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California's Generation 1.5 Immigrants: What Experiences, Characteristics, and Needs do They Bring to our English Classes?

■ Over the past several decades, the number of generation 1.5 immigrants attending California's elementary, secondary, and postsecondary schools has increased dramatically. However, many teachers, curriculum developers, administrators, and educational policymakers are still unaware of the special experiences, characteristics, and needs that these students may bring to the classroom. This article provides an overview and synthesis of scholarship relevant to generation 1.5 immigrants, in order to help readers develop more appropriate pedagogies, policies, and programs to meet these students' needs. The following areas are addressed: (a) definitions of the generation 1.5 population; (b) the social, political, and economic context of post-1965 immigration; (c) adaptation, acculturation, and identity formation; (d) experiences in U.S. schools; (e) language acquisition and language practices; and (f) acquisition of academic literacy.

Introduction

Over the past several decades, the number of English learners in California's K-12 schools, colleges, and universities has increased dramatically. These learners might be seen as falling somewhere along an *arrival age continuum*. At one end are those who arrive as adults; this group consists mainly of "foreign students" on short-term educational visas and immigrants who arrive after completing high school in their home country. At the other end are those born in the U.S of immigrant parents; this group consists mainly of children who live in linguistic enclave communities. However, most English learners in California schools fall somewhere between these two extremes. Most are immigrants[1] who arrive in U.S. some time during childhood, adolescence, or young adulthood and who thus have life experiences that straddle two or more nations, cultures, and languages. Because these students' experiences, characteristics, and educational needs may lie somewhere between those of recently arrived *first-generation* adult immigrants and the U.S.-born *second-generation* children of immigrants,

scholars have begun to refer to these students as *generation 1.5 immigrants*, a term which denotes these learners' in-between status.

In this article, I draw upon various fields to summarize and synthesize what is currently known about these students. This article thus sets the stage for subsequent generation 1.5 articles in this issue of *The CATESOL Journal*. I divide my discussion into several sections, beginning with broader socio-political, socioeconomic, and sociocultural issues and progressively narrowing my focus to schooling, language, and finally academic literacy. I thus organize my discussion as follows:

- Definitions of the generation 1.5 population
- The social, political and economic context of post-1965 immigration
- Adaptation, acculturation, and identity formation
- Experiences in U.S. schools
- Language acquisition and language practices
- Academic literacy

At the outset, I must stress that the goal of this article is not to categorize, label, or stereotype individual students but rather to help teachers, curriculum developers, administrators, and policy makers understand these students' educational needs and develop more appropriate pedagogies, policies, and programs to meet these needs. I must note that any attempt to describe a *group* of students is fraught with difficulty. Immigrant students' experiences are extremely diverse, even among members of the same family. These varied experiences are heavily affected by factors such as the geographic area of settlement, community demographics, the local political climate, school characteristics, and the presence or lack of extended family. Furthermore, student identity itself is fluid, multifaceted, and socially constructed (Harklau, 2000) and even the term "generation 1.5" may be problematic, for it implies that these students are somewhere "between" first and second generation immigrants when, in fact, they may have experiences, characteristics, and educational needs which differ markedly from both of these groups.

Defining the "Generation 1.5" Population

The terminology for immigrant generations often creates confusion and thus requires some explanation. The Japanese-American community has long used the numerical designations *issei, nisei, sansei,* and *yonsei* to refer to first, second, third, and fourth generation Japanese-Americans. Each of these terms is associated with a specific historical period; the *issei* were those who first came to the U.S. around the turn of the century and the *yonsei* are their highly Americanized fourth generation descendents, born in the 1980s and 1990s.

The Korean-American community developed a term specifically for immigrants who arrive as children, *il cheom o se*, translatable literally as the "one point five generation." For Korean-Americans, the term is not tied to a specific historical period but refers instead to the complicated social position of any Korean immigrant who arrives during childhood. In a study of Korean American youth, Park (1999) describes the term as "a highly conscious cate-

gory with complex cultural meanings." In fact, the term is prominently used in Korean-American media and publishing.

The immigration researchers Rumbaut and Ima (1988) are often credited with bringing the term *generation 1.5* into usage in the educational research community. Rumbaut and Ima used the term to describe the difficult social position of young Southeast Asian refugee children adapting to life in the U.S. during the 1970s and 1980s. The term was later taken up by a number of scholars in the fields of anthropology, immigration studies, and education. It found resonance because it captured the "in-between" position of students who did not seem to fit within traditional definitions and categories. Over the past several years, the term has become more widespread; a search for "generation 1.5" on the internet can now pull up hundreds of relevant web pages and documents. However, if one reads through these various documents, it becomes apparent that authors use the term in multiple ways. Some use it narrowly to describe only those children who arrive at a pre-school age, while others use it broadly to describe any immigrant child.

I would argue for a broad and flexible definition of "generation 1.5." In recent years, language minority populations have become increasingly diverse and the boundaries between populations have become blurred. Therefore, we should view the generation 1.5 population as a highly fluid group which may encompass a wide variety of students including (a) "in-migrants" from U.S. territories such as Puerto Rico (Zentella, 2000); (b) so-called "parachute kids" who come to live with relatives in the U.S. and attend school here (Zhou, 1998); (c) children of transnational families who experience multiple back-and-forth migrations between their home country and the U.S.; (d) U.S.-born children of immigrants in linguistic enclave communities (Portes & Manning, 1986); and (e) immigrants who are speakers of "Other Englishes" (Nero, 1997). I see the term as highly flexible because it captures the in-between position of many different groups of students whose experiences fall between the poles of "native" and "nonnative," and somewhere between the poles of U.S.-born and newcomer.

