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Dual Language Teachers' Approaches to Engaging Latino ELL Students in Elementary

Education

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Education

in

Educational Leadership

by

Irma F. Fernández

Committee in charge:

University of California, San Diego

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2016

The Dissertation of Irma Fernández is approved, and is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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University of California, San Diego

California State University San Marcos

2016

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation in memory of my parents, Xavier and Angelina, who taught me early in life the importance of having an education. For my father who taught me that "education is something that no one can ever take from you", and I learned he was right. For my mother, who has always been my guiding light, and who has inspired me every day of my life to be all that I am.

To my three children, Marisa, Cristina and Brian who have continuously encouraged me to fulfill my educational dreams. They continue and always will be, the brightest and best part of me.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Dual Language Teachers' Approaches to Engaging Latino ELL Students in Elementary

Education

by

Irma Fernández

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

University of California, San Diego, 2016
California State University, San Marcos, 2016

Professor Frances Contreras, Chair

The U.S. Census Bureau predicts that by 2021, one of four U.S. students will be

Latino. Research points to an increase in students identified as English Language

Learners (ELLs), thus providing a glimpse of tomorrow's demographics and framing the

reality of the classroom of the future. Schools are examining their partnerships with

families from linguistically diverse backgrounds. These partnerships call upon all

stakeholders to examine the ways dual language teachers are prepared to educate this growing student population. The literature review in this study examined the troubling picture of Latinos as being the least educated of all major ethnic groups, whose achievement gap has minimally narrowed, and the educators who explore ways to improve their knowledge of instructional practices to strengthen communication with Latino families. One of the major challenges that confronts educators is to work collaboratively with diverse families whose cultural perspectives may differ from their own. Moll's (1992) Funds of Knowledge and Culturally Responsive Instruction Theory provides the conceptual framework for this study.

This qualitative study examined dual language educators' understanding of effective culturally competent practices and instructional strategies for working with Latino ELL students. Data was collected through interviews with ten dual language teachers who earned a master's degree, multiple subject teaching credentials, and acquired a BCLAD to be highly qualified to instruct in a dual language immersion school.

Key words: English language learners, funds of knowledge; cultural awareness, cultural proficient leadership, two-way language immersion/dual language immersion, educational partnerships, cross-cultural competence, Hispanic/Latino.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

"If the child is not learning the way you are teaching, then you must teach in the way the

child learns" - Rita Dunn

Today's public school classrooms are made up of students from a variety of

ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, and in California, almost 1.6 million of these

students have been classified as English Language Learners (Ennis, Ríos-Vargas, &

Albert, 2011; Fry & Lopez, 2012; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005). Defining

the term English Language Learner (ELL) and English Learner (EL) are frequently

confusing in the present literature. In the educational community the use of ELL has

created inconsistencies found across schools, districts and states (Garcia, Arias, Murri &

Serna, 2010). The term ELL for the purpose of this study refers to schoolchildren in the

United States whose native language is other than English (Gandara, 2005). Besides ELL,

other common terms use for children whose native language is other than English are also

known as: language minority, English Learner (EL), and limited English proficient

(Garcia, et al., 2010). These children have yet to develop enough English to be successful

in the classroom and this requires knowledge and ability to communicate in academic

English. Consequently, English Language Learners (ELLs) require special assistance

from their teachers to meet the state's rigorous academic content while also learning

English as a second language.

Teachers in the dual language classroom, shoulder the responsibility for the

content knowledge education of ELLs, including their academic language development in

a second language. Unfortunately, teachers often enter classrooms unprepared to meet the cultural and language needs of the growing population of ELLs (Durgunoglu, & Hughes, 2010; Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005; Garcia, et al., 2010, Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Teachers are assigned to provide instruction with minimal college coursework to address the needs of ELLs in the classroom and workshop training. In California for example, the debate on how best to educate students with limited English language skills has been a main issue for more than 40 years, with some ELLs gaining success, but not enough to be productive in today's competitive and global society (DeGaetano, 2007; Marshall, 2006; Sosa & Gomez, 2012).

Today Latino children account for about 1 in 6 school-aged children and comprise 41% of students in the top ten largest public school districts in 2000 (LeFevre & Shaw, 2012; Marshall, 2006). Due to rapid demographic changes, many school districts are faced with increasing demands not only for more classrooms and schools, but also for more teachers who have been trained to work with culturally diverse children and their communities. With 32% of all ELLs in the United States, California has the highest concentration of English learners than anywhere else in the nation (Ennis, Ríos-Vargas, & Albert, 2011; Fry, & Lopez, 2012; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005). California educates one-third of all the nation's ELL students – 1.6 million students, 85 percent of all ELLs in California are Spanish speaking, and more ELLs in both elementary and secondary schools are U.S. born (Payán & Nettles, 2008). As changes in the allocation of funds increase for ELLs and students from lower socioeconomic families occur, teacher approaches to engaging ELLs in the classroom have garnered the attention of all stakeholders responsible for the academic achievement of all students.

One challenge in urban schools with a large percentage of a working-poor and low-income Latino populations is to help students become and remain academically engaged in their own learning despite the presence of difficult situations and obstacles in their communities (Sosa & Gomez, 2012). These relatively young Latino families, whose children constitute the majority of the student population in many public urban schools, face their own sets of challenges and barriers when it comes to their children's schooling and education. For example, they are more likely to experience language barriers when they enroll their children in school, and also encounter United States Visa and other immigration problems that affect residency (Becerra, 2012; DeGaetano, 2007; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005; Woolenberg, 1974). In addition, everyday subsistence is exacerbated by poverty. These challenges are compounded by the fact that many Latino parents must engage with and confront public institutions not accustomed to serving them culturally and/or linguistically (Sosa & Gomez, 2012).

Many Latino families still carry negative school experiences from their own childhoods, and trust is often difficult (Altschul, 2011; Good, Masewicz, Vogel, 2010). Some negative generational encounters with the educational system include being excluded from White schools in California (Blanco, 2010; Woolenberg, 1974). The lasting impact of Mendez v. Westminster (1946) in the struggle for desegregation and Latino children not being able to speak their native language in school, being ostracized, and penalized for speaking a language other than English, continues to be a reality for Latino families during acculturation (Woolenberg, 1974). Thus, for many Latino families, race and culture continue to be viewed as ongoing issues with Latino families

inclined to use past frames of references for being treated unfairly in their struggle for equality in education (Smith, Stern & Shatrova, 2008; Turney & Kao, 2009).

As a group, Latinos continue to be marginalized in education and society at large (Good, Masewicz, & Vogel, 2010). Furthermore, research indicates teachers have historically viewed ELLs through a deficit lens of not being as academically successful as their White peers (Becerra, 2012; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005). The issues of immigration, racism, language barriers, and being culturally different from mainstream America characterize this population as being unique, puzzling and difficult (Dotson-Blake, Foster, & Gressard, 2009; Ruiz, 2001; Torres & Hurtado, 2011). Marginalization within U.S. society limits Latinos from taking part in educational reform and modeling positive educational opportunities for their children (Blanco, 2010; Good, Masewicz, & Vogel, 2010).

In essence, Latinos continue to have a segregated educational experience in U.S. public schools (Epstein, 2011; Turney & Kao, 2009). Perceived segregation and isolation further maintain barriers and create stressors. The stressors known to be specific to the Latino population are language differences, acculturation or lack thereof, and differences in cultural perspectives between home and school (Auerbach, 2011; Epstein, 2001; Gaitan, 2004; Turney & Kao, 2009). As noted by Dotson-Blake, Foster and Gressard, (2009) partnerships between the parents-teachers-students, when developed with intentionality and awareness, provide a pathway for Latino parent participation, and involvement in education (Dotson-Blake, Foster & Gressard, 2009). The significance of positive parent-teacher-student relationship offers teachers the opportunity to look beyond the classroom, and into mindsets and homes of the families they serve.

Statement of the Problem

In classrooms throughout the United States, the number of students who do not speak English as their first language is increasing significantly (Becerra, 2012; Fry & Gonzales, 2008; Quiocho & Dauod, 2006). In California, almost 1.6 million students are classified as English Language Learners (ELLs), and require additional support from highly qualified, experienced teachers and schools to meet the state's rigorous academic content standards while learning English (Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, Driscoll, 2005; Garcia et al, 2010). Addressing the educational needs of Latinos, as the fastest growing student population in the United States, is critical to California's future not only because of the increasing numbers of Latino students, but also because the majority of Latino students are not thriving in California public schools (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011; Gandara, Maxwell- Jolly, Driscoll, 2005).

As the debate rages among educators and policy-makers on how to best educate the ELLs, research continues to look towards methods and programs of instruction, and to the teachers that require special skills and training to meet the needs of ELLs. The U.S. government requires every school district that has more than 5 percent minority children, with no or limited English proficiency, to take affirmative steps to rectify the language deficiency in order to open its instructional program to these students (Calderon et al., 2011). These affirmative steps indicate a decisive move toward change in educational policy and professional development for educators. School districts across the nation must also determine whether students', who are designated as Limited English Proficient (LEP), educational needs are being met in the public school setting (Fry & Gonzales, 2008). These students are often identified with deficit language abilities, and

perceived as too limited to benefit from full instruction in English (Dotson-Blake, Foster & Gessard, 2010).

Wide and persistent disparities between English learners and English-proficient students demonstrate that schools must address the language, literacy, and academic needs of English learners more effectively (Quiocho & Daod, 2006). In order to address these needs, the quality of instruction for ELLs must improve. Recommendations for improvement include comprehensive reform models, informed school leadership, quality language and literacy instruction, integration of language, literacy, cooperative learning, professional development, and parent and family support teams to mention some (Epstein, 2010). Tutoring, monitoring implementation of instruction, and analysis of authentic assessment and program outcomes all affect the quality of education ELLs receive (Calderon et al., 2011).

Further exploration is needed to better understand that minority students' diverse backgrounds and their multiple challenges in the classroom. Meeting the learning needs of English Language Learners is a big job, one that requires coordination and collaboration throughout the educational system (Van Roekel, 2010). This study investigated the issues facing dual language teachers and parents of Latino ELLs, by exploring and describing teachers' perceptions of how to increase ELL student achievement through quality instruction and parent engagement. This study was grounded on Moll's (1992) Funds of Knowledge theory as the underpinnings for academic success of Latino students, and the Model of Culturally Responsive Teaching (Gay 2002; Wlodkowki & Ginsberg, 1995) based on theories of intrinsic motivation (Gay, 2002; Gonzalez, Moll, Tenery, Rivera, Rendon, Gonzales & Amanti, 1995;

Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995). These theories were used as the conceptual framework for this investigation.

The review of literature provides evidence to the need for school reforms and effective classroom interventions focusing on ELLs, with compelling reasons to begin in the early grades. Both funds of knowledge (1992) and culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002) research focus on the importance of dual language teachers' partnering with Latino families and communities to ensure educational programs that improve schools' quality, strengthen families, and invigorate community support in order to promote students' academic achievement and school success (Rueda, Monzo & Higareda, 2004; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The following section of this study sets the purpose for exploring the teaching approaches of dual language teachers, and their beliefs on how to meet the academic requirements of Latino ELLs.

Purpose of the Study

Although extensive literature has described the gap that exists in academic achievement between Latino students and students of other races and ethnicities, few studies examine the relationship between a dual language teachers' cultural beliefs and practices and their influence on the academic achievement among Latino K-12 students (Becerra, 2012; Petit, 2011). Diverse students from urban communities may live in a variety of different socio-cultural contexts than many White-middle class families, and bring unique experiences, discourse practices and styles, skills, beliefs, attitudes, and values that may conflict with mainstream practices and curriculum (Rueda, Monzo, & Higareda, 2004). This investigation explored the following areas of knowledge of

instruction and supports for English Language Learners by dual language teachers: (a) best teaching practices that serve the academic needs of English Language Learners, (b) identification of successful classroom supports for English Language Learners, and (c) descriptions of what was learned in professional development about the best instructional practices to meet the needs of English Language Learners.

Moll's (1992) Funds of Knowledge theoretical framework served as the basis for analyzing what participating teachers took into consideration, in regards to three main areas indicated above. Various studies argue teachers have conflicting views on parent involvement and some teachers believe they can only be effective in instructing students if they obtain parental assistance with learning activities at home (Epstein, 1986; Marschall, 2006; Mena, 2011). Other teachers' opinions reflect a fear that their professional status might be in jeopardy if parents are involved in activities that are typically perceived as teachers' responsibilities (Becker & Epstein, 1982, Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005). Whereas, Epstein's (2011) studies indicate parent involvement is an effective strategy to ensure student success with benefits of rising academic performance. Therefore, Latino parent involvement in the school and home is a positive step for their child's academic performance trajectory.

Over the past two decades, research on parental involvement in schooling has increased considerably, and so has the accumulated body of evidence demonstrating the link between active parent engagement and student outcomes (De Gaetano, 2007; Marschall, 2006). Simply put, researcher Epstein's (2011) studies contends that for parent involvement to take place, teachers can do more to involve parents in learning activities at home that result in increased learning time helping their children at home.

Parent involvement in reading and reading-related skills, if modeled by the teacher to the parent, can provide valuable learning moments in a child's life.

Moll's (1992) concept of Funds of Knowledge is based on home visitations, observations and interviews, which emerged during the early 1990s literature in relation to scholarship and resources of working-class Latino families. The work of Moll and his associates resulted in bringing data to the forefront of academia that countered traditional deficit perspectives of ethnically and linguistically diverse communities and low-income families (Rios-Aguilar, et al., 2011). Subsequently, this theoretical framework has been used by educational researchers to document the competence and knowledge embedded in the life experiences of under-represented students and their families (Moll & Gonzales, 1992; Rios-Aguilar et al., 2011).

