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School Connectedness, Language Acquisition and Academic Success: A Study of
English Language Learners' Experiences at a Comprehensive High School

A Dissertation by
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

August, 2016

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August 31, 2016

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ABSTRACT

School Connectedness, Language Acquisition and Academic Success: A Study of

English Language Learners' Experiences at a Comprehensive High School

by Philip M. Alfano

The purpose of this study was to explore differences in perceptions of school connectedness among Long Term English Learner (LTEL) students and Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) students in a comprehensive high school setting. The study also seeks to determine whether or not there is a relationship between English language acquisition and perceptions of school connectedness among these two groups.

The target population was LTEL and RFEP students enrolled in grades 6-12 in public schools in Stanislaus County. Delimiting characteristics were applied to both the target population and the population sample to reduce variability. Quantitative data including artifacts and scaled survey scores were collected. A two-tailed t-test was employed to establish the significance of differences between LTEL and RFEP students across six different contexts of school connectedness. Semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted, and the qualitative data produced was coded and triangulated with the other two data sets.

The three research questions produced key findings showing significant differences between LTEL students and RFEP students' perceptions and expectations within the academic performance, classroom behavior, and extracurricular involvement contexts. An additional key finding was that there is a relationship between perceptions of school connectedness and students' status as either LTEL or RFEP.

These findings resulted in emergent theories regarding students' perceptions of school connectedness and language acquisition. The theories propose that EL students' language acquisition and academic success may be accelerated through participation in extracurricular activities. Additionally, classification as RFEF increases non-cognitive assets such as determination, self-confidence and self-efficacy. This results in greater school connectedness through participation in extracurricular activities and determination to succeed and achieve personal goals within the academic performance context.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background.....	5
Immigrant Education and English Language Instruction	5
Early 20 th Century Approaches to English Language Instruction	5
Post-World War II Approaches to English Language Instruction	7
School Connectedness	10
School Connectedness and Challenges Facing English Language Learners	11
Long Term English Learners and Fluent English Proficient Students	14
Second Language Acquisition and School Connectedness	16
Statement of the Research Problem	17
Purpose Statement.....	19
Research Questions.....	19
Significance of the Problem.....	19
Definitions.....	21
Delimitations.....	26
Organization of the Study	26
 CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	 28
Introduction.....	28
Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies.....	29
The Permissive Period	29
The Restrictive Period (Pre-World War II)	30
Early Systems and Practices of ESL Instruction.....	31
Mexican-American Immigrant Experiences	35
The Restrictive Period (Post-World War II).....	39
The Opportunist Period.....	41
Return to Progressive Education Philosophies	44
Empowerment and Its Impact on ESL Systems and Practices	45
Litigation and Legislation	47
The Dismissive Period	50
Conflicting Research on ESL Systems and Practices	52
Recent Developments	57
Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students.....	57
LTEL Students and the ESL “Ghetto”	60
Success of Redesignated Fluent English Proficient Students.....	61
Overview and Significance of School Connectedness.....	63
Providing a Theoretical Framework for School Connectedness.....	64
School Connectedness and Associated Terminology	65
The Affective Dimension of School Connectedness	66
The Behavioral Dimension of School Connectedness.....	67
The Cognitive Dimension of School Connectedness.....	69
School Connectedness as a Multidimensional Construct	71
School Connectedness and EL Students	72
Examining School Connectedness for EL Students within Existing Constructs..	72

Examining Sociocultural Factors of School Connectedness and EL Students	75
School Connectedness and Language Redesignation Status	77
Summary	77
Synthesis Matrix	79
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	80
Overview	80
Purpose Statement	80
Research Questions	80
Research Design	81
Population	82
Sample	83
Instrumentation	86
Data Collection	92
Data Analysis	95
Limitations	98
Summary	99
CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS.....	101
Overview	101
Purpose Statement	101
Research Questions	102
Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures	102
Population	104
Sample	105
Demographic Data	105
Presentation and Analysis of Data	106
Quantitative Research Data	106
Research Question 1	106
Research Question 2	110
Research Question 3	114
Qualitative Research Data	116
Academic Performance Context	119
Classroom Behavior Context	122
Extracurricular Involvement Context	125
Interpersonal Relationship Context	131
School Community Context	135
Sociocultural Factors Context	140
Language Acquisition	147
Summary	153
CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	156
Introduction	156
Purpose Statement	157
Research Questions	159
Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures	158
Population	160

Sample.....	160
Major Findings.....	161
Research Question 1	162
Research Question 2	163
Academic Performance Context	164
Classroom Behavior Context	167
Extracurricular Involvement Context	167
Sociocultural Factors Context.....	169
Research Question 3	170
Unexpected Findings	174
Conclusions.....	175
Language Acquisition as a Factor of School Connectedness	178
An Emergent Theory on Language Acquisition and School Connectedness	178
Implications for Action.....	182
Recommendations for Further Research.....	185
Concluding Remarks and Reflections.....	188
REFERENCES	195
APPENDICES	213

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Population Demographics.....	85
Table 2. Research Study Planning Schedule	91
Table 3. Participant Information.....	105
Table 4. Comparison of Artifact Data for LTEL and RFEP Students	107
Table 5. Comparison of Composite Scores for School Connectedness Survey	108
Table 6. Comparison of Individual Scaled Scores for School Connectedness Survey...	111
Table 7. Differences in Perceptions of School Connectedness as Measured by Artifact Data and Scaled Scores from Survey Questionnaire.....	113
Table 8. Quantitative Artifact Data for LTEL Interview Participants	117
Table 9. Quantitative Artifact Data for RFEP Interview Participants	118
Table 10. Coded Responses for Interview Questions in the Academic Performance Context	120
Table 11. Coded Responses for Interview Questions in the Classroom Behavior Context	123
Table 12. Coded Responses for Interview Questions in the Extracurricular Involvement Context.....	126
Table 13. Coded Responses for Interview Questions in the Interpersonal Relationships Context.....	131
Table 14. Coded Responses for Interview Questions in the School Community Context.....	136

Table 15. Coded Responses for Interview Questions in the Sociocultural	
Factors Context	141
Table 16. Coded Responses for Interview Questions Regarding	
Language Acquisition	148
Table 17. Summary of Research Questions and Data Analysis Findings.....	155

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The United States is becoming more linguistically and culturally diverse as reflected in the growth of its non-U.S. born population and the languages spoken in its schools. English Learner (EL) students represent more than 5% of the student population in 27 of 50 states and are roughly 10.7% of students enrolled in all K-12 districts across the country (Batalova & McHugh, 2010). Data compiled and analyzed from the 2010 United States Census (Pandya, Batalova, & McHugh, 2011) shows that the highest concentrations of EL students and Limited English Proficient (LEP) adults remain concentrated in six states—California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, and New Jersey. The largest growth in LEP populations between 1990 and 2010 occurred in Nevada (398.2%), North Carolina (395.2%), Georgia (378.8%), and Arkansas (311.5%). Six other states—Alabama, Washington, Utah, South Carolina, Nebraska, and Tennessee, experienced LEP population growth rates ranging from 202.1% to 281.4% during this same time period.

The demographic trends evident in United States census data show that immigration and the associated educational demands of an EL student population are no longer regional phenomena but issues impacting public school districts across the country. Among the 104 metropolitan areas with the largest LEP populations are communities spread across 41 of 50 states. In 47 out of 50 states, Spanish is the dominant language spoken among non-English speakers, and it is also the dominant language among 99 out of the 104 communities with the highest LEP populations (Pandaya et al., 2011).

The largest group of immigrants to the United States, which also accounts for the vast majority of Spanish-speaking EL students, is from Mexico. Zong and Batalova (2015) reported that Mexican-born immigrants account for approximately 28% the 41.3 million foreign born living in the United States and 46 % of immigrants report Hispanic or Latino origins. Regardless of national origin or native language, meeting the academic needs of EL students while simultaneously providing instruction directed toward development of English language proficiency has always presented unique challenges for administrators and teachers working with immigrant students and their families. Even when lacking research-based knowledge and the professional training to do so, Karabenick and Noda (2004) found that most teachers recognize the importance of developing and implementing effective teaching strategies to help EL students acquire mastery of English as a second language.

This interrelationship between research and classroom application is crucial in developing successful programs for EL students. Krashen (2009) supported the idea that second language acquisition theory, applied linguistics research, and the ideas and intuition of practitioners and EL students themselves should function harmoniously to guide EL instruction. However, political and social factors often make such seamless integration difficult.

In California, voter passage of Proposition 227 (1998) placed severe limits on the type of instruction provided to EL students (California Secretary of State, 1998), but the proposition did not ban bilingual education altogether as some opponents claimed. Students could continue participating in bilingual programs rather than English only classes, “with the prior written informed consent, to be provided annually, of the child’s

parents or legal guardian” (Article 3). Critics of Proposition 227 claimed the law ignored academic research showing that second language acquisition does not occur quickly but happens in developmental stages. Consequently, they argued that programs focusing only on English language acquisition deprive non-native speakers the opportunity to master complex academic coursework in their native languages (Collier & Thomas, 1989; Cummins, 2014).

While it is likely that academicians and politicians will continue to debate the merit and efficacy of transitional bilingual and two-way dual language programs versus English-only immersion models, Collier and Thomas (1997) found that an additional predictor of long-term EL student success is school effectiveness. They concluded that school effectiveness includes more than just research-based, interactive approaches to teaching and an additive bilingual context. It is the development of a transformed sociocultural context for EL students in which non-English speaking students and English speaking students are integrated. The school climate is safe, supportive, and respectful, with multiple opportunities for academic enrichment.

Individual student perceptions of school effectiveness, defined by their own personal connections to school, may be an overlooked factor in understanding why some EL students make academic progress and acquire language proficiency at a more rapid rate than others. Expanding research from the classroom environment and instructional programming to the broader school or community environment in which EL students live may offer additional insights. During an interdisciplinary invitational conference of education leaders and multiple government agencies held in June 2003 at the Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin, six new research studies on school

connectedness were presented. The synthesis and consolidation of the empirical data presented, along with discussions of prior research and common terminology, led to the crafting of a written statement titled *The Wingspread Declaration on School Connections* (Blum & Libbey, 2004). The declaration includes six core elements distilled from the research and concludes that students are more successful when they feel connected to school.

School connectedness is a topic of study often labeled as *soft* because it is difficult to quantify and straddles a number of academic subject areas including education, psychology, medicine, and sociology (Blum, 2005). Nevertheless, the implications of school connectedness for educators seeking to provide effective instructional programming for EL students are significant. Good, Masewicz, and Vogel, (2010) identified many obstacles facing EL students and their families—particularly if they are also transitioning to living in a new country and adapting to a different culture while learning a second language. Besides academic concerns, students may need additional counseling services, having left family support systems behind and not feeling like they belong in either world.

The affective, cognitive, and behavioral needs of EL students are many. EL students' sense of belonging in a school setting may play a pivotal role in acquiring language and serve to bolster attainment of academic goals. Understanding EL students' perceptions of school connectedness is a research topic warranting further examination. This study examines and analyzes EL students' experiences and school connectedness in a comprehensive high school setting and compares their perceptions of school connectedness based on language acquisition and academic success.

Background

Immigrant Education and English Language Instruction

The United States is by definition a nation of immigrants. Industrialization, immigration, and the development of the modern American public school system in America occurred as parallel historic events in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During this time the Americanization movement began as an effort to solve many societal ills and concerns tied to immigrant assimilation, thereby placing the teacher at the center of social reform and marking the beginning of language pedagogy in the United States (Dayton-Wood, 2008). In 1903, 14 states mandated English-only instruction in their public schools. By 1923, 34 of 48 states required instruction only in English. This represented not only contemporary social and political views and the monolingualistic approach to language instruction supported by most in the Americanization movement but also the expanding role of state legislatures in developing education policy as the country moved closer to free and universal public education (Baron, 1990).

Early 20th Century Approaches to English Language Instruction

Between 1870 and 1900, the number of students attending public elementary schools doubled, but few students attended high school (Edwards 2000). Adolescent and adult immigrants working factory jobs often learned basic education and English language instruction intermittently through settlement houses, religious institutions, or programs sponsored by businesses employing large numbers of immigrant workers. Using strategies inspired by the progressive education philosophy of John Dewey and others, immigrants were encouraged to learn English as the path to a better job and a better way of life. Through forums with other educators, programs for non-native

speakers, and direct dialogue with the general public (Dayton-Wood, 2008), many of these English teachers and social workers subtly exploited nativist fears by proclaiming that English language instruction and the creation of a culturally and linguistically homogenous citizenry was the key to a better America.

B. Ray (2013) observed that although Americanization began in the early 1900s, it was not until after World War I that teacher training for English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction became truly formalized. Some programs in the urban settlement houses and night schools adopted progressive philosophies, used methods that made English instruction and civics relevant to students' lives, and encouraged immigrant groups to retain their native languages and cultures (Dayton-Wood, 2008). Teachers adapted texts that addressed worker rights and also integrated social injustice into the curriculum and embraced cooperative learning. These practices align to current research supporting the need for teachers to make connections to students' previous learning and experiences, find out what interests them, and utilize their native language ability first to build skill and support advanced literacy in English (Maxwell-Jolly, Gandara, & Mendez-Benevediz, 2007).

Other progressives adopted more traditional, "scientific" and orderly approaches to teaching language that seemed completely at odds with their philosophical roots. The instructional goal was to prepare immigrants to be productive, docile workers. Multilingualism was viewed as a threat to social stability, as the unmonitored use of native languages would spread radicalism and lead to labor unrest (Dayton-Wood, 2008). The historical context under which ESL instruction developed during the period of Americanization helps explain current educational policies toward EL students. Political

discourse and attitudes about immigrants, rather than pedagogy and education research, framed practices related to ESL instruction then much as it does to this day (Yamagami, 2012).

Demographic trends show that the ethnic composition of immigrants coming to America has changed dramatically since the last century. As recently as 1990, European languages (French, Italian and German) were among the top five non-English languages spoken by immigrants to the United States, along with Chinese and Spanish. By 2010, the top five non-English languages were Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Tagalog (Pandya et al., 2011), with Spanish-speaking residents accounting for 66% of the non-native speakers in the United States.

The predominance of Spanish language and changes in immigration patterns over the past two decades may have impacted public perceptions of bilingual language instruction. In a study of 25 residents in a predominantly Caucasian county in Georgia—a state experiencing one of the fastest growth rates among Latino immigrants—Cuevas (2014) found significantly strong agreement with the statement, “English should be the national language” (p. 322) and strong beliefs among respondents that Spanish-speaking immigrants today are not learning English as rapidly as European immigrants did in the 20th Century. Survey scores from the study showed a strong disposition, “to protect a national identity in the form of language rather than overt hostility toward immigrants” (p. 323).

Post-World War II Approaches to English Language Instruction

Restrictive legislation and the Great Depression resulted in a sharp decline in immigration to the United States from the mid-1920s until the end of World War II, and

little attention was paid to ESL instruction in America's public schools (B. Ray, 2013). Progressive education was the dominant philosophy in teacher preparation programs at universities throughout the United States from the early 1900s through the 1940s (Edwards, et.al, 2000), and emphasized a child-centered approach to education. It was based on a psychological foundation focused on how children learn and what motivates them to learn, combining a sociological component emphasizing skill based knowledge. Rejecting classical techniques and rote memorization, progressive instructional practices were designed to equip pupils with skills and judgment to solve problems that may yet be unknown to societies. Schools, the progressives believed, should function as small communities (Gavin-Loss & Loss, 2002) in which curriculum was tailored to meet individual needs, but civic responsibility, and cooperative, engaging experiential learning was encouraged.

Almost immediately following Dewey's death in 1952, amidst growing tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States along with misinterpretation and misapplication of many progressivist ideas (Edwards 2000), progressive education came under attack by both the general public and higher education. It was blamed for what some perceived was an undereducated American student population incapable of competing with its Soviet counterpart. This rejection of progressive education philosophy was also reflected in the ESL practices that emerged during this period.

The *oral or audiolingual approach* to language instruction, used predominantly from the 1940s until the early 1960s (Marcella, 1998), was derived primarily from a need to rapidly teach foreign languages to United States military personnel during World War II and for ESL instruction to a growing number of immigrant students arriving in the

United States after the war. Marcella (1998) recalled that the audiolingual approach embraced a linguistic and psychological method emphasizing oral repetition, memorization, and the development of *programmed learning* using audio tapes and *stimulus-response-reward* systems. Marcella noted, “Teachers and students were bored by the use of the classroom merely for the choral and individual repetition of grammatical patterns and for the mechanical recitation of the memorized dialogues” (p.6).

During the 1960s a new group of social reformers and educators, appalled by what they saw as gross social inequities and ineffective school systems—particularly in impoverished urban areas inhabited primarily by minorities (Edwards, 2000) reintroduced many of the progressive instructional practices from the first half of the century. Chronologically, this movement paralleled federal desegregation efforts and the passage of comprehensive civil rights legislation. Reflecting this resurgence in progressive educational practices, ESL instruction became more developmental and grounded in research based methodologies.

The *total physical response* (TPR) approach (Asher, 1969) emphasized listening training and mirroring natural language development, transitioning to motor acts which engaged students in more complex learning tasks. Marcella (1998) referenced another approach to language acquisition prevalent during this period, the *communicative* approach, which utilized pupil focused materials and active engagement through social conversations. Texts emphasized social functions and promoted student interaction and engagement through group work, role-playing and problem-solving. Written text and accompanying illustrations also included dialogue among individualized characters

“involved in real-life situations of young people, such as dates, parties, and sports”
(Marcella, 1998, p. 9).

School Connectedness

Although not always explicitly stated, the progressive education philosophy of the early 1900s and its reemergence in the late 1960s and early 1970s placed a strong emphasis on student engagement (Gavin-Loss & Loss, 2002). The movement was not monolithic, however, and as applied to the education of immigrants, many progressives ignored the sociological and psychological underpinnings of their philosophy by rejecting students’ home languages and cultures (Dayton-Wood, 2008), creating a school environment insensitive to student needs. Political and societal attitudes, as well as the cultural assumptions and ineffective practices of social reformers and educators, ultimately led to the demise of the Americanization movement in the late 1920s (B. Ray, 2013). Immigrant students’ perceptions of these political and societal attitudes can be classified within the sociocultural context of what a growing number of scholars now refer to as school connectedness.

New analyses (Blum & Libbey, 2004) were developed in the early 21st Century to more clearly articulate and define connectedness factors and measures. At the center of these theories, based on years of empirical data, is the belief that students will experience greater academic success and engage in fewer negative and risky behaviors when they feel connected to school. Although terms developed through interdisciplinary studies over the last two decades have established the theoretical framework for school connectedness, the philosophical roots go back much further. Progressives drew upon the work of late 18th and early 19th Century philosophers and educators such as Johann

Heinrich Pestalozzi who advocated the teaching of the *whole child* centered on a psychological instructional methodology to balance three elements—hands, heart, and head (Silber, 1960).

Taken in this context, a multi-disciplinary approach to the study of school connectedness may be viewed as an asset rather than a limitation. Its impact can be tested as a mitigating factor against the negative influence of external environmental variables (Loukas, Roalson, & Herrera, 2010) as well as internal conditions associated with school climate such as peer harassment (Eisenberg, Neumark-Stzainer, & Perry, 2003). Historically, most school connectedness research has emphasized correlations between defined school connectedness and academic achievement or, conversely, academic failure and negative or risky youth behavior (Allen, 2006).

The definition of school connectedness and associated terminology is varied. Synthesizing 45 different research articles on the subject dating to 1988, Jimerson, Campos, and Grief (2003) found that 31 “did not delineate an explicit definition of the terms” and that the terms “were best understood by examining the specific measures and items reported in each article” (p. 8). Reviewing these empirical research studies of school connectedness, the authors recorded a wide variety of methods used. These included qualitative data such as student, teacher, and school records along with the quantitative assessments such as surveys, interviews, and self-report questionnaires.

School Connectedness and Challenges Facing English Language Learners

Research on school connectedness is particularly relevant to many immigrant EL students because, in addition to language barriers and economic hardship, EL students and their families often report a sense of cultural deprivation, feelings of disrespect, and

social isolation (Good et al., 2010). Understanding the pathways by which Latino families integrate American culture (Hill & Torres, 2010) may also help schools build greater connectedness.

Beginning in the 1970s, ESL instructional practices evolved as researchers recognized that language acquisition is a long developmental process (Collier & Thomas, 1989; Cummins, 1984, 2014). They also concluded that the monolingual approach favored by previous generations not only deprives EL students of the opportunity to master academic content in their native language but may also have a deleterious impact on their perceptions of school connectedness. Even in a non-bilingual instructional setting, respect for a student's primary language and culture is crucial and encourages students to use native language to build comprehension and gain the self-confidence to use the new words in English once tasks are understood (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011).

Subtractive schooling in which EL students are not provided the opportunity to develop their native language literacy skills, results in many EL students arriving at high school classified as Long Term English Learners (LTEL) with limited academic literacy in either English or their native language (Menken & Kleyn, 2010). Considered with the findings of Klem and Connell (2004) that as many as 40 to 60 % of all high school students are disengaged, and the results of the California Healthy Kids Survey, which found that only 37% of students in high poverty high schools report high levels of school connectedness (Austin, Hanson, & Voight, 2013), students entering high school lacking English language proficiency face enormous challenges.

Research by Morrison, Cosden, O'Farrel and Campos (2003) suggested that early redesignation as Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) may have a positive impact on school connectedness among EL students as they enter adolescence. Morrison, et al. also found that EL students placed a greater value on peer attachment as they enter middle school. This is also supported by a qualitative study using interviews of middle school Latino and Latina students at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders (Balagna, Young, & Smith, 2013), which found all subjects placed an extremely high value on interpersonal relationships, particularly within their peer group.

Academic performance as a context of the cognitive and behavioral dimensions of school connectedness is often measured by grade point averages and performance on standardized assessments. Historically, middle school and high school EL students have not performed as well academically as their peers. Among EL students studied at a large rural high school in Northern California, Callahan (2005) found that less than 2% of EL students were enrolled in college preparatory classes. Language proficiency was identified as a significant predictor of performance on standardized English language assessments. However, recent immigrants with prior schooling were found to have higher grade point averages, earned credits, and math scores than EL students who had been in the United States for five or more years.

The negative correlation between length of ESL instruction and academic performance identified by Callahan (2005) seems to support the theory that academic content instruction in a student's native language has transferrable value. This transferrable value is often overlooked as school policies aimed at protecting EL students by limiting choices (Kanno & Kangas, 2014) focus on English language acquisition only,

thereby systematically block accessing to more rigorous college preparatory tracks taught only in English. Not only can EL students' native language serve as a cognitive and academic resource for scaffolding English language instruction (Cummins, 2014), its classroom use places importance on the student's linguistic and cultural background adding potential value to perceptions of school connectedness.

Long Term English Learners and Fluent English Proficient Students

Olsen's (2010) research revealed that LTEL students often develop oral fluency in their native language and English and are high functioning in social conversation. However, they have weak academic language and significant gaps in their reading and writing. Becoming *stuck* at intermediate levels of proficiency, they fail to achieve success in school work or on standardized tests. Lacking the academic background in their native language, they struggle as the rigor increases at higher grade levels.

In a qualitative study of 29 secondary LTEL students in New York City schools, Menken and Kleyn (2010) reached a similar conclusion and observed LTEL students with strong oral fluency in English but weak literacy skills and an inability to comprehend academic language. They noted that LTEL students remained in ESL classes that were designed for newcomers where coursework was too easy and students quickly became bored and disengaged. Students reported being withdrawn in class and developed a lack of confidence based on poor academic performance. In reviewing academic records for the LTEL subjects, the authors found that the cumulative grade average for all students in the survey was 69.2% (D+), with six students having failing averages.

In California, data collected by the California Department of Education (CDE) shows that by contrast, many former EL students reclassified as Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) are enrolled in college preparatory classes as evidenced by 11th grade participation rates on the Algebra II exam, and they consistently outperform both LTEL and English Only (EO) students as measured by the California Standards Test (CST) in English and mathematics (CDE, Assessment and Accountability Office, 2012). Although the CST was discontinued, results from the first comprehensive statewide administration of the new California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), based on national common core standards for English and mathematics, yielded similar results. Among RFEP students, 52% met or exceeded standards for English compared to 51% of EO students and 11% of EL students. In mathematics, 39% of EO students met or exceeded standards, compared to 36% of RFEP students and 11% of EL students (California Department of Education, Data Reporting Office, 2015).

Similarly, RFEP students outperformed both EO and EL subgroups on the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). The CAHSEE was designed to measure minimum proficiency in both English-Language Arts and mathematics. The assessment was first given in 10th grade with additional opportunities provided through 12th grade. A passing score on the CAHSEE was previously required for California's public school students to receive their high school diploma. The CAHSEE State Demographic Summary Report (California Department of Education, 2013) showed that in the 2013 test administration given to 461,150 students, 83% of all students passed. RFEP students passed the CAHSEE at a rate of 94%; 93% of 10th grade EO students passed, and 42% of EL students passed.

Second Language Acquisition and School Connectedness

While there is a growing body of research supporting the efficacy of dual language programs to support EL students' academic content knowledge while acquiring English language proficiency (Calderon, 2011; Collier & Thomas, 1989; Cummins, 1984, 2014; Hakuta, Butler, & Witt, 2000) little research exists that adequately explains differences in language acquisition and academic performance between EL subgroups classified as LTEL or RFEP. More than two decades of research has provided compelling evidence to support academic performance as a context measure of school connectedness within the cognitive and behavioral dimensions (Jimerson et al., 2003). If English language acquisition is a strong indicator of EL students' success in high school, as indicated by current research studies (Callahan, 2004; Kanno & Kanga, 2014; Kleyn & Menken 2010; Olsen 2010), other measures of school connectedness within cognitive, affective and behavioral dimensions may be relevant in understanding issues impacting LTEL students' education.

Olsen (2010) observed that many LTEL students in California live in communities that are linguistically isolated and have fewer opportunities to interact with native English students in authentic situations: "Where English Learners are socially segregated or linguistically isolated, they learn English with and from other English Learners—and depend upon the teacher to be the sole English model" (p. 19). Despite an increased awareness of the academic difficulties LTEL students face, most research and applied practices related to this topic have focused on curriculum, instruction, pedagogical methodologies, and teacher expectations. Few studies have addressed the impact school connectedness may have on both academic achievement and language

acquisition rates among EL students and whether or not specific contexts of school connectedness may help accelerate language acquisition.

Statement of the Research Problem

In comparing what she calls the *lived reality* perceptions of EL students and staff at an urban high school, Bashara (2007) recommended further research on the impact of non-academic experiences on EL students' academic success. The author also recommended that qualitative data should also drive decision making for EL students. A significant body of research has established that strong student connectedness with school leads to higher rates of academic success, increased engagement, and fewer instances of behaviors that jeopardize students' health (Blum, 2005). However, specific research on the relationship of student connectedness contexts among EL students, its influence and role in language acquisition and academic achievement, remains unclear.

Callahan (2013) reported that EL students are more than twice as likely to drop out of school as their peers. This is exacerbated by the fact that EL students often belong to other groups with significant risk-factors for dropping out, such as immigration status, low parent education levels, poverty, and high mobility. Callahan noted that the ESL classes designed to remediate EL students' language deficiencies create a school that is "a prison for immigrant youth, replete with expectations of passive compliance" (p. 19). The lack of social and academic engagement in this environment plays a significant role in an EL student's decision to drop out of school. Research has also shown two-way bilingual immersion programs may be the most effective and engaging programming option for language acquisition and academic success among EL students (Calderon et al., 2011; Collier & Thomas 1989; Cummins 2014; Maxwell-Jolly et al., 2007).

Participation in such programs also benefits EL students by bridging cultural gaps and connecting with Spanish-speaking relatives (Block 2011), which builds students' resiliency.

In a review of academic research, Tellez and Waxman (2010) also found strong evidence supporting similar work by Collier and Thomas (1997) demonstrating efficacy in the creation of effective school environments for EL students. Their synthesis of the research shows that peer interactions play a critical role during language acquisition in two-way, bilingual immersion programs and that "how adults organize peer interactions holds great importance" (Tellez & Waxman, 2010, p. 113). The confluence of community resources, parent participation, and peer relationships form an educational environment that can improve school connectedness factors among EL students, increase their academic success, and accelerate English language acquisition.

While it remains necessary and fundamental to ensure teachers are trained with contemporary theories of language development and engage EL students with scaffolding strategies providing access to core content (Faltis 2013), the complexity and multitude of challenges facing EL students, and the achievement gap that exists between LTEL and RFEP students, requires additional study beyond pedagogical practices. Research related solely to language acquisition theory and the cognitive dimension of school connectedness is insufficient. Behavioral and affective dimensions, and the differences in perceptual factors of school connectedness between LTEL students and RFEP students, can be influenced by *informal learning* that occurs outside the classroom (Tellez & Waxman, 2010). Defined contexts of school connectedness such as extracurricular involvement, interpersonal relationships, and school community

(Jimerson et al., 2003), may also provide greater understanding of the struggles facing LTEL students' academic success and language acquisition.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods grounded theory study was to explore differences in perceptions of school connectedness among Long Term English Learner (LTEL) students and Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) students in a comprehensive high school setting. The study also seeks to determine whether or not there is a relationship between English language acquisition and perceptions of school connectedness among these two groups.

Research Questions

1. Do LTEL students have different perceptions of school connectedness than RFEP students?
2. What are the differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students?
3. What is the relationship between perceptions of school connectedness and language acquisition among LTEL and RFEP students?

Significance of the Problem

There is an urgent need for public school teachers and administrators in the United States to better understand the social, emotional, and educational needs of EL students. Nationally, the United States Department of Education (2014) reported that there are nearly five million EL students, representing more than 10% of public school enrollment. In California alone, the number of EL students is nearing 1.5 million. The

most commonly spoken second language among EL students in 47 of 50 states is Spanish (Pandya et al., 2011).

Academic success among all student subgroups is frequently measured by academic grade point average and results on standardized state assessments. Language acquisition is also used to measure academic progress for EL students. In a survey of 175,734 secondary EL students enrolled in 40 different school districts throughout the State of California, Olsen (2010) found that the majority (59%) of secondary EL students are Long-Term English Language Learners (LTEL) who have been in United States Schools for six or more years but have not attained English language proficiency. Failure to achieve English language proficiency upon entry into high school often means LTEL students remain in ESL or ELD courses that do not meet pre-requisite requirements for entrance into a four-year university. Consequently, the implications for EL students not achieving RFEP status before entering high school are significant and may have a long-lasting, negative impact on their post-secondary education options and career opportunities as young adults.

The long-term impact of such a large group of students routinely experiencing academic failure resulted in the passage of Assembly Bill 2193. Signed into law in September 2012, California became first state in the country to provide a definition for LTEL students and recognize them as an at-risk student population with “unique language and academic needs.” The law also requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to track EL students who are or may become LTEL (Lara, 2012). The law does not provide specific, prescriptive programming for LTEL students. It also acknowledges that a uniform definition for LTEL students and standard methods of data

collection to effectively measure the scope of the problem had not been implemented previously (Olson, 2010). However, it does articulate an urgent need in recognizing that large numbers of EL students are exiting high school in California without reaching linguistic and literary proficiency in English needed to successfully graduate and obtain post-secondary education or obtain employment. Among the 93,713 California EL students in the 2013-2014 senior class, the graduation rate was 65.3%, with a dropout rate of 20.9%. Among the total student cohort population, the graduation rate was 80.8% with dropouts at 11.6% (CDE, Data Reporting Office, 2015).

Heightening these concerns is the state's transition to common core standards for English and mathematics that will place new and higher demands on EL students (Brisk & Proctor, 2012). The new standards have a cross-curricular focus on informational text and students' ability to comprehend and express what they have read through research-based writing. Students are expected to analyze material and cite references to support their arguments (Bunch, Kibler, & Pimentel, 2012). At the same time, there is currently inadequate standards-based materials developed for bilingual programs, alignment with ELD standards, or the accompanying teacher training needed to bridge the transition for ESL programs (Brisk & Proctor, 2012; Hill, 2012).

Definitions

Academic performance context. A context of school connectedness/school engagement that crosses behavioral and cognitive dimensions and is generally measured by quantitative data such as grade point averages, standardized test scores and other

academic records, as well as student self-reporting of hours spent studying and personal effort (Jimerson et al., 2003).

Affective dimension. A dimension of school connectedness/school engagement defined by the degree to which a student feels attachment to school, teachers and peers (Jimerson et al., 2003).

Americanization movement. An educational, political, social, and cultural movement of the early 20th Century characterized by efforts at immigrant assimilation and citizenship, the adoption of American customs, beliefs and values, and the promotion of English as the common language (Hill, 1919).

Audiolingual approach. An approach to teaching second languages that emphasizes mechanical oral repetition, rote memorization, and programmed learning using stimulus-response-reward systems (Marcella, 1998).

Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS). A descriptor of the developmental process of second language acquisition characterized by mastery in conversational fluency (Cummins, 1984).

Behavioral dimension. A dimension of school connectedness/school engagement defined by students' observable actions or performance (Jimerson et al., 2003).

Bilingual education program. A general and broad descriptive term used to identify a wide variety of language acquisition models with different ideological, cultural and pedagogical approaches and target population (Freeman, 2004).

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). A descriptor of the developmental process of second language acquisition characterized by both conversational fluency in the second language, as well as and more cognitively

demanding tasks requiring the ability understand and express academic concepts on both oral and written modes (Cummins, 1984).

Classroom behavior context. A context of school connectedness/school engagement within the behavioral dimension that can be measured through qualitative responses from teachers and students related to attentiveness and work ethic or by quantitative data such as attendance records and disciplinary referrals (Jimerson et al., 2003).

Cognitive dimension. A dimension of school connectedness/school engagement defined by students' beliefs and perceptions related to all aspects of the school community and self—including peer and teacher relationships, as well as personal beliefs about self-efficacy, motivation, aspirations, and expectations (Jimerson et al., 2003).

Communicative approach. An approach to teaching second languages that uses pupil centered texts and materials emphasizing active engagement through social conversation and the use dialogue in meaningful, real-life scenarios (Marcella, 1998).

Dual language education program. A model of bilingual education that places value on primary language as a resource to develop and build upon as students master a second language. Dual language education programs include second language programs for English speakers, one-way developmental bilingual programs for ELL students, and two-way immersion programs for English and non-English speakers (Freeman, 2004).

English as a second language (ESL). A broad term used for a wide variety of programs and practices to teach English language and academic content to ELL students using a communicative approach (Freeman, 2004).

English learner (EL). English learner students (formerly classified as Limited English Proficient or LEP in the State of California), are those students whose families report a home language other than English, and lack the functional English skills necessary in listening, reading, writing, and speaking to experience academic success in a mainstream classroom (CDE, 2015).

English language development (ELD). A specialized program of English language instruction designed to develop second language proficiency in listening, reading, writing and speaking among EL students (CDE, 2015).

English-only immersion program. A structured approach to ESL instruction popular in the first half of the 20th Century that is monolingualistic, focuses primarily on English language acquisition rather than mastery of academic content, and rejects the need to preserve or build upon students' primary language (Baron, 1990; Clark, 2009).

Extracurricular involvement context. A context of school connectedness/school engagement within the behavioral dimension and can be measured through self-report questionnaires from students related to participation in sports, leadership programs or other school activities. Participation and involvement may also be measured through quantitative measures such as frequency of yearbook listings (Jimerson et al., 2003).

Interpersonal relationship context. A context of school connectedness/school engagement crossing affective, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions and can be measured through self-report questionnaires from students related to perceptions of teacher caring and peer interactions and support. (Jimerson et al., 2003).

Limited English proficient (LEP). A term formerly used in the State of California to describe EL students, LEP is still commonly found in current academic

research and literature to describe both EL students and adult immigrant populations who have not acquired functional skills in listening, reading, writing, and speaking English (CDE, 2015; Pandya et al., 2010).

Long term English language learner (LTEL). A subpopulation of EL students, an LTEL is a student in grades 6-12 and enrolled in schools in the United States for six or more years, who has remained at the same English language proficiency for two or more consecutive years and scored below average on standardized state assessments (Long-term English Learners Act, 2012).

Redesignated fluent English proficient (RFEP). Students formerly classified as EL, who have met district criteria for English language proficiency and are redesignated as fluent English proficient (CDE, 2015).

School community context. A context of school connectedness/school engagement crossing affective and cognitive dimensions that can be measured through self-report questionnaires from students related to their feelings toward school, their sense of belonging, and general perceptions of personal safety and well-being while at school (Jimerson et al., 2003).

School connectedness. Sometimes labeled as school engagement, school bonding, school attachment or school community, school connectedness refers broadly to the extent in which students feel a sense of personal and interpersonal connections within a school setting as measured within a variety of contexts (Blum & Libbey, 2004).

Structured English Immersion (SEI.) An approach to ESL instruction that seeks to teach English and transition EL students to mainstream English classes as quickly as possible (Clark, 2007).

Subtractive schooling. The introduction of a second language for primary academic content instruction before a students' primary or native language has been fully developed (Menken & Kleyn, 2010).

Total physical response approach. An approach to teaching second languages that mirrors natural language development by emphasizing listening and training then transitioning to motor skills that engage students in increasingly complex learning tasks (Asher, 1969).

Transitional bilingual education program (TBE). A program designed to transition EL students rapidly to mainstream classes instructed entirely in English—usually after a period of one to three years of academic content instruction in the students' primary language (Freeman, 2004).

Delimitations

This study was delimited to Spanish speaking LTEL and RFEP students in grades eleven and twelve, enrolled at a comprehensive high school in Stanislaus County, California.

Organization of the Study

This research study examines dimensions of school connectedness among EL students measured within five contexts. It incorporates a grounded theory design utilizing mixed qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. Chapter II includes a review of the literature, providing historical context for the study, relevant theories developed through previous research on the topics related to this study, and the importance and need for additional research. Chapter III outlines and explains the rationale for the research design and methodology used in the study, the population,

sample, and the processes for developing instrumentation and gathering data. Chapter IV is a presentation of the research findings, an analysis of the results, and an overview of the study findings. Chapter V contains a summary and conclusion with recommendations for action and additional research.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Although Roberts (2010) cautioned against the danger of trying to analyze all available research on a topic in a review of the literature, the author also emphasized the importance of providing a strong historical background. In selecting sources for this literature review, qualitative studies on the history of immigrant education and instructional practices throughout American history were vital in providing a more thorough understanding of the current status of English learner (EL) students in California. This history suggests that social and political forces have played a significant role in the development of English as a second language (ESL) instruction and educational programming for EL students.

A comprehensive analysis of the evolution of these practices requires a framework based on historical constructs. Although there may be disagreement on the significance or influence of specific events, and policies developed during various periods of American history, Ovando (2003) provided a useful framework for defining and understanding four distinct periods: *The Permissive Period: (1700s-1800s)*; *The Restrictive Period: (1880s-1960s)*; *The Opportunist Period: (1960s-1980s)*; *The Dismissive Period: (1980s-2003)*. Each period developed unique and sometimes ambiguous instructional practices based on the contemporary social and political climate. In addition to historical context, deconstruction and analysis of the dissertation topic required the identification of commonly used terms associated with ESL practices and second language acquisition, categorization of EL students, and measures of school connectedness.

An empirical approach to these overlapping topics requires careful planning – why, whom, how and when to observe (Patten, 2012). A literature review should support an empirical process that evaluates and identifies relevant sources, synthesizes and interprets both old and new materials, outlines intellectual progression in the field of study, and records scholarly disagreement within the topic (Roberts, 2010; Troyka & Hess, 2012). Both qualitative and quantitative research was reviewed in an attempt to gain a balance of what Patton (2002) referred to as the *breadth* of qualitative research with the *depth* provided by quantitative analysis. Consequently, examination of this research topic identified four primary themes: (a) historical overview of ESL practices and government policies, (b) characteristics of LTEL and RFEP students, (c) overview and significance of school connectedness factors, and (d) school connectedness factors among EL students.

Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies

The Permissive Period

Until the 1820s, the vast majority of immigrants to the United States came from England, Scotland, and Wales, followed by a wave of Irish immigrants in the 1840s and 1850s—all speaking English as their primary language (Hill, 1919). Beginning in the 1840s and continuing through the 1880s, immigrants from non-English speaking countries—Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Germany arrived in large numbers, yet they possessed the “ideals, customs, standards of living, modes of thought, and religion of the same general tenor as those of earlier settlers”(Hill, p. 610). Through what is described as a combination of tolerance, benign neglect, and legislative action, Ovando (2003) noted that in the second half of the 19th Century, 24 different states allowed multilingual

instruction, representing 10 different languages, in many private and public schools. Ovando noted that the educational system was not set up to promote bilingualism, but that it evolved through passive policies of “linguistic assimilation without coercion” (p. 4).

The Restrictive Period (Pre-World War II)

Prior to 1885, 90% of immigrants to the United States came from counties in Northwestern Europe. By 1905, 75% were from counties in Southern and Eastern Europe (Hill, 1919). Immigrant education during the Restrictive Period began with the Americanization Movement, which sought to develop good citizens. Although the movement targeted Native Americans, Mexican-Americans, and African-Americans as well, it is most closely associated with Southern and Eastern European immigrants (Ovando, 2003), and it occurred amidst international strife, growing fears related to European nationalism leading to World War I, the subsequent Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, and concerns over radical political groups in the United States. These historical events unfolded simultaneously with social, political, economic, and education reforms of the Progressive Era that were influencing domestic policies in the United States. However, the Naturalization Act of 1906 required that immigrants speak English before becoming naturalized citizens, thereby inextricably linking English language proficiency with being a good American (Dayton-Wood, 2008; Hill, 1919; Ovando, 2003; B. Ray, 2013; Wegner, 2013).

Although the Americanization movement is frequently analyzed by modern historians as rooted in paranoia, racial and ethnic prejudice, and a desire for linguistic and cultural homogeny (Ovando, 2003; Wegner, 2013), it is important for understanding

subsequent policies that impacted instructional practices for EL students that developed over the next 40 years. The movement was also significant in extending progressive education and marked the first major federal intervention in education since the Civil War. It also established structured language pedagogy for English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction for the first time (Dayton-Wood, 2008; B. Ray, 2013).

Early systems and practices of ESL instruction. As part of the Americanization movement, ESL instruction was delivered to adult immigrants through a patchwork of public and privately funded programs administered in settlement houses, factories, and churches. Nine states provided funding for evening schools beyond compulsory ages. Through the Bureau of Naturalization under the Department of Labor, the federal government allocated funds for teacher training, developing curricula and writing textbooks. It also provided direct apportionment to pay teacher salaries in areas with large numbers of immigrants (Hill, 1919; Wegner, 2013).

Instructional objectives during this period were framed by three distinct groups that encouraged immigration but had very different views on purpose (B. Ray, 2013). The first group, led by Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, advocated for complete assimilation in speech, culture, and politics. A second group, represented by progressives like Dewey, supported cultural pluralism, and a third advocated for a redefined melting pot—the creation of an amalgamated citizen “that would transcend all ethnicities” (B. Ray, 2013, p.19). B. Ray argued that a fourth group, which advocated the racial superiority of the Nordic or Anglo-Saxon race, rejected integration altogether and would eventually shut down the Americanization movement by the mid-1920s. While a philosophy of linguistic and cultural homogeneity may have prevailed, some contemporary

texts, instructional manuals, and government publications during this period also supported pedagogical approaches to language instruction that were developmental, transitional, and respectful of native cultures.

A manual designed by the Bureau of Education (U. S. Department of Interior, 1927) to provide assistance to those teaching or being trained to teach English to immigrant students, set as a primary objective of Americanization: “Breaking down racial prejudice between native-born and foreign born” (p.2). The tract also promoted personal contact and encouraged teachers to immerse themselves in immigrant culture by attending social events, cultural celebrations, and other activities. It recommended extensively researching immigrants’ native countries for a detailed study on challenges facing immigrants to the United States, as well as the social, cultural, educational, economic, political, and historical background of their home land. Rather than advocating a strict homogenous definition of an American, the manual also stated that immigrants contribute to the *composite structure* of the United States, and instructors should, “clearly realize the value of this cooperation and of the contribution of each race, according to its own particular genius and traditions, as these contributing elements are ever entering into the molding of a new national life that is still in the making” (U. S. Department of Interior, p. 3).

During this early part of the Restrictive Period, immigrant education and ESL instruction for adults and children occurred in a wide variety of settings: factories, settlement houses, churches, community centers, and public schools (Dayton-Wood, 2008; Hill, 1919; B. Ray 2013; Wegner, 2013). Progressive idealism dominated the educational philosophy and instructional practices of this era. These American

progressive educators were influenced by pedagogical practices advocated in the late 18th and early 19th century under Swiss educator Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi and German philosopher Friedrich Froebel (Sibler, 1965). Both advocated instruction that was child-centered and practical.

Applied to the teaching of citizenship and English language to new immigrants, leading progressives such as Jane Addams and John Dewey both rejected what they perceived to be *coercive* elements of Americanization and believed that American nationalism was multicultural (Wegner, 2013). Such views were not shared by all within the progressive movement. Though sometimes characterized as racist, educational policies that advocated Anglo-Saxon traditions and English-only instruction were rooted more in nativist ideology. Galindo (2011) differentiated between nativism and racism by noting that racism seeks to establish a racial hierarchy based on perceptions of superiority, while nativism distinguishes between those who are *true members* of a nation and those who represent foreign or alien cultures, languages, political ideologies, religions, or race.

The influence of nativism during this period can be seen in the written ESL texts and instructional materials developed by two prominent authors from the era: Henry Goldberger and Peter Roberts. Korman (1965) noted that the lessons designed by Roberts in his work as the head of the industrial department of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) prior to World War I were eventually adopted by many large American corporations to teach English, workplace vocabulary, and safety practices to immigrant employees. Strategies from the Roberts Method also found their way into ESL texts used by immigrant children in public schools. Because ESL was a new

endeavor in education, instructional materials during this era relied heavily on direct methods of instruction (Baron, 1990; Dayton-Wood, 2008; Korman, 1965). Roberts emphasized an aural/oral method, and his system included 30 lessons based on lessons that included home, work, and business life. Although Roberts opposed compulsory English education and espoused conversational methodology that mirrored mother tongue acquisition, Baron (1990) observed that, in practice, Roberts' texts called for repetition and drill using simple sentences "painfully broken down into component parts" (p.159).

In his role as a public school principal and ESL instructor for Columbia Teachers College, Goldberger also rejected mandatory English instruction for immigrants and advocated the use of themes to teach language—such as visiting a doctor or opening a door. This would be accompanied by pantomime by the instructor, question and answer with pupils and the instructor, and acting out short dialogues based on situations students would encounter in everyday life (Baron, 1990). Like Roberts' work, researchers found that the simplicity of the linguistic frames and monotony of repetition used by Goldberger were ineffective when applied to both adult and school-aged ESL students, and the methodology was rooted in ideology rather than sound pedagogy (Baron, 1990; Dayton-Wood, 2008; Korman, 1965).

Instructional practices for school-aged immigrants during this time were even more dogmatic than adult education programs in linking ESL lessons with patriotism and good citizenship. Baron (1990) observed that the goals of Americanism were embodied in the *Good English* campaigns found in American classrooms throughout the late teens and early 1920s. These campaigns, "consciously attached the problem of what the schools considered the contamination of English by foreigners. They sought to ridicule

and root out the errors of the non-native speaker” (Baron, 1990, p. 155). Baron offered examples in which school children earned extra points for reporting classmates’ language errors to their teachers. He noted that the Good English campaign was egalitarian in that its objectives were assigned to all students—including native English speakers. The campaign also produced *loyalty oaths* and pledges in which school children promised not to dishonor their country with poor speech, and vowed to speak in pleasant, clear, and concise tones.

Mexican-American immigrant experiences. The Americanization Movement is most closely associated with the experiences of immigrants from Central and Southern Europe who settled primarily in large urban centers located in the Eastern and Midwestern regions of the United States. However, large-scale immigration from Mexico to the Southwestern United States also occurred during The Restrictive Period, and the ideological policies associated with the Americanization Movement were applied to this immigrant population as well. Similar to European immigrants during the Permissive Period, immigrants of Mexican descent lived in communities where bilingualism was initially allowed. These experiences were different from those of European immigrants as ethnic and linguistic identity changed over time. Noting the uniqueness and long-history of Spanish-speaking populations in the United States, dating to the early 1500s, Achugar and Oteiza (2009) contended that language ideology is not homogenous and has been constructed and reconstructed over time—particularly in southwest border communities where interactions between English and Spanish have created cultures that can’t be recognized as singularly American or Mexican.

Following the Mexican-American War, bilingualism continued in many parts of the southwest, but restrictive and sometimes contradictory policies promoting monolingualism began to emerge. Although California recognized Spanish language rights in its original constitution, it established English as its official language in 1879 and was soon followed by Wisconsin and Illinois (Baron, 1990; Galindo, 2011). Texas also passed English-only laws in the late 1800s and early 1900s, while the numbers of Spanish-speaking residents in New Mexico and Arizona territories delayed statehood (Baron, 1990; Ovando, 2003; Zazula, 2014).

Illustrating the contradictions inherent in these language policies, New Mexico's applications for statehood were rejected for more than 60 years because its constitution protected Spanish language rights. However, when finally admitted as a state in 1912, New Mexico entered the union as the only state with a constitution recognizing two official languages: English and Spanish. At the same time, the United States senate rejected Arizona's attempt to enter the union with an English only provision for voting and only admitted the territory after this requirement was removed (Baron, 1990; Zazula, 2014).

Zazula (2014) theorized that statehood status for New Mexico was ultimately achieved by promoting the idea that Spanish-speaking residents of New Mexico were European elite descended from early Spanish colonists. They allied themselves with Anglo-Americans in the territory and were not considered to be part of the mixed-race (Spanish and Indian) populations associated with Mexico that were considered inferior and incapable of self-governance. In this context, Americanization as practiced in the

Southwest created a racial hierarchy apart from the nativist practices and policies that sought to create an idealized American citizen.