The Social, Political, and Economic Context of Post-1965 Immigration

To understand the experiences, characteristics and, educational needs of today's generation 1.5 immigrants, one must first examine the social, political, and economic context of post-1965 immigration. In 1965, the U.S. government repealed the oppressive and racist National Origins Act of 1924, a law that had severely restricted immigration from non-European counties (McKay & Wong, 2000). The new 1965 Immigration Act allowed for a more equitable distribution of visas to applicants throughout the world, established family unification rather than ethnicity as a favored selection criterion, and increased the overall number of immigration visas issued each year. These new post-1965 immigrants were joined by repeated waves of refugees from the early 1970s onward. Then, starting in the 1970s, both immigrants and refugees began to bring additional family members to the U.S. through family sponsored visas; these family visas now account for almost two thirds of all new immigration visas (Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services,

2001). Currently, about one million immigrants arrive in the U.S. each year; over 30% of these immigrants are children under the age of 18. This represents the largest yearly inflow of immigrant children in U.S. history.

Changing Demographics

The 1965 Immigration Act dramatically changed the racial, ethnic, and linguistic composition of the immigrant population. The flow of immigrants from Northern and Western Europe slowed considerably, replaced by an ever-growing stream of immigrants from Asia and Latin America, who now account for over three quarters of new U.S. immigrants (Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2001). Unlike previous generations of European immigrants, most post-1965 immigrants are "visible minorities;" because their ethnic status is more readily apparent, they may be more vulnerable to racial and ethnic discrimination and negative "White-nativist sentiments" (McKay & Wong, 2000). This discrimination may slow both intragenerational (i.e. individual) and intergenerational (familial) integration processes and place these immigrants at an economic and political disadvantage, compared to earlier generations of European immigrants (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996; Portes & Zhou, 1993).

In the post-1965 era, the immigrant population has also become more socio-economically diverse. Some groups, such as migrant agricultural laborers, enter the U.S. with few resources or marketable skills while others groups, such as technology workers, enter with skills that are in high demand. Within-group and between-group differences have also become greater, making it difficult to generalize about immigrants as a whole or adopt coherent political, social, and economic policies toward immigrants. The variability has created highly conflicting images of immigrants in the public eye and has fueled both pro- and anti-immigrant sentiment.

Changing Economic Conditions and "Segmented Assimilation"

While the demographics of the immigrant population have changed considerably, so too have the U.S. economic conditions that immigrants face when they arrive. During pre-1965 waves of immigration, immigrants' processes of economic integration often proceeded in a predictable manner. First generation immigrants tended to take jobs as laborers; their second generation children tended to take more highly paid skilled industrial jobs, thus moving up into the economic middle class; and their third generation grandchildren often took professional jobs, thus becoming firmly anchored in the U.S. middle class.

However, over the past 30 years, technological changes, globalization, and the movement of manufacturing to offshore locations have eliminated many well-paying skilled industrial jobs, cutting off the traditional routes of economic integration and upward mobility for many immigrant families. The U.S. economy has become more hourglass-shaped, with ever-growing numbers of unskilled, low-paying service sector jobs at the bottom and highly skilled, high-paying language-intensive information-age jobs at the top.

Immigrants now face the prospect of "segmented assimilation" (Rumbaut, 1994). Some segments of the immigrant population—those who arrive with strong educational backgrounds or those who are able to obtain high levels of education in the U.S.—achieve rapid economic assimilation and upward social mobility. In fact, college-educated immigrants often reach income parity with native-born U.S. citizens within their lifetimes. By contrast, other segments—those who arrive without education and who are unable to obtain higher education in the U.S.—make little progress toward income parity (Portes & Zhou, 1992). Such immigrants have little chance of making it out of poverty within their lifetimes. In fact, some segments of the immigrant population experience "downward assimilation." In such cases, the second generation children of immigrants end up with less social and economic capital than they would have acquired had they remained in their parents' home countries. In sum, the changing economic conditions in the U.S. have placed addition pressure on immigrant children; in order to avoid downward economic assimilation and/or to pull their families out of poverty, they are forced to follow a "college-bound" educational path, regardless of their level of academic interest or language and literacy proficiency.

Arrival, Adaptation, Acculturation, and Identity Formation

Immigrant families' arrival experiences are greatly affected by the circumstances surrounding their departure from their home countries. Immigrants who were victims of oppression in their home countries, who were displaced by political or economic crises, who had to leave on short notice, who spent time in refugee camps or third countries, or who were unable to bring along economic capital may have great difficulties establishing themselves in the U.S. Those who lack an extended family in the U.S. and lack access to cultural and linguistic enclave communities may also have difficulties. However, regardless of families' circumstances of departure and arrival, immigrants who arrive as children tend to share a number of common hardships.

