

Middle School ELL Students:  
Understanding their Challenges  
in the Mainstream Classroom

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A Special Project  
Presented to  
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Heritage University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirement for the Degree of  
Master of Education

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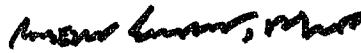
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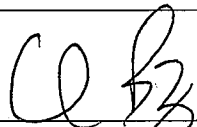
FACULTY APPROVAL

Middle School ELL Students: Understanding their Challenges in the Mainstream  
Classroom

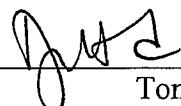
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## ABSTRACT

This case study research examined the challenges English Language Learners (ELLs) faced in the mainstream classroom. This study also analyzed what teachers were doing and needed to do in order to help ELLs succeed in school. Lastly, this study expected to contribute with some strategies to help ELL students achieve academic success in school.


The methodology focused in this case study that is a qualitative research approach. Questionnaires were administered to students and teachers involved in the study. To triangulate this study, the researcher observed and analyzed interactions between teachers and students. Because the study answered a descriptive question, most of the research was written in narrative form in order to analyze the results.

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

#### Background for the Project

Scholars and teachers alike have demonstrated their academic interest in finding promising practices for educating our nation's English Language Learner (ELL) population. Closing the achievement gap, responding to state and federal mandates like Common Core State Standards have been often cited as reasons for the increased attention in effective programs for ELLs (Fisher, 2008; Faltis, 2011). Throughout our history, we have had a nation of immigrants who tried to learn English as second language while attaining academic success in our schools' education system.

As Faltis (2011) articulated, "Since the 1800's teachers have had the difficult task of teaching both English and non-English speaking students within one classroom. Solutions to meet both the needs of LEP students and English proficient students have been varied" (p. 81). History revealed that German-Speaking Americans operated schools in their mother tongue since the founding of this nation (Crawford, 1991; Faltis, 2011). In later years, the norm across this country was to teach immigrants with English only "sink or swim" programs until the civil rights era of the 1960's (Crawford, 1991; Faltis, 2011).



Latino activists pressed lawmakers to require schools to teach children in two-languages, otherwise known as bilingual education (Crawford, 1991; Faltis, 2011). Faltis (2011) aptly noted, that parents, researchers, and educators questioned the effectiveness of these bilingual education programs, as they did not appear to dramatically improve the achievement scores of ELLs. Since the 1960's, many different types of programs had been developed in an effort to help ELLs. Some of the most common types of programs were ESL/Pull-out, ESL/content based (sheltered instruction), Transitional Bilingual early-exit; and late-exit, and Dual immersion one-way; and two-way (Faltis, 2011). Dual immersion (language) programs were the only program models that were found to assist students to fully reach and maintain high achievement levels (Collier & Thomas, 2001, as cited in Vivanco, 2010).

Educators should consider many other factors when trying to adopt a system that employs a sheltered instructional program versus a dual language program. Other factor could range from the type of instructional programs, students' first language literacy and socio-cultural background, poverty factors, teacher quality, experience, and professionalism; parents' education level and expectations. Additionally, there could be other unforeseen issues that teacher may encounter when teaching that could affect the educational success of students.

Teachers have passed through challenging times in education since each day there have been more ethnically and linguistically diverse students in their classroom. This could be perceived by some as a concern or even a disadvantage to our education system, but as Zhao (2012) notes that, "Being able to communicate in another language is a true asset for the future global entrepreneur" (p. 229). As Faltis (2011) noted, "Education of limited English proficient (LEP) students is important for domestic economic growth, the cohesion of society within the United States, and for maintaining US competitiveness in the global economy" (p. 81).

However, "Developing true proficiency in a foreign language takes tremendous effort and is a long process" (Zhao, 2012, p. 230). Everyday schools have had less money for special programs for English Language Learners (ELLs) students, so mainstream teachers have faced students who have different language proficiency levels and diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. For these reasons, educators needed to understand their needs, background, student voice and the challenges they faced in the mainstream classrooms in order to help students succeed. Additionally, teachers appeared to be lacking the necessary skills to meet the needs of ELLs in the mainstream classroom.

### Statement of the Problem

The growing numbers of children who have learned English in school have dramatically increased the demands on classroom teachers. More than 50% of middle school students classified as limited English proficient were born within U.S. borders; however, they were not at par with their mainstream peers as noted by Rance-Roney, 2008, as cited in Batalova, Fix, and Murray, (2007). It appeared that in order to help ESL students in the mainstream classrooms teachers needed to be aware of ESL students' voices and the challenges they faced in school.

### Purpose of the Project

The overall purpose of this Case Study research was to examine the challenges English Language Learners (ELLs) faced in the mainstream classroom. This study also analyzed what teachers were doing and needed to do in order to help ELLs have success in school. Lastly, the purpose of this study suggested some strategies to help ELL students in the mainstream classroom achieve academic success.

### Delimitations

The project involved ESL students who attended mainstream classrooms. They had different literacy levels in their first language (L1) and different English

proficiency (EP) level. In the same manner, they had different amounts of time learning English and living in Unites states. In addition, the project involved Science, Math, and English teachers with different amounts of teaching experiences with ESL students. Observations of both students and teachers were done during the 2012-13 school year. The survey focused on the needs of teacher and students and the challenges they faced in the mainstream classrooms.

### Assumptions

Due to the review of the literature, the researcher made several assumptions about ESL students and teachers involve in the project. First, students confronted many challenges in the mainstream classrooms because of their diverse literacy levels, and their EP. Because of that, they had low self-steam and low school interest. Teachers did not know the needs of ESL students and they assumed many things like lack of interest for them.

### Research Questions

This research case study used the following research questions to guide and inform the study: (a) what are the challenges that ESL students are facing in the mainstream classroom? (b) what are the challenges that mainstream teachers are facing in working with ESL students?

### Significance of the Project

Because there was a significant growth of ESL students, mainstream teachers needed to be aware of their needs and challenges in order to help them and our country to be proud of their diversity. This was the time that all teachers needed to come together in order to help students be prepared for a globally world. We needed to help students to become citizens to compete in a globe economy.

### Procedure

The procedures involved in the research project evolved over several stages as follows:

1. 2012-13 school year, the researcher made many observations of ELL students and mainstream teachers.
2. The researcher received informal permission from her supervisor to conduct the interviews and make observations.
3. The researcher interviewed ELL students and teachers.
4. The researcher used a questionnaire to gather data from students and teachers.

