in contact with

five of the six families of ELL students regarding behavioral or academic concerns. There was no doubt that these bilingual administrators carried the burden of communication for the school. The structures in place in the school to communicate with families of immigrant students were limited due to a lack of Spanish-speaking personnel, which hampered home-school relations at Western Heights Middle School.

Political Powerlessness

My interview with the assistant principals brought out the political powerlessness that they felt for the Latino students and their parents. I was told:

I feel that there is a hopelessness about our kids. And that may be with all the things you mentioned. Their faces don't reflect what they know and what they see at home. There are very few … I don't think we have enough materials either, you mentioned that. We don't have enough materials in the library, and we don't have enough materials. Then again everything is economics.

The assistant principals believed the Latino people by nature of their culture of "turning the other cheek" were not able to effect change and get the political representation that they deserved at the district level. The administrators cited the political position of power that the African American community had been able to carve for themselves and their ability as a minority people to voice their opinions and effect change. One explained:

When I first came to this district I would go to central office and I would find people with their bull horns...it was the African American supporters for their rights and injustices and now I always wanted to hear what is it that they are

saying. I thought how nice that they make themselves visible to the community and the media won't give them attention of course. But they must be there as guardians. Hispanics have not done that. If that's what it takes, then that is what must take place. Can we do it ourselves as administrators? We can't because we are part of the system. Lulac or some other organization has to step forth and do it because will changes come about by themselves.

The administrators believed the Latinos as a people must learn to do the same as the African American community.

The assistant principals felt powerless in their own positions to effect change. They told me that to standout or complain would be seen as a bad move and one that would deter their opportunities for promotion and advancement in the district. They saw me as the researcher as having more power to effect future change because of my objectivity and my license to write and my non-employment with the district.

Future Goals and Directions of the District

Future goals and directions for the education of ELL students within the district varied depending upon the level of administrator. At the central office level, the TAAS achievement outcomes always determined the future directions of programs. Modifications and adjustments were made to programs depending on results and the deficits created by those test results. But the district was committed to supporting the needs of the ELL child and was willing to continue expansions as needed. The future challenge of the district was trying to meet the educational needs of the recently arrived 16 and 17-year-old ELL immigrant student. The district was experiencing an influx of

immigrants at this age who, sometimes uneducated in their home countries were still required to pass TAAS to earn a high school diploma. This was an issue that this district as well as others in the state of Texas was trying to resolve at the state level during the time of this study.

The principal's future goal was to have more interdisciplinary and thematic teaching and more block scheduling. He really was not aware of any other future initiatives as they pertained to the education of ELL students.

From the assistant principals' perceptions a change in the political powerlessness of the Hispanic community was a necessary prerequisite for political representation at the local and at the state level in order to effect change at the district level. They believed the emphasis on the Latino culture needed to be the same as that of the African American culture.

From the staff and office perspective there were increasingly more non-English speaking parents to deal with on a daily basis, more work to be done, but no increasing support personnel added by the district. This situation was something that the district needed to change in their opinion.

Summary of Findings for RQ5: What administrative policies and procedures are in place in the school and district to meet the educational needs of ELL students?

The district had in place many policies for the identification and placement of recently arrived immigrant students. The district at the local level supported the Language Center and the ESL programs by continually providing the funding to meet the needs of an increasing influx of immigrants. Olsen (1997) found in most cases there was

little understanding among key school staff and board members of ELL programs and immigrant student needs. Thus, when schools faced budget cuts that required prioritization, ELL programs often were marginalized or weakened. In two of the case studies, the ELL programs were discontinued altogether. Olsen also found evidence that, in most cases, language and cultural issues had low priority in such decisions.

I did not find this to be the case in this school district. This was a district that really supported the education of ELL immigrant students. All the programs were supported by local funding so that even if the federal money disappeared suddenly, the school board and district administration are committed to continue improving and expanding the services to immigrant students.

At the campus level it was clear that the district needed to be doing more to hire Spanish-speaking personnel to provide support for teachers and administrators in communicating with the parents.

The powerlessness of the Hispanic community in terms of district representation was a concern that emerged in talking with the Spanish-speaking personnel at the campus level. This finding is consistent with the research on minority status and schooling by Gibson & Ogbu (1991) that explores the political powerlessness of minority groups in the United States as they try to have a voice in a political system that is still dominated by the White male.