The Psychosocial Difficulties of Immigrant Youth

Most people are under the mistaken impression that immigrant children adapt relatively easily to new cultural and linguistic surroundings. However, research suggests that immigrant children are vulnerable to a whole host of psychosocial difficulties. (See James 1997, for an overview.) Furthermore, such problems are exacerbated by the fact that immigrant families are often reticent to make use of social services due to cultural prejudices, linguistic barriers, or practical obstacles, such as a lack of availability in local neighborhoods. State and federal regulations (as well as budget problems) further limit the availability of family support services tailored to the needs of new immigrants, nonnaturalized U.S. residents, and undocumented immigrants.

Immigrant children typically experience anxiety and depression as they leave behind their familiar homeland and their established social relations (James, 1997). Various stage models of culture shock have been proposed and researchers have documented multiple stages of acceptance and rejection

of the new culture. What all of these models have in common is the recognition that cultural adjustment is a long-term process fraught with both emotional and cognitive difficulties—difficulties which may continue to resurface, even after many years in the U.S.

Immigrant children are generally burdened by more family responsibilities than U.S.-born children. Many immigrant parents work long hours in multiple jobs in order to make enough money to establish and support their family in the U.S. Therefore, many immigrant children must fend for themselves, in addition to playing a parenting role for younger siblings. Many immigrant children also do a significant amount of *language brokering* for their non-English speaking parents and siblings, thus taking on intense adult responsibilities at a very early age (Tse, 1996). Furthermore, immigrant children are often under pressure both to begin work at an early age and to get through school at a record pace so that they can support their families financially.

Perhaps the most commonly recognized psychosocial problem of immigrant children is intergenerational conflicts of values. Although immigrant children tend to suffer short- and long-term culture shock and experience considerable cognitive and emotional stress in adapting to American culture, they do tend to take on American values and behaviors far more quickly than their parents. This often brings them into conflict with their parents' expectations, especially regarding traditional gender roles and traditional parent-child relationships (Kibria, 1993; Zhou & Bankston, 1998). Immigrant children thus may be forced to navigate between two drastically different social worlds on a daily basis, with conflicting norms, values, roles, and expectations.

In addition to these pressures within the family, immigrant children often experience linguistic, cultural, and racial discrimination in their schools, communities, and society at large. In schools, teachers may harbor conscious or unconscious prejudices and thus underestimate immigrant students' potential (Valdés, 1998). Conversely teachers may place undue expectations on students; this is often the case with Asian immigrants who must live up to the "model minority" stereotype (Suzuki, 1994).

In school, generation 1.5 immigrants often experience four-fold discrimination from their cohorts. Native-born Anglo children may see generation 1.5 students as "foreigners." U.S.-born same-ethnicity cohorts may see generation 1.5 students as being too backward, sometimes using the disparaging term F.O.B. ("fresh off the boat") to refer to these students. Recently arrived immigrants who still have strong linguistic and cultural ties to their homelands may regard generation 1.5 students as "too Americanized." Other U.S.-born minority groups may perceive generation 1.5 students as "competing" with them for access to an increasingly limited array of desirable economic and social niches within U.S. schools and society.

Acculturation and Identity Formation

The process of acculturation and identity formation is particularly difficult for generation 1.5 immigrant children. Traditionally, acculturation has

been seen as a linear "zero sum" game in which immigrant children progressively give up their home culture and accept American culture. However, scholars now realize that immigrant children negotiate complex multicultural identities (McKay & Wong, 1996). An immigrant who arrives during childhood or adolescence faces a two-fold task—continuing to develop a home culture identity, while simultaneously developing a U.S. cultural identity. When this process is successful, immigrants develop healthy bicultural identities with strong attachments to two or more cultures. When the process is unsuccessful, immigrants sometimes become doubly alienated, as in the case of Latino immigrant youth who reject both mainstream American culture and Mexican culture (for example, see Vigil, 1997).

Over the past several decades, the process of identity negotiation has become more complex as the role of so-called hyphenated identities (e.g. "Asian-American") has increased in U.S. society. For example, an immigrant child who arrives from Vietnam must struggle to form a three-fold cultural identity as Vietnamese, as American, and as Asian-American. Similarly, an immigrant child from Mexico must negotiate aspects of Mexican, American, and Chicano identities. The process of navigating between national heritage identities (e.g. "Argentinean") and pan-national ethnic identities (e.g. "Latino") may also be difficult for the generation 1.5 immigrants. While immigrant children tend to identify primarily with their national heritage identity, U.S. society tends to label these children with pan-national ethnic and racial identities, such as "Asian" or "Latino" (Kibria, 1998). Immigrant children often resist pan-ethnic or racial labels, especially those that entail self-perceived loss of status. The process of negotiating a bicultural/multicultural identity may be especially difficult for children who arrive in the U.S. at a very young age. These children must struggle to form home-culture identities, in spite of the fact that they may have little or no memory of their home countries. This problem is highlighted when ESL teachers give them stereotypical "ESL assignments" such as comparing America with their "home country" (Harklau, 2000).