## Definition of Terms

### Acronyms

ELL, English Language Learner

ESL, English as a second language

GLAD, Guided Language Acquisition Design

MSP, Measurement of Student Progress

NCLB, No Child Left Behind

OSPI, Office of the Superintendent of Public instruction

SIOP, Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol

## CHAPTER 2

### Review of Selected Literature

#### Introduction

This case study research examined the challenges English Language Learners (ELLs) faced in the mainstream classroom. This study also analyzed what teachers were doing and needed to do in order to help ELLs succeed in school. Lastly, this study expected to contribute some strategies to help ELL students achieve academic success in school.

The purpose of this literature review was to provide a context in three critical areas of literature related to this case study. First, a brief examination of the challenges teachers faced in the classroom were observed. Second, the characteristics and sociocultural background of ELLs were reviewed. Third, promising practices for ELLs in the mainstream classroom were examined. This chapter then concluded with a summary of the literature review.

#### Teacher Challenges

As the literature indicated, teachers encountered many challenges due to the disproportion of injustice faced by minority children learning English. As Zhao (2009) declared, "The spirit of NCLB also denies the real cause of education inequality-poverty, funding gaps, and psychological damages caused by racial

discrimination” (p. xi). Schools should work with the causes and not with the effects. If the government wants a better country, it may want to start with a better schooling for all students. Zhao further notes, “Scientists have found that genetic diversity enhances a population’s ability to adapt to a changing environment” (p.51).

Zhao (2009) shared that, “Understanding others languages is also vital to the continued prosperity of the United states as a multicultural society” (p.164). In order to develop real understanding of others’ cultures it required us to experience the culture in context, rather than simply memorizing some facts or imitations, stereotypes (Zhao, 2009). Zhao finally noted that, “This new era requires all citizens to think globally, to understand others cultures, to have the ability to interact with others, and to competently handle changes and complexity” (p.182). It is also important to understand the difference between culture and poverty.

Jensen (2009) stated, “kids raised in poverty are more likely to lack and need a caring, dependable adult in their lives, and often it’s teachers to whom children look for that support” (p.11). Too often, teachers believed that they needed to speak their student’s first language in order to help them with their needs as ELLs, but sometimes understanding is enough. Jensen continued to share that, “Teachers don’t need to come from their students’ cultures to be able



to teach them, but empathy and cultural knowledge are essential" (p.11). In the United States, there appeared to be many poor students many of whom are immigrants who speak another language. Rector, 2005, as cited in Jensen (2009) stated, "Children of immigrants make up 22 percent of the total child in poverty cases in the United states" (p.12). He also pointed out, "the four primary risk factors afflicting families living in poverty are: emotional and social challenges, acute and chronic stressors, cognitive lags; health and safety issues" (p.7). As teachers worked with students with these challenges, Rector stressed the point that teachers have to be more than good teachers.

In the literature reviewed, de Jong and Harper (2005) believed that being a good teacher is not enough when he or she is working with ELLs. They further stated that, "As schools are confronted with increasing numbers of linguistically and culturally diverse learners, 'just good teaching' approach will simply not be good enough" (p.118). de Jong and Harper (2005) reviewed how the mainstream teachers have to be prepared in order to teach in classroom with native and not-native English speakers. They had to meet ELLs' linguistic and cultural needs.

In linguistic needs, mainstream teachers needed to understand the process of second language acquisition and acculturation, and they needed more scaffolding "many teachers do not realize that even the most straightforward classroom language can be confusing for ELLs and can limit access to learning"

(p.105). As for cultural needs, Gay, 2002, as cited in de Jong and Harper (2005) discussed how mainstream teachers must understand their own and students' culture; teachers need to use "the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (p.111). This helped teachers with the challenges they face as well as support ELLs to not feel ambivalent, marginalized or excluded.

Myburgh, Poggenpoel and Rensburg, (2004) pointed out, teachers are confronted with multiple challenges caused by the multicultural and diverse composition of their classrooms. "Teachers are experiencing difficulties to form a correlation between the learners' home languages and their language of instructions." (p.573). Myburgh, Poggenpoel, and Rensburg (2004) provided an overview of how learners of different culture and language background were found in the same classroom.

This diversity and multilingualism posed a great challenge for teachers. Myburgh, Poggenpoel, and Rensburg (2004) rationalized how teachers should recognize the differences of each learner during the teaching process as language differences. Many times teachers were unaware of their learners' experiences of learning a second language. Myburgh, Poggenpoel, and Rensburg (2004) reflected, "second language of instruction may caused a lack of understanding because the learner does not use the language as a form of basic communication,

the language of instructions is thus not meaningful for the learner.” (p. 574).

Venter, 1962, as cited in Myburgh, Poggenpoel, and Rensburg (2004) referred to language as:

The most individual and direct means thought which a person thinks, formulate ideas and gives meaning to his emotions. The lack of ability to express themselves causes children to feel powerless and worthless. This may lead to underperformance and behavior problems. (p.575)

Because students who spoke a language other than English, teachers should make ELLs feel proud of their differences in language and culture (Nieto, 2000, p. 219).

Myburgh, Poggenpoel, and Rensburg (2004) formulated the guidelines for teachers that call attention to the following points: (a) learners must be given the opportunity to apply their language skills in real life situation, (b) take part in discussions, (c) errors in speech should not be corrected immediately, (d) teachers must make use of pictures, objects and practical activities in their classes (e) they should motivate students to help each other, (f) accommodate second language learners in their assessment, (g) try to build on the learners’ previously gained knowledge, and (h) use their cultural backgrounds for the class. Finally, Myburgh, Poggenpoel, and Rensburg (2004) insisted that teachers should highlight tolerance toward different cultures and languages in the classroom. Learners must experience a strong sense of comfort and safety both physical and

emotional abuse and criticism. (p.581) ELL students may have also encountered anxiety and stress due to feeling marginalized by their teachers and peers.

Krashen, 1985, as cited in Fisher (2008) noted that anxiety in ELLs as a contributing factor to the affective filter can impede language learning. As Fisher stated, "By viewing himself or herself as unequal to classmates and peers in the English speaking classroom and school, ELL students' classroom experiences can be overwhelming" (p. 19).

#### Student Characteristics and background

In reviewing the literature, many researchers noted that importance for teacher to understand the difference between basic English and academic English. Furthermore, the literature expressed the significant of understand their students' cultural and linguistic background. Lessow-Hurley (2003) noted there is a major difference between Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) and Basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS). Lessow-Hurley explored how many teachers have misunderstood multicultural education and noted that it is more than holidays and celebrations.