While this political tactic may have proven successful in achieving statehood for New Mexico, demographic changes throughout the Southwest made such claims of racial purity impossible just a few years later. Ruiz (2001) observed that the economic and political chaos of the Mexican Revolution transformed former colonial cities and towns throughout the Southwest into enclaves where new, Mexican immigrants outnumbered Mexican Americans two to one.

The Mexican population of Los Angeles grew from 3,000- 5,000 residents in 1900 to more than 150,000 by 1930, and Ruiz (2001) and Galindo (2011) noted several important differences between the practices of the Americanization movement as applied to European immigrants and those targeting immigrants from Mexico. Policies in the Southwest promoted, both directly and indirectly, segregation over assimilation. Schools were run by Anglo administrators and school boards with very few teachers of Mexican background. Ruiz found that more than 80% of school districts in Southern California enrolled students of Mexican descent in segregated schools.

Americanization efforts aimed at European adult immigrant populations targeted institutions such as churches, settlement houses, and factories in large cities. Although almost all were of European descent, racial stereotyping as well as cultural and religious differences between the largely Anglo, Protestant teachers and their Catholic pupils often created tension and resentment (Baron, 1990; Dayton-Wood, 2008; Korman, 1965).

These differences were exacerbated in services provided to Mexican immigrant populations since they lived in predominantly rural, agricultural communities throughout

the Southwest and were highly mobile. Educational programs were aimed primarily at women, and provided by *home teachers* (Galindo, 2011) who were “usually single, middle-class Anglo women (that) visited Mexican homes and taught sanitation, the English language, household duties, and civic lessons” (Galindo, 2011, p. 332).

In larger urban settings, Gunnell (2013) explained that Roman Catholic charities were more successful in bridging cultural and linguistic divisions. Although not all nuns spoke Spanish, the Sisters of Charity, operating in the predominantly Mexican neighborhood of Boyle Heights in Los Angeles, shared a common religious identity with Mexican immigrants fleeing persecution during the Mexican Revolution. These sisters performed the type of settlement work associated with secular social reformers in Eastern and Midwestern cities in support of Americanization efforts.

B. Ray (2013) observed that by the mid-1920s, the Americanization movement had run its course. Policies aimed at assimilation and developing good citizens were replaced by legislative efforts to restrict immigration altogether. Following the passage of the National Origins Act of 1924, which placed strict restrictions on immigration, interest in ESL instruction also waned. As the Great Depression began, so also did the mass deportation of Mexican immigrants. In 1922, Mexican immigrants filled between 50 and 85 % of all low-wage agriculture jobs, 60 % of mining jobs and between 60% and 90 % of railroad track crews in the Southwest (Galindo, 2011; Gutierrez, 1995). As unemployment rose during the 1930s, communities across the country implemented policies aimed at repatriating or deporting Mexicans. It is reported that about one-third of the Mexican population of the United State—an estimated 60 % of whom were United States citizens was returned to Mexico between 1931 and 1934 “either summarily

deported by immigration agencies or persuaded to depart voluntarily by duplicitous social workers who greatly exaggerated the opportunities awaiting south of the border” (Ruiz, 2001, p. 25).

The Restrictive Period (Post-World War II)

World War II ushered in both new practices in ESL instruction and a second wave of immigration from Mexico. The oral or audiolingual approach to ESL instruction introduced during this time varied little from the techniques developed by Roberts during the early days of the Americanization movement. Marcella (1998) observed that the method was deployed to teach foreign languages quickly to United States servicemen during the war and relied on new technologies such as audio tapes. Later called the aural/oral approach, and popular through the early 1960s, the methodology was grounded in the work of anthropologists, linguists, and missionaries and utilized behaviorist theories that suggested language is best learned by a system of stimulus-response-reward.

Central to this movement was the work of the English Language Institute (ELI) at the University of Michigan under the leadership of Charles Fries and later, Robert Lado (Kramsch, 2007; Marcella, 1998). During the late 1950s and early 1960s, the ELI produced a series of texts that were used for their core ESL teaching program. Although Kramsch notes that many of these theories have been discarded, the work of the ELI was significant in that it applied scientific research to pedagogical practices and training for ESL instruction coinciding with the end of the Restrictive Period.

As new methods for teaching ESL and foreign language were developed during World War II, resurgence in immigration from Mexico also began. Recognizing a labor shortage with military deployment for the war effort, the federal government launched

the Emergency Farm Labor Program in 1942. This legislation was also known as the Bracero Program, and Gutierrez (1995), stated that government policies at this time were significant in ushering in a new period of large-scale legal and illegal immigration from Mexico. He further argued that returning Mexican-American veterans strategically capitalized upon the human rights issues of the war effort to organize communities in the Southwest and demand civil rights for Mexican-Americans and Mexican nationals in the United States.

A significant event in these early civil rights efforts occurred in 1945, when parents Gonzalo and Felicitas Mendez attempted to enroll their three children in the 17th Street School in Westminster, California. Denied entrance, the Mendez family, along with four other Mexican families, filed suit against the Westminster, Garden Grove, Santa Ana, and El Modena school districts in Orange County. The suit was filed on behalf of their children and five thousand other children (Ruiz, 2001). Using practices dating to the early days of the Americanization movement, these school districts and many like them throughout the Southwest remained segregated. Strum (2014) observed that the Mexican schools had inferior facilities and second-hand books. The school day was shortened for children to work the fields. The Mexican schools taught boys subjects like gardening, boot-making, blacksmithing and carpentry, while girls studied sewing and homemaking, thus preparing the children for low-paying manual labor and domestic service.

Defense attorneys representing the districts argued that Mexican students were sent to different schools based on their lack of English proficiency, but they also made statements suggesting that Mexican students were intellectually inferior to white students.

(Ruiz, 2001; Strum, 2014). The attorney for the plaintiffs succeeded in demonstrating that many of the Mexican students were already proficient in English and called researchers as expert witnesses to successfully challenge many assumptions made about Mexican American students. Using testimony and data that showed segregated Mexican American students at one school had higher standardized test scores than their white peers (Ruiz, 2001), the presiding federal judge issued a decision in favor of the defendants, noting that the practices of the Orange County districts violated the Fourteenth Amendment and that the Mexican-American students were being segregated not because of language barriers or sound instructional practices but because of their racial backgrounds. After losing again on appeal, the Orange County school districts desegregated.

As a result of the *Mendez Case*, the Anderson Bill passed in 1947 eliminated all California school segregation codes, and the *Mendez Case* would be used as precedent to desegregate school districts in communities throughout the Southwest. The United States Supreme Court would eventually rule school segregation unconstitutional in 1954 (Gutierrez, 1995; Ruiz, 2001; Strum, 2014).

The Opportunist Period

Ovando (2003) observed that although World War II served as a “wake-up call” regarding the need to address foreign language instruction in the United States, instructional practices were both costly and inefficient. Additionally, he argued that at the same time the government was encouraging foreign language instruction, it was also advancing policies within K-12 public education that devalued native language instruction for its students and continued practices that promoted monolingual English

instruction. The beginning of what he calls The Opportunist Period corresponds with both the civil rights movement of the 1960s and the reversal of policies adopted during The Restrictive Period. Citing Molesky (1988), Ovando demonstrated that growth in multilingualism begins in the 1960s with the Civil Rights Act and the creation of the Office of Civil Rights. Even more significant for a rebirth in instruction in languages other than English, were changes in immigration laws:

The 1965 Immigration Act revoked the Naturalization Act of 1906 and terminated the 1924 national origin quota system. As a result of the 1965 Immigration Act, larger numbers of Asians and Latin Americans started to enter the country. With this demographic shift, more language-minority students from these regions of the world appeared in U.S. classrooms, where bilingual instruction was needed. (p. 7)

An unexpected catalyst for bilingual programs in the 1960s was the Cuban Revolution of 1959. Field (2011) and Ovando (2003) both pointed to the plight of exiled Cuban refugees as an early example of the implementation of a successful two-way dual immersion program. Because exiled Cubans believed their stay in the United States would be short, they sought to educate their children in English while also maintaining their native Spanish language. Both Field and Ovando observed that the refugees included many well-educated professionals, members of the intelligentsia, and political classes of Cuba, creating an immigrant population that was more assertive of their rights while also providing a significant number of qualified bilingual teachers. Many were descended from Spanish settlers and did not encounter the same level of racism as Mexican immigrants. As a result, Field opined:

Almost from the beginning, *cubanos*, as a special political case, perhaps, received federal assistance through the Cuban Refugee Program, which helped get Cuban teachers recertified in the educational system of Florida. *He further explains:* In Dade County, ESL programs were quickly set up, and a program was begun in 1961 that provided for Spanish instruction for Spanish speakers. (p. 218)

The establishment of successful dual bilingual immersion programs in Florida was unique. Although the United States Supreme Court had issued a ruling as early as 1923 stating that a Nebraska law requiring English-only instruction violated the 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution, the decision was not enforced. ESL programs remained largely subtractive and monolingual English over the next 40 years—with the primary exception being Spanish language instruction offered in segregated school districts throughout the Southwest (Field, 2011; Ovando, 2003; Petrzela, 2010; Ruiz, 2001).

As the civil rights movement grew during the 1960s, efforts to address the needs of language minority students also increased. Alarmed by a drop-out rate of more than 50% of Spanish-speaking students by eighth grade in California (Petrzela, 2010), a bipartisan coalition of California's Republican and Democrat state legislators passed Senate Bill 53, signed into law in 1967. The bill not only officially ended California's 1872 statute requiring English only instruction in public schools, but in analyzing the bill's significance further, Petrzela observes that it also provided "a more specific measure that forthrightly acknowledged the place of culture and the value of the Spanish language in bilingual classrooms" (p. 407). Taken within the context of a volatile political climate and enormous cultural changes of the late 1960s, Petrzela acknowledged a remarkable spirit of cooperation among politicians and bureaucrats to devise a model system to more adequately meet the needs of a growing Spanish-speaking student population.

These local and state reform efforts were quickly matched by the federal government. Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), known

as the Bilingual Education Act (BEA), was passed by Congress with little opposition and signed into law on January 2, 1968. Ovando (2003) and Petrzela (2010) both have observed that although the BEA contained a great deal of ambiguity, it was a watershed event in the education of immigrant students. The legislation's greatest impact, according to Ovando, was a departure from the "Darwinian sink-or-swim educational practices so prevalent from the 1880s through the 1960s"(p. 8) and a new approach in which "language-minority students' ancestral languages and cultures were recognized in some form in the contents and processes of school life" (p. 8).

Return to Progressive education philosophies. In general, the 1960s also saw a return, and expansion of, a progressive philosophy of education mirroring the political climate of the time. Progressivism came to prominence in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and had a profound impact on instructional practices and pedagogy through the late 1940s. Noting that bilingual and ESL programs developed after passage of the BEA were, "guided initially more by goodwill and intuition than by specific pedagogical principles based on empirical research" (p. 8), Ovando (2003) nevertheless credited both legislation and community activism for a rapid growth in school programs that addressed not only academics but also the social, emotional, linguistic, and cultural needs of EL students during this time.

Ascribed to educational practices during the Opportunist Period, progressive educators expanded their philosophy beyond earlier child-centered pedagogical approaches that had altered the traditional classroom hierarchy and roles of the instructor and pupil. An underlying assumption of this new progressive philosophy, defined by the Columbia University's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Teaching Center (2015) is

that teaching is a *political act* and instructors are *political agents*. Modern progressive pedagogy also emphasizes the “psycho-social dimensions of teaching: empathy and cultural sensitivity.”

Sedlack (1993) also suggested that social justice concerns and issues of empowerment raised by progressives during the Opportunist Period significantly impacted government policies towards education. A sharp increase in state funds, as well as federal revenue after passage of the ESEA, was the direct result of efforts to reduce inequities and provide supplementary social services, nutritional programs, and job training for disadvantaged youth. These programs also contained provisions that attempted to connect disenfranchised groups by including parents or representative community interests in the decision-making process.

Empowerment and its impact on ESL systems and practices. During the 1970s, empowerment movements directly resulted in more bilingual and bicultural educational programs in communities with large Mexican-American populations, such as East Los Angeles, West San Antonio, Kingsville, and Crystal City, Texas (Gutierrez, 1995; Olneck, 2009). By the early 1970s, resurgence of progressive practices was also evident in both policy and practices associated with ESL instruction. In addition to creating more bilingual programs, ESL methods became more student-centered and research based. Marcella (1998) cited both the TPR technique developed by James Asher and the communicative approach influenced by the work of British and European linguists as examples of ESL practices that emerged in the United States during the 1970s.

Referencing studies showing that American foreign language pupils had almost no second language fluency after two years of study, Asher (1966) tested a strategy called the total physical response technique, which sought to develop listening fluency by having students listen to commands in a foreign language, and then immediately respond with a physical action. Asher's experimental training began with "simple one-word utterances, but within thirty minutes, the morphological and syntactical complexity of the commands" (p. 4) was increased. Asher's research suggests that the audiolingual approach to learning a foreign language, which dominated ESL instructional methodology throughout the Restrictive Period, fails because it attempts to "teach almost simultaneously the listening and speaking of a foreign language" (1966, p. 13). His experiments with both adults and children demonstrated significant acceleration in comprehension and retention of foreign language when subjects performed kinesthetic responses based on oral commands. His research further revealed that when speaking was introduced, listening comprehension was reduced and the facilitating effects of physical action responses were negated if translation is used in the training.

The work of Asher and other linguists from the late 1960s into the early 1980s found its way into popular ESL textbooks used during this period. Marcella (1998) noted that Asher's (1977) *Learning Another Language Through Actions: The Complete Teachers Guidebook* advocates a student-centered approach to make the work fun, by using commands that are "playful, silly, crazy, bizarre, and zany" (p. 6). Also, published in 1977, *The Threshold Level for Modern Languages in Schools*, by J.A. van Ek, is characteristic of a number of functional approaches developed during this period, representing what Marcella called, the communicative approach. Central to this theory is

the idea that language is not only a set of oral habits leading to linguistic competence, but the goal of teaching a new language must also include communicative competence (Marcella, 1998). ESL materials using the communicative approach are student-centered and emphasize communication over grammatical correctness by providing authentic situations with frequent practice and student interaction.

Litigation and legislation. Also shaping ESL instructional practices during the Opportunist Period were federal court cases that provided greater clarity and prescriptive measures for bilingual education (Field, 2011; Ovando, 2003; Ptrezela, 2010; Wiley, 2002). Field argued that the first and most significant of these cases was *Lau v. Nichols* (1974). *Lau* moved beyond the provisions of the BEA as the plaintiffs also cited Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and successfully argued they were discriminated against on the basis of race and national origin. The case originated in the San Francisco Unified School district and was filed on behalf of Chinese American parents and students. Wiley (2010) noted that approximately 63% of Chinese speaking students in the district received no ESL instruction, 22% received part-time ESL instruction (usually 40 minutes a day), and only 15% received full-time ESL instruction. Among those receiving specialized instruction in English, only 24% were taught by bilingual Chinese speaking teachers.

In its ruling, the Supreme Court found that the educational programming for Chinese language students in San Francisco violated the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which bans discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The court moved beyond the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment as cited in *Mendez* and specifically referenced racial discrimination. Field (2011) contended that the *Lau* decision provided Congress with direction that resulted in the passage of the Equal

Education Opportunity Act (EEOA), requiring districts receiving bilingual education grant funds from the federal government to address the needs of EL students. These federal remedies, however, specifically designated that such programs be transitional, with the goal being full proficiency in English.

Lau remedies issued by the United States Office of Civil Rights in 1975 more clearly defined suitable instruction practices as well as standards for EL students and bilingual instructors (Ovando, 2003). These standards were applied to all districts serving more than 20 EL students speaking the same language. Districts were also required to provide evidence of effective programming. Although Ovando credited the *Lau* remedies with “redirecting school districts to provide strong versions of bilingual education for language-minority students to enable them to become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural” (p. 10), when the BEA was reauthorized in 1978, further limitations were placed on bilingual programs that emphasized the retention of native language. Field (2011) compared the intent of *Lau* with the political realities in Washington, DC:

The tide had changed again, and there was growing pressure to limit reliance on heritage languages and to focus on what was perceived as *the goal of bilingual education*, namely full proficiency in English. In an almost complete reversal of the spirit and intent of Civil Rights legislation, heritage-language maintenance programs were no longer eligible for federal funding. (p. 193)

A second landmark federal court case significantly influencing policies towards EL students and ESL instruction during the Opportunist Period was *Castaneda v. Pickard* (1981). *Castaneda* strengthened EEOA by establishing a three-part test to determine whether a school district’s plan for EL students meets constitutional requirements under the 14th Amendment and adheres to the legislative intent of EEOA. The plan must be supported by (a) sound educational theory based on research and qualified expertise, (b)

sufficient resources and personnel for implementation, and (c) include sound practices that not only demonstrate English acquisition, but knowledge of subject matter content as well (Haas & Gort, 2009; Ovando, 2003; Sutton, Cornelius, & McDonald-Gordon, 2012).

Providing context to the strategies that evolved as a result of these mandates, Marcella (1998) referred to characteristic ESL practices from the early 1980s until the late 1990s as the *process approach*. Although the process approach focuses mainly on writing, it recognizes developmental stages that include prewriting, writing and composing, and rewriting. Marcella's contemporary assessment noted that the last two stages involve significant oral communication through peer editing and teacher conferencing. The prewriting stage involves discovery strategies. He also addresses recent developments including *schema theory*: the use of pre-reading strategies that serve as *advance organizers*. Marcella contended that these strategies, when applied to ESL instruction, can increase comprehension and allow easier integration of new knowledge through "cultural explanations, discussion of key vocabulary, pre-questioning on students' prior knowledge of the subject or a preview of the organization of a passage" (p. 12). Whether implied or explicitly stated, linguistic theories and ESL practices that developed during the 1970s and 1980s suggest a desire by researchers to address the concerns raised by the *Lau* and *Castaneda* cases. Both research and testimony included in the Congressional record during passage of the EEOA supported the efficacy of bilingual programs as a more effective approach to teaching second-language acquisition than English immersion programs (Haas & Gort, 2009).

Many research studies and emerging theories of language acquisition during the 1980s focused on ESL programming and differences between transitional bilingual

education and dual language programs for EL students. Freeman (2004) observed that transitional bilingual education programs are designed to use the primary language only until a student is proficient in English, at which time he or she is mainstreamed to English-only classes, often without ESL support. This early exit approach to bilingual education gained political support at a time when contradictory research suggested that while EL students learn conversational English quickly, it takes at least another five years to master academic English (Collier & Thomas, 1989; Cummins, 1984; Hakuta et al., 2000). This apparent dichotomy between the academic research of the time and public policy towards bilingual education led to what Ovando (2003) called The Dismissive Period.

The Dismissive Period

In 1988, Title VII funds for English-only programs were increased, but compliance standards developed after the *Castaneda* decision were never implemented (Ovando, 2003). At the same time, public sentiment began to turn against bilingual education programs. In California, businessman and political activist Ron Unz authored Proposition 227, claiming that bilingual programs were ineffective and that EL students were staying in them too long. However, at the time Proposition 227 was passed by California voters in 1998, only about 30% of California's 1.4 million EL students were enrolled in bilingual programs (Cummins, 1998; Ovando, 2003; Yamagami, 2012).

The ballot initiative's language included "findings and declarations" that framed the issue in terms of equity, stating:

English is the national public language of the United States and of the State of California," and that because it is also the "leading world language for science, technology, and international business . . . Immigrant parents are eager to have their children acquire a good knowledge of English, thereby allowing them to

fully participate in the American Dream of economic and social advancement.
(Proposition 227, Chapter 3, Article 1, 1998)

Article 1 also stated that students learn English quickly when immersed at a young age and admonishes California's public schools for unsatisfactory performance and misuse of financial resources on "unproven programs."

According to Yamagami's (2012) interpretive policy analysis, the success of Proposition 227 was the result of four key themes. First, although Proposition 227 did not actually abolish bilingual education, its cumbersome requirement that parents meet personally with school staff and inspect instructional materials before consenting to participate in a bilingual program reinforced supporters' claims that most immigrant parents opposed bilingual education. Second, Yamagami believed this provision was also part of a fundamental shift in political communication that delegitimized bilingual education by portraying bilingual education supporters, educators, and researchers as political activists motivated by self-interest "seeking personal financial gain from public funding of bilingual programs" (p.145) at the expense of both EL and native English speaking students. Third, supporters succeeded in portraying bilingual education as simply a method to acquire English rather than a developmental process in which EL students gain proficiency in two languages. Throughout the 1998 campaign, Proposition 227 supporters also described bilingual programs as Spanish-only (Yamagami, 2012) suggesting that native language instruction were the cause of current failures and Structured English Immersion (SEI) programs as the remedy. A fourth and significant theme that emerged from Proposition 227 is its prima facie declaration on the primacy of the English language. While Yamagami (2012) noted that the Proposition 227 campaign generally avoided representing English as an official language, its domination as the

international language of science and industry necessitated that English language instruction be viewed as a right afforded to all students. According to Yamagami, the success of this messaging in California, led voters in Arizona and Massachusetts to pass almost identical measures authored by Unz, while a third made the ballot in Colorado but was defeated.

Cummins (2002) noted that both sides of the Proposition 227 debate claimed “equity as their guiding principle” (108), but their analyses of the cause of EL students’ underperformance differed significantly. Proponents of Proposition 227 stated that immigrant students were receiving diluted instruction in English, resulting in academic deficiencies. Opponents of the initiative claimed that EL students needed a longer period of academic content instruction in their native language to develop the cognitive foundation needed to acquire English. Cummins argued that subtractive schooling combined with a deep rooted history of oppressive power relations, discrimination and biased instructional practices, created a strongly held conviction by many bilingual education advocates that public education created a sense of shame, rather than affirmation of students’ native languages and culture.

Conflicting Research on ESL Systems and Practices

Ovando (2003) stated that the public policy regarding ESL instruction is often framed by intuitive beliefs about language acquisition that ignore empirical data and are often rooted in earlier nativist policies aimed almost exclusively at linguistic and cultural assimilation while ignoring students’ cognitive development. Citing attempts by the United States Congress in 1999 to impose a two-year time limit for EL students to learn English, Ovando observed that policy makers also overlook the complex background

variables that impact ESL instruction and rely too heavily on program evaluation rather than academic research. Contrasting the public policies advocated during this time, existing research seemed to support bilingual dual immersion as the most effective program for EL students. These studies also reinforced the theory that the developmental process of mastering English as a second language takes much longer than the 1 to 2 years required by the immersion strategies outlined in Proposition 227.

Proponents of bilingual education claim public policy that led to immersion programming did not adequately address theoretical constructs that distinguished between basic oral fluency in English and academic proficiency (Brisk et al., 2012; Yamagami, 2012). Although a number of studies address this topic, the concepts of Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), developed by Cummins and refined over the past 35 years, are widely recognized as terms that highlight the differences between conversational fluency and academic language proficiency for EL students. These studies recognize that language acquisition is a lengthy developmental process (Street & Hornberger, 2008).

This failure to distinguish between EL students' acquisition of BICS and CALP and its negative impact was explored in a Canadian study by Cummins (1984) that analyzed over 400 referrals and psychological assessments conducted on EL students. Cummins found that teachers often assumed that EL students who mastered oral fluency in English but were not performing academically were likely to have a learning disability. As a result, Cummins concluded that bilingual students were disproportionately and inappropriately placed in special education classes. Supporting Cummins' theories, Collier and Thomas (1989) conducted a study of 2,014 EL students in the United States,

with a sample that included 75 different first language backgrounds. Sixty-five percent of the students were Asian and 20 % Hispanic. Analyzing the results of standardized test scores covering a period of 10 years, the authors concluded that even among the most advantaged EL students, CALP takes five to 10 years. In a study of nearly 2,000 EL students in two different San Francisco School Districts, Hakuta et al. (2000) found that it takes three to five years to obtain BICS in English and four to seven years to achieve CALP. The study also found a negative correlation to the acceleration rate of oral and academic proficiency in English with variables such as socioeconomic status and parent education levels.

Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, and Christian (2005) conducted a literature review of empirical studies published in peer-reviewed journals in the United States and focusing on the language, literacy, and academic achievement of EL students. The authors noted that most of the published research focused on low-income EL students who are native Spanish speakers. The studies also demonstrate that oral BICS in English requires several years, and as these skills increase, so does CALP. The studies reviewed by Genesee et al. (2005) showed that a combination of direct and interactive approaches are most effective, and there are important similarities in the development of literacy skills in both English and home languages. The authors concluded through these existing studies that there is strong correlation between bilingual proficiency and biliteracy related to overall academic achievement.

According to Krashen and McField (2005), a synthesis of research studies covering the years between 1968 and 1991 confirmed that students in bilingual programs normally outperform students in English only programs on tests of academic achievement

in English. The authors noted that while past narrative literature reviews of these studies provided similar results, they were based on a simple tally process in which the sum total of the characterizations of each study receive equal weighting “regardless of how big a difference it finds in educational outcomes, how many subjects are involved, or how rigorous its research methods” (p.7). These two separate meta-analyses were conducted by Rolstad, Mahone, and Glass (2008) and by Slavin and Cheung (2005).

The research conducted in both meta-analyses concluded that two-way bilingual immersion programs produced higher scores for EL students, as measured by English reading scores. Slavin and Cheung (2005) found that across 17 studies, 12 favored bilingual education programs and five showed no differences. Among those studies focusing on students whose native language was Spanish, nine of 13 studies favored bilingual instruction and four demonstrated no difference. Similarly, Rolstad et al. (2005) concluded that empirical evidence from 17 studies using standardized tests as outcome measures showed that two-way bilingual immersion programs yielded better results than transitional bilingual immersion programs. The authors conclude that “current policies implemented in California, Arizona and Massachusetts, which ban or greatly discourage the use of the native language for instructional purposes cannot be justified” (p. 590).

Contradicting this research, Rossell and Baker (1996) found no evidence to support either transitional bilingual education or dual bilingual education programs as superior to Structured English Immersion (SEI) programs. The authors evaluated more than 300 studies and found only 72 that were “methodologically acceptable” (p.1) and concluded that existing studies also rely too heavily on research performed outside of the

United States in which heritage languages are confused with native languages; therefore, the program participants, often self-selected, are not truly EL students.

This criticism occurs in later evaluations by Rossell as well. Analyzing longitudinal research by Collier and Thomas (1997, 2002) purporting to show the efficacy of two-way bilingual immersion programs, Rossell (2008) concluded that the authors' work contains unsubstantiated assertions based on flawed research methodology and student population samples not representative of EL students found in most American schools. Cummins (1998) claimed that Rossell and Baker (1996) distorted his research and the studies of other researchers. In concluding that reading comprehension was worse for 83% of students in transitional bilingual education programs, Cummins maintained the authors incorrectly identified successful programs as structured immersion or English only programs that were actually bilingual or, in some instances, trilingual programs.

The significant political and academic debates that surrounded ESL instruction during the Dismissive Period also occurred at a time when the demographics of the immigrant population in the United States also changed. The largest increase during this time was among Spanish-speaking EL students from Mexico, with Spanish now the largest native language among EL students in the United States, and growth in EL student populations occurring at a rate of over 200% in nine different states (Batalova & McHugh, 2010; Pandya et al., 2011; Zong & Batalova, 2015). The obstacles of overcoming politics and ideological bias, while trying to draw reliable, empirical data from such a wide variety of ESL programming options and shifting demographics is a

challenge acknowledged by researchers on both sides (Cummins, 1998; Rolstad et al., 2005; Rossell & Baker, 1996).

Recent Developments

In recent years, interest in ESL instruction appears to have shifted from programming discussions to a more focused look at the demographics of EL students, their linguistic and academic outcomes, socially and culturally responsive classrooms, and contexts of school connectedness. In California, scholars and policy experts have become concerned about the consequences associated with Long Term English Learner (LTEL) students: those EL students who have been in the United States for six or more years, have not mastered English, and struggle academically (Callahan, 2013; Lara, 2012; Olsen, 2010). These policy discussions are now being driven more by empirical data than political rhetoric.

As of 2015, Arizona remains as the only state that officially bans bilingual education altogether (Rolstand, MacSwan, & Mahony 2012; Sutton et al., 2012). California has more than 300 dual-language immersion programs, up from 201 in 2006 (CDE, Language Policy & Leadership Office, 2009). Additionally, the number of high school students awarded California's "State Seal of Biliteracy," which recognizes students who demonstrate high levels of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English, increased from approximately 10,000 in 2012 to over 24,500 in 2014 (California Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2014).

Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students

Despite the large number of EL students obtaining proficiency in both English and Spanish in California, an even larger number have remained LTEL. National

statistics are difficult to determine, but estimates put the number of LTEL students at more than 50% —with calculations suggesting that between 50% and 70% of EL students in high school were born in the United States (Batalova, Fix, & Murray, 2007; Kim & Garcia, 2014; Olsen, 2010). In California, a comprehensive survey of 175,734 EL students in grades 6-12, comprising 31% of the state’s EL population and representing each region in the state— including urban, suburban, and rural areas—was conducted using student data from the 2008-2009 school year. The results showed that the LTEL subpopulation of EL students was 59%, with LTEL students representing more than 75% of the EL population in 13 of the 40 districts surveyed (Olsen, 2010).

The lack of available research on LTEL students combined with data showing that EL students who do not achieve academic language proficiency by high school have much higher rates of failure (Callahan, 2005, 2013; Olsen, 2010) led to the passage of Assembly Bill 2193 in California. In amending Section 1 of Education Code 313.1, Lara (2012) provided a specific definition for LTEL students:

Long-term English learner means an English learner who is enrolled in any of grades 6 to 12, inclusive, has been enrolled in schools in the United States for more than six years, has remained at the same English language proficiency level for two or more consecutive years as determined by the English language development test identified or developed pursuant to Section 60810, or any successor test, and scores far below basic or below basic on the English language arts standards-based achievement test administered pursuant to Section 60640, or any successor test. (Press release)

However, the law does not provide specific ESL programming recommendations for LTEL students, but it does mandate that the California Department of Education (CDE) track the numbers of students who are or may become LTEL. While acknowledging the law and addressing the need to align systems to address the needs of LTEL students (Sanchez, 2015), the CDE has yet to fully develop administrative regulations and create a

systematic process of data collection to determine annually the number of students who are or may become LTEL.

The academic experiences of LTEL students may support earlier research (Callahan, 2005; Collier & Thomas, 1989, 2002; Cummins, 1984, 2014; Genesee et al., 2005; Hakuta et al., 2005; Rolstad et al., 2005; Slavin & Cheung, 2005) suggesting that academic language acquisition is a slow process, and late exit bilingual dual immersion programs that promote literacy in both English and EL students' native languages are more successful than transitional ESL programs. However, the research does not adequately explain differences in academic success rates for LTEL and RFEP students who have received the same ESL programming. In a study of graduation rates among EL students in a large urban district in the western United States, Walker (2015) found that students who exited ESL programming and became RFEP in third grade had an 82% graduation rate, those who exited in fifth grade had a 72% graduation rate, and those who exited in ninth grade had a 59% graduation rate. This data would seem to suggest that students who achieve English language proficiency earlier, meet redesignation criteria, and exit into mainstream English classes sooner, achieve greater success in high school.

Additional research (Callahan, 2005; Menken & Kleyn, 2010; Menken, Kleyn, Chae, & Nabin, 2012; Olsen, 2010) found that LTEL students are often placed in high school ESL classes that lack academic rigor, and that subtractive schooling (Menken & Kleyn, 2010) may also contribute to LTEL students' academic deficiencies. Supporting earlier theory developed by Cummins, Menken and Kleyn conclude that LTEL students have developed BICS in their native language and English to become high functioning in social conversation. However, they lack the CALP in either language to perform well in

mainstream college preparatory classes. As a result, LTEL students become stuck in what some researchers refer to as the *ESL Ghetto* (Faltis & Arias 2007; Olsen 2010; Valdes, 1998).

LTEL students and the ESL “Ghetto”

By the time EL students enter high school as LTEL, many have received six or more years of English Language Development (ELD) instruction or other programming designed for newly arrived immigrant students (Menken & Kleyn, 2010; Menken et al., 2012; Olsen, 2010). Others received an inconsistent combination of both ESL and mainstream English only classes. As a result, those LTEL students assigned to mainstream English classes in high school often lack adequate intervention and support.

In a qualitative study of 29 secondary LTEL students in New York City, conducted by Menken and Kleyn (2010), pupils reported strong feelings of disengagement, boredom, and a lack of self-confidence. The researchers also found that students were three grade levels below in English and three and a half years below in Spanish on a standardized test of language and literacy, with cumulative grade point averages for the study group at 69.2% and six of the students having failing averages. This has resulted in high retention and dropout rates among LTEL students in New York. One study subject who was 18-years-old commented:

Um, I wanna tell you that I don't belong in 10th grade as you can see 'cause I just hit 18 [years old]. I'm supposed to be in 12th grade and I had got left back in seventh and eighth, so like sometimes I feel embarrassed to be in a class you know that I don't supposed to be in. (p. 412)

Research also shows a general disconnect between LTEL students' perceptions of their academic success, program placement, and goals for post-secondary attainment

(Kim & Garcia, 2014; Menken et al., 2012; Olsen, 2010). Programs are often designed to “protect” EL students by restricting course selection. As a result, EL students are systematically prevented access to college preparatory classes (Kanno & Kangas, 2014).

Among EL students at a large rural high school in Northern California, Callahan (2005) identified three distinct cohorts for a quantitative research study and collected demographic and student achievement data from the school’s student information system. The EL students were categorized as “long-term English learners, recent immigrants with high amounts of previous schooling, and recent immigrants with limited previous schooling” (Callahan, 2005, p. 313). Callahan found that less than 2% of all EL students were enrolled in college preparatory classes, and while language was a significant predictor of performance on standardized English assessments, recent immigrants with high levels of prior schooling were more likely to achieve higher grade point averages, earned credits and math scores than LTEL students. Callahan also noted a significant disparity in the grade point averages of beginning and advanced EL students, with advanced students having significantly lower grade point averages, which the author attributed to a change in expectations as students exit ESL programs.

Success of Redesignated Fluent English Proficient Students

Disaggregating data between RFEP and LTEL students has proven difficult for researchers. Saunders and Marcelletti (2013) noted that national assessment reports often fail to identify RFEP students and LTEL students as separate populations, making it difficult to determine longitudinal progress made by students initially identified as EL. The authors argued that if California Standards Test (CST) data from 2005 to 2010 focused only on current EL students, it would have shown an increase of 10.4% in the

performance gap between EL and EO students. Instead, Saunders and Marceletti found a 14.5% reduction in the gap between students initially identified as EL and later achieving RFEP status, and those students classified as EO. They recommended further research in this area and suggested that studying the progress of RFEP students will lead to a better understanding of how best to educate EL students. Specifically, the authors advocated for studies that examine demographic and program variables among RFEP and LTEL students:

The RFEP results from California suggest that the population of all IELs (*Initially Identified English Learners*) bifurcates into Long Term English Learners and RFEPs, two subgroups characterized by dramatically different achievement levels . . . Understanding better the student and program variables associated with successful ELs might shed important light on how best to support those that are less successful. (Saunders & Marceletti, 2013, p. 155)

Contrasting the experiences of LTEL students entering high school, RFEP students have much greater access to college preparatory classes. They also experience higher rates of academic success and post-secondary attainment. Applying a statistical analysis to longitudinal data, Kanno and Kangas (2014) determined that only 19% of high school EL students attend a four-year institution directly from high school, compared with 45% of English only students and 35% of EL students redesignated as FEP.

Similar results can be seen in standardized testing. California is currently transitioning to a new assessment system: the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), which is based on common core standards. The most recent administration of its former assessment system, the California Standards Test (CST) in English and mathematics indicate that many RFEP students are enrolled in college preparatory classes as demonstrated by participation rates on the Algebra II exam. The results from the 2011-2012 administration also show that RFEP students consistently

outperform both EL and English Only (EO) students (CDE, Assessment and Accountability Division, 2012). RFEP students also outperformed both subgroups on the previously required CAHSEE. Demographic reports illustrate that among the total cohort of 461,150 students who took the exam, 83% passed. RFEP students passed at a rate of 94%, EO students at a rate of 93%, and LTEL students at a rate of 42% (CDE, 2013).

The first administration of the CAASPP during the 2014-15 school year yielded similar results. At the high school level, the assessment is only given to 11th grade students. The results showed that only 8% of all 11th grade EL students met or exceeded standards in English/language arts, while 57% of 11th grade RFEP students met or exceeded standards, as did 61% of 11th grade EO students. In mathematics, 6% of 11th grade EL students met or exceeded standards, while 27% of 11th grade RFEP students met or exceeded standards, as did 33% of EO students (CDE, Data Reporting Office, 2015). Although EL data for the CAASPP is not disaggregated by LTEL status as defined by state law, the assessment does break down data by those EL students who have been enrolled in school in the United States for less than 12 months and those who have been enrolled in schools in the United States for more than 12 months (CDE, Data Reporting Office, 2015).

Overview and Significance of School Connectedness

Concurrent with research aimed at better understanding the effectiveness of ESL programming and identifying differences among EL subpopulations, scholars in the 1990s and early part of the 21st century also began to take an interest in empirical research around child-centered concepts rooted in the philosophical beliefs of 20th century progressive educators. A groundbreaking moment in the evolution of this research occurred at an invitational conference called *School Connectedness* –

Strengthening Health and Educational Outcomes for Teens Wingspread Conference held in June 2003 at the Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin. The goal of the conference was to bring together researchers and representatives from multiple disciplines to create a clearly identified empirical base, identify the existing body of knowledge, and synthesize a set of core principals to guide schools in the United States (Blum & Libbey, 2004). The conference findings may also be seen as a bridge between the more intuitive practices of the previous century, which were based primarily on philosophical and social theory, and a more scientific approach aimed at establishing a grounded theory for practitioners in the fields of government, education and health.

The *Wingspread Conference* produced six commissioned papers presented in a special edition of the *Journal of School Health* in September, 2004. Conference attendees also issued the *Wingspread Declaration on School Connections* based on the commissioned research (Blum & Libbey, 2004):

Students are more likely to succeed when they feel connected to school. School connection is the belief by students that adults in the school care about their learning as well as about them as individuals. (p.233)

Providing a Theoretical Framework for School Connectedness

The Wingspread Declaration on School Connectedness identified critical elements for students' school experiences that research suggests increases school connectedness and thereby promotes greater educational motivation, classroom engagement, and improved school attendance. One of the commissioned papers from the *Wingspread Conference* (Klem & Connell, 2004) found that these three factors then increase academic achievement. Significant in the summary of conference findings was the conclusion that the results from each study crossed racial, ethnic, and income groups.

Blum and Libbey (2004) also reported research findings showing strong evidence that students who feel more connected to school are less likely to engage in risky behaviors such as early sex, substance and tobacco use, school disruptions and violence, or experience emotional distress.

School Connectedness and Associated Terminology

Because of the interdisciplinary research associated with school connectedness, a common set of defined terms has proven difficult. Analyzing and summarizing previous literature, Jimerson et al. (2003) attempted to explore constructs and measurements of school connectedness and associated terms. The authors identified three dimensions relevant to the study of school connectedness: (a) affective, (b) behavioral, and (c) cognitive. The affective dimension describes students' feelings about school, teachers, and peers. The behavioral dimensions include students' actions and performances such as participation in extracurricular activities and academic achievement. The cognitive dimension includes their perceptions and beliefs related to self, school, teachers, and peers. They also classified measures into five contexts: (a) academic performance, (b) classroom behavior, (c) extracurricular involvement, (d) interpersonal relationships, and e) school community.

Focusing only on school climate, Zullig, Huebner, & Scott (2011) developed a *school climate measure* (SCM) that identifies four domains: (a) positive student teacher relationships; (b) academic support; (c) order and discipline; and (d) school physical environment. Applied across disciplines, various research instruments have also been employed to measure school connectedness and its relationship to variables such as substance abuse, absenteeism, early sexual initiation, violence, unintentional injury,

emotional distress, eating disorders, and suicide (Centers for Disease Control), 2009). Although most researchers support the concept that school connectedness includes affective, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions, Chung-Do, Goebert, Chang, and Hamagani (2015) found that studies often measure only the affective dimension and many different terms are still utilized for measurement contexts.

The affective dimension of school connectedness. There has been a slight increase in school connectedness in California, as measured by the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS), administered in grades 5, 7, 9, and 11, but the results also show a consistent decline from elementary grades to high school. Student responses in 9th and 11th grade show that 60% do not have high connectedness to school, with less than one-third of students ranking high levels of connectedness in 18.5% of high schools. Only about 3% of high schools in the state have more than two-thirds of their students reporting high levels of school connectedness. The findings also suggest that schools reporting high levels of caring relationships between students and adult staff report much stronger feelings of connectedness with school (Austin et al., 2013).

Studies also suggest that adults may be unaware of students' perceptions of these affective dimensions. Early research on perceived levels of caring conducted by Tunney and Jenkins (1975) found a significant difference between teacher and student perceptions, with students reporting very low levels of caring by teachers, and teachers reporting high levels of caring about their students. In a quantitative research study comparing student and staff perceptions of school connectedness, Brown (2012) found that although both students and staff believe caring relationships are important, there were significant differences. Among seven factors contributing to school connectedness

identified in the scaled survey, staff perceived teacher-student relationships highest, while students perceived peer attachment to be most important.

Brown's research is consistent with similar findings (Allen, 2006; Eisenberg et al., 2003; Jennings, 2003; Morrison et al., 2003) showing that although caring relationships with staff continue to be an important affective dimension of school connectedness (Chhuon & Wallace, 2014), students may value attachment and positive relationships with peers more as they enter early adolescence and continue into high school. The structure of high schools in general may also create an atmosphere that is less personalized, hampering efforts to build strong relationships among students, staff, and their peers (Darling-Hammond, Aness, & Wichterle, 2002).

The behavioral dimension of school connectedness. Positive or negative affective factors reported by students have a strong impact on the behavioral dimension of school connectedness. Klem and Connell (2004) found that among students at both elementary and middle school, those reporting high levels of teacher support also reported higher levels of engagement in school. Positive correlation between high levels of school connectedness and academic achievement as measured by standardized testing has also been reported. Austin et al. (2013) found that in high schools where students reported the highest levels of connectedness on the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS), the academic performance index (API) of these schools, determined by student results on the CST, were approximately 200 points higher than schools where students reported the lowest levels of school connectedness.

Students' perceptions of school connectedness and the overall school climate also show a significant positive correlation to grade point average. Using a population sample

of 2,049 students across grades 6-12, Zullig et al. (2011) found a positive correlation between school climate and students' satisfaction with school. There was also a negative correlation reported between students' perceptions of exclusion and privilege assigned to teacher favoritism. The study's focus on academic support rather than social support also yielded generalizability across multiple demographics such as age, gender, and socio-economic status. Research by Peters and Wooley (2015) conducted with an initial data set that included surveys of 37,354 middle and high school students in 318 schools across eight states, also yielded similar findings. The researchers concluded that school climate factors, represented by adequate levels of rules, guidelines, and boundaries for students, coupled with high levels of adult encouragement, support, and higher levels of challenge, resulted in higher student grades.

Brown (2012) demonstrated that students with positive perceptions of school connectedness also had higher grade point averages and greater participation rates in extracurricular activities. Archambault, Janosz, Morizot, and Pagani (2009) concluded in a survey of 13,330 students from 69 different high schools in Quebec, Canada, that low engagement is also an early risk factor for high school dropout. These perceptions manifest frequently in boys and are accompanied by a growing disinterest in learning and increased disciplinary issues, particularly in the first two years of high school. In a study conducted with 476 students in grades 6 and 7, Loukas et al. (2010) found that school connectedness was a predictor of early adolescent conduct problems and that school connectedness was a protective factor from the negative impact of poor family relationships, not only decreasing conduct issues at school but also compensating for a troubled home environment.

Existing research also supports the theory that negative peer interactions such as teasing, name-calling, social exclusion, and other forms of non-physical bullying result in poor academic performance and impact a students' overall sense of self and well-being. In a survey administered to 4,746 multiethnic students in grades 7-12 and enrolled at 31 different urban and suburban middle and high schools, Eisenberg et al. (2003) found that students performing poorly in academics reported the most frequent peer harassment. The importance of safety as a domain of school climate was verified by Bradshaw, Waadsorp, Debnam, and Johnson (2014) in a study of over 25,000 students in Maryland high schools. The authors concluded that bullying and drug use by peers played a significant role in students' perceptions of school climate. They also found that students are more engaged when they perceive a culture of equity and fairness.

The cognitive dimension of school connectedness. In analyzing data connected to multiple dimensions of school connectedness, Jimerson et al. (2003) reminded readers that these dimensions may overlap. When identifying aspirational perceptions, self-regulation and coping skills, personal autonomy, and factors related to both the mental and physical health of students, there are observable behaviors that may or may not correlate directly with the cognitive dimension of school connectedness. Additionally, Libbey (2004) argued that although a variety of terms and methods are used to measure student connectedness, an abundance of salient research looks at both functional measures, such as grades and participation, as well as affective measures characterized by students' feelings of liking or belonging.

Although high academic standards can be characteristic of a positive school climate (Zullig et al., 2011) an overemphasis on performance goals was found to decrease

school participation and connectedness (Wang & Holcombe, 2010), while encouragement in developing personal mastery increased student confidence, self-regulatory strategies and overall confidence in students' ability to learn. However, Wang and Holcombe (2010) also noted that social comparison and competition in school did not result in negative cognitive outcomes. The authors argued that a performance goal structure and competition could provide students with an external point of reference from which to judge their performance and serve as a motivational strategy. Additionally, Wang and Holcombe found that the association between cognitive engagement and achievement was not as strong as anticipated, suggesting that their multidimensional approach to studying school connectedness may have captured this effect in other dimensions.

The extent to which school climate and poor school connectedness may impact students' cognitive motivation, self-efficacy, and ability to succeed crosses multidisciplinary studies. These studies consider protective factors such as feelings of self-worth and a positive view of one's future (CDC, 2009). Strong school connectedness may create a positive view of self that "buffers" adolescents from involvement in tobacco, alcohol and drug use, violence, gang involvement, and early sexual encounters.

In an extensive longitudinal study on adolescent health completed with a stratified sample of 80 high schools and yielding an initial sample of 20,745 students, McNeely and Falci (2004) identified six health risk behaviors: cigarette smoking, drinking to the point of getting drunk, marijuana use, suicidal ideation or attempt, first sexual intercourse, and weapon-related violence. The data showed that students with positive perceptions of teachers' caring—both personally and academically—do better academically and engage in fewer health-risk behaviors. The authors had hypothesized

that teacher support generates a greater sense of belonging, which reduces involvement in health-risk behaviors. However, the study showed that positive school engagement itself did not decrease the initiation of health risk behaviors, and actually increased the chance of occasional smoking and drinking to the point of getting drunk.

Complementing the earlier work of McNeely and Faci (2004), Shochet and Smith (2014), in a study of 504 students in grades 7-8 at two urban high schools in New South Wales, Australia, concluded that school connectedness and positive classroom environments may mediate adolescent depressive symptoms, with classroom environment and school connectedness accounting for a 41% to 45% variance in concurrent depressive symptoms. Although quality interpersonal relationships are developmental needs that impact both school connectedness and classroom environment, the authors argue that autonomy and competence are unique to the classroom environment. Consequently, they recommend multilevel interventions tailored to individual or group needs.

School Connectedness as a Multidimensional Construct

In the twelve years since the *Wingspread Conference* was held, studies on school connectedness have been authorized and scales developed and adapted by multiple social, academic, and governmental institutions. Each has utilized similar terminology, but they have often been used inconsistently (Chung-do et al., 2015) and sometimes fail to capture the multidimensionality of school connectedness. This concern was identified early in the development of scholarly research on this topic (Blum, 2005; Blum & Libbey, 2004; Libbey, 2004; Jimerson et al., 2003). Most scholars agree that studies on school connectedness and crossing disciplines will yield many variables. Jimerson et al. (2003)

also recognized that future research should consider developmental and sociocultural considerations, commenting:

The absence of discussion regarding socio-cultural variables is also notable. Familial and cultural values will likely influence school engagement among diverse groups. While it is beyond the scope of this review of definitions and measures, further research may examine how age, socio-cultural, and familial variables interact with school engagement. (p. 12)

School Connectedness and EL Students

Examining School Connectedness for EL Students within Existing Constructs

Reviewing current literature addressing the affective, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions of school connectedness may be useful in understanding school environment issues impacting EL students, and more specifically, differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP subpopulations. Although the number of research studies specifically addressing school connectedness and EL students is limited, available literature provides some useful insights. In a survey of 215 middle and high school students, Gorski and Newton (2012) reported no difference in levels of school connectedness between EL students and native English speakers. However, Morrison et al. (2003) found that fourth grade EL students reported a lower perception of school connectedness than peers who had become RFEP. Among both groups, peer relationships became more important than teacher relationships as students aged. Consequently, the authors concluded that LTEL student, unlike his RFEP peers, could be more likely to be influenced by negative peer interactions and engage in risky behavior when grouped with other disconnected students tracked in ESL or ELD classes through middle and high school.

The importance of peer attachment within the affective dimension was reinforced in a qualitative study (Balagna et al., 2013) of Latino and Latina students at risk of emotional and behavioral disorders. The study was completed with 11 participants at a middle school in which approximately 9% of the student population is Latino or Latina. In open-ended, semi structured interviews conducted over a period of one year, the students spoke frequently about positive and negative social interactions with peers, teachers and family. How students experienced these relationships impacted their perceptions of school, behavior, and academic performance. The authors found that participants highly valued their peers, and seven of the ten participants reported verbal aggression (six with physical retaliation) upon experiencing negative peer interactions attributed to differences in race or ethnicity. Consistent with the findings of Chhuon and Wallace (2015), participants described teachers that were helpful or unhelpful, and they identified the positive attributes of teachers as being nice and understanding, flexible, providing one-on-one interventions, getting to know students individually and using engaging learning methods.