As the growing number of teachers find themselves teaching Latino ELLs, it becomes imperative that teacher preparation programs examine theories such as Moll's (1992) Funds of Knowledge theory to enrich teacher pedagogy for the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are needed to work effectively with ELLs. Furthermore, some research has reported on positive performance and achievement of Latino ELLs with culturally responsive instruction that capitalizes on the knowledge and literacy strategies students learn in their homes and communities (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011; Gay, 2002). The ways that students reason about and make sense of their world, as well as students' language and communicative patterns of students, engages all learners transfer lesson content to their own background (DeGaetano, 2007; Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2007; Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995). In addition, research has found that culturally responsive instruction requires educators to have a broad and in-depth understanding of

the students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds and out-of-school experiences (Moll & Gonzalez, 1994; Risko & Walker- Dalhouse, 2007). Risko and Walker-Dalhouse (2007). Research also indicates tapping into a student's cultural funds of knowledge, to address the achievement gap for ELLs across the nation that provides educators with a guide to implement culturally responsive instruction.

For dual language teachers to be effective today, a broad range of knowledge and skills is needed to be drawn from the principles of second language learning (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001). Research has shown there is no one teaching strategy effective to all learners (Murphy, Guzman, & Torres, 2014). What becomes more important is how teachers helps students to connect the lesson content to their unique backgrounds (Moll, 1992; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; Wlodkowsi & Ginsberg, 1995).

A pedagogy that accommodates the different races, ethnicities, classes, gender, religions, and families contributes to every student's cultural and personal identity (Calderson, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011); Gandara, 2010; Larrotta & Yamamura, 2011), and provides teachers opportunities to be effective in multicultural classrooms (Bower & Griffin, 2011; Gandara, 2010; Wlodkowsi & Ginsberg, 1995). When ELLs are able to connect and make sense of what they are learning, their intrinsic motivation develops into more active engagement with the teacher's strategies and practices (Wlodkowski & Gingsberg, 1995; Risko & Walker- Dalhouse, 2007). Based on Risko and Walker-Dollhouse (2007) for teachers of ELLs to be effective four conditions are necessary for culturally responsive teaching. The conditions are: (1) establish inclusion, (2) develop and maintain a positive attitude, (3) enhance meaning, (4) engender competence. These conditions provide an agency for dual language teachers, while preparing them with new

approaches and methods, to engage culturally and linguistically diverse students towards academic success (Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2007).

Research Questions

This qualitative study was designed to examine dual language teachers' approaches and instructional practices in teaching ELL students, and to explore ways dual language teachers communicate with families to promote involvement and student success. The overarching research question is: How do dual language teachers of ELL students communicate and interact with their Latino parents (using a culturally competent approach) to better support their student?

Additional questions included:

RQ1:   How do dual language teachers frame cultural competency in their instruction?

RQ2:   What teaching approaches do they believe have been effective using methods that reflect cultural competency?

RQ3:   What supports do teachers believe are needed to better assist them as they work with ELL students and their parents?

Research Methodology

The study followed an embedded case study design (Yin, 2003) where different sources of data, including interviews and documents were collected within a specific context, from ten dual language teachers at one school. The intent of this study was to examine the case (i.e. dual language teachers of ELL students), using within case analysis, between case analysis, and cross-case analysis of the individual participants

(Baxter & Jack, 2008). This case study can be further described as an intrinsic case study because it aimed to "gain a better understanding of this particular case" (Creswell, 2012, p. 465), concerning teachers' approaches to engaging Latino students.

Qualitative research begins with assumptions and the use of interpretative frameworks for research problems that address the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2002, 2012). Themes uncovered through an analysis of qualitative data informed results from multiple sources of information that included semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and a demographic, descriptive questionnaire. The case study approach to inquiry provided this study a case within a real life situation to highlight participating teachers' professional development, approaches, and instructional practices for ELLs. In addition, a case study inquiry relies on multiple sources of evidence with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion (Yin, 2013).

Based on the purpose of the study and guiding research questions to explore the experiences of dual language teachers who educate Latino English language learners in today's diverse classrooms, and an embedded single-case study approach was well suited to gather this type of information. Participants provided insight into their teaching experiences, best practices, instructional strategies, and implementation methods in meeting the diverse needs of ELLs in the classroom. Additionally, information was retrieved about dual language teachers' knowledge and ways professional development have shaped their instructional practices to support ELLs' success.

Definition of Key Terms

The following definitions were used in this investigation.

- **California Proposition 227:** Required California public schools to teach Limited English Proficient (LEP) students in special classes that are taught nearly all in English. This provision had the effect of eliminating "bilingual" classes in most cases and shortened the time most LEP students stay in special classes. The bill's intention was to educate Limited English proficiency students in a rapid, one-year program (Department of Education, 2015).

- **Cross-cultural competence:** The ability to successfully teach students who come from a culture or cultures other than their own (National Center for Cultural Competence, 2015). It entails developing certain personal and interpersonal awareness and sensitivities, understanding certain bodies of cultural knowledge, and mastering a set of skills that, taken together, underlie effective cross-cultural teaching and culturally responsive teaching (National Center for Cultural Competence, 2015).

- **Cultural awareness:** It becomes central when we have to interact with people from other cultures. People see, interpret and evaluate things in different ways. What is considered an appropriate behavior in one culture is frequently inappropriate in another one and misunderstandings arise when one person uses his or her meanings to make senses of another person's reality (National Center for Cultural Competence, 2015).

- **Cultural and linguistic diversity:** This is a very broad concept that encompasses the differences that exist between people, such as language, dress, traditions, food, societal structures, art and religion to mention some.

- **Culturally proficient leadership:** This type of leadership is distinguished from other leadership approaches in that it is anchored in the belief that a leader must clearly understand one's own assumptions, beliefs, values about people and cultures different from one's self in order to be effective in cross-cultural settings (Terrell & Lindsey, 2008).

- **Culturally responsive teaching:** This concept refers to the use of cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them; it teaches to and through the strengths of these students (Gay, 2002).

- **Culturally responsive curriculum pedagogy:** This is a student-centered approach to teaching in which the student's unique cultural strengths are identified and nurtured to promote student achievement and a sense of well-being about the student's cultural place in the world (Gay, 2002). Culturally responsive pedagogy is divided into three functional dimensions: the institutional dimension, the personal dimension, and the instructional dimension (Gay, 2002).

- **English language learners:** This term and its abbreviation, English learner, is the term currently used by the California Department of Education (2015) to refer to students who have not passed an English proficiency test or met academic standards in English that fulfill the state's criteria for the definition of English language proficiency.

- **Educational partnership:** When two parties come together for the common good of a school or to enhance student learning, we call this an educational partnership. Partners can include anyone who is interested in or committed to enriching educational experiences for students, families, schools, and the community (Epstein, 2001).

- **Educational barriers***: These barriers refer in this study, school-level issues with school teachers and administrators and individual- or family- level issues of Latino students and their families (Becerra, 2012).

- **Funds of knowledge:** The literature on Funds of Knowledge (Moll, 1992) suggests that educators must draw upon students' background knowledge and experiences to enhance learning. Studies have suggested that drawing on the experiences that students have accumulated in their households with siblings, peers, friends, communities, and parents are not only valuable to students' lives, but can assist teachers in understanding the ways in which these experiences can be practically and meaningfully connected to classroom curriculum (Esteban-Guitart &Moll, 2014; Moll, 2010; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992).

- **Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD):** Provides an organizational structure for an integrated, balanced literacy approach. The integration, of listening, speaking, reading, and writing into all content areas and the interrelating of science, social studies, and literature with each other, underscores research that language is acquired most effectively when the emphasis is on meaning and the

message. Language, any language, should be acquired while studying something of interest or real life use.

- **Hispanic/Latino population:** The Census Bureau's (2010) census provides a definition of the terms Latino or Hispanic as a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.

- **Parent involvement/parent engagement:** To create the kinds of school-family partnerships that raise student achievement, improve local communities, and increase public support, we need to understand the difference between family involvement and family engagement. Involvement implies doing to; in contrast, engagement implies doing with (Epstein, 2001).

- **Sheltered Instruction Protocol Observation (SIOP):** An instructional model developed to facilitate high quality instruction for ELLs in content area teaching.

- **Specially Designed Academic Instruction for English (SDAIE):** Teaching strategies for teaching academic content to English Language Learners

- **Student engagement:** It refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education (Schmieder, 1973). Generally speaking, the concept of "student engagement" is predicated on the belief that learning improves when students are inquisitive, interested, or inspired, and that learning tends to suffer when students are bored, dispassionate, disaffected, or otherwise "disengaged" (Schmieder, 1973).

- **Thinking Maps:** A set of graphic organizer techniques used in primary and secondary education (K-12). There are eight diagram types that are intended to correspond with eight different fundamental thinking processes. They are supposed to provide a common visual language to information structure, often employed when students take notes. Thinking Maps are visual tools for learning, and include eight visual patterns each linked to a specific cognitive process. Teachers may apply Thinking Maps in all content areas and all grade levels (Hyerle, 1998). The eight map types are:

  1. Circle Map- used for defining in context

  2. Bubble Map- used for describing with adjectives

  3. Flow Map- used for sequencing and ordering events

  4. Brace Map- used for identifying part/whole relationships

  5. Tree Map- used for classifying or grouping

  6. Double Bubble Map- used for comparing and contrasting

  7. Multi-flow map- used for analyzing causes and effects

  8. Bridge map- used for illustrating analogies

Two-way immersion program/ Two-way dual language program: This type of educational program is based on the premise that two groups of students (each with different home languages, in the United States one being English) learn together in a systematic way so that both groups become bilingual and biliterate in the two languages (Howard & Christian, 2002).

Significance of the Study

Creating meaningful connections between home and school is not always an easy task, especially when parents and families speak a language other than the one spoken by the classroom teacher (Becerra, 2012). Challenges become even greater when these families belong to a different culture than the dominant culture of the teacher and school (Becerra, 2012; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005). Although Latino students have made strides attaining higher education degrees, the number of Latino students who are not accomplishing this goal, continues to be a great concern for administrators and educators across the United States. In Risko and Walker-Dalhouse's study (2007), the researchers argued students whose language, ethnicity, and race are not represented in the school's dominant culture experiences varying degrees of success in reading achievement occur, resulting in persistent gaps in reading and overall academic achievement.

In the United States, education is commonly perceived as the equalizer against poverty and social inequality. However, the problem with inequality exists within the U.S. educational system itself, whose core curriculum and multicultural education do not sufficiently address the challenges of Latino students. (Lee & Brown, 2006; Ogu, 1994). A large body of literature reports an achievement gap among Latino schoolchildren and their peers due to a low socioeconomic status and race/ethnicity (Altschul, 2011; Gandara, 2010; Petit, 2011; Woolenberg, 1974). Closing the achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students is at the core of present national educational efforts and the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 which ignited a reform movement by establishing high expectations for all students (Good, Masewicz, & Vogel, 2010). The underachievement of Latino ELLs is an educational problem that has caught

the attention of not only educational leaders, policymakers, and teachers, but also parents and taxpayers (Good, Masewicz, & Vogel, 2010). Data on student state assessments demonstrate a growing problem, yet there is lack of consensus about what causes the achievement gap and what solutions may close it (Good, Masewicz, & Vogel, 2010). The purpose of this case study was to gain a deeper understanding of the barriers that impede the academic achievement of Latino ELL students by exploring the perceptions, instructional practices, and experiences of ten dual language teachers at an elementary school.

Organization of the Study

The introductory Chapter 1 sets the background for looking at teachers' approaches and perspectives on educating Latino students, and investigating whether culturally responsive instruction is implemented in the education of English Language Learners at one elementary school. Funds of Knowledge (1992) and Culturally Responsive Instruction (2002) theories form the basis of the study's conceptual framework. The literature review presented in Chapter 2 focuses on the specifics of defining the selected conceptual framework, as well as on reviewing research-based information on culturally differences, aspects of trust and respect between teachers and diverse families, multicultural professional development, social justice, and policy and reform related to ELLs education. Chapter 3 describes the methodology implemented on this study. Chapter 4 provides in-depth descriptions of the research findings and Chapter 5 includes conclusions, implications, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world."

-Nelson Mandela

From their first day of kindergarten to their last day of school, Latino students on average, perform far below most of their peers (Gandara, 2010), although they represent the largest minority group of school children in the United States (Gandara, 2010). Access and exposure to preschool education, of which Latino children have less than any other major group (Fry & Lopez, 2012; Gandara, 2010) contributes significantly to this achievement gap. The home-school relationship begins when a child enters preschool or kindergarten and parents, as their children's first teachers, are expected to prepare them for the educational journey (Baquedano-Lopez, Alexander, & Hernandez, 2013).

Not all Latino parents believe preschool is needed for the children (Durand, 2011), even when opportunities may be available to them. This may be one of the reasons why a dramatic number of Latino children enter kindergarten and first grade classrooms being differentially prepared, in comparison to their non-Latino peers, to benefit from their educational experiences. In Gandara's (2010) study, Latino preschool children were more than twice likely to be poor as white children, and one-third of the Latino families lacked basic life necessities such as health care. These issues are compounded when Latino preschoolers and kindergarteners have demonstrated low performance in reading skills, academic achievement, and socio-emotional functioning (Durand, 2011; Gandara, 2010; Gandara & Contreras, 2009; Hong & You, 2012; Jasis, 2012). Some causes of their low-performance and subsequent dropout rate include language barriers (Gandara, 2010), differences between school and home culture, low

teacher expectations, poverty, racism, and isolation and with poor communication and cooperation among the school, parents, and community (Gandara & Contreras, 2009; Smith, Stern, & Shatrova, 2008).