Recently, scholars have noted a new pattern of acculturation and identity formation among immigrant children—acculturation without assimilation. In other words, both generation 1.5 immigrants and U.S.-born second generation immigrants have increasingly maintained aspects of their home culture identities instead of rapidly Americanizing. This phenomenon has led immigration scholars such as Rumbaut (1996) to refer to today's U.S.-born children of immigrants as "the new second generation," a generation which no longer follows the traditional intergenerational path of linguistic, cultural, and economic assimilation. Acculturation without assimilation has been noted particularly in the case of two rapidly growing and relatively successful immigrant groups, East Indians (Sridhar & Sridhar, 2000) and Russians (Eli, 2000). This new pattern challenges the traditional notion that assimilation is a prerequisite for success (Gibson, 1998) and it is especially visible among ethnolinguistic groups that see themselves as part of transnational diasporas, such as the overseas Chinese communities.

All of the above factors have resulted in a multi-speed and multi-dimensional process of adaptation and acculturation. Post-1965 immigrant

children tend to follow more complex and varied paths of linguistic, cultural, social, and economic integration, with more varied outcomes even among siblings within the same family. In fact, identity itself has become an increasingly complex phenomenon as immigrants now face numerous racial, ethnic, and identity options that they can, to a certain extent, freely negotiate, if they choose to do so (Kibria, 2000).

K-to-College Educational Experiences

Educational researchers have noted that immigrant students are poorly served at both the K-12 and college levels (Harklau, Siegal, Losey, & 1999; Rolph, Gray, & Melamid, 1996; Ruiz-de-Valasco & Fix, 2000). School support staff are generally ill-prepared to meet the social and psychological needs of immigrant children (James, 1997). Academic services targeted toward immigrants are sparse, especially at the postsecondary level (Rolph, Gray & Melamid, 1996). Within English programs, curricular structures that track students into ESL, bilingual, remedial, and mainstream classes offer no clear placement options for immigrant students who are long-term U.S. residents. After several years in the U.S., such students no longer seem to "fit" in newcomer-oriented ESL classes but such students are often not yet ready for the language and literacy demands of mainstream English classes. With time, English placement becomes even more problematic, especially when students shift to English dominance and yet still retain learner-like features in their speech and writing (Valdés, 1992; Frodsen & Starna, 1999).

The ways that educational institutions currently label and categorize students tend obscure the immigrant student population and conflate these students' experiences, characteristics, and needs with those of other populations (Harklau, Siegal & Losey, 1999), making it more difficulty to design special programs to serve these students. *Ethnic labels* associated with diversity mandates are problematic because they conflate immigrants with U.S.-born minorities. For example, newly arrived Southeast Asian immigrants and fourth generation Japanese Americans are both labeled "Asian-American." *Linguistic labels* such as "ESL" are problematic, especially at the college level, because they conflate immigrant students with foreign-visa students who, unlike most immigrants, usually come to the U.S. with ample social and economic capital (Vandrick, 1995), strong metalinguistic English training (Reid, 1997), and strong academic skills. *Academic labels* such as "remedial" or "basic writer" are problematic because they conflate immigrant students with monolingual U.S. students who have very different language and literacy needs (Braine, 1996; McKay, 1981). Furthermore, all of these labels are problematic because they reduce immigrant students' needs to a single dimension and overlook other social, cognitive, and affective factors associated with immigration and biculturalism.

Long-Term Learning Trajectories, Disruptions, and Discontinuities

Immigrant children confront many more disruptions and discontinuities along their pathway from kindergarten to college than do mainstream U.S.-born children. Immigrants who arrive before first grade experience a disrup-

tion when they enter U.S. schools, confront the English-dominant culture, and are forced to navigate mainly or solely in English. Adolescent immigrants who arrive during middle school or high school experience a major disruption when they face a new schooling system, curriculum, language of instruction, and school culture. This disruption is even greater for immigrants who have received little or no schooling in their home countries when they enter the U.S., and for refugee children who have missed years of schooling during their migratory process (Bosher & Rowekamp, 1998). In addition, new immigrants to the U.S. often relocate several times before finding a stable place to live; their children experience additional interruptions as they switch between schools that have differing placement policies, programs, and instructional practices.

Public schools generally assess incoming immigrant students to determine whether these students need specialized language instruction. However, the quality of the assessment varies considerably among states and among school systems within a given state. California schools use the "Home Language Survey," a series of questions about the child's use of languages other than English. A "yes" answer to any of the survey questions is supposed to trigger a more thorough assessment process. Unfortunately, there may be a significant delay between initial identification and the more thorough assessment; during this time period, a child may languish in an inappropriate classroom at an inappropriate level (ESL Intersegmental Project Commission, 1996). Even when assessments are carried out in a timely manner, the effectiveness of assessment tools is often questionable. Especially at the younger grade levels, assessment tools can mistake minimal oral fluency for English proficiency, thus denying students access to special language services (Wong Fillmore, personal communication, 2001).

Even when effective assessment mechanisms are used, placement options and services for language minority students may be severely limited. One commonly favored option is the "newcomer school" or "newcomer program," where recently arrived immigrant children may be placed for one or more years while adjusting to U.S. society and learning basic English. The value of newcomer schools and programs has been contentiously debated. Critics argue that such schools and programs may enhance segregation, add yet another disruption to students' long-term schooling path, and delay students' entry into mainstream school life (Feinberg, 2000). Advocates claim, on the other hand, that such schools and programs provide a "foot up" for newcomers, assist them with the adaptation and acculturation process, affirm the value of home cultures, and help newcomers build confidence and self-esteem (Herzberg, 1998). Unfortunately, generation 1.5 immigrants who arrive in the U.S. several years before first grade are seldom placed in newcomer programs because these students are technically no longer considered "newcomers."