Using data collected from 4,263 students at six middle schools in the Midwest, Karcher and Sass (2010) found that Latino students reported the lowest perceptions of connection related to cognitive dimensional contexts of reading, self-in-the present, and self in the future when compared with their Caucasian and African-American peers. In contrast, semi-structured interviews with 13 high school LTEL students, and an analysis of related documents using a grounded theory approach (Kim and Garcia, 2014), found that students perceived themselves as “motivated, active learners who no longer saw themselves as [EL students] . . . (and) described their learning experiences as positive, but

challenging” (p.35). The triangulation of the data collected also showed a significant discrepancy between the participants’ aspirations and the reality of their academic standing. Kim and Garcia (2014) determined that the LTEL students, although they demonstrated high levels of connectedness within the cognitive dimension, did not adequately understand the implications of grade point average or the academic coursework needed to prepare for post-secondary education.

A more recent study by M. Ray (2015) used a qualitative approach to examine and analyze affective dimensions of school connectedness among ten Latino LTEL students recently graduated from high school. All were of Mexican descent with six of the participants born in Mexico, and four born in the United States. M. Ray also addressed acculturation, which she defined as, the school “adapting to new culture groups and supporting/not supporting students’ needs and adaptation to the school culture” (p. 65).

M. Ray (2015) found that most of the study participants had at least one strong connection to an adult on their campus they could rely on for guidance and support. However, nine of the 10 study participants reported a strong sense of feeling different culturally and did not have a sense of belonging at school. They also reported that their high school did not do enough to bridge this social and cultural gap, noting that the high school staff rarely reached out to their parents, all Spanish speakers, and didn’t take time to understand their culture and how it impacted them at school. According to M. Ray’s findings, students reported high levels of support and felt comfortable asking questions in ELD classes, but eight out of ten also stated that outside of their ELD classes, teachers rarely reached out to them or checked for understanding. This resulted in low self-

efficacy and diminished aspirations. In contrast to the experiences reported in M. Ray's study, Lemberger, Selig, Bowers, and Rogers (2013) found that low-income, Hispanic middle school students enrolled in a counselor driven intervention program designed to support students' learning and personal-social skills, saw increased cognitive student outcomes measured by improved executive functioning, social engagement, and feelings of school connectedness.

Examining Sociocultural Factors of School Connectedness and EL Students

M. Ray's (2015) work seems to support the findings of other researchers suggesting that in addition to traditional dimensions of school connectedness that have been applied to heterogeneous groups of students, sociocultural experiences may be another important variable when studying school connectedness and EL students. Although difficult to measure, Collier and Thomas (1997) characterized effective sociocultural schools as those that respect and value the cultural context and native language of EL students. Also supporting the relevance of sociocultural context are the findings of Santos and Collins (2015). In a study of 436 students of Mexican descent, the Santos and Collins found strong evidence that positive ethnic identity played an even greater role in predicting high levels of achievement on standardized test results than measures of school connectedness and may serve as an additional protective factor.

Parent involvement and home to school connections may also be an additional measure within the sociocultural variable warranting further study (Bradshaw et al., 2014; Chung-Do et al., 2015; Wang & Holcombe, 2010). This could be particularly true for EL students and their families (Tellez & Waxman, 2010). In a qualitative study using critical inquiry and cultural-ecological theory, Good et al., (2010) interviewed eight

Spanish-speaking mothers who had received their education in Mexico and had immigrated to the United States within the previous five years. The mothers communicated a sense of cultural deprivation and frustration when trying to communicate with the school. Lacking their traditional family support systems, the parents expressed a need for bilingual staff to assist them in adjusting to a new culture. The barriers articulated by the parents included both language and a lack of relationships with school staff. Balagna et al. (2013) found that when Latino parents initiated contact with school, teachers were responsive and helpful, providing additional time and resources that were helpful and appreciated. However, citing Hill and Torres (2010), Balagna et al. noted cultural values among Latino parents that place a great amount of respect for the authority and expertise of teachers, suggesting that parents may be reluctant to initiate contact with the school.

The academic benefits of strong family to school connections were also addressed by Crosone (2009). In analyzing coursework in both math and science, he found that low-income and EL students achieved the same results as their peers when there were multiple forms of communication with families as they transitioned from middle school to high school. Where differences were observed, these student groups derived greater benefit, suggesting that creating stronger family-school connections would likely have a greater impact on these groups as they were less likely to have such communication previously. Block (2011) maintains that EL students' participation in dual-immersion programs may also increase school to family connectedness by preserving intergenerational relationships between students and extended family, thereby increasing both family engagement with school and students' resiliency.

School Connectedness and Language Redesignation Status

Many of the school connectedness studies referenced in this literature review utilized heterogeneous student populations (Archambault et al., 2009; Bradshaw et al., 2014; Brown, 2012; Eisenberg et al., 2003; Klem & Connel, 2004; Mc Neely & Falci, 2004; Peters & Woolley, 2015; Zullig et al., 2011). Some studies focused on EL students. These studies identify ethnicity and socioeconomic status, but do not clearly identify the national origin current language status of students initially classified as EL. Multiple contexts of school connectedness are not addressed (Balagna, 2013; Block, 2012; Crosone, 2009; Good et al., 2010; Karcher & Sass, 2010; Gorski & Newton, 2012; Kim & Garcia, 2014; Lemberger et al., 2013; Santos & Collins, 2015).

Other studies identify LTEL as a subpopulation of EL students, but they provide primarily a descriptive analysis of their learning experiences in ESL programming (Faltis & Arias 2007; Menken & Kleyn, 2010; Menken et al., 2012; Olsen, 2010; Valdes, 1998). Applied holistically, each study contributes to the growing body of research on school connectedness and provides insights helpful in constructing future research to analyze multidimensional perceptions of school connectedness among both LTEL and RFEP student populations.

Summary

The history of immigrant education and the policies for providing ESL programming have evolved over the past 120 years. A review of the existing literature shows that widely held political views on immigrants, more than empirical research, shaped the often contradictory government policies and pedagogical practices used in the education of EL students during the first half of the 20th century (Baron, 1991; Dayton-

Wood, 2008; Ovando, 2003; B. Ray, 2013). As applied to Mexican immigrant students throughout the Southwestern United States, earlier government policies based on the assimilation and acculturation of foreign born immigrants transformed into local policies of segregation and isolation (Galindo 2011; Ruiz 2001).

This history continues to influence discussions on the efficacy of ESL programming. The public policy debate can also be viewed through the lens of scholarly research. Studies presented over the past twenty years were often used in the adversarial setting of a court room, and academicians favoring dual immersion bilingual education sparred with their peers, each accusing one another of using faulty data (Cummins, 1998; Rossell & Baker, 1996) and drawing improper conclusions.

Around this same time, an emerging body of scholarly research across various disciplines sought to better understand issues related to individuals' sense of belonging and well-being at school and its impact on their academic performance, health, and overall behavior (Blum & Libbey, 2004). Analysis and synthesis of this body of literature has resulted in the identification and categorization of dimensions and contextual measures of school connectedness that are now commonly applied to this area of study (Jimerson et al., 2003).

As the number of Spanish-speaking students of Mexican ancestry grew significantly over the past twenty-five years (Zong & Batalova, 2015) data reveals an achievement gap not only between EL students and EO students, but also a significant achievement gap between those EL students who remain LTEL and those who become RFEP (Olsen, 2010). Existing research on ESL programming and instructional practices alone do not adequately explain these differences.

There is a need to better understand other variables that may impact language acquisition and academic achievement among EL students classified as LTEL or RFEP. Significant empirical data shows that positive perceptions of school connectedness correlate strongly with student achievement, but there is a lack of available research explaining the differences in perceptions that may exist between LTEL and RFEP students.

Synthesis Matrix

Existing research addressing the historical overview of ESL practices and government policies, the characteristics of LTEL and RFEP students, the significance of school connectedness, and perceptions of school connectedness among EL students are delineated and presented in a synthesis matrix (Appendix A).

This study seeks to better understand differences in the experiences of LTEL and RFEP students and their perceptions of school connectedness. Using a multidimensional approach to school connectedness, which also addresses the lived realities of LTEL and RFEP students as they navigate the sociocultural experiences between home and school life (Balagna, 2013; Bashara, 2007; Good et al., 2010) may help identify effective strategies to support EL students as they face the difficult challenge of achieving oral and written fluency in a second language while simultaneously mastering academic content. Potential outcomes from this study include: (a) the identification of possible protective factors for EL students, (b) whether or not strong perceptions of school connectedness accelerates their English language acquisition, and (c) developing best practices for a positive school environment, and effective support systems for LTEL students.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

Chapter III describes the methodology used to complete this research study. The purpose of this study, the design, processes for data collection, and a description of the population and sample are also delineated. This includes a description on the rationale and process by which the grounded theory study was implemented, including information specific to both the qualitative and quantitative measures used, data analysis, and limitations of the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods grounded theory study was to explore differences in perceptions of school connectedness among long term English Language Learner (LTEL) students and Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) students in a comprehensive high school setting. The study also sought to determine whether or not there is a relationship between English language acquisition and perceptions of school connectedness among these two groups.

Research Questions

1. Do LTEL students have different perceptions of school connectedness than RFEP students?
2. What are the differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students?
3. What is the relationship between perceptions of school connectedness and language acquisition among LTEL and RFEP students?

Research Design

This study utilized a grounded theory research design. Grounded theory was appropriate for this study because it is useful to professional practitioners and crosses multiple disciplines. As defined by Glaser (2010), grounded theory provides a systematic methodology focused on moving from data collection to a “multivariate conceptual theory. It is a total methodological package” (p.1).

Glaser added:

The principal users today, mostly students who are doing M.A. or Ph.D. theses or dissertations, are well into their academic careers and looking for methodologies that will result in data and theories relevant to what is going on in their research areas of interest. This makes grounded theory very appealing on that one point alone – relevance. (p. 2-3)

Mixed methods work well with a grounded theory design (Johnson, McGowan, & Turner, 2010) because data collection instruments can take on qualitative, quantitative, and mixed forms and different methods can be used together. This helps the researcher understand local and more general processes in operation by developing a theory that is generated from systematic data collection and analysis. Theory is grounded and emerges from empirical data, but the design provides researchers the flexibility to move back and forth between data and theory. Furthermore, as Strauss and Corbin (1998) explained, grounded theory is designed to “build theory rather than test theory” (p. 12). Therefore, a grounded theory design using a mixed methods approach was useful for this study because it allowed the researcher to access multiple sets of data and develop a useful theory relevant to many public school districts with similar demographics.

Population

A population is defined as a “group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events that conform to specific criteria and to which we intend to generalize the results of the research” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 129). Among the total enrolled population of more than three million students enrolled in grades 6-12 in public schools in the State of California during the 2014-2015 school year were 461,126 (14%) EL students. Among these EL students, 344,418 (75%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Additionally, 1,180,060 (35%) of students enrolled in grades 6-12 were classified as RFEP. Among these RFEP students, 764,958 (65%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Demographic totals also indicate that 1,761,280 (53%) of students in grades 6-12 report their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino and that 3,655,624 (58.6%) of California students qualify for free and reduced priced meals. (CDE, Educational Demographics Office, 2015).

Stanislaus County was chosen as the target population because it closely resembles the student population of the state and can produce a sampling frame (Creswell, 2012). Among the total enrolled population of 56,894 students enrolled in grades 6-12 in public schools in Stanislaus County during the 2014-2015 school year were 9,019 (16%) EL students. Among these EL students, 8,101 (90%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Additionally, 14,715 (26%) of students enrolled in grades 6-12 were classified as RFEP. Among these RFEP students, 12,437 (85%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Demographic totals also indicate that 32,091(56%) of students in grades 6-12 report their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino, and that 71,377 (66.7%) of

students in Stanislaus County qualify for free and reduced priced meals (CDE, Educational Demographics Office, 2015).

Sample

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) noted that in many research studies the target population for which results may be generalized is too large; therefore, data is collected from a sample or smaller group within the target population. A sample is a group of subjects from a larger population being studied and from whom data are collected. Cresswell (2012) explained that the sample is selected from the target population or sampling frame. The researcher can then generalize the results from the sample population to the target population. In this study, the sample can be generalized to many other school districts in California with similar populations.

The survey portion of this study included a purposive, non-random sample of 56 Spanish speaking LTEL students and 104 Spanish speaking RFEP students. Purposive sampling is the selection of particular elements within the study population that are representative of the larger population. Purposive sampling was useful for this study because it allowed the researcher to obtain data more efficiently (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Patten, 2012).

For the qualitative interview portion of the study, purposive sampling was also employed. Purposive sampling is sometimes referred to as selective, purposeful or theoretical sampling (Coyne, 1997). Consequently, purposive sampling was particularly useful in this grounded theory research study because specific characteristics of the sample population were used to guide emerging theory. Although Coyne (1997) noted

distinctions among the three terms used to describe purposive sampling, qualitative data collection within this study required purposive sampling designed to yield information rich data. Coyne further argued for “researchers to be adaptable and creative in designing sampling strategies that are aimed at being responsive to real-world conditions and that meet the information needs of the study” (p. 630).

The subjects were invited to participate in the study after meeting the following delimiting variable characteristics:

- They are economically disadvantaged as defined by their participation in the National School Lunch Program.
- They are Spanish speaking high school EL students of Mexican ancestry
- They are enrolled in grades 11 or 12.
- They have been enrolled continuously within the same school district for at least five years.

Both purposive and convenience sampling were employed to identify the location from which the sample was extracted. McMillian and Schumacher (2010) noted that convenience samples are often used in both qualitative and quantitative studies because subjects are “selected on the basis of being accessible or expedient” (p. 137). In this study, the researcher had access to the district being studied and its students. A comprehensive high school in a K-12 school district located in western Stanislaus County was selected.

The district within which the high school resides was chosen because its demographics are representative of those found in Stanislaus County and in many districts within the State of California. Among the total enrolled population of 3,279

grade 6-12 students in the district during 2014-2015 school year were 748 (23%) EL students. Among these EL students, 718 (96%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Additionally, 984 (30%) of students in grades 6-12 were classified as RFEP. Among these RFEP students, 904 (92%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Demographic totals also indicate that 2,282 (70%) of students in grades 6-12 report their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino and that 4,095 (68%) of district students qualify for free and reduced priced meals (CDE, Educational Demographics Office, 2015).

Table 1

Population Demographics

Location	Students Enrolled Grades 6-12	EL Students Grades 6-12	RFEP Students Grades 6-12	EL Students With Spanish as Their Primary Language Grades 6-12	RFEP Students With Spanish as Their Primary Language Grades 6-12	Ethnicity is Hispanic or Latino Grades 6-12	Free and Reduced Meal Program (All Grades)
California	3,350,492	461,126 (14%)	1,180,060 (35%)	344,418 (75%)	764,958 (65%)	1,761,280 (53%)	3,655,624 (59%)
Stanislaus County	56,894	9,019 (16%)	14,715 (26%)	8,101 (90%)	12,437 (85%)	32,091 (56%)	71,377 (67%)
District	3,279	748 (23%)	984 (30%)	718 (96%)	904 (92%)	2,282 (70%)	4,095 (68%)

The district's high school's boundaries include a city whose population was 20,413 at the 2010 census, with Hispanic or Latino residents at 11,971 (58.6%) comprising the largest racial group. At 10,117 (49.6%), Whites make up the second largest race (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). The high school also serves several smaller, non-incorporated communities in Stanislaus County and largely uninhabited, rural land west into Santa Clara County. Within the district's comprehensive high school, among the total enrolled population of 1,749 grades 9-12 students during 2014-2015 school year

were 341 (19%) EL students. Among these EL students, 329 (96%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Additionally, 579 (33%) are classified as RFEP. Among these RFEP students, 530 (92%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Demographic totals also indicate that 1,193 (68.2%) of students at the high school report their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino, and 979 (56%) qualify for free and reduced priced meals (CDE, Educational Demographics Office, 2015).

LTEL and RFEP students identified in the sample for this study were limited to those enrolled in grades 11 and 12. Students in these grades were chosen because they may be more likely to provide a broader and comprehensive contextual view of school connectedness than what has been experienced by underclassmen, junior high, or elementary students. Patten (2012) also suggested that researchers can obtain accurate results from a smaller population sample when delimitation reduces variability by creating a more homogenous sample population. Although the question of what constitutes an adequate sample size is relative to what is being studied, Patten provided a useful formula for estimating an adequate sample size for survey research:

Using the sample size (n) recommended in the table that corresponds to the population size (N) will usually hold the error down to about 5%. That is, the true percentage in the whole population should fall within 5% of the percentage obtained in the sample. (p. 58)

A group of 160 students, including a population of 56 LTEL students and 104 RFEP students met the delimiting criteria for this study—requiring an adequate sample size of 152.

Instrumentation

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in this study. The quantitative methods employed included the collection and analysis of descriptive

statistical data gleaned from artifacts. The qualitative portion of the study included a survey questionnaire and open-ended interviews.

After receiving permission from the district's board of trustees (Appendix B), artifacts were reviewed to gather data on all LTEL and RFEP students. The first artifact examined for data was the district's Student Information System (SIS). The SIS utilized for the high school identified in this study is PowerSchool. PowerSchool is a web-based system that contains a wide variety of information on students including gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, health, course schedules, grades, assessment results, attendance, discipline, family information (parents and siblings), home addresses, telephone and email contacts, entry and exit dates, place of birth, and languages spoken. Data from the SIS was cross-referenced, and those with incomplete or missing data related to study variables were not included in the study. The SIS was useful in identifying the overall population of EL students at the high school and to develop a population sample based on the established criteria for the study. It was also used to apply delimiting variables and organize the population into LTEL and RFEP subgroups. Data from the SIS was also used to determine comprehensive grade point averages, number of absences, and office referrals for LTEL and RFEP students in the sample population.

The second artifact examined was the 2015-2016 yearbook of the high school attended by the sample population. The yearbook features individual photographs of staff and students. Additional data includes photographs and written accounts of athletic programs, honor societies, visual and performing arts, clubs, student government, and social activities. All students and staff are identified by name and listed in the index.

Student and staff participants in all organizational photographs are also identified by name and listed in the index. This data was used to record frequency of references among individual subjects in the population sample and to establish levels of extracurricular participation.

Data collected from artifacts form a number of essential functions. As Patton (2002) explained, and as the application to this study demonstrates, artifacts may take a variety of forms. Examining data from artifacts is useful for comparative purposes, and also provides access to information not easily observed that would otherwise remain unknown. Additionally, Patton noted that these resources provide useful background for “paths of inquiry” pursued through direct observation and interviewing as part of a “repertoire of field research and evaluation” (p. 293).

After reviewing artifacts, a survey was employed to gather data on perceptions of school connectedness among LTEL students and RFEP students. According to Patten (2012), surveys are useful in non-experimental, quantitative research. Using a survey, researchers can “draw a sample of a population, study the sample, and then make inferences to the population from the sample data” (p. 9). McMillan and Schumacher (2010) also argued that “Surveys are popular because credible information from a large population can be collected at a small cost . . . also, small samples can be selected from large populations in ways that permit generalizations to the population” (p.236). In this study, the differences in perceptions of school connectedness noted between LTEL students and RFEP students were recorded with a survey questionnaire using a Likert-style scale to produce interval data providing descriptive statistics (Appendix C).

The self-reporting scale for the survey contains 30 items asking students to evaluate their personal perceptions of school connectedness using a five-point scaled construct. Because this survey was designed to measure students' perceptions or feelings of school connectedness based on actual experiences, a five-point scale was useful in providing interval data that allowed students to access their actual depth of engagement. Although a five-point Likert scale often includes a "neutral" option to avoid forcing a response that may be incorrect (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010), the scaled questions included qualifying words such as "almost" and "sometimes" to more accurately describe the frequency reported by respondents.

Twenty-five items were assigned to measure each of five school connectedness contexts identified by Jimerson et al. (2003): (a) academic performance, (b) classroom behavior, (c) extracurricular involvement, (d) interpersonal relationships and (e) school community. A sixth context relevant to EL students, (f) sociocultural factors, was also included in the survey. This context was noted by Jimerson and utilized in other studies of EL students and their families (Block, 2012; Good et al., 2010; Hill & Torres, 2010; Santos & Collins, 2015; Tellez & Waxman, 2010).

Although scaled differently, some survey questions were adapted from school connectedness questionnaires developed by Brown (2010) and Chung-Do et al. (2015) since both researchers also used Jimerson's (2003) framework to develop their questions. Brown compared student and staff perceptions of school connectedness at a comprehensive high school with a student population that is 77% Caucasian or Asian/Pacific Islander, has a Hispanic population that is 13%, and where students come from families with a "median household income of \$110,350" (p. 31-32). Language

status was not addressed in the study. Although Chung-Do et al. conducted research with a sample population that was more diverse than Brown's, it focused on school connectedness and student health, but it did not address students' language status.

Because the population for this study and the purpose were much different, new questions also were developed. The questionnaire was reviewed by two experts—both of whom have master's degrees in psychology and are familiar with scaled survey questionnaires and assessments. Using the assigned school connectedness constructs, both correctly matched questions to the correct construct with 87% and 93% agreement respectively.

After students completed the survey questionnaire, which was administered using Google docs and Chromebooks and then followed by a review of artifacts, eight LTEL and eight RFEP students were selected for interviews. Since grounded theory seeks to understand both local and more general processes (Johnson et al., 2010), subjects were selected for interviews based on the variance from the mean on SIS and yearbook data points, suggesting either high or low levels of school connectedness. Counselors at the high school also identified students within this group who might be more comfortable participating in an interview. The interview process also allowed for methods triangulation and the opportunity to explore the research topic in greater depth than available through survey results alone (Patten, 2012).

The interview instrument contained 21 open-ended questions with standardized wording. Three questions were assigned to each of the same six contexts of school connectedness used in the survey instrument, while an additional three questions were based on students' self-perceptions of their language use and acquisition (Appendix D).

To mitigate issues related to validity and reliability, both the survey instrument and the interview questions were administered through a pilot study with one LTEL student and one RFEP student randomly selected from the population sample. It is also anticipated that the aforementioned delimiting variables applied to the sample population created a more homogeneous population, thereby reducing the need for a larger sample size. For this study, a planning schedule was developed (see Table 2).

Table 2

Research Study Planning Schedule

Event	Description of Activities	Date(s)
Quality Review/IRB Approval	Completion and Submission of Form 4 and Quality Review Checklist to Brandman University	December 2015-January 2016
Review of (SIS) Artifact	Sort student data by dependent variables (LTEL and RFEP) status and by delimiting variables (National School Lunch Program eligibility, Years of District Enrollment, Home Language, Ancestry, and Grade Level)	February 2016
Distribution of Informed Consent Forms	Student meetings scheduled at high school with identified student population.	March 2016
Collection of Informed Consent Forms	Forms returned to main office with follow up contact as needed until adequate sample is obtained.	March 2016-April 2016
Administration of pilot study	One LTEL and One RFEP student chosen through random draw.	March 22, 2016
Review of (SIS) Artifact	Sort student data by independent variables (Grade Point Average, Absences, Office Referrals).	March 2016
Administration of Survey Questionnaire	Students complete the Google doc survey at the school site using a Chromebook.	March 22-April 7, 2016
Review of Yearbook Artifact	Identify and quantify extracurricular activities and social visibility for each of the subjects in the population sample.	May 2016

Event	Description of Activities	Date(s)
Administration of Student Interviews	Students are interviewed individually, with questions and answers digitally recorded and transcribed.	April 22 – May 15, 2016

Data Collection

Before research and data collection began, approval for the research study was obtained through the Brandman Institutional Review Board (IRB). An initial meeting at the high school was held with all prospective subjects. Because many of the subjects were under the age of 18, an informed consent form, written in both English and Spanish, was sent home and parent permission received for each student who met the sample criteria and agreed to participate in the study (Appendix E). Informed consent forms were collected at the main office of the high school, collected regularly by the researcher, and secured in a locking file cabinet to assure confidentiality.

Students with parent approval to participate in the study were provided a five dollar gift certificate for a local sandwich shop and entered in a raffle for a chance to win a \$100 Target gift card. Prior to administration of both the survey and interview, a separate child assent form, written in both English and Spanish, was distributed and signed by each participant (Appendix F). During administration of the survey and interviews, students were informed that to maintain confidentiality, no names would be used in the written study. This was stated by the researcher and reaffirmed by a designated student advocate.

The research study met the regulations established by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which establishes four categories of

research for protocols involving children. Relevant to this study, the code of federal records requires that

the research presents no greater than minimal risk to children; and adequate provisions are made for soliciting the assent of the children and the permission of their parents or guardians, as set forth in HHS regulations at 45 CFR 46.408. (HHS, Public Welfare, Protection of Human Subjects, 45 CFR 46.404, 2009)

Quantitative data were collected prior to delivering the survey questionnaire. Data from the SIS were exported to an Excel spreadsheet used to calculate the mean and median for grade point average, number of office referrals, and absences for each research subject. Yearbook references were tallied and entered next to individual students' records on the same Excel spread sheet and calculated for the mean and median.

The designated student advocate was present during the administration of both the survey questionnaire and interviews. The student advocate was available to validate delivery of the child assent form, answer questions, ensure that students understood their rights, and had the authority to stop the interview process if students felt uncomfortable. The advocate selected is a counselor of Mexican-American ancestry who met district standards for bilingual Spanish interpretation skills. She possesses a master's degree in educational counseling and has previously served as a coordinator for Healthy Start, a case manager for juvenile probation, and a family support services administrator. In these roles, she was trained on issues pertaining to client confidentiality. She has experience answering clarifying questions in both English and Spanish without providing leading directions. Besides professional training and formal education already obtained by the student advocate, additional directions specific to this study were provided to the advocate before and after the pilot study of the survey instrument and student interviews.

The written Spanish portion of the questionnaire was also reviewed for accuracy by a professional team led by Victoria, assistant superintendent for educational services, and Tamara, the district's secondary curriculum coordinator. As children, both Victoria and Tamara immigrated to the United States from Mexico and began their formal schooling as EL students. Both have earned master's degrees in educational leadership. Victoria served as an assistant principal at a dual immersion elementary school before becoming principal of another elementary school with a large EL student population. She also served as a district level ELD coordinator before becoming assistant superintendent. Tamara was a teacher at a dual-immersion elementary school and then served as a high school ELD teacher and later as a high school ELD coordinator before becoming the district's secondary curriculum coordinator.

Students were called from class in groups of five and responded individually to the survey instruments using Google Docs on Chromebooks located in a computer lab on the high school campus. The students were assigned seats in five different rows leaving a distance of 10-12 feet between each row. The process was supervised by the student advocate.

Subject interviews were conducted individually after the completion of the survey questionnaire. Interview subjects were selected based on their status as either an LTEL or RFEP student, as well as data collected from the SIS and school yearbook suggesting either high or low levels of school connectedness. Subjects were also evenly distributed by grade level and gender. This non-random, purposive sampling method utilized a strategy known as *sampling by case type* (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Based on the data obtained from the SIS and school yearbook, a combination of LTEL and RFEP case

types were chosen and non-interactive questioning techniques were deployed. Each subject was asked a series of structured and semi-structured questions to obtain additional background and in-depth analysis of the topic, provide insights on students' perceptions in each of the school connectedness contexts, and enhance the quality of quantitative data collected.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data collected from the SIS, school yearbook, and survey questionnaire were calculated using an Excel spreadsheet to establish an overall mean for the entire EL student population as well as each LTEL and RFEP subpopulation. A two-tailed t-test was administered as the appropriate statistical analysis for the data produced. According to Patten (2012), the purpose of the t-test is to reject the *null hypothesis*, which states that there is no real difference between two means and statistical differences recreated by chance errors based on the sample population used.

Qualitative data from student interviews were coded and analyzed for patterns common to the entire sample population or unique to each subpopulation. A thematic coding system was utilized from interview transcripts using. According to Gibson and Hartman (2014), categorization is a key goal of grounded theory and coding is its key mechanism.

Although Strauss and Corbin (1998) argued that in grounded theory research, "the first step in theory building is conceptualizing" (p 103), the six established contexts used to develop the interview questions for this study also served as the main categories for the thematic coding of subjects' responses. Some interpretations of grounded theory suggest that Glaser and Strauss (1967) advocated ignoring previous studies. In fact, as Gibson

and Hartman (2014) observed, Glaser and Strauss did not suggest ignoring the literature completely. Instead, they advocated establishing similarities and differences “after the core category emerged” (p. 201). Additionally, they argued that the aim of grounded theory “was to establish as much variety as possible in conceptualisations that could enable the development of a fully relevant theory.” (p. 201).

Citing early work by Glaser and Strauss that introduced grounded theory research, Gibson and Hartman (2014) also argued that the analysis of data derived from a grounded theory study can be presented as either a thorough set of propositions or a running theoretical discussion. Applied to grounded theory, Gibson and Hartman maintained that coding of qualitative data has two fundamental purposes: First, to secure categories from the data; Second, to integrate these categories into a unified theory. Strauss and Corbin (1990) recommended a three-step process to coding qualitative data in grounded theory studies: (a) open coding, (b) axial coding, and (c) selective coding. Traditionally, the first step in this process is open coding, which uses data to name and categorize phenomena. Citing Glaser, Gibson and Hartman (2014) argued that the goal of open coding is to prevent the researcher from developing a theory that is preconceived.

In this research study, a modified form of open coding was utilized. Established and substantive contexts from the literature review were first used to develop and categorize interview questions from which theoretical open coding could emerge (Dey, 1999). Axial coding was then used to identify relationships among the themes identified during the open coding process (Patton, 2009). Axial coding has also been described as a method to reassemble data that has been *fractured* during the open coding process. This

creates new ways of making connections between categories and subcategories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

As a part of the grounded theory process, the research team used axial coding to consolidate themes and sub themes relative to the six contexts of school connectedness. Upon completion of axial coding, selective coding was employed. Gibson and Hartman (2014) explained that selective coding is used to focus analysis and establish the centrality and generality of the researcher's core category.

To strengthen trustworthiness, an inter-rater process was used to validate categories. Armstrong, Gosling, Weinman, & Marteau (1997) found that qualitative research studies may use a variety of techniques to establish inter-rater reliability. These techniques include both separate analyses and joint meetings. In this research study, both members of the professional team and the researcher reviewed the transcribed student interviews separately and established initial categories using modified open coding, axial coding and selective coding. Professional team members then debriefed with the researcher to collaborate and clarify codes. Team members also validated the core category used to develop the theory. Attestation letters from both professional team members outlining their participation in instrument development and data analysis are included as Appendices G and H.

Triangulation is another technique used to establish reliability. As applied to this grounded theory study, quantitative data from the SIS and survey questionnaire were analyzed and triangulated with qualitative data obtained through subject interviews. Consistent with the grounded theory design, the researcher analyzed the code responses and quantitative data to investigate and discover significant patterns in the responses of

LTEL and RFEP study participants. Significant differences in academic performance, classroom behavior, and extracurricular involvement contexts of school connectedness, coupled with the lack of significant differences in interpersonal relationships, school community, or sociocultural factors provided a framework through which a working theory was developed. The results of this analysis are presented in Chapter V as two emergent theories of EL students' language acquisition and perceptions of school connectedness.

Limitations

A limitation of this study was the population used. Data from this study provided insights that may be generalized to other school districts in California or other regions of the United States with large numbers of Spanish speaking EL students from Mexico. Since 11th and 12th grade high school students were studied, results may be generalized to other LTEL and RFEP high school students in this grade range. Delimitation reduced variability and established greater internal validity with the sample population. In large urban centers, and in other regions of the United States, EL student populations are less homogeneous (Pandya et al., 2011; Zong & Batalova, 2015). Cultural and linguistic backgrounds, educational expectations and experiences, and socioeconomic status may be different among students within these communities, thereby making population external validity to larger districts more difficult.

However, as noted in Chapter 1, Pandya et al., (2011) also reported that among metropolitan areas in the United States with the largest populations of non-English speakers, Spanish is the dominant language spoken among non-English speakers, with the majority of these native Spanish speakers hailing from Mexico. Thus, the delimiting

variables applied to the population sample may be relevant and generalized to many other districts likely to have similar student demographics.

Further limitations may be attributed to the quality of the survey questionnaire and interview questions. Although this study utilized mixed methodologies and pilot testing was employed to mitigate possible concerns related to construct validity, the multidimensional factors associated with the topic of school connectedness suggest that other methods of measurement could produce different results. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) argued that construct validity is closely associated with generalizability and that weak conceptualization will limit inferences.

The sampling strategies used in this study were designed to control for possible sampling bias and subject motivation. Nevertheless, research subjects' motivations and sampling bias can occur non-deliberately (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Patton, 2002). Considered within the context of the survey, it is difficult to determine whether or not high school students may be motivated to answer questions in a specific manner that skews and limits the generalizability of the responses. Empirical generalizability is not the primary purpose of methods triangulation in qualitative interviews using sampling by case type strategies (Patton, 2002). However, unperceived bias on the part of the researcher in selecting participants or biases of the subjects themselves may prevent the delivery of information rich data.

Summary

The number of EL students is growing throughout the United States. EL students who do not acquire academic language proficiency in English after five or more years and enter high school as LTEL students are at greater risk of experiencing academic

failure and dropping out. Evidence also suggests that students who feel connected to school perform better academically and that high levels of school connectedness serve as a protective factor against negative behaviors and mental health issues as well.

This grounded theory study was designed to determine whether or not LTEL students and RFEP students attending the same comprehensive high school have different perceptions of school connectedness. Delimiting criteria were assigned to the EL student population to reduce variability and provide a more homogenous sample population. Both quantitative and qualitative methodology were used to gather data, provide greater depth to this inquiry, and established two practical theories related to perceptions of school connectedness and language acquisition among EL students.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Overview

Throughout the United States, the number of students identified as English Learners (EL) has increased significantly over the past two decades. Currently, there is limited research available on the perceptions of school connectedness and the role it may play in EL students' mastery of English. This grounded theory study endeavors to bridge this gap in academic research.

Chapter IV presents the findings of quantitative and qualitative data collected in this grounded theory research study. The data are ordered and organized around six contexts of school connectedness: (a) academic performance, (b) classroom behavior, (c) extracurricular involvement, (d) interpersonal relationships, (e) school community, and (f) sociocultural factors. This chapter also presents quantitative information collected from artifacts. The findings are presented in the form of descriptive data retrieved from the district's Student Information System (SIS) and the high school yearbook. Subject responses to a survey questionnaire also yielded quantitative interval data on perceptions of school connectedness among the sample population. Qualitative data from subjects within the sample population was gathered through open-ended interview questions. Chapter IV also restates the purpose statement and questions guiding the research, the population and sample, a description of the methodology and data collection process, demographic data, an analysis of the data, proposed theories, and a summary.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods grounded theory study was to explore differences in perceptions of school connectedness among Long Term English Learner

(LTEL) students and Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) students in a comprehensive high school setting. This study also seeks to determine whether or not there is a relationship between English language acquisition and perceptions of school connectedness among these two groups.

Research Questions

1. Do LTEL students have different perceptions of school connectedness than RFEP students?
2. What are the differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students?
3. What is the relationship between perceptions of school connectedness and language acquisition among LTEL and RFEP students?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

This study was a grounded theory research design using mixed methodology. Before research and data collection began, approval for the research study was obtained through the Brandman Institutional Review Board (IRB) and informed consent was obtained from all subjects and from the parents or guardians of those subjects under the age of 18.

For the quantitative portion of the study, the Student Information System (SIS) was used to first identify the overall population of EL students at the high school and to develop a population sample based on the established criteria for the study. It was also used to apply delimiting variables and organize the population into LTEL and RFEP subgroups. Data from the SIS was also used to determine comprehensive grade point averages, number of absences, and office referrals for LTEL and RFEP students in the

sample population. This data was then exported to an Excel spreadsheet for tabulation. After publication of the high school's annual yearbook, indexed references to photographs illustrating students' participation in extracurricular activities was collected, cross-referenced with the sample population and tabulated on a spreadsheet for each member of the sample population.

An initial meeting was held with all students meeting the criteria for inclusion in the study. An informed consent form, written in both English and Spanish, was sent home with subjects under the age of 18. Returned forms were collected and secured in a locking file cabinet to assure confidentiality. Students who returned informed consent forms were provided a five dollar gift certificate for a local sandwich shop and entered in a raffle for a chance to win a \$100 Target gift card. Prior to administration of both the survey and interview, a separate child assent form, written in both English and Spanish, was also distributed and collected. An advocate was present with the researcher during administration sessions to assure that students' rights were not violated and to reaffirm confidentiality.

A pilot study of the survey questionnaire was given to one LTEL student and one RFEP student. The survey was administered on Chromebooks using Google docs. Both of the students in the pilot study indicated to the researcher and advocate that they understood the questions and response choices and did not have any difficulty completing the survey. Among the 160 potential subjects, five students opted out of participation and three were not recorded because students did not submit their responses upon completion of the survey. This resulted in an overall participation rate of 95%. A complete summary of survey responses is presented in Appendix I.

For the qualitative portion of the study, interviews were conducted by the researcher with the advocate present. Again, one LTEL student and one RFEP student participated in a pilot study. After completing the interview both stated that they understood the questions and did not have difficulty responding. Student responses were digitally recorded and submitted to a service for written transcription.

The researcher reviewed the transcripts for accuracy and then provided copies to members of the professional team to begin the inter-rater process used to validate categories. Team members included the district's assistant superintendent of educational services and its secondary curriculum coordinator. Members of the professional team and the researcher reviewed the transcribed student interviews separately and established initial categories using modified open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The team members and the researcher then met together to discuss and clarify codes and validate the core category used to develop the theory. Coded responses from 16 interviews with the eight LTEL and eight RFEP students are presented in the Qualitative Research Data section of Chapter IV. These 16 students were selected to provide greater depth of understanding, enhance construct validity, and develop the emergent theories proposed in this study.

Population

The target population for this study was Spanish speaking LTEL and RFEP students in grades 6-12 in Stanislaus County. The total number of students enrolled in grades 6-12 in Stanislaus County during the 2014-2015 school year was 56,894. The population of EL students was 9,019 (16%). Among these EL students, 8,101 (90%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Additionally, 14,715 (26%) of students

enrolled in grades 6-12 were classified as RFEP. Among these RFEP students, 12,437 (85%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Demographic show that 32,091 (56%) of students report their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino, and that 71,377 (66.7%) qualify for free and reduced priced meals (CDE, Educational Demographics Office, 2015).

Sample

The sample for this study included 160 subjects: 56 LTEL and 104 RFEP high school students enrolled in a comprehensive high school in Western Stanislaus County. All subjects also met the delimiting demographic criteria for this study. Additional information on participants' grade level and gender is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Participant Information

Language Acquisition	Gender		Grade	
Long Term English Learners (LTEL) Students	Male	35	11th	19
			12th	16
	Female	21	11th	11
			12th	10
Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) Students	Male	52	11th	21
			12th	31
	Female	52	11th	22
			12th	30

Demographic Data

All subjects in the sample population are economically disadvantaged as defined by their participation in the National School Lunch Program. All are of Mexican ancestry with Spanish as their native language. All are enrolled in grades 11 or 12 and have been continuously enrolled in the school district for at least five years.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Quantitative Research Data

This research study was designed to identify and measure differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students. A theoretical framework using the multi-dimensional contexts identified by Jimerson et al. (2003) was used to group quantitative data collected from both the identified artifacts and subjects' survey responses. The study sample was described in Table 3. Based on the established criteria, all 160 students were juniors or seniors. By designated language acquisition criteria, 56 (35%) were LTEL and 104 (65%) were RFEP. Thirty-five (62.5%) of LTEL students were male and 21 (37.5%) were female. Among RFEP students, 52 (50%) were male, and 52 (50%) were female.

Research question 1. Research Question 1 was: Do LTEL students have different perceptions of school connectedness than RFEP students?

In analyzing data collected from artifacts, a two-tailed t test was used to compare the means of LTEL and RFEP students in the sample population. The p-value is used to determine statistical significance, reject the null hypothesis, and establish that differences in means between the two groups studied are not due to random chance. A p-value of less than 0.05 indicates statistical significance and rejection of the null hypothesis. Table 4 displays the results of t tests (t) using the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) to determine the probability (p) that there are significant differences between the means of school connectedness data collected for LTEL and RFEP students. The data collected was from two different sources. The Student Information System (SIS) includes cumulative grade point averages (GPA), office referrals, and absences. The yearbook

contains indexed portraits along with group and individual pictures referencing extracurricular involvement for all students enrolled at the high school. Artifact data for LTEL and RFEP students in the research study is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Comparison of Artifact Data for LTEL and RFEP Students (N=160)

Artifact	School Connectedness Construct	LTEL Students		RFEP Students		Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
SIS - GPA	Academic Performance	2.17	0.73	2.88	0.79	-0.71	5.5657	0.0001
SIS- Office Referrals	Classroom Behavior	0.57	1.51	0.50	1.56	0.07	0.2737	0.7846
SIS - Absences	Multi-Dimensional	12.21	16.10	11.60	19.03	0.61	0.2037	0.8388
Yearbook References	Extracurricular Involvement	2.30	1.73	4.13	3.44	-1.83	3.7312	0.0003

The results of the t-test showed significant differences between LTEL and RFEP students within the academic performance construct of school connectedness as measured by mean GPA ($p = .0001$) and extracurricular involvement as measured by the mean number of yearbook references ($p = .0003$). There was no statistically significant difference in the classroom behavior construct as measured by the number of office referrals or multi-dimensional constructs that may include attendance as measured by absenteeism.

In analyzing data collected through the survey questionnaire, a two-tailed t test was also used to compare the means of LTEL and RFEP students in the sample population. This analysis was used for both aggregate means for the five questions in each of the six school connectedness contexts as well as responses to individual survey items. The p -value is used to determine statistical significance, reject the null hypothesis, and establish that differences in means between the two groups studied are not due to random chance. A p -value of less than 0.05 indicates statistical significance and rejection of the null hypothesis. Tables 5 and 6 display the results of t tests (t) using the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) to determine the probability (p) that there are significant differences between the means of school connectedness based on the scaled scores from the School Connectedness Survey collected for both LTEL and RFEP students. The survey used a Likert scale (1-5).

Results of the 30 question survey questionnaire administered to the sample population showed no statistically significant differences in perceptions of school connectedness in the aggregate scaled scores. The results, as measured by the aggregate mean for the set of five questions within each school connectedness construct, are presented in Table 5.

This aggregate survey data suggests that the academic context of school connectedness, as measured by cumulative GPA, and the extracurricular involvement context, as measured by the mean number of indexed yearbook references, are not impacted by students' perceptions of classroom behavior, interpersonal relationships,

Table 5

Comparison of Composite Scaled Scores for School Connectedness Survey (N=152)

School Connectedness Context	Number of Items	LTEL Students		RFEP Students		Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Academic Performance	5	3.21	1.24	3.36	1.24	-0.15	0.7194	0.4730
Classroom Behavior	5	3.16	1.26	3.25	1.25	-0.09	0.4269	0.6700
Extracurricular Involvement	5	3.19	1.24	3.29	1.24	-0.10	0.4796	0.4796

School Connectedness Context	Number of Items	LTEL Students		RFEP Students		Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Interpersonal Relationships	5	3.28	1.21	3.35	1.21	-0.07	0.3440	0.7313
School Community	5	3.26	1.21	3.35	1.20	-0.09	0.4447	0.6572
Sociocultural Factors	5	3.25	1.26	3.34	1.25	-0.09	0.4269	0.6700

school community, or sociocultural factors or their status as either LTEL or RFEP.

However, individual survey responses support the artifact data collected showing significant differences within the academic performance and extracurricular involvement contexts based on language acquisition. Table 6 details a comparison of LTEL and RFEP students' responses to individual survey items within the questionnaire. Results showed

three mean scores for questions 2, 4, 8, and 13 within the extracurricular involvement context and one mean score, question 16, within the sociocultural factors context yielding statistically significant differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students. The results of *t* tests (*t*) using the mean (*M*) and standard deviation (*SD*) to determine the probability (*p*) that there are significant differences between the means of school connectedness based on the scaled scores from the School Connectedness Survey collected for both LTEL and RFEP students.

Sociocultural factors were not measured through artifact data, but are explored further in the interview instrument employed for qualitative data collection. The mean for the scaled score to question 16 showed that on average, LTEL students gave a higher ranking than RFEP students regarding the frequency with which their high school hosts events and activities that celebrate and honor the cultural and language backgrounds of Mexican-American students. This appears to be at odds with self-reported participation in organizations such as the Hispanic Youth Leadership Council (HYLC) and the Mexican American Student Association (MASA) as expressed through student interviews reported later in Chapter IV. When questions 2, 4, 8 and 13 are examined in relationship to language status, it is interesting to note that again, significant differences are observed between LTEL and RFEP responses within the academic performance and extracurricular involvement contexts of school connectedness.

Research question 2. Research Question 2 was: What are the differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students?

Table 6

Comparison of Individual Scaled Scores for School Connectedness Survey (N=152)

Survey Item	School Connectedness Context	LTEL Students		RFEP Students		Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
2. I get good grades in my classes	Academic Performance	3.64	0.86	3.92	0.74	-0.28	2.1182	0.0358
4. I enjoy and get involved in the activities offered at this school.	Extracurricular Involvement	2.64	1.10	2.99	0.92	-0.35	2.1029	0.0371
8. I attend school sponsored functions such as dances, pep rallies, music performances or sports events.	Extracurricular Involvement	2.43	1.26	3.05	1.02	-0.62	3.3098	0.0012
13. I am involved in leadership activities as an officer in a club or Associated Student Body (ASB)	Extracurricular Involvement	1.27	0.70	1.71	1.17	-0.44	2.5578	0.0115
16. This school hosts events and activities that celebrate and honor the cultural and language backgrounds of Mexican-American students	Sociocultural Factors	2.89	0.91	2.53	0.98	0.36	2.2420	0.0264

Quantitative data obtained through artifacts and survey responses both show differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students. Multiple differences are in the academic performance and extracurricular involvement contexts. Using the aforementioned t-tests applied to these analyses, the p-value is used to determine statistical significance, reject the null hypothesis, and establish that differences in means between the two groups studied are not due to random chance. A p-value of less than 0.05 indicates statistical significance and rejection of the null hypothesis. A complete comparison of both sets of quantitative data is illustrated below in Table 7.

The results of artifact data showed statistically significant differences in the academic performance construct as measured by cumulative GPA for LTEL students ($M = 2.17$) and RFEP students ($M = 2.88$). Also within the academic performance construct, there was a significant difference in students' response to survey item number 2, "*I get good grades in my classes.*" Scaled scores were ($M = 3.64$) for LTEL students and ($M = 3.92$) for RFEP students.

Significant differences within the extracurricular involvement construct were also noted. Artifact data from the high school yearbook produced indexed references of ($M = 2.30$) for LTEL students and ($M = 4.13$) for RFEP students. Three separate survey items also showed statistically significant differences within this construct. Survey item number 4, "*I enjoy and get involved in the activities offered at this school,*" resulted in ($M = 2.64$) for LTEL students and ($M = 2.99$) for RFEP students. LTEL students' scaled scores were ($M = 2.43$) and ($M = 3.05$) for RFEP students in response to survey item

Table 7

Differences in Perceptions of School Connectedness as Measured by Artifact Data and Scaled Scores from Survey Questionnaire

	School Connectedness Context	LTEL Students		RFEP Students		Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Artifact SIS - GPA	Academic Performance	2.17	0.73	2.88	0.79	-0.71	5.5657	0.0001
Survey Item	2. I get good grades in my classes	3.64	0.86	3.92	0.74	-0.28	2.1182	0.0358
Artifact Yearbook References	Extracurricular Involvement	2.30	1.73	4.13	3.44	-1.83	3.7312	0.0003
Survey Item	4. I enjoy and get involved in the activities offered at this school.	2.64	1.10	2.99	0.92	-0.35	2.1029	0.0371
Survey Item	8. I attend school sponsored functions such as dances, pep rallies, music performances or sports events.	2.43	1.26	3.05	1.02	-0.62	3.3098	0.0012
Survey Item	13. I am involved in leadership activities as an officer in a club or Associated Student Body (ASB)	1.27	0.70	1.71	1.17	-0.44	2.5578	0.0115

number 8, “*I attend school sponsored functions such as dances, pep rallies, music performances or sports events.*” Survey item number 13, “*I am involved in leadership activities as an officer in a club or Associated Student Body (ASB),*” produced scaled scores of ($M = 1.27$) for LTEL students and ($M = 1.71$) for RFEP students.

These findings, showing significant differences in the academic performance and extracurricular contexts, are consistent across all three measures utilized in this research study. Yet, there are no significant parallel differences noted between LTEL and RFEP students’ perceptions of school connectedness within the contexts of school community or interpersonal relationships in any of the quantitative or qualitative measures.

Klem and Connell (2004) reported that as many as 40 to 60 percent of high school students in urban, rural and suburban communities are chronically disengaged in school. Distilling his research and the work of others, Blum (2005) noted that students with strong perceptions of school connectedness:

like school, feel they belong, believe teachers care about them and their learning, believe that education matters, have friends at school, believe that discipline is fair, and have opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities. (p. 17)

The absence of significant differences in either the school community and interpersonal relationships contexts suggests that there may be a relationship between extracurricular involvement and academic performance for LTEL and RFEP students.

Research question 3. Research Question 3 was: What is the relationship between perceptions of school connectedness and language acquisition among LTEL and RFEP students?

In this study, language acquisition and mastery of the English language by students who were English learners (EL) is defined by redesignation or reclassification as fluent English proficient (RFEP). EL students who have been in the United States for five or more years and have not been reclassified as fluent English proficient are considered long term English learner (LTEL) students.

The quantitative data presented in Tables 4, 5, and 6 suggest significant differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students in the academic performance and extracurricular involvement contexts. A third context, sociocultural factors, yielded a singular significant difference in scaled scores for an item on the survey questionnaire that asked students to assess the frequency that their high school “hosts events and activities that celebrate and honor the cultural and language backgrounds of Mexican-American students.”