Looking back to the first days of kindergarten, data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (1998) confirm only one-half as many Latino children as White children fall into the highest quartile of math and reading skills at the beginning of kindergarten, and more than half fall into the lowest quartile (Fry & Gonzales, 2008; Gandara, 2010). This study indicates that from the beginning of their academic pursuits, Latino children are often identified at risk and labeled as "low-performing" (Fry & Gonzales, 2008). If Latino children are going to catch up their more advantaged peers, they must have access to high quality preschool to reduce the wide gaps of achievement that currently exists (Gandara, 2008).

Regarding the issue of poverty, Latino children come from families with no health insurance, which causes its own problems with school attendance and participation (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011; Gandara, 2008). These children rarely see a doctor, dentist, or optometrist, and often go to school with toothaches, uncorrected vision problems, and untreated chronic health issues, compounded by going to school hungry (Gandara, 2008). These barriers constitute serious impediments to learning, that schools are often poorly equipped to address (Gandara, 2010; 2009; Kim, 2009; Turney & Kao, 2009). Although some schools provide a bilingual liaison to guide parents to doctors, dentists and optometrists, not all Latino parents have transportation to make the necessary appointments.

For Latinos in the United States, the educational experience is one of accumulated disadvantage. Many Latino students begin formalized schooling without the economic and social resources that other students receive, and schools are often ill-equipped to compensate for these initial disparities (Gandara, 2010). In addition, the economic circumstances of Latino families are frequently cited as a barrier to parent participation in that parents must direct most of their energies toward providing basic needs, leaving little time for involvement at school (Altschul, 2011; Chrispeels, & Rivero, 2001; Turney & Kao, 2009).

Parent involvement at school offers opportunities and has important implications for children's academic and behavior outcomes (Jasis, 2012; Kim, 2009; Larrotta & Yamamura, 2011). Although researchers have delved extensively into the issue of general parent involvement in education (Altschul, 2011; De Gaetano, 2007; Good, Maswicz, & Vogel, 2010), there is limited research specifically addressing teachers' beliefs and perspectives to meet the needs of today's global and diverse student population (Epstein, 2001; Gandara, 2010). The differing definitions of parental involvement plays an important role in the education of Latinos, and whether Latino parents are adequately being understood of their definition of parent involvement. Another important definition of constitutes parent involvement is the one teachers possess and implement when working with Latino parents (Altschul, 2011; Bower & Griffin, 2011; Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001). Parent involvement through the lens of Latino parents' potential, capacity, and life experiences is the bridge between home and school, often an untapped valuable resource by school districts, administrators and teachers.

Many of the common barriers to Latino parent involvement in their children's education include Latino parents' inability to understand English (Altschul, 2011), their cultural view of involvement as interfering with school (Altschul, 2011), unfamiliarity with the school system (Altschul, 2011), too many outside-of school responsibilities (Altschul, 2011) and/or negative experiences with schools, teachers and school administrators (Altschul, 2011), lack of transportation to the school (Altschul, 2011), and childcare (Altschul, 2011; Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001; Quezada et al., 2003). Even though these barriers, separate or combined, may not apply to every Latino parent, they are significant factors often reported in studies on Latino families.

During parent-teacher discussions of their child's academic achievement, or underachievement, many Latino parents feel disconnected from the school (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001). This primarily manifests itself with teachers and school staff not being able to understand them when they speak Spanish, and no translators being available to them, especially during parent conference week. Parents often use their oldest child as the translator, instead of the school providing them an adult translator. By the use of the child as an interpreter, complex thoughts can be lost in translation, when some information is not adequately relayed.

Latino parents also share their own negative school experiences with their own teachers, who did not understand their cultural and linguistic differences, and considered them to be slow learners (Orozco, 2008). These prior negative experiences often reappear when their children enter today's classroom and teachers have labeled them ELLs by their English proficiency based on a state test (Orozco, 2008). While researchers have focused on the schools' performance and various teaching strategies,

less research takes into account the parents' frame of reference on education and how their children can be reached more effectively (Orozco, 2008).

This chapter reviews the available literature on dual language teachers, their instructional practices in teaching Latino ELLs, and the ways teachers' engage parents to be involved in school and at home. The definition of teacher engagement is essential to understanding the Latino parent's frame of reference as being untapped sources of knowledge and information about how minority children can be reached more effectively. An historical overview and current disruption of the relationship between Latino ELLs, parents, teachers, and schools is presented in this chapter. In addition, a summary is included of empirical research on mainstream teachers' instructional practices with Latino ELLs and the failure of closing the achievement gap. The barriers that impede academic achievement of culturally linguistic diverse students are examined, as well as the importance of the use of the parents and students as Funds of Knowledge (Moll, 1992) and the preparation of culturally responsive teachers as a new vision for educational reform.

Funds of Knowledge Approach

General education teachers across the United States are aware of the growing population of English Language Learners (ELLs) in their classrooms, and most of these teachers do not have the professional knowledge and experience, more importantly they often lack of and/or cultural or linguistic competence to educate Latino students in general and ELLs in particular (Epstein, 2010; Gay, 2002).

The results of the 2000 Census report that the U.S. population is becoming increasingly diverse, and one of every three students enrolled in public schools is of a racial or ethnic minority background (Fry & Gonzales, 2008; Villegas & Lucas, 2007). Teachers' values often affect relationships with students and families, and negative feelings towards culture and/or ethnicity/race groups may influence a teacher's decision about a Latino ELLs underachievement (Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; Villegas & Lucas, 2007).

General education teachers in the United States play a key role in identifying Latino ELLs at risk through their referrals for psychological as well as educational assessments. Good, Masewicz, and Vogel (2010) argue that the underachievement of Latino ELLs is a recognizable problem among educational leaders, school administrators, teachers, parents and policymakers (Good, et al., 2010) yet there is lack of understanding of the causes of the achievement gap and effective solutions to close the gap. These researchers also argue that many of the existing studies on academic achievement for Latino ELLs have been on curriculum, best practices, professional development, class size, and funding, which are variables schools can control (Good et al., 2010). Less research has been conducted on the social and cultural capital of Latino parents, their strengths and their desires to form partnerships with schools that are meaningful.

Many researchers have emphasized the importance of teachers building on culture and language when working with Latino parents (De Gaetano, 2007; Epstein, 2010; Quiocho & Daod, 2006). The cultures and languages of parents that differ from the dominant culture, however, are often ignored, denigrated, and/or treated superficially (De Gaetano, 2007; Epstein, 2010, Quiocho, 2006). Durand's study (2011) describes Latino

mothers' perspectives as being a crucial foundation for building positive, effective, and empowering partnerships in a child's early and later school years. The maternal role as the traditional centrality for family, addresses the mother as being responsible for maintaining the cultural beliefs, values, primary socializations, and importance placed on raising a child who is well-mannered and respectful to authority figures (Auerbach, 2011; Duran, 2011; Quezada, Diaz, & Sanchez, 2003).

In the study of cultural understanding, Durand (2011) sheds light on the possible confusion between Latino parents and schools when he defines the Spanish term *educación* as being more comprehensive in Spanish than its English cognate "education." In Spanish, *educación* refers to moral, interpersonal, and academic goals that are not separate, but intimately linked (Durand, 2011). This definition of education often used by many Latinos does not center exclusively on academics, but includes morality, proper behavior, good manners, and respect for elders (Durand, 2011). Even though Latino families place a high value on education, this broad definition of education conflicts with most mainstream educational professionals, who are predominantly white and Euro-American descent, and centered on academics (Durand, 2011). Furthermore, Durand's (2011) study discovered that parent's cultural beliefs about children, education, and their caregiver roles influence both the parent-child and parent school relationships, and Latina mothers are situated as the experts in their children's development and education.

Children learn from their parents past positive and negative experiences (Durand, 2011). For many Latino parents, the message is school is difficult, and only White students succeed and go on to college (Durand, 2011). This message, directly or in directly, is not only given by parents, but also to educators and professionals working

with children (Auerbach, 2011; Cheatham, Jimenez-Silva, Wodrich, & Kasai, 2013).

Thus, to dispel commonly held myths about Latino participation, Quiocho & Daoud

(2006) conducted a study to illuminate on differences between teachers' perceptions of

Latino parent involvement and parents' understanding of their role in supporting their

children's education. The study revealed that Latino parents had high expectations for

their children's academic achievement and that they, wanted to be more involved in their

children's education, but felt excluded from the school community (Quiocho & Daoud,

2006). These findings have been corroborated by other studies about Latino parents in

which they expressed their desire to actively support and participate in their children's

education and moral development (Auerbach, 2011; Quezada, Diaz, & Sanchez, 2003;

Quiocho & Daoud, 2006).

School personnel, including administrators, professionals, and educators often

take the position of being experts in a child's education, sometimes discounting the

child's culture and linguistic background (Durand, 2011; Orozco, 2008). While school

personnel are trained to work with children and families, the perspective and values of

low-income parents included culturally diverse, are not always understood, nor

incorporated into the school culture (Gregg, 2012; Epstein, 2010, Orozco, 2008).

In view of the fact, that parent involvement has been shown to positively affect

students' academic outcomes (Altschul, 2011; De Gaetano, 2007; Epstein, 2010), it

becomes important to understand the potential contributions that low-income and diverse

parents can make to their children's education. Minority parents should be viewed as

untapped sources of knowledge and information in bridging the cultural gaps for

meaningful partnerships (Moll, 1992, Epstein, 2010). Findings from Orozco's (2008)

study indicated that low socioeconomic parents are often regarded as being unconcerned with the education of their children. The study also explained the fact that parents classified as being low socio-economic were equally interested in their children's academic success as parents from other income brackets (Orozco, 2008). Given that many low-income immigrant parents are of Latino heritage, this finding is important to understanding how classroom teachers' beliefs and perceptions towards Latino parents whose children are ELLs, may have a significant effect on parent's participation in the classroom, as well as the children's educational growth and performance.

Latino families have often been regarded as being uninvolved in their children's education, particularly in teacher-parent involvement literature (Gregg, Rugg, & Stoneman, 2012). More recently, the researchers have recommended for educational professionals to look at a family's "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1992) concept to encourage and validate their involvement. The term "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1992) takes into account the knowledge a teacher can gain from a family and a child, including awareness of culture, familial background, and other contributions the family which can add to the child's education (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992; Esteban-Guitart, 2014).

Moll et al. (1992) noted that historically, low-income minority students were viewed through a lens of deficiencies, substandard in their socialization practices, language skills, and orientation toward scholastic achievement. This deficit view, in turn, affects classroom practices, and home-school environments. In addition, the researchers found that teachers tended to prejudge a family based on their cultural identities, names, or socioeconomic status (Moll et al., 1992). These assumptions can set up a relationship

up to be unconstructive and even harmful to the student's potential success. Results of the research of Moll and colleagues (1992) conclude that voices of Latino families, particularly those in low-income families, often are marginalized, and parent involvement practices typically place families in the role of receiver of information rather creating a situation where teachers learn from Latino families. The "funds of knowledge" approach (Moll, 1992) uses innovative means to help practitioners and researchers alike to discover resources and insights where families are encouraged to contribute to their children's education.

A significant body of research has suggested that ELLs and other students of diverse backgrounds learn best through instructional approaches that take into account their languages, cultural practices, and existing background knowledge (De Gaetano, 2007; Epstein, 2010; Rueda, Monzo, & Higareda, 2004; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006). The use of the Moll's (1992) "funds of knowledge" construct refers to knowledge gained through reciprocal exchange practices that occur among social networks.

The funds of knowledge (Moll, 1992) approach for Latino students is as a positive step toward improving the school success for ethnically and linguistically diverse students. The field of education in the 21st century calls upon the educational establishment to recognize the legitimate and powerful contribution that low-income, immigrants, including Latino parents can make to the educational success of their children and others (Durand, 2011; Gregg, Rugg, & Stoneman, 2012; Orozco, 2008). By recognizing and honoring the culturally embedded perspective of these parents, teachers can enter into a true partnership with families. Family members, parents, and students'

siblings, are integral to the children's education and development (Durand, 2011; Gregg, Rugg, & Stoneman, 2012; Orozco, 2008).

Connections between Latino Parent Involvement and Student Success

The issue of barriers to Latino parent involvement in education has its roots in the1940s state of California case Mendez vs. Westminster, when five Mexican-American fathers, Gonzalo Mendez, Thomas Estrada, William Guzman, Frank Palomino, and Lorenzo Ramirez challenged the practice of school segregation in the Ninth Federal District Court in Los Angeles (Blanco, 2010; Ruiz, 2001; Woolenberg, 1974). The parents claimed their three children and 5,000 other children of Mexican and Latin descent were victims of unconstitutional discrimination by being forced to attend separate "Mexican" schools in Westminster, Garden Grove, Santa Ana, and El Modeno school districts in Orange County (Blanco, 2010; Ruiz, 2001; Woolenberg, 1974).

As an early example of Latino parent participation in schools, Gonzalo Mendez moved his family to the predominantly White Westminster district in Orange County and his children were denied admission to the neighborhood public school on 17th Street. The case provides insight into the long history of school segregation in California and is an important chapter in the educational experiences of Mexican and Mexican-American people in the United States. The significant federal legislation that came out of this court case would legally end segregation in California for children who were not admitted to their local community school because they were "too dark". The Mendez case also serves as a point for understanding the quest for educational equality and continues to be a quest for today's Latinos as the achievement gap widens.

Even though segregation has ended in public schools, Latino children are still faced with labels such as: underserved, low performing, over-identified, and culturally linguistically different. In addition, parents from low socioeconomic classes, minority, and less educated are often perceived by school personnel and mainstream parents as participating less actively in their children's schooling than their better educated, White, middle-class counterparts (Gordon & Nocon, 2008; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; Ruiz, 2001). Court cases such as Mendez (1946) and Brown vs. Board of Education (1954) highlight some of the legislative obstacles that minority parents have historically faced. More importantly, history books in public schools do not explore the inequity that faced the Mendez children in the 1940s, nor is this court case mentioned as part of California's rich history. The Mendez experience was unique and became the trailblazer for the Brown v. Board of Education (1954) case.