When newcomer programs are unavailable or inappropriate, ESL or bilingual classes often serve as the initial placement and the nexus of support for immigrant students. Of course, ESL and bilingual classes vary greatly in scope and function. Some classes have taken on a more general cultural empowerment mission where the teachers serve as advisors and intermediar-

ies between the ESL students and other school personnel (Harklau, 1994). Other classes have a more limited scope, focusing merely on language instruction. In the wake of Proposition 227, the anti-bilingual education ballot measure accepted by California voters in 1998, the role and scope of ESL classes appears to have become even more complex and varied as school districts attempt to restructure existing programs to comply with the new law.

ESL Tracking, Remedial Tracking, and Mainstreaming

As immigrant students advance along their educational trajectory, they face a bewildering variety of programs, classroom placement options and instructional approaches (e.g. bilingual, ESL, immersion, 2-way immersion, sheltered content, remedial/developmental, pull-out, and mainstream). This occurs because language minority students are treated in different ways within each segment of K-to-college trajectory (ESL Intersegmental Project Commission, 1996). In California, immigrants usually start out designated as "English Learners" (EL), a term which has recently replaced the term "Limited English Proficient" (LEP), scrapped because of its pejorative connotations. Students are typically re-designated as "Fully English Proficient" (FEP) within a span of a few years. However, many generation 1.5 immigrants are redesignated as language learners as they move up the rungs of the educational hierarchy. When students enter high schools, community colleges, and 4-year colleges, they are particularly vulnerable to redesignation, a prospect that most students find highly demoralizing because they feel they have already "made it out of ESL."

In K-12 schools, immigrant students may face two equally problematic English placements—premature mainstreaming on the one hand and long-term ESL tracking on the other. In the post-proposition 227 era, schools are under pressure to mainstream students long before the students are fully equipped to deal with the language and literacy demands of mainstream classes. In such classes, immigrant students may get little or no instructional support and thus may flounder (Harklau, 1994). On the other hand, when immigrant students are tracked into ESL classes for years on end, they may have little contact with native English speakers and may receive an education consisting only of mechanical grammar drills, "worksheet" pedagogy and "seatwork." Harklau (1994) documents how certain groups of ESL students (often Asian immigrants) manage to navigate themselves out of ESL tracks and find compensatory strategies for succeeding in mainstream tracks. However, many groups of students (often Latino immigrants) remain "stranded" in ESL tracks for much longer. Such placements may arise from latent racial and ethnic prejudices of school officials (Valdés, 1998).

Those immigrant students who successfully exit ESL classes face two additional problematic placement options—high track (i.e. "honors") classes and low track (i.e. "remedial) classes. In high track classes, students generally receive richer linguistic input, more opportunities for oral interaction, and more stimulating instructional practices. However, students must "compete" with U.S.-born native English speakers, a prospect that can be quite daunting if the instructor fails to structure activities to accommodate second language

speakers. In low track classes, ESL students may find the tasks more manageable. However, linguistic input in low track classes is generally poorer, tasks are more mechanical, and classroom interaction tends to be minimal, as many teachers avoid interactive activities in order to control "behavior problem" students (Oakes, 1995).

Success and Failure in K-12 Schools

A number of theories have been advanced to explain immigrant students' successes and failures in K-12 schools. Ogbu's (1998) theoretical construct of *voluntary and involuntary* minorities is perhaps the most well known. Ogbu suggests that new immigrants tend to have a success-orientation because they come to the U.S. voluntarily, to seek out better economic opportunities and better living conditions. Conversely, Ogbu suggests that U.S.-born minorities lack a success-orientation because they are descendents of colonized or oppressed groups who were brought to the U.S. involuntarily. Voluntary minorities tend to "buy into" the power structures of school and society while involuntary minorities tend to resist these structures because they are well aware of the oppressive nature of these structures. However, as Gibson (1998) points out, immigrant children who come at an early age may not fit into this dichotomy. In fact, generation 1.5 students may share traits of both voluntary and involuntary minorities. They may also come to identify with other U.S.-born ethnic minority groups in inner city schools; they thus may develop a general attitude of resistance toward schooling and viewing school as an instrument of social oppression.

Home-school mismatch theories may also help to explain the success and failure of immigrant children. Such theories are predicated on the notion that different socioeconomic and sociocultural groups belong to different discourse communities (Gee, 1990). U.S. school structures and instructional practices generally dovetail closely with the values, norms, and behaviors of middle-class Anglo families, thus giving middle class Anglo children an enormous "foot up" toward academic success (Heath, 1983). Because immigrant families are generally cut off from middle-class Anglo discourse communities, they may have trouble negotiating the language practices of the school environment.

Academic success and failure may also be connected to parental expectations and parental participation in their children's schooling. Many teachers and administrators perceive certain groups of immigrant parents—particularly Spanish-speaking parents—as being disinterested in their children's schooling. However, educational researchers have begun to counter these claims, suggesting that immigrants parents' low levels of participation may be due to factors that school personnel overlook, including the grueling work schedules that many immigrant parents face, language barriers, and parents' negative experiences during previous contacts with teachers and school officials.