Within the sample population, the findings show that RFEP students have much greater participation in extracurricular activities and stronger academic performance than LTEL students—irrespective of other factors of school connectedness. This suggests a possible relationship between extracurricular involvement, academic performance, and language acquisition. The quantitative data from this section were gathered concurrently with qualitative results obtained through student interviews. These data sets are triangulated and explored further in the following section to provide additional insights on the identified phenomena and develop an emergent theory based on the research study, which is presented in Chapter V.

Qualitative Research Data

The qualitative portion of the research study consisted of 21 semi-structured questions asked of 16 students who were part of the sample population being studied. Three questions were asked in each school connectedness context and three questions related to language acquisition were also asked. Follow-up questions designed to elicit more detailed responses were asked of each participant, except in instances where the interviewer inadvertently skipped a question or the respondent covered material in more than one response.

Quantitative artifact data for each of the LTEL interview participants are presented in Table 8. Quantitative artifact data for each of the RFEP interview participants are presented in Table 9. Purposive sampling was used to identify subjects for interviews, and selection was based on variance from the mean on SIS and yearbook data points, suggesting either high or low levels of school connectedness. Counselors at the high school also identified students within this group who might be more comfortable participating in an interview. The groups were also balanced equally by gender and grade level. Each interview participant was provided a pseudonym to preserve anonymity.

Table 8 shows the cumulative GPA ($M = 2.06$), number of absences ($M = 9.5$) and the number office referrals ($M = 0.75$) extracted from the SIS for the eight members of the LTEL interview group. Yearbook references ($M = 1.88$) are also provided. For comparative purposes, the cumulative GPA ($M = 2.17$), number of absences ($M = 12.21$) and the number of office referrals ($M = 2.30$) from the SIS and yearbook references ($M = 2.30$) for all LTEL members of the sample population are also provided.

The quantitative artifact data show that three of the eight LTEL interview participants have a GPA that is above the mean for the LTEL subpopulation in the sample population, while five of the participants possess a GPA below the mean. Four of the students have cumulative absences that are above the mean for the LTEL

Table 8

Quantitative Artifact Data for LTEL Interview Participants

LTEL Students	Cumulative GPA	Absences	Office Referrals	Yearbook References
“Carlos”	2.69	1	0	4
“Monica”	1.59	6	0	3
“Nancy”	2.89	15	0	1
“Sergio”	2.59	18	0	2
“Veronica”	1.63	19	4	1
“Yesenia”	1.90	11	0	2
“Lorenzo”	1.75	2	0	1
“Marcos”	1.50	4	2	1
LTEL Interview Group Mean:	2.06	9.5	0.75	1.88
LTEL Sample Population Mean:	2.17	12.21	0.57	2.30

subpopulation, while four have cumulative absences below the mean. Six of the LTEL students had no office referrals, while two had office referrals above the mean for the LTEL subpopulation. Two of the LTEL interview participants have yearbook references above the mean for the LTEL subpopulation, while six are below.

Table 9 shows the cumulative GPA ($M = 4.14$), number of absences ($M = 6.25$) and the number office referrals ($M = 0.00$) extracted from the SIS for the eight members

of the RFEP interview group. Yearbook references ($M = 7.25$) are also provided. For comparative purposes, the cumulative GPA ($M = 2.88$), number of absences ($M = 11.60$) and the number of office referrals ($M = .50$) from the SIS and yearbook references ($M = 4.13$) for all RFEP members of the sample population are also provided.

Table 9

Quantitative Artifact Data for RFEP Interview Participants

RFEP Students	Cumulative GPA	Absences	Office Referrals	Yearbook References
“Alexis”	4.07	10	0	10
“Arturo”	2.77	6	0	6
“Gina”	4.21	12	0	2
“Omar”	4.24	1	0	7
“Linda”	3.57	2	0	8
“Cesar”	4.28	1	0	12
“Janet”	3.67	17	0	7
“Ricardo”	4.24	1	0	6
RFEP Interview Group Mean:	4.14	6.25	0.00	7.25
RFEP Sample Population Mean:	2.88	11.60	0.50	4.13

The quantitative artifact data show that seven of the eight RFEP participants in the interview group have a GPA that is above the mean for the RFEP subpopulation, while one of the participants possess a GPA below the mean. Five of the students possess a GPA above 4.0 due to participation and academic achievement in advanced placement (AP) classes. Two of the students have cumulative absences that are above the mean for the RFEP subpopulation, while six have cumulative absences below the mean. None of the RFEP students had office referrals, compared with an average of .50 for the

RFEP subpopulation. All eight of the RFEP interview participants have yearbook references above the mean for the RFEP subpopulation. In some instances, the number of yearbook references for RFEP students does not equally match the number of coded responses from students. This may be attributed to absences on the days photographs were taken or responses indicating extracurricular participation in prior academic years, as recorded in the interview transcripts.

Qualitative interview data are presented and analyzed by school connectedness context. All survey responses were coded by type and frequency. Students sometimes provided more than one response for the same item. Responses yielding two or more codes are presented, unless singular codes accounted for the first or second most frequent response. Codes are presented in tables. Complete written transcripts for each student interview are included as Appendices J-Y.

Academic Performance Context

Students' responses to interview questions relating to the academic performance context, as illustrated in Table 10, show differences between LTEL and RFEP students. When asked about the characteristics of a good student, LTEL students more frequently responded with traits associated with respect and responsibility. While RFEP students also cited respect and responsibility, they were more apt to describe terms related to a student's work ethic, such as "hard work," "determination," and "perseverance."

Asked individually if they considered themselves to be good students, a majority (six) of both LTEL and RFEP students stated that they were good students. "Sergio," is an 11th grade LTEL student who maintains a cumulative GPA of 2.59, above the mean of

2.17 for the LTEL sample population. He described the characteristics of a good student as “responsible, respectful towards others.” “Arturo”, a 12th grade RFEP student, has a cumulative GPA of 2.77 – below the mean of 2.88 for the RFEP sample population. He considers himself an “average” student and believes that good students, “Just focus a lot on studies”:

Table 10

Coded Responses for Interview Questions in the Academic Performance Context

Academic Performance Context Interview Responses	
(a) What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student?	
LTEL Students	RFEP Students
Responsible – 5 Respectful - 5 Academically Proficient -3	Hard Work/Determination and Perseverance - 7 Responsible -4 Respectful -3
(b) Do you consider yourself to be a good student?	
LTEL Students	RFEP Students
Yes - 6 No - 1 Average - 1	Yes - 6 Average – 2
Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?	
LTEL Students	RFEP Students
Teachers/After School Tutoring With Teachers -7 Family Members - 3 Peers - 2	Teachers/After School Tutoring With Teachers -4 TRIO/Upward Bound Program -2
(a) Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?	
LTEL Students	RFEP Students
Yes - 5 No - 1 Somewhat - 2	Yes - 5 Somewhat -3

(b) If so, what are you most proud of? If not, why?

LTEL Students	RFEP Students
Increasing GPA/Bringing Up Grades - 2 Credit Recovery/Avoiding Continuation School – 2	High GPA/Academic Honors - 7 Achieving Goals - 2

I consider myself an average student because I never got an academic block. I’ve gotten 3.0’s, but I’ve never got that 3.5. I always thought that if I got that, I’d consider myself smart. I got accepted to CSU Stanislaus and CSU Sac, but I don’t feel smart, to be honest.

“Omar,” an 11th grade RFEP student, maintains a 4.24 GPA and is enrolled AP classes.

He considers himself to be a “pretty good student.” He attributed academic success to motivation:

Oftentimes students are told that they need to be intelligent, smart, or already with an aptitude, but I feel that that’s not really the case. As long as you’re driven, you can achieve pretty much anything you want. I feel you just need motivation to keep you going.

Both LTEL and RFEP students noted that they most often go to their teachers for assistance with homework. LTEL students more frequently sought assistance from family members and peers. RFEP students also referenced formal tutoring programs, such as the TRIO Upward Bound program, which is offered on their high school campus.

Asked about their academic accomplishments in school, a majority (five) of the subjects from both the LTEL and RFEP interview groups responded that they were proud of their academic accomplishments. LTEL subjects most frequently cited instances of improvement over poor prior academic performance, while RFEP subjects more often referenced their GPA and goal attainment. “Nancy,” an 11th grade LTEL student,

maintains a GPA of 2.89 – above the mean for the LTEL sample population. She described her proudest accomplishment as follows:

I am proud of my academic accomplishments, because I have work hard to get where I am, and do my best to get good grades. I'm most proud of math, because I would always get bad grades on my tests. Now, I'm getting C's on it.

“Veronica,” an 11th grade LTEL student has a 1.63 GPA that is below the mean for the LTEL sample population. She indicated that she was planning to take summer school classes to get caught up on credits for her senior year:

I'm proud because of the fact that I was going back some credits, behind really, and I came back to trying to get all my credits back and not being worried about it in my senior year. I just want to get everything together and get far in life.

“Ricardo” is an 11th grade RFEP student who maintains a 4.24 GPA and is enrolled in AP classes. Ricardo described his accomplishments relative to past honors, and current class standing. “I'm proud of being currently number one in my class and being valedictorian for XXXXXX Middle School.”

Classroom Behavior Context

Students' responses to interview questions relating to the classroom behavior context, as illustrated in Table 11, show some similarities in perceptions of their day-to-day activities in their English and math classes. Both groups most frequently cited the activities “reading” and “doing assigned work” as common experiences in their English classes. However, RFEP students also noted activities associated with verbal engagement such as “presentations” and “participating in class discussions.” In math, “taking notes” and completing “assigned work” or math problems were the most frequent codes for both groups' responses, with RFEP students also citing “preparing for exams” or “testing” along with verbal engagement, “asking and answering questions.”

Greater verbal engagement was also noted in students' responses to a question about participation in classroom discussions. As recorded in Table 11, a significant number of respondents from both groups (12) did not like participating in class discussions or expressed reservations about doing so. However, no LTEL students liked

Table 11

Coded Responses for Interview Questions in the Classroom Behavior Context

Classroom Behavior Context Interview Responses				
(a) If someone visited your English class what would they see you doing as a student?				
LTEL Students		RFEP Students		
Reading - 7 Assigned Work - 5		Assigned Work - 3 Writing -3 Reading -2 Presentations – 2 Participating in Class Discussions – 2 Lecture – 2 Preparing for Exams/Testing -2		
(b) If someone visited your Math class, what would they see you doing as a student?				
LTEL Students		RFEP Students		
Assigned Work/Problems – 4 Taking Notes - 2		Taking Notes – 4 Assigned Work/Problems – 3 Asking/Answering Questions – 3 Preparing for Exams/Testing - 2		
Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions – why or why not?				
LTEL Students		RFEP Students		
No - 2 Sometimes - 6		Yes - 4 No - 2 Sometimes -2		
Don't Like to Talk/Get Nervous - 2		Hear Opinions of Others – 2 Enjoy Debating -1 Express Myself - 1		
Depends on Topic/ Confidence Level – 6		Don't Want to Be Judged – 1 Introverted - 1 Don't Want to Be Judged – 1 Introverted - 1		
Do you believe you are treated fairly by your teachers?				
LTEL Students		RFEP Students		
Yes – 7 Not Asked - 1		Yes - 7 No - 1 Not Asked -1		
All Students Treated the Same – 2 Behavior is Good - 2		All Students Treated the Same - 5 Some Teachers Play Favorites - 1		

participating, while half (four) of the RFEP students indicated that they enjoyed participating in class discussions.

“Alexis,” a 12th grade RFEP student who is enrolled in AP classes and maintains a cumulative GPA of 4.07, noted that she enjoys debating and likes “to put my ideas out there,” while “Gina,” an 11th grade RFEP and AP student who maintains a GPA of 4.21, doesn’t like to participate in class discussions. “I feel like if I’m wrong or something, I’ll get judged.” “Carlos,” a 12th grade LTEL student with a cumulative GPA of 2.70 – above the mean for LTEL students in the sample population, sometimes enjoys participating in class discussions:

When I know what the discussion is about, if I know what I want to talk about and find research about it, I like going into it. If I don’t know what’s going on, then I don’t talk.

LTEL student, Veronica noted:

It depends what class it is. I’m more into talking Spanish, I’m more talking in Spanish. I would really like Spanish classes for talking out stuff. When it comes to, my accent is strong in Spanish, so it’s kind of hard.

Also within the classroom behavior context, all but one of the students interviewed for the study stated that their teachers treat them fairly. Gina, an RFEP student, observed that there are certain teachers that can play favorites.

“Monica,” a 12th grade LTEL student with a GPA of 1.89, which is below the mean for LTEL students in the sample population, elaborated on her response by stating that teachers “give kids the same amount of help,” and LTEL student Veronica noted that “I don’t really talk in class, so I think I was treated fairly. “Yesenia,” a 12th grade LTEL student with a GPA of 1.90, below the mean for LTEL students in the sample population,

noted that she is treated well by her teachers because, “I’m a good student and I don’t misbehave.”

RFEP student Arturo remarked that if he doesn’t feel that he is being treated fairly, he will tell his teachers, “Hey, it’s like this,” and they will listen to him. RFEP student Alexis, observed:

I’ve never seen that distinction between (teachers) and me because of race, because of . . . that I speak Spanish or anything like that. I’ve never seen that discrimination amongst teachers at all.

Overall, both LTEL and RFEP students in the sample population reported that they and other students are treated fairly and respected by their teachers. Descriptions of classroom activities suggest that members of both groups have some fears about participating in classroom discussions, and that these fears are more acute among LTEL students. Descriptions of classroom activities also suggest greater rigor and engagement among students reported by RFEP students.

Extracurricular Involvement Context

Subjects’ responses to interview questions relating to the extracurricular involvement context, as illustrated in Table 12, show significant differences in participation levels between LTEL and RFEP students. All (eight) RFEP students reported that they participate in, or “sometimes” attend, school activities such as dances, music performances and sports events. A majority (five) of the LTEL students reported that they do not attend such events, while three responded that they attend “sports events.” One LTEL student and one RFEP reported a singular time attending a school dance, but all others did not attend dances. Seven RFEP students reported attending

sports events, while four others noted attendance at “music performances” or “talent shows.”

Table 12

Coded Responses for Interview Questions in the Extracurricular Involvement Context

Extracurricular Involvement Context Interview Responses	
Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances and sports events? Why or why not?	
LTEL Students	RFEP Students
Yes -3 No -5	Yes - 6 Sometimes -2
Sports Events – 3 Not Interested – 5	Sports Events – 7 Music Performances/Talent Shows – 4
Are there any extracurricular activities you would like to see at your school that are not currently in place?	
LTEL Students	RFEP Students
Yes - 4 No – 4	Yes - 6 No - 1 Not Asked -1
Elective Classes – 3 Sports - 1	Academic Programs/Competitions – 3 Clubs – 2 Sports -2
(a) What types of extracurricular activities are you involved with?	
LTEL Students (1 – Not Asked)	RFEP Students
Clubs – 3 Sports – 1	Clubs – 17 Sports – 14 Academic Programs/Competitions - 4 Music – 3 Student Government – 3
(b) If involved with extracurricular activities, who encouraged you to join?	
LTEL Students	RFEP Students (2-Not Asked)
Friend/Family – 2 Self-Motivated – 1	Self-Motivated – 7 Friend/Family – 3

“Linda” is a 12th grade RFEP student who maintains a cumulative GPA of 3.57 – above the mean for RFEP student in the sample population. She participates in the school band, but also likes to attend other activities:

I haven’t actually attended a dance here because none of my friends actually like it, but I do like attending music performances, since I usually participate in them I usually like watching other bands perform, even if it’s not at school . . . I do like football games. Other sports are O.K. for me, but I usually have homework during that time . . . If I can, I’ll go support them, even though I’m not on the team anymore.

“Janet,” an 11th grade RFEP student with a 3.67 GPA that is above the mean for RFEP students in the sample population, likes to attend soccer and football. “Cesar,” is a 12th grade RFEP student with a cumulative GPA of 4.28 and is enrolled in AP classes. He reports attending dances and sports events, but hasn’t enjoyed them. He remembers a dance performance as something he enjoyed because “it was just something different and interesting.”

Among RFEP students, “Alexis” noted that she is on the swim team and feels it’s important to support other teams as a courtesy to them. She is also in band and likes to attend other performing arts group performances such as choir, orchestra, and winter percussion. Another RFEP student, “Arturo,” noted that he likes to attend the talent shows to see who has talent and can sing. RFEP student “Gina” likes to attend events “at times” and “enjoy her high school years with friends,” but sometimes, because of her workload she just wants to “go home and relax.”

RFEP student Omar participates in sports, but commented that it is difficult to attend other activities as a spectator:

I would like to attend more of those events, but I’m busy participating in school events such as track and field, or cross country or clubs. I feel like I am involved in my events, but I really don’t get to observe others as much as I would want.

“Lorenzo” is a 12th grade LTEL student with a cumulative GPA of 1.75, which is below the mean for LTEL students in the sample population. Lorenzo noted that he doesn’t go to dances, because he “doesn’t like to dance.” He does not participate in sports, but attends “almost all” home games for football, volleyball, and basketball. Among other LTEL students, Carlos also reports attending sports events, but doesn’t attend other activities due to a lack of interest. Sergio only attends sports events, because “I like supporting our schools.” Nancy reported that sometimes she attends school events, but “sometimes I don’t because they don’t sound interesting.”

“Marcos” is an 11th grade LTEL student with a GPA of 1.50. He doesn’t attend any school events because, “I’m just not interested.” Monica reported attending prom the previous year, but has not attended other school events or activities: “I never really got into it, I don’t know.” Veronica noted that she doesn’t attend because the events don’t catch her attention and she’d “rather be at home.” Yesenia expressed similar feelings:

I really don’t like attending school activities that much, because I just like being at home. I don’t like going out that much.

Asked about additional extracurricular activities at their school, one LTEL student and two RFEP students cited sports. LTEL student Carlos and RFEP student Alexis noted the absence of a water polo team. RFEP student Linda had participated in “Powder Puff,” and wanted to see flag football become a sport for female students. LTEL students Nancy, Yesenia and Marcos wanted to see an elective in home economics brought back to their high school to teach “cooking and baking” to students. Marcos also expressed interest in a Japanese language class.

RFEP student Arturo noted that the high school once had a Criminal Justice Club that he would like to see brought back. Ricardo noted that he would like to see, “a chess club, a computer programming class, or a robotics club.” Other RFEP students, Omar and Cesar, stated that they would like to see Model United Nations and Mock Trial established at their high school.

In addressing their personal extracurricular involvement, the LTEL students reported three clubs and one sport among those interviewed. RFEP students’ responses were coded to 17 instances of participation in a club. Fourteen additional responses from RFEP students were coded to sports, four to academic programs and competitions, three to music, and three to student government.

Among LTEL interview subjects, Monica reported that she was involved with “Kids Helping Kids” because it was something she’d “always wanted to do.” Lorenzo joined the Mexican American Student Association (MASA) because his mother participated in the club when she attended high school. Marcos reported that he was a member of guitar club, but “rarely” goes. Sergio joined wrestling because he was encouraged by a friend in junior high and “was inspired by my cousin who was also a wrestler.”

RFEP students more frequently cited instances of “self-motivation” to join extracurricular activities. Alexis remembered joining band because it was an interest of her own, but stated that she was also motivated to join band because her uncle was a trombone player. She recalled playing a recorder in elementary school and thinking, “Is this what my uncle used to do?” With clubs, she remembered joining MASA because she had been bullied in middle school because of the way she dressed:

Seeing the MASA club as the Mexican American Students Association, I saw that as I'm going to be around people that are from the same background as me. I saw that as an opportunity, but I was never reached out, nobody ever reached out to me to join. I went out of my own free will, in a way.

Linda also noted a combination of self-interest and outside encouragement, stating that she joined the TRIO program for college advising, because it was something that, "I really did need," and joined soccer because it was "just one of my interests that I had." She noted that her mother encouraged her to become involved in music, but that it is something she "really (does) like as well." Involved with MASA, the math club, California Scholastic Federation (CSF), tennis, and cross-country, Hispanic Youth Leadership Council (HYLC), and tennis, Ricardo stated that he joined tennis because his sister was in tennis. "The other clubs, I participate in them because it interested me."

Responses to questions regarding participation in extracurricular activities at their high school showed that few of the LTEL or RFEP students participate in school dances. Consistent with quantitative data gathered, the RFEP students articulated far greater participation in sports, clubs, music, and student government than LTEL students. RFEP students were also more likely to attend sports events and music performances than LTEL students. Among LTEL students interviewed, one participated in a school sport and three participated in a club. Among those who did not participate in any extracurricular activities or attend other school events, a lack of interest was most frequently stated as the reason.

While all RFEP students cited participation in multiple extracurricular activities, three students noted that they do not attend other school events frequently due to time commitments associated with their own activities and academic workload. Others noted that they have curtailed some activities they participated in as freshmen or sophomores.

In contrast to LTEL students' responses, RFEP students also noted participation in student government and titles of specific leadership positions they held in clubs.

Table 13

Coded Responses for Interview Questions in the Extracurricular Involvement Context

Interpersonal Relationships Context Interview Responses	
Do teachers at P. High School encourage you to do well in school? If so, how is that encouragement provided?	
LTEL Students	RFEP Students
Yes -8	Yes - 8
Additional Help and Support– 4 Verbal Motivation – 3	Additional Help and Support – 5 Verbal Motivation – 2 High Expectations/Challenge Students – 2
Do you find it easy to make friends at school – why or why not?	
LTEL Students	RFEP Students
Yes - 6 No - 2	Yes - 8
Mutual Respect – 5 Extrovert Personality – 1	Introvert Personality – 1 Have Established Peer Group - 1
	Depends on Individual – 4 Common Experiences – 2 Students are Friendly - 2
Do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have personal or school related problems?	
LTEL Students	RFEP Students
Yes - 8	Yes - 7 Not Asked - 1

Interpersonal Relationship Context

Subjects' responses to interview questions regarding the interpersonal relationships context, as recorded in Table 13, show similarities among the perceptions of both LTEL and RFEP students who participated in the interview. When asked whether teachers at their high school provide encouragement, all (eight) LTEL students and all (eight) RFEP students responded affirmatively. In providing further explanation, the most frequent coded responses were that encouragement was provided through "Additional Help/Support" or "Verbal Motivation." Two RFEP students also provided responses coded as "high expectations/challenge students," with the same frequency as Verbal Motivation. None of the LTEL students cited "high expectations/challenge students" in their responses.

Among LTEL students, Monica said that teachers offer after school help, and Nancy noted that teachers are "always behind us, to bring our grades up." Sergio responded similarly:

They always tell you to keep your grades up and to try to always do you work so you can do well in the future.

Veronica noted that teachers helped her, "get all my credits and all my classes together," while Yesenia observed that encourage students to get their homework done and turned in on time, "so that you can get better grades." Marcos stated that he wasn't sure how they provide the encouragement. "I just don't pay attention to it, but they do." Lorenzo, responded:

Like if this is not working, they do and tell us, and tell us, and tell us. Once, if you don't listen, they send us to classes to show the rest of us, that'll be you.

Among RFEP students, Alexis noted that she had teachers who pushed her and other students to “do things out of their comfort zone.” Linda also noted that teachers provide support for her to “reach, and to learn more about colleges.” Arturo referenced a long-term substitute teacher who encourages students to “learn deeply,” while Gina noted that teachers help her when she’s “having trouble in school” and encourage her to “work hard and actually study for the final and midterm.” Cesar also noted that teachers will “pull students aside when they’re worried about how they’re doing.”

Omar referenced help that extends beyond the classroom:

They provide me with all the materials I need outside of the classroom, such as homework assignments or projects, and they’re always willing to offer me their aid if I need help. Some teachers have even gone farther and supported me outside of the classroom for things not really connected to the classroom, such as clubs or organizations for which they help and guide me. They have also helped to guide me for the college process.

Asked about interpersonal relationships with peers and whether or not it is easy to make friends at school, a majority of LTEL students (six) and all RFEP students (eight) responded affirmatively. Each group responded with various qualifying comments related to issues of mutual respect, common experiences, and individual student personalities.

Among the LTEL students, two students did not find it easy to make friends at school. Yesenia noted, “I just like being with one or two people,” and Marcos explained that he’s “an introvert.” By contrast, Carlos stated:

I do, because I’m really social, so I talk to people, even if we don’t know each other, to find something, or ask for something.

Monica explained that, “it just depends on how you treat them, and how you want to be treated back.” Sergio responded, “You just have to be social with people, be nice and kind and everything will turn out good.”

RFEP student Arturo, opined that “it depends on the person,” while Gina noted, “There are certain people you can talk to and others you can’t.” Although he has an established peer group, Omar likes “to get to know people and be open to their opinions.” Janet and Ricardo found it easy to make friends at school because, everyone’s “really friendly.” Cesar commented that it’s easy to make friends at school and anticipates the same happening when he enters college, because “everyone’s in the same boat.” He added:

At least here, even though we’ve all established our main friendships, it’s still easy to make friends since at least I have a tendency to befriend some of the new freshmen. In organizations like TRIO, or just different classes, I will make new friends each year.

All of the LTEL students and all RFEP students also noted affirmatively that they have friends they could turn to at school if they are having personal or school related problems. Among LTEL students, Carlos explained that he has friends he can go up to at “any time” and they will listen. Nancy noted that she “could just text them,” and they will help each other out. Yesenia stated that she has friends she can talk to “outside of school.” Marcos has friends he can talk to about problems, but he doesn’t want to “infect other people with my negativity.”

Among RFEP students in the sample population, Gina noted that she has a couple of friends she, “can trust and help.” Omar stated that he turns to friends he’s been with “since middle school,” and can “tell them with trust.” Although he prefers to “deal with it myself,” Cesar responded that he has friends he can turn to, “if I really have to.” Janet

has a group of friends she can talk to “if we’re stressed out at school and stuff like that,” while Ricardo referenced two friends he talks to “every day” and can turn to for help.

There were few differences noted between LTEL and RFEP students’ perceptions of school connectedness within the interpersonal relationships context. Both groups reported that they received encouragement and support from their teachers, staff, and students they could turn to for help. RFEP students also commented that teachers had high expectations and pushed students to “do things outside of their comfort zone.” With a few exceptions noted, both LTEL and RFEP students interviewed also found it easy to make friends at their high school.

School Community Context

Subjects’ responses to interview questions regarding the School Community context, as described in Table 14, show a variety of different codes for LTEL and RFEP students who participated in the interview. When asked what they liked most about their school, the most frequent coded response (three) for LTEL students was, “Teacher Help,” followed by six different unique responses. The most frequent codes for RFEP students, with three recorded responses each, were “Classes” and “Teachers and Students are Nice,” followed with two responses coded as “Extracurricular Activities.”

LTEL student Monica replied, “there’s many people here who don’t understand a variety of things, so the teachers give a lot of help.” Nancy also felt, “the teachers help you out,” and Lorenzo commented, “I like the way the teachers are.” Carlos liked that, “the school has a lot of pride in sports and all that,” while Sergio liked school to be with his friends, and Veronica felt, “they help me to be more independent.” Yesenia liked

some of the activities and “fun stuff,” like rallies. Marcos found “nothing special” to like.

Table 14

Coded Responses for Interview Questions in the School Community Context

School Community Context Interview Questions			
What do you like most about your school and what do you like least?			
LTEL Students		RFEP Students	
Most	Least	Most	Least
Teacher Help – 3 School Pride – 1 Respect – 1 Friends/Peer Support – 1 Develops Independence – 1 Activities – 1 Uncertain – 1	Restrictions – 2 Food - 2	Classes – 3 Teachers and Students are Nice – 3 Extracurricular Activities - 2	Cliques/Divisions Among Students – 2 Student Behavior/Rule Enforcement – 2 Facilities/Bathrooms - 2
(a) When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings?			
LTEL Students		RFEP Students	
Scared/Uncertain/Nervous – 5 Excited – 1 Aware of Importance/Expectations – 1		Scared/Uncertain/Nervous – 7 Disliked Underclassman Status – 1 Aware of Importance/Expectations – 1	
(b) Do you recall anything students or staff did to make you feel welcomed?			
LTEL Students		RFEP Students	
Teachers/Staff Were Nice – 4 Freshman Orientation/Ambassador Program - 2		Freshman Orientation/Ambassador Program – 4 Teachers/Staff Were Nice – 2	
What resources are available to you at school if you are having personal problems, issues at home, or issues with other students?			
LTEL Students		RFEP Students	
Counselors/Teaching Staff – 5 Contracted Service Provider - 2		Counselors/Teaching Staff – 5 Contracted Service Provider – 1 Coach – 1	

Among RFEP students, Ricardo and Omar both cited AP classes as something they like about their school, while Janet stated, “I love science. I’m in physics right now and it’s a really good class.” Gina, Linda, and Anthony all liked that the teachers and students are nice and supportive, although Anthony noted it was “mixed,” with “some people who are not nice” and “a few bad teachers” as well. Ricardo and Cesar liked the extracurricular activities also.

When asked what they liked least, LTEL student Carlos noted that “we can’t do certain stuff like graduation, and all that,” while Yesenia observed that sometimes they don’t get to attend rallies and other activities held during the school day. Lorenzo didn’t like the Senior Prep Project because “it made him nervous,” while Sergio didn’t like “getting a lot of homework.” Monica and Marcos reported that they don’t like the food, and Nancy stated that sometimes “the facilities aren’t clean.”

Among RFEP students, Omar felt “there’s a lot of division between students who are considered good and students who are considered bad or not satisfactory enough.”

Alexis also commented on divisions among students:

I feel the thing I like least is that it still feels like that middle school mentality where sometimes it’s still that broken up different little cliques. Their barrier has become more invisible, I guess you could say, in the past years and especially as we grow, but that barrier’s still there.

Ricardo noted that what he liked least was lunch and the condition of the restrooms, while Cesar also described, “The bathrooms without the stall doors or the stall doors that broke off a long, long time ago.”

Both Gina and Linda cited the behavior of some students as what they like least about their school. Linda responded, “sometimes some students are really disrespectful,

and I really don't like saying that." Gina said, "there's not much enforcements, so kids can do whatever they wanted. I feel I don't feel really safe here as much as I would like to."

Asked how they felt entering their freshman year, the most frequent coded response for both the LTEL and RFEP students was "Scared, Nervous, or Uncertain." In recalling anything that students or staff did to make them feel welcome at school, the most frequently cited responses for both groups was that "Teachers and Staff were Nice," or the "Freshman Orientation and Ambassador Program." LTEL student Carlos recalled his experiences as an incoming freshman:

As a freshman I was scared that I didn't know what was going to go on. Going into a new school is weird. What they did for the freshman orientation is, all the seniors lined up and started clapping each time you walked in. That made me feel welcome.

Lorenzo recalled, "I felt nervous. Then when I walked into my first class as a freshman, they said, 'Welcome to the best years of your life'." Yesenia didn't remember what helped her, but recalled being scared and feeling, "like I would never finish." Nancy remembered being scared because, "I didn't know my classmates. It was a bigger school." Campus supervisors helped her find her classes. Marcos recalled:

Some of the teachers in freshman year were really upbeat. The thoughts I had is that four years of K-12 education can be the most important.

Among RFEP students, Arturo remembered that he was scared because he thought it was going to be like middle school where "I'd get teased a lot." He found that the teachers were nice and that "no one really does that (teasing) it seems in high school." Linda recalled that she felt welcomed when she came to the freshman orientation, but "I

was really unsure because I barely had any friends my freshman year.” Janet and Ricardo remembered that their freshman orientation helped them adjust to their new surroundings. Ricardo remembered that the student ambassadors took him “around the high school to introduce high school, to make me feel more comfortable. Omar also shared similar experiences:

My first year in high school, or my first day, I was very nervous. It was just a jump from middle school to high school. I had heard a lot about high school, there being a clash between greater difficulty and more expectations from peers. But I got a lot of support. On the first week before school started there was a roundup day and they brought in speakers . . . and they gave us ambassadors who tried to ease us into high school. Throughout high school our counselors and teachers made the transition easy.

Cesar noted that he was “super scared” entering his freshman year because he used to be “super short,” but had a growth spurt over the summer:

I was still scared, since I had some more advanced classes, I did have some classes with upperclassmen, and only a few were with my grade level. The upperclassmen students I had in those classes really made me feel welcomed, and I met some new people from different backgrounds, good or bad, and they all taught me new things.

Asked what resources are available at their school if they’re are having personal problems, issues at home, or issues with other students, the majority (five) of coded responses for both LTEL and RFEP students was, “Counselors or Teaching Staff.” Among the LTEL students interviewed from the sample population, Carlos responded, “We have counseling, or I could ask the teachers for help and they’ll listen.” Monica felt that she could talk to “the principal, counselors and teachers,” while Sergio referred to his case manager, “because I’m closest to her.” Nancy stated, “They have staff members at these colleges that we can go to when we need help or to talk to somebody.” Veronica talked about a program. She could not remember the name, but went to her counselor

“once.” Yesenia replied, “We have counseling and other stuff, but I usually don’t like talking to other people.”

Among RFEP students, Gina was aware of resources, “but I don’t know where, when you can go.” Similarly, Omar was aware that there are psychologists and counselors on site, but “I haven’t needed to use them yet.” Cesar was also aware of special counseling services: “I forgot what it was dedicated to, but I know we have another special counselor.” Linda noted that she likes to see her counselors—both her current counselor and one she had in the past. Ricardo stated, “I usually talk to my counselor or teachers if I have any problems.” Arturo stated that he was aware of counseling, but isn’t comfortable talking to school employees, “unless it’s my coach, because he may be a school employee but to me he’s more than a coach.”

Overall, common perceptions were mostly noted within the school community context. LTEL and RFEP students reported both formal programs, such as their freshman orientation and informal behaviors by teachers and students to make them feel welcomed and overcome initial fears entering high school. However, RFEP students also noted the presence of cliques and disrespectful behavior by some students as a serious issue and something they didn’t like about their high school: issues not reported in LTEL responses. Both groups frequently noted teacher help as something they liked about their school, and were knowledgeable of counseling services and resources they could access for help, even if they articulated that they did not presently need such services.

Sociocultural Factors Context

Interview questions regarding the sociocultural factors context, as illustrated in Table 15, yielded very similar codes for LTEL and RFEP participants from the sample

population. Responding to perceptions of whether or not teachers at their high school are respectful and understanding their cultural and language background, all (eight) LTEL students and all (eight) RFEP students responded affirmatively. The most frequent codes for their explanations were that teachers apply “Equal Treatment and Don’t Judge Students.” The second most frequent response was coded as “Staff Diversity.”

Table 15

Coded Responses for Interview Questions in the Sociocultural Factors Context

Sociocultural Factors Context Interview Responses	
Do you feel the staff at P. High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?	
LTEL Students	RFEP Students
Yes - 8	Yes – 8
Equal Treatment/Don’t Judge Students - 5 Staff Diversity - 2	Equal Treatment/Don’t Judge Students – 6 Staff Diversity – 1
Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school? If so, what do they say?	
LTEL Students	RFEP Students
Yes – 8	Yes – 8
Post-Secondary/Career Plans – 4 Achieve Potential – 2 Stay in School – 2	Post-Secondary/Career Plans – 5 Achieve Potential - 4
Outside of school, how do you spend your free time? What activities do you like to do with your family?	
LTEL Students	RFEP Students
Stay at Home/Hang Out With Friends/Watch T.V. – 4 Household Chores/Yardwork – 4 Walk/Exercise – 3 Homework/Read – 3 Travel – 2 Play Musical Instrument/Draw – 2 Go Out To Eat - 2	Stay at Home/Hang Out With Friends/Watch T.V. – 4 Play Sports/Outdoor Recreation – 4 Homework/Read – 3 Watch Movies – 3 Walk/Exercise – 2 Go Out to Eat – 2 Shopping – 2

LTEL student Monica responded that her teachers, “don’t really judge you,” and Sergio commented, “Yeah, they’re very respectful.” Veronica noted, “Yeah, they’re respectful. They haven’t disrespected me. I haven’t seen any disrespect between races or whatever.” Marcos observed that, “Some kids would say they’re being rude to them, but I don’t know. I never had to deal with that.” Nancy observed that the staff is respectful, “because some staff are also different, from different races. Yesenia also expressed a similar viewpoint. “I feel like they are, because a lot of Hispanics work here at the school.”

Among RFEP students, Alexis responded, “I actually have never gotten a comment from a teacher or any other staff making my culture, my beliefs, any less than theirs.” Arturo said, “They don’t say anything like, ‘Oh, you speak Spanish. You should know this.’ They’re pretty respectful.” Linda observed, “They do seem to respect everyone, no matter what culture they come from.” Ricardo stated, “I guess, because if you ever have a question about some family problems, you could go ask it and they’ll understand where you’re coming from.” Cesar commented on the staff’s diversity which he found different than other schools he’s attended, and Omar noted the presence of cultural clubs:

I definitely feel that my school is very respectful of that. There’s clubs like MASA club or HYLIC, which encourage us to pursue our culture and our identity, and also through the language classes, such as the classes or the French classes. They really encourage us to become more cultural and more involved in our culture, and to develop it in order to, in a way, find something in common with others and really make a strong relationship with our community and with any other group.

In answering whether or not their parents or other family members talk to them about school, all (eight) LTEL students and all (eight) RFEP students responded

affirmatively. The most frequently coded responses for both groups, describing what their parents or family members said were “Post-Secondary and Career Plans,” along with “Achieve Potential.” LTEL student Monica described her conversations with her father:

He motivates me to go to college and to go study for what I want to do, because he wasn't able to. He wants me to go to college.

Veronica stated that “it’s an everyday thing.” Her parents tell her, “Nobody’s going to take you nowhere. It’s all on you.” They encourage her to, “go to school, graduate, go to college and everything.” Marcos also stated that his parents tell him to attend school so that he can go to college.

Yesenia explained that her parents motivate her to do better, and “they support me in anything I want to do.” Carlos noted that his mom, “is always telling me that she wants to see me do things in life, and not just be a bum at home.” Nancy said that her parents, “always talk to me about school, about not to drop out or going to (continuation high school).” Lorenzo stated, “My mom’s the one that tells me all this stuff.” She checks his grades and attendance, and helps him and his brothers with homework. Sergio commented, “They usually tell me how my day goes and how classes went, like if my day was good or bad.”

Among RFEP students in the population sample, Alexis commented that her parents come from Mexico and her mother’s father “did not allow her to go to college.” Her father had to drop out of high school due to the death of his father. They tell her, “Do what you want. Don’t let anything stop you. We’re not going to stop you, so you do what you want. Alexis added:

I have older cousins from my mom's side of the family, one of them's a teacher and one of them's a counselor. They have a younger brother who didn't go to college and was in jail . . . Seeing the comparison between them three, because they were basically like my older siblings all throughout my life . . . like my cousin David, unfortunately went to jail. Now he looks back on it and says, 'I don't know why I didn't focus on my education' . . . I can't let myself go down just because of a spur of the moments because it affects the rest of your life.

Arturo commented that his father "brings up how he never finished high school, and he wants me to finish high school . . . and be what I want . . . which is border patrol." Gina offered that her parents, "constantly remind me of what I want to do as a career and to do my homework and all that stuff." Omar noted that his mother talks to him about what's going on at school because, "She really didn't receive an education herself, so she doesn't know about it, so she'll just try asking if everything is OK. Linda noted that her parents talk to her a lot about college, particularly cost:

That's something that we need to talk about . . . My mom still is unsure about a lot of college stuff, since I'm a first-generation student. She does have a lot of questions towards me. I have a TRIO advisor, and she asks him a lot, because she is still unsure about everything – about college, about financial aid. It's just on the money part of school.

Asked about how they spend their free time outside of school and what activities students like to do with their families, both LTEL and RFEP students provided a wide variety of responses that are coded in Table 15. In some instances, it was unclear whether the activities described were done alone, with friends, or with family. In other cases, students responded with specificity.

The most common responses were general statements for both groups were categorized and coded as, "Stay at Home, Hang Out with Friends, Watch T.V." The second most frequent response for LTEL students was coded as "Household Chores/Yardwork". The second most frequent response given by RFEP students was,

“Play Sports/Outdoor Recreation.” These categories were followed by six others coded with two or three student responses, including three that were common to both groups:

“Walk/Exercise,” “Homework/Read,” and “Go out to Eat.”

Among LTEL students, Carlos described his activities thusly:

Outside of school, I’m really just home. I don’t really do anything with my family, we usually just go camping or something. We go on adventures. This weekend, we’re going to Oregon.

Monica stated that there isn’t much family time in her home because everyone works.

“When we do have time, we usually play a lot of football and volleyball. We’re a big family, so sometimes we go away.” Nancy responded, “I go to walk with my family. I sometimes hang out with my friends.” Sergio noted that he likes to “go and eat with my family,” but spends most of his time, “doing homework or being out with my friends.”

Marcos stated that he usually goes out of town with his family or goes shopping – “probably Augustus or some stores like Guitar Center, because I need some strings for my guitar. I like to play guitar at home.”

When she is at home, Yesenia likes to read or draw. She added, “Sometimes we go walking, and we’ll be in the back yard watering plants, or stuff like that.” Lorenzo noted that when he’s at home he watches T.V. and does his homework. With his family, they visit their family ranch to feed their cows, horses, and goats. Veronica said:

I usually help my mom out at the house, to clean and stuff, or I go to the gym. With my family, we go out to eat and stuff like that.

Within the group of RFEP students interviewed, Alexis noted that during the school year she is, “probably constantly doing homework.” If she has free time, her family stays at home, “or maybe we go out and get ice cream because we don’t have the resources to do things like that.” Arturo explained that when he’s at home he plays his

Play Station 4 or does exercises, “so I can be a good wrestler.” Gina noted that she watches T.V. in her free time and likes to go shopping. She added:

I like to go out with my family. With my family, we go out usually and then we just spend time together, eat, and watch moves in the theater, whatever.

Omar noted that his time is divided among extracurricular activities, and Linda spends much of her time doing homework and practicing with the band. When she does activities with her family, they “usually go out to the mountains and have a barbecue and invite more family over to do that.” Janet also stated that she divides her time between extracurricular activities. She also likes “going to the park with my family. We play soccer, and we just play. When he’s not doing homework, Ricardo stated that, “I’m with my parents watching T.V. or going out to the mall and shopping. Cesar goes to the mountains with his family to ride their ATV’s. He added:

We also like to just watch movies. Also in my free time, even when I’m off-season, I usually either go play tennis with my friends, or we’ll go to the gym, or we’ll go hiking, watch a movie, or just hang out.

Relative to use of their free time, both LTEL and RFEP students expressed a variety of similar activities and experiences with family friends. Within the sociocultural context, all students also described a high school staff that is respectful and understanding of their cultural and language. Two LTEL students and one RFEP student also noted the diversity of the staff at their high school.

All students stated that their parents or other family members talk to them about school. However, the conversations described by LTEL and RFEP students showed differences in the depth, specificity and aspirations communicated between students and their parents. RFEP students frequently described specific plans for post-secondary

education, while LTEL students described vague advice and goals centered primarily on staying in school and achieving goals that were not clearly defined.

Language Acquisition

Interview questions related to language acquisition among LTEL and RFEP students, as recorded in Table 16, produced similar responses for LTEL and RFEP students. In assessing their acquisition of English, a majority (six) of LTEL students and all (eight) RFEP students believed they have mastered English as a second language. Both groups attributed their mastery to a variety of reasons frequently cited as “Study Techniques/Reading” for both groups, along with “Rigorous Classes.” Among RFEP students, responses also included, “Teachers/Instructional Strategies” and “Speaking with Classmates” Those LTEL students reporting that they had “somewhat” mastered English felt that issues related to academic language development were holding them back.

Within the LTEL student group, Carlos stated that his English classes helped him. “English was my hardest class before, now it’s easy for me.” Monica cited more reading. “People think I don’t like to read, but sometimes, in my own time, I read bigger books.” Nancy remembered, “in first grade they would give us cards with names, and they would make us pronounce them and do quizzes on them.” Sergio credited “doing essays and reading more advanced books,” while Veronica credited her teachers who “taught me a lot.” Yesenia, explained her answer that she has “somewhat” mastered English:

Because I still struggle. Sometimes I don’t know the right words to use. I sometimes don’t understand in class the words that they talk about. The big words, I have to ask, like what did that mean. I feel like I need to understand the words, or look through my dictionary or something so I can know what, because they said it would be a small percent that might be difficult.

Table 16

Coded Responses for Interview Questions Regarding Language Acquisition

Language Acquisition Interview Responses

Do you feel you have mastered English as a second language? If so, what helped you, and if not, what do you think is holding you back?			
LTEL Students		RFEP Students	
Yes - 6	Somewhat - 2	Yes – 8	
Study Techniques /Reading - 2	Academic Language Not Mastered - 2	Study Techniques/Reading – 3 Rigorous Classes – 3 Teachers/Instructional Strategies – 2 Speaking With Classmates - 2	
Rigorous Classes - 2			
(a) When did you first learn English?			
LTEL Students		RFEP Students	
Kindergarten – 4 Elementary School – 1		Kindergarten – 5 Elementary School – 1 Home – 1	
(b) What was most helpful to you in learning English?			
LTEL Students		RFEP Students	
Instructional Strategies – 4 Speaking With Classmates - 2		Teachers/Environment – 3 Bilingual Dual Immersion Program – 2 Instructional Strategies – 2 Translating for Others – 2	
(a) When do you use Spanish, and when do you use English?			
LTEL Students		RFEP Students	
Spanish	English	Spanish	English
At Home – 9	At School – 6	At Home – 6	At School – 9
At School – 3	At Home - 3	At School – 3	At Home - 4
		At Work – 2	
(b) What language television do you watch?			
LTEL Students		RFEP Students	
English – 4 Spanish – 2 Both – 2		Both – 5 English – 2 Spanish – 1	

Among the RFEP student group interviewed, Alexis noted that she started kindergarten wondering how she was going to talk to everyone. She credits her teachers and the instructional strategies employed. She also cited “translating constantly” for her parents and employees and customers where she works. “I can walk into a room, and even if I don’t know a person, I can approach them and help them. Arturo believes that reading books helped him master English, noting, “books just got my vocabulary up and helped me learn English.”

Gina credited her teachers and friends, “because you’re around people who speak that language. That really helps you learn more stuff.” Linda also thanked her teachers throughout elementary, middle school and high school. Omar believes he has mastered English and “It definitely wasn’t easy.” He noted that elementary school was hardest, but now that he is in AP classes and received the seal of multilingual proficiency, “I feel those prove that I have mastered both languages.”

Cesar observed that he began kindergarten in a bilingual school and was going to be held back because he “didn’t learn English in that year.” Cesar referenced a variety of factors that helped him, including help from his non-English speaking parents and intervention by teachers. He noted that he would finish his assignments early and distract other students:

To solve that, my mom and the teacher came to an agreement of just giving more work. That really pushed me forward. Also, when I was younger, I used to read a lot of books, and chapter books during my first years in elementary school. That really pushed me forward, in just keeping up with the development program. At least I did in middle school. I took honors English, and AP English, which I still take.

Asked when they first learned English, both LTEL and RFEP students most frequently referenced kindergarten, but provided a variety of responses when asked what was most helpful in learning English. The most frequent coded responses for LTEL students were related to “Instructional Strategies” and “Speaking with Classmates.” LTEL students provided responses describing “Teachers and Environment” most often, followed by references coded as “Bilingual Dual Immersion Program,” “Instructional Strategies,” and “Translating for Others.”

LTEL student Carlos remembered being in a kindergarten class that was, “all Hispanic families and low income families.” He observed that his kindergarten teacher focused on learning the ABC’s and new vocabulary words in English every week. Monica also remembered learning her ABC’s in English during kindergarten, and Nancy stated the same, noting that her kindergarten and first grade teachers had “patience,” and helped them pronounce new words. Veronica’s teachers in elementary school used flashcards and practiced vocabulary every day.

Sergio recalled that he first learned English in kindergarten, but didn’t start speaking it until first or second grade. He felt that “talking to his classmates,” was most helpful in learning English because he didn’t talk that much with his teachers. Yesenia did not start learning English until junior high school learning by herself and “with the other kids.”

Among members of the RFEP group, Alexis remembered beginning to learn English in kindergarten and practicing with her cousins once she was in school. Arturo remembered starting kindergarten at a bilingual school with “nice teachers” and instruction in both English and Spanish. Janet recalled that when she was in kindergarten

all instruction was in Spanish, “so I didn’t really learn anything. When I got to first, I had to learn everything in English.”

In analyzing their use of English and Spanish, the majority of LTEL students and RFEP students’ coded indicated that they primarily use Spanish at home and English at school. In some cases these responses included multiple codes, as several students indicated they use English or Spanish with different relatives or friends. However, more RFEP students than LTEL students indicated that they watch both Spanish and English television. LTEL student Carlos explained:

I use English mostly at school. I use Spanish at home, because my mom understands English, she just doesn’t know how to say it. She doesn’t like when I speak English to her, she said that it’s weird for her. She tells me to speak Spanish to her, so that’s when I use it. Or when I’m with my whole family, it’s in Spanish.

Carlos doesn’t watch Spanish language television. “I don’t like it. For me, it’s all the same. All the telenovelas are all the same for me, they’re dramatic.” Lorenzo noted that he speaks Spanish with his grandmother and father, but his mother was born in the United States and speaks English. “Sometimes she makes me talk Spanish to her.” Lorenzo added that he strongly prefers English language television. “Pure English. I hate Spanish TV. Like, when I go to Mexico, I can’t stand it.”

Monica explained that she speaks Spanish with her parents and sometimes speaks Spanish at school with her friends. At home she watches both Spanish and English language television. At home, Nancy uses Spanish because her mom and dad “don’t speak English,” but speaks with her siblings in both English and Spanish. At school, she speaks English, but attends night school classes where most people speak Spanish. When watching television at home, Nancy stated that, “We mostly watch Spanish, because my

mom, she doesn't understand the English much. Sometimes, when we're alone, we just watch English channels.