Today in some schools throughout the nation, some Latino ELLs still experience the isolation of discrimination from mainstream teachers, administrators, and policymakers (Chapa & De La Rosa, 2004). Barriers for Latino parent participation and their sense of belonging in the school are still voiced by parents today. Latino parent's cultural beliefs and their impact on student achievement come into question, and historical legacies of school discrimination between families and schools still echoes through the halls of education (Altschul, 2011; Gordon, 2008; Kim, 2009).

In addition, the economic circumstances of Latino families are frequently cited as a barrier to parent participation in that parents must direct most of their energies toward providing basic needs, leaving little time for involvement at school (Altschul, 2011; Gandara, 2010, Gandara & Contreras, 2009). A critical issue in the current school reform

debate is how teachers actively involve Latino parents in the school process to connect

with the ELLs in the classroom. What is often overlooked is the more challenging issue

of how to involve them in the schooling process in ways that are both affirming and

empowering to them and of benefit to schools (Bordas, 2013; De Gaetano, 2007).

Understandably, effective and meaningful partnerships between teachers and parents

require sensitive, respectful, and caring school leaders willing to learn about the positive

nature and culture of the community as well as identify barriers that have impeded

progress in school-community relations (Olivos et al., 2011).

Understanding the Differences of Involvement

Assertions have been made describing low socioeconomic Latino parents as being

"uninvolved" and "uninterested in their children's academic advancement", despite

empirical studies showing these parents caring deeply about their children's education

(Altschul, 2001; Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001; Epstein, 2010). The debate about Latino

parent involvement in their children's education is rooted in the definition of parent

involvement commonly used by scholars and educators, and Latino parents. For the most

part, school-based involvement in academics includes activities such as parent

conferences, attendance in school events, and school-based parent organizations; whereas

home-based involvement centers on assisting children in homework, discussing school

related matters with children, and engaging children with intellectually stimulating

activities (Altschul, 2010; Epstein, 2010).

Parent involvement has also been defined as being formal (school-based) and

informal (home-based), concluding both forms of support are significant predicators of

student achievement (Alschul, 2010; LeFevre & Shaw, 2012). Informal parent

involvement includes behaviors, activities, and emotional support that occur in the home

and is often framed in the parents' cultural narratives (Altschul, 2010; LeFevre & Shaw,

2012). Formal participation, on the other hand, is typically measured as a visible

participation in the school, such as volunteering in the classroom or being involved with

hands-on school activities (Altschul, 2010; LeFevre & Shaw, 2012).

Key distinctions about the definition are evident when considering the

relationships between school-based and home-based involvement, and between parental

involvement of time and investment of money in their children's education. Recent

educational research has found that Latino parents often provide informal academic

support for their children (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001; LeFevre & Shaw, 2012).

Educators and parents often assign different meanings and interpretations to the concept

of "parent involvement." The ultimate goal should be for educators and parent to have

comparable views of participation in order to support one another. Given the various

perceptions that exist among parents and educators, successful and accurate

communication between home and school is critical for bridging the relationship gap

between home and school (Olivos et al., 2011). Furthermore, teachers must begin to

understand the cultural perspective of Latino families towards education, in order to have

a positive impact on curriculum planning and implementation in all settings (Chrispeels

& Rivero, 2001; Olivos et al., 2011).

Cultural Approaches in Learning

Through the use of cultural understanding, educators would be well served by exploring the body of literature on how parents foster academics in their children at home. In addressing the literacy acquisition of language minority children, researchers have examined strategies developed at home, as well as information to facilitate Latino parent involvement (Olivos, 2009; Saenz & Felix, 2008). An analysis was also made of how home-based literacy strategies can serve as a bridge to meaningful parental involvement (Olivos, 2009). When immigrant parents do read to their young children, it may be for the purpose of imparting moral lessons or fulfilling school assignments rather than fostering literacy (Saenz & Felix, 2008; Torres & Hurtado-Vivas, 2011). Findings indicate parent literacy strategies often include reading bedtime stories, buying educational toys, and implementing shared reading techniques, which are powerful tools to support academic achievement (Olivos, 2009; Saenz & Felix, 2008; Torres & Hurtado-Vivas, 2011). Studies found that the traditional "good parent model" (Durand, 2011) of assessing parental involvement did not have to be at play in order for Latino parents to be effectively involved in the literacy development of their children (Saenz & Felix, 2008; Torres & Hurtado-Vivas, 2011).

In Torres and Hurtado-Vivas (2011) study, findings describe teacher assigning homework and other family literacy practices to the parent to follow through with children at home that result in inappropriately burdening Latino families. Latino parents argued that teaching responsibilities were being delegated to them, and they felt unprepared to handle them; the task should remain in the hands of teachers (Torres & Hurtado-Vivas, 2011). The authors report that homework converts parents into

schoolteachers, which puts more burdens on children to become students at home (Torres & Hurtado-Vivas, 2011).

For an immigrant parent from a low socioeconomic background and with limited education, having to assist their children with homework is an enormous responsibility often beyond their capability in terms of resources, time, and their own level of education (Torres & Hurtado- Vivas, 2011). Homework then becomes an overload for both parents and children and consequently a source of family conflicts, striking harder at parents and children of low socioeconomic status (Torres & Hurtado- Vivas, 2011). Many teachers justify assigning homework as necessary, which will ultimately raise children's scores to meet the standards set by schools under the control of the state (Torres & Hurtado- Vivas, 2011). Research regarding homework and its effectiveness has indicated that homework is often used as a remedial measure and takes on the role of punishing the whole family when it is not up the school's norms and expectations (Gandara & Contreras, 2009; Torres & Hurtado-Vivas, 2011).

Unlike higher class families, low-income Latino parents often lack the time, school experiences, resources, and adequate space for their children to do the homework (Larotta & Yamamura, 2011). The problem is exacerbated when teachers assign a "one-size fits all" type of homework. The correlation between the benefits of homework on academic performance is skewed, given that it is based on teacher's test scores, grades given by the teacher who assign homework, and scores on standardized testing (Larotta & Yamamura, 2011; Torres & Hurtado-Vivas, 2011). The authors deconstructed homework to find out whether it is really brainwork or busywork and concluded that for the most part, homework is busywork and has a negative psychological and physical impact on

children (Larotta & Yamamura, 2011; Torres & Hurtado-Vivas, 2011). These findings call for teachers to rethink the usefulness of homework as a mean to acquire more of the English language and as a gain to academic core curriculum (Larotta & Yamamura, 2011; Torres & Hurtado-Vivas, 2011). Additionally, Cattanach (2013) reports Latino parents do not understand the importance of parent- child engagement in homework completion and that by simply asking their children if they have homework is sufficient, in comparison to the teachers' that emphasize a grade for homework completion.

Developing Teacher- Parent Partnerships

Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants continue to have a segregated educational experience in U.S. public schools (Gandara, 2010). This segregation and isolation are further amplified by barriers and stressors specific to the population, including language barriers, acculturative stress, and cultural incongruence between home and school (Dotson-Blake, Foster, & Gressard, 2009; Gandara, 2010, Smith, Stern, & Shatrova, 2008). Although Mexican immigrants enter the U.S. excited for new possibilities of their future and their children, this hope could begin to dim as children struggle to balance living between two cultures: home and school (Dotson-Blake, Foster, & Gressard, 2009; Gandara, 2010, Smith, Stern, & Shatrova, 2008). Conflicting values between home and school arise for Latino students once they are immersed into U.S. schools and are expected to display independence and individualism. These values conflict with traditional Mexican values.

Researchers indicate positive academic achievement results when parents, or family members, become involved in students' education (Dotson-Blake, Foster, &

Gressard, 2009; Hong & You, 2012; Quezada, Diaz, & Sanchez, 2003). The development of effective strategies for attracting Latino parents to schools and classrooms is critical if change is to occur. Some of the common barriers include Latino parents' inability to understand English, parents perceptions that involvement is culturally viewed as interfering with what school should do, unfamiliarity with the school system, lack of education, too many outside-of-school responsibilities, negative experiences with schools, school personnel's negative or condescending attitudes, lack of transportation to the school, and childcare to mention some (Dotson-Blake, Foster, & Gressard, 2009; Hong & You, 2012; Quezada, Diaz, & Sanchez, 2003).

Research studies reported language as the basis for learning and demonstrating competency in all school subject areas, and English proficiency as the key to improve the academic achievement of language minority children, including ELLs (Gandara, 2010; Hong &You, 2012; Saenz & Felix, 2008). Looking further at how Latino children are perceived in today's classroom, and the many challenges educators face in meeting the needs of ELLs, studies also indicated that students whose primary language is other than English are educationally at-risk (Gandara, 2010).

Due to language barriers or inadequate language proficiency, many Latino students have a lower performance in reading and writing, compared to White students (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). As other researchers have suggested, English language proficiency is the key to success in school, and when English proficiency is not attained, the limitation creates obstacles to the language minority students' ability to complete school work and activities (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011; Saenz, & Feliz, 2008).

At the early childhood education level, research studies indicate that preschool literacy proficiency affects later mathematics performance (Hong & You 2012; Lefevre & Shaw, 2012). Language barriers also place Latino students at risk for mathematics failure before entering elementary school (Hong & You, 2012; Lefevre & Shaw, 2012). The authors, Fry and Gonzales (2008) concur with the U.S. Department of Education and assert that Latino students comprise one of the fastest growing groups within the school population, and are perceived as the poorest and least educated of minority groups (Fry & Gonzales, 2008). In contrast, Latino students who speak dual languages (English and Spanish) at home are more likely to perform better academically compared to Latino students who only speak Spanish at home. Much of the association of home language with achievement for minority students could be explained using other background factors, notably socioeconomic status (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001; Good, Masewicz, & Vogel, 2010).

Researchers have perceived parental involvement as having different domains, namely, parental involvement at home and parental involvement at school (Gandara, 2010; Kim, 2009; Orozco, 2008). Studies on parent involvement, also address teacher and school perceptions of minority parents and children (Jasis, 2012; Larrotta & Yamamura, 2011; Orozco, 2008). To increase parental participation, teachers may need to keep an open mind about availability of minority parents and actively solicit their participation. Responsibility in positive parent-teacher relationships involves teacher's beliefs on the effectiveness of parental involvement, self-efficacy in teaching effectiveness, and the school's friendliness and positive communication (Jasis, 2012; Larrotta & Yamamura,

2011; Orozco, 2008). Better communication with minority parents pulls back the curtain on minority parents feeling of distrust and distance within the school.

Building Trust

Latino parents have a long history with having an absolute trust in teachers and the school administration for the education of their children (Orozco, 2008; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; Dotson-Blake, Foster, & Gressard, 2010). In many instances they do not question the quality of education their children receive because they feel they are not educationally prepared or equipped to question those who are better prepared than they to teach their children (Orozco, 2008; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; Dotson-Blake, Foster, & Gressard, 2010). Societal perceptions of the language barrier serve to impede the efforts of Mexican immigrant parents, for example, to serve as resources for their children's school (Dotson-Blake, Foster, & Gressard, 2010).

School personnel often believe that parents are who are unable to speak, write, or otherwise communicate in English are incapable of being involved in their children's school experience (Orozco, 2008; Dotson-Blake, Foster, & Gressard, 2010). Teachers should be sensitive to cultural differences in working with ELL families and become more aware of the resources available at the school and district level for ELLs and their families (Orozco, 2008; Dotson-Blake, Foster, & Gressard, 2010). These resources include, but are not limited to, translation services or hotlines for parents who a specific language. In addition, teachers can encourage parents to read to their children in the home language and to ask questions about what their children have learned at school.

As long as this deficit perception is perpetuated, parents for whom English is their second language will be less valued and thus less involved in family-school-community partnerships (Dotson-Blake, Foster, & Gressard, 2010). Building a strong foundation of respect needs to be established, in order for teacher-parent partnerships with the school to develop. A collaborative climate offers parents the opportunity to interact with one another and with faculty to promote the development of communication skills needed to overcome the language barrier. In forming a trust with Latino parents, warm invitations to participate in field trips, volunteering in the library, and parent volunteers in the classroom, serves to foster relationships between ELL parents and English speaking staff (Gandara, 2010).

Social justice calls for the examination of the schools' commitment to and empowerment of, Latino parent involvement and appropriate leadership development to meet the needs of minority EL children (Hong & You, 2012; LeFevere & Shaw, 2012). By addressing and reducing barriers to Latino parent involvement, educational leaders will be increasing equity of educational opportunity for Latino students, meaningful inclusion of Latino parents in the education of their children, and provide a productive path for activism for Latino parents in the schooling process of their children (Orozco, 2008; Turney & Kao, 2009).

For recent immigrants, the idea of participation in their child's school can be a new concept. In Mexico, the educational success of a child is left to the school, and because many parents are uneducated, they don't feel they can be involved with their children's education. In the U.S., this mindset translates to Latino parents not enforcing homework or study time at home. Whereas, Latinos are feeling apprehensive about

helping with schoolwork they don't understand, and don't ask about tutoring at their

child's school. Parental involvement needs to be an organizational expectation if

stakeholders are interested in increasing parental involvement (Zarate, 2007). Although

some schools are providing essential communication in Spanish, a greater need of

Spanish-language fluency among staff is needed to engage parents in more substantial

ways. States and school boards should aim to increase Spanish-fluent staff at schools

with high concentrations of students from Spanish-dominant households by using

incentives or recruitment strategies (Zarate, 2007). Additionally, States, funding

organizations, and federal agencies can allocate funding for innovative and sound

parental-involvement programs in schools. Funders can support large-scale partnerships

between communities, universities, and schools to promote English language, literacy,

and computer training for parents in districts facing low academic achievements trends.