Banks, 1993, as cited in Lessow-Hurley (2003) reflected, "strong multicultural education implies the reform of school in such a way that schooling can facilitate the academic success of students from all backgrounds" (p.12). It is

respecting students' histories, values and beliefs. An implication for teaching ELLs lead teachers to think about creating a warm, welcoming classroom environment and using motivational strategies to let ELLs communicate with each other. Additionally, it was better to use repetitive drills or grammar exercises in whichever type of program model they have in place.

Lessow-Hurley (2003) provided an overview of the following bilingual programs models and English language development strategies: (a) working with ELLs in their primary language, (b) transitional programs, (c) immersion programs, (d) two ways immersion programs, (e) traditional approaches (grammar translations approach and audio-lingual), and (f) language thought content (planning for second language instruction, cooperative grouping and sheltered instruction). With reference to teacher competencies, Lessow-Hurley pointed out, "teachers of second language learners needed awareness, skills, and knowledge related to language, pedagogy, culture, and community relations" (p.51). Effective teachers of ELLs should have high expectations for their students, connect them with the subject matter, use students' language; and value and incorporate many aspects of their culture.

Rance-Roney (2009) argued that, "one of the most complex challenges is how to meet the needs of adolescents English language learners" (p.32).

Batalova, Fix and Murray (2007) pointed out in Rance-Roney article, "We know,

that 57 percent of adolescents learners classified as limited English proficiency were born within U.S. borders and thus are second or third-generation residents” (p.33). Rance-Roney (2009) noted that students often have achieved oral proficiency, but they are behind in their ability to use English for literacy and content learning” (p.34). Rance-Roney concluded that ELLs need School-wide, team-based support, a dual curriculum, global communicative classrooms and individual progress record. (p. 34-36).

With reduced resources, teachers felt overwhelmed during these times as Rance-Roney explained, “In these times of increasingly meager resources in which school are paring down to essential programs. Budget cuts and federal programs funding reductions, adolescences ELLs are often view as an unwelcome presence in schools” (p.33). These students with little or no English, interrupted or limited formal school and limited literacy in any language are the reality of our school.

Butler and Stevens (1997) described the characteristics of ELL students. They argued that, “Students who are acquiring English as a second language are not simply students who need to strengthen their academic English in order to functions in mainstream English classroom” (p.9). Butler and Stevens (1997) communicated that ESL students, like others students, bring a full range of characteristics and talents-cultural, personal, and linguistic-to the learning

situation. In order to better serve ELLs needs and in this manner, help assure equity, educator must be aware of the ways English language learners can differ from each other as well as from their mainstream English-speaking peers (Butler & Stevens, 1997).

Butler and Stevens (1997) described the two elements that affect English Language learners: the students' sociocultural environment and individual student characteristics. The former included the community, the school, and the home. The second embraced personal characteristics, educational background and language factors. Butler and Stevens concluded that, "To acknowledge diversity among students who are non-native speakers of English is a critical first step toward addressing the issue of equity for all students in school in the United States" (p.25).

Marshall, 2002 considered three kinds of teachers according to their attitude toward ELL students. Some teachers demonstrated a strong personal and professional commitment to ELLs. These teachers engaged in various efforts to learn instructional and interpersonal techniques and strategies that helped them help ELLs in school. Other teachers conversely, had low personal and/or professional efficacy and were likely to depend entirely on the outside assistance of bilingual teachers or English as a second Language specialist (Marshall, 2002).

These teachers recognized that ELLs had language needs that differed from English-speaking students, but they felt incapable of serving these needs. Marshall (2002) pointed out, "There are teachers whose profile reveals that they are basically averse to ELLs in regular classroom" (p.174). Marshall concluded that to meet the challenge of teaching ELLs in the mainstream classroom teachers needed to improve the school environment for ELLs by incorporating aspects of Hispanic/Latino/a American culture values into classroom interactions.

Marshall finally noted the characteristics of successful teachers of Hispanic/Latino/a American students. These teachers respected Spanish-speaking skills, but they also worked to assure that ELLs acquire full literacy in English. (p.179) Successful teachers knew that students must feel good about themselves, and they must believe that they were capable of succeeding in school. Marshall pointed out the complexity of second-language acquisition faced by many ELLs; however, they realized that although students needed to acquire high proficiency in English language skills, they also needed support in maintaining their present language skills in Spanish. Marshall stated that, "teachers who are effective in promoting the academic success of Hispanic/Latino/a American students have also acquired knowledge of and an appreciation for the culture of these students" (p.181). They viewed culture as an important ingredient in learning and teachers



needed to integrate in their subject matter and teaching techniques cultural references that students would recognize (Marshall, 2002).

Cui-ping (2012) pointed out in his article the insufficiency of input of native culture while students are learning English. Cui-ping believed that, "Teachers should make English Language Teaching (ELT) useful and meaningful for the students so that English learners are able to experience a sense of pride and achievement in successful second language acquisition" (p.120). For example, questions about culture target and native culture should be added. Cui-ping concluded that culture teaching in foreign language education is indispensable.

Cui-ping affirmed that, "English teachers and researchers have misunderstood the content of culture teaching and paid most of their attention to target culture, but ignored learners' native culture" (p.121). The ignorance has caused severe problems among them not cross-cultural communicative competences that it is vital for the trend of economic globalization. Having a better understanding of the issues mentioned in this section of the literature review should help teachers improve their craft.

### Promising Practices

Short and Echevarria (2005) explained that not all ELLs are the same. They have differing levels of cognitive ability, backgrounds, languages and

education profiles. Teachers needed to be aware of these differences for a better instruction. However, "few states required that the teachers of core content areas have any background or training in second-language acquisition, English as a second language (ESL) methods, or cross-cultural communication" (p.9). Consequently, teachers may expect that ELLs can complete paper pencil tasks with proficiency, read books and understand them without support like visual aids, or pre-teach vocabulary.

This may create an incomplete work and a big gap in their learning. Short and Echevarria (2005) suggested the (SIOP) model to make sure ESLs develop language and content area vocabulary at the same time. The SIOP model implemented the following steps: (a) identify the language demands of the content course, (b) plan language objective for all lessons and make them explicit to students, (c) activate and strengthen background knowledge, (d) review vocabulary and concepts, and (e) give the students feedback on language use in class. (p. 10-11)

Furthermore, Echevarría, Vogt and Short, (2008) demonstrated that their statistics pointed out that ELLs needed sheltered instruction, "96 percent of the eight-grade limited English proficiency (LEP) students scored below the Basic level" (p.4). To become productive members of the society, ELLs needed to receive improved educational opportunities in States United. In addition, schools

needed to understand students', "diversity in their educational background, expectations of schooling, socioeconomic status, age of arrival, personal experiences while coming to and living in the United States, and parents' education level and proficiency in English" (p.7).