Among RFEP students, Ricardo stated the he usually speaks English at school and Spanish at home. In reference to television viewing, Ricardo explained, "I usually watch in English. My parents watch Spanish, so if I'm in the living room, I'm listening to Spanish. Janet stated that she speaks English primarily at school and Spanish at home, but with her cousins, she'll "mix it up." She does use some Spanish at school, "but not much." She watches both English and Spanish language television. Linda uses English at school talks to her sister in English. With her parents, she noted that she uses English, but will also use Spanish at home with her parents or other family members. She likes watching English language television. "It feels awkward to watch it in Spanish sometimes." Arturo noted that he also used Spanish when he was "dating someone who didn't really speak English." Both he and Alexis also noted that they were frequently called upon to use Spanish as translators at their jobs.

Cesar noted that although he uses Spanish at home with his parents, he speaks to his brother in English. He watches a mix of Spanish and English language television. Although he has always used English at school, he now uses more Spanish with his friends lately and in a chatroom after making friends on a visit to Georgetown University:

There's one student—I don't know if he speaks English, but I guess he feels more comfortable speaking Spanish, so whenever he joins the chat, we'll all just start speaking Spanish.

Omar observed that he primarily uses Spanish at home, English at school, and watches a mix of Spanish and English language television:

I'd say for a lot of my personal life with my parents, or uncles, aunts, and family, I'll use Spanish to communicate with them. Even though my siblings speak

English I try to speak Spanish, too, so they don't lose that language. For English I'd say that's more for school, activities, the friends I made here, and for just my life outside of home.

By established criteria LTEL students have not mastered English as a second language. Nevertheless, six of the eight LTEL students interviewed perceived that they had. Both LTEL and RFEP students most frequently cited kindergarten as the time they first learned English while describing somewhat vague experiences developing and mastering English. Similar responses by both LTEL students and RFEP students included personal study techniques and reading on their own, and movement into more rigorous classes. A range of instructional strategies and educational environments were noted, with some students recalling bilingual programming and others describing immersion or sheltered instructional programming during their elementary years.

With few exceptions, students described speaking Spanish mostly at home and English at school. When speaking English at home, most often it was with younger family members. RFEP students more frequently reported watching both English and Spanish television programming. There were no significant differences noted in LTEL and RFEP students' observations of learning English in school or their use of English at home.

Summary

This chapter presented the quantitative and qualitative findings from artifacts, a survey questionnaire, and subject interviews. These artifacts and instruments were used to assess differences in perceptions in school connectedness based on the subjects' language status. A summary of key quantitative and qualitative data findings, as presented in Table 17, shows there are significant differences in perceptions of school

connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students, identifies those differences, and shows the relationship between these differences and students' acquisition of English as a second language:

- Within the academic performance and extracurricular contexts, significant differences were noted in all quantitative and qualitative measures—artifacts, individual scaled survey questions, and interview responses
- Within the sociocultural context, a singular significant difference was noted in relationship to school-based heritage celebrations
- Within the classroom behavior context, significant differences were noted in descriptions of class discussions and activities in English classes as recorded in interview responses

When triangulated with quantitative data and other interview questions, students' responses to experiences related to language acquisition also provide greater insights on differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students within the sample population studied. These connections are explored in relationship to perceptions of school connectedness as part of an overarching theme and development of theory. A summary of the significant findings outlined in Chapter IV, based on the Review of the Literature and the results of this research study, is presented in Chapter V. As a grounded theory study, the conclusions and implications are also tied to emergent theories developed through the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative research findings. Unexpected findings and recommendation for further research are also presented in this chapter.

Table 17

Summary of Research Questions and Data Analysis Findings

Research Question	Quantitative Data Analysis Findings (Artifacts)	Quantitative Data Analysis Findings (Survey Questionnaire)	Qualitative Data Analysis Findings (Student Interviews)
RQ 1: Do LTEL students have different perceptions of school connectedness than RFEP students?	Yes – Measured by cumulative GPA and Indexed Yearbook References	No – Measured by composite scaled scores from the survey questionnaire Yes – Measured by scaled scores from individual survey items	Yes – Measured by coded responses to interview questions
RQ 2: What are the differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students?	Academic Performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPA Extracurricular Involvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indexed Yearbook References 	Academic Performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grades Extracurricular Involvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at School Events • Participation in Extracurricular Activities • Participation in Student Government Sociocultural Factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-Based Heritage Celebrations 	Academic Performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of a Good Student • Academic Accomplishments Classroom Behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities in English Class • Participation in Class Discussions Extracurricular Involvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at School Events • Participation in Extracurricular Activities
RQ: 3 What is the relationship between perceptions of school connectedness and language acquisition among LTEL and RFEP students?	RFEP students showed greater academic performance and greater extracurricular involvement than LTEL students.	RFEP reported perceptions of higher academic performance, greater extracurricular involvement, and lower sociocultural appreciation than LTEL students.	RFEP students reported perceptions of higher academic performance, greater participation within the classroom behavior context, and greater extracurricular involvement than LTEL students.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Chapter I introduced the background, statement of the research problem, purpose statement, research questions and significance of the problem. The significance of the problem under study was supported with demographic data on the population formally introduced later in Chapter III. Chapter I also provided definitions used in the research, the delimitations of the population sample being studied, and an explanation of the organization of each chapter.

Chapter II provided a literature review that included the historical background on the history of immigrant education and instructional practices in the United States. Constructs for the social and political forces that shaped this history, developed by Ovando (2003), were used as the framework to define this historical context: The Permissive Period (1700s-1800s); The Restrictive Period (1880s-1960s); The Opportunist Period (1960s-1980s); and, The Dismissive Period (1980s-2003). An overview of the political and social considerations impacting the instruction of immigrant students in the United States, along with the evolution of English as a Second Language (ESL) programming was also provided in Chapter II.

Concurrent with the presentation of this historical research in Chapter II was a review of literature pertaining to research studies on school connectedness. The work of Jimerson et al. (2003) identified three dimensions of school connectedness: (a) affective, (b) behavioral, and (c) cognitive. Within these dimensions, and sometimes overlapping, Jimerson et al. classified school connectedness measures into five contexts: (a) academic performance, (b) classroom behavior, (c) extracurricular involvement, (d) interpersonal

relationships, and (e) school community. A sixth possible context is identified by Jimerson et al. as sociocultural factors and broadly referenced in the work of Collier and Thomas (1997), M. Ray (2015), as well as Santos and Collins (2015).

The literature review established that there is abundant research on the history of educating immigrant students in the United States and ESL practices during these historical periods. There is also a significant and growing body of research on school connectedness and protective factors associated with each context. However, the literature review also revealed a lack of research on perceptions of school connectedness pertaining to English Learner (EL) students. Specifically, there is a gap in understanding school connectedness factors among EL students who become Long Term English Learners (LTEL) and those who master English and transition to Redesignated Fluent English proficient (RFEP) students.

The three overarching dimensions of school connectedness identified in the research helped conceptualize school connectedness and associated protective factors for students. The six contexts of school connectedness identified in Chapter II, provided the theoretical framework for the research design and methodology presented in Chapter III. These contexts also served as the structure for the presentation of quantitative and qualitative data analysis in Chapter IV, the triangulation of data, and the development of the theories presented in this chapter.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods grounded theory study was to explore differences in perceptions of school connectedness among Long Term English Learner (LTEL) students and Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) students in a

comprehensive high school setting. This study also seeks to determine whether or not there is a relationship between English language acquisition and perceptions of school connectedness among these two groups.

Research Questions

1. Do LTEL students have different perceptions of school connectedness than RFEP students?
2. What are the differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students?
3. What is the relationship between perceptions of school connectedness and language acquisition among LTEL and RFEP students?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

This study utilized a grounded theory research design with mixed methodology. The Brandman Institutional Review Board (IRB) provided approval for the study. A written timeline for collection of data was developed by the researcher. Informed consent was obtained from all subjects and from the parents or guardians of those subjects under the age of 18 prior to beginning data collection.

The district's Student Information System (SIS) was used to obtain quantitative data, for grade point average, absences and office referrals. It also was used to identify the overall population of EL students at the high school develop a population sample based on the established criteria for the study. This included the application of delimiting variables and organization of the population into LTEL and RFEP subgroups. This data was then exported to an Excel spreadsheet for tabulation.

Using the high school's annual yearbook, indexed references to photographs illustrating students' participation in extracurricular activities was collected, cross-referenced with the sample population, and tabulated on a spreadsheet for each member of the sample population. Prior to administration of both the survey and interview, a separate child assent form, written in both English and Spanish, was also distributed and collected. An advocate was present with the researcher during administration sessions to assure that students' rights were not violated and to reaffirm confidentiality.

The 30 question survey instrument included five questions for each context of school connectedness. The survey was administered on Chromebooks using Google docs. Among the 160 potential subjects included in the population sample, five students opted out of participation and three were not recorded because the students did not submit their responses upon completion of the survey. This resulted in an overall participation rate of 95%.

The qualitative portion of the study included a total of 21 questions—three for each area context of school connectedness and three based on perceptions of language acquisition. Interviews were conducted by the researcher with the advocate present. Student responses were digitally recorded and submitted to a service for written transcription.

The researcher reviewed the transcripts for accuracy and then provided copies to members of the professional team to begin the inter-rater process used to validate categories. Members of the professional team and the researcher reviewed the transcribed student interviews separately and established initial categories using modified open coding, axial coding and selective coding. The team members and the researcher then

met together to discuss and clarify codes and validate the core category used to develop the theory. Coded responses were tallied from 16 interviews with the eight LTEL and eight RFEP students as presented in the Qualitative Research Data section of Chapter IV.

Population

The target population for this study was Spanish speaking LTEL and RFEP students in grades 6-12 in Stanislaus County. The total number of students enrolled in grades 6-12 in Stanislaus County during the 2014-2015 school year was 56,894. The population of EL students was 9,019 (16%). Among these EL students, 8,101 (90%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Additionally, 14,715 (26%) of students enrolled in grades 6-12 were classified as RFEP. Among these RFEP students, 12,437 (85%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Demographic totals also indicate that 32,091(56%) of students in grades 6-12 report their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino, and that 71,377 (66.7%) of students in Stanislaus County qualify for free and reduced priced meals (CDE, Educational Demographics Office, 2015).

Sample

This study included a purposive, non-random sample of 56 Spanish speaking LTEL students and 104 Spanish speaking RFEP students from a comprehensive high school in a K-12 school district located in western Stanislaus County. Within the district's comprehensive high school among the total enrolled population of 1,749 9-12 students during 2014-2015 school year were 341 (19%) EL students. Among these EL students, 329 (96%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Additionally, 579 (33%) are classified as RFEP. Among these RFEP students, 530 (92%) speak Spanish as their primary language. Demographic totals also indicate that 1,193 (68.2%) of students at the

high school report their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino, and 979 (56%) qualify for free and reduced priced meals (CDE, Educational Demographics Office, 2015).

The subjects were invited to participate in the study after meeting the following delimiting variable characteristics:

- They are economically disadvantaged as defined by their participation in the National School Lunch Program.
- They are Spanish speaking high school EL students of Mexican ancestry
- They are enrolled in grades 11 or 12.
- They have been enrolled continuously within the same school district for at least five years.

Major Findings

The goal of this research study was to determine whether or not differences in perceptions of school connectedness exist among LTEL and RFEP students within the sample population; what those differences are; and, what the relationship is between perceptions of school connectedness and language acquisition among LTEL and RFEP students. A summary of the key findings from the analysis of data is presented in Chapter IV and analyzed further in the following sections. Data are represented by collected artifacts, scaled scores from survey responses, and interview responses. Findings are organized by research question and previously cited contexts of school connectedness aligned to quantitative and qualitative data.

Research Question 1

The first research question asked, “Do LTEL students have different perceptions of school connectedness than RFEP students?”

Determining whether or not there are different perceptions of school connectedness among LTEL and RFEP students has important implications for educators, as the United States is becoming more linguistically and culturally diverse (Batalova & McHugh, 2010). The results of six commissioned papers produced at the *Wingspread Conference* and published in the *Journal of School Health* in September, 2004, concluded that, “Students are more likely to succeed when they feel connected to school” (Blum & Libbey, 2004, p.233). Research from the conference also suggests that greater school connectedness promotes increased educational motivation, classroom engagement, and improved school attendance—thereby increasing academic achievement (Klem & Connell, 2004). Significant in all of the conference studies was the observation that the results crossed racial, ethnic, and income groups.

As a grounded theory design, quantitative and qualitative data were equally important to this research study. Triangulation of quantitative data with interview responses allowed for deeper and more complex answers to the research questions. This led to the discovery and development of the emergent theories presented in the conclusions section of this chapter.

1. *Different Perceptions of School Connectedness in the Academic and Extracurricular Contexts.* In measuring the perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students within the sample population for this research study, it was found that LTEL students had

significantly lower cumulative grade point averages (GPA) within the academic performance context of school connectedness. There was also significantly lower participation in clubs, sports, music programs, and attendance at such events within the extracurricular involvement context. These findings were supported in all three areas of data collection—artifacts, survey results, and student interviews.

2. *Different Perceptions of School Connectedness in other Contexts.* A singular response to a survey question within the sociocultural context was observed. RFEP students reported a significantly lower frequency of cultural heritage celebrations at their school than LTEL students. There were also differences within the classroom behavior context and responses to interview questions about students' perceptions of their language acquisition that are expanded upon in the conclusions presented later in Chapter V.

Research Question 2

The second research question asked, “What are the differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students”?

Although there is certainly crossover among the affective, behavioral and cognitive dimensions of school connectedness (Jimerson, 2003), it is noteworthy that in this research study, differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students in the sample population fell almost exclusively within the behavioral and cognitive dimensions as measured within the academic performance, classroom behavior, and extracurricular involvement contexts. LTEL and RFEP students expressed

very similar perceptions within the affective dimensions measured by interpersonal relationships, school community, and sociocultural factors.

Academic performance context.

1. *Grade Point Average in the Academic Performance Context.* As referenced in Chapter IV, significant differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students within the academic performance were supported by both the quantitative and qualitative data results. Information from the Student Information System (SIS) showed a significantly lower GPA for LTEL students, there was also a significant difference between LTEL and RFEP students' response to survey item eight: *"I get good grades in my classes."*
2. *Characteristics of a Good Student in the Academic Performance Context.* Lower perceptions of school connectedness within the academic performance context were observed again in students' interview responses. When asked the questions, *"What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student?"* and, *"Do you consider yourself to be a good student?"* a majority of the LTEL students responded that the characteristics of a good student were responsibility and respect. These more passive characteristics were reinforced by responses to whether or not individual students considered themselves to be good students. LTEL student Carlos described himself as an "O.K." student because, "I don't do that good, and I don't do that bad, so it's just in-between." RFEP students also cited respect and responsibility, but they most

frequently described a good student as possessing characteristics associated with hard work, determination, and perseverance.

3. *Lower Expectations for LTEL students within the Academic Performance*

Context. Also noteworthy in the interview responses, was the fact that a majority (six) of both the LTEL and RFEP students considered themselves to be good students. However, LTEL students not only referenced more passive characteristics when expressing their perceptions of student behaviors associated with academic performance but also articulated lower expectations. These expectations did not include academic honors or achievements. LTEL student Nancy considered herself to be a good student, “because I always turn in my work, and I do it on time,” and LTEL student Sergio stated, “I don’t get in trouble that much, and I always try to do good in school.”

4. *Higher Expectations for RFEP students within the Academic Performance*

Context. In contrast RFEP students expressed high expectations particularly in relation to GPA attainment. RFEP student Arturo considered himself to be an “average” student, even though he’ had been accepted to several state universities, because he had not received academic honors by earning a GPA of 3.5 or above. Despite enrollment in advanced placement (AP) classes and maintaining a cumulative GPA of 4.24, Omar described himself as a “pretty good student.” Linda explained that a good student is someone who wants to be at school and study, and is not just there to get it over with.

5. *Differences in Self-Assessment of Accomplishments within the Academic*

Performance Context. Aspirational differences in perceptions between LTEL

and RFEP students within the academic context were also observed in response to the interview questions, “*Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?*” and “*If so, what are you most proud of; if not, why?*” While a majority (five) of both LTEL and RFEP students interviewed stated that they are proud of their academic accomplishments at school, LTEL students most frequently cited achievements based on academic deficiencies. These included bringing up grades and avoiding placement in continuation school. RFEP students most frequently noted accomplishments associated with achieving academic honors and goal attainment.

6. *Lower Aspirations for LTEL Students.* Among LTEL students, Lorenzo noted that he was most proud of passing Geometry: “I learned the whole year, and I managed to pass with a C+.” Nancy also cited improved math grades, “because I would always get bad grades on my tests. Now I’m getting C’s on it.” Veronica was proud of the fact that she is taking summer school classes to address credit deficiencies and be on track her senior year, while Marcos was proud that he avoided placement at the continuation high school.
7. *Higher Aspirations for RFEP Students.* RFEP student Gina was most proud of getting all A’s, because, “I feel I’ve worked hard and I’ve accomplished my goals so far. Hopefully I can accomplish all of them in the future too.” Linda was proud of her accomplishments, but felt she could do better, “since right now I only have a 3.8. I wanted a 4.0. But what I’m proud of is just trying to keep the A’s.”

Classroom behavior context. Although differences were not present in the quantitative data, responses to interview questions show some significant differences in LTEL and RFEP students' perceptions of school connectedness related to the classroom behavior context. These differences are related to passive and active classroom experiences. These stated behaviors are also consistent with the differences in perceptions noted within the academic performance context.

1. *Differences in Classroom Engagement.* In reference to the interview question, “*If someone visited your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?*” LTEL students cited passive activities such as reading and doing assigned work, while RFEP students were more likely to also reference active engagement in their English classes through writing, presentations, and participation in class discussions.
2. *Differences in Participation in Classroom Discussions.* Both LTEL and RFEP students expressed some situational qualifications in response to the interview question: “*Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions—why or why not?*” However, half (four) of RFEP students responded affirmatively, while none of the LTEL students stated that they enjoyed participating in classroom discussions. Participation in classroom discussions by LTEL students was most frequently predicated on their comfort level and understanding of the topic being discussed.

Extracurricular involvement context. Within the extracurricular involvement context, significant differences in perceptions of school connectedness between LTEL and RFEP students, as measured by indexed references in the school yearbook, were also

validated through responses to survey items. RFEP students reported scaled responses that were significantly higher than those of LTEL students on three survey items: item four: *“I enjoy and get involved in the activities offered at this school”*; item eight: *“I attend school sponsored functions such as dances, pep rallies, music performances or sports events”*; and, item thirteen: *“I am involved in leadership activities as an officer in a club or Associated Student Body (ASB).”* These differences in perceptions of school connectedness within the extracurricular involvement context were also supported through interviews with LTEL students and RFEP students who were part of the sample population studied.

1. *Differences in Attending School Events.* In response to the interview question, *“Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances and sports events? Why or why not?”* a majority (five) of LTEL students responded that they do not, citing a lack of interest. Among RFEP students, all (eight) responded affirmatively that they attend or sometimes like to attend these types of events. RFEP student Cesar noted that extracurricular activities are what he likes most about his school. Demands associated with academics and their own involvement in other extracurricular activities were most often cited as reasons RFEP students did not attend more school activities.
2. *Differences in Extracurricular Participation.* Noteworthy in response to the question, *“Are there any extracurricular activities you would like to see at your school that are not currently in place?”* was the fact that three of four LTEL students who responded affirmatively to this question cited home

economics classes as something they wanted to see at their school. It was unclear whether or not they understood the difference between elective classes and extracurricular activities. In contrast, among the six RFEP students responding affirmatively, the most frequently requested extracurricular activities were academically oriented clubs and programs such as criminal justice, model United Nations, and mock trial. Responses to the interview question “*What types of extracurricular activities are you involved with?*” yielded significant differences in the variety and quantity of participation stated by LTEL and RFEP students. LTEL students noted involvement in three clubs and one sport, while among RFEP students, tabulation of coded responses numbered 17 clubs, 14 sports, four academic programs and competitions, three music programs, and three student government participants.

Sociocultural factors context. In response to survey item sixteen: “*This school hosts events and activities that celebrate and honor the cultural and language backgrounds of Mexican-American students,*” there was a significant difference in scaled scores, with RFEP students rating this item lower than LTEL students. However, such differences were not present in other survey questions related to this context.

1. *Similarities in the Sociocultural Factors.* In other measures within the sociocultural factors context, connected to both home and school experiences, few explicit differences were observed between LTEL and RFEP students. Responding to the interview question, “*Do you feel the staff at P. High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?*” all

LTEL and RFEP students responded affirmatively. Additionally, one LTEL student cited participation in the Mexican American Student Association (MASA), while four RFEP students referenced their participation in MASA or the Hispanic Youth Leadership Council (HYLC).

Research Question 3

The third research question asked “What is the relationship between perceptions of school connectedness and language acquisition among LTEL and RFEP students?”

As observed in Chapter II, Review of The Literature, multiple studies on school connectedness have utilized similar terminology, but often inconsistently (Chung-do, et al., 2015) and sometimes failing to capture the multidimensionality of school connectedness. The early development of scholarly research on this topic (Blum, 2005; Blum and Libbey, 2004; Jimerson et al., 2003; Libbey, 2004) also showed that studies on school connectedness cross disciplines and will yield many variables. The research also demonstrated that protective factors associated with strong school connectedness cross racial, gender, and socioeconomic status. In relation to this study, while some school connectedness contexts did not yield statistically significant differences in isolation, the triangulation between quantitative and qualitative methods produced from interviews allowed for deeper exploration of the research topic (Patten, 2012).

1. *Language Acquisition Impacts Student Perceptions of School Connectedness within the Academic Performance and Extracurricular Contexts.* Language acquisition, defined by status as either an LTEL or RFEP student within the population sample, was compared with perceptions of school connectedness across six separate contexts. Results from all data sets show significant

differences within the academic performance and extracurricular contexts based on language acquisition status, with RFEP students reporting stronger perceptions of school connectedness in both contexts.

2. *Language Acquisition Impacts Student Perceptions of School Connectedness within the Classroom Behavior Context.* LTEL students reported greater discomfort and were more likely to avoid participating in classroom discussions. While respondents reported a variety of reasons for this, LTEL students more frequently cited a lack of confidence which could be attributed to language acquisition, while RFEP students were more likely to cite a fear of being judged. LTEL student Nancy noted that she doesn't always understand what is being said, and Veronica explicitly cited a language barrier:

I'm more into talking Spanish, I'm more talking in Spanish. I would really like Spanish classes for talking out stuff. When it comes to—my accent is strong in Spanish, so it's kind of hard.

3. *Perceptions of Language Acquisition.* As part of the interview protocols, LTEL and RFEP students were also asked about their perceptions and experiences acquiring English as a second language. Both groups of students were asked, “*Do you feel you have mastered English as a second language?*” Despite their defined status, a majority (six) of LTEL students felt they had mastered English, while two others believed they had “somewhat” mastered English. The interview included other questions associated with language acquisition, such as “*When did you first learn English?*” and “*What was most helpful to you in learning English?*” Both LTEL and RFEP students most frequently cited kindergarten, while providing a variety of responses, with

little specificity, indicating exposure to both explicit and implicit instructional experiences and environmental factors influencing their language acquisition.

The findings from this research study are consistent with research examined in Chapter II, which found a general disconnect between LTEL students' perceptions of their academic success, program placement, and goals for post-secondary attainment and the reality of their situation within these factors of academic performance (Kim and Garcia, 2014; Menken, Klyne & Chae, 2012; Olsen, 2010).

In calibrating responses to the interview question, "*Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school?*" it was previously noted in Chapter IV, that all sixteen LTEL and RFEP students responded affirmatively to this question, most frequently citing discussions about post-secondary plans and achieving their potential. However, in examining the conditions associated with these answers, greater specificity and detail was noted in the responses of RFEP students compared with those of LTEL students. LTEL student Carlos stated that his mom "wants to see me go to college in a few more years or so. It's going to help me find out what I want to do." LTEL student Monica noted that her father motivates her and "wants me to go to college." Among the five LTEL students who discussed going to college with their parents or another family member, only Carlos, who expressed his intent to attend Los Angeles Community College, identified a specific institution or career goal. None cited discussions about financial resources needed to attend college.

Among RFEP students, Cesar referenced a trip to Georgetown and participation in the school's TRIO program. Alexis discussed help received from her cousin, and identified possible colleges for her undergraduate work and medical school to become a

pediatrician: “I ended up applying to Santa Clara, Stanford, Saint Mary’s and USF. USF has me waitlisted Saint Mary’s accepted me. Saint Mary’s is offering me \$14,000 right off.”

Linda noted her status as a “first generation student” and is one of three RFEP students interviewed who have availed themselves of services offered through the TRIO Upward Bound program. She cited ongoing discussions with her mother about plans to attend either a community college or state university based on availability of financial aid. Ricardo noted that his parents encourage him to follow in the footsteps of his sister who graduated valedictorian and is now at U.C. Berkeley “studying to be a doctor.”

These student responses to family discussions about post-secondary attainment, and LTEL students’ perceptions compared to their reality, were consistent with the longitudinal statistical data analysis by Kanno and Kangas (2014) that found only 19% of EL students attend a four-year university directly from high school, compared with 45% of English Only (EO) students and 35% of RFEP students.

4. *Multidimensional Perceptions of School Connectedness and Language*

Acquisition. The cumulative quantitative and qualitative research data shows higher academic performance, greater participation within the classroom behavior context, and greater extracurricular involvement based on students’ redesignation or reclassification as fluent English proficient. The study analyzed underlying conditions noted in interview responses across multiple school connectedness contexts and students’ reported perceptions of English language mastery. It was observed that among LTEL students, perceptions of

English language mastery, academic performance, and post-secondary aspirations did not match the reality of their circumstances.

Unexpected Findings

The absence of any significant differences between LTEL and RFEP students within the interpersonal relationships and school community contexts was unexpected. Research has shown that positive or negative perceptions of school connectedness within the affective dimension have a strong impact on the behavioral dimension of school connectedness (Austin et al., 2013; Klem & Connell, 2004). The impact of caring teacher relationships is important (Brown 2012; Chhuon & Wallace, 2014), but students perceive peer attachment as even more important (Allen, 2006; Brown, 2012; Eisenberg et al., 2003; Jennings, 2003; Morrison et al., 2003). The design of most American high schools may also create an atmosphere that is less personalized and hampers efforts to build strong relationships among students, staff, and their peers (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002).

In this research study, both LTEL and RFEP students reported mostly positive perceptions within the interpersonal relationships and school community contexts at their high school, suggesting that affective factors did not strongly influence the perceptions of students in this sample population. An additional context within the affective dimension, sociocultural factors yielded a singular difference that was not strongly supported by other data.

Conclusions

This research study was designed to determine whether or not differences in perceptions of school connectedness exist among LTEL and RFEP students within the sample population; what those differences are; and, what the relationship is between perceptions of school connectedness and language acquisition among LTEL and RFEP students. As a grounded theory study, methods triangulation was employed utilizing artifacts, a survey questionnaire, and interviews to guide the development of an emergent theory on the relationship between school connectedness and language acquisition. The following conclusions may be made based on the findings of this research study:

1. Based on the findings in this study and supported by the literature, school connectedness is a multidimensional construct that crosses various disciplines (Blum, 2005; Blum & Libbey, 2004; Libbey, 2004; Jimerson et al., 2003). Previous research also supports the theory that strong school connectedness within the affective dimension serves as a protective buffer (CDC, 2009; McNelly & Faci, 2004) that positively impacts students' cognitive motivation, self-efficacy, and ability to succeed. Similar to the findings of M. Ray (2015), all of the LTEL and RFEP participants in the interview reported that their teachers were willing to help, supportive, and treated them with respect. In this study, it is concluded that there are no significant differences between LTEL and RFEP students within the affective dimension of school connectedness, as measured within the interpersonal relationships and school community contexts. Consequently, these contextual factors did not influence other findings presented in this study. Taken into consideration along with

students' self-reported perceptions within the sociocultural factors context, and the delimiting characteristics of the sample population, this data provided greater clarity to the research findings and the development of the emergent theory.

2. Based on the findings in this study, and supported by previous research, it is concluded that LTEL students experience less academic rigor, fewer opportunities to use academic language in classroom discussions and activities, and lower expectations than RFEP students. LTEL students reported high levels of support by teachers and positive experiences overall within interpersonal relationships, school community, and sociocultural factors, similar to what was reported by RFEP students. However, as noted in other research studies (Callahan, 2005; Menken & Kleyn, 2010, 2012; Olsen, 2010) LTEL students interviewed for this study reported behaviors within the academic performance and classroom behavior contexts indicating lower expectations by teachers, less rigor, and fewer opportunities to engage in classroom discussions or activities using academic language in either Spanish or English. As a result, LTEL students do not develop the academic language necessary to be successful in high school, and makes it less likely they will pursue post-secondary education. This expressed passivity and lack of success in college preparatory classes is also consistent with previous research data showing that LTEL students can become stuck in what has been referred to as the *ESL Ghetto* (Faltis & Arias, 2007; Olsen, 2010; Valdes, 1998).
3. Based on the findings of this study and using an established theoretical

framework supported by the literature (Brown, 2012; Chung-do, et al., 2015; Jimerson, 2003), this research concludes that the significant differences between LTEL and RFEP students within the behavioral dimension, as measured by academic performance, classroom behavior, and extracurricular involvement, is attributed to students' language status. The differences are not the result of population variables or other school connectedness factors. This data provided the researcher and professional team direction to focus on language acquisition and its relationship to school connectedness in developing the emergent theories presented in this research study.

4. Based on the findings of this study and supported by the literature, LTEL students' perceptions of their language status and academic performance do not match their reality. Previous research has shown that LTEL students are unaware that their inadequate academic performance and program placement are inconsistent with their aspirations for post-secondary attainment (Kim & Garcia, 2014; Menken et al., 2012; Olsen, 2010). The data from this research study showed that the majority of LTEL students interviewed believed they had mastered English, and although half talked about attending college, none articulated a clear and coherent plan. This is in contrast with RFEP students' awareness of academic honors, placement in advanced placement classes, articulation of financial planning, and references to specific colleges and universities. It is also consistent with findings that showed higher performance on standardized assessments among RFEP students (CDE, 2015).

As a result, LTEL students will not have the same opportunities to achieve college and career goals as RFEP students.

Language Acquisition as a Factor of School Connectedness

In Chapter II, the historical development of immigrant education and English language instruction was presented. Meeting the academic needs of English learner (EL) students, while simultaneously providing instruction to develop English language fluency, has challenged educators. Instructional practices guiding English as a second language (ESL) instruction have varied tremendously based on social and political forces (Baron, 1991; Dayton-Wood, 2008; Hill, 1919; Ovando, 2003; B. Ray, 2013; Wegner, 2013). Guiding much of early ESL instruction were practices that underestimated the length of time it took for an EL student to master English. By the 1980s, multiple research studies emerged to support the theory that EL students learn conversational English fairly quickly but require at least another five years to master academic English (Collier & Thomas 1989; Cummins, 1984; Hakuta et al., 2000). Research by Collier and Thomas (1997) also provided evidence that school effectiveness is also a predictor of long-term EL student success. They recommended a safe, supportive and respectful school climate with opportunities for non-English speaking students and English speaking students to interact.

An Emergent Theory on Language Acquisition and School Connectedness

Olsen (2010) noted that LTEL students often have “inconsistent language development in their years of schooling in the United States.” The author also observed that this inconsistency is sometimes due to mobility and transiency or in some cases inconsistency in program within schools in the same district. In California, Spanish-

speaking EL students often attend schools in “linguistically isolated communities” clustered primarily with other EL students. Olsen added:

Linguistic research on second language development cites interaction with native English speakers as a key component in motivation, in providing the necessary opportunities to actually use the language in authentic situations, and providing good English models. Where English Learners are socially segregated or linguistically isolated, they learn English with and from other English Learners – and depend upon the teacher to be the sole English model. (p. 19)

This research study employed purposive sampling to reduce the variability referenced by Olsen (2010). All LTEL and RFEP students in the population sample live in the same community. All are socioeconomically disadvantaged, speak Spanish, and are of Mexican ancestry. All students were enrolled in 11th or 12th grade at the time of the study, and all have been continuously enrolled within the same school district for at least five years. It was also noted in the research findings that both LTEL and RFEP students reported similar sociocultural factors at school and at home, and similar experiences using Spanish at home with family members and primarily using English at school with peers.

The researcher and members of the professional team used open coding to disaggregate student responses. Axial coding was then employed to consolidate these responses into themes and sub-themes within the established theoretical framework based on the six contexts of school connectedness. Selective coding provided greater focus to core categories and in some cases, elaboration to answers that elicited only affirmative or negative responses.

Chhoun and Wallace (2015) found that students’ affective relationships with teachers, and sense of belonging within a school environment, impact academic and

developmental outcomes during late adolescence. Morrison et al. (2003) found that as early as fourth grade, EL students reported lower perceptions of school connectedness than their peers who had become RFEP, and that among both groups, peer relationships became more important than teacher relationships as students aged. Similarly, Balagna et al. (2013) found that among Latino and Latina students at risk of emotional and behavioral disorders, students' positive or negative social interactions with peers, teachers, and family impacted their perceptions of school, behavior, and academic performance.

This study produced no significant differences in LTEL or RFEP students' perceptions of school connectedness within the interpersonal relationships, school community, or sociocultural factors contexts. Therefore, it is proposed that differences in perceptions noted within the academic performance, extracurricular involvement, and classroom behavior contexts are connected to language acquisition as determined by students' designation as either LTEL or RFEP.

As noted in Chapter II, it is widely accepted among researchers that acquisition of a second language is a long developmental process. In 1979, Cummins first proposed the terms Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) to describe these developmental stages that progress from basic oral fluency to advanced mastery of academic language. This research evolved into a theoretical construct highlighting the range of cognitive demands and support needed for language development in subsequent research studies by Cummins and others (e.g. Street & Hornberger, 2008).

In a study of more than 2,000 EL students with a population sample that included 75 different language backgrounds, Collier and Thomas (1989) found that even among the most advantaged EL students, CALP takes 5 to 10 years. Work by Hakuta et al. (2000) also found that it takes 3 to 5 years to obtain BICS and another 4 to 7 years to achieve CALP. A literature review and synthesis of nearly 200 empirical studies on language, literacy and academic achievement of EL students published in peer-reviewed journals in the United States (Genesee et al., 2005) also supports the theory that language acquisition is a lengthy exercise. The delimiting characteristics of the sample population in this study were used to mitigate variability associated with socioeconomic status, instructional programming, and ethnicity, as reported in these studies.

Based on a review of existing research, along with methods triangulation from quantitative data and coded interview responses provided in this research study, two theories related to language acquisition and school connectedness among LTEL and RFEP students developed. The data showed that RFEP students were much more engaged in extracurricular activities at their high school than LTEL students. Additionally, LTEL students described more passive characteristics when noting the characteristics of a good student, while also stating passive exercises to illustrate typical classroom activities.

However, both LTEL and RFEP students described mostly positive experiences relative to interpersonal relationships with adults and peers within the school community. Few differences were noted in sociocultural experiences at home or at school. Differences between LTEL and RFEP students in some of the most important protective factors associated with school connectedness were not evident in the research findings.

Yet, perceptions of academic success, aspirational realities and classroom behaviors experienced by the two groups were very different; extracurricular involvement showed the greatest contrast between LTEL and RFEP students. As a result, these emergent theories propose that:

1. Connectedness within the extracurricular involvement context may help LTEL students develop Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) leading to the acceleration of Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) and greater achievement within the academic performance context.
2. Redesignation as a Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) student increases non-cognitive assets such as determination, self-confidence and self-efficacy. This results in greater school connectedness through extracurricular involvement and determination to succeed and achieve personal goals within the academic performance context.

Implications for Action

It should be noted that the proposed theories are not mutually exclusive. RFEP students may show greater determination and perseverance as the result of the self-confidence gained by achieving both oral and academic language fluency in English. This language mastery may also be hastened through participation in extracurricular activities which provide opportunities for greater interaction with native English speakers, irrespective of instructional programming or demographic variables.

Data from this research study obtained through artifacts, survey responses and interviews provided implications for further action. The review of literature, presented in Chapter II of this study, showed a strong connection between status as an LTEL

student and passivity, low academic performance, low social and academic engagement, and a drop-out rate that is more than double that of their peers (Callahan, 2013). As the number of EL students enrolled in public schools across the United States continues to increase, teachers and administrators must develop effective plans to help EL students face the difficult challenge of achieving oral and written fluency in a second language while simultaneously mastering academic content. Consequently, it is imperative that educators not only develop and refine their instructional strategies to meet the needs of these students, but also identify best practices and effective support systems to help EL students become more connected to school within the larger campus and community environment. This will help EL students avoid the devastating consequence of entering high school as a Long Term English Learner. Recommendations for further action include:

1. *Early Opportunities for Extracurricular Involvement.* Few elementary schools offer opportunities for enrichment outside the school day through music, performing arts, clubs or sports. It is recommended that public school districts integrate multiple extracurricular activities in grades 3-8 that recognize and celebrate EL students' cultural and language heritage while also providing opportunities for greater social interaction with native English speakers. This outreach must begin in pre-formal programs to establish a seamless transition to kindergarten which fosters parent involvement and accelerates students' acquisition of English.
2. *Outreach to Parents of EL Students.* Early understanding of academic programming within the K-12 public school system, including those classes

designed primarily to develop English, must be an ongoing effort for educators. These classes must also provide explicit directions to EL students outlining the process for becoming reclassified as fluent in English. These efforts must include workshops to help the parents of EL students navigate the public school system and access more rigorous college preparatory classes. They must also bridge the gap between academic expectations and post-secondary aspirations among EL students and their families, including access to financial aid and scholarship opportunities. Outreach efforts should consider locations outside the school setting that might be more conducive to active participation – such as churches, community centers, or the workplace.

3. *Student Access to College and Career Counseling.* Beyond the assignment of academic counseling at middle school and high school, school districts must integrate standardized career planning lessons and activities for EL students at all grade levels, beginning in kindergarten. This must be followed by formal classes with curriculum centered on college and career planning, field trips to college campuses, personal finance, interest surveys, and goal setting beginning in grades 6-8. Support systems such as the TRIO Upward Bound Program, designed to serve students who are first-generation college bound or from low-income families should be implemented at all high school campuses to support EL students and their parents in developing a comprehensive plan for post-secondary education and career attainment.
4. *Teacher Expectations for EL Students.* An EL student who has obtained BICS can easily mask his or her academic language deficiencies when engaging in

less demanding assignments and passive classroom activities. Stronger training for teachers is needed to understand and recognize differences among students who appear to be orally fluent, but lack the academic language needed to be successful in more rigorous classes. Teachers must recognize that a student's first language is an asset, not a liability. Regardless of the instructional setting or the teacher's ability to speak in the students' first language, new vocabulary can be introduced in both languages. Along with supplemental native language resources and scaffolding, EL students can gain equal access to more complex curriculum. Teachers must also be trained to provide explicit but non-threatening opportunities for EL students to engage in classroom discussions and activities that facilitate greater peer interactions resulting in the use and practice of academic language as part of instructional norms. In addition, teachers must hold high expectations for all EL students and provide access to rigorous curriculum for both LTEL and RFEP students.

Recommendations for Further Research

A confluence of literature on EL students and ESL practices along with literature on students' perceptions of school connectedness was presented in Chapter II: Review of the Literature. Chapter II also reviewed the social and political factors that have shaped public policy towards the education of immigrant students throughout the history of the United States. Chapter III outlined the methodology, data collection and theoretical framework for this study. Chapters IV and V analyzed the findings, conclusions and emergent theories developed from the research.

This study sought to identify possible protective factors for EL students, determine whether or not strong perceptions of school connectedness accelerates their English language acquisition, and identify actionable outcomes based on the theories proposed. The theories developed in this study offer possible explanations about school connectedness and EL students while ultimately providing guidance to create best practices leading to a positive school environment and effective support systems for EL students.

The research findings, theories proposed from this research, and the identified actions achieved the study's objectives. However, the delimitations placed on the population sample along with the scope and limitations of this research study provide opportunities for further research. The following are recommendations to further expand on this research:

1. Expand the study to include a larger and more heterogeneous sample population with diverse home languages and diverse geographic settings.
2. Replicate the with the same socioeconomic and age delimitations for LTEL and RFEP students, but with a larger population sample in an urban setting.
3. Replicate the study with the same socioeconomic, geographic, and age delimitations for LTEL students and RFEP students, but also include EO students.
4. Replicate the study with the same socioeconomic, geographic, and age delimitations for LTEL students and RFEP students, but also analyze results by gender within each subpopulation.

5. Expand the study to address and identify the type and frequency of involvement in risky behaviors, as identified by the Center for Disease Control, exhibited by LTEL and RFEP students.
6. Conduct a study to further explore perceptions of home to school connectedness among LTEL and RFEP parents.
7. Conduct a longitudinal, experimental research study to determine whether or not early exposure to extracurricular activities among EL students has a positive correlation with language acquisition.
8. Conduct a qualitative research study that further explores the resiliency factors and growth mindset of high performing RFEP students.
9. Conduct a mixed-methods research study to determine whether or not differences in perceptions of school connectedness are influenced by EL students' participation or non-participation in dual language education programs.
10. Conduct a mixed-methods research study of LTEL and RFEP students in high school to determine whether or not differences in perceptions of school connectedness exist between those who arrived in the United States in primary grades (1-3), upper elementary (4-6), middle school (7-8), or high school (9-12).
11. Conduct case study research of high-performing RFEP students, their families, to explore possible resiliency and growth mind-set characteristics that exist irrespective of school connectedness contexts.

Concluding Remarks and Reflections

As a teacher, assistant principal, site principal, district administrator, and now superintendent, I have spent most of my 28 years in education serving communities in Central California. All of these communities included neighborhoods with high poverty and large numbers of first-generation immigrants. Most were Spanish-speaking families from Mexico, along with a few clusters of immigrant refugees from Laos and Cambodia.

As an educator, I have always been cognizant of the barriers most of our students needed to overcome in order to achieve academic success in school. Serving as an assistant principal and then a principal of both a middle school and high school between the years 1997 and 2008, we achieved great things. Title I dollars, grants, and supplemental social services were all leveraged to provide students and their families with the help necessary to mitigate circumstances that hampered educational attainment.

The middle school where I served is located in a city of just over 200,000 in a neighborhood characterized by high poverty, high crime, and what was then the highest per capita teen pregnancy rate in the nation. Nearly half the students were EL, more than 40 percent of students had parents who did not graduate high school, and our free and reduced lunch count reached nearly 90 percent. Nevertheless, we cultivated a school community that one parent, who previously wanted to transfer her child out of the school, described to a local newspaper reporter as “an oasis within a volatile community.” Home visits by administrators, counselors, and bilingual outreach workers were initiated, along with after school recreation programs, tutoring, and after hours computer access for parents and students. All communications to parents were translated to their native languages.

As a result, we saw parent participation at school events increase by more than three hundred percent, and set a local middle school record for participation in the Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE), graduating more than 120 of our parent participants. As measured by California's Academic Performance Index (API), test scores grew every year, and we maintained a similar school ranking of nine or ten – indicating that we were doing much better than other schools in the state that had similar demographics.

The high school where I became principal in 2004 is situated near the center of the city. Its attendance boundaries once included some of the most exclusive and wealthiest neighborhoods in the area; however, the opening of another high school in the 1990's significantly changed the high school's demographics as these affluent neighborhoods were annexed to the new school. This shift resulted in a new, non-contiguous boundary that included older neighborhoods immediately surrounding our high school and a predominantly Spanish-speaking community located on the southern edge of the city, with adjacent non-incorporated neighborhoods approximately ten miles away from our campus. The area, nicknamed *Deep South Side*, is known for gang activity, drug sales, and prostitution. Thirteen buses transported students from these neighborhoods to our high school each day.

Prior to the boundary adjustment, our high school's student population was 23% Hispanic/Latino and 68% White. By 2007, it was 49% Hispanic/Latino and 40% White. The number of EL students grew from 7.6% to 19% during this same time period. Between 2000 and 2005, our free and reduced lunch count grew from 30% to 60%.

At the time I accepted the position as principal, there was a widely accepted view (although not always explicitly stated) among both district administrators and some site staff, that the school had seen better days and was in a state of unavoidable decline. Enrollment in most advanced placement (AP) classes was below 20 students. Both the superintendent and director of secondary education warned me that if I didn't get those numbers up, the AP classes would be collapsed.

Contrary to these perceptions, average daily attendance rates had remained the same, and post-secondary attainment for our students had actually increased from what it was before the boundary adjustment. Within two years, we had not only filled our AP courses, but the percentage of our students passing AP exams was above both district and state averages. So that more Spanish-speaking parents and students could participate, we began alternating meeting locations for our School Site Council (SSC), English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) and Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) between our high school and a middle school located in our southern attendance boundary. We also used Title I dollars to fund a *late bus* so that students living in this area could participate in after school sports, tutoring programs, Associated Student Body (ASB) government, and clubs.

We also began an early outreach program for incoming freshmen, starting at homecoming in the fall. More than 60 8th grade student leaders from our middle school feeder located in Deep South Side were invited and attended a pre-game barbeque hosted by our ASB. After the barbeque, the students marched in with our band and sat among the high school students in our spirit section at the fifty-yard line to watch the football

game. These same students helped host our *Link Crew* assembly and activities to welcome incoming freshman prior to the start of the next school year.

While experiencing incremental growth on our API, our high school also maintained a similar schools ranking between 8 and 10. Our graduation rate and pass rate on the high school exit exam was at or above the state average every year as well. Our students had the same average on the verbal section of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) as the district and surpassed the district average on the mathematics portion. Students also outperformed the district and state on the American College Test (ACT) assessment.

Entering a new school district as an assistant superintendent, and later becoming superintendent, I was able to reflect on these and other experiences in my professional career. All have taught me valuable lessons and helped shape my philosophy as an educator. Specifically, I believe that strong leadership, effective teaching, and a positive school environment can beat demographics. By contrast, low expectations among adults at a school become self-fulfilling and create outcomes based on a vision of perpetual failure. Intuitively, I also believed that efforts we had made to help our Spanish-speaking students and parents feel more connected at the middle school and high school where I served as principal were instrumental in helping us achieve the aforementioned academic achievements; however, given the time constraints of being a site principal I never dug deeper to research this belief any further.

In my career, I have enjoyed and experienced fulfillment seeing students overcome the odds and achieve great things. One of my fondest memories was seeing two former EL students, both Latinas from Deep South Side, graduate first and third in

among a senior class of more than 400 students. One was on her way to Stanford, the other bound for Harvard, and both with full scholarships. I remember the efforts taken by a Spanish-speaking counselor to convince the parents of one student to allow her daughter to go away to college.

Nevertheless, within these same classes were EL students who grew up in the same neighborhoods, faced the same obstacles, were provided similar instruction and academic support, and yet drifted into places of despair, hopelessness, and unrealized potential. Some joined gangs, and I've read their stories in the newspaper as either perpetrators or victims of violence. I see others in the community as adults, working dead-end jobs and trying to support a family, often telling me that they are trying to go back to school to better themselves, but unable to move past the immediacy of their current responsibilities. I see some repeating a familial cycle of government dependency and addiction to drugs or alcohol.

Before finalizing a topic for this study, my first goal was to initiate research methodology that would produce data with actionable results. Choosing a mixed-methods, grounded theory design helped me achieve this goal. Second, I wanted to conduct a research study that specifically met a need in our community and could help improve educational outcomes for our students. By focusing on the needs of Spanish-speaking, socio-economically disadvantaged EL students, I was able to define a student population that represents more than 97% of our EL student population K-12, and 29% of our general student population overall. The delimiting characteristics of the sample population allowed for deeper insights from RFEP and LTEL students nearing the completion of their public school experience.

The literature review provided context to the often capricious history of ESL instruction in the United States. Understanding policies and instructional practices influenced by the social, cultural, and political climates of each era provided a comprehensive perspective of both the academic challenges facing EL students, as well as the important civil rights issues addressed by immigrant education. This understanding, along with the concurrent research on issues of school connectedness and data produced by the research study provided validity to the emergent theories that were developed. The quantitative data findings, coupled with student interview responses, helped me better understand the multiple dimensions of school connectedness and the challenges facing EL students as they must master a new language while simultaneously meeting the academic demands within each content area, and navigating multiple social and cultural experiences at home and at school .

Finally, the student voices themselves were most illuminating. By sharing their experiences, I was able to develop greater clarity from the findings, answer the research questions, draw conclusions, report implications for action, and develop recommendations for further research. It is hoped that others will continue research on this topic to help formulate strategies across the academic, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions of school connectedness that will help LTEL students master English and acquire all the tools needed to experience success in school.