Leaders in education, must examine curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, roles and

responsibilities, aligning school resources to support improvement plans, and school-

based community collaboration, to find proactive measures which focusing on

understanding why so few minority parents become involved in school (Altschul,2011;

Hong & You, 2012; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; Torres & Hurtado-Vivas, 2011). Leaders

need to be mindful of the cultural perspectives of Latino parents who often prioritize the

values of obedience and respect, over their children having White values of

independence, autonomy, and being assertiveness encouraged at school (Altschul, 2011;

Hong & You, 2012; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006; Torres & Hurtado-Vivas, 2011). For

Latino parents, education equates to moral values, where proper behavior, good manners,

and respect for elders are valued markers of being a person of quality (Altschul, 2011; Durand, 2011).

Culturally Responsive Teaching

The increase number of English Language Learners in the classrooms gives cause to rethink the curriculum and the practices of general education teachers in order to adequately serve this student population (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Currently, one of every three students enrolled in elementary and secondary schools are identified having a racial or ethnic minority background (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). In response to the growing population of Latino ELLs in the classrooms, teacher education programs have added a courses on multicultural education, bilingual education, or urban education. Although these required teacher credential courses in California provide preservice teachers a foundation in diversity, this curriculum reform does not go far enough to provide the teachers the skill sets needed to be effective in the classroom (Bunch, 2013; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Webster & Valeo, 2011). To be a culturally responsive teacher it requires knowing the students well and using that knowledge to access learning (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). For example, Villegas and Lucas's (2002) vision describe culturally responsive teachers to be: (a) be socio-culturally conscious, (b) have affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds, (c) see themselves as responsible for and capable of bringing about change to make schools more equitable, (d) understand how learners construct knowledge and are capable of promoting knowledge construction, (e) know about the lives of their students, and (f) design instruction that builds on what their students already know while stretching them beyond the familiar.

Similarly, Calderon, Slavin, and Sanchez (2010) study assert that the quality of instruction is what matters most in educating English Language Learners. In schools where English is the primary language of instruction, it is critical for teachers to show respect for the students' primary languages and cultures (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2010). Much like language and identity are interwoven, so are culture and identity (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2010). A best practice, a teacher should use to acknowledge that students' primary language has value and should encourage students to use their primary language with like peers during activities so as to build their comprehension and English vocabulary (Banks, 2015; Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2010). Through the use of cooperative learning skills and differentiation, the Latino ELL would probably feel validated and worthy to be included in his/her education (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2010).

To provide quality instruction to ELLs requires that teachers be skilled in a variety of curricular and instructional strategies. Research on teacher training and preparedness suggests that teachers who do not hold bilingual or ESL certificates are not well prepared to be effective teachers of ELLs (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008; De Jong & Harper, 2005; Gandara, 2005; Gay, 2002; Lucas & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008). Ballantyne, Sanderman, and Levy (2008) indicate that only twenty states currently require new teachers to have some ELL preparation, and other states such as California, Florida, and New York require teachers' to have specific coursework or certification to meet the needs of ELLs (Ballantyne et al., 2008; De Jong & Harper, 20015). These requirements pose an issue for teachers and school districts to be

compliant with federal and state educational policies for yearly progress of all students and today's newly adopted national Common Core Standards (Ballantyne et al., 2008).

As teachers explore successful cultural and linguistic supports for Latino ELLs access to curriculum, professional development should emphasize the importance of ELLs drawing on their native language resources and abilities (Banks, 2015; Gandara, 2008; Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008). Students who are literate in their native language can be provided material to read in their preferred language to build their background knowledge, use bilingual dictionaries, define relevant vocabulary with visuals, and outline key concepts in English in simplified language (Lucas, Villegas & Gonzalez, 2008; Villegas & Lucas, 2007).

Multicultural theorists and educators have remained committed to the goal that education must provide equal opportunities for all to learn, grow, and participate (Banks, 2015). Banks (2015) argues inequality within schools has been reflected in the curriculum, textbooks, teacher attitudes and expectations, student-teacher interactions, and the languages and the dialects valued, in the school culture. Banks, Higbee & Lundell (2004) further emphasize the importance of change and the integration of multicultural education and state:

> Scholars and researchers agree that if multicultural education is to be implemented successfully, comprehensive institutional changes must be in schools, colleges and universities. The needed changes include those to the curriculum; teaching materials; teaching and learning styles; the attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors of teachers and administrators; and the goals, norms, and culture of educational institutions.

Hands-on learning provides Latino ELLs time to explore, investigate, and form their knowledge based on the current content standards and curriculum (Banks, 2015;

Feinauer & Howard, 2014; McAllister & Irvine, 2000; Ogu, 1994). Using ELLs prior knowledge is another way that knowledge can be transferred and incorporated onto graphic organizers, which provides a visual of their understanding of concepts (Anderson, 2011; Banks, 2015; Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008). Teachers have the ethical reality responsibility to help all students learn, and they must view themselves as part of the community working to make school equitable to all. Being a cultural and responsive teacher is advocating for all students, especially for those students who have been traditionally marginalized in schools (Gay, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2007).

Cultural Competency for All

The demographic landscape in the United States is rapidly changing to a diverse country of many languages, cultures, and frames of minds. To compete in today's global job market, educators and administrators will need to advocate not only for English proficiency for English language learners, but also academic achievement. ELLs should be able to demonstrate academic confidence, as well cultural competence in the classroom (Lucas & Villegas, 2008, Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008; McAllister & Irvine, 2000). In the response to current school reform, schools across the country turn to the core curriculum and multicultural education as appropriate approaches to address the problems of minorities' low academic performance (Ogbu, 1994). Responding to the growing Latino student population in the U.S. public school system, many parents are choosing to send their ELLs to dual language programs for their academic content (Lindholm-Leary, 2012). The dual language immersion program was designed for

students to learn academic content in two languages, as well as cross-cultural competence for all students (Lindholm-Leary, 2012). With the growing popularity of the dual language programs in the United States, research on these programs have addressed the success of the programs of promoting language proficiency and academic achievement (Lindholm-Leary, 2012). As the demand for more dual language programs arise in the field of education, the need will turn to hiring highly qualified, cross-culturally competent dual language teachers.

Dual language teachers have the task of providing an appropriate classroom environment and meeting the high standards of instruction mandated by Common Core Standards. A teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors towards culturally diverse students is crucial in educating the growing population of Latino students (McAllister & Irvine, 2000; Petit, 2011). Cross-cultural competence begins when teachers first turn inward to recognize and understand their worldviews, confront their own racism and biases (McAllister & Irvine, 2000; Petit, 2011). Teachers then begin to understand differences in cultures, and their cultural lens of world reframes their positionality in the classroom.

Multicultural Professional Development

School districts, administrators, and teachers across the nation are facing the challenge of providing quality instruction for the increasing population of Latino English Language Learners. The rise of students who are culturally and linguistically diverse brings forward a discussion for multicultural professional development when federal and state funds are in short supply. The hiring of additional certified bilingual teachers and

English as Second Language (ESL) is not plausible during the current downturn of today's economy, and instead, school administrators are looking toward professional development as being a realistic solution to the issue in meeting the ELLs educational needs (Karabenick & Noda, 2004).

Research on teacher preparation suggests that general education teachers who do not hold the necessary bilingual or ESL qualifications are not well prepared to meet the academic needs of English Language Learners (Bunch, 2013; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Webster & Valeo, 2011). Teachers themselves have reported feeling unprepared to instruct ELLs and have not received the necessary training and knowledge to make a difference (Becker & Epstein, 1982; Petit, 2011). The importance of professional development for teachers provides the opportunity for asking questions, time to share strategies with other teachers, specific guidance in pedagogy, and the means to support one another in finding ways to effectively work with ELLs. Multicultural professional development aims to increase awareness among educational leaders and the public for the need of high quality ELL staff development in their schools (Van Roekel, 2010).

Staff development includes the training of administrators, teachers and other educational professional staff as part of the ongoing professional development of a school site. Based on reviews of professional development studies, teachers who work with English Language Learners found professional development helpful when it provided opportunities for hands-on practice with teaching techniques available in their classrooms, peer coaching and teacher modeling of best practices (Calderon et al., 2011). The researchers also reported biweekly professional development improved teacher work

with ELLs and they became more effective after receiving training in eight strategies, including:

1. Enhanced instruction via planning

2. Vocabulary building and fluency

3. Oral language development

4. Reading comprehension

5. Literacy development

6. parental support and involvement

7. Student engagement

8. Reflective practice through portfolio development

Professional development becomes the central task for teachers who are culturally responsive in creating a classroom environment where each student has the opportunity to make sense of new ideas by constructing knowledge to help them better understand society and the world at large.

Research-based professional development is paramount for districts and teachers across the U.S. public school system that face the challenge of providing quality education for the increase number of ELLs (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). In a study of 729 teachers, Karabenick and Noda (2004) surveyed teachers on their beliefs; attitudes, practices, and needs related to ELLs, their findings resulted on:

- Teachers who were more accepting of ELLs in their classes were more likely to believe an ELLs first language proficiency promoted academic performance, and did not impede ELLs learning a second language.

- Bilingualism and bilingual education are beneficial.

- ELLs should be tested in their first language.

- Lack of fluency in a second language does not imply lack of comprehension.

- ELLs do not consume additional teacher time or district resources.

Teacher attitudes often steer a teachers' motivation to engage with their students', which results in higher students' motivation and performance (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). These attitudes also transfer on how engaged teachers could be to professional development efforts to improve ELL instruction, accept strategies to support their instructional delivery, and dispel any myths of ELLs ability to learn (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). Teachers, administrators and support staff that shared a common vision of developing culturally and linguistically responsive teachers becomes a best practice for all students (Karabenick & Noda, 2004).

Educational Leadership and Policy

Students in California's school system come from a variety of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Students classified as English Language Learners (ELLs) often face multiple challenges in the classroom and their level of academic achievement has lagged significantly behind than their language minority peers (Chapa & De La Rosa, 2004; Gandara, 2010). In addition, data from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Education Studies indicate Latinos lag behind non-Latinos in education and in other socioeconomic characteristics (Chapa & De La Rosa, 2004).

Latinos are the nation's largest minority group and among its fastest growing populations. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Latino population in 2012 was 53 million, making up 17% of the U.S. population (Brown & Lopez, 2013; Fry & Gonzales,

2008). Latino population growth between 2000 and 2010 accounted for more than half of the nation's population growth (Brown & Lopez, 2013; Fry & Gonzales, 2008). Furthermore, most ELLs in U.S. schools are of Latino descent and the rise in the number of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students are related strongly to the increased population (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006). Echevarria, Short, and Powers (2006) reported that students have difficulty in school for a number of reasons, and one is the mismatch between student needs and teacher preparation. Although the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 (Fry & Gonzales, 2008) called for highly qualified teachers in every core academic classroom by 2006, the supply of certified English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual teachers is still too small for the demand. Moreover, regional and district level studies have reported significant shortages of teachers qualified to teach students that have been identified with a limited English proficiency and the number of bilingual teachers trained to instruct in a second language (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006).

Studies have reported fewer than 13% of teachers in the nation have received professional development to prepare them for teaching linguistically and culturally diverse students (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006). To compensate, school administrators often used to hire less qualified teachers, use substitute teachers, and cancel courses, bus students elsewhere, require reading specialists to fill the void, increase class size, or ask teachers to teach outside their field of preparation (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006).

Moreover, federal guidelines regarding highly qualified teachers focus only on core subject- area teachers, requiring them to have a deep understanding of their subject

matter, but not requiring such teachers who have ELLs in their classes to have an adequate level of understanding of second-language acquisition, ESL methods, and/or sheltered teaching methods (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006; Zarate, 2007). As a result of those policies and practices, many ELLs receive much of their instruction from content-area teachers or paraeducators who have not had appropriate preparation or professional development to address their needs or to make content instruction comprehensible. Consequently, this situation deters ELLs academic success in U.S. schools.

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, and its accountability measures, has called for district-wide instructional reform to close the achievement gap between groups of students and for instructional improvement and has shifted the focus of educational policy over the last two decades to issues of instructional technology and the work of classroom teachers (Gallucci, 2008). School district leaders must also learn new ways of doing things in order to respond to these contemporary issues. Gallucci (2008) argues that the term "organizational learning" implies the organization as a collective learns and that individuals learn from each other and from the group. Organizational change could be considered an outcome of organizational learning, and what a school district actually does in response to what it learns about how to accomplish instructional improvement through support for professional learning (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006; Gallucci, 2008).

As U.S. schools adjust to the growing population of Latinos students, many from economically disadvantaged homes, schools and outside groups are increasingly faced with teaching not just the student, but the parent as well. Research studies conclude how

well a child performs in school is based in large part on family and outside influence (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008; Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014). Culturally based evidence show Latino parents tend to feel more comfortable in small, group based, bilingual programs (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008; Esteban-Giutart & Moll, 2014). Today's culturally responsive teaching model has influenced school administrators and leaders to become more proactive in reaching out to parents, yet school programs are often designed to address middle-class Latino parents, not low-income parents or those with little education (Anderson, 2011; Garcia, Beatriz-Arias, Harris Murri, & Serna, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). As a result, Latino parents, especially non-English speaking parents, feel alienated and often do not participate.

Thus, to prepare administrators and teachers to be proactive with parents in culturally sensitive ways, faculties of schools of education must understand that courses in educational theories of learning, or methods of teaching, are not enough (De Gaetano, 2007; Olivos 2009). Many of these courses do not prepare school personnel in becoming responsive to the diversity of their students. More importantly, these courses are not tackling issues of language, class, and race of teachers, students, and parents to prepare school personnel to teach and address social issues in the 21st century (De Gaetano, 2007; Olivos, 2009). The focus of Latino ELL education must be more than learning to speak and understand English and consequently, teachers, policymakers, and school administrators must shift their thinking to an educational reform for culturally sensitive (Zarate, 2007). Zarate (2007) recommendations for schools and organizations to develop and disseminate clear goals and objectives for increasing parental involvement are related to goals being measurable. Other Zarate's (2007) recommendations include:

- Greater Spanish-language fluency among staff is needed to engage parents in more substantial ways. States and school boards should aim to increase Spanish-fluent staff at schools with high concentrations of students from Spanish-dominant households by using incentives or recruitment strategies.