ELL and bilingual teachers could not alone offer the educational opportunities for ELLs needs (Echevarría, Vogt & Short, 2008). Echevarría, Vogt and Short (2008) suggested that mainstream teachers follow the sheltered model to help their students have success in US schools. The SIOP model includes eight components and 30 features, which explain step-by-step of how to implement these features (Echevarría, Vogt & Short, 2008).

Young (1996) explained how English language Arts Teachers can help ESL students' success. He clarifies that when learners can use their second language (L2) on the materials for which they are expected to demonstrate academic competence, L2 development will progress most effectively. (p.17) In Young's journal, Claire pointed out (1995) mainstream teachers needed to understand second language acquisition, and they needed to change their beliefs, values and attitudes toward ESL students" (p.193). Young referred to the following resources for teaches to help ELLs in their classroom: (a) reading specialist, (b) school librarian, (c) foreign language teacher, (d) other teachers, (e)

classroom supporters, (f) other L1 native speaking students, and (g) foreign language learners.

With reference to oral language development, Young stated, “without opportunities for students to be constantly immersing in language development activities, oral proficiency is difficult to attain” (p.20). Cooperative learning in small groups was ideal because of the low-risk atmosphere. Sheltered instruction was another way to ensure that the language used holds meaning for learners. Moreover, it suggested high degree of visual support, simplify and contextualize the language, identify vocabulary that was crucial, provided demonstration, and hold post-reading discussions in collaborative groups. Regarding L1, literature teachers must label items in the classroom, write directions, allow students to copy and imitate others. Young (1996) continued to share that,

We are in an ideal position to educate mainstream ESL students to enable them to make important gain in language acquisition, academic skill, and self-esteem and we gain significant benefits from the cultural and linguistic diversity as these newcomers brings new life to our classrooms. (p.23)

Souto-Manning (2010) in her article explained, “How can repositioning teacher as a discourse analyst help her or him access and develop pedagogy based on students’ linguistic strengths and foster more culturally relevant classroom

environments?”. Teachers could have active roles in creating more classrooms that are inclusive. For example, “Santiago said that he felt like a “burro” (dumb) when he used Spanish at school and was disrespected and excluded by his peers, although he admired not noticing his drifts from English to Spanish” (p.257).

“There was a clear need to create a synergetic space for multiples languages in the classroom, attempting to reconcile two apparently different, initially conflicting practices” (p.257) . Mariana pointed out, “We need to bring home and school practices together so that children become proficient at both, developing a pedagogical third space” (p.257). Souto-Manning reviewed how children who are learning a new language needed time to develop their second-language skills.

If teachers paid close attention to children’s speech events and learn from their cultural and linguistic resources, they could open doors to the opportunities provided by multiple languages and cultural practices. Rymes, 2009, as cited in Souto-Manning (2010) suggested, “Every day, students from diverse background fail academically because their teachers cannot recognize their knowledge and their brilliance” (p.260). For these reasons, Souto-Manning suggested that, “By becoming aware of the social and interactional context that shape classroom practices, interactions, and identities, teachers can foster transformative practices” (p.260).

Helfrich and Bosh (2011) explained that the role of the teacher in language acquisition for ELLs was an integral one because diverse learners may require somewhat differentiated methods of instructions and assessment. Furthermore, "Teachers should allow for ELLs to learn the English language while respecting and preserving their native language and attitude toward literacy" (p.261). Helfrich and Bosh suggested teachers learn the background of their students and the function of language and literacy in their native culture because some cultures place less importance on academic written and spoken language proficiency.

In addition, Helfrich and Bosh demanded that teachers must recognize differences between students' culture and the culture of the school. Not all students are the same; for this reason, Helfrich and Bosh suggested that teachers should take the time to explore the background and interest of ELLs. They further stated that, "Teachers should not underestimate the role of peer in the inclusion and education of ELLs (p. 3 of 7). They clarified that "Having students share their experiences with one another allows students to see other points of view" (p.3). ELLs' experiences and contributions to the classroom are just as valuable as those of their native English-speaking peers. Regarding assessments, Helfrich and Bosh mentioned that, "Some assessments measures may also be linguistically or culturally biased, which could negatively affect the result" (p.4).

Lakovos (2011) explained projects-based instruction and their benefits in schools. Project-based learning involved multi-skill activities focusing on topics or themes. It did not have a specific target language, but involved a variety of individual or cooperative tasks. The project-based learning gave positive outcomes because it took into consideration the students' interest, preferences and language needs.

The project-based learning had seven steps. The first step included choosing the topic of the project. The second step involved agreement on the outcomes. The third step involved structuring the project. During the fourth step, the teacher prepared the students for the demands of the information gathering. In the fifth step, the students engaged in the gathering of information, as designed in the previous steps. During step six, the students compiled and analyzed the information. Finally, in step seven the students presented the final outcome through a bulletin board display and an open discussion (p.119).

Lakovos (2011) believed that, "the integration of project-based learning into second and foreign language instruction is considered a natural extension of content-based instruction" (p.115). Stoller, 1997, as cited in the Lakovos (2011) discussed that content-based instruction lends itself to the natural teaching of the four languages skills. (P.115) Lakovos explained, "Within content-based instruction students are required to read authentic reading materials, to interpret

and evaluate the information contained in them, to cooperate, so they can respond either orally or in writing" (p.115).

### Summary

This literature review examined the challenges English Language Learners (ELLs) faced in the mainstream classroom. This study also analyzed what teachers were doing and needed to do in order to help ELLs succeed in school. Lastly, this study expected to contribute with some strategies to help ELL students achieve academic success in school.

The purpose of this literature review was to provide a context in three critical areas of literature related to this case study. First, a brief examination of the challenges that teachers faced in the classroom were observed. Second, the characteristics and sociocultural background of ELLs were reviewed. Third, promising practices for ELLs in the mainstream classroom were examined. This chapter then concluded with a summary of the literature review.

In sum, the review of the literature clearly indicated the need for further research on examining the challenges English Language Learners (ELLs) faced in the mainstream classroom. This review of literature attempted to provide context in three critical areas of literature related to this case study. First, teacher challenges provided a brief overview of the struggles teachers faced in working



with English Language Learners. Second, as mentioned in the review of literature, teachers needed to have a deep understanding of their ELLs' cultural backgrounds. This area of literature provided keen insight to express the importance of this research along with my third area of literature review. Numerous promising teaching practices to help ELLs succeed in school were identified.