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discriminant analysis (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Synthesis Matrix

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Achugar, M. & Oteiza, T. (2009). In whatever language people feel comfortable: Conflicting language ideologies in the U.S. Southwest border. <i>Text and Talk</i> , 29(4), 371-391.	X			
Allen, A. (2006). <i>Constructing “connectedness”: A study of youth identity and participation in high school</i> (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database (UMI No. 3222840).			X	X
Archambault, I., Janosz, M., Morizot, J., & Pagani, L. (2009). Adolescent behavioral, affective, and cognitive engagement in school: Relationship to dropout. <i>Journal of School Health</i> . 79(9), 408-415.			X	
Asher, J. (1969). The Total Physical Response Approach to Second Language Learning. <i>The Modern Language Journal</i> . 53(1), 3-17.	X			
Austin, G., Hanson, T. & Voight, A. (2013). <i>School connectedness and academic achievement in California high schools</i> . S3 Factsheet #5, Los Alamitos, CA: West Ed.			X	

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Balagna, R., Young, E., & Smith, T. (2013). School experiences of early adolescent Latinos/as at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders. <i>School Psychology Quarterly</i> . 28(2), 101-120.				X
Baron, D. (1991). <i>The English only question: An official language for Americans?</i> New Haven, CT: Yale University Press	X			
Batalova, J., Fix, M., and Murray, J. (2007). <i>Measures of change: The demography and literacy of adolescent English learners</i> . New York: Carnegie Foundation.		X		
Batalova, J. and McHugh, M. (2010). <i>States and districts with the highest number and share of English language learners</i> . Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.	X	X		
Block, N. (2012). Perceived impact of two-way dual immersion programs on Latino students' relationships in their families and communities. <i>International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism</i> . 15(2), 235-257.	X			X
Blum, R., and Libbey, H. (2004). School connectedness – Strengthening health and education outcomes for teenagers: Executive summary – Wingspread declaration on school connections. <i>Journal of School Health</i> , 74 (7), 231-234.			X	

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Blum, R. (2005). A case for school connectedness. <i>The Adolescent Learner</i> , 62 (7), 16-20.			X	
Bradshaw, C., Waadsorp, T., Debman, K., and Johnson, S. L. (2014). Measuring school climate in high schools: A focus on safety, engagement, and the environment. <i>Journal of School Health</i> . 84(9), 593-603.			X	
Brisk, M. E., and Proctor, C. P. (2012). <i>Challenges and supports for English language learners in bilingual programs</i> (Report from the Understanding Language Initiative). Retrieved from Stanford University School of Education Website.		X		X
Brown, T. E. (2012). <i>School Connectedness: A comparison of students' and staff school connectedness perceptions</i> (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Database (UMI 3542185).			X	
Bureau of Education, Department of the Interior (1927). <i>Methods of teaching adult aliens and native illiterates</i> , Bulletin No. 7, Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office.	X			
Calderon, M., Slavin, R. and Sanchez, Marta (2011). Effective instruction for English learners. <i>The Future of Children</i> . 21(1), 103-127.	X			X

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
California Department of Education, (2013). <i>California High School Exit Exam(CAHSEE) State demographic summary report</i> . Sacramento, CA: DataQuest. Retrieved from: http://www.cahsee.cde.ca.gov .		X		
California Department of Education, Educational Demographics Office (2015). <i>English Learner (EL) Data – 2013-14</i> . Retrieved from: www.cde.ca.gov/Dataquest		X		
California Department of Education, Language Policy & Leadership Office (2009). <i>California two-way bilingual immersion program directory</i> . Sacramento, CA.	X			
California Secretary of State (1998). <i>English language in public schools. Initiative statute</i> . Voter guide.	X			
California Superintendent of Public Instruction, Office of Communications (2014). <i>State schools chief Tom Torlakson reports jump in number of students earning seal of biliteracy</i> [Press release].		X		
Callahan, R. (2005). Tracking and high school English learners: Limiting opportunity to learn. <i>American Educational Research Journal</i> . 42(2), 305-328.	X			X

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Callahan, R. (2013). <i>The English learner dropout dilemma: Multiple risks and multiple resources</i> (California Dropout Research Project Report #19). Retrieved from Gervitz Graduate School of Education, University of California, Santa Barbara website: http://www.cdrp.ucsb.edu .		X	X	X
Campos, E., Grief, J., and Jimerson, S. (2003). Toward an understanding of definitions and measures of school engagement and related terms. <i>The California School Psychologist</i> (8), 7-28.			X	
Centers for Disease Control (2009). School connectedness: Strategies for increasing protective factors among youth. Washington, DC.			X	
Chhuon, Vichet & Wallace, Tanner LaBaron (2015). Creating connectedness through being known: Fulfilling the need to belong in U.S. high schools. <i>Youth & Society</i> 46(3), 379-401.			X	
Chung-Do, J., Goebert, D., Chang, J., and Hamagani, F. (2015). Developing a comprehensive school connectedness scale for program evaluation. <i>Journal of School Health</i> 85(3), 179-189.			X	
Collier, V. and Thomas, W. (1989). How quickly can immigrants become proficient in school English? <i>The journal of educational issues of language minority students</i> 5(1), 26-38.	X			

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Collier, V. and Thomas, W. (1997). School effectiveness for language minority students. <i>National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, Resource Collection Series, Number 9</i> , Washington, DC: George Washington University, Center for the Study of Language and Education.	X	X		X
Collier, V., and Thomas, W. (2002). <i>A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement</i> . Santa Cruz, CA: UC Santa Cruz, Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.	X	X		
Columbia University Graduate School of Arts and Science Teaching Center (2015). <i>Progressive pedagogies</i> . Retrieved from: http://www.columbia.edu/cu/tat/pdfs/progressive.pdf			X	
Crosone, R. (2009). Family-school connections and the transitions of low-income youths and English language learners from middle school to high school. <i>Developmental Psychology</i> . 45(4), 1061-1076.			X	
Cummins, J. (1984). <i>Bilingualism and special education: Issues in assessment and pedagogy</i> . Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.	X			

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Cummins, J. (1998, February). Beyond adversarial discourse: Searching for common ground in the education of bilingual students. Paper presented to the <i>California State Board of Education</i> , Sacramento, CA.	X			
Cummins, J. (2014). Beyond language: Academic communication and student success. <i>Linguistics in Education</i> . (26), 145-154.	X			X
Cuevas, J. (2014). Hispanic acculturation in the U.S.: Examining the relationship between Americans' ethnocentricity and education. <i>Journal for Critical Policy Studies</i> 310-337.	X			
Darling-Hammond, L., Aness, J., & Wichterle, S.O. (2002). Reinventing the high school: Outcomes of the coalition campus schools project. <i>American Educational Research Journal</i> . 39(3), 639-673.			X	
Dayton-Wood, A. (2008). Teaching English for "A Better America". <i>Rhetoric Review</i> 27 (4), 397-414.	X			X
Edwards, V. (Ed.) (2000). <i>Lessons of a century: A nation's schools come of age</i> . Bethesda, MD: Editorial Projects in Education.	X		X	

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Eisenberg, M. E., Neumark-Sztainer, D., & Perry, C. L. (2003). Peer harassment, school connectedness, and academic achievement. <i>Journal of School Health</i> . 73(8), 311-316.			X	
Faltis, C. and Arias B. (2007). Coming out of the ESL ghetto: Promising practices for Latino immigrant students and English learners in hypersegregated secondary schools. <i>Journal of Border Educational Research</i> . 6(2), 19-35.	X			X
Faltis, C. (2013). Language, language development and teaching English to emergent bilingual users: Challenging the common knowledge theory in teacher education & K-12 school settings. <i>Association of Mexican-American Educators</i> . 7 (1), 18-28.	X			X
Field, F. (2011). <i>Bilingualism in the USA: The case of the Chicano-Latino community</i> . Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.	X			X
Freeman, R. (2004). <i>Building on community bilingualism</i> . Philadelphia: Cason.	X			
Galindo, R. (2011). The nativist legacy of the Americanization era in the education of Mexican immigrant students. <i>Educational Studies</i> , 47, 323-346.	X			

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Garcia, O., and Baker, C. (Eds.) (2007). <i>Bilingual education: An introductory reader</i> . Buffalo, NY: Multilingual Matters, Ltd.	X			
Gavin-Loss, C., and Loss, C. P. (2002). Progressive education. <i>Encyclopedia of Education</i> . Retrieved from http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3403200501.html .			X	
Genesee, F., Lindholm-Leary, K., Saunders, W., and Christian, D. (2005). English language learners in U.S. schools: An overview of research findings. <i>Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk</i> . 10(4), 363-385.		X		X
Good, M. E., Masewicz, S., and Vogel, L. (2010). Latino English language learners: Bridging achievement and cultural gaps between schools and families. <i>Journal of Latinos and Education</i> , 9(4), 321-329.			X	X
Gorski, E. and Newton, J. (2012). English language learners: Exploring Connections to School (Capstone project). University of Wisconsin, LaCrosse. Retrieved from: https://www.uwlax.edu/uploadedFiles/Academics/Graduate_Programs/School_Psychology				X

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Gunnell, K.A. (2013). The daughters of charity as cultural intermediaries: Women, religion, and race in early twentieth-century Los Angeles. <i>U.S. Catholic Historian</i> , 31(2), 51-74.	X			
Gutierrez, D. (1995). <i>Walls and mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican immigrants, and the politics of ethnicity</i> . Berkeley, CA: U C Press.	X			
Haas, E., Huang, M., and Tran, L. (2014). <i>The characteristics of long-term English language learner students and struggling reclassified fluent English proficiency students in Nevada</i> . San Francisco, CA: West Ed.		X		X
Hakuta, K., Butler, Y.G., and Witt, D. (2000). How long does it take English learners to attain proficiency? <i>Policy Report, University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute</i> .	X	X		
Hill, H. C. (1919). The Americanization movement. <i>American Journal of Sociology</i> . 24(6), 609-642. Retrieved from: http://www.jstor.org/stable/2764116	X			
Hill, N., and Torres, K. (2010). Negotiating the American dream: The paradox of aspirations and achievement among Latino students and engagement between their families and schools. <i>Journal of Social Issues</i> . 66(1), 95-112.				X

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Jennings, G. (2003). An exploration of meaningful participation and caring relationships as contexts for school engagement. <i>The California School Psychologist</i> . 8, 43-52			X	
Jimerson, S., Campos, E., and Grief, J. (2003). Toward an understanding of definitions and measures of school engagement and related terms. <i>The California School Psychologist</i> (8), 7-28.			X	
Kanno, Y. and Kangas, S. (2014). I'm not going to be like, for the AP: English language learners' limited access to advanced college-preparatory courses in high school. <i>American Educational Research Journal</i> . 51(5), 848-878.	X	X		X
Karabenick, S. A. and Noda, Clemens, P.A. (2004). Professional development Implications of teachers' beliefs and attitudes toward English language learners. <i>Bilingual Research Journal</i> , 28(1), 55-75.	X		X	X
Karcher, M. J. and Sass, D. (2010). A multicultural assessment of adolescent connectedness: Testing measurement invariance across gender and ethnicity. <i>Journal of Counseling Psychology</i> . 57(3), 274-289.			X	

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEF Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Kim, W. G. and Garcia, S. (2014). Long-term English language learners' perceptions of their language and academic learning experiences. <i>Remedial and Special Education</i> . 35(5), 300-312.		X		X
Klem, A. and Connell, J. P. (2004). Relationships matter: Linking teacher support to student engagement. <i>Journal of School Health</i> , 74(7), 262-273.			X	
Korman, G. (1965). Americanization at the factory gate [Electronic version]. <i>Industrial and Labor Relations Review</i> , 18, 396-419. Retrieved from: http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/articles/70 .	X			
Kramsch, C. (2007). Re-reading Robert Lado, 1957, <i>Linguistics across cultures</i> . <i>Applied linguistics for language teachers</i> . <i>International Journal of Applied Linguistics</i> , 17(2), 241-247.	X			
Krashen, S., & McField, G. (2005, November/December). What works? Reviewing the latest evidence on bilingual education. <i>Language Learner</i> , 7-10.	X			
Krashen, S. (2009). <i>Principles and practice in second language acquisition</i> . Retrieved from http://www.sdkrashen.com/content/books/principles_and_practice (Original work published 1982, Elmsford, NY: Pergamon Press).	X			X

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEF Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Lara, Ricardo (2012). <i>Lara's bill, the first in the nation to create a definition for long term English learners signed in to law</i> [Press Release] Retrieved from: http://sd33.senate.ca.gov/news/2012-09-21		X		
Lemberger, M. E., Selig, J. P., Bowers, H., and Rogers, J. E. (2013). Effects of the student success skills program on executive functioning skills, feelings of connectedness, and academic achievement in a predominantly Hispanic, low-income middle school district. <i>Journal of Counseling and Development</i> . 93, 25-37.			X	X
Libbey, H. (2004). Measuring student relationships to school: Attachment, bonding, connectedness, and engagement. <i>Journal of School Health</i> . 74(7), 274-283.			X	
Loukas, A., Roalson, L. A., and Herrera, D. E. (2010). School connectedness buffers the effects of negative family relations and poor effortful control on early adolescent conduct problems. <i>Journal of Research on Adolescence</i> . 20(1), 13-22.			X	
Marcella, F. (1998, October). The historical development of ESL materials in the United States. Expanded version of paper presented at <i>Annual Meeting of the New York State Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages</i> , Buffalo, New York.	X			

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Maxwell-Jolly, J., Gandara, P., and Mendez-Benevidez, L., (2007). <i>Promoting academic literacy among secondary English language learners: A synthesis of research and practice</i> . Policy Report, University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute.	X			X
McNeely, C., and Falci, C. (2004). School connectedness and the transition into and out of health-risk behavior among adolescents: A comparison of social belonging and teacher support. <i>Journal of School Health</i> . 74(7), 284-292.			X	
Menken, K. and Kleyn, T. (2010). The long-term impact of subtractive schooling in the educational experiences of secondary English language learners. <i>International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism</i> . 13(4), 399-417.	X	X		X
Menken, K., Kleyn, T., and Chae, N. (2012). Spotlight on long Term English learners: Characteristics and prior schooling experiences of an invisible population. <i>International Multilingual Research Journal</i> . 6, 121-142.			X	X

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Molesky, J. (1988). Understanding the American linguistic mosaic: A historical overview of language maintenance and language shift. In J.K. Peyton, P. Griffing, W. Wofram, & R. Fasold (Eds.), <i>Language in action: New studies of language in society</i> (29-68). Cambridge, MA: Newbury House.	X			
Morrison, G. M., Cosden, M., O'Farrell, S. L., and Campos, E. (2003). Changes in Latino students' perceptions of school belonging over time: Impact of language proficiency, self-perceptions and teacher evaluations. <i>The California School Psychologist</i> (8), 43-52.		X		X
Olneck, M. R. (2009). What have immigrants wanted from American schools? What do they want now? Historical and contemporary perspectives on immigrants, language, and American schooling. <i>American Journal of Education</i> . 115(3), 379-406.	X			
Olsen, L., (2010). <i>Reparable harm: Fulfilling the unkept promise of educational opportunity for California's long term English learners</i> , Long Beach, CA: Californians Together.	X	X		X
Ovando, C. (2003). Bilingual education : Historical development & current issues. <i>Bilingual Research Journal</i> (27)1, 1-23.	X			

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Pandya, C., Batalova, J., and McHugh, M. (2011). <i>Limited English proficient individuals in the United States: Number, share, growth and linguistic diversity</i> . Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.	X	X		
Peters, S. K. and Wooley, M. E. (2015). Testing a model of environmental risk and protective factors to predict middle and high school students' academic success. <i>Children and School</i> . 37(3), 135-143.			X	
Petrzela, N. M. (2010). Before the federal bilingual education act: Legislation and lived experience in California. <i>Peabody Journal of Education</i> 85(4), 406-424.	X			
Ray, Brian (2013). ESL droids: Teacher training and the Americanization movement, 1919-1924. <i>Composition Studies</i> 41(2), 15-39.	X			X
Ray, Maureen (2015). <i>School culture and the affective learning needs of Latino long-term English Learners</i> (Doctoral dissertation). Available from Dissertations and Theses, Portland State University, PDX Scholar (Paper: 2209).		X		X

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Rolstad, K., Mahony, K., and Glass, G. V., (2005). The big picture: A meta-analysis of program effectiveness research on English language learners. <i>Educational Policy</i> , 19(4), 572-594.	X			
Rolstad, K., Mahony, K., and Glass, G. V. (2008). The big picture: A meta-analysis corrected for Gersten's coding error. <i>Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies</i> , 8(2), 1-15.	X			
Rossell, C.H. and Baker, K. (1996). The educational effectiveness of bilingual education. <i>Research in the Teaching of English</i> . 30(2), 7-74.		X		
Rossell, C.H. (2008, July). <i>Disordered data and murky models: Critique of Wayne P. Thomas and Virginia P. Collier, "A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement," Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence, 2002.</i> Alexandria, VA: Lexington, Institute.		X		
Ruiz, V. L. (2001, Winter). South by southwest: Mexican Americans and Segregated Schooling, 1900-1950. <i>Organization of American Historians Magazine of American History</i> , 23-27.		X		

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Sanchez, E. (2015, January). Aligning all systems for English learner success – Local accountability plan. Report presented at <i>Regular Meeting of the California State Board of Education</i> , Sacramento, CA.	X	X		
Santos, C. E. and Collins, M. A. (2015). Ethnic identity, school connectedness, and achievement in standardized tests among Mexican-origin youth. <i>Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology</i> . 1-6				X
Saunders, W.M., and Marcelletti, D.J. (2012). The gap that won't go away: The catch-22 of reclassification in monitoring the progress of English learners. <i>Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis</i> . 35(2), 139-156.	X	X		
Sedlack, M. (1993). Historical perspectives on school-based social services in the United States. <i>Historical Perspectives on the Current Education Reform</i> . Washington, D.C: Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED).	X		X	
Shochet, I. M. and Smith, C. I. (2014). A prospective study investigating the links among classroom environment, school connectedness, and depressive symptoms in adolescents. <i>Psychology in the Schools</i> . 51(5), 480-492.			X	

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Silber, K. (1960). <i>Pestalozzi: the man and his work</i> . London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.			X	
Slavin, R.E., and Cheung, A. (2005). A synthesis of research on language of reading instruction for English language learners. <i>Review of Educational Research</i> . 75(2), 247-284.	X			
Street, B. and Hornberger, N.H. (Eds.). (2008). BICS and CALP: Empirical and theoretical status of the distinction. <i>Encyclopedia of Language and Education, 2nd Edition, Volume 2: Literacy</i> , 71-83. New York: Springer Science + Business Media. Retrieved from: http://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry	X	X		
Strum, P. (2014). "We always tell our children they are Americans": Mendez v. Westminster and the beginning of the end of school segregation. <i>Journal of Supreme Court History</i> , 39(3), 308-327.	X			
Sutton, L., Cornelius, L., and McDonald-Gordon, R. (2012). English language learners and judicial oversight: Progeny of Castaneda. <i>Educational Considerations</i> . 39(2), 31-36.	X			
Tellez, K. and Waxman H. C. (2010). A review of research on effective community programs for English language learners. <i>The School Community Journal</i> . 20 (1), 103-119.				X

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Tunney, J.J. and Jenkins, J. M. (1975). <i>A comparison of climate as perceived by selected students, faculty, and administration in PASCL, innovative and other high schools</i> (Doctoral dissertation). Available from the University of Southern California (A677141).			X	
U.S. Department of Education, (2014). <i>Total number of EL students in the United States, 2011-2013</i> , Retrieved from Ed Data Express website: http://www.eddataexpress.ed.gov . Washington, D.C.	X			
Valdes, G. (1998). The world outside and inside schools: Language and immigrant students. <i>American Educational Research Association</i> . 27(6), 4-18.	X			X
Walker, Diana (2015). <i>Determining the differences between English language learners who exit services and English language learners who become long-term ELLs: A discriminant analysis</i> (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database (UMI No. 3707992).		X		X
Wang, M., and Holcombe, R. (2010). Adolescents' perceptions of school environment, engagement, and academic achievement in middle school. <i>American Research Journal</i> . 47(3), 633-662.			X	

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
Wegner, K. L. (2013). Progressive reformers and the democratic origins of citizenship education in the United States during the First World War. <i>History of Education</i> , 46(6), 713-728.	X			X
Wiley, T. (2002). Accessing language rights in education: A brief history of the U.S. context. <i>Language Policies in Education: Critical Readings</i> (ed. J. Tollefson), 39-64, Mahway, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.	X			
Yamagami, M. (2012). The political discourse of the campaign against bilingual education: From proposition 227 to <i>Horne vs. Flores</i> . <i>International Multilingual Research Journal</i> . 6, 143-159.	X			
Zazula, P. (2014). From Hispanophobia to Hispanophilia: Travel, writing, tourism and politics in late 19 th -and early 20 th Century New Mexico. <i>Brno Studies in English</i> , 40(2), 123-146.	X			
Zong, J. and Batalova, J. (2015). Frequently requested statistics on immigrants and immigration in the United States. <i>Migration Information Source</i> . Retrieved from: http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article .	X	X		

Source	Historical Overview of ESL Practices and Government Policies	Characteristics of LTEL and RFEP Students	Overview and Significance of School Connectedness	School Connectedness and EL Students
<p>Zullig, K. J., Collins, R., Ghani, N., Patton, J.M., Heubner, E. S., and Ajame, J. (2014). Psychometric support of the school climate in a large diverse sample of adolescents: a replication and extension. <i>Journal of School Health</i>. 84(2), 82-90.</p>			X	
<p>Zullig, K. J., Huebner, E. S., and Patton, J. M. (2011). Relationships among school climate domains and school satisfaction. <i>Psychology in the Schools</i>. 48(2), 133-145.</p>			X	

APPENDIX B
INSTITUTIONAL CONSENT LETTER

(Insert District Letterhead)

Brandman University
Institutional Review Board
16355 Laguna Canyon Road
Irvine, CA 92618

To Whom It May Concern:

The Board of Trustees of the Patterson Joint Unified School District has received a request from Philip Alfano, a doctoral candidate at Brandman University, under the supervision of Dr. Peggy Wozniak, to access student data as part of a research study he is undertaking.

On behalf of our board, I am writing this letter to confirm our acknowledgement and permission to grant Mr. Alfano access to data. We understand the value of the study proposal, and that informed consent from both parents and students will be received before formal research begins.

Additionally, all student data obtained through this research will be kept confidential. No identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will be disclosed. When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no identifiable information will be included.

We wish Mr. Alfano good luck with his research study and look forward to reading the results when it is completed. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at gmccord@patterson.k12.ca.us , or by telephone at (209) 895-7700.

Sincerely,

xxxxx, President
xxxxxxxxx Unified School District Board of Trustees

APPENDIX C

Survey Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions according to the scale provided. Please answer based on <u>your</u> personal perceptions and experiences. Please know there are not right or wrong answers.	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
	1	2	3	4	5
1. I feel proud of who I am and my family background	1	2	3	4	5
2. I get good grades in my classes	1	2	3	4	5
3. Teachers complain about my behavior in class and refer me to the office	1	2	3	4	5
4. I enjoy and get involved in the activities offered at this school.	1	2	3	4	5
5. If I have a problem, there is an adult staff member at school I can talk to	1	2	3	4	5
6. Tutoring is available at school if I need additional support with homework or understanding school work	1	2	3	4	5
7. I participate in class discussions and ask questions when I do not understand something	1	2	3	4	5
8. I attend school sponsored functions such as dances, pep rallies, music performances or sports events.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I feel other students at this school like me.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I like coming to school	1	2	3	4	5
11. I feel that the cultural and language backgrounds of Mexican-American students are respected by staff members at this school	1	2	3	4	5

Please answer the following questions according to the scale provided. Please answer based on your personal perceptions and experiences. Please know there are not right or wrong answers.

	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
12. I try to find ways to learn more about a topic that interests me, even when not assigned	1	2	3	4	5
13. I am involved in leadership activities as an officer in a club or Associated Student Body (ASB)	1	2	3	4	5
14. I have friends at school that I can turn to when I have personal or school related problems	1	2	3	4	5
15. Students at this school respect each other	1	2	3	4	5
16. This school hosts events and activities that celebrate and honor the cultural and language backgrounds of Mexican-American students	1	2	3	4	5
17. I keep track of my grade point average (GPA) and know what I need to accomplish to graduate high school	1	2	3	4	5
18. I have difficulty concentrating and am easily distracted in my classes	1	2	3	4	5
19. My teachers or other adult staff members talk with me about my future plans after high school	1	2	3	4	5
20. I feel safe at this school	1	2	3	4	5
21. When at school, I prefer speaking to my friends in Spanish	1	2	3	4	5
22. If I have questions about my plans after high school, I meet with my counselor	1	2	3	4	5
23. I am engaged and interested during class discussions	1	2	3	4	5

Please answer the following questions according to the scale provided. Please answer based on your personal perceptions and experiences. Please know there are not right or wrong answers.

Almost Never Rarely Sometimes Often Almost Always

24. At this school, there are student activities before and after school or during lunch

1 2 3 4 5

25. I know where to go and what resources are available through this school for issues such as depression, suicide, substance abuse, or physical/sexual assault

1 2 3 4 5

26. I make friends with students from ethnic and cultural backgrounds different than mine

1 2 3 4 5

27. I do well on class assignments and tests when I study hard

1 2 3 4 5

28. I feel that I am singled out by my teachers for misbehavior when other students are doing the same things

1 2 3 4 5

29. When the school day has ended, I would rather go home than participate in extracurricular activities at school

1 2 3 4 5

30. I feel that teachers at this school care about me as an individual.

1 2 3 4 5

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions

Question	School Connectedness Contexts
1. Do teachers at P. High School encourage you to do well in school? (If so, how is that encouragement provided?)	(d) Interpersonal Relationships
2. What do you like most about your school and what do you like least?	(e) School Community
3. Do you feel the staff at P. High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?	(f) Sociocultural Factors
4. What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student? Do you consider yourself to be a good student – why or why not?	(a) Academic Performance
5. If someone visited your English class what would they see you doing as a student?/If someone visited your Math class, what would they see you doing as a student?	(b) Classroom Behavior
6. Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances and sports events – why or why not?	(c) Extracurricular Involvement
7. When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings? Do you recall anything students or staff did to make you feel welcomed?	(e) School Community
8. Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school? (If so, what do they say?)	(f) Sociocultural Factors
9. Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?	(a) Academic Performance
10. Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions – why or why not?	(b) Classroom Behavior
11. Are there any extracurricular activities you would like to see at your school that are not currently in place?	(c) Extracurricular Involvement
12. Do you find it easy to make friends at school – why or why not?	(d) Interpersonal Relationships
13. Outside of school, how do you spend your free time? What activities do you like to do with your family?	(f) Sociocultural Factors

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 14. Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school? (If so, what are you most proud of? If not, why?) | (a) Academic Performance |
| 15. Do you believe you are treated fairly by your teachers? | (b) Classroom Behavior |
| 16. What types of extracurricular activities are you involved with? (If involved with extracurricular activities, who encouraged you to join?) | (c) Extracurricular Involvement |
| 17. Do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have personal or school related problems? | (d) Interpersonal Relationships |
| 18. What resources are available to you at school if you are having personal problems, issues at home, or issues with other students? | (e) School Community |

Question	Language Acquisition
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19. Do you feel you have mastered English as a second language? (If so, what helped you/If not, what do you think is holding you back?)
20. When did you first learn English? What was most helpful to you in learning English?
21. When do you use Spanish, and when do you use English?

Appendix E

Informed Consent Letter

Brandman University
16355 Laguna Canyon Road
Irvine, CA 92618

INFORMED CONSENT FOR NON-MEDICAL RESEARCH/ PARENTAL PERMISSION LETTER

School Connectedness, Language Acquisition and Academic Success: A Study of English Language Learners' Experiences at a Comprehensive High School

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child is invited to participate in a research study conducted by Philip Alfano, a doctoral candidate from Brandman University, under the supervision of Dr. Peggy Wozniak. Your child's participation is voluntary. Please read the information below and ask any questions about anything you do not understand before deciding whether to participate. By signing this permission slip, you grant permission for your child to participate in this study. You will be given a copy of this form.

Purpose of the study:

As part of this study your child will be asked questions about their opinions on school connectedness and belonging at xxxxxxx High School. The purpose of the study is to determine whether perceptions of school connectedness differ among students.

What will be done:

Your child will complete a survey questionnaire. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete, and will be administered to students at school. From the initial group of students, some will be selected for a follow-up interview. The interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes.

Benefits of this Study:

Your child will be contributing to our understanding of what helps students connect to school, master a second language, and achieve academic success.

Risks or discomforts:

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts associated with this survey. If your child feels uncomfortable with a question, he or she can skip that question or withdraw from the study altogether. If they decide to quit at any time before they have finished the questionnaire or interview, their answers will NOT be recorded.

Confidentiality:

Responses will be kept completely confidential. No identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will be disclosed. When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no identifiable information will be included.

Decision to quit at any time:

Participation is voluntary; students are free to withdraw their participation from this study at any time. They also may choose to skip any questions they do not wish to answer.

How the findings will be used:

The results of the study will be used for scholarly purposes only. The results from the study will be presented in educational settings and at professional conferences. The results may be published in a professional journal.

Contact information:

If you have concerns or questions about this study, please contact Phil Alfano at alfano@brandman.edu. You may also contact Dr. Peggy Wozniak at pwozniak@brandman.edu.

SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

I have read the information provided above. I have been given a chance to ask questions. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to allow my child to participate in the study.

Name of Participant (Student)

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

APPENDIX F

Child Assent Form

Brandman University
16355 Laguna Canyon Road
Irvine, CA 92618

CHILD ASSENT FORM FOR NON-MEDICAL RESEARCH

School Connectedness, Language Acquisition and Academic Success: A Study of English Language Learners' Experiences at a Comprehensive High School

You have been invited to participate in a research study conducted by Philip Alfano, a doctoral candidate at Brandman University under the supervision of Dr. Peggy Wozniak. Your participation is voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything you do not understand before deciding whether to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form prior to completing the survey or participating in a follow-up interview. You will be given a copy of this form.

Purpose of the study:

As part of this study you will be asked questions about your opinions on school connectedness and belonging at xxxxxxxxx High School. The purpose of the study is to determine whether perceptions of school connectedness differ among English Learner students.

What will be done:

You will complete a survey questionnaire. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete, and will be administered at school. From the initial group of students, some will be selected for a follow-up interview. The interview will take approximately 30-45 minutes.

Benefits of this Study:

You will be contributing to our understanding of what helps students connect to school, master a second language, and achieve academic success.

Risks or discomforts:

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts associated with the survey or interview. If you feel uncomfortable with a question, you can skip that question or withdraw from the study altogether. If you decide to quit at any time before you have finished the questionnaire or interview, your answers will NOT be recorded.

Confidentiality:

Responses will be kept completely confidential. No identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will be disclosed. When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no identifiable information will be included.

Decision to quit at any time:

Participation is voluntary; students are free to withdraw their participation from this study at any time. They also may choose to skip any questions they do not wish to answer.

How the findings will be used:

The results of the study will be used for scholarly purposes only. The results from the study will be presented in educational settings and at professional conferences. The results may be published in a professional journal.

Contact information:

If you have concerns or questions about this study, please contact Phil Alfano at alfano@brandman.edu. You may also contact Dr. Peggy Wozniak at pwozniak@brandman.edu.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

I have read the information provided above. I have been given a chance to ask questions. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in the study.

Name of Participant (Student)

Signature of Participant (Student)

Date

APPENDIX G

Professional Team Member Letter (Participant One)

Brandman University
16355 Laguna Canyon Road
Irvine, CA 92618

Dissertation Committee:

I served as a Professional Team Member for Philip Alfano's dissertation research.

My role was to review the survey questionnaire, open-ended interview questions, informed consent form, and child assent form for accuracy in the written Spanish translation.

I was also responsible for increasing the validity and reliability of the results of student interview responses. I first read the written transcripts of all the students, and then listened to the oral records in their entirety. I examined both to check for possible errors in understanding.

Following this initial review of the raw data, I began independently coding the data into thematic categories. After the completion of this task, I met with the other professional team member and Mr. Alfano to debrief and analyze our categories. Collectively, we analyzed and audited each category. Through this process, coding categories were either eliminated or merged. Student responses were then consolidated and placed with the appropriate theme.

Using grounded theory processes and procedures, relationships between the themes data provided by participants resulted in a unifying theory presented in this study.

I feel that the professional team was successful in assisting Mr. Alfano to accurately code the extensive amount of qualitative data produced through the student interviews. Through this methodical process, an emerging theory was developed. This theory was developed and supported by the raw data that was collected and analyzed – both independently and collectively, by members of the professional team.

Sincerely,
Victoria XXXX

APPENDIX H

Professional Team Member Letter (Participant Two)

Brandman University
16355 Laguna Canyon Road
Irvine, CA 92618

Dissertation Committee:

I served as a Professional Team Member for Philip Alfano's dissertation research.

My role was to review the survey questionnaire, open-ended interview questions, informed consent form, and child assent form for accuracy in the written Spanish translation.

I was also responsible for increasing the validity and reliability of the results of student interview responses. I first read the written transcripts of all the students, and then listened to the oral records in their entirety. I examined both to check for possible errors in understanding.

Following this initial review of the raw data, I began independently coding the data into thematic categories. After the completion of this task, I met with the other professional team member and Mr. Alfano to debrief and analyze our categories. Collectively, we analyzed and audited each category. Through this process, coding categories were either eliminated or merged. Student responses were then consolidated and placed with the appropriate theme.

Using grounded theory processes and procedures, relationships between the themes data provided by participants resulted in a unifying theory presented in this study.

I feel that the professional team was successful in assisting Mr. Alfano to accurately code the extensive amount of qualitative data produced through the student interviews. Through this methodical process, an emerging theory was developed. This theory was developed and supported by the raw data that was collected and analyzed – both independently and collectively, by members of the professional team.

Sincerely,
Tamara XXXX

APPENDIX I

Complete Summary of Scaled Scores from Survey Questionnaire

Item	School Connectedness Context	LTEL Students		RFEP Students		Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>				
Question 1	Sociocultural Factors	4.82	0.47	4.66	0.72	0.16	1.4873	150	0.1390
Question 2	Academic Performance	3.64	0.86	3.92	0.74	-0.28	2.1182	150	0.0358
Question 3	Classroom Behavior	1.34	0.55	1.27	0.59	0.07	0.7232	150	0.4707
Question 4	Extracurricular Involvement	2.64	1.10	2.99	0.92	-0.35	2.1029	150	0.0371
Question 5	Interpersonal Relationships	2.95	1.31	3.14	1.30	0.19	0.8667	150	0.3875
Question 6	School Community	3.88	0.95	3.95	0.83	-0.07	0.4593	150	0.6467
Question 7	Classroom Behavior	3.23	0.99	3.41	0.98	-0.18	1.0882	150	0.2782
Question 8	Extracurricular Involvement	2.43	1.26	3.05	1.02	-0.62	3.3098	150	0.0012
Question 9	Interpersonal Relationships	3.84	0.93	3.81	0.91	0.03	0.1945	150	0.8461
Question 10	School Community	3.50	0.83	3.29	1.11	0.21	1.2288	150	0.2211
Question 11	Sociocultural Factors	4.16	0.83	4.05	0.79	0.11	0.8128	150	0.4176
Question 12	Academic Performance	3.41	1.04	3.35	1.01	0.06	0.3495	150	0.7272
Question 13	Extracurricular Involvement	1.27	0.70	1.71	1.17	-0.44	2.5578	150	0.0115
Question 14	Interpersonal Relationships	3.93	1.11	4.18	0.98	-0.25	1.4441	150	0.1508

Item	School Connectedness Context	LTEL Students		RFEP Students		Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>				
Question 15	School Community	3.04	0.89	3.02	0.88	0.02	0.1346	150	0.8931
Question 16	Sociocultural Factors	2.89	0.91	2.53	0.98	0.36	2.2420	150	0.0264
Question 17	Academic Performance	4.20	1.02	4.43	0.79	-0.23	1.5520	150	0.1228
Question 18	Classroom Behavior	3.18	0.96	3.51	1.08	-0.33	1.8914	150	0.0605
Question 19	Interpersonal Relationships	3.89	1.09	4.11	0.97	-0.22	1.2882	150	0.1997
Question 20	School Community	3.73	1.00	3.78	0.94	-0.05	0.3090	150	0.7578
Question 21	Sociocultural Factors	2.57	1.20	2.34	0.97	0.23	1.3116	150	0.1917
Question 22	Academic Performance	2.77	1.24	2.96	1.31	-0.19	0.8795	150	0.3805
Question 23	Classroom Behavior	3.11	0.73	3.36	1.02	-0.14	1.6086	150	0.1098
Question 24	Extracurricular Involvement	3.30	0.78	3.19	0.92	0.11	0.7508	150	0.4539
Question 25	School Community	2.96	1.39	2.88	1.28	0.08	0.3601	150	0.7193
Question 26	Sociocultural Factors	3.86	1.05	3.97	1.00	-0.11	0.6422	150	0.5217
Question 27	Academic Performance	3.73	0.80	3.85	0.88	-0.12	0.8381	150	0.4033
Question 28	Classroom Behavior	2.27	1.20	2.45	1.30	-0.18	0.8467	150	0.3985
Question 29	Extracurricular Involvement	3.64	1.05	3.51	1.15	0.13	0.6938	150	0.4889
Question 30	Interpersonal Relationships	3.50	1.08	3.29	1.05	0.21	1.1770	150	0.2411

APPENDIX J

LTEL Student Interview 1 – “Carlos”

Interviewer: Go ahead and tell me your name again.

Carlos: My name is Carlos.

Interviewer: You're a senior at xxxxx High School, right? OK. I'm going to ask you a few questions and again, if the question isn't clear, just ask and I can re-state it. Do you feel that teachers at xxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school?

Carlos: Yeah, they really challenge you to do better than you think, or something.

Interviewer: How is that encouragement provided?

Carlos: They help you, and make you try to make you understand what the lesson's about, or try to help you if you're struggling or something.

Interviewer: What do you like most about your school, and what do you like least?

Carlos: I like that the school has a lot of pride in sports, and all that. What I like least is that we can't do certain stuff like graduation, and all that.

Interviewer: Do you feel the staff at xxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Carlos: Yeah, they don't tell you anything. They treat you like any other kid.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student, and do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why or why not?

Carlos: I consider a good student knows how to take care of himself academically, so they can not necessarily have straight A's, but know what they're doing, and not really need help from anybody else that they know what's good. For me, I consider myself an OK student.

Interviewer: Why's that?

Carlos: I don't do that good, and I don't do that bad, so it's just in-between.

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Carlos: For my English class, probably doing the work.

Interviewer: What type of work would you like doing?

Carlos: Probably reading tables.

Interviewer: If they visited your math class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Carlos: Trying to figure out what I'm doing, because I struggle in math.

Interviewer: What math class are you in?

Carlos: Pre-cal.

Interviewer: In your math class, if you're having difficulties, how do you address that during class? What do you do, as a student?

Carlos: I make sure I ask for help with my partners, or I ask the teacher if they can help me to understand what's going on.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances and sports events? Why, or why not?

Carlos: I like attending sports events, but not really dances or music things, because it's not interesting for me.

Interviewer: You don't go to the dances and music performances, because they're not really interesting?

Carlos: Yeah.

Interviewer: What sports events do you attend?

Carlos: I like games like the football games. I'm in swimming, so I go to the meets. That's fun, too.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings, and do you recall anything that students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Carlos: As a freshman I was scared that I didn't know what was going to go on. Going into a new school is weird. What they did for the freshman orientation is, all the seniors lined up and started clapping each time you walked in. That made me feel welcome.

Interviewer: Very good. Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school?

Carlos: Yeah, my mom is always telling me that she wants to see me do things in life, and not just be a bum at home.

Interviewer: What does she say specifically?

Carlos: To try being better like, "Try to find something that's going to help you, and not just do anything that you see other people doing."

Interviewer: Does she talk to you about what you're going to do after high school?

Carlos: Yeah, she said she wants to see me go to college in a few more years or so. It's going to help me find out what I want to do.

Interviewer: Very good. Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Carlos: I usually try to find help in my AVID class. I try to find people who know or have that class that I need help in. I go there.

Interviewer: Let's see if I've got the right question. Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why, or why not?

Carlos: When I know what the discussion's about, if I know what I want to talk about and find research about it, I like going into it. If I don't know what's going on, then I don't talk.

Interviewer: Are there any extracurricular activities that you would like to see at your school that are not currently in place?

Carlos: Probably a water polo team. We were supposed to have one, but it was like we couldn't find a coach to do it, so it didn't happen.

Interviewer: Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why, or why not?

Carlos: I do, because I'm really social, so I talk to people, even if we don't know each other, to find out something, or ask for something.

Interviewer: Outside of school, how do you spend your free time? What activities do you like to do with your family?

Carlos: Outside of school, I'm really just home. I don't really do anything with my family. We usually just go camping or something. We go on adventures. This weekend, we're going to Oregon.

Interviewer: How often do you take those kinds of trips with your family?

Carlos: Not often. Usually, I go with my older sister. We usually go down to LA every September for this event. It's usually with my sister. But with my mom and my stepdad, we don't go anywhere.

Interviewer: What's the event you go down to in LA?

Carlos: It's a car show. All the sports...Subaru cars going down there. They have a meet, and they race, and all that. They go there.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?

Carlos: Not really, because I feel like I could've done better. Now that I'm a senior, looking back at my grades, I could've done better. I regret not paying attention my freshman year, because there's where it's really hurting my grades.

Interviewer: You feel like you could've pushed yourself a little bit harder in class?

Carlos: Yeah, instead of worrying about other people's problems. Instead of me trying to figure out what to do, how to do better, that's what's really hard for me, or taking better classes.

Interviewer: You're planning to go to college?

Carlos: I'm planning to go to LACC, and then transfer.

Interviewer: Do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have personal or school-related problems?

Carlos: Yeah, I have friends I can go up to at any time, even though we don't really talk anymore. I can always go to them, and they listen.

Interviewer: What resources are available to you at school if you're having personal problems, issues at home, or issues with other students?

Carlos: We have counseling, or I could ask the teachers for help and they'll listen.

Interviewer: The last three questions, do you feel that you've mastered English as a second language?

Carlos: I think I have. It took a while for me to learn it. Now that I know it, I think I've done better with it.

Interviewer: What helped you?

Carlos: Really taking better classes in my English class, and trying to work at it instead of just avoiding it. English was my hardest class before, and now it's easy for me. I think that, and trying to write out what I'm thinking probably helped me.

Interviewer: Are you in college prep classes?

Carlos: Yeah.

Interviewer: Very good. When did you first learn English, and what was most helpful to you in learning English?

Carlos: I learned English in kindergarten. What helped me was my kindergarten teacher, because I was in the classroom and it was all Hispanic families and low income families. It was just them, and they would be like, "Oh, learn the ABCs this week, and learn a word this week." She gave us words to try to use during the week, so that probably helped me.

Interviewer: When do you use Spanish, and when do you use English?

Carlos: I use English mostly at school. I use Spanish at home, because my mom understands English, she just doesn't know how to say it. She doesn't like when I speak English to her, she said that it's weird for her. She tells me to speak Spanish to her, so that's when I use it. Or when I'm with my whole family, it's in Spanish.

Interviewer: Do you usually watch Spanish television?

Carlos: Not really. I don't like it. For me, it's all the same. All the telenovelas are all the same for me, they're just dramatic.

Interviewer: You watch more English?

Carlos: I watch more English shows and movies, and all that.

Interviewer: Anything else you want to tell me about your experience at xxxxxx High?

Carlos: It's been a ride. [laughs]

Interviewer: [laughs]

Carlos: A lot of things happen.

Interviewer: You're ready to graduate?

Carlos: Kind of. I'm scared for life.

Interviewer: Thank you, Carlos. I appreciate it...

APPENDIX K

LTEL Student Interview 2 – “Monica”

Interviewer: Go ahead and tell me your name.

Monica: Monica Rodriguez.

Interviewer: Monica, you're a 12th grader at xxxxxx High, right?

Monica: Yes.

Interviewer: I'm going to ask you a series of questions, and just give me your honest answer. There's no right or wrong. Do teachers at xxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school?

Monica: Yes.

Interviewer: How is that encouragement provided?

Monica: They help us more. They tell us that after school, we can come in for more help.

Interviewer: What do you like most about your school, and what do you like least?

Monica: Maybe how much help we get, because there's many people here who don't understand a variety of things, so the teachers give a lot of help. The least? I don't know.

Interviewer: There's got to be something that could improve the school.

Monica: Maybe the food sometimes.

Interviewer: Do you feel that the staff at xxxxx High School is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Monica: Yes.

Interviewer: How so?

Monica: They don't really judge you in no type of way.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student?

Monica: Being responsible, respectful.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why or why not?

Monica: I think I am, because I am pretty responsible with my deeds and my actions.

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Monica: Currently, right now?

Interviewer: Yeah, a typical day in your English class.

Monica: Right now, we're just presenting for the prep. Right now, presentations, but other days, we would be reading books, and just doing the worksheets on it.

Interviewer: If someone visited your math class, what would they see you doing, as a student?

Monica: We take notes, and we also have a booklet where we get assigned pages, and the teacher usually helps us out with what's inside, the material. That's what we usually do.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances and sporting events?

Monica: Not really. I never have.

Interviewer: Why not?

Monica: I've never really got into it, I don't know. I went to prom last year.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings? Do you recall anything that students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Monica: I was excited to come, and I think they just treated me respectfully.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school?

Monica: Yes, my dad, a lot.

Interviewer: What does he say?

Monica: He motivates me to go to college and to go study for what I want to do, because he wasn't able to. He wants me to go to college.

Interviewer: Very good. Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Monica: I stay after school with my teachers, or else my older brother, because he's out of high school.

Interviewer: Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Monica: Sometimes, because I'm kind of shy. Sometimes I do, and sometimes I don't.

Interviewer: When you do participate, why do you normally participate?

Monica: Because I feel like I'm more confident, I would say. I'm more sure about it, so maybe that's why.

Interviewer: Are there any extracurricular activities that you would like to see at your school that are not currently in place?

Monica: I don't think so, because we have a lot of activities going on during lunch and stuff. I think no.

Interviewer: But you noted earlier that you don't participate in most of those. Is there something that you would participate in, if it was available?

Monica: I don't know. I'm so shy around other big groups of people.

Interviewer: Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why or why not?

Monica: I think it is, because it just depends on how you treat them, and how you want to get treated back. I think it's not difficult to make friends.

Interviewer: Outside of school, how do you spend your free time, and what activities do you like to do with your family?

Monica: We don't get much family time, because everyone works. When we do have time, we usually play a lot of football and volleyball. We're a big family, so sometimes we go away.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?

Monica: Yes, because I recently brought up my grades two letter grades.

Interviewer: You're most proud of raising your grades?

Monica: My grades, yes.

Interviewer: You're on track to graduate?

Monica: Yes.

Interviewer: What are your plans after school?

Monica: I'm planning to attend MJC for medical assistant.

Interviewer: Very good. Do you believe you were treated fairly by your teachers?

Monica: Yes, because they always give everyone the fair. They treat everyone fairly, they give kids the same amount of help that they give to other kids.

Interviewer: What types of extracurricular activities are you involved with?

Monica: When I was a freshman, I was just involved in, I think...Oh no, last year I was involved in Kids Helping Kids. I totally forgot. [laughs]

Interviewer: Who encouraged you to get involved with that?

Monica: I would just see the signs, and I've always wanted to do that. Then, I was able to attend all the meetings, so I was able to do that.

Interviewer: Do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have personal or school-related problems?

Monica: Yes.

Interviewer: What resources are available to you at school, if you're having personal problems, issues at home, or issues with other students?

Monica: The principal, the counselors, the teachers.

Interviewer: You feel you can talk to the adults?

Monica: Yeah.

Interviewer: The last three questions have to do more with language development. Do you feel you've mastered English as a second language?

Monica: I think I did.

Interviewer: What helped you?

Monica: I would actually get into reading a lot. People think I don't read, but sometimes, in my own time, I like to read bigger books.

Interviewer: Very good. When did you first learn English, and what was most helpful to you in learning English?

Monica: I started learning English when I was in kindergarten. The teacher would do the alphabet in English. I had an English class, so I basically had to learn in English.

Interviewer: When do you use Spanish, and when do you use English?

Monica: I use Spanish with my parents, because my parents don't really speak English that well. English, I use it at school, and sometimes I use Spanish here, too.

Interviewer: Do you speak Spanish with your friends at school?

Monica: Sometimes.

Interviewer: What about TV shows, do you normally watch them in Spanish?

Monica: I watch both.

Interviewer: Very good. Anything else that you'd like to share, or tell me about your experience at xxxxxxx High?

Monica: No.

Interviewer: Good to go, huh? Thank you, Monica. I appreciate it.

Monica: Thank you, as well. Have a nice day.

Interviewer: You too.

APPENDIX L

LTEL Student Interview 3 – “Nancy”

Interviewer: If you can go ahead and say your name for me?

Nancy: Nancy.

Interviewer: Nancy, I'm going to ask you a few questions. Again, just give me your best answer, and if you're not sure of the question, you can ask me to explain it. Do teachers at xxxxxxxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school?

Nancy: Yeah, because they're always behind us, to bring our grades up. They're always helping us out.

Interviewer: What do you like most about your school, and what do you like least?

Nancy: What I like most is that the teachers help you out, and there's no discrimination. What I like least is the facilities. They're not...

Interviewer: Not clean?

Nancy: Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you feel the staff at xxxxxxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Nancy: Yes, because some staff are also different, from different races. They're respectful.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student, and do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why or why not?

Nancy: A good student is someone that turns in work on time, and has good grades. I consider myself a good student, because I always turn in my work, and I do it on time.

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Nancy: They would see me doing the work that my teacher assigned to us, or reading chapters of a story.

Interviewer: If someone visited your math class, what would they see you doing, as a student?

Nancy: They would see me doing math homework, or the work that the teacher gives us.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances, and sports? Why or why not?

Nancy: I sometimes like to attend them. Sometimes I don't, because they don't sound interesting.

Interviewer: What kind of events have you attended in the past?

Nancy: The rallies.

Interviewer: During the day, or after school?

Nancy: After school.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings, and do you recall anything that students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Nancy: I was nervous, and I was scared, because I didn't know my classmates. It was a bigger school, and they would just help me out, and tell me where the class was.

Interviewer: Who helped you out, do you remember?

Nancy: The class supervisors.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school?

Nancy: Yeah, they always talk to me about school, about not trying to drop out, or going to DP.

Interviewer: DP is the continuation high school?

Nancy: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: Do they ever talk to you about your plans after high school?

Nancy: They sometimes talk about it, but sometimes they don't.

Interviewer: When they do talk about it, what do they normally talk about after you're done with high school?

Nancy: Where I might go to college, and what I'm going to be.

Interviewer: Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Nancy: When I need additional help with homework, I have a neighbor that helps me. We help each other. Sometimes, I stay after school with the teachers.