The district's diversity training was not enough to meet the needs of teachers. All teachers needed to be provided with more ESL training to meet the needs of ELL students. Researchers in the field of culturally responsive teaching also illuminate good

instructional strategies for teaching ELL students are effective for all students (Gay, 2000; Banks, 2002). There is still a need, as this study demonstrates, to equip teachers with more ESL teaching strategies to meet the needs of their ever-increasing culturally diverse classrooms. Gersten & Jimenez (1996) stress there is need for increased focus and research in understanding critical instructional issues. They argue it is necessary to examine, in a way that "fits the realities of the classrooms" (p. 219), what was already known about effective teaching practices, second language acquisition, cognitive research, and cross-cultural communication. Goldenberg (1996) contended that past research relating to the education of Limited English Proficient (ELL) students focused too much attention on language instruction and neglected language instruction within the context of effective instructional techniques (Arreaga-Mayor & Perdomo-Rivera, 1996; Faltis, 1993; Jimenez, Gersten, & Rivera, 1996).

The interdisciplinary approaches were very well implemented in the school because the principal supported this. The literature on culturally responsive teaching supports the effectiveness of interdisciplinary approaches in meeting the needs of ELL and culturally diverse students (Gay, 2001)

The challenges in meeting the needs of the ELL students centered upon 1) lack of appropriate identification procedures for G& T and Special education due to language (language masked the real needs of the students), and 2) pressures of students having to take TAAS at the end of their third year in the United States. Bohn & Sleeter (2000) caution state standards and tests have forced schools to standardize and emphasize content at the expense of any other concerns, which, they suggest, is not in the best

244

educational interest of the English-as-a-Second Language student. Bohn & Sleeter (2000) state a xenophobic climate is developing again. State standards are operating on the assumption that all students have an equal opportunity to learn even though it is common knowledge that discrepancies exist among facilities and resources.

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to examine ELL students and teachers' perceptions of culturally responsive teaching. The study was a qualitative case study of one middle school conducted over a five-month period in an urban school district in Texas. Six English Language Learner (ELL) students and six mainstream teachers were selected for interviewing and classroom observation. Administrators and other support staff personnel were also interviewed for an understanding of the administrative policies and procedures in place in the school to meet the needs of ELL students. I, as researcher, was an integral part of the school for three days a week during a five-month period.

The data analysis was framed by Geneva Gay's (2000) characteristics of culturally responsive teaching of both the students' and teachers' perceptions. The overall research questions that guided the study included: 1) what were teachers' perceptions of the academic challenges facing ELL students as they enter the mainstream classroom? 2) What instructional strategies did middle school, regular classroom teachers use to meet the academic needs of these students? 3) What were the ELL students' perceptions of the academic challenges facing them in the mainstream classroom? 4) What were the ELL students' perceptions of the instructional practices used by the teachers to meet their academic needs? and 5) What administrative policies and procedures were in place in the school and district to meet the educational needs of ELL students?

Summary of Findings

<u>Research Question 1</u>: What were teachers' perceptions of the academic challenges facing ELL students as they entered the mainstream classroom?

All teachers in this study perceived that ELL students were prepared for their classes. They all agreed that Math was the easiest subject for students because of the reliance on numbers rather than words.

Teachers' perceptions of the experiences of ELL students in acquiring subject matter knowledge and skills in the mainstream classrooms depended on whether the teacher manifested an Interactive or Didactic teaching style. Table 7 below represents two teaching styles adapted from James Bank (2001). Geneva Gays (2000) research on culturally responsive teaching supports Banks' assertion that teachers with an interactive teaching style tend to exhibit more culturally responsive characteristics and tend to do better meeting the needs of ELL students.

Table 7

Teaching Style Characteristics

Interactive Teaching Style	Didactic Teaching Style
Used Intuition to gauge the frustrations of ELL students. Did not ignore students	Not in tune with frustrations of ELL students. Ignored students.
Focused on <u>how</u> students learned cognitively (learning styles)	Focused on <u>what</u> (content) students learned but made no accommodations for learning styles of students
Forced ELL student to interact in classroom	Did not pressure ELL student to interact

From the hours of classroom observation and teacher interviews I was able to categorize six teachers according to discipline and teaching styles. I observed teachers in their classrooms and noted the characteristics of their discipline and teaching styles. I then made the following determination of both teaching and discipline styles from my time in the classroom during the research period. See Table 4 for each teacher's specific categorization in regard to discipline and teaching style.