- Funders can support large scale partnerships between communities, universities, and schools to promote English language, literacy and computer training for parents in districts facing low academic-achievement trends.

- Schools can provide professional development opportunities for teachers and staff to share best practices for increasing parental involvement.

- Teachers should initiate more positive contacts with parents and not concentrate efforts on interactions for negative reasons.

Mena (2011) concurs on practices that bolster student academic persistence includes school personnel creating a greater congruence between home and school cultures. Schools need to reach out to parents and explain what the expectations are and what parents can do to support their children's education, as not all parents know this information (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011; Mena, 2011; Zarate, 2007). Consequently, activities that support a welcoming effort include school personnel participating in cultural events, bringing families into the classroom, developing positive and ongoing relationships, offer activities for families and hiring bilingual staff for Back to School Night and parent conferences (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011; Mena, 2011; Zarate, 2007).

Organizations such as The Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) have developed a program that has been successful in providing Latino parents with the knowledge and information necessary to navigate the U.S. educational system, interact with teachers, and help their children at home (Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001). Relationships with Latino families and knowledge of the community serve as brokers between the school and Latino families to promote successful programs such as PIQE, which supports Latino parents understanding on how to navigate school systems in the country and interact with teachers.

Teachers are seldom asked about classroom challenges or the support they need to ensure every child in California can meet the state's rigorous academic standards (Gandara, 2005). As larger numbers of English learners continue to fill the nation's classrooms, elementary teachers recognize that they must provide more challenging and meaningful instruction to prepare their students for secondary schools. Research conducted by Gandara (2005) explained that elementary and secondary teachers across all districts agree on what would most help them meet the needs of their ELL students include more and better ELD materials, more time to teach students and to collaborate with colleagues, and more professional assistance.

Comprehensive studies show that successful schools work simultaneously on student formative assessments, school structures, professional development, teacher support, and effective instruction for English learners (Becerra, 2012; Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). Change is education always is an ambitious endeavor and calls for all stakeholders to contribute their best practices. Local school reform requires time to stop and to retool all educators through comprehensive professional development, which

require appropriate funding at the district, state and national level. Becerra's (2012) study is important for school administrators, teachers, social workers and other school staff to recognize the potential impact when collaborating with families and students in a culturally appropriate manner.

Sí Se Puede (It Can Be Done) and Areas for Future Research

More research is needed in the area professional development for administrators, teachers, and staff to consider more training in the understanding of cultural proficiency, and parent partnerships for students' academic success. Future research needs to be aimed at the current unfavorable attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions about minority parental involvement in our culture, as well, as limited school practices to encourage minority parental involvement (Kim, 2009). Leaders in education, need to have a holistic point of view on parental involvement by considering contextual barriers both at home and school (Epstein, 2011; Kim, 2009; Larotta & Yamamura, 2011). Parental involvement needs to be an organizational expectation if stakeholders are interested in increasing parental involvement (Zarate, 2007).

The issue of the academic underperformance of bicultural children is nothing new. When focusing on educators' practices, they can make a difference for students and their communities if they pay attention to students' particular needs and strengths (Olivos, et al., 2011). Implementing cultural proficiency as the guide to responding to issues arising from the diversity of our schools and other organizations, we will begin to change the mindset of school leaders. Cultural proficiency shifts the perspective from

viewing the school as being of the community, not just in the community and possesses an inclusive worldview (Olivos et al., 2011).

Summary

The literature discussed in this chapter is a synthesis that illustrate the historical and ongoing disruption of the relationship between Latino parents and school personnel, including teachers and school administrators. The literature on parent involvement suggests that there are differences in how parents define their place in their children's education based on cultural and socioeconomic status and the definition teachers place on parent involvement (Kim, 2009; Chrispeels & Rivero, 2001; Epstein, 2011).

Transformative conversations among parents, educators, and administrators are the pivotal steps in reducing the barriers to Latino parental involvement. These conversations are important pathways for cultural understanding realistic parent involvement expectations and activities in order to have positive collaborations between Latino parents and educators (Durand, 2011; Jasis, 2012).

Thirty years ago, experts said more rigorous schoolwork was the answer to improving test scores and decreasing dropout rates (Durand, 2011; Jasis, 2012). Part of the challenge with Hispanic parents is that parents often do not know how to connect with their children as students, or how to be involved in their life at school or at home (Durand, 2011, Jasis, 2012). Thus a critical issue in the current school reform debate is how to actively involve Latino parents in the schooling process with the support of culturally supportive teachers and administrators. They also do not understand the importance of engagement and view it as simply asking if there is homework, visiting the

school only when there is a problem, and viewing themselves primarily as a disciplinarian, not their child's first teacher (Cattanach, 2013). A critical issue in the current school reform debate is how to actively involve Latino parents in the schooling process with the support of culturally supportive teachers and administrators.

Many studies have emphasized the importance of building on culture and language when working with Latino parents (Epstein, 2011; Kim, 2009; Moll, 1992). Through the lens of Latino parents' perspectives, home practices, and "expert" knowledge about their children, educators can enhance Latino parent involvement in children's education (Durand, 2011, Epstein, 2011).

A barrier to school involvement for Latino parents requires stakeholders to examine formal (school-based) and informal (home-based) parent involvement as significant predictors of student achievement. Defining Latino parent involvement requires stepping away from the deficit perspective of what parents are not doing, in comparison what is being achieved, through the use of cultural understanding. The current school system has continuously regulated the parent-school relationship through a normalizing perspective based on middle-class values, and this view of family does not take into account the complexity of family arrangements and their economic organization, which often negatively affects parents of color (Baquedano-López, Alexander, & Hernandez, 2013).

Most of the studies reviewed for this dissertation were a mixed of quantitative and qualitative studies, with some studies examining the voice of Latino parents and teachers in interviews. The current research corroborated some research findings from previous studies in regards to the need of school personnel and teachers to view EL students and

their parents with gifts, strengths, and willing to contribute. With this positive mindset,

leaders in education could become the agents of change for school reform by tapping into

the Latino voice. Further explanation of this study's research findings, as well as a

discussion in relation to the review of literature is presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

"Learning another language is not only learning different words for the same things, but

learning another way to think about things."

~Flora Lewis

This chapter outlines the methods used to explore the issue of underperforming Latino ELLs and whether dual language teachers have attained the knowledge to develop best practices to address the unique educational needs of this increasing student population today's classroom. The study also analyzed participating teachers' own understanding of "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1992) and "culturally responsive instruction" (Gay, 2002). Delving into a teachers' experiences, professional development, use of best practices, instructional strategies, and their cultural understanding of Latino ELLs provided the necessary data to respond to this study's research questions, which included:

(1) How do dual language teachers of EL students communicate and interact with the Latino parents (using culturally competent approach) to better support their student?

(2) How do dual language teachers frame cultural competency in their instruction?

(3) What teaching approaches do they believe have been effective using methods that reflect cultural competency?

(4) What supports do dual language teachers believe are needed to better assist them as they work with EL students and their parents?

Dual Language Education (DLE) programs, also known as two-way language immersion or dual language programs, have grown in popularity in response to the need to provide a quality and appropriate education to ELLs and close the achievement gap between them and their mainstream peers (Lindholm-Leary, 2012). Thus, the main purpose of this research was to examine participating dual language teachers' approaches to engaging Latino ELL students in elementary education. Research findings aim to assist the educational community, including school administrators and teachers in determining effective instruction practices and resources for ELLs in dual language immersion.

The research design was a single-case study using qualitative methods, including interviews and document review. Purposeful sampling was employed and included 10 dual language teachers from one distinct dual language program at an elementary public school in southern California. The rationale and criteria for the school site and dual language teachers are also detailed in this chapter. A description of data sources as well as the data collection process are outlined in this chapter. A discussion of the soundness of this study and the implemented validity and reliability of the implemented procedures are explained, as well as the researcher's positionality and limitations of the study.

Theoretical Framework

As the racial, ethnic, and linguistic demographics of the K-12 student population in the United States changed over the past three decades, the demand for culturally responsive teachers has been at the forefront for educational transformation (Feinauer & Howard, 2014; Ogbu, 1994; Villegas, 2007). School districts across the United States are

exploring ways to improve school success for the culturally, ethnically and linguistically diverse students and ways to provide educator's knowledge with appropriate information and training on cultural differences and competencies. This knowledge goes beyond the mere definition, identification, awareness, respect, and general recognition of the fact that cultural/ethnic diverse groups often have different values and express them in different ways (Gandara, 2005; Gay, 2002). Knowledge begins when teachers have acquired detailed factual and accurate information on the cultural/ethnic characteristics of students they are educating.

There is little argument that the role of school leaders and teachers are critical for a student's successful educational journey. Effective teachers are those who have taken the time to know their students and families, and build a strong and trusting relationship with them. The building of cultural proficiency involves school leaders and educators to look at their own cultural/ethnic group and have the ability to teach, interact and connect with students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Moll, 2005; Gay, 2000; Gay 2002). Therefore, engaging students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds in classroom activities involves teachers seeing diverse students, such as Latino ELLs, as capable and productive learners (Moll, 1992, Villegas, 2007).

The study's theoretical framework is based on the Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) (Gay, 2002, Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) and Funds of Knowledge (Esteban-Guitart, 2014; Moll, 1992; Rios-Aguilar, Kiyama, Gravitt, & Moll). These theories were used in order to explain and understand phenomena under investigation and to challenge the existing knowledge within the limits of critical bounding assumptions (Creswell, 2012). Culturally Responsive Teaching

(CRT), is a "pedagogy that crosses disciplines and cultures to engage learners while respecting their cultural integrity" (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Research has revealed there is not one teaching strategy which engages all learners, and the key is helping students relate lesson content to their own cultural/ethnic backgrounds.

A model of CRT (Villegas & Lucas, 2002) is based on student intrinsic motivation is respectful to student's culture and create a common culture that all students can accept (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995). As Villegas and Lucas (2002) explain, "it accommodates the dynamic mix of race, ethnicity, class, gender, religion, and family that contributes to every student's identity. The foundation for this approach lies in theories of intrinsic motivation".

CRT framework consists of four motivational conditions that exist for the teacher and the student to build, create and enhance on:

1. establishing inclusion, in other words, a creation of a learning environment in which students and teachers feel respected and connected to one another.

2. developing attitude, related to the creation of positive attitude toward the learning experience through personal relevance and choice.

3. creating challenging, thoughtful learning experiences that include student perspective and values.

4. engendering competence by creating an understanding that students are effective in learning something they value.

The second theory, used in this study was, Funds of Knowledge for Teaching (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992), connects homes and classrooms by understanding households and how this knowledge transfers to teaching in the classroom

(Gonzalez, Moll, Tenery, Rivera, Rendon, Gonzales, & Amanti, 1995; Moll et al., 1992; Moll & Arnot-Hopfter, 2005). This theory is based on the basic idea that Latino households are "competent and have life experiences; consequently, they have accumulated knowledge" (Rios-Aguilar, Kiyama, Gravitt & Moll, 2011). Each household amasses multiple ways to gain knowledge, ideas and skills in order to maintain the household and each family member's well-being (Moll, 1992; Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014). As Moll and colleagues (1992) explain: "this approach is particularly important in dealing with students whose households are usually viewed as being 'poor' not only economically, but in terms of the quality of experiences for the child.

At schools throughout the United States, teachers often need to commute outside their own neighborhood schools, to teach in schools that serve low-income, and ethnically/linguistically diverse students. At the end of the school, teachers go back to their own neighborhoods, separated from the families they serve during the day. The opportunity to build mutual trust is usually limited to teacher-parent phone calls, emails, school newsletters and parent conferences. Building *confianza* (mutual trust) has been described from the household funds of knowledge (Moll, Arnot-Hopfter, 2005) perspective as "the glue that held the households' multiple (and sometimes fragile) social networks together" (Moll & Arnot-Hopfter, 2005). C*onfianza* refers to the nature of social relationships among school administrators, teachers, and students that establishes a community of caring and learning together (Gonzalez, Moll, Tenery, Rivera, Rendon, Gonzales, & Amanti (1995).

The use of the two above theories in this study assisted in understanding how to support the ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse population in dual language

programs, as well as their families. In addition, the theories depicted the importance of examining the dual language teachers and ELL student relationship for positive communication and interaction.

Figure 1 provides a graphic representation of the selected theoretical framework use in this investigation. The creation of a culturally responsive environment involves teachers being aware of the socioeconomically, cultural/ethnic and linguistically diverse students and their needs. A safe and positive environment for diversity to be expressed and function is important for all students. Teachers create culturally responsive classrooms by being aware of and sensitive to students' cultural and linguistic differences and look at ways to enrich the students' learning experience through cultural relevant instructional strategies and techniques (Gay, 2002; Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2007). Getting to know the parents, student's background and family tradition enriches learning for everyone. Important elements for culturally responsive teaching include: (1) understanding history and culture, (2) community culture into the classroom, (3) family involvement, and (4) bringing native language into the classroom.