## CHAPTER 3

### Methodology and Treatment of Data

#### Introduction

This case study research examined the challenges English Language Learners (ELLs) faced in the mainstream classroom. This study also analyzed what teachers were doing and needed to do in order to help ELLs succeed in school. Lastly, this study expected to contribute with some strategies to help ELL students achieve academic success in school. Specifically, this study considered the following research questions: (a) What are the challenges that ESL students are facing in the mainstream classroom? (b) What are the challenges that mainstream teachers are facing in working with ESL students?

#### Methodology

The methodology focused in this case study is that it is a qualitative research approach. The research focused on the challenges that ELL students were facing attending mainstream classroom and teachers who instructed them. The researcher received consent and approval from the school to administer questionnaires and survey participants for this study. Questionnaires were administered to students and teachers involved in the study. To triangulate this

study, the researcher observed and analyzed interactions between teachers and students. Because the study answered a descriptive question, most of the research was written in narrative form in order to analyze the results.

### Participants

Participants for analyzing the challenges that ELL students faced in the mainstream classrooms included sixth, seventh, and eighth grade ELL students who attended mainstream classrooms. The students had different literacy levels in their first language, and they had different amounts of time learning English. The teachers who the researcher observed and asked questions, were teachers between two years of teaching experience and teachers with thirty years of teaching experience.

### Instruments

The gathering of data was performed by the researcher as a participant observer. The researcher wrote field notes using the observation protocol. In addition, the investigator made unstructured and structured interviews with the both students and teachers involved in the study.

### Design

This study implemented a qualitative research approach to this case study. The researcher collected unstructured questionnaires and field notes throughout the entire process of the study. Additionally, structured questionnaires were employed during the research

### Procedure

The researcher with nine years of teaching experience in another country started working as a Para educator in September 2010. Helping ESL students in the mainstream classrooms, the writer started to take notes and made unstructured interviews about the challenges that teachers and ESL student faced in mainstream classrooms. Then the researcher lead structured interviews with the participants in the study. Finally, the investigator analyzed made conclusions about the data.

### Treatment of the Data

The questionnaires, field notes, and observations were analyzed by classifying them in themes using coding. The researcher was careful not to be bias toward any components of the research while collecting the data. What

really is important is not to eliminate the influence but to understand it and use it productively (Maxwell, 2005, as cited in Vivanco, 2010).

### Summary

This research study took a qualitative approach specifically focusing on a case study. As a result, this research had a thick case description. The researcher used the same data collection techniques as others qualitative researches have used in the past. The variables were both ELL students in the mainstream classroom and teachers in the mainstream classroom. The sample was ESL students with different literacy levels in their first language and different amounts of time learning English. The instruments, design, procedure, and treatment of the data were modeled after noted investigators in the field of educational research (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012).

## CHAPTER 4

### Analysis of the Data

#### Introduction

The overall purpose of this case study research was to examine the challenges English Language Learners (ELLs) faced in the mainstream classroom. This study also analyzed what teachers were doing and needed to do in order to help ELLs succeed in school. Lastly, this study expected to contribute with some strategies to help ELL students achieve academic success in school. In order to help ESL students in the mainstream classrooms, teachers needed to be aware of ESL students' voices and challenges they faced in school.

#### Description of the Environment

The project involved thirteen ESL students who attended mainstream classrooms in an urban middle school in north central Washington. They had different literacy levels in their first language (L1) and different English proficiency (EP) levels. In the same manner, they had different amounts of time learning English and living in the United States. In addition, the project involved twelve Science, Math, and English teachers. The selected teachers had different amounts of teaching experiences in working with ESL students. Observations of both students and teachers occurred during the 2012-13 school year. The

researcher used a survey questionnaire that focused on the needs of teacher and students and the challenges they faced in the mainstream classrooms.

In addition, the researcher observed these students and teachers during the 2012-13 school and took field notes during observations and informal interviews. One of the delimitations of the project was that the researcher was an insider to the study. The researcher was observing and participating with the ESL students and teachers at the same time. This also benefited the research, as the principal investigator was able to have a deep connection with students and staff. The researcher was objective and careful not to influence during her interactions with the participants. As noted earlier, what really is important is not to eliminate the influence but to understand it and use it productively (Maxwell, 2005, as cited in Vivanco, 2010).

Another delimitation was the sample size selected for the study. Even though there was a small sample size, this allowed the researcher to focus deeply with participants. As Gay, Mills, and Airasian, (2012) note, "To obtain the desired depth of information required by such topics, qualitative researchers must always deal with small samples, normally interacting over a long period of time and in great depth" (p. 142). Since this was a qualitative case study, the research selected a small number of participants in order to gain more authentic and qualitative data from the participants engaged in the study.

### Research Questions

This research case study used the following research questions to guide and inform the study: (a) what are the challenges that ESL students are facing in the mainstream classroom? (b) what are the challenges that mainstream teachers are facing in working with ESL students? Specifically, a questionnaire was developed to inform the researcher during their investigation (Appendix A). School district leadership officials approved this survey instrument prior to implementation.

### Results of the Study

#### *Student Questionnaire*

The results of the study are narrative descriptions of the key points that emerged from the interviews, observations, field notes, and collaboration with teachers and students involved in the study. Data collected for this research was intended to gain a better understanding of the challenges ESL students faced in the mainstream classroom. In addition, this study was intended to gain a better understanding of the challenges mainstream teachers faced in working with ESL students.



One of the first key points from the study was that 69% of the ESL students who participated in this research project indicated that in order to have success in the mainstreams classroom, they should have instruction in their first language. Another key point that emerges was that 69% of the ESL students answered that they were facing challenges with language, literacy background, time for the assignments and grades. The other 31% faced challenges with just one of the following: (a) time for the assignments, (b) literacy background, (c) grade, and (d) language.

Another important topic that appeared was that 77% of the students indicated that they either sometimes or usually experienced anxiety in the classroom. This can possibly demonstrate that anxiety is a barrier that impedes with learning language (Krashen 1985, in Fisher 2008).

Less than half of the students indicated they had 'somewhat' high learning expectations for themselves, while 54% had average expectations. Only 38% said that their teachers had somewhat high or high expectation for them. The other 62% said that their teacher had average expectations for them.