My classroom observations and data from interviews revealed that the two veteran teachers, Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly, demonstrated more Interactive and Democratic characteristics than the other teachers in the study. Both teachers always greeted students by name at the beginning and at the end of class. Both teachers incorporated the cultural backgrounds of their students conversationally in classes. I observed Miss Monroe discussing why Hollywood only depicted one side of the truth when it came to movies of the Civil War. Both teachers used cooperative learning often and always forced students to interact in class. While I observed these teachers, I noticed that they circulated the room and called on every student. These teachers were very aware of how students learned in their classrooms.

The two novice teachers, Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague, were Didactic in their teaching styles. They always stayed close to the chalkboard or overhead projector. I observed that they both were still developing discipline management styles that were consistent with the literature pertaining to beginning teachers (Joyce & Showers, 1989). I observed that the novice teachers, Miss Montague and Miss Lockhart, tried to implement autocratic styles that became permissive at times as students demonstrated off-task

behaviors that resulted in their having to raise their voices to get the class under control. These teachers criticised students for off-task behaviors and did not interact humorously with students. These novice teachers tended to blame the families of students for lack of support in relation to homework and failing grades. Threats of extra homework and detentions were commonplace in these classrooms. These teachers never stood at the door nor did they greet students by name. I observed students being ignored in these classrooms and students who were never called upon in class. The novice teachers tended to stay close to the overhead projector or chalkboard and did not circulate throughout the classroom like the Interactive teachers. Worksheets and the completion of independent assignments were frequent instructional tasks observed in these classrooms and students rarely if ever worked in pairs or groups. These teachers struggled a great deal with students' behaviors and many of their interactions with student's involved comments directed at classroom behaviors such as, "sit down," "pay attention."

Miss Bell's class, I observed, spent considerable time reading independently and completing TAAS practice reading assignments independently. During these times she was sitting behind her desk rather than circulating the room. Her discipline style was autocratic with strict enforcement of rules and consequences. Her teaching style was Didactic in that she tended to remain at the top of the classroom and checked answers with students. She did implement cooperative learning activities on a monthly basis and she was more Interactive in her teaching style during those times.

Mr. Bond demonstrated the most Didactic and Autocratic characteristics of the teachers in this group. He placed a heavy emphasis on rigid structure and behaviors and

249

the students clearly knew their limits with him. He did use group work periodically, but even then his discipline management style was very rigid and students were limited to clearly defined directions and behaviours. Students entered his classroom silently; he passed out worksheets at the door, and never greeted students by name. He rarely interacted with students other than to ask for the correct answers.

In this study the two veteran teachers, Miss Monroe and Mrs. O' Reilly, had the most interactive teaching style that was also the most culturally responsive. Two of the teachers (Miss Bell and Mr. Bond) had strict autocratic discipline management styles and a Didactic teaching style. The two novice teachers (Miss Lockhart and Miss Montague) demonstrated the least culturally responsive teaching. The novice teachers also exhibited a Didactic teaching style and struggled with their classroom discipline management.

Research Question 2:What instructional strategies did mainstream teachers use to meet the academic needs of these students?

Incorporation of student culture in subject content was dependent upon the teaching style of teacher. The four Didactic teachers perceived ELL students as very quiet behaviourally. The Math teachers did not feel any responsibility for cultural incorporation due to the nature of math and figures. The two novice teachers were unable to weave cultural connections naturally through classroom discussion due to their lack of classroom discipline management. The two Interactive teachers were able to weave the cultural backgrounds of students into lessons during informal classroom discussions without losing classroom control. Byrnes et al (1998) examined the practices used by regular classroom teachers involved in teaching ELL students. Their study supports my

findings that there are inadequate resources available to these teachers, and that teacher engage in well-meaning practices that are detrimental to the academic and personal development of ELL children.

All teachers viewed the cultural backgrounds of immigrant ELL students as a deficit to be overcome for cultural adaptation to their classrooms. This finding substantiates research by Tizard and Hughes (1984) in which teachers blamed failing students for lack of family support rather than the inability of the teacher to connect the school's culture to that of the student's family. The novice teachers held in my study this view the strongest. McCarthey (199) found that when teachers believed that students came from impoverished backgrounds, teachers did not incorporate the cultural backgrounds of these students in the curriculum.

All teachers perceived that there were cultural tensions between students in general. There were cultural tensions between the Chicanos and the Mexicans and between the Mexican immigrants and the African Americans. My study did not reveal that there was any consistent effort by the school to deal with these cultural tensions. The administrators in the district also mirrored the tensions between the Black and Hispanic students. Teachers reacted to situations of cultural tension as they arose but there was not school wide effort to deal with this issue.