Interviewer: Is the neighbor a student here?

Nancy: Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Nancy: Sometimes I do, and sometimes I don't because sometimes I don't understand what they're saying, but when I do, I try to always say something.

Interviewer: Are there any extracurricular activities that you would like to see at your school, that are not currently in place?

Nancy: I'm not sure.

Interviewer: Extracurricular would be things like band, or sports, things that you do after school in addition to your classes. Is there anything like that that you'd like to see at your school that they don't currently have in place?

Nancy: Just a cooking class.

Interviewer: A cooking class?

Nancy: To teach the students how to cook, and bake, and everything.

Interviewer: Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why, or why not?

Nancy: I find it easy because, sometimes when they're alone, I just make friends with them.

Interviewer: Outside of school, how do you spend your free time, and what activities do you like to do with your family?

Nancy: I go to walk with my family. I sometimes hang out with my friends, and I sometimes go volunteer for this project that I'm doing.

Interviewer: What is that?

Nancy: It's for science.

Interviewer: Tell me a little bit more about that.

Nancy: I'm doing a flower arrangement, and I would go to Blue's Floral to volunteer to get my hours.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?

Nancy: I am proud of my academic accomplishments, because I have work hard to get where I am, and I do my best to get good grades.

Interviewer: What are you most proud of? What academic accomplishment are you most proud of?

Nancy: I'm most proud of math, because I would always get bad grades on my tests. Now I'm getting Cs on it.

Interviewer: Do you believe you were treated fairly by your teachers?

Nancy: Yes, because all the teachers treat every student the same. They don't make them feel bad.

Interviewer: What types of extracurricular activities are you involved with? Again, are there any extracurricular activities, things that you do at school, outside the school day?

Nancy: I just go to walk, and sometimes I come to meetings at school.

Interviewer: Go to walk?

Nancy: Yeah.

Interviewer: What is that?

Nancy: I just go walking around.

Interviewer: So nothing tied to a club, or anything here at xxxxxxxxxx High?

Nancy: No.

Interviewer: Do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have a personal or school-related problem?

Nancy: Yes, because I could just text them and I could talk about it, and they'd be able to help me, like I would help them out.

Interviewer: What resources are available to you at school if you are having personal problems, issues at home or issues with other students? Besides your friends.

Nancy: They have staff members and these counselors that we can go to when we need help or to talk to somebody.

Interviewer: The last three questions are more about how you learned English. Do you feel you have mastered English as a second language?

Nancy: Yes, even though I'm kind of bad at writing. I can speak it well.

Interviewer: What helped you master it, do you think?

Nancy: I remember in first grade, they would give us cards with names, and they would make us pronounce them, and do quizzes on them.

Interviewer: As far as the writing goes, what do you think is holding you back there?

Nancy: I'm not using all proper language. The first, second, and third person point of view, they confuse me.

Interviewer: That's not unusual. When did you first learn English, and what was most helpful to you in learning English, when you first learned it?

Nancy: I first learned in kindergarten through first grade. They would have patience, and they would give us words, and help us pronounce them.

Interviewer: When do you use Spanish, and when do you use English?

Nancy: I use Spanish at home because my mom and dad don't speak English, even though they understand some words. When I go to night school, I speak Spanish because they don't speak English, and I speak English at school, or at home when I talk to my sister.

Interviewer: How old is your sister?

Nancy: She's 13, and my brother is 22.

Interviewer: When you're talking to them, do you normally use English?

Nancy: Yeah, or sometimes Spanish.

Interviewer: When you watch television as a family, do you usually watch Spanish-language television, or English television?

Nancy: We mostly watch Spanish, because my mom, she doesn't understand the English much. Sometimes, when we're alone, we just watch English channels.

Interviewer: Is there anything else that you wanted to share with me about your experiences at xxxxxxxxxx High?

Nancy: No.

Interviewer: Thank you, Nancy. I appreciate it. You can go ahead and get back to class, OK?

Nancy: Yeah.

Interviewer: All right, thanks.

APPENDIX M

LTEL Student Interview 4 – “Sergio”

Interviewer: Go ahead and state your name for me again.

Sergio: My name is Sergio.

Interviewer: Sergio, we'll ask you a few questions, and then if anything's not clear feel free to ask. Do teachers at xxxxxxxxxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school?

Sergio: Yeah.

Interviewer: How so?

Sergio: They always tell you to keep your grades up and to try to always do your work, so you do well in the future.

Interviewer: What do you like most about your school, and what do you like the least?

Sergio: About school, I would say I would like to see my friends, of course. I'd say least of all about school is getting a lot of homework and sometimes you can get lazy. Other than that everything's cool.

Interviewer: Do you feel the staff at the xxxxxxxxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Sergio: Yeah.

Interviewer: How so, are they?

Sergio: Yeah, they're very respectful.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student?

Sergio: I would say always being responsible, respectful towards others.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why or why not?

Sergio: Yeah, I consider myself a good student. I don't get in trouble that much and I always try to do good in school.

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class what would they see you doing as a student?

Sergio: Usually following along, reading.

Interviewer: If someone visited your math class what would they see you doing as a student?

Sergio: I would usually take notes, and do working problems.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances, and sports events? Why or why not?

Sergio: Sports events I do, because I like supporting our school, and dances, not much. I'm not that type of person.

Interviewer: What about musical performances?

Sergio: Musical performances? Yeah.

Interviewer: Have you been to some of those?

Sergio: Yeah, I've been to some. They're pretty cool. I like them.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman what were your feelings, and do you recall anything students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Sergio: As a freshman I felt very nervous at first, but the teachers, everything seemed nice. I felt comfortable.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school. If so, what do they say?

Sergio: They usually tell me how my day goes and how classes went, like if my day was good or bad.

Interviewer: Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Sergio: I'll usually go to tutoring.

Interviewer: Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Sergio: If I feel strongly about something I would, but usually not.

Interviewer: You're more likely to participate in the discussion if it's something that you feel strongly about?

Sergio: Yeah.

Interviewer: Are there any extracurricular activities that you would like to see at your school that are currently not in place?

Sergio: I'm not sure. I think we have everything.

Interviewer: Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why or why not?

Sergio: I think it is easy. You just have to be social with people, be nice and kind, and everything will turn out good.

Interviewer: Outside of school how do you spend your free time, and what activities do you like to do with your family?

Sergio: Outside of school I really like to go and eat with my family. I will usually spend most of my time either doing my homework, or being out with my friends.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school, and if so, what are you most proud of? If not, why?

Sergio: Right now I'm most proud of my being reclassified as an English learner, because that gives me the advantage of being bilingual.

Interviewer: Very good. I'll skip that one.

[pause]

Interviewer: Oh, do you believe you were treated fairly by your teachers?

Sergio: Yes.

Interviewer: What types of extracurricular activities are you involved with?

Sergio: Wrestling. I wrestle for the school, but I don't do any other extras.

Interviewer: Who encouraged you to join wrestling?

Sergio: My friend from seventh grade, and also I was inspired by my cousin who was also a wrestler.

Interviewer: Do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have personal or school-related problems?

Sergio: Yeah.

Interviewer: What resources are available to you at school if you are having personal problems, issues at home, or issues with other students?

Sergio: Who would I turn to?

Interviewer: Yes, what resources are available? It could be adults. It could be...

Sergio: Oh, it would be my...Miss Carveli, the case manager, I guess. I think her, because I'm closest to her, like the most closest adult.

Interviewer: Do you feel that you have mastered English as a second language?

Sergio: I feel that I still have a lot to learn, but I think I have.

Interviewer: What helped you?

Sergio: I think doing essays and reading more advanced books.

Interviewer: Are you in college prep classes?

Sergio: Yeah.

Interviewer: When did you learn English, and what was most helpful to you in learning English? When did you first learn English?

Sergio: I think I first learned English when I was in...I remember in kindergarten I still wasn't able to understand the students, my teacher and my classmates. I think around first and second grade I started speaking it.

Interviewer: What was the most helpful for you in learning English?

Sergio: I think talking to my classmates, because I don't talk that much with my teachers.

Interviewer: When do you use Spanish, and when do you use English?

Sergio: The majority of the time I'll use my Spanish at home with my family, or sometimes with my bilingual friends.

Interviewer: When do you use English mostly?

Sergio: At school, I would say.

Interviewer: At school. If you're at home watching TV do you normally watch Spanish language or English language?

Sergio: I'd rather watch English.

Interviewer: You watch mostly English?

Sergio: Yeah.

Interviewer: Is there anything else that you want to share, Sergio, about your experience at xxxxxxxxxxxx High?

Sergio: No.

Interviewer: No? You're good?

Sergio: Yeah.

Interviewer: Thank you very much for participating. I appreciate it.

APPENDIX N

LTEL Student Interview 5 – “Veronica”

Interviewer: If you could go ahead and state your name again?

Veronica: Veronica.

Interviewer: OK, Veronica. First question I have is, do teachers at xxxxxxxxxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school?

Veronica: Actually, they do encourage me. It depends on what teachers, because since I was younger, they helped me a lot to get all my credits, and all my classes together.

Interviewer: How, specifically do they encourage you? Do they talk to you?

Veronica: They talk to me, and they help me out. They talk to me, saying what's the best for me, and stuff like that.

Interviewer: What do you like most about your school, and what do you like least?

Veronica: What I like most is that they help me be more independent by myself. What I don't really like is...there's nothing that I don't really like. [laughs] I'm just trying to graduate. That's it, pretty much.

Interviewer: Do you feel that the staff at xxxxxxxxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Veronica: Yeah, they're respectful. They haven't disrespected me, I haven't seen any disrespect between races or whatever.

Interviewer: You haven't seen anything that bothered you?

Veronica: No.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student, and do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why or why not?

Veronica: I would say I'm in the middle. [laughs] I say a good student should be in school, doing all their work, never failing anything, being respectful and everything, and I'm like in the middle, so I'd just say middle. [laughs]

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class what would they see you doing, as a student?

Veronica: Reading a book, that's pretty much what we do, and doing our work, asking questions, and stuff like that.

Interviewer: I'm sorry, the second part is kind of the same question, but if someone visited your math class, what would they see you doing, as a student?

Veronica: Also doing my work, and learning how to graph stuff, using calculators, how to use calculators, stuff like that.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances, and sports events? Why, or why not?

Veronica: Not really. I'd rather just be home, because it didn't really catch my attention, honestly.

Interviewer: Nothing's caught your attention?

Veronica: No.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings, and do you recall anything students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Veronica: I've finished with it. The only thing I wanted to say, when I come to graduation, that they made me feel like I was able to graduate, or finish any of my classes.

Interviewer: Was there anything that you remember that the students or the staff here did to make you feel welcomed when you came in as a freshman?

Veronica: There was a ceremony for freshmen.

Interviewer: The orientation?

Veronica: The orientation, yeah. [laughs]

Interviewer: You liked that?

Veronica: Yeah.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school? If so, what do they say?

Veronica: It's an everyday thing, they talk about. They say that, "Nobody's going to take you nowhere. It's all on you. If you want to get far in life, if you want to make your own way, you have to go to school, graduate, go to college and everything."

Interviewer: Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Veronica: To my brothers. My two older brothers have graduated already. If I need any help, I would just call them or something, to help me out.

Interviewer: I'm sorry, I skipped a question. Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why, or why not?

Veronica: It depends on what class it is. I'm more into talking Spanish, I'm more talking in Spanish. I would really like Spanish classes for talking out stuff. When it comes to – my accent is strong in Spanish, so it's kind of hard. Maybe, it depends on the class.

Interviewer: It depends on the class? Are there any extracurricular activities you would like to see at your school, that are not currently in place?

Veronica: No, everything's fine. It's probably because I'm not involved in them, so it's pretty much, whatever. It's fine, yeah.

Interviewer: Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why, or why not?

Veronica: Yeah. It all depends on you, if you want to smile and talk to other people. It all depends on you.

Interviewer: Outside of school, how do you spend your free time, and what activities do you like to do with your family?

Veronica: I usually help my mom out at the house, to clean and stuff, or I go to the gym. With my family we go out to eat, and stuff like that.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?

Veronica: I'm proud, because of the fact that I was going back some credits, behind really, and I came back to trying to get all my credits back, and not being worried about it in my senior year. I just want to get everything together, and get far in life. That's pretty much what I want to do.

Interviewer: Are you caught up on your credits?

Veronica: I'm doing it right now, for summer school, so I won't worry about my senior year. I'll just focus on my projects, and stuff like that.

Interviewer: After summer school, you'll be caught up on your credits?

Veronica: Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you believe you were treated fairly by your teachers?

Veronica: Yeah. I don't really talk in class, so I think I was treated fairly.

Interviewer: What types of extracurricular activities were you involved with?

Veronica: Outside school or in school?

Interviewer: A club, or sports, or anything at school?

Veronica: Nothing.

Interviewer: Are you involved with some activities outside of school?

Veronica: No. [laughs]

Interviewer: Do you have friends at school that you can turn to, if you have some personal or school-related problems?

Veronica: Yes, I do. Multiple...three, yeah. [laughs]

Interviewer: Three? What resources are available to you at school if you're having personal problems, issues at home, or issues with other students?

Veronica: That one program, what is it called when you go and they talk to you? I forgot. You go to this little room, and they talk to you. I forget what it was called.

Interviewer: You're talking about your counselor?

Veronica: Yeah, they help you out, and stuff like that. You can talk to them.

Interviewer: Who is your counselor?

Veronica: I forgot. I only went once, so that's it, when I saw him.

Interviewer: I'm sorry, I just asked that question. These next three have to do with language, and acquiring language. Do you feel you have mastered English as a second language?

Veronica: Yeah.

Interviewer: What helped you master English?

Veronica: My teachers, pretty much, because I came to school not knowing Spanish, so learning how to learn in school. My teachers taught me a lot.

Interviewer: A similar question, but when did you first learn English, and what was most helpful to you when first learning English?

Veronica: I learned in elementary. What helped me more were the vocabularies, they'd give us flashcards, and we would practice every day.

Interviewer: When do you use Spanish, and when do you use English?

Veronica: I use Spanish at home, because my parents are Spanish speakers, and also my family are Spanish speakers. My English, I usually it at school or when I'm outside with my friends. My mother speaks Spanish and English, and mixes it around, is what we do. [laughs]

Interviewer: What language are most of the television programs you watch in, English or Spanish?

Veronica: Spanish.

Interviewer: Spanish?

Veronica: Yeah.

Interviewer: OK, very good. Lastly, is there anything else that you wanted to tell me or share with me about your experience at xxxxxxxxxx High, that you think I would like to know, or would be helpful?

Veronica: That's pretty much it. It's a good school. It's not a bad school. It all depends on the students, whether they want to do it or not. A teacher isn't there to force them, a teacher just gets paid to make us to learn, teach us, and talk to us if we want to listen to them.

Interviewer: Very good.

APPENDIX O

LTEL Student Interview 6 – “Yesenia”

Interviewer: OK, go ahead and say your full name for me.

Yesenia: My name is Yesenia.

Interviewer: OK, Yesenia. The first question is, do teachers at xxxxxxxxxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school?

Yesenia: Yeah, I think some of them encourage you to do well in school. They motivate you.

Interviewer: How specifically is that encouragement provided, or that motivation?

Yesenia: What do you mean?

Interviewer: What are some of the things that they do to encourage you?

Yesenia: They try and tell you to do your homework, or turn it in on time so that you can get better grades.

Interviewer: What do you like most about your school, and what do you like least?

Yesenia: I like that sometimes we do activities. There's some times that we just do fun stuff, I guess. I don't know, sometimes I don't like it because they have rallies during school, because sometimes we don't all get to see them.

Interviewer: You don't get to see the rallies all the time?

Yesenia: Yeah, because we're busy at school, or something like that.

Interviewer: Do you feel the staff at xxxxxxxxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Yesenia: Yes, I feel like they are, because a lot of Hispanics work here at the school.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student, and do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why, or why not?

Yesenia: I feel that being a good student is paying attention, being on time, not getting in trouble. For me, I've never really been in trouble yet at school, and I'm always on time.

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Yesenia: It depends on the class, I think. In some places, I'll just do work.

Interviewer: What about your English class?

Yesenia: Oh, doing my work, paying attention to the teacher, writing notes.

Interviewer: Writing notes?

Yesenia: Yeah.

Interviewer: If someone visited your math class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Yesenia: I really don't have math class right now, but if I did, I most likely would be paying attention.

Interviewer: When you took a math class previously, if I had walked in on a typical day, what kind of things would you be doing?

Yesenia: Taking notes. We always would take notes on the math.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events, such as dances, music performances and sports events? Why, or why not?

Yesenia: I really don't like attending school activities that much, because I just like being at home. I don't like going out that much.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings? Do you recall anything that students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Yesenia: When I first got here, my freshman year, it was kind of scary. I felt like I would never finish. I thought these things take a long time, but now I'm here. I really didn't pay attention that much in my freshman year, so I don't know if they helped me or not.

Interviewer: That's fine. Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school? If so, what do they say?

Yesenia: They motivate me to do better, and they support me in anything that I want to do.

Interviewer: Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Yesenia: I'll go to the teacher, because my parents don't really know about the school stuff. I'll ask the teachers.

Interviewer: Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Yesenia: I really don't, because I really don't like talking in front of other students. I get really nervous, and I don't like speaking what I have on my mind.

Interviewer: Are there any extracurricular activities that you would like to see at your school, that are not currently in place?

Yesenia: I wish they still had the cooking classes, or the baking classes, the ones that they used to have.

Interviewer: Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why, or why not?

Yesenia: I really don't like making friends. I just like being with one or two people.

Interviewer: Friends that you already have?

Yesenia: Yeah.

Interviewer: Outside of school, how do you spend your free time, and what activities do you like to do with your family?

Yesenia: I'm always at home, so I like to read, or I like to draw. Sometimes we go walking, and we'll be in the back yard the watering plants, or stuff like that.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?

Yesenia: Somewhat, because before, I didn't care much about school. But now, this year I'm trying hard.

Interviewer: Are you on track to graduate?

Yesenia: Yeah.

Interviewer: Good. What academic accomplishment are you most proud of?

Yesenia: Actually having higher than a 3.0 this year.

Interviewer: Very good. Do you believe you are treated fairly by your teachers?

Yesenia: Yeah, I feel like I am. I'm a good student and I don't misbehave, so I get treated good.

Interviewer: What types of extracurricular activities are you involved with?

Yesenia: Not really, I have a medical thing.

Interviewer: Do you have friends at school you can turn to if you have personal or school-related problems?

Yesenia: Yeah, I have a couple of friends I can talk to outside of school.

Interviewer: Do you guys talk if you're having problems?

Yesenia: Yeah. She listens to me.

Interviewer: What resources are available for you at school, if you're having personal problems, issues at home, or issues with other students?

Yesenia: We have counseling and other stuff, but I usually don't like talking to other people.

Interviewer: But you know that those resources are there?

Yesenia: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: The next three questions have to do with acquiring language. Do you feel you've mastered English as a second language?

Yesenia: Somewhat, because I still struggle. Sometimes I don't know the right words to use. I sometimes don't understand in class the words that they talk about. The big words, I have to ask, like what did that mean?

Interviewer: Academic words in class give you more trouble than if you're talking to friends in English?

Yesenia: Yeah.

Interviewer: What do you think is holding you back in terms of mastering the academic language?

Yesenia: I feel like I need to understand the words, or look through my dictionary or something so I can know what, because they said it would really be a small percent that might be difficult.

Interviewer: Sure. When do you remember first learning English, and what was most helpful to you in learning English at that time?

Yesenia: I started learning English when I was in junior high, by myself. I basically started with the other kids.

Interviewer: The last question, when do you use Spanish, and when do you use English?

Yesenia: I use Spanish all the time at my house. English, I also use it when I talk to my sister in English. I talk to her in English.

Interviewer: You talk to your little sister in English at home?

Yesenia: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: Who do you talk to in Spanish?

Yesenia: My parents.

Interviewer: Your parents?

Yesenia: They understand English, but I talk to them in Spanish.

Interviewer: If you're watching television, do you normally watch Spanish language television, or English language?

Yesenia: English.

Interviewer: English? OK. Finally, is there anything that you would like to share with me about your experiences at xxxxxxxxxx High, or anything that you'd like me to know?

Yesenia: I really haven't been doing anything, so I really don't have that much experience.

Interviewer: OK, very good. That's it.

APPENDIX P

LTEL Student Interview 7 – “Lorenzo”

Interviewer: Go ahead and state your name again for me.

Lorenzo: My name is Lorenzo.

Interviewer: Lorenzo, the first question I have is, do teachers at xxxxxxxxxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school?

Lorenzo: Yeah.

Interviewer: They do?

Lorenzo: They do.

Interviewer: How do they provide that encouragement?

Lorenzo: Like if this is not working, they do and tell us and tell us and tell us. Once, if you don't listen, they send us to classes to show the rest of us, that'll be you.

Interviewer: What do you like most about your school and what do you like least?

Lorenzo: I like the way the teachers are. I don't like the prep.

Interviewer: The senior prep project?

Lorenzo: I don't like the prep.

Interviewer: Have you completed yours?

Lorenzo: Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you pass?

Lorenzo: Yeah. But still, the nerves.

Interviewer: [laughs] It made you nervous. Do you feel the staff at xxxxxxxxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Lorenzo: Yeah, I think that they are.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student, and do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why or why not?

Lorenzo: I'd say a good student is a student that does his work, and is quiet while others are talking.

Interviewer: Quiet...

Lorenzo: While others are talking.

Interviewer: Oh, while others are talking, OK. Do you consider yourself to be a good student?

Lorenzo: I'd say I'm a good student. I do most of my work. I'm pretty quiet when others are talking.

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Lorenzo: They'd see me doing my work, or reading.

Interviewer: What type of work would you be doing?

Lorenzo: The work that was assigned.

Interviewer: If someone visited your math class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Lorenzo: The same. I do math problems.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances and sports events? Why or why not?

Lorenzo: I go to the sports events because I'm interested in sports, but I don't go to the dances. I don't like the dance.

Interviewer: Which sport events do you normally attend?

Lorenzo: Almost all the home events.

Interviewer: Football?

Lorenzo: Football, volleyball. I don't do the baseball, but, basketball.

Interviewer: Basketball, great. When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings, and do you recall anything that students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Lorenzo: I felt nervous. Then when I walked into my first class as a freshman they said, "Welcome to the best years of your life."

Interviewer: [laughs] Did that make you feel better?

Lorenzo: Yeah.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members talk to you about the school? If so, what do they say?

Lorenzo: My mom's the one that tells me all this stuff. She's checking my grades, checking my attendance, helping me with my homework if I need to, to me and my brothers.

Interviewer: And your brothers, OK. Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Lorenzo: From the class, I go to the teacher but if I'm at home, I go to my mom.

Interviewer: Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Lorenzo: I don't really like to discuss in class. I don't like talking.

Interviewer: You don't like talking? Are there any extra-curricular activities you would like to see at your school that are not currently in place?

Lorenzo: I don't think so, not that I could think of.

Interviewer: Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why or why not?

Lorenzo: Yeah, I think it's pretty easy. If you just have one thing in common, then that'll get the track rolling.

Interviewer: Outside of school, how do you spend your free time, and what activities do you like to do with your family?

Lorenzo: At home I watch TV and do my homework. The activities that me and my family do, we go to the ranch. We feed the animals, and stuff like that.

Interviewer: Is that your ranch or a family member's?

Lorenzo: A family ranch.

Interviewer: What kind of animals do you have there?

Lorenzo: Cows, horses, goats.

Interviewer: You enjoy going there and feeding the animals? Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?

Lorenzo: Some of them.

Interviewer: Some of them? What is one that you're most proud of?

Lorenzo: I'm most proud of passing geometry. I learned the whole year, and I managed to pass with a C+.

Interviewer: Very good. Do you believe that you were treated fairly by your teachers?

Lorenzo: Yeah, I believe so, yeah.

Interviewer: What types of extra-curricular activities are you involved with?

Lorenzo: I'm in the MASA club.

Interviewer: In the MASA club. Who encouraged you to join the MASA club?

Lorenzo: My mom was in it when she was in high school, so I joined.

Interviewer: Are there any other extra-curriculars that you're involved with?

Lorenzo: No, that's the only one.

Interviewer: Do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have personal or school-related problems?

Lorenzo: Yeah.

Interviewer: What resources are available to you at school if you're having personal problems, issues at home, or issues with other students?

Lorenzo: I have my counselor and I have my teachers -- the ones that I feel comfortable with.

Interviewer: The ones that you feel comfortable talking to.

Lorenzo: Yes.

Interviewer: The last questions are about acquiring English. Do you feel you've mastered English as a second language?

Lorenzo: Yeah.

Interviewer: What do you think helped you most in acquiring English as a second language?

Lorenzo: English, taking it every year and the test that they always make you take. The CELDT, I think it is.

Interviewer: The CELDT. Did you practice for the CELDT test?

Lorenzo: No, just all the stuff they did, not right now that I'm older but when I was younger. That really helped.

Interviewer: When did you first learn English, and what was most helpful to you in learning English?

Lorenzo: I was raised speaking English, but I learned both at the same time.

Interviewer: When do you use Spanish, and when do you use English?

Lorenzo: At home, I speak to my grandmother and my father because he only talks Spanish. But my mom, she was born here, she talks English. Sometimes she makes me talk Spanish to her. Mostly, I don't speak Spanish at school, I speak English.

Interviewer: What about television programs? Do you usually watch television programs that are in English or in Spanish?

Lorenzo: Pure English. I hate Spanish TV.

Interviewer: You don't like the Spanish ones?

Lorenzo: Like, when I go to Mexico, I can't stand it.

Interviewer: [laughs] Finally, is there anything that you'd like to tell me about your experiences at xxxxxxxxxxx High, or things that you think I should know?

Lorenzo: My experience at xxxxxxxxxxx High was pretty good.

Interviewer: You're a senior, right?

Lorenzo: Yeah.

Interviewer: Very good. Let me switch this off here.

APPENDIX Q

LTEL Student Interview 8– “Marcos”

Interviewer: Go ahead and state your name for me, again.

Marcos: xxxxxxxx.

Interviewer: And first name is Marcos, right?

Marcos: Right.

Interviewer: So Marcos, do teachers at xxxxxxxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school?

Marcos: Yes.

Interviewer: How do they provide that encouragement?

Marcos: I don't know. I just don't pay attention to it but they do.

Interviewer: Have they said anything to you individually to encourage you?

Marcos: No. Just my class as a whole.

Interviewer: What do you like most about your school and what do you like least?

Marcos: I would say the school food, is what I don't like.

Interviewer: I'm sorry. What's the part you don't like?

Marcos: What I don't like is the school food.

Interviewer: Oh the food. What do you like most?

Marcos: I don't know. Nothing special.

Interviewer: Do you feel that the staff at xxxxxxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Marcos: Yeah.

Interviewer: You've never had any issues of teachers being what kids would say is disrespectful?

Marcos: Some kids could say that they're being rude to them, but I don't know. I never had to deal with that.

Interviewer: You've never experienced it? OK. What do you believe are characteristics of a good student? What are the things good students do in your opinion?

Marcos: They don't act disrespectful.

Interviewer: They're respectful. Do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why or why not?

Marcos: I guess so. I don't talk a lot in class.

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Marcos: Probably just reading out of a book or completing some [inaudible 02:49] .

Interviewer: Similar question. If someone visited your math class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Marcos: Working on a computer on spreadsheets.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances and sports events? Why or why not?

Marcos: I don't go to any school events because I'm just not interested.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings? And do you recall anything that students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Marcos: I guess. Some of the teachers in freshman year were really upbeat. The thoughts I had is that's four years of...K-12 education can be the most important.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school, and if so, what do they say?

Marcos: That you have to attend [inaudible 04:09] and go to college.

Interviewer: Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Marcos: I usually ask my teachers. I have the option to go to the testing center. I don't usually go there. I don't see it as necessary.

Interviewer: What is the name of it again? I'm sorry.

Marcos: The testing center.

Interviewer: Oh, the testing center. Is that through Modesto Junior College, the Gateway Trio program? Or is that something else?

Marcos: I don't know.

Interviewer: Is it here at xxxxxxxxxxx High School?

Marcos: Yeah.

Interviewer: Next question. Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Marcos: Only in the ones I'm interested in. There's some subjects that come up that I don't have an opinion towards. I can't participate in the discussion.

Interviewer: What are the ones you usually participate in? What interests you? Certain classes or...?

Marcos: I don't know.

Interviewer: Do you remember a discussion that you've been involved in recently and what the topic was?

Marcos: I guess one of them in English class, we were discussing about the death penalty.

Interviewer: That was a topic that interested you, and you wanted to express an opinion on?

Marcos: Yeah.

Interviewer: Are there any extra-curricular activities you would like to see at your school that are not currently in place?

Marcos: Probably home ec and Japanese.

Interviewer: Japanese language, or Japanese culture?

Marcos: Japanese language.

Interviewer: Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why or why not?

Marcos: Not really, but I'm an introvert.

Interviewer: Outside of school, how do you spend your free time, and what activities do you like to do with your family?

Marcos: With my family, we usually go out of town, to go shopping, probably Augustus or some stores like Guitar Center, because sometimes I need some strings for my guitars. I like to play guitar at home.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?

Marcos: I guess so. I'm grateful for it. Just getting what I can do. In the past, I wasn't really that bright.

Interviewer: Is there one thing that you can point to that you're most proud of?

Marcos: Most proud of. Not getting sent to xxxxxxxxxxxx .

Interviewer: Not having to go to the continuation high school. Were you down credits at one point?

Marcos: Yeah.

Interviewer: And you've brought those up?

Marcos: Still working on it.

Interviewer: Are you attending summer school this year?

Marcos: I'm doing home study.

Interviewer: Home study. Very good. Do you believe you're treated fairly by your teachers?

Marcos: Yeah.

Interviewer: What types, if any, extra-curricular activities are you involved with? Any clubs or...?

Marcos: I rarely go to guitar club. That's the only club I would visit.

Interviewer: You're in guitar club but you don't attend regularly?

Marcos: Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have personal or school-related problems?

Marcos: Yeah, but I wouldn't usually bring up my problems with them. I don't want to infect other people with my negativity.

Interviewer: Do they ever talk to you about their problems?

Marcos: They just complain about teachers.

Interviewer: [laughs] What resources are available to you at school if you're having personal problems, issues at home or issues with other students?

Marcos: I don't know if they're still doing it this year, but last summer, I heard there was some...is it psychiatrist?

Interviewer: School psychologists.

Marcos: Yeah, there's one available on campus. I don't know if they're still doing that.

Interviewer: The last questions are about acquiring English as a second language. Do you feel you've mastered English as a second language? If so, what has helped you? If not, what do you think is holding you back?

Marcos: Yeah. I have gotten fluent in English. Since I haven't taken any Spanish classes in the last years, I lost Spanish.

Interviewer: You're losing your Spanish language?

Marcos: Yeah.

Interviewer: When did you first learn English, and what was most helpful to you in learning English at that time?

Marcos: I don't know. I've been immersed in the English language ever since...The first time was in school, which was xxxxxxxxxxxx.

Interviewer: Do you remember anything that was helpful to you in picking up English during elementary school or junior high?

Marcos: I don't know.

Interviewer: Last question. When do you use Spanish and when do you use English?

Marcos: I usually use Spanish at home and sometimes at stores. Some shops where there's people that mostly talk in Spanish.

Interviewer: When do you usually use English?

Marcos: At home. Just talking to my sister and my brother, and I use English mostly every day.

Interviewer: You use Spanish with your parents or grandparents?

Marcos: Yeah.

Interviewer: If you're watching TV at home, do you usually watch Spanish language television or English language TV shows?

Marcos: I don't watch TV, but when I do it's the news.

Interviewer: In English?

Marcos: Spanish.

Interviewer: Spanish news. Very good. Finally, is there anything else that you'd like to share with me about school or your experiences at xxxxxxxxxxxx High you think I should know?

Marcos: I guess, ever since they removed the grass or whatever here on the front, all of the...When there's wind, there's a bunch of dust that goes into the eyes. It's kind of annoying.

Interviewer: Really? The decomposed granite that they put in. So when it's windy it blows around. I didn't know that. You've experienced that?

Marcos: A lot of students have.

Interviewer: Thanks for sharing that. I'm going to let our maintenance department know.

APPENDIX R

RFEP Student Interview 1 – “Alexis”

Interviewer: We should be good to go. Go ahead and tell me your name one more time.

Alexis: Alexis.

Interviewer: Thanks, Alexis. First question, do teachers at xxxxxxxxxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school?

Alexis: Yes. All throughout my four years, I've actually had teachers who have...My freshman year and my junior year, I had “Ms. Munoz”. She's very upbeat and she really likes to have her students do things out of their comfort zone. That really helped me push myself to get out of that comfort zone. Also, sophomore year and senior year I've had “Ms. Brown”, who's also one of those teachers who pushes you out of that comfort zone.

Interviewer: What do you like most about your school and what do you like least?

Alexis: Most about my school, I'd have to say the school spirit that we do have. It is different than what other schools have. A lot of other schools do have more school spirit but I feel that the way we do it shows how we've known each other for so long because other schools are in a big city. You can tell that their school spirit is only dependent because they're doing it because it's school spirit.

For us, it's more supporting each other because we've known each other for years.

Interviewer: What do you like least about your school?

Alexis: What do I like least? I feel like the thing I like least is that it still feels like that middle school mentality where sometimes it's still that broken up different little cliques. Their barrier has become more invisible, I guess you could say, in the past years and especially as we grow but that barrier's still there.

Interviewer: Do you feel that the staff at xxxxxxxxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Alexis: Yes, I actually have never gotten a comment from a teacher and any other staff making my culture, my beliefs, any less than theirs.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student?

Alexis: The characteristics of a good student, I feel it's if you're determined enough to do the work that you're supposed to do. Per se, whatever level of expertise you have, it's that you do whatever you have in your power to get to that level. If I'm really good in math, I excel and I excel constantly. If you see that there's something that you don't understand then you look for those answers.

It's not just being stuck in your one position where you reach to a certain level and you don't want to go further. It's wanting to get higher than what you already have in a certain level.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why or why not?

Alexis: I feel like I am because I've always maintained -- not just grade wise -- this mentality that I have to be true to myself. I can't let myself derail from what I already believe and what I think is for me. I use my parents a lot for support to make sure that I'm not completely going off the tracks or something like that.

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Alexis: In English class? We would either be presenting or writing notes about other people's presenting. We read a lot because it's AP English Literature. We read a lot and then once we're done reading we have a big presentation over the religious background on the book because certain types of literature, especially British literature, is very highly influenced by their religion that they follow.

We're constantly going over that, although it is, in many times it's the same but it's still going over it. We constantly go over it to show the connections between time period and religion in there.

Interviewer: If someone visited your math class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Alexis: I didn't take a math class this year but in my other math classes you would have probably, let's see, last year, last year was Pre-Cal. We'd always be asking questions. [laughs] You would see us constantly asking questions.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances, and sports events? Why or why not?

Alexis: Dances I don't go to that often. I don't know. I don't like going to dances all that often but musical performances, yes. I'm in the band, so I'm there. I actually don't just go because I have to go. I actually like to go and watch the choir and listen to the... Why is the name escaping me?

Interviewer: The orchestra?

Alexis: The orchestra and then we have the other one, the winter percussion. We have winter percussion. I enjoy watching them and listening to that. Then, I feel that even if I wasn't in band and forced to go, I would still go because this year I'm not technically enrolled in the class but I still participate with them. I see that push for me in that. What was the other one you had asked?

Interviewer: Sports.

Alexis: Sports, yes. I'm on the swim team. I enjoy that very much. I feel like a lot of other sports support us so I feel like it's that courtesy. Also, I like going to watch them and feel that support.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings? Do you recall anything that students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Alexis: Coming in as a freshman, I saw it as coming in to a next school. I saw it as going to the next grade. I was never scared of them saying, for Fridays, trashcan the freshman.

Interviewer: [laughs]

Alexis: I was never scared of that or anything. One thing was, yes, I am the underclassman and I am looked down upon. Probably the biggest change for me was in the Spanish classes. We were so mixed together where people who were seniors in that class or people who were juniors in that class.

Seeing those upperclassmen intimidating me, in a way, but then the biggest way that I saw that push to not have me be scared of that was probably Miss Munoz constantly asking questions of every single person to show how much each person knew and how much we had to give to each other.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school?

Alexis: My parents, they always emphasize it to be get your education because my parents did come from Mexico. My mom was not given the chance after graduating high school. Her father did not allow her to go to college. My father, he went to about halfway through his junior year and he had to drop out because his father passed.

They constantly push that education on me and telling me, "Do what you want. Don't let anything stop you. We're not going to stop you so you do what you want."

That's constantly been in the back of my mind. Then seeing, I have older cousins from my mom's side of the family, one of them's a teacher and one of them's a counselor. They have the youngest brother who didn't go to college and was in jail. Unfortunately, he was in jail. Seeing the comparison between them three because they were basically like my older siblings all throughout my life.

I see the comparison between what they all did and how specific things drive you to different things, like my cousin David, unfortunately, went to jail. Now he looks back on it and says, "I don't know why I didn't focus on my education." I see that as a reflection for me to see I can't let myself go down just because of a spur of the moments because it effects the rest of my life.

Interviewer: One other follow up on that. Do your parents talk to you about what you're going to do after high school?

Alexis: I've always had the mentality of what I want to do. I want to be a pediatrician, so they've always had that. They occasionally ask, "Do you still want to do that? Do you still

want to do that?" They know. I've explained my plan to them from going to, it doesn't matter what school I go to for my undergrad. I really don't mind if I go to Stanislaus or if I end up going to a private college.

It doesn't matter to me because either way I'm getting my education. For pediatrics, you have to go to your undergrad then your medical school.

I've told them my plan originally was Stanislaus, then medical school, hopefully San Francisco, if they accept, but it shifts. Yes, it shifts. They ask occasionally to see if it's shifted anymore in the past few weeks. [laughs]

Interviewer: So, your plan, you're going to Stanislaus after school?

Alexis: That's actually changed. At the beginning of senior year I thought Stanislaus and then medical school. It actually just shifted because my cousins, that I told you, the one that's a counselor actually brought up to me because she was looking through my transcripts and said, "Why don't you apply to the private colleges?"

She convinced me to do it. She even offered to pay for them. I told her, "It's not the issue of money it's just I never thought of it." I ended up applying to Santa Clara, Stanford, Saint Mary's, and USF. USF has me waitlisted. Saint Mary's accepted me. Saint Mary's is offering me 14,000 right off. It covers at least books, so that's the good thing for that.

Interviewer: Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Alexis: I usually go to the teacher and, if not, probably my cousins because I always use them a lot as a resource, especially even when I was younger and my parents couldn't help me. I don't know. I always knew how my parents were, how they worked so hard. I don't want to burden them more with it so I always just asked my cousins. [laughs]

Interviewer: Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Alexis: Yes. I enjoy debates very much. It's probably because I like to put my ideas out there. I'm not scared to put my perspective out there. A lot of people say, "I don't know what they're going to say or what they're going to think." I don't fear from that. I feel like that's probably why I enjoy debate because I don't fear my own opinion and it being contradicted by others.

Interviewer: Are there any extracurricular activities you'd like to see at your school that are not currently in place?

Alexis: Extracurricular, probably water polo. Water polo's something. I see other schools who have water polo, like xxxxxxx High, they have water polo, and I see the difference between how their competitive swimmers are because a lot of them do do water polo. It benefits them a lot. It brings them closer together as a family because they have the full year together instead of just that one semester.

Interviewer: Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why or why not?

Alexis: I actually do find it pretty easy. I feel it's that I'm open to different opinions. If a person has a different opinion than me I see that as the idea that they're letting me gain knowledge on something that I don't know on. It allows me to see other people's perspectives because you're not always going to agree with the person and you encounter those differences in life.

Interviewer: Outside of school, how do you spend your free time and what activities do you like to do with your family?

Alexis: Outside of school? During the school year it's probably constantly doing homework because I do have two AP classes, so it's constantly that. Getting my homework done, getting this done, swim practice, and balancing that out with work. Then when summer comes around we don't...my family and me we don't go out that much.

It's more if we have that free time we stay home or maybe we go out and get ice cream because we don't have the resources to do things like that. It's the idea of being together is what we do when we do have time together.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?

Alexis: Yes. I very much am because, like I said, I see that comparison with my older cousin. I think, "If I would have veered in anyway, where would I be at? Would I be failing all my classes or have something else happen?" I'm so proud of myself to see that I've been able to excel in the way that I have in that seeing that my parents do come from a very difficult background.

Seeing that I've been able to, in a way, contradict that ideology that Mexicans aren't always able to do this and do that. I see myself and I compare sometimes that there are people who aren't Mexican and still find themselves in the same situation. I've been able to contradict that completely.

Interviewer: What accomplishment are you most proud of?

Alexis: Biggest accomplishment that I'm proud of. I have no idea, honestly. I group it together because it's just...they all, how do I say? They all go together to help me as a person and create who I am so I never see one as bigger than the other.

Interviewer: You talked a little bit about this but if you can give me the...wait, I'm skipping the wrong question.

Alexis: [laughs]

Interviewer: The next question is do you believe that you're treated fairly by your teachers?

Alexis: Yes and, like I said, I've never seen that distinction between me because of race, because of that I speak Spanish, or anything like that. I've never seen that discrimination amongst teachers at all.

Interviewer: This is the one. I know you've mentioned some things already, but what types of extracurricular activities are you involved with?

Alexis: The extracurriculars that I do have is Ambassadors and then MASA club, swim, I think band counts as another extracurricular?

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Alexis: Band. I don't believe Spanish classes do because those are actually [inaudible 15:27] .

Interviewer: Right. Are you in any clubs?

Alexis: Yeah, the clubs that I do do are Ambassadors and MASA, then sports is swim, and then band.

Interviewer: Who encouraged you to join these programs?

Alexis: Band was an interest of my own. It might have been because my uncle was a trombone player when he was younger. I always knew that but he never really...Impulse, I guess you could say. I know [inaudible 15:55] in the back of my head. When we were in elementary school, we did have that program where we only used the tiny recorders.

I remember doing that. I remember thinking, "Is this what my uncle used to do?" [laughs]

That was where that came from. As in clubs wise, I think it was more of seeing there was an opportunity for me to meet new people. Especially with MASA club because in middle school I was bullied, because of the way I dressed because we didn't have the resources to give me that specific clothing that everybody else had or anything. I was made fun of by students.

Seeing the MASA club as the Mexican American Student Association, I saw that as I'm going to be around people that are from that same background as me. I saw that as an opportunity but I was never reached out, nobody ever reached out to me to join. I went out of my own free will, in a way.

Interviewer: Do you feel you've mastered English as a second language?

Alexis: I feel like I have. Looking back at elementary school where I was, because my parents don't speak English. Going into kindergarten I remember, "How am I going to talk to everyone?" [laughs] I remember looking at everybody talking like, "What do I say?" [laughs]

Looking at it now where I can walk into a room and even if I don't know a person, I can approach them and help them. I feel like that helps me in the biggest way. Then seeing

that ever since I was a young girl, since my parents don't speak English, I would have to translate. That would force me to gain a different vocabulary than a regular English speaker.

I feel like that's probably the biggest way that I've mastered English.

Interviewer: What helped you most in mastering English, do you think?

Alexis: What helped me most is probably the way teachers, the teachers knew. The teachers knew that I was not recertified from a Spanish speaker into English speaker. The teachers really, in elementary school a lot because I got recertified in elementary school, they really focused on trying to get me to open that up and being able to master all those little, small techniques.

Also, the translating constantly. Now I see it at work. There's people who don't speak Spanish and they're like, "Wait, we need somebody to translate. Somebody go find Alexis." It's like the ideology where you look back.

Interviewer: Where do you work?

Alexis: I work for the city. It depends which program they shift me to. During the summer, it's life guarding. Right now, I'm working for a fitness program for the city.

Interviewer: Where did you first learn English? What was most helpful then in learning English?

Alexis: Learning English it started in kindergarten because my parents don't speak English at home. Then occasionally whenever I saw my cousins. Once I started kindergarten my cousins, then it's when they began to speak English to me but they always spoke Spanish around me out of respect to my parents. Once they knew I was in school they were like, "Now we can do this." [laughs]

Interviewer: When do you normally use Spanish and when do you normally use English?

Alexis: English at school a lot because the majority of my friends don't speak Spanish. The curious thing is that a lot of them they haven't taken Spanish classes or they did and now they don't. Then they start asking, "How do you say this? How do you say that?" That's where it intertwines with the school setting. At home, it's almost always Spanish because my parents don't speak English.

In the work setting, it's a mixture of it.

Interviewer: When you're at home do you watch Spanish language television?

Alexis: Yeah, that's a normal day-to-day. [laughs]

Interviewer: Anything else that you'd like to share?

Alexis: No, I don't think so. Is there anything else that you think could help you?

Interviewer: No, I was just trying to get different perspectives on school connectedness so I'm going to talk to eight different students and see what we can find out.

Alexis: That's good then. Thank you .

Interviewer: I appreciate it.

Alexis: You're welcome.

Interviewer: Thanks again.

Alexis: Have a nice day.

Interviewer: You too.

APPENDIX S

RFEP Student Interview 2 – “Arturo”

Interviewer: OK, if you can go ahead and tell me your name again.

Arturo: My name is Arturo, but everybody calls me Art for short.

Interviewer: Art, do teachers at xxxxxxxxxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school?

Arturo: Yes, of course. My teacher right now, “Mr. Collin”, that I’m with, he encourages everybody to do well.

Interviewer: Mr.?

Arturo: Mr. Collin.

Interviewer: Oh, OK.

Arturo: He’s a sub. He’s a long-term sub, but he loves teaching. I like that about him.

Interviewer: What class is that?

Arturo: It’s chemistry right now.

Interviewer: Specifically, how is that encouragement provided by him and others?

Arturo: He says stuff, like words of encouragement. He brings stuff about life into it. He says, "You want to know why we always said why when we were kids? It's because we don't know much. We want to learn deeply. So let's learn deeply. That's why we ask why."

Interviewer: What do you like most about your school, and what do you like least?

Arturo: It’s a hard question. The people are nice sometimes. There are some people who are not nice, but that’s just life. There’s a few good teachers, a few bad teachers. It’s really just mixed.

Interviewer: Do you feel that the staff at xxxxxxxxxxxx High School is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Arturo: Oh, yeah. They don’t say anything like, "Oh, you speak Spanish. You should know this." They’re pretty respectful. It’s not anything discriminate.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student? [coughs] Excuse me. Do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why or why not?

Arturo: I consider myself an average student because I never got an academic block. I've gotten 3.0's but I've never got that 3.5. I always thought that if I got that 3.5 like that I'd consider myself smart. I got accepted to CSU Stanislaus, and CSU Sac, but I don't feel smart, to be honest.

Interviewer: What do you think...?

Arturo: Makes a good student?

Interviewer: Yeah. What would you have to do differently to get those higher grades?

Arturo: I guess stop hanging out with friends, because I hang out with my friends a lot. I like to go do sports. I like to train for wrestling. Just focus a lot more time on studies and study, do your sports, and hang out with friends. Just focus a lot on studies to get that.

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Arturo: Conversing with a teacher, because he is always talking about things. He's like, "What's your guys' point of view?" I like to talk. I like to say my point of view. Some people like to hear. Some people don't.

Interviewer: If someone visited your math class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Arturo: Just sitting down and taking notes. That's all we ever do in math, just sit down and take notes.

Interviewer: If someone...oh, I'm sorry. That's the same question. Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances, and sports events? Why or why not?

Arturo: Yeah, I do, because I like to go to talent shows. I like to see who has talent. I like to see people sing. I wish I could sing. Sporting events I just go because friends tell me to. I'm like, "I'm not sure if I'll go." I'm not really into football, but I'll go.

Interviewer: If someone...I keep going back to that same question. When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings, and do you recall anything students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Arturo: When you're a freshman all the teachers are going to make you feel welcome because they know you're new, but to be honest, I was scared because I thought it was going to be like middle school where I'd get teased a lot. But no, no one really does that anymore. There are some few, but no one really does that it seems in high school.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school, and if so, what do they say?

Arturo: My dad brings up about how he never finished high school so he wants me to finish high school and go to school, continue just getting smarter and be what I want, and just tells me be what I want to be, which is border patrol.

My mom, she finished high school, and she tells me there's nothing wrong with going to junior college. Yes, that's pretty much it.

Interviewer: But your plans are you've been accepted to CSU Stanislaus?

Arturo: Yeah, and Sac, but I want to go to Stanislaus.

Interviewer: You want to go on the border patrol. Are you majoring in criminal justice?

Arturo: I'd major in criminal law and justice, but I don't need to get a degree. It's just...I don't know.

Interviewer: It's good to have, probably.

Arturo: Good to have.

Interviewer: Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Arturo: When it came to math, I'd got to "Mr. Barnes". I feel like he's the only math teacher I could ever learn math with. When it comes to English, I'm great at English so I don't really need help with that. Everything else I'm pretty much good at because I just pay attention.

Interviewer: Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Arturo: I pretty much answered that.

Interviewer: Yeah. Why do you like doing that?

Arturo: I guess I like to talk, and I like to put what I have to say into a conversation, because some people never get to hear something that I have to say, which is a really deep thought. People are, "I never knew that. I never knew that."

Interviewer: Are there any extracurricular activities you would like to see at your school that are not currently in place?

Arturo: I remember my freshman year there was Criminal Law Justice Club. They don't have that anymore. I'd like that to be back, but I'm a senior so I won't be able to have that anymore. But for the other people...

Interviewer: Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why or why not?

Arturo: I feel like that depends on the person, to be honest. I do pretty good at making friends. People say I know a lot of people. I feel like they're not my friends. It's more like, "Oh, hey, how are you doing?" If I have you for a class I'm going to say, "Hi," to you.

Interviewer: Outside of school how do you spend your free time, and what activities do you like to do with your family?