It has also been suggested that acculturation is a determinant of success in K-12 schools. Traditionally, school personnel and educational scholars have assumed that immigrant children's educational successes correlated

with their level of cultural and linguistic assimilation into U.S. society. However, over the past 20 years, a number of scholars have shown that strong home culture identity is *positively* correlated with motivation, academic performance, and behavioral traits conducive to successful academic performance. In fact, rapid cultural and linguistic assimilation has recently been linked to educational failure, rather than success, particularly among certain segments of the immigrant population, such certain groups Southeast Asian students (Bosher & Rowekamp, 1998).

Overall, immigrant children experience the same segmented assimilation that is experienced by the general immigrant population. Some groups of immigrant children use U.S. schooling as a path for upward mobility while others flounder in U.S. schools or drop out all together. Bankston and Zhou (1997) have referred to this as the "bifurcation" of immigrant youth. In their study of schooling in New Orleans, they document how local population of Vietnamese immigrant children became bifurcated, with children gravitating toward two polar extremes, which the authors describe as "Valedictorians" and "Delinquents."

Success and Failure in College

Recent studies have shown that immigrant children are more likely than same-ethnicity U.S.-born cohorts to attended college, even when confounding variables such as socioeconomic status have been factored out (Vernez & Abrahamse, 1996). This high attendance rate may be attributable in part to the success-orientation of voluntary immigrants (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). However, it is more likely related to changes in the U.S. economy (discussed earlier in this article), which have made postsecondary education one of the few routes for upward mobility available to new immigrants

Immigrants face a number of difficulties in college. First, immigrants experience an identity change as they begin their post-secondary studies. As Harklau (2000) notes, in high school, immigrant students are often seen by teachers and administrators as the "good kids" (i.e. the most diligent and "dutiful") when compared to U.S.-born students. This is especially true in remedial high school classes where immigrants may be studying along side "troubled" U.S.-born students whom teachers see as "behavior problems." However, when immigrant students arrive at college, they find that their identity in ESL and English classes changes radically. If they are placed in college-level ESL classes, they will study alongside newly arrived foreign-visa students who have come to the U.S. with ample social, intellectual, and economic capital. Immigrants, whom teachers and program administrators now compare to foreign students, take on a new identity as the "under-prepared," the "slackers," or the "behavior problems" (in part because they adjusted to the informal character of U.S. schools).

Most immigrant students find that college is a fundamentally different sort of institution from high schools. Because U.S. society tends to perceive K-12 education as a "right," K-12 schools are characterized by an abundance of *support services*. In contrast, because U.S. society perceives post-secondary education as a meritocratic privilege, post-secondary schools are

characterized by an abundance of *gate-keeping mechanisms*. Even with the advent of open admissions, starting in the 1970s, and the expanding "urban mission" of many public colleges, most college English department find themselves caught between the conflicting goals of supporting linguistic minority students while at the same time maintaining what faculty and administrators perceive as "traditional academic standards."

Many immigrant college students also face burdens typically associated with "non-traditional" students. Many are "first in the family" to go to college. Many have to deal with cultural and racial prejudices in college. Many are struggling economically, often working full time to support their families because their non-English speaking parents have limited earning potential. Their families, while supportive of education, might have little understanding of what American college experiences are all about and such families may pressure students to take unreasonable course loads in order to finish in record time. In addition, recent anti-remediation mandates in many state college systems have put additional pressures on immigrant students to complete their ESL courses coursework in record time or face disenrollment or loss of financial aid.

Language Acquisition and Language Practices

New immigrants to the U.S. have always tended to settle in specific magnet regions. Over the past several decades the most important magnet regions have been California, New York, Texas, Florida, New Jersey, and Illinois. In fact, one third of all U.S. immigrants have made California their destination and immigrants now represent one quarter of the current population of California.

Entering a Bilingual Enclave Community

Within these magnet regions, immigrants have tended to settle in ethno-linguistic enclave communities, which are characterized by complex patterns of social and linguistic interaction. These communities contain monolingual home language speakers, monolingual English speakers, and bilinguals who range from home language-dominant to English-dominant (Valdés, 2000). Within these communities, the functions of English and the home language are particular to different social contexts and they spread over a variety of registers and domains. To be a full member of the community and participate in all social institutions, immigrant children must both maintain their home language and develop English proficiency (Zentella, 1997). In addition, these children must adapt to the localized language practices of the community, which generally differ from language use in the home country. For example, within in an enclave community, both the home language and the host language undergo modification and influence each other through such processes as semantic extension and linguistic borrowing. In addition, interlocutors often use complex patterns of code-switching that require speakers to be proficient in both languages. In short, as members of bilingual communities, generation 1.5 children must develop complex linguistic practices of which mainstream English proficiency is only a part.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Issues

Until the 1960, many educators thought that the acquisition of a second language acquisition at an early age carried negative cognitive consequences, "overloading" and "confusing" the child. In fact, many educators advised immigrant parents to switch to English when addressing their children, even in cases where the parents had only a minimal command of English. Now it is generally recognized that children can navigate bilingual and even trilingual development without any negative cognitive repercussions, other than perhaps small delays in vocabulary acquisition.