All teachers agreed that it was difficult to find resources and materials for the Latino culture. All teachers agreed that there was a need for a curriculum from the district pertaining to Latino culture. All teachers perceived that the African American culture was well taught in the classrooms. The teachers perceived this was the case because of the

resources provided by the district pertaining to African American culture were readily available, accessible and easy to use. All teachers expressed that there was nothing similarly available to teach about the Latino culture. All teachers agreed that the Latino culture did not get the same level of attention as the African American culture due to the lack of readily available curriculum. The teachers looked to the school district to provide this curriculum, as it was too time consuming for teachers to find the materials and resources otherwise.

Home-School connections were inadequate for the needs of the Spanish-speaking parents. Parental involvement was minimal and there was a lack of Spanish speaking interpreters to meet the needs of the Spanish-speaking population served by the school. Home-school connections existed for discipline and academic problems among students. Contacting Spanish-speaking families was a major challenge for teachers due to lack of interpreters available. All interpreters in the school had other jobs and interpretation was something they did over and beyond their normal duties.

The use of learning styles by teachers was either subject-centered or student-centered. The teachers who accommodated to learning styles of students used differentiation, modalities, and multiple intelligences. The veteran Interactive teachers mostly evidenced the student-centered approaches. The novice teachers were unwilling to try out more student-centered approaches because of discipline management concerns. The Didactic/Autocratic teachers emphasized order and discipline and had all students working on the same skill. These classrooms were not challenging for ELL students who needed higher order critical thinking and problem solving. Visual and tactile learning

modes are important for culturally and linguistically diverse students (Presmeg, 1989).

The Didactic and novice teachers took district testing procedures seriously. The novice teachers relied on the results of mini-assessments and benchmark testing to individualize instruction for their students and to guide their lesson planning. Although Interactive veterans used the district tests similarly, they did not rely exclusively on results but also developed their own individualized tests. Novice teachers were overwhelmed by testing procedures that generated considerable grading whereas the Interactive veterans enjoyed creating their own tests. The Interactive veterans created many tests to suit the individual needs of their students. Dentler & Hafner (1997) found that low-performing schools tended to use considerable lecturing, worksheets and focusing on skill building and drills. They found teachers tended to rely often on traditional achievement test and used no instructional innovation. Although this situation was not true of all the teachers in this study, the school climate was TAAS oriented and the teaching styles observed throughout the school were predominantly Didactic.

Teachers validated students either intrinsically or extrinsically. Intrinsic validation was linked to the academic success of students and to something the student did (grades and achievements). Extrinsic validation was what the teacher did to the student, e.g. praise stickers. Students preferred intrinsic motivation. The novice teachers tended to validate students the least and when they did so validation was mostly extrinsic in nature.

Interdisciplinary approaches were tried consistently in the school. All the teachers supported each other's subject content areas. The math teachers believed they were in the least position to support other subject areas because of the nature of math content and

instruction. All the teachers valued teaming, and planning, especially the novices who received much guidance and support at these times.

<u>Research Question 3</u>:What were the ELL students' perceptions of the academic challenges facing them in the mainstream classroom?

<u>Language</u> and learning content through a new language and keeping up in class was definitely the ELL students' main concern. Their desire to do well in school and go on to high school and college was important for five of the six students.

The ELL students wanted to fit-in and belong in class, not be noticed or ridiculed. This attitude would be consistent with their developmental age of wanting to fit-in and belong.

Dealing with peers (Chicano and African American) and insensitive and impatient teachers proved a challenge for ELL students. They perceived they did not always get the help they needed because teachers got "mad." The ELL students made behavioral adaptations in the classroom to get the help they needed. These students took turns asking for help so as to share the "wrath" of a teacher they perceived to be "mad." "Mad" for the students meant impatience displayed by the teacher when a student asked for an explanation for the second or third time.

<u>Research Question 4:</u> What were the ELL students' perceptions of the instructional practices used by the teachers to meet their academic needs.

<u>Culture</u> for students was what they did in the Language Center. Talking Spanish with their friends and being with Mexicans was what students perceived as culture. Students expected the LC teachers to talk about Mexico but did not expect it from the

mainstream teachers. Students perceived that teachers in the LC talked more about Mexico than in the mainstream.

All students acted as the main liaison and communicator between school and home. They explained and translated for parents as needed. The parents of these students were supportive of school when requested to do so by teachers.

Students perceived that the instruction they received in the LC was better than the instruction by teachers in the mainstream. The ELL students perceived that the mainstream teachers ignored them, didn't call on them, and didn't give enough examples. "Example" for students was step-by-step directions that the teacher gave while the students followed along. These students did not like working independently. Woking several examples with the teacher made students feel supported and helped them learn best. Independent practice with worksheets did not suit their learning styles. They preferred working with the teacher or another student.

Students perceived that a "good" teacher should offer help first to a student. Students were reticent about asking for help. They believed a good teacher should know automatically or intuitively when the students needed help. This belief explains why the students in this study perceived the Interactive teachers to help them learn better.

Students had to make behavioral adaptations in the mainstream classroom to ask for help and to avoid making a teacher "mad." Students had "figured" out strategies such as taking turns among themselves to ask for help or asking the person beside them for help when the teacher wasn't looking.

Students liked to be self-validated by teachers and also liked it when their national

identity was validated. The ELL students in this study expected the Language Centers to do this but did not expect it from the mainstream teachers.

Students' self-perception of selves as "good" students encompassed grades, and behaviors in class. Five out of the six students all got into trouble behaviorally when they were first mainstreamed. Their behaviors also changed in the LC once they were mainstreamed. After students were in the mainstream the ELL students started imitating behaviors they observed in the mainstream.

Research Question 5: What administrative policies and procedures were in place in the school and district to meet the educational needs of ELL students?

This district had in place many policies for the identification and placement of recently arrived immigrant students. The district at the local level supported the Language Center and the ESL programs by continually providing the local funding to meet the needs of an increasing influx of immigrants.

Teachers perceived at the campus level that the district needed to be doing more to hire Spanish-speaking personnel to provide support for teachers and administrators in communicating with the parents. The powerlessness of the Hispanic community in terms of district representation was a concern that emerged in talking with the Spanish-speaking personnel at the campus level.

The teachers and administrators at the campus level agreed that the district's diversity training did not equip them to meet the academic needs of ELL students. All teachers needed more ESL training to meet the needs of ELL students.

The interdisciplinary approaches were very well implemented in the school

because the principal supported this instructional strategy.

The challenges in meeting the needs of the ELL students in the Language Center centered upon 1) lack of appropriate identification procedures for G& T and Special education due to language (language masked the real needs of the students), and 2) students "rushed too soon" to take TAAS put a great deal of stress on LC teachers to prepare students who had academic gaps in their education. The findings from this study are supported by research by Jim Cummins (1984) that students may develop BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) but are still developing CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency), which are needed to do well on standardized tests such as the TAAS. The research confirms that the ELL students in the state of Texas are pushed too soon in this regard. Cummins (1984) found that successful attainment of CALPS took a minimum of seven years for the average person.

<div align="center">Recommendations</div>

LEP students learn best with a teacher who has an interactive teaching style. Equipping teachers with more cooperative learning strategies, knowledge of multiple intelligences and learning styles would help students with diverse cultural and language needs.

LEP students should not be placed with novice teachers who are still developing both a teaching and discipline management. Valuable learning time is lost for immigrant ELL students in these classrooms. Novice teachers need mentoring, peer coaching, and on-going professional development during their initial years in the classroom before ELL students are placed with them.

Giving teachers more knowledge and understanding of operations and procedures in the Language Center, I believe, would create an empowerment that could impact positive change for LEP students. This would help support the teachers in the Language Center but also make involve all teachers and not just ESL in the education of LEP students.

Equipping regular mainstream teacher with more ESL teaching strategies could add to their teaching repertoires and maybe improve teacher confidences in regard to meeting the needs of their LEP students.

Teachers might be more apt to implement multicultural materials in the classroom if provided for by the district. A more structured and developed curriculum for the Latino culture might ensure more widespread implementation in the school.   Making more connections with the families of students who do not speak English is important. What is currently in place is not adequate to make these home-school connections. The involvement of the non-English speaking parents in policies and procedures in the school still needs to be developed in this regard.

<center>Recommendations for future research</center>

My research studies left me with many unanswered questions that I believe warrant investigation sometime in the future. Here are some questions that remain unanswered by my study and warrant further investigation by researchers in the future:

Is the political powerlessness felt and experienced by the Hispanic administrators in this study also true of similar administrators in other schools and districts?

Are the experiences of these students in the Language Center similar to students

in other Language Centers and sheltered ESL classrooms in the district and in other districts?

Would a similar study of immigrant students who were Mexican reveal similar findings in a school with a higher SES?

Would a similar study of non-Mexican immigrant students reveal similar finding?

How can novice teachers be supported during their first few years in the classroom?

Are regular classroom teachers who are ESL certified more interactive in their teaching style?