Understanding history and culture	Community culture into the classroom
	Culturally Responsive Teaching
Family involvement	Bringing native language **into** the classroom
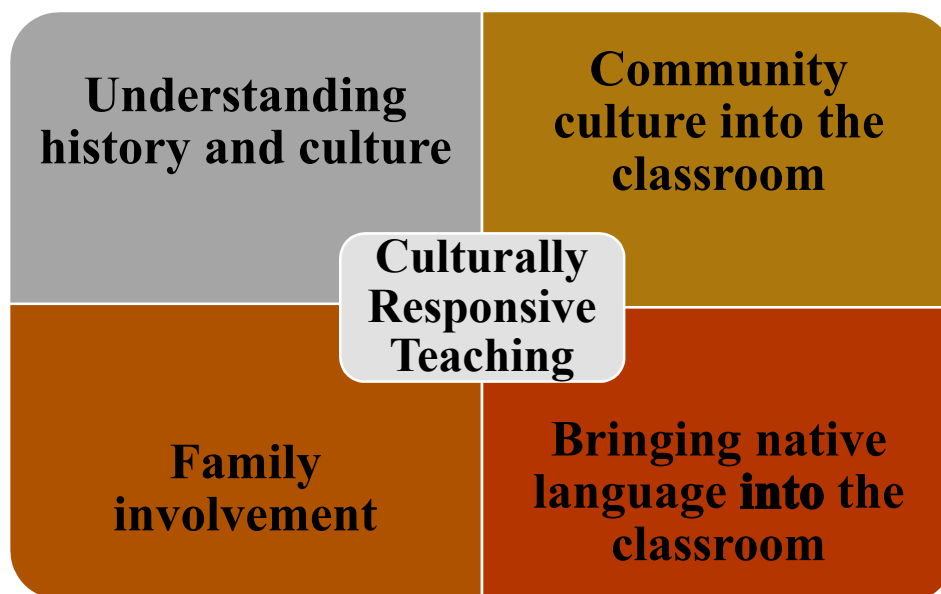
Figure 1. Culturally Responsive Teaching Conceptual Framework

In addition, Figure 2 below presents a graphic representation of the Funds of Knowledge theory (Moll, 1994). Moll (1992) as an advocate for minority and bilingual students, contends that the existing best classroom practices are insufficient in meeting the needs of these students. He points out that funds of knowledge begin in the home with family members, religion values/beliefs, language spoken at home, where children live, where their parents work, food they eat and traditions, and holidays and celebrations being integral to what students bring to the classroom (Moll, 1992; Moll, 1994). Moll's (1992) research with Latino families revealed that many families have rich and plentiful knowledge that schools do not use to their fullest potential. He proposes strategies for teachers to step away from drill-based approaches, so that Latino students could find meaning in the content versus memorizing facts and rules (Moll, 1992). Teachers should be encouraged to treat Latino students as "active learners" and capable of learning in English using the foundation of their native language (Moll, 1992).
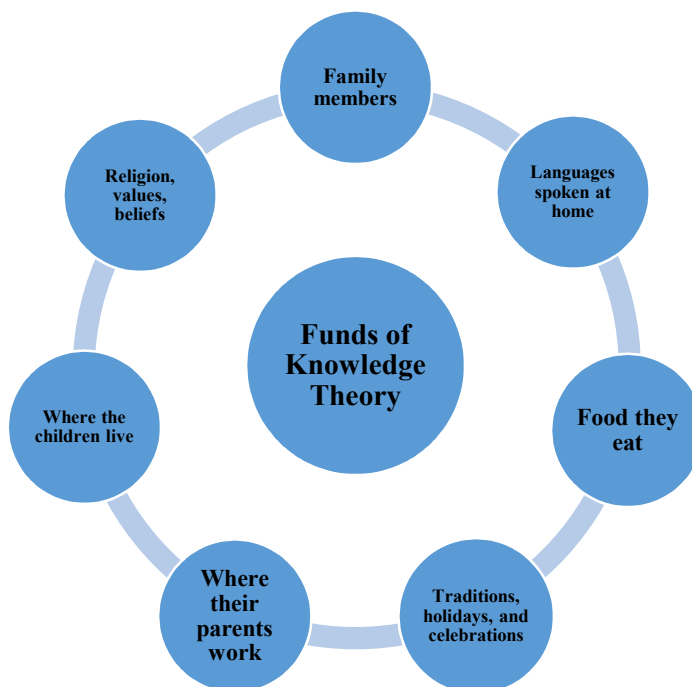
Figure 2. Funds of Knowledge Theory

Methods

This dissertation utilized a single-case study research design. A single case study becomes a process or record of research conducted, in which detailed consideration is given to the development of a particular person, group, or situation over a period of time (Creswell, 2012). A case study is focused on developing an in-depth understanding of the case by collecting multiple forms of data, and may represent a process consisting of a series of steps that form a sequence of activities (Creswell, 2002). According to Creswell (2012), when the approach is applied correctly, it becomes a meaningful method for a researcher to develop theory, evaluate programs, and develop interventions. Case study researchers such as Stake, Simons, and Yin have written about case study research and suggested techniques for organizing and conducting the research successfully. The researchers corroborate case study research draws upon six steps (Creswell, 2002):

- Determine and define the research questions

- Select the cases and determine data gathering and analysis techniques

- Prepare to collect the data

- Collect data in the field

- Evaluate and analyze the data

- Prepare the report

Case study research begins by identifying a specific case, such as an individual, a small group, an organization, or a partnership (Creswell, 2012). In this investigation, case study was bounded to an elementary school in southern California with a purposeful sampling of ten dual language teachers. Similar to dual language education programs throughout the United States, the participating school provides instruction in Spanish and English to both native English speakers and English language learners from various socio-economic and cultural/ethnic backgrounds.

District Context and Setting

This research took place in Arbol Lindo Unified School District (ALUSD-pseudonym) in the state of California. ALUSD was ranked as the 8th largest public school district in California for the school year 2014-2015 (California Department of Education, 2015). ALUSD emphasis on quality teaching and learning drove another year of academic growth, allowing it to remain a leader in student achievement and the state's top performing large school district (California Department of Education, 2015). The District's API rose to 879, 5 points higher than its 2011 base score (California Department of Education, 2015). Of the District's 54 traditional schools, 50 scored above

the state goal of 800, while 26 exceeded 900, which is considered the mark of an elite

school, and 53 percent of the schools met or surpassed the state's target of 800

(California Department of Education, 2015).

The district was founded in 1965 and in the 2015-2016 school year had a student

enrollment of approximately 54,000 in grades Kindergarten through grade 12. In 2015-

2016, ALUSD operated a total of 64 schools/programs including 35 elementary schools

(total student enrollment: 23,539), 10 middle schools (total enrollment: 12,914), 6 high

schools and 1 alternative education high school (total student enrollment: 17,583), 1 adult

school, 2 exceptional needs facilities, 1 independent study/high school, and 5 charter

schools. Of the 35 elementary schools, three schools offered a Two Way Language

Immersion Program in Spanish/English and one in Mandarin/English.

Based on the student demographics of ALUSD by race and ethnicity included

60.2% White, 25.1%, Hispanic, 5.4% Asian, and less than 10% of the students were

Filipino (1.6%), Filipino, African American (1.3%), American Indian/Alaska Native

(0.1%), and multiple/decline to state (5.7%). Table 1 provides information about

ALUSD students' ethnic/racial background and compares it to the state average.

Table 1. ALUSD Student's Ethnicity/Racial Background and State Average

Ethnicity	This District	State Average
White, not Hispanic	60.2%	28.6%
Asian	5.4%	8.3%
Hispanic or Latino	25.1%	48.6%
Multiple or No Response	5.7%	3.1%
African American, not Hispanic	1.3%	7.4%
Filipino	1.6%	2.7%
Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.6%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.1%	0.8%

Arbol Lindo Unified School District extends 195 square miles and has forty California distinguished schools, eleven National Blue Ribbon schools and nineteen Golden Bell winning programs. In 2015-2016 the district had a graduation rate of 97%, which was higher than the California average of 85% (California Department of Education, 2015). That school year ALUSD employed 3,992 people, 2,144 of them as certified teachers.

Data collection in Arbol Lindo Unified School District (ALUSD) was first initiated by conducting a face-to-face meeting with the Assistant Superintendent of Education Services to discuss this research study and provide a copy of the protocols to be used. A one-page overview of the study and timeline was submitted for district approval. The goal

was to gather qualitative data in order to gain a deeper understanding of dual language teachers' approaches to engaging Latino students in elementary education. Merriam (1998) explains how "qualitative research is an umbrella concept covering several forms of inquiry that help us understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible" (p. 5). Due to state and district testing period, time constraints of the data collection on the participants was discussed, and confidentiality of the school district was assured to all.

School Site. Don Javier Elementary school (pseudonym) first opened its doors in 1970 and was one of thirty-five elementary schools in the Arbol Lindo Unified School District. At the time of this research, the school was in its fifth year as a Two-Way Language Immersion Program and offered students a unique opportunity to attain the gift of fluency and literacy in two languages English and Spanish. The dual language program provides the same academic content, addresses the same standards, and provides school of choice to all students as the other elementary schools in the district. The dual language program is considered an 80/20 Model, meaning that students in kindergarten and first grade receive 80% of their instruction in Spanish and 20% of their instruction in English. Each year, more English instruction is added, while Spanish instruction continues so that students develop academically and linguistically in both languages. Students gain a multicultural appreciation and respect for other cultures as they pass through each grade level. The program also encourages high self-esteem, lifelong relationships, and prepares students for multilingual careers of the future.

In grades K-1, academic subjects were taught in Spanish (reading, math, science and social studies), and oral English language development is taught daily. With Grades

2-3, most of the academic subjects were taught in Spanish and a gradual addition of English reading, writing and content by third grade. Formal English reading and writing is emphasized beginning in the third trimester of Grade 2. For Grades 4-5, instructional time is balanced daily between English and Spanish in all academic areas, and intercultural relationships are further developed and encouraged. The program goals were for students to develop bilingualism, biliteracy and multiculturalism in English and Spanish.

The Two- Way Language Immersion program was established in Arbol Lindo Unified in 1992, and is based on the significant features of bilingual education for language minority students and immersion education for language majority students (Lindholm, K.J., 1987; 2012). In 2009, ALUSD made a decision to restructure and designate 3 out of 35 elementary schools as Two-Way Immersion Magnet Schools. This change was a direct result of the schools receiving Title 1, Part A funds, and are Schoolwide Programs (SWP) and Program Improvement schools.

Title 1 is a federal categorical program. Its purpose is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain high-quality education, and reach minimum proficiency on the state content standards and assessments (California Department of Education, 2015). The intent of the funding is to meet the educational needs of low-achieving students enrolled in the highest poverty schools. Schoolwide Programs, Section 114(a) of NCLB allows schools receiving Title 1 funds to be designated as Schoolwide Programs (SWP) if 40% of the student population is living in poverty (California Department of Education, 2015). All Title I funded schools and local educational agencies (LEAs) that do not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) are

identified for Program Improvement (PI) under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (California Department of Education, 2016). A magnet school's primary purpose is to provide students the opportunity to select an option that is attractive to them. Magnets schools are established by district Governing Boards in order to provide appealing choices for families and students whose neighborhood school may not serve a student's interests, talents, and aptitudes (California Department of Education, 2015). By offering a specialized curriculum, they attract students from varied backgrounds, creating diversity within learning communities and providing opportunities for beneficial education outcomes (California Department of Education, 2015). A magnet school has no assigned attendance boundaries and enrollment is by choice. Students from across the district may select the magnet subject to available space.

ALUSD has implemented a School of Choice Program (SOC) and is not considered a waiver approved CORE (California Office of Reform Education) school district (Klein & Ujifusa, 2013). CORE was established by the U.S. Department of Education, under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, and granted an unprecedented waiver to eight California districts that together educate 1 million students (Klein & Ujifusa, 2013). The CORE districts include Fresno, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Oakland, Sacramento, San Francisco, Sanger, and Santa Ana. Klein & Ujifusa (2013, p.2) described CORE policy as:

> These school districts will operate under a new "school quality improvement index" that will be based 60 percent on academic factors such as test scores and graduation rates, 20 percent on social-emotional factors such as the absentee rate, and 20 percent on culture and climate factors such as student and parent surveys.

Whereas, the SOC program offers parents the opportunity to apply to the school that they would like their child to attend. The SOC program began 19 years in ALUSD, and more than 90 percent of parents annually choose to have their child remain in their home school, which is the local school serving their child's attendance area. Some parents prefer to have their child attend another school within the District. The SOC program provides parents with this option on a space-available basis.

Don Javier School's Two-Way Immersion program is voluntary for families with children entering into Kindergarten. Parents must attend a presentation and complete an application to enroll in this popular program. Parents and students are also required to follow enrollment procedures to ensure the programs goals are met, which consist of parents taking a tour of the school and filling out an interest form, a parent interview, student's may be given a school-readiness assessment, and a completed school of choice enrollment form for those who live outside regular attendance boundaries.

In the 2015-2016 school year, the school was serving 405 students in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade. Its student body included 79% Hispanic, 15% White, 2% Black, 2%, as two or more races, and 1% Asian. That same year, 70% of the students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch program, and 58% of the student body were identified as English Language Learners. The Academic Performance Index (API) was 675 based on a school's performance based on STAR test score results from spring 2013, and was also considered to be a Title 1 school-wide program.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 required states to test students annually in Reading and Math in grades 3-8 and once in grades 10-12 (Ballantyne,

Sanderman, & Driscoll, 2008; Williams, 2014). Prior to NCLB, ELLs were often left out of standardized testing for fear that their language skills might mask their content knowledge (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Driscoll; Williams, 2014). While this made teaching and the learning environment less stressful, there was little accountability for ELLs' achievement growth (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Driscoll, 2008; Williams, 2014). With this accountability on assessing ELLs' progress, light was shed on this underserved population in public schools.