Arturo: With my family, it's not one certain activity. They just say, "Oh, we're going to go out to this place." I'm like, "Oh, OK." It's more different. What I like to do when I'm at home is just play my PlayStation 4 sometimes. Do exercises so I can be a good wrestler. That's pretty much it.

Interviewer: Do you believe you are treated fairly...oh, I'm sorry. I skipped a question. Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?

Arturo: Yes and no, because I'm proud that I can get a 3.0, but I'm not proud that I can't get that academic block. Yes and no.

Interviewer: What would be the accomplishment you're most proud of?

Arturo: Probably my wrestling accomplishments.

Interviewer: Do you believe you're treated fairly by your teachers?

Arturo: Yeah, I feel like I'm treated fairly. When I'm not I'll tell them, "Hey, it's like this." Then they'll, "OK, you're right."

Interviewer: You mentioned wrestling. Are there any other types of extracurricular activities you're involved with?

Arturo: I used to do football, but not anymore. I'm not really into football. It's just wrestling and FFA. I'm not really into FFA, but I'm still in it because I like to do it sometimes.

Interviewer: And you were in the Criminal Justice Club when it was here?

Arturo: Yeah. That was my freshman year.

Interviewer: Who encouraged you to join these activities?

Arturo: I started in sixth grade when it came to wrestling, and to be honest I did it because I got bullied a lot and I wanted to have an edge on the bullies. Criminal law and justice it was just because I wanted to be border patrol, and football was because my friends told me to do it. "Hey, you're a wrestler. You should try it." I'm like, "I'll try it."

Interviewer: Do you have friends at a school that you can turn to if you have personal or school-related problems?

Arturo: Yeah, I have lots to turn to.

Interviewer: Besides friends, what resources are available to you at school if you're having personal problems, issues at home, or issues with other students?

Arturo: To be honest I don't feel comfortable talking to the school employees about stuff like that, unless it's my coach, because he may be a school employee but to me he's more than a coach.

Interviewer: Are you aware, though, of what's available even if you didn't use it?

Arturo: Yeah, I'm aware, but I just don't feel comfortable about that.

Interviewer: The last three questions are about learning English. Do you feel you've mastered English as a second language, and if so, what helped you? If not, what do you think is holding you back?

Arturo: I feel like I've mastered it. What's helped me is reading books. I used to read a lot of books. I still read books every now and then, but books just got my vocabulary up and helped me learn English.

Interviewer: When did you first English, and back then what was most helpful to you in learning English?

Arturo: I went to a bilingual school when I was younger. I went to xxxxxxxx Charter. I still live in xxxxxxxx so my teachers, because you'd have...I think it was half a day you spoke Spanish and the other half you spoke English. I forgot how it went. I don't know, but I remember...

Interviewer: Yeah, 50/50 model.

Arturo: Yeah.

Interviewer: What was most helpful there? What were some of the things they did?

Arturo: Just the nice teachers. That's all. Just the way they taught. They'd sometimes call, "Art," in the Spanish accent then they'd bring me over in a Spanish accent, and they say something in English, tell me something, how to get me in trouble. I don't know.

Interviewer: [laughs] Last question. When do you use Spanish, and when do you use English?

Arturo: I use English all the time. I use Spanish whenever I have to, whenever I talk to someone who doesn't speak Spanish. I was dating someone who didn't really speak that much English so I would talk to her in Spanish.

When I did have a job they told me, "Art", I need Spanish over here." I'm like, "OK, I'm coming."

Interviewer: Where was that at? Where was your job?

Arturo: That was at Little Caesar's. I worked there.

Interviewer: When you're at home with your parents watching TV, do you normally watch TV in Spanish or in English?

Arturo: In English. My mom, she's broken the English barrier. She speaks it fluently. My dad, he speaks it fluently. They both speak Spanish and English very fluently.

Interviewer: Anything else you wanted to tell me, Art, about your experience at xxxxxxxxxxx High?

Arturo: I don't know. It went pretty good. I liked these years. There's some times when I didn't like it, and some times when I did like. Yeah, it was a pretty good experience.

Interviewer: Overall good?

Arturo: Overall good.

Interviewer: Glad to hear. Glad to hear you're heading off to college. That's great. Law enforcement is...you're smart to get that degree.

APPENDIX T

RFEP Student Interview 3 – “Gina”

Interviewer: Go ahead and [inaudible 0:03] we'll go.

Gina: Gina.

Interviewer: Gina, do teachers in xxxxxxxxxx High encourage you to do well in school?

Gina: Yes.

Interviewer: How so? How is that encouragement provided?

Gina: When I'm having trouble in school or any test or something. I try to tell...They try to help me, and encourage me that I can do good, and encourage me to work hard and actually study for the final and midterm.

Interviewer: What do you like most about your school, and what do you like the least?

Gina: I like my teachers, they're really supportive. What I like least is you can say there's not much enforcements, so kids can do whatever they wanted. I feel I don't feel really safe here as much as I would like to.

Interviewer: Not enforcing the rules?

Gina: Yeah, enforcing the rules and they say you can't wear red or this but there're still lots of kids wear red, and then there's certain areas in school and they don't enforce to stop that.

Interviewer: Do you feel the staff at xxxxxxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Gina: Yeah, I don't see any problem with that.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student, and do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why or why not?

Gina: Good students should be responsible, organized and respectful to their peers and their teachers. I believe I am that good student because I try to be as respectful as I possibly can to the teachers, and I try to do all my work and everything that I should do.

Interviewer: If someone visit you in your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Gina: They would see me reading and analyzing literature, poems and writing about it.

Interviewer: If they visited your math class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Gina: They would see me trying to learn a lesson and figure out how to do examples.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances and sports events? Why or why not?

Gina: I do at times because I want to enjoy my high school years with friends and stuff, but then again at times I don't because I am tired of all the works that at the end of the day I just want to go home and relax.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings? Do you recall anything students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Gina: I was very afraid because high school is a big part of your life and I wasn't sure what to expect. I heard stories and expectations but I wasn't sure myself what I would experience. What was the other part of the question?

Interviewer: Do you recall anything that the students or staff here did to make you feel welcomed?

Gina: I'd always [inaudible 3:18] try to do certain things at the beginning of the year but overall, not really, no.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school?

Gina: Yeah, my parents constantly remind me of what I want to do as a career and to do my homework and all that stuff. Yeah, my family really does.

Interviewer: Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Gina: When I need help, I would go to my teachers or friends if they know how to do that certain thing.

Interviewer: Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Gina: I actually don't like participating. I would like to hear but I personally don't like to participate because I feel like if I'm wrong or something, I'll get judged or it's not really me.

Interviewer: Are there any extracurricular activities that you would like to see at your school that are not currently in place?

Gina: More electives we can choose on because I feel it's very limited and something I feel we need something that helps us with career. We have career choices but it doesn't really help. Something that gets you prepared and lets you know what really is out there, because I feel I'm still oblivious of what I can do. I feel it's really limited, just doctor or this and I want to know more fields.

Interviewer: Let's see what the next question that's here. Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why or why not?

Gina: Yeah, I find it easy if you're really able to talk to them, but then again there are some people who are very cold and don't want to talk, and some people who feel like they're the best and they don't want to talk to you or something. There are certain people you can talk to and others that you can't.

Interviewer: Outside of school, how do you spend your free time? What activities do you like to do with your family?

Gina: I watch TV most of the time in my free time or I spend...I like to go shopping. I like to go out with my family. With my family, we go out usually and then we just spend time together eat and watch movies in theater, whatever.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?

Gina: Yes, I'm proud because I feel I've worked hard and I've accomplished my goals so far. Hopefully, I can accomplish all of them in the future too.

Interviewer: What are you most proud of so far academically?

Gina: I can say is so far I'd been getting straight A's. I'm proud of myself because it has been more challenging throughout the year so I'm proud that I've been able to sustain those good grades.

Interviewer: Do you believe you're treated fairly by your teachers?

Gina: Yeah, I believe but there can be certain teachers who are more favorite students.

Interviewer: When you say there are some that...Do they treat you differently or they treat other students differently...?

Gina: It's not really based on any ethnicity or anything. It's just because that's doing some more like more engaging in discussions so you know they have that certain little like with them because they're more into it and no more.

Interviewer: What types of extracurricular activities are you involved with?

Gina: Throughout my years in high school or [inaudible 7:04] throughout or just this?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Gina: Every year I've been in ASB and I've done sports like volleyball and swimming. I'm also in clubs like Kids Helping Kids. In this year, I decided to join YAC , and I actually started my own club, helping the Young and the Brave. We're trying to work on that.

Interviewer: What is the objective of that club?

Gina: It's like Kids Helping Kids. We want to just help kids in our community first and then slowly build up from there, but it's been challenging because of time and all the stuff. Junior year is very stressful. Our club really wasn't able to do as much as we liked. Hopefully, we're looking into next year.

Interviewer: Do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have personal or school-related problems?

Gina: Yeah, I have a couple of friends who I can trust and help. If I need help, I go to them.

Interviewer: What resources are you aware of that are available to you at school if you're having personal problems, issues at home or issues with other students beside your friends?

Gina: I do know there is a counselor or something that helps you with your personal but I'm not sure of details. I just know of its existence but I don't know where, when you can go.

Interviewer: The last three questions deal more with language acquisition or mastering English as a second language. Do you feel you've mastered English as a second language? If so, what has helped you?

Gina: I feel I've mastered it. What helped me is school and teachers helping me learn more English you can say and friends, because you're around people who speak that language. That really help you learn more stuff.

Interviewer: When did you first learn English? What was the most helpful to you in learning English at that time?

Gina: I learned English when I went to school, and when I started school what helped was preschool or kindergarten, I don't remember. What helped me is the environment and the teachers themselves who helped me and to learn the language.

Interviewer: When do you use Spanish and when do you use English now?

Gina: I use Spanish when I talk to my mom because she speaks that language and I also speak it to those who have trouble speaking English. I try to communicate as well as I can using that language. I speak English mostly the rest of the time in school, at home with my dad who speaks English. I basically speak only Spanish with my mother and then her family, my part of the family and just like them.

Interviewer: When you're at home if you're watching television, do you normally watch Spanish language or English language?

Gina: I have certain shows that are English, I do ones that I like. There's like novella's at night so I watch that one in Spanish. There's both, I watch both. It depends on what I like.

Interviewer: Anything else that you like to add about your experience at xxxxxxxxxxxx High, are you sure?

Gina: No, it's a good school. It's great. There's nothing really wrong with it, but there's a few things that we can change to make it a much better place to go to school.

Interviewer: Let me go ahead and [inaudible 10:38] this off.

APPENDIX U

RFEP Student Interview 4 – “Omar”

Interviewer: It should be good to go. Go ahead and say your name.

Omar: I'm Omar.

Interviewer: Omar, I'm going to ask you a few questions. Do teachers at xxxxxxxxxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school, and if so, how is that encouragement provided?

Omar: Most of the teachers at xxxxxxxxxxxx High School motivate me to do better. For the most part they make sure to teach the material well. They provide me with all the materials I need outside of the classroom, such as homework assignments or projects, and they're always willing to offer me their aid if I need help. Some teachers have even gone farther and supported me outside of the classroom for things not really connected to the classroom, such as clubs or organizations for which they help and guide me. They have also helped to guide me for the college process.

Interviewer: Great. What do you like most about your school, and what do you like least?

Omar: I'd say that what I like most is that there is a lot of -- I don't know if it's just right now or if it's always been like this -- but I feel like right now we're getting a lot of changes in our school, and I feel like I can take part in those changes. Changes like the addition of new AP classes or the new construction that's going on, and I really like that I'm able to be part of that and to try something new that might work for others. I'd say that what I like the least would probably be at times I feel like there's a lot of division between students.

Omar: Sometimes I feel like there's a lot of division between students who are considered good and students who are considered bad or not satisfactory enough, so I feel like there could be more union or more events made to encourage union between students.

Interviewer: Do you feel the staff at xxxxxxxxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Omar: I definitely feel that my school is very respectful of that. There's clubs like MASA Club or HYLIC, which encourage us to pursue our culture and our identity, and also through all the language classes, such as the Spanish classes or the French classes. They really encourage us to become more cultural and more involved in our culture, and to develop it in order to, in a way, find something in common with others and really make a strong relationship with our community and with any other groups.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student?

Omar: A student needs to be responsible and perseverance. Oftentimes students are told that they need to be intelligent, or smart, or already with an aptitude, but I feel that that's not really the case. As long as you're driven you can achieve pretty much anything you want. I feel you just need a motivation to keep you going.

Interviewer: Do you consider yourself a good student? Why or why not?

Omar: I would say for the most part I try to be a pretty good student. I try to always turn my assignments in on time. I try to be respectful during lessons to my superiors, to my teachers. I also try to make good relationships with my peers. I try to avoid all conflicts and just try to find the best characteristics that unite us in order to make a better environment.

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Omar: If someone visited my English class they would see me participate in the class, work on the essays, and get involved in the discussion with the class about certain topics, and generally just doing my work and participating.

Interviewer: If someone visited your math class what would they see you doing as a student?

Omar: If they visited my math class they would probably for the most part see me engaged in the lessons. For math I prefer to just let it all just sink in rather than ask too many questions, but I'll ask an occasional question. They could also see me testing, perhaps.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances, and sports events? Why or why not?

Omar: I would like to attend more of those events, but I'm busy participating in school events such as track and field, or cross country or clubs. I feel like I am involved in my events, but I really don't get to observe others as much as I would want.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman what were you feelings, and do you recall anything that students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Omar: My first year in high school, or my first day, I was very nervous. It was just a jump from middle school to high school. I had heard a lot about high school, there being a clash between greater difficulty and more expectations from peers.

But I got a lot of support. On the first week before school started there was a roundup day and they brought in speakers who in a way...and they gave us ambassadors who tried to

ease us into high school. Throughout high school our counselors and teachers made the transition easy.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school?

Omar: Yeah. My mom generally just talks to me if there's anything going on at school, but for the most part she knows that I try to be good in school so she really...she really didn't receive an education herself so she doesn't know about it, so she'll just try asking if everything is OK.

Interviewer: Do you talk about your plans after high school with your family, your mom, or...?

Omar: Yeah. Ever since elementary school my parents have always been very encouraging for me to go to college and get an education after high school. We have always been talking about where do I want to go, what career do I want to study for, and we have always been very open about that.

Interviewer: Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Omar: If I need any help with my homework I'll just go to the teacher of that class. Since they were the one who assigned it they can probably offer the best help. My teachers are generally very open about giving help to students and trying to get them to understand the material well.

Interviewer: Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Omar: I do like participating in classroom discussions, because I get to hear the opinions of my peers. Oftentimes they're different opinions, but I like that because I'm able to think more about what I'm discussing rather than just stating my opinion. When I engage in a discussion I have to take into consideration the opinions and values of others, and I really like that I have to do that. It really makes me a greater thinker, and outside of the classroom it makes me considerate of other people.

Interviewer: Are there any other extracurricular activities you would like to see at your school that are not currently in place?

Omar: I would like to see some more extracurricular activities. At other schools they have model United Nations programs or...I don't know how...it's like a simulation of a court.

Interviewer: Oh, like Mock Trial?

Omar: Yes, Mock Trial. I would like to see more of those, because it offers you a view to how the world is actually run and the way it prepares you for the future.

Interviewer: Thank you. Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why or why not?

Omar: I get along with people, but for me to get a friend, I feel like I already have my set group of friends so I like to get to know people and be open to their opinions, but I feel like I have my groups of friends and that hasn't changed much.

Interviewer: Outside of school how do you spend your free time, and what activities do you like to do with your family?

Omar: Outside of school it's divided between my extracurriculars. I do two sports a year, and I also participate in clubs.

Interviewer: What sports and clubs are you in?

Omar: I'm in cross country first semester, and then I do track and field second. I'm also the vice-president of HYLIC, Hispanic Youth Leadership Council. I also participate in MASA and Kids Helping Kids in first semester. After the extracurriculars I spend time with my family. I have three other siblings that are younger than me so I try to guide them and help them with their homework or do any needs. I also attend church regularly. With my family I just try to make enjoying moments and help them succeed, too.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?

Omar: Yes, I do feel pretty proud about what I've accomplished, but I always like to tell myself that there's always a step above you could go. I try not to stay very conformed to what I have or what I have achieved. I try to go far out and beyond, but I think for what I've done I feel pretty proud of it.

Interviewer: What are you most proud of as an academic accomplishment?

Omar: I'd say that what I feel most proud of is just my grades in the classes, because they reflect all the hard work and effort I've put into them in order to receive those grades. Also the AP test scores I feel like they really reflect how much hard work and focus I put into those classes.

Interviewer: Do you believe you are treated fairly by your teachers?

Omar: I would say I'm treated pretty fairly by my teachers. They do a pretty good job of including all students and treating all students the same.

Interviewer: You mentioned a few. What are all the types of extracurricular activities that you're involved with?

Omar: For sports I do cross country and track and field. I participate in HYLIC, the Hispanic Youth Leadership Council, and MASA, the Mexican American Student Association, and also Kids Helping Kids. Outside I participate in my church and I try to do community service for my church. That's it.

Interviewer: You were in academic decathlon, too, weren't you?

Omar: Yes, academic decathlon.

Interviewer: Do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have personal or school-related problems?

Omar: Yeah, I do have a few friends who, I've been with them since middle school. We've been really close, so if I have anything going on I can just tell them with trust.

Interviewer: What resources are available to you at school if you're having personal problems at home, issues at home, or issues with other students?

Omar: I haven't needed to use them yet, but I have heard that they do have personnel on school, such as psychologists and counselors, who will help others with any problems. I do know that they're available whenever they're needed.

Interviewer: Do you feel you have mastered English as a second language?

Omar: I do feel I have mastered English. It definitely wasn't easy. The hardest part was in elementary school, but with all the practice I have received throughout currently I'm in AP English. I received my seal of multilingual proficiency, and so I feel that those prove that I have mastered both languages.

Interviewer: What helped you most in mastering English?

Omar: I think the immersion with other students. Prior to my education at home, when I was a child I only spoke Spanish, so when I was immersed into school with students who only spoke English that really helped me develop it. Just talking English and hearing English helped me most.

Interviewer: When did you first learn English, and what was most helpful to you at that time in learning English?

Omar: When I entered kindergarten that was the very first time. As I said before, prior to that it had only been Spanish, because my parents had recently emigrated from Mexico. All my life I had spoken Spanish, and then I reached kindergarten. There was a little clash between both languages, but eventually I was able to assimilate.

Interviewer: When do you use Spanish and when do you use English?

Omar: I'd say for a lot of my personal life with my parents, or uncles, aunts, and family, I'll use Spanish to communicate with them. Even though my siblings speak English I try to speak Spanish, too, so they don't lose that language. For English I'd say that's more for school, activities, the friends I have made here, and for just my life outside of home.

Interviewer: Television shows and things like that, do you normally watch in English or in Spanish?

Omar: It's a mix.

Interviewer: A mix?

Omar: Yes, my mom sometimes she'll put on the Spanish TV channel, and sometimes I'll got watch my shows on streaming in English.

Interviewer: Very good. Anything else that you want to share, Omar?

Omar: I think that's...

Interviewer: That's about it?

Omar: Yes.

Interviewer: What are your plans after high school?

Omar: After high school I definitely want to go to college for sure. I want to go either to a UC, one of the UCs, and major in science, and then perhaps go into medical school and become a doctor.

Interviewer: Have you heard back on any of your applications?

Omar: I'm a junior, so I haven't...

Interviewer: Oh, you're a junior. For some reason I was thinking you were a senior. OK.

Omar: I haven't applied yet, but I'm definitely thinking where.

Interviewer: Very good. All right. Thank you.

Omar: Thank you.

Interviewer: Appreciate it. The next student, you can go ahead and send her in.

Omar: OK.

Interviewer: All right. I appreciate it. Thanks, Omar.

APPENDIX V

RFEP Student Interview 5 – “Linda”

Interviewer: ...OK, we're on. If you could go ahead and state your name for me?

Linda: Linda.

Interviewer: OK, Linda, thank you. First question, do the teachers at xxxxxxxxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school?

Linda: Yes, they do. I have a lot of teachers that have supported me to reach, and to learn more about colleges, and to actually do what I want to do when I actually go into college.

Interviewer: How would you say that encouragement is provided?

Linda: At first, they didn't encourage me. They didn't, because at first I was really disappointed because I wasn't going to have enough money to go to San Jose State, which was my number one. But I get to go to Stan State, and they're encouraging me to just get my units done, get my 15 units for each semester done, and then transfer into something I really like, and join the marching band that I want to.

They told me that it's going to be a slow process, but at least you get to do that. I'm really happy they told me that, because I was disappointed at first when I didn't get to go to San Jose.

Interviewer: You wanted to go away to school, to San Jose State, but you're going to be going to Stan State instead?

Linda: Yes.

Interviewer: It's a little closer, OK. What do you like most about your school, and what do you like least?

Linda: The most I would say the people I met, and also the teachers, because they you do a good job in teaching and inspiring students. The thing I would say least is just...I didn't think about this one. I would say it would just be, sometimes some students are really disrespectful, and I really don't like saying that.

I feel that something should be done about them, and I can't do anything, because I'll get in trouble as well. Some of those students really don't deserve to even be treated the way that the teacher treats them, with respect.

Interviewer: Do you feel the staff at xxxxxxxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Linda: Most of the staff, I don't really talk to. I do talk to teachers, but it's usually just, it depends on, it's usually about school, so none of that stuff usually comes up. They do seem to respect everyone, no matter what culture they come from.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student? Do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why, or why not?

Linda: A good student should first be respectful towards teachers, and other students, and they should also want to study. They shouldn't just be here, just because they want to get it over with. I do consider myself a good student, because I do want to succeed later in my life, as I do now. I do want to go on, and be someone, and be more successful than I am now.

Interviewer: Great. If someone visited your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Linda: We do a lot of stuff in my English class. We test usually study for an AP test, for presentation, grading essays, a lecture. It usually just varies. Most of the time, I do my same presentations. I get scared at times, but the presentations show off what a student is capable of, and everything that they worked for.

The presentations actually show off the quality that the students are putting into that. That's one of the things that most people would be impressed with, if they walk into an English class.

Interviewer: Great. Same question, but with math. If someone visited your math class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Linda: It would just be taking notes. Math is one of my harder subjects, because it's something that I have a hard time struggling with. Usually it's just taking notes and asking questions, trying to make sure that I understand the concept, as well as my friend. Most of the students just want to get it over with since math is required, but I really want to try to understand that for college, because I will have a little harder time if I don't pay attention now.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events, such as dances, music performances and sports events? Why or why not?

Linda: I haven't actually attended a dance here, because none of my friends actually like it, but I do like attending music performances, since I usually participate in them, such as the winter concerts, spring concerts.

Interviewer: Are you in the band?

Linda: Yeah.

Interviewer: OK.

Linda: I usually have to go to those, but I usually like watching other bands perform, even if it's not at school. At sports events, usually I have to go for a band, but I do like football games. Other sports are OK for me, but I usually have homework during that time.

If I do have time, I usually do it, because I used to be in soccer, but this year I didn't try out, because of the amount of homework I was getting and I wanted to become more dedicated to music. If I can, I'll go support them, even though I'm not on the team anymore.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings? Do you recall anything that students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Linda: I felt welcomed when I came to the orientation for freshman, but I was still really unsure, because I barely had friends my freshman year, because I came in...I didn't come in new, but everyone else got new friends, so I was just on the line. I wasn't really sure, but I felt kind of scared. My person helped me.

Interviewer: Your ambassador?

Linda: Yeah, they helped me the first week, but after that they drifted away. I was OK with that, but I found friends in my sophomore year, actually. My freshman year it was just me trying to see who I actually like hangout with, who I don't like hangout with. I was scared and unsure, but I got more on track after freshman year.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school? If so, what do they say?

Linda: My parents do talk to me about school, a lot now since college is coming up, and cost is really important. We haven't gotten a lot of financial aid help. That's something that we need to talk about. I do have an aunt that has a child, a son in college, but she has a lot more money.

He picked the school, because he could have, but I didn't get to do that. That kind of disappoints me. She told me to just go to my local school, and I said OK, because I saw if I got like \$5,000 from my Cal Grant, there would be the same price if I go to MJC and Stan School. I picked Stan, as a backup.

She told me not to go to JC, because she said "It's going to waste your time." Even though I was considering a JC, I decided not to, because I really want to transfer in two years. My mom still is unsure about a lot of college stuff, since I'm a first-generation student. She does have a lot of questions towards me. I have a TRIO advisor, and she asks him a lot, because she still unsure about everything, about college, about financial aid. It's just on the money part of school.

Interviewer: Where do you go, if you need additional help with homework, or class assignments?

Linda: I usually go to my TRIO Upward Bound program, and that's each Tuesday after school. They help me with homework, or college advising. There's tutors there, so they can help you with the homework. If I need help on college, my TRIO advisor is here during lunch to help me, so I usually have them on Tuesdays or Saturdays.

Interviewer: Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Linda: Sometimes I do, and sometimes I don't. Sometimes I feel like I'm being judged, and I'm afraid because I'm a shy person most of the time. Since there's a lot of the people in the classroom, usually, I usually don't like talking, because I'm afraid that I might get judged. If it's a classroom that I'm comfortable with, I'm OK with talking out loud, and saying what my opinion, or my discussion question, but it's usually hard.

Interviewer: Are there any extracurricular activities you would like to see at your school that are not currently in place?

Linda: Right now, I'm not really sure. Not right now. I actually do like flag football, or the powder club. I would have liked to play that a whole season, because it's something that I enjoy, but it's usually just that one thing. I really would like seeing a season.

Interviewer: OK, like an intramural, play football?

Linda: To play more than just students at our school, to play maybe different schools.

Interviewer: Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why, or why not?

Linda: It just depends on the person, a lot of times. Here, there's some people that aren't friendly at all, and there's some people that are. It depends on who you're talking to, at first. Even today, I was just walking on some girl who bumped into me, and she started saying she wanted to fight me, so that was like, "OK, she's not someone that I would want to be her friend."

It just depends on the person. I usually just talk to people who are already in my classes, and that's how you know whether they're nice or not.

Interviewer: Outside of school, how do you spend your free time, and what activities you like to do with your family?

Linda: After school, usually I have homework. Sometimes in the winter season, I had winter percussion after school. During the fall I had marching band, and I sometimes have to go with friends to do homework. Some activities that I do with my family, we usually go out to the mountains and have a barbecue, and invite more family over to do that.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school? If so, what are you most proud of? If not, why?

Linda: I am proud, but I feel like I could've done better, since right now I only have a 3.8. I wanted a 4.0. But what I'm proud of is just trying to keep the As. The only reason I

don't have a 4.0 is because of math, and I try. I've been trying really hard just to raise that, and I feel like if I try more, I might get what I want to see, because straight As are what my goal is right now. It's been my goal, pretty much.

Interviewer: Do you believe you are treated fairly by your teachers?

Linda: Yes. I never had a problem with any of them here. I think they do treat everyone fairly.

Interviewer: What types of extracurricular activities are you involved with? You've mentioned a few.

Linda: I played soccer for freshman, sophomore, and junior year. Marching band for all four. Winter percussion for two years, and Upward Bound TRIO for all my four years here.

Interviewer: Who encouraged you to join some of these activities?

Linda: Most of the time, it was just myself, and my interests. I joined the TRIO program because it's something that I needed, because it's college advising. It's a college program that I thought I really did need, and soccer was just one of my interests that I had. For music, it was just something that my mom encouraged me into, but I really do like it as a whole.

Interviewer: Do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have personal or school-related problems?

Linda: Yeah, I have two or three that I can turn to for anything, pretty much.

Interviewer: What resources are available to you at school, if you are having personal problems, issues at home, or issues with other students?

Linda: There's my counselor, and I also like going to "Mr. Larson", since he was my counselor freshman year. I have him, but now I have "Mr. Salvador" and "Ms. Garcia".

Interviewer: The last three questions have more to do with language acquisition. Do you feel you've mastered English as a second language? If so, what helped you? If not, what do you think has held you back?

Linda: I mastered English by now, most of it. Most of the time, I had to thank my English teachers I had all throughout all, not just high school, but actually middle school and elementary school, because that's what actually helped me get it down.

Interviewer: When do you remember first learning English, and what was most helpful to you in learning English?

Linda: I started learning English when I got into kindergarten. It was hard for me since the teacher knew I didn't understand, so she spoke to me in Spanish a lot of the times, but once I got into first grade, my teacher didn't speak Spanish. I learned it just by listening to

it, and writing it. I didn't know how to speak it that well yet, so that's why I was usually the quiet kid, because I didn't know how to talk in English. But that's how I learned, going through each year, knowing more and more.

Interviewer: Today, when do you usually use Spanish, and when do you use English?

Linda: English, I use for school. I talk to my sister in English, I talked to my parents in English. The only time I use Spanish is to talk to my mom, or dad, or a family member, because that's the only time I actually use it. It's usually just used in the house, when I use Spanish.

Interviewer: You watch television. Do you normally watch Spanish language television, or English language television?

Linda: English. I feel like it's something I'm more comfortable with, now, even though back then I was a really comfortable with it, but now I am. That's why I like watching it in English. It feels awkward for me to watch it in Spanish sometimes.

Interviewer: Lastly, anything else you'd like to tell me about your experiences at xxxxxxxxxxxx High, that you think I should know?

Linda: No, not right now. Not that I can remember. I just know I'm going to miss all the people I met here, because we all pretty much came from the same school, since xxxxxxxxxxxx's such a small town. Some of us met each other just so we didn't have to speak Spanish, but now we speak in English to each other, so that's pretty much it.

Interviewer: Do you still feel confident speaking in Spanish, though?

Linda: No, I actually don't, because I have a hard time rolling my Rs in Spanish, and that's why I really didn't like my Spanish class, Spanish 2NS and Spanish 3NS, because a lot of people, they used to laugh at me. I usually just laughed along, so it wouldn't make me feel bad as much. I can't roll my Rs in Spanish, because it's something that I never learned to do as a child. That's why I really don't feel comfortable talking in Spanish to someone. I'm just afraid they'll laugh at me.

Interviewer: Thank you. Let me go ahead and...

APPENDIX W

RFEP Student Interview 6 – “Linda”

Interviewer: This should be going on right now. If you would just state your name for me?

Cesar: Cesar.

Interviewer: OK, Cesar, what grade are you in?

Cesar: Senior.

Interviewer: Senior. I'll be asking you a few questions. If they aren't clear, just ask me to repeat them or rephrase them. Did teachers at xxxxxxxxxx High School encourage you to do well at school?

Cesar: For the most part, yeah.

Interviewer: How is that encouragement provided?

Cesar: Mostly, from what I've seen, or what I've experienced, I noticed sometimes that some teachers pull students aside when they're worried about how they're doing.

Interviewer: I'm sorry, they post what?

Cesar: They pull them aside after class, to talk to them. If they're doing bad, to make sure that they step it up. Just small things, like after a test to study more for the next test.

Interviewer: What do you like most about your school, and what do you like the least?

Cesar: The most would be the extracurricular activities that are available. The least, the only thing that comes to mind right now would be the restrooms. The bathrooms without the stall doors, or the stall doors that broke off a long, long time ago.

Interviewer: The condition of the restrooms?

Cesar: Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you feel that the staff at xxxxxxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Cesar: I would say yes, since the staff, for the most part...I've been to other schools, it's more diverse.

Interviewer: You've never had any situations where you felt disrespected by teachers, in terms of your cultural and language background?

Cesar: No.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student, and do you consider yourself to be a good student?

Cesar: A good student, I feel like also has to be well-rounded. It doesn't have to do much with getting straight As, but just at least putting in the maximum effort and just getting good grades. Having goals set, and work to reach those goals, and also be involved in stuff outside of academics. I think, for the most part I sometimes get there. Every once in a while, everyone has their off day, and since kids have to be respectful, everyone has their off day. They just can't do it.

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class, but would they see you doing, as a student?

Cesar: In our AP English class, for the most part, we have either a lecture, or we do a lot of discussions. They would personally just see me either participating in the discussion in a small group. We've been doing AP Olympics, and preparing for the AP test, which is tomorrow. They would see me just helping, working with their group to try to make sure they get all the right answers, or the best answer.

Interviewer: Same question, different subject. If someone visited your math class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Cesar: For the most part, they would just see me taking down notes.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances, and sports events? Why or why not?

Cesar: I don't really participate in dances, simply because sometimes I just get some anxiety with so many people. This doesn't feel like, you don't connect with people on the personal level. You're just there, physically. I haven't been to the musical performances, but I do remember, I believe it was my sophomore year when the team hosted that dance performance they had, and I really enjoyed that, because it was just something different and interesting. In sports, I've only attended a few, but it just didn't really grab my attention.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings? Do you recall anything that students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Cesar: I remember my freshman year, at least in coming, I was super scared. At least during the summer, especially because I used to be super short. I just imagined high school students at the top. Fortunately, I had my growth spurt that summer, so I was average height by then.

I was still scared, since I had some more advanced classes, I did have some classes with upperclassman, and only a few were with my grade level. The upperclassmen students I had in those classes really made me feel welcome, and I met some new people from different backgrounds, good or bad, they all taught me new things.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members told you about school, and if so, what do they say?

Cesar: My parents obviously remind me to keep my grades up. When I have low grades, I'm struggling to talk to the teacher, or work extra hard. If I have an extracurricular that's in the way, I just have to set my priorities straight.

Interviewer: Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Cesar: Normally I go to another student. If not, I go to YouTube, since they do have tutorials there.

Interviewer: Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Cesar: I like discussions much more than just lectures, because you don't just learn from one person, but from a whole group. You have all these different perspectives they're learning from.

Interviewer: Are there any extracurricular activities you would like to see at your school, that are not currently in place?

Cesar: I was talking to some other students that were accepted to the other colleges, since we have some group chats. A lot of them kept on mentioning this thing called, they had a mock trial club. That sounded super interesting, since I had one last year, and I think I might have one this year, but they actually have a whole club dedicated to that.

Another thing that stands out, I've noticed that not all schools, but some other more established schools had, is they have, I don't know what it's called, but it's like a model UN club. That seems interesting, but I didn't learn about that until this year.

Interviewer: Those are two things you'd like to see? Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why, or why not?

Cesar: It's really easy to make friends at school, since at least when you start freshman year, or at least freshman in college, from what I've heard, since everyone is on the same boat, they all try to make friends. At least here, even though we've all established our main friendships, it's still easy to make friends, since at least I have a tendency to befriend some of the new freshman. In organizations like TRIO, or just different classes, I will make new friends each year.

Interviewer: Outside of school, how do you spend your free time? What activities do you like to do with your family?

Cesar: With my family, we like to take our ATVs to the mountains here in xxxxxx Park. We also like to just watch movies. Also in my free time, even when I'm off-season, I usually either go play tennis with my friends, or we'll go to the gym, or we'll go hiking, watch a movie, or just hang out.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?

Cesar: For the most part I am. I have had a few hiccups in my grades, but even though they could've been higher, I'm OK with that, simply because some time around, at the end of sophomore year when I got my first B, I was devastated at first. Then "Mr. Estes" told me, he mentioned "Alex Barrios", who was his TA and going to go to Berkeley.

He said, "I gave Alex his first B, and he was devastated also." Although at the time, I didn't feel like it was fair because of my efforts. Looking back now -- sometimes I think it's not fair -- but for the most part I don't really care. It really taught me that, it was the first time...after that, not immediately, but gradually, I started to feel OK with it simply because I felt I was much more than just a grade on my transcript. Really, when you're thinking about college, sometimes you don't realize that.

Interviewer: Do you believe that you were treated fairly by your teachers?

Cesar: I think I was treated fairly, for the most part, by my teachers.

Interviewer: What types of extracurricular activities -- I've heard you mention tennis -- are you involved with?

Cesar: My freshman year, I think the first club I joined, I forgot. It was run by "Officer Hall", the police, law enforcement or something club. That was super interesting, although I wasn't interested in that in a future. The career itself, or at least what he was teaching us, and the trips we would go on, were super interesting, and we were able to learn more.

I joined the color run, or color the future club that year, but that didn't last for me. I didn't stay there. This year, besides tennis, it's my third year in ASB, my second year of being ASB treasurer. It's my first year in the school site council, and I'm the chair. It's my fourth year in the TRIO Upward Bound organization, I'm the treasurer. First year in Interact, I'm the vice president. I'm in Ambassadors. That's it.

Interviewer: Do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have personal or school-related problems?

Cesar: If I really have to turn to them, I do, but for the most part, I prefer to deal with it myself.

Interviewer: What resources are available at your school, if you're having personal problems? Issues at home, or issues with other students.

Cesar: I know we have the counselors. From what I've heard, we have a special counselor that comes every day, or once a week. I forgot what it was dedicated to, but I know we have another special counselor.

Interviewer: The last three questions have to do more with language acquisition. Do you feel that you've mastered English as a second language?

Cesar: Yes, I do believe I've mastered English as a second language.

Interviewer: What do you think helped you master English?

Cesar: It first started when I first learned English, which was in kindergarten. I attended xxxxxxxxxxx Charter School, and it's bilingual. My teacher did tell my mom that I was going to fail simply because I didn't learn English, and I was going to be held back.

Even though they didn't speak it at the time, they're much better at it now, both my parents, but at the time, I don't think they were able to speak it at all, or just a few sentences. Somehow they helped me, and I was able to learn English in that year.

In the following years, since I do talk a lot, I would finish my assignments before everybody else, and they ran into a problem where since I finished before everybody else, I'd start talking, and then other students would stop doing their work.

To solve that, my mom and the teacher came to an agreement of just giving me more work. That really pushed me forward. Also, when I was younger I used to read a lot of books and chapter books during my first years in elementary school so that really pushed me forward in the bilingual program. At least I did in middle school. I took honors English, and AP English, which I still take.

Interviewer: When did you first learn English, and what was most helpful to you in learning English?

Cesar: I learned English in kindergarten. I have no memory of learning English. Since I was so young, I don't have any memories before I didn't know it. I'm not really sure what helped me, besides my parents help, and just encouraging me in learning.

Interviewer: Today, when do you use Spanish, and when do you use English?

Cesar: I mostly use Spanish. I use Spanish and English at home, I mostly use Spanish with my parents, and English with my brother. At school lately, I've normally always used more English, but I've started to use more Spanish, simply because normally my friends have started speaking it. Every once in a while, we would just start speaking it.

I did make some friends when I went to go visit Georgetown, and one of them doesn't. From the standing participants that were in it, from the administrators to the group chat, even though it was intended to just remind us of each of them, even while we were over there. After we left, we just kept it up as a normal group chat. There's one student -- I don't know if he speaks English, but I guess he feels more comfortable speaking Spanish, so whenever he joins the chat we'll all just start speaking Spanish.

Interviewer: When you're at home, when you're watching TV, do you normally watch English, or Spanish television shows?

Cesar: I normally watch English television shows, but every once in a while I will watch something in Spanish.

Interviewer: Anything else you'd like to tell me about xxxxxxxxxx High School, and your experience here that you think I should know?

Cesar: I don't think it's as bad as everyone makes it seem. I know a lot of people say it's horrible, but we have a good amount of extracurriculars. It's really up to the students, to really encourage the students. It doesn't really encourage, but there should be something encouraging them to make new clubs that interest them. Even though we don't, unfortunately, have that grant we used to have to help the clubs, we have a good sports program. I think it's an all-around decent school.

Interviewer: All right. Thank you, Cesar.

APPENDIX X

RFEP Student Interview 7 – “Janet”

Interviewer: There we go, if you can say your full name for me.

Janet: Janet.

Interviewer: Thanks, Janet. First question, do teachers at xxxxxxxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school?

Janet: Yes.

Interviewer: How do they provide that encouragement?

Janet: They tell you to stay on track. They tell you not to procrastinate, that you need a better future.

Interviewer: Great. What do you like most about your school, and what do you like the least?

Janet: In subjects or...?

Interviewer: Anything. It can be anything about your experience that you like or don't like.

Janet: I love science. I'm in physics right now and it's a really good class. Least, nothing.

Interviewer: Really?

Janet: Yeah, I like everything.

Interviewer: Do you feel the staff at xxxxxxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Janet: Yeah.

Interviewer: How so?

Janet: They don't do anything. They don't say anything mean about it. It's just normal.

Interviewer: You feel like you're treated with respect?

Janet: Yeah. I'm treated equally, not different.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student? Do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why or why not?

Janet: Yeah, because a good student, is respectful, responsible, honest, and I'm those things.

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Janet: Working on classwork.

Interviewer: If someone visited your math class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Janet: Working on math problems.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances, and sports events? Why or why not?

Janet: Sports, because I like sports. I like seeing soccer, football. Dances and other stuff, I don't really get involved. I don't like it that much.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings? Do you recall anything students or staff did to make you feel welcome?

Janet: I felt nervous because I was coming into a new school. I don't remember what it was, but they had where they got all of the freshmen into the gym and they were doing things with them.

Interviewer: The orientation?

Janet: Yeah, I think that.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school? If so, what do they say?

Janet: They tell me to try my best, that it might be hard right now, but all this hard work will pay off in the future.

Interviewer: Great. Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Janet: For math, I would go to tutoring with "Mr. Aziz". Usually, that's the only subject I'll struggle in.

Interviewer: Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Janet: Not so much. I'll get involved if I need to, but I'm kind of shy.

Interviewer: Are there any extracurricular activities you would like to see at your school that are not currently in place?

Janet: No, not really.

Interviewer: Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why or why not?

Janet: Yes, because everyone's really friendly. They're open. They're not rude about it.

Interviewer: Outside of school, how do you spend your free time? What activities do you like to do with your family?

Janet: Usually, I do sports. I'm in cross-country and swim. I like going to the park with my family. We play soccer and we just play.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school?

Janet: Yeah.

Interviewer: What are you most proud of?

Janet: Getting the academic block.

Interviewer: The academic block key?

Janet: Yeah.

Interviewer: Do you believe you are treated fairly by your teachers?

Janet: Yes.

Interviewer: What types of extracurricular activities are you involved with? I heard you mention a couple.

Janet: Swim and cross-country, Kids Helping Kids. I think that's it. I'm not sure.

Interviewer: Who encouraged you to join those activities?

Janet: I did. I really like swim. I did it over summer, so I decided to do it for school. Cross-country, I really like running. I was thinking of track, but then it's the same time as swim, so I did cross-country. It's really fun. Kids Helping Kids, I just thought it was a nice club to join. You help kids and it's a really good club.

Interviewer: Nobody asked you to join. You just saw these activities and thought they would be things that you wanted to do?

Janet: Yeah.

Interviewer: The next question is, do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have personal or school-related problems?

Janet: Yes.

Interviewer: How many friends? What kinds of things do you discuss?

Janet: We're a group of friends. We talk if we're stressed out at school and stuff like that.

Interviewer: What resources are available to you at school if you're having personal problems, issues at home, or issues with other students?

Janet: I really don't know, because I don't have issues with anyone.

Interviewer: If you were having issues, do you know what resources are here or who you could go to?

Janet: My counselor.

Interviewer: Your counselor? OK. The last three questions deal with language acquisition and learning English. The first question is, do you feel that you have mastered English as a second language?

Janet: I feel like I have, because I can communicate with people and I could write it, read it.

Interviewer: What do you think helped you master English as a second language?

Janet: Practicing it a lot in school.

Interviewer: The second question. When did you first learn English? Looking back, what was most helpful to you in first learning English?

Janet: I learned English in first grade. It was helpful that they actually talked to me in English. When I went to kindergarten, it was all Spanish, so I didn't really learn anything. When I got to first, I had to learn everything in English.

Interviewer: Then last question, when do you use Spanish and when do you use English?

Janet: English, I use it at school. I use some Spanish here at school, but not so much. At home, I use Spanish with my family. With my cousins, I'll mix it up.

Interviewer: If you watch television programs at home, do you usually watch them in English or Spanish?

Janet: Both.

Interviewer: Both?

Janet: Yeah.

Interviewer: Then finally, is there anything you'd like to share with me about your experiences at xxxxxxxxxx High that you think I should know, or any other information about you and your schooling?

Janet: Not really.

Interviewer: Nothing? OK. Thank you very much.

APPENDIX Y

RFEP Student Interview 8 – “Ricardo”

Interviewer: If you could go ahead and state your name again.

Ricardo: Ricardo.

Interviewer: OK, Ricardo. First question, do teachers at xxxxxxxxxxxx High School encourage you to do well in school?

Ricardo: Yes.

Interviewer: How is that encouragement provided?

Ricardo: They encourage me to do my homework. Each day, they provide a lesson and if you have any questions, you can always ask them and they'll answer your question.

Interviewer: Great. What do you like most about your school, and what do you like least?

Ricardo: What I like most is all the clubs that are offered, the sports and the AP classes you could take. What I don't like is the lunch and some of the bathrooms.

Interviewer: Do you feel the staff at xxxxxxxxxxxx High is respectful and understanding of your cultural and language background?

Ricardo: I guess, because if you ever have a question about some family problems, you could ask it and they'll understand where you're coming from.

Interviewer: What do you believe are the characteristics of a good student? Do you consider yourself to be a good student? Why or why not?

Ricardo: A good student is responsible and is determined to do the best at all times. I consider myself an OK student because I do my homework and I do what I'm supposed to do.

Interviewer: If someone visited your English class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Ricardo: If someone visited my English class, they would probably see me paying attention and doing any of the assignments that are required during class.

Interviewer: I missed that last part. Doing the assignments...?

Ricardo: Yeah, doing what I'm supposed to do.

Interviewer: Same question, if someone visited your math class, what would they see you doing as a student?

Ricardo: In my AP Calc class, I would probably be writing notes on the lesson or taking a test, depending on the time of the week.

Interviewer: Do you like to attend school events such as dances, music performances, and sports events? Why or why not?

Ricardo: I don't attend sports events, but I'm in some sports and I was in band, so I tended to do that. If I'm not in a sport, I wouldn't attend it.

Interviewer: When you entered high school as a freshman, what were your feelings? Do you recall anything that the students or staff did to make you feel welcomed?

Ricardo: Entering high school, I was very anxious to get to high school because I didn't know what to expect, coming from middle school. There was going to be more students. When I entered, there was people in ASB that took me around the high school to introduce high school, to make me feel more comfortable.

Interviewer: Was that the ambassadors?

Ricardo: Yes.

Interviewer: Do your parents or other family members talk to you about school? If so, what do they say?

Ricardo: When they do talk about school, they encourage me to do my best. They use my sister as an example, to follow her steps.

Interviewer: Why do they use your sister as an example?

Ricardo: Because she's done very good at school. She was valedictorian for her class.

Interviewer: What is she doing now?

Ricardo: She's in Berkeley, studying to be a doctor.

Interviewer: Great. Where do you go if you need additional help with homework or class assignments?

Ricardo: In TRIO, every Tuesday I go to a class in 5-0 something. Right there, if I have any questions on any subject, they'll answer the questions.

Interviewer: Do you enjoy participating in classroom discussions? Why or why not?

Ricardo: If I'm required to, I probably will. If I'm not, I probably won't because I'm shy.

Interviewer: Are there any extracurricular activities that you would like to see at your school that are not currently in place?

Ricardo: Some extracurricular activities are a chess club, a computer programming class, or a robotics club.

Interviewer: Great. Do you find it easy to make friends at school? Why or why not?

Ricardo: Yeah, because everybody's friendly here. If you talk to someone and if you connect with them, yeah.

Interviewer: Outside of school, how do you spend your free time? What activities do you like to do with your family, Ricardo?

Ricardo: Outside, I'm usually doing homework. If I'm not, then I'm with my parents watching TV or going out to the mall or shopping.

Interviewer: Are you proud of your academic accomplishments at school? If so, what are you most proud of? If you're not proud of your academic accomplishments, why?

Ricardo: I'm proud of being currently number one in my class and being valedictorian for xxxxxxxxxx Middle School.

Interviewer: You were valedictorian in junior high school?

Ricardo: Yeah.

Interviewer: You're currently number one in your class, here?

Ricardo: Yes.

Interviewer: Congratulations. Do you believe you are treated fairly by your teachers?

Ricardo: Yeah, because every teacher treats you fairly. Let's say someone doesn't do their homework. He would punish that person because it's only fair to punish them when other people do their homework on time.

Interviewer: What types of extracurricular activities are you involved with?

Ricardo: I'm in MASA, which is Mexican American Student Association club, HYLK the math club, CSF, tennis, and cross-country.

Interviewer: Who encouraged you to join in those activities?

Ricardo: For sports, I joined tennis because my sister was in tennis. I joined because I wanted to see how interested I would be in that. The other clubs, I participate in them because it interested me.

Interviewer: Do you have friends at school that you can turn to if you have personal or school-related problems?

Ricardo: Yeah, I have two friends that I usually talk to every day. If I have any questions, I want to talk about something, I can talk to them.

Interviewer: Ricardo, what resources are available to you at school if you're having personal problems, issues at home, or issues with other students?

Ricardo: I usually talk to my counselor or teachers if I have any problems.

Interviewer: The last three questions deal with language acquisition. Do you feel that you've mastered English as a second language? If so, what helped you? If not, what do you think is holding you back?

Ricardo: I think that I have mastered English because I have taken many honors courses in English and that's prepared me to practice my English.

Interviewer: Looking back, when did you first learn English? What was most helpful to you in learning English?

Ricardo: I started learning in kindergarten because I attended a bilingual in elementary school. That helped me because if I had any questions, I would just ask the teacher.

Interviewer: Then last question, when do you use Spanish and when do you use English?

Ricardo: I usually speak English at school and Spanish at home.

Interviewer: When you're at home, if you're watching TV -- you probably don't have a lot of time to watch TV -- but when you do, do you usually watch TV in Spanish or in English?

Ricardo: I usually watch in English. My parents watch Spanish, so if I'm in the living room, I'm listening to Spanish.

Interviewer: Is there anything else that you'd like to share with me about xxxxxxxxxx High and your experiences here, or things that you'd like me to know?

Ricardo: I think it's a great school. Like I said, the best things are all the AP classes that you could take currently. But the lunch and the bathrooms are [inaudible 8:27].

Interviewer: Thank you.