When generation 1.5 children begin the process of acquiring English, they face all of the difficulties that are characteristic of any second language acquisition process. Their English competence goes through a long "interlanguage" stage in which it gradually approximates native-like English. This interlanguage may be characterized by a high degree of diachronic and synchronic variability (for example, based on cognitive and affective factor such task difficulty and anxiety). These learners may experience frequent periods of backsliding, as their interlanguage system periodically "reorganizes" itself. These learners' linguistic performance may be highly uneven, with some areas and domains highly developed and others quite weak. Finally, both the rate of acquisition and the ultimate attainment of English proficiency will vary greatly from individual to individual, due to social and psycholinguistic factors that are still only partially understood. Some learners will fossilize at an earlier stage of language development while others will go on to attain a much more native-like English.

Naturalistic Acquisition and Community Dialects

There are several factors that make generation 1.5 students' acquisition processes different from that of the typical English learners. Generation 1.5 students often learn much of their English through informal oral/aural interaction with friends, classmates, and coworkers, through interaction with English-dominant siblings and members of the extended family, and of course, through "passive" input from radio and television. Students who acquire language predominantly through oral/aural interaction may not notice nonsalient grammatical features and therefore these features may never become part of their syntactic or morphological repertoire. In their speech, they may rely heavily on pragmatic discourse moves rather than syntactic or morphological specificity. While they usually become highly proficient communicators, many face considerable difficulty when confronted with school writing tasks that demand a high level of grammatical accuracy. In addition, oral/aural learners generally lack the meta-language and grammar terminology necessary for understanding teachers' explanations of their grammar errors.

Socioeconomic factors also affect the language acquisition process. Most immigrant students attend underfunded inner-city schools with large U.S-minority student populations; their interlocutors are typically speakers of various community dialects of English, such as African American English

Vernacular (AAEV), Chicano English (CE), and American-born Chinese English (ABCE). Many of their interlocutors are also English as a Second Language speakers whose own speech may be characterized by various patterns of fossilized nonnative-like forms. Immigrant students thus may receive a great deal of linguistic input that differs from so-called "standard English" and differs from so-called "native English." If their peer-groups consist primarily of community dialect speakers, immigrant students may target their speech patterns to those speakers. When confronted with academic writing tasks, these immigrant students often produce prose that contains both ESL features and dialect features. They then face double censure from teachers—both for their "ESL errors" and for their "nonstandard errors."

Classroom-Based English Acquisition in the Home Country and the U.S.

Immigrant students who arrive during middle school and high school have often had some formal English instruction in their home countries. This instruction is generally text-based, focusing on reading and grammar. Therefore, such students usually arrive in the U.S. quite unprepared for the challenges of real-time oral interaction. However, their prior English training may give students a meta-linguistic understanding of English, which can later facilitate their language acquisition, particularly in the area of formal accuracy-focused school writing tasks. In fact, many older immigrant students report that they rely heavily on the grammatical instruction that they received in their home countries, particularly in cases where such instruction is lacking in U.S. schools.

While the classroom-based language acquisition experiences of immigrant students have been studied in some detail at the elementary school level, less is known about their experiences at the high school level (Harklau, 2000). This lack of research is attributable in part to the complex instructional path high school students must traverse each day across many sites, making research difficult (Harklau, 2000). Recent studies suggest that instructional practices in high school ESL classrooms vary greatly in quality and type. In some high school ESL classrooms, mechanical drills and worksheet pedagogy dominate. In other classrooms communicative language teaching dominates, with little attention paid to grammatical form. However, one thing is clear: most immigrant ESL students at the high school level receive less than adequate practice in academic writing (Harklau, 1998).

Language Shift and Language Loss

After immigrant children arrive in the U.S., their home language proficiency may follow two possible routes. Their proficiency may continue to grow through interactions with other home language speakers, as often occurs with children who acquired literacy skills before immigrating to the U.S. and with children who attend special home-language literacy programs in the U.S. These children continue to develop home language proficiency not just through their oral interactions but also through their reading practices.

Conversely, an immigrant child's home language proficiency may cease development and even backslide; in such cases, children do not develop a

lexically and syntactically rich, age-appropriate command of their native language as they mature. The process of language shift and home language loss may occur quite rapidly. Of the group of immigrants who arrive between age 0 and age 14, approximately 20% will shift to English dominance within the first five years of U.S. residency, 40% will switch within the first 10 years and 66% switch within the first 20 years. In fact, 10% of immigrants age 0 to 14 will eventually lose their home language completely. Those immigrants who arrive after age 15 appear to fare much better; few of these individuals lose their home language over the course of their lifetime. (See McKay & Wong, 2000 for a complete discussion of immigrant children's language loss and the associated statistics.)

Academic Literacy

As Pérez (1998) points out, children acquire the foundations of literacy—whether in a first or second language—within their native languages and cultures (see Cummins, 1989; Wells, 1986; Wong Fillmore, 1991). In other words, childhood experiences in the family and in the local community serve to initiate children into attitude, values, and practices regarding interaction with print. In families and communities where literacy practices are widespread, where adults frequently model pleasure reading, where conversation often revolves around texts, and where reading and writing are valued, immigrant students will have a distinct predisposition to acquire literacy in both of their languages. Students' experiences in their families and communities also provide students with fonts of knowledge—general real world knowledge, background knowledge about specific topics, various kinds of schema—all of which are essential for constructing meaning from texts.