Sampling. Participants for this study were certificated teachers with experience working with Latino K-5 English Language Learners. Participants were recruited by (1) contacting the principal of the elementary school to inform him of the data collection process and the purpose of the research and, (2) inviting teachers for permission to conduct a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions and provide background information in a questionnaire. Once approval was obtained by the principal to collect data at the school site, the researcher emailed all teachers to invite them to participate in the study. Participants willing to participate to be recruited for the study were provided a hard copy of the consent form for their review. The researcher then made individual appointments with each participant to review the consent form and to answer any questions they may have. Every attempt was made to recruit potential participants equitably and to choose participants from a variety of backgrounds and ethnicities. In order to gain the most diverse sample possible, teachers from different grade levels were invited to participate in this study.

Purposeful sampling was used to identify and select participants in order to discover, understand, and gain insight from dual language teachers. The criteria

established to identify the "representative teachers" in the dual language program corresponded to teachers with a minimum of two to five years of experience teaching at a dual language program. The teachers were also identified as being knowledgeable on the issue of underperforming Latino ELLs and how to address the needs of this growing population in today's classroom. The teachers were also examined for their use of their instructional strategies on how to cultivate a supportive environment for the development of biliteracy in all students (Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005; Guilloteaux & Dornyei, 2008). Teachers commonly use the term "motivation" to explain what causes success or failure in learning, and without sufficient motivation, students with the most remarkable abilities cannot accomplish long term goals (Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005; Guilloteaux & Dornyei, 2008).

Ten dual language (English/Spanish) teachers from Kindergarten – 5th grades were invited to participate in the study. Although, ten teachers were invited to participate in this study, only teachers from Kindergarten-3rd grade, were able to accept due to their availability. Three of these teachers were observed for the purposes of obtaining data on cultural competency approaches and to observe the culture of the classroom. The dual language teacher observations were randomly selected and observations lasted between 20-30 minutes using a checklist of cultural competency approaches (Appendix C).

Nine of the participants were female and one was male, all dual language teachers shared the commonality of speaking English and Spanish, and one participant spoke English, Spanish and German, with German being her native language. All of the ten teachers taught full- time at Don Javier Elementary School. To be highly qualified to teach in a dual language immersion program, each participant has earned a California

Elementary Multiple Subject Teaching Credential with Bilingual Authorization to teach English language learners. The participants also have knowledge, skills and abilities to teach in Spanish in a bilingual or dual language classroom. Dual language teachers instruct in self-contained classrooms, where students learn to think, read, write, and communicate naturally in two languages: English and Spanish. Whereas, general education teachers in California are required to have a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential that authorizes the holder to teach all subjects in English, and in a self-contained classroom. Such as the classrooms in most elementary schools.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection was conducted over a three-month period from Spring 2015 to Fall 2015. The researcher met with the principal to discuss data collection and provide copies of the University of California, San Diego Institution Review Board (IRB) documents for approved data collection. Purposeful sampling was used in this case study so as to develop an in-depth description and analysis of dual language teachers' approaches to engaging Latino students in education. The instrumentation comprised of teacher semi-structured interviews, observations in three dual language teachers' classrooms, and the collection of background information on each participant. Throughout the process of data collection and analysis, the researcher determined the accuracy of the finding through strategies such as triangulation (Creswell, 2002). Creswell (2002) argues the purpose of triangulation in qualitative research is to increase the credibility and validity of the results. Triangulation is a powerful technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification from two or more sources. In

particular, it refers to the application and combination of several research methods in the study of the same phenomenon. Creswell (2002) explains:

> It can be used in both quantitative (validation) and qualitative (inquiry) studies. It is a method-appropriate strategy of founding the credibility of qualitative analyses. It becomes an alternative to traditional criteria like reliability and validity. It is the preferred line in the social sciences.

By combining multiple observers, theories, methods, and empirical materials, researchers can hope to overcome the weakness or intrinsic biases and the problems that come from single method, single-observer and single-theory studies (Creswell, 2002).

Interviews. According to Creswell (2012), the data collection process is embedded within a larger sequence of research and the questions are open ended, general and focused on understanding the central phenomenon in this study. In this study, the most suitable participants to answer the open-ended questions were dual language teachers. Each participant responded to the 10 semi-structured interview questions, which were developed by the researcher for the current study. Yin (2009) recommends for case study research, a pilot test of the research question refines the development of relevant questions. Thus, one participant from the lower grades (Kindergarten – 2nd grade) was chosen for piloting the research questions, but the responses were not used in the data analysis.

The study included ten in-person 60 minute semi-structured interviews of individuals who were currently dual language teachers of Latino ELs and who may have or not received professional development to support the EL in their classroom. The interviews were face-to-face to encourage participant's engagement in the study, and they were digitally recorded by the researcher with each participant's written permission. The

face-to-face interviews were transcribed verbatim, coded for similar themes, and analyzed by the researcher with the objective to capture a direct view of the stories within. All participants were able to provide insight on the research questions and shed light on dual language teacher approaches to engaging Latino students in a two-way language immersion program.

The semi-structured interview questions were specific to the participants' work tasks and experiences as dual language teachers. It was important to be unbiased and distanced from the research questions, yet understanding of the issues expressed. In the event as individual wished to terminate his/her participation or withdraw his/her interview they could do so immediately by calling or emailing the researcher. No one was penalized for terminating their participation or withdrawing from the interview. Follow up questions during the interview process occurred and elicited more data that help to gain understanding of the participants' point of views.

Interviews were conducted in the dual language teacher's classroom and held after the end of their contracted day. A paper-based interview guide was used by the researcher and each interview was digitally recorded with the participant's signed permission. The researcher developed a positive rapport and dialogue with each participant to ensure essential data. The semi-structured interview questions are presented in Appendix A.

The researcher used a digital recorder that required no tapes. The digital recorded interviews were stored in the recorder, until they were uploaded to the researcher's personal laptop. Each participant was advised the transcript of the recording was used only by the researcher to analyze and code for themes. All recordings and transcripts will be

destroyed no later than one year after the completion of the study. All signed consent forms remained in the researcher's home office in a locked cabinet at all times. There was never a reason for the research to transport the signed consent forms to any other location.

Questionnaire. Each participant completed a background information questionnaire, which were developed by this researcher for the current study. Background information included number of years teaching, number of years teaching at the district, grade level participant was currently teaching, and whether the participant was a support and/or full time teacher.

Observations. Three random dual language teachers were selected at random to observe during their instructional day. During this 20 to 30 minutes' observation period, the researcher collected data through the use of field notes on the teacher's culturally competent approaches utilizing the Classroom Culture Observation Rubric (Appendix C). The instrument was developed by the researcher, in order to obtain data in a dual language classroom during the participants' instructional day with Latino ELLs. Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society's (2015) self-assessment checklist supported the research questions, and contributed to the development of the Classroom Culture Rubric for this study. Its purpose was to help consider participants' skills, knowledge, and awareness of their interactions with others. Its goal was to assist the researcher to recognize what may be effective in working and living in a diverse environment. The term 'culture' includes not only culture related to race, ethnicity and ancestry, but also the culture (e.g. beliefs, common experiences and ways of being in the world) shared by people with characteristics in common.

In this tool, the researcher was focusing on race, ethnicity and ancestry and it visuals representation in the classroom. The instrument also provided "a moment in time" of the participants' culturally responsive instruction and their interaction with Latino ELLs. Culturally responsive (or relevant) teaching has been described as "a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (Anderson, 2011; Gay, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2007; Wlodkowki & Ginsberg, 1995). The researcher was also provided the opportunity to witness and interpret the culture of the classroom through the use of field notes and photographs.

Data Analysis

Data collection for this study was in the form of digitally recorded, semi-structured interviews, a background information questionnaire, and classroom observation with field notes. The questionnaire was analyzed for participant's commonalities, differences and non-responses. Semi-structured interviews were analyzed and interpreted by forming codes to develop themes in the data. The cultural competency field notes were interpreted and analyzed for commonalities and differences between dual language teachers' approaches and the culture of each classroom. The initial process of open coding began with identifying repeated themes or categories utilizing the funds of knowledge and culturally responsive instruction as the theoretical frameworks. The transcribed interviews were analyzed and coded into patterns, themes and categories.

Interview data were both hand-coded through reading and re-reading each transcript three times, and then coded, but not forced into preconceived understanding (Creswell, 2012). In addition, the reason for this case study inquiry approach was to tell a story and to provide examples of participants who teach in a dual language program. Efforts were made to look for coherence in the interviews to identify themes and patterns in the data. Both "textural descriptions" (lived experiences of dual langue teachers) and "structural descriptions" (context, and in this case the educational institution's role, in those descriptions" (context, and in this case the educational institution's role, in those experiences).

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to participants that were certificated dual language teachers at one particular dual language elementary school. It focused on dual language teachers who have a diverse classroom of students that including Latino English Language Learners. Possible limitations include the majority of students in the dual language elementary schools were predominantly ELLs in comparison to a school that had a small majority of ELLs.

The timeline to collect data posed a constraint in the methodology of this study, since data collection was held during a window of opportunity between state and district standardized testing in the spring and the end of the school year. This created scheduling of interviews a problem with some of the participants due to being overwhelmed with end of the year responsibilities. The data process was limited to the district approval of data collection out of concern for teachers during this time of year. As an educator at Don

Javier Elementary and under the same timelines as the participants, data collection was limited to after school and time availability of the participants.

Ethical Considerations

There were several ethical issues in safeguarding all study materials and the anonymity of the participants. All study materials were maintained in a secure manner and data was anonymized. All data were kept on the researcher's laptop and in password protected files. Study ID numbers were assigned to all interviewees. A separate file included the correspondence between IDs and names. Analysis and presentation of results were in aggregate form, and the individual study participants remained anonymized.

There were minimal risks to participating in this project. All protocols and aspects of the study were completely voluntary. Only the researcher, and professional transcriber had access to the interview data. Participant data did not ask a teacher's name, nor was identifiable information asked or recorded. The researcher had access to the key, as the transcriber was an outside party and contracted solely to transcribe the interview data for the researcher. No data was placed in "public" venues or computers. Only the researcher kept the data on a personal computer and a backup drive with password protected access.

Analysis and presentation of results were in aggregate form, and the individual study participants remained anonymous. The key to the coding and the list of codes were to remain in the researcher's home office as a hardcopy. Transcripts were kept in a locked file. Electronic recordings were be stored on a designated computer. The

computer files cannot be accessed without a security key. At the end of the study, all participants' responses were organized in to one file without any codes on them. All electronic files, including digital recordings of interviews, were also placed in one file. This information will be kept for one year after the completion of this dissertation.

Since this study included audio recording, participants were informed the interview and the recording could be stopped at any time, and upon request by the participant, portions of or the entire audiotape were erased. This information was included in the audio tape consent document. During the recording interview process, each participant was reminded he/she could end the interview at any time. As the start of the interview, participant was reminded that he /she could end the interview at any time because of fatigue, stress, boredom, or for any other reason. The researcher's position had no bearing or influence on the participation of teachers. There were no direct benefits to the individual teacher participants for engaging in this research. However, the interviews and questionnaire tools enabled teachers to provide direct feedback to the dual language program based on their experience. Thus, personal satisfaction could be one of the unintended benefits to participating teachers for giving honest feedback that improved the overall components of the dual language program and program components may strengthen to best serve all stakeholders engaged in the dual language program. Implications and recommendations based on this study's research finding are provided in the last chapter of this dissertation.

Positionality

I had a personal and professional interest in dual language programs. I have been a bilingual Education Specialist in Arbol Unified School District for 8 years. In addition, my other duties included being the Student Success Team Coordinator, 504 Plan Coordinator, and an Elementary Teacher Assistant Principal (ETAP) at Don Javier Elementary School. As part of the leadership team and as an educator, I had extensive experience working with Latino families and their children. I had built strong, trusting relationships with my colleagues, families, students and the community I served. There are some positionality concerns that may affect the study. The researcher's native language is English, but raised in a family where English and Spanish were spoken, and whose ethnicity matched the dominant population of the students at the elementary site. Although the researcher recognizes the struggle many Latino families have had in their pursuit in education, the researcher has been successful in attaining her formal education and holds a professional position in the field of education. At the same time, the researcher's present professional educational position had provided effective educational pathways for Latinos ELLs and their families. Some participants in this study may have not shared with the researcher their instructional approaches and strategies if it was an area needs improvement. However, keeping true to remaining unbiased, and not the one to question why professional development has not been attained, the participants' answers remain candid and trustworthy.

Significance of the Study

Teacher education programs throughout the United States can no longer address the growing population of Latino ELLs in the classroom by simply adding a course or two on multicultural education, and expect teachers to be fully prepared to focus on the diverse needs of ELLs (Gay, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The failure of Latino ELLs to move successfully through the K-12 system for over three decades requires all stakeholders to acknowledge the closing of the achievement gap has not narrowed significantly.

Due to the central role the general education teacher's play in the culturally linguistic diverse learner's social, emotional, and cognitive development, it is important to examine teacher's approaches to engaging Latino students in education and their families. Therefore, the focus of this research was to examine the best teaching practices for ELLs identified and implemented by participants. Given the fact that the Latino ELL population continues to grow exponentially every school year, it is critical for educators and those seeking to join the teaching profession to understand that specialized knowledge and skills are needed to make education possible for these learners. The study aimed to fill a gap in the literature of what is considered best practices for dual language teachers and today's norms of "good teaching", in relation to ELL students' educational needs. This study also explored Moll's (1992) Funds of Knowledge and Culturally Responsive Teaching (Gay, 2002) as the theoretical framework.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

A teacher effects eternity: he can never tell where his influence stops.

~Henry Adams

Research on two-way language immersion programs have demonstrated positive results with students that have been identified as English language learners (Hernández & Daoud 2014; Lindholm-Leary, 2012). Yet, there has not been sufficient research on dual language teachers implementing these programs and the use of culturally responsive strategies and classroom practices. This study focused on dual language teachers' content delivery in a Spanish/English Two Way language immersion program at Don Javier Elementary School. The study used observations, interviews, and