#### *Teacher Questionnaire*

The data from the questionnaires indicated that the average teaching experience for teaching in this study was of 9.5 years. Less than half (42%) indicated that they did not have any kind of training in teaching ESL students.

Only 17% of them had 20-30 hours of Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) training. The other 42% have between 30 to 50 hours of GLAD training. None of the teachers in this study had an ESL endorsement or a Master's degree in ESL.

Teachers noted they had the following challenges with ESL students: Anxiety, cultural shock, language, literacy and vocabulary. In the same data, 50% of the teachers communicated that the most important factor to help ESL students is to speak their language, and the least important thing was to know their culture.

When teachers were asked in the survey how many years it takes for ESL students to be academically proficient, their answers varied. Roughly, 58% of the teachers answered that ESL students need less than seven years to being academically proficient. An overwhelming number of teachers (92%) pointed out that they have noticed anxiety in their ESL students. In regards to academic expectations, half of the teachers indicated that they have high academic expectations for ESL students. The other half stated that they have average academic expectations.

#### *Observation and Informal Interviews*

In some classrooms, teachers did not understand the ESL students' language proficiency levels. For example, in one classroom a teacher wanted a student to answer a question with an extended response in English when the

student had only two months learning English. The teacher's facial expressions showed his/her frustration when the student could not make an extended response to the teacher's question. In another classroom, a teacher was talking about a water well when they were explaining the water cycle in a lesson. Only after the teacher showed a visual example of a well (ten minutes into the lesson) did the ESL student understand that the teacher was talking about a water well and not whale. The student stated, "I thought the teacher was talking about a whale." This is a clear indication that the teacher could have started with a visual example in the beginning of the lesson to provide clarity in their lessons. In addition, when the researcher asked teachers whether they knew anything about the background of their ESL students or how many years the students have been learning English, they did not know. In another class, a teacher gave students the confidence and encouragement to answer questions in either English or Spanish.

Another observation was that teachers assumed that students had enough background knowledge to engage in classroom discussion. However, the observer often asked the students about a word that they needed to know in order to understand the classroom discussion and they did not know basic things like what is a microscopic, atoms, vortex, cell, etc. For example, after one week where teacher was talking about vortex an ESL student said, "Now, I understand about vortex when the teacher explained it using the toilet as an example". In

another occasion, a teacher asked an ESL student, "Do you want to be scout?" (This was a new GLAD strategy for the class that the teacher was trying to incorporate, but without a clear explanation of the purpose or role of the scout in class). "What is a scout", asked the ESL student. The teacher, with an annoyed face turn around and said, "Ask to your team." There were only three English-speaking students in the ESL student's team. As a result, the ESL student was quiet and did not engage the rest of the class.

With reference to the students' culture, there was a cultural shock between ESL students and teachers. In a classroom, an ESL student was calling the teacher by their title and not their name. The student said, "teacher, teacher" and the teacher just ignored the student. The next time that the student called for the teacher, the teacher said in a frustrated tone, "I am Mrs. Smith." This is a clear example of how the lack of understanding between two cultures can cause tension. In this example, ESL who come from Mexico are taught to address teachers by their titles and not their last names. This could have been a great opportunity for the teacher to learn a little bit of their student's cultural and background and feel honored of how they were being addressed by their ESL student. In the same manner, this also could have been a good chance for the teacher to explain to the student that in the United States it is okay and expected to address teachers by their last name and not their title. In another occasion, a

teacher was teaching a lesson on math and was using the Red Robin restaurant menu as an example (but did not have an actual menu as a visual aid). When the researcher asked ESLs if they had been at Red Robin restaurant, they answered, "No." This illustrates that ESL students had no prior knowledge or experience in the new culture for them (Red Robin) much less their menu.

ESL students appear to be very sensitive to the challenging circumstance they are facing. In one example about grades, an ESL student said to the researcher when he realized that he had a "D", "I am not good at anything, my family is going to throw me away in the garbage". In another classroom, the teacher was walking around the desks and when she passed by ESL students' desks, the teacher passed by without acknowledging them. One student said to the researcher, "The teacher does not like us because she did not ask how are we were doing". Lastly, an ESL student was crying due to performing very poorly on a spelling test because it was too hard for him. These examples clearly demonstrated that student sensitivity, not feeling valued coupled with lack of appropriate ESL teaching strategies, made for a difficult learning environment for the ESL students in class.

Although the examples noted above may lead the reader to conclude that there is as a lack of sympathy or caring from teachers, this is not usually the case. Many times, it is the lack of understanding and training in meeting the needs of

ESL Students in their classroom. One example of teacher who has the knowledge and understanding of ESL Students is the teacher who had traveled all around the world and talked with the students about diversity. She gave them the confidence to follow their dreams because our world will be better in a diverse environment working together.

The researcher observed the rate of speech that the teachers were using and the amount of time the teachers gave students to do their assignments. Most teachers were very fast with their rate of speech when they explained their instruction. They also did not give the ESL students the time they needed to complete their assignments. The researcher noticed that ESL students often waited to see what their white peers were doing to follow their lead. Other ESL students who did not understand the lessons, disengaged, got bored or did other things like talk, play around or misbehaved.

The researcher wrote a few notes about ESL anxiety. ESL students had anxiety when they did not understand the class, when they had to speak in English or they needed to go to the front of the class. One student was very apprehensive and wanted to vomit when she did not understand the class. Another student was nervous and felt a lot of angst before the State Measurement of Student Progress (MSP) test. Others, due to their nervousness, did not come to school when they knew they had to speak in front of the whole class.

The researcher noticed there was a lot of confusion about accommodations for ESL students for the MSP test. When a teacher asked if there was a tutorial in Spanish for ESL students, nobody knew that answer.

### Findings

Upon analysis of the data from this project, the researcher found some answers to the research questions for this study. There are challenges that ESL students faced in the mainstream classrooms. Additionally, the researcher also found some challenges that teachers faced in working with ESL students.

Findings that supported these research questions included:

1. The language level of students appeared to be an obstacle to their learning in the mainstream classroom. In addition, teachers' lack of understanding of English language proficiency impeded student learning.
2. Literacy background appeared to be a critical factor on student success in the classroom. Teachers who did not know their students' literacy background were not able to adequately support their ESL student's learning in the mainstream classroom.