First Language Literacy

The process of acquiring English literacy is facilitated both by students' general proficiency in English and by students' literacy proficiency in their home language. Early studies of immigrant children's language and literacy acquisition demonstrated conclusively that reading proficiency in the first language facilitates the acquisition of reading proficiency in English (see Cummins, 1979). As Cummins notes, this occurs because a wide range of skills are directly transferable from first language to second language literacy, including perceptual skills, basic word decoding skills, prediction, and decoding of syntax. Perhaps more importantly, children who are already literate in their first language also bring text schema to their second language reading experiences.

One of the strongest rationales for bilingual education is that children can develop English literacy skills and practices more easily and effectively through the transfer of skills and practices from L1. Cummins (1979) has argued that students need to attain a certain threshold of reading proficiency in their first language before they can transfer reading skills to English. Many Chinese families in urban enclaves have traditionally sent their children to Chinese "Saturday school" so that children may master the Chinese character system and develop literacy in Chinese, which certainly facilitates their English literacy acquisition. Unfortunately, many young immigrant children do

not have access to bilingual education or home language maintenance programs and thus they do not develop home language literacy. This leaves young immigrant children at a distinct educational disadvantage compared to older children.

School-Based Writing Tasks

Immigrant students who arrive as adolescents or young adults generally have the advantage of well-developed L1 literacy skills and ample experiences with school-based reading and writing tasks. These L1 academic literacy skills and practices generally transfer positively to English school writing tasks. However, there may be some initial difficulties in transferring literacy skills from L1 to L2 schooling tasks because of differences in school practices and expectations. The possibility of cultural difference in written discourse style has been debated since Kaplan first introduced the notion of Contrastive Rhetoric in 1966. However, it is fairly certain that school-based writing practices do vary greatly among school systems of the world, especially in the nature, structure purpose, and amount of writing tasks within the classroom. Immigrant students who arrive as adolescents or young adults for example, may be unfamiliar with school tasks that involve expressivist narrative writing, creative writing, or argumentative writing. Similarly, these students may be unfamiliar with instructional practices that include extensive reading. For example, in many students' home cultures, the prohibitive cost of books makes it impossible for teachers in those cultures to assign novels or other outside texts.

Academic Literacy in High School and College

Students' oral proficiency in English also greatly facilitates proficiency in reading and writing. However, oral proficiency in conversational English does not in and of itself assure students of success in reading and writing. Cummins (1979) first introduced the notions BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) and CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) to highlight the differences between conversational English, which immigrant students tend to acquire rapidly, and academic English, which students develop only over an extended period of time (Collier, 1987; Hakuta et al, 2000). Unfortunately, many immigrant students are mainstreamed long before they have a firm grounding in academic language and thus they must struggle with the academic language of mainstream courses.

Even when immigrant students have a basic grounding in academic English, students often face literacy "roadblocks" as they move across educational segments from high school into college. In college, students are generally faced with much greater reading loads and much higher demands for accuracy in their writing. College appears to be the first place where immigrant ESL students are consistently (and often unfairly) held to native-English-speaker literacy norms. In fact, native-speaker-normed English placement tests (such as California State University's EPT) tend to place immigrant students into Basic Writing classes, even when such students have attended mainstream English classes in high school. Furthermore, many im-

migrant ESL students find themselves redesignated as "ESL" when they enter college, even if they have long ago exited K-12 ESL programs.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Disciplinary divisions within the educational research community have made it difficult to gain a complete picture of the experiences, characteristics and educational needs of generation 1.5 immigrant students. At the K-12 level there has been a distinct separation between researchers focusing on bilingual instruction, ESL instruction, and mainstream language arts instruction. At the postsecondary level there has been a distinct separation between scholars focusing on TESOL and Composition (Matsuda, 1998). TESOL scholars have tended to focus on foreign-visa students rather than immigrant students. Composition scholars have tended to focus on academically under-prepared, "non-traditional," U.S.-born minority students rather than immigrant students who are English learners. It is clear that educational scholars and classroom teachers from all sub-disciplinary branches and educational levels must work together to further our understanding of generation 1.5 immigrants. In addition educational scholars must begin draw upon other fields, such as immigration studies, sociology, and psychology, in an attempt to understand immigrant students' successes and failures during their long-term K-to-college learning trajectory.

The aim of this article has been to summarize and synthesize some of the relevant research on the experiences, characteristics, and needs of generation 1.5 students. In subsequent articles in this *CATESOL Journal* theme section, authors will discuss particular pedagogical practices and institutional arrangements for serving generation 1.5. All of these pedagogical suggestions will acknowledge the fact that generation 1.5 students may have very different experiences, characteristics, and educational needs than those of U.S.-born monolingual English speakers, U.S.-born bilinguals, U.S.-born speakers of community dialects of English, foreign-born and foreign-educated international students.

Acknowledgements

Endnote

[1] In this paper, I use the term "immigrant" to refer to all newcomers who intend to reside permanently in the U.S., including naturalized citizens, permanent residents, refugees, and holders of asylum visas, as well as undocumented immigrants.

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