How can schools make connections with the families of immigrant students and involve these families in the educational process regardless of language and communication barriers?

<div align="center">Conclusions</div>

English Language Learner (ELL) students, in this study, had specific needs that were not always met in the regular classroom. These students were often perceived as quiet and well behaved by teachers but still had learning needs. English Language Learner (ELL) students did not often ask for help for fear of making a teacher "mad." Being able to work in pairs or in a group was an important instructional strategy used by some teachers to meet the needs of these students.

English Language Learner (ELL) students experienced isolation when they entered the mainstream classroom and the teacher ignored them. These students need to be involved in conversation and interacted with as much as possible to develop their

language abilities and skills.

English Language Learner (ELL) students needed more time to practice skills. All the ELL students in this study perceived they benefited greatly from doing more than one example.

The students in this study also preferred some practices similar to those found by Thompson (2000). The practices included: Literature based activities, oral practice, individual help, peer interaction, games, use of realia (real objects). The students in this study in accord with Thompson (2000) identified following to instructional practices to be ineffective: being forced to read in front of the class, being corrected publicly, segregating language-minority students from the language-majority students, ignoring language-minority students, embarrassing students, not providing adequate assistance, and covering information too rapidly.

The best teaching style was an Interactive one for the needs of the ELL student. ELL students perceived a difference in the quality of instruction between the LC and the mainstream. They preferred the LC where they were among their own kind, where teachers know them, and where they did more examples. This preference is consistent with studies done in the area of culturally responsive teaching (Bank, 2001; Gay, 2000).

The ethnic composition of school can influence a child's feeling of worth and value in school; a school with a larger proportion of language minority students may provide a supportive environment for the student and consequently positively effect self-esteem. A school with only a small number of ELL students may result in "stigmatization" as well as alienation. The psychological impact of a pullout ESL

program for ELL students can often result in marginalization and inferiority (Ovando, 1978). The ELL students in this study reported they did not feel marginalized in the LC because they had each other and that made them all feel "comfortable." They were also mainstreamed in groups of four, which greatly assisted the transition for these students to the mainstream.

Closing Remark

This is a student who attended the urban school district that was the site for this research study. She was not one of the participants in this study. I met her daily in the library and developed a relationship with her as I did with many other students in this school who were not participants in the research study. This student attended the Immigrant's Welcome Center, went through the Language Center and exited the ESL program at two years ago. Her level of English is more advanced than the students who participated in this study. She requested that I include this in my dissertation as a testament of how her time in ESL programs provided by this district, and her former ESL teachers equipped her to do well in school, stay on grade level and aspire to "fulfill the American Dream."

I would like to end my dissertation with her "voice" as I believe it aptly epitomizes how many immigrant students similarly feel, but have not developed the English language skills to do so. She explained:

> Important things happen in our lives and we often save these memories to
> ourselves. Reflecting on these memories, we can define for us who we are, where
> we come from and where we are going. Three of these memories or objects I

have chosen to represent my life's journey are: a mirror, a flag, and a photograph of my parents.

The mirror describes who I am. When I see myself in the mirror, I see my reflection. I know that I want to be the best I can be. I also see that I want to be a better person and help people in whatever way I can. I'm a person that gets a long with everyone; teachers and classmates. When I look in the mirror and view myself I say to myself that I will try to do better every day of my life to get better grades in school.

The flag describes where I came from. I come from a little town in Mexico called San Jeronimo. In Mexico we have flag with beautiful bright colors: red, white, green and an eagle in the middle. I think my flag is a good way of describing where I come from. A flag represents how people are. I think we are like a flag because we want to stand up high and fly with bright colors. People in my town were always finding ways to help each other and finding ways to be better each day of our lives. A flag describes where I come from because a flag is what people view and respect.

The photograph of my parents reminds me of where I am going. My parents came over here to the United States to give us a better way of life, and a better education. They did not speak the language, yet that did not stop them from pursuing their dream. I know their strength is in me too. I have not yet decided my career path, however, I know what it is like going to the moon. I will explore new things. I like to be challenged, expand my horizons, to soar to new

heights, meet new people and be the best I can be. So some day I can say to my

parents, I know who I am and stand up high with my head straight and proud

(Former LEP student, Western Heights Middle School, 2002).

APPENDIX A

STRUCTURED INTERVIEWED QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

Structured Interviewed Questions for Teachers

Each teacher was interviewed at least 6 times. It took 40 minutes per Interview. Some teachers required longer to interview as fewer questions were covered per interview and sometimes a shorter interview was only feasible depending on schedule of teacher.

Interview 1: Life history & philosophy of teaching

1.1 Please share some background information about yourself; where you were born, different places you have lived, colleges attended, teaching experience, and other general information that you think has influenced who you are today.
1.2 How would you describe your own cultural background?
1.3 Do you speak languages other than English? Did you study a foreign language in college? Which? How does this knowledge inform your work with students from diverse language backgrounds?
1.4 Did your course work for teaching prepare you to teach students from diverse cultures and languages?
1.5 How long have you taught in your present school?
1.6 What changes have you seen in the demographics of the student population during your tenure here?
1.7 How has your teaching practice changed as you have encountered more students whose first language is not English?
1.8 What staff development or training courses, related to cultural diversity or ESL students, have you experienced? How does the knowledge gained in the courses inform your present practice?
1.9 What kind of interactions do you have with ESL teachers?
1.10   Do you think time in ESL prepared students for the mainstream?
1.11   What policies and procedures you observe being used for ESL students?

Interview 2: Culturally responsive teaching

2.1 Describe what you do when you have a student with limited English proficiency in your classroom.
2.2 Describe your concerns when you have students from varying cultural backgrounds in your classroom.
2.3 Specifically, what do you do to learn about your students' cultural backgrounds?
2.4 How do you use your knowledge of your students' cultural backgrounds in your lessons and interactions with them?
2.5 What resources do you draw upon when teaching immigrant and culturally diverse students?

Interview 3: Home-school connections.

3.1 How do you communicate with the families of your students concerning academic progress?
3.2 How do you involve the parents of your students in your classroom?
3.3 How important is it for you to get to know the families of your students?
3.4 What resources do you have to assist you in communicating with immigrant students' families?
3.5 How do you get to know your students?

Interview 4: Instructional strategies/learning styles.

4.1 Describe the experiences of your immigrant students as they learn your subject content in your classroom.
4.2 Describe the instructional strategies you use in your classroom to help all students learn.
4.3 Describe the learning styles you observe among your students.
4.4 How do you teach to the academic needs of your students?
4.5 How do you individualize instruction for your students?
4.6 Describe the assessment procedures you use in your classroom.
4.7 In what ways do you use diverse cultural materials in your classroom when not available?

Interview 5: Student-teacher relations.

5.1 Describe the cultural diversity you observe among your students in the classroom.
5.2 What's important to you in understanding the cultural background of your students?
5.3 Describe how you maintain a relationship with each student.
5.4 Describe how you build relationships among all students in your classroom.
5.5 How do help all students feel a sense of belonging in your classroom?
5.6 How do you help students feel successful about what they do in your classroom?

Interview 6: Interdisciplinary approaches

6.1 How do you include multicultural information and resources in your lessons?
6.2 How do you support your colleagues' subject areas in your classroom?
6.3 How important is it for you to plan with other teachers?
6.4 What procedures already in place in the school to assist you in coordinating **and** planning across other disciplines and grade levels?

Student Interviews: Each student was interviewed at least 5 times. Each Interviewed lasted approx. 30 minutes. I conducted these Interviews outside of classroom time and at a time that was convenient for the student.

Interview 1: Emigration/Immigration Experiences

1.1 Tell me about where you grew up and why your family came to the United States?
1.2 How did you feel about leaving home?
1.3 Tell me what it is like for you being a student here when you first came to the United States?
1.4 Describe how life in your home country and life in the United States are different/same.
1.5 What was school like in your home country?
1.6 What subjects did you like?
1.7 What is important for you about your home country?
1.8 What do you like best about living in the United States?

Interview 2. Culturally responsive teaching

2.1 What do teachers do to include your home culture in lessons?
2.2 How important for you is it that teachers know where you came from and what it was like for you living in another country?
2.3 How is school in the United States different from your school experience in your home country?
2.4 What subjects do you like the best/least and why?
2.5 How often is your home culture included in the books and lessons that your teachers plan and use?
2.6 How important is it that teachers talk about your home culture in the class?
2.7 What about going to school in the United States has been most difficult for you?

Interview 3: Home-School connections.

3.1 How do teachers tell your family about what you are doing in school?
3.2 How does your family find out about what is going on in school?
3.3 What does your family do to help you be successful in school?
3.4. What does your teacher do to help you be successful in school?

Interview 4: Instructional strategies/ Learning styles

4.1 What does the teacher do to help you understand in class?
4.2 What do teachers do to help you learn best?
4.3 What do you do if you do not understand what the teacher is explaining in class?
4.4 What does the teacher do to help you when you do not understand the work?