3. - Time to do their assessments seemed to be the biggest challenges that students faced in their classroom. Teacher's lack of training or empathy made it difficult for student to complete their assignments.
4. Learning anxiety was also a contributing factor that many students encountered which impeded student learning. Teachers needed to learn strategies on how to provide a risk-free learning environment for students in their class to promote academic success.
5. Cultural shock appeared to be a contributing issue that student encountered in the mainstream classroom that affected their learning. When cultural differences emerged, learning diminished for both the students and the teachers.
6. Student sensitivity may have been an issue faced by ESL students. With all the challenges that ESL students faced, they became sensitive with their feeling and self-esteem.
7. Teachers appeared to not be adequately trained to help ESL students. One of the major issues was that ESL students were taught by teachers who were not prepared or trained to meet their unique challenges and needs in the mainstream classrooms.



## Discussion

The principal investigator's findings appeared to be consistent strongly correlated with other researcher's findings. A key point that emerged was that 69% of the ESL students answered that they were facing challenges with language. Gay (2002) in de Jong and Harper discussed, "many teachers do not realize that even the most straight forward classroom language can be confusing for ELLs and can limit access to learning" (p.105). This confirmed the researcher's observations when many students did not understand a simple word, and it led them to a lack of content knowledge; however, Jensen shared that, "Teachers don't need to come from their students' cultures to teach them, but empathy and cultural knowledge are essential" (p.11).

Another critical point learned by the teacher interviews seemed to be inadequate teacher training and lack of teacher qualifications. For example, not one teacher nobody had an ESL endorsement or a Master's degree in ESL. To this point, Jong and Harper (2005) stated, "As schools are confronted with increasing number of linguistically and culturally diverse learners, 'just good teaching' approach will simply not be good enough" (P.118). The researcher discovered that teachers appeared to omit the use of students' culture background to teach them. Gay, 2002, as cited in de Jong and Harper (2005) argued that, teachers needed to use "the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives

of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively” (p.111). In regards to ESL students’ anxiety, the researcher observed that some students vomited, cried or felt unwanted in the classroom. To this point, Venter, 1962, as cited in Myburgh, Poggenpoel and Rensburg (2004) referenced, “The lack of ability to express themselves causes children to feel powerless and worthless. This may lead to underperformance and behavior problems (p.575). Fisher also stated that, “By viewing himself or herself as unequal to classmates and peer in the English speaking classrooms and school, ELL students’ classroom experiences can be overwhelming” (p.9). According to Lessow-Hurley many teachers have misunderstood multicultural education and noted that it is more than holidays and celebrations. Myburgh, Poggenpoel, and Rensburg (2004) argued that, “Teachers should use students’ cultural background for the class,” to help strengthen students’ prior knowledge and background. The author detected this problem when teachers only used white culture references such as Rob Robin restaurant, golf, and American football. In addition to experiencing cultural unfairness, students also they did not understand the class. In relation to Literacy background, the author noticed there was a different between Basic English and academic English. ESL students needed many more years of leaning English to be academically proficient. Rance-Roney (2009) noted, “Students often have achieved oral proficiency, but they are behind in their ability to use English for

literacy and content learning” (p.34). This is because students came from a very poor country or communities where they did not have access to a good school or parents lacked schooling themselves. In regards to students doing their assignments, most of them stated they had a big problem with it. Helfrich and Bosh (2011) explained that the role of the teacher in language acquisition for ELLs was an integral one because diverse learners may require somewhat differentiated methods of instructions and assessment.

### Summary

In this chapter, the researcher organized the outcomes. First, in results of the study, the author analyzed results of students; questionnaires about what were the challenges that ESL students were facing in the mainstream classroom. Then the author explored the teachers’ responses to the questionnaires about the challenges that ESL students faced in the mainstream classroom. As a final point, the researcher analyzed the observations and responses from the formal and informal interviews. The researcher listed all the challenges that ESL students were facing in the mainstream classrooms. In the discussion’s part, the investigator analyzed the challenges that ESL students were facing in the mainstream classrooms and their relationship with others studies of like kind. The author found many challenges that ESL students and teachers were facing in

the mainstream classrooms among them were; ESL students' language proficiency, ESL students' literacy, learning anxiety, cultural shock, students sensibility, time to do assessments, and unprepared teachers to help ESL students.

## CHAPTER 5

### Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### Introduction

As noted earlier, the purpose of this Case Study research was to examine the challenges middle school English Language Learners (ELLs) faced in the mainstream classroom. This study also analyzed what teachers were doing and needed to do in order to help ELLs have success in school. Lastly, the purpose of this study suggested some strategies to help ELL students in the mainstream classroom achieve academic success.

#### Summary

Because developing true proficiency in a foreign language takes tremendous effort and is a long process, educators needed to understand ESL students' challenges in the mainstream classroom. Researchers have noted there are many challenges ESL students faced in the mainstream classroom. Some of the challenges they encountered were poverty, psychological damages cause by racial discrimination, acculturation, cultural sock, lack of teacher knowledge about language development, speaking the students' language, low literacy background, and prior knowledge.

This case study research examined the challenges English Language Learners (ELLs) faced in the mainstream classroom. It also analyzed what teachers were doing and needed to do in order to help ELLs succeed in school. Lastly, this study expected to contribute with some strategies to help ELL students achieve academic success in school.

Upon analysis of the data, the researcher found some answers to the research questions for this study. There are challenges that ESL students faced in the mainstream classrooms. Additionally, the researcher also found some challenges that teachers faced in working with ESL students.

### Conclusions

In summary, the findings from this research appear to correlate to similar research in the field. After analyzing the data from this project, the study suggests there are many challenges middle school English Language learner were facing in the mainstream classroom. The data also noted that teachers were lacking the skills necessary to meet the unique needs of ESL students. Most of the teachers did not have an ESL endorsement or a Master's degree in ESL and there was a lack of teacher training opportunities. These issues contributed to the challenges that teachers faced in working with ESL students. As a final point, the issues mentioned above need to be addressed if we are serious about closing the

achievement gap and providing each child with what they need in be academically successful.

### Recommendations

It is evident that ESL students are facing many challenges in the mainstream classrooms. This study suggests that teachers play a critical role in implementing new teaching strategies. In order to help ESL students overcome their challenges, teachers need to be aware of their ESL students' needs. These middle school ELLs are diverse in their educational background, school expectations, socioeconomic status, English proficiency, personal experiences, age of arrival, and their parents' educational level. Teachers may want to offer ESL students a free risk environment where they can practice all the competencies. An intense training for teacher language acquisition may be good practice in order to help ESL students in the mainstream classroom.