Interview 5: Student validation.

5.1 What does the teacher do to encourage students to talk about their home cultures in class?

5.2 Do you study other cultures? What have you studied?
5.3 Do you consider yourself a good student? Why?
5.4Do you tell other students where your family is from? Do other students know?
5.5 What do teachers do to help all students get along together?

Questions for Administrators: Each administrator was interviewed once for approx. 60 minutes.

1.1 Describe the policies and procedures that you use in the school/district to assist culturally diverse students succeed academically in school/district.
1.2 Which policies and procedures do you believe are the more strongly supported by action?
1.3 Describe the training and staff development, related to limited English proficient students, that is provided to teachers.
1.4What are the challenges you face in meeting the needs of the limited English-speaking students in your school/District?
1.5What procedures are in place to make connections with families of immigrant students?
1.6What are the future goals and directions for the school/district, as they relate to student cultural and linguistic diversity?

APPENDIX B

SCHEDULE OF INTERVIEWS AND OBSERVATIONS

January 2001-June 2001 (The district required that all data collection from students and teachers be completed by April 15 if possible).

T=Teacher; S=Student; A=Administrator; 1-6= volunteers

Month		Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
January		7-11	14-18	21-25	28-Feb. 1
	Monday	Finalizing final permission from district to conduct research	Permission to begin research from district	Holiday	District Testing Interviewed Miss Bell Mr. Bond Miss Lockhart Ms o' Reilly
	Wednesday	Finalizing final permission from district to conduct research	Orientation to School/Participant selection	Interviewed LC team coordinator	District Testing Presentation of cover story to students and procuring permission slips
	Friday	Finalizing final permission from district to conduct research	Orientation to School/Participant selection	Presentation of cover story and securing permission slips from teachers	Holiday
February		5-9	12-16	18-23	26-Mar. 2
	Monday	District Testing Interviewed Mr. Bond Ms. O' Reilly Miss Lockhart Observed LC	District Testing Interviewed Mr. Bond Miss Lockhart Ms. O' Reilly	District Testing Interviewed Mr. Bond Ms. Lockhart Ms. Reilly	Interviewed Mr. Bond Observed Mr. Bond
	Wednesday	Interviewed Rosa Jaime Lupe Angel Maria	District Testing Interviewed Enrique Maria Jaime	District Testing Interviewed Maria Jaime	Interviewed Maria Miss Lockhart Observed Miss Lockhart
	Friday	District Testing Interviewed Enrique Miss Monroe	District Testing Interviewed Angel Lupe Rosa Miss Bell Miss Monroe Miss Montague Observed Miss Lockhart	District Testing Interviewed Angel Enrique Lupe Rosa Miss Bell Miss Montague Ms. Monroe	Interviewed Enrique Angel Miss Bell Lupe Rosa Jaime LC teachers Miss Monroe Observed Lupe & Angel in Science

March			12-16	19-23	26-30
	Monday	Interviewed Enrique Miss Lockhart Ms. O' Reilly Observed Miss Lockhart	Spring Break	District Testing Interviewed Miss Bell Miss O' Reilly Miss Montague	District Testing Interviewed/Observed Language Center
	Wednesday	Interviewed Miss Montague Observed Miss Monroe	Spring Break	District Testing Observed Miss Bell Miss Reilly Miss Montague	Observed Miss Monroe Interviewed Miss Monroe
	Friday	Interviewed Jaime Angel Rosa Maria Lupe	Spring Break	District Testing Interviewed Miss Monroe Interviewed Enrique	Observed in TAAS theme camp
April		1-5	8-12	15-19	22-May 1
	Monday	District Testing	Interviewed Mr. Bond	TAAS Preparation	
	Wednesday	District Testing Interviewed Mr. Bond LC teacher Miss Lockhart Mrs. O' Reilly	Interviewed Miss Bell Miss Montague	TAAS Testing	Scheduling Administrator Interviews Interviewed Miss Bell Observed Miss Bell
	Friday	District Testing Interviewed Miss Montague Miss Monroe Miss Bell	Observed Mr. Bond Miss Bell Miss Montague	TAAS Testing	Interviewed Maria Observed Mrs. O' Reilly Observed Lupe Angel in Science
May		1-3	6-10	13-17	27-31
		Interviewed Office staff	Interviewed two administrators Assisted on field-trip all-day	Interviewed Principal	Interviewed District Coordinator Exited From school -Thank you gifts to students and teachers
June		3-7			
		Thank you dinner for teachers			

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