Cooperative learning techniques may have promise because it offers a risk-reduced atmosphere. Teachers of ESL students need to learn how implement sheltered instruction strategies, which implicates a lot of visual support, simplify and contextualize the language, identify crucial language, provide demonstration and discussion in small groups. Teachers may want to provide middle school ELLs with an inclusive classroom and projects based instruction. ESL students

appear to benefit from multi-skilled and scaffold instructional activities that take into account their interest, preferences and language needs. As a final recommendation, teachers may want to value and incorporate many aspects of their students' cultural beliefs and background into their daily instruction.



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# SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES

## Teacher Data Analysis

Teacher	Teaching experience	Training hours in teaching ESL	Challenging with ESLs	Most important to help ESL students	Years for being academically proficient	Noticed Anxiety in ESLs	Academic expectations
1	11-15	30-50	V,LI,LA,CS,A	ESLS,SL,KC,KEN,KAB	5-7	Almost never	High
2	7-10	30-50	V,LI,LA,A,CS	ESLS,KEN,KAB,KC,SL	7+	Sometimes	High
3	4-6	0-10	LA,A,V,CS,LI	SL,KC,KAB,KEN,ESLS	7+	sometimes	average
4	16+	20-30	LI,LA,V,A,CS	SL,ESLS,KAB,KEN,KC	5-7	sometimes	high
5	11-15	30-50	L,LI,A,V,CS	KEN,KAB,KC,ESLS,SL	7+	sometimes	high
6	11-15	30-50	LA,CS,A,V,LL	KEN,KC,SL,ESLS,KAB	7+	sometimes	average
7	16+	0-10	LI,V,LA,CS,A	ESLS,SL,KAB,KEN,KC	5-7	sometimes	high
8	11-15	0-10	LA,V,LI,A,CS	KEN,SL,KAB,ESLS,KC	7+	sometimes	Somewhat high
9	7-10	30-50	LA,V,LI,A,CS	ESLS,SL,KEN,KC,KAB	5-7	sometimes	average
10	4-6	0-10	LI,LA,V,A,CS	ESLS,KAB,SL,KEN,KC	3-5	sometimes	average
11	4-6	0-10	LA,V,LI,CS,A	ESLS,SL,KAB,KEN,KC	3-5	Sometimes	average
12	1-3	20-30	CS,A,LI,V,LA	KEN,SL,KC,KAB,SLSS	3-5	sometimes	average

SL= speak their language

ESLS= ESL strategies

KAB= Know their academic background

KC=Know your culture

KEN= know your emotional needs

A=Anxiety

Cs=Culture shock

LA=Language

LI= literacy

V= Vocabulary

## APPENDIX A

### Student Survey

1. How long have you been learning English?

- a) less than 1 year
- b) 1 to 2 years
- c) 3 to 5 years
- d) More than 5 years

2. Please rank which of the following issues are most important to least important for teachers to help you in the classroom (1=Most important, 5=least important)

- a) Speak your language \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Knowledge about your culture \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Know your emotional needs \_\_\_\_\_
- d) ESL teaching strategies \_\_\_\_\_
- e) Know your academic background \_\_\_\_\_

3. What challenges do you have in the classroom?

- a) Language
- b) Literacy background
- c) Time for the assignments
- d) Grades
- e) All of the above

4. Do you feel anxiety in the classrooms?

- a) Never
- b) Almost Never
- c) Sometimes
- d) Almost Always
- e) Always

5) What are your academic expectations for yourself?

- a) Low
- b) Somewhat Low
- c) Average
- d) Somewhat High
- e) High

6) What do you think are the academic expectations for you from your teacher?

- a) Low
- b) Somewhat Low
- c) Average
- d) Somewhat High
- e) High

7). Open ended/probing questions (15 minutes)

## APPENDIX B

### Encuesta de Estudiantes

1. ¿Cuánto tiempo has estado aprendiendo inglés?

- a) menos de 1 año
- b) 1 a 2 años
- c) 3 a 5 años
- d) Más de 5 años

2. Por favor clasifica los siguientes puntos del más importante al menos importante para que el maestro pueda ayudarte en el salón (1 = más importante, 5 = menos importante)

- a) Hablar tu idioma
- b) Conocimiento sobre tu cultura
- c) Conocer tus necesidades emocionales
- d) Estrategias de enseñanza de ESL
- e) Conocer tus antecedentes académicos

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Qué retos tienes en el salón?

- a) Lenguaje
- b) Tus antecedentes académicos
- c) Tiempo que tienes para hacer trabajo en clase
- d) Grados
- e) Todas las anteriores

4. ¿Sientes ansiedad en el salón?

- a) Nunca
- b) Casi nunca
- c) A veces
- d) Casi siempre
- e) siempre

5) ¿Cómo son sus expectativas académicas?

- a) Bajas
- b) Algo bajas
- c) Normal
- d) algo altas
- e) Altas

6) Como son las expectativas académicas que tiene el maestro para ti?

- a) Bajas
- b) Algo bajas
- c) Normal
- d) algo altas
- e) Altas

7). Preguntas/comentarios (15 minutos)

## APPENDIX C

### Teacher Questionnaire

1. How many years of teaching experience do you have?
  - a) 1-3
  - b) 4-6
  - c) 7-10
  - d) 11-15
  - e) 16 or more
  
2. How many hours of training have you received in teach ESL students?
  - a) None to Less than 10 hours (Trainings)
  - b) 20-30 hours (a series of Trainings)
  - c) 30-50 hours (i.e. GLAD, SIOP)
  - d) 200+ hour (ESL endorsement)
  - e) Master's in ESL
  
3. Please rank which of the following issues are most challenging to least challenging for your ELLs in the classroom (1=Most challenging, 5=least challenging)
  - a) Anxiety \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Culture shock \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) Language \_\_\_\_\_
  - d) Literacy \_\_\_\_\_
  - e) Vocabulary \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Please rank which of the following issues are most important to least important for teachers to help ESL students in the classroom (1=Most important, 5=least important)
  - a) Speak their language \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) Knowledge about their culture \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) Know their emotional needs \_\_\_\_\_
  - d) ESL teaching strategies \_\_\_\_\_
  - e) Know their academic background \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Do you know what the research states on how long it takes ESL students to become Academically proficient in English?
  - a) 0-6 months
  - b) 7 months to 2 years
  - c) 3-5 years
  - d) 5-7 years
  - e) 7+ years

6. Have you noticed anxiety in ESL students?

- a) Never
  - b) Almost Never
  - c) Sometimes
  - d) Almost Always
  - e) Always
- 

7) What are your academic expectations for ESL students?

- a) Low
- b) Somewhat Low
- c) Average
- d) Somewhat High
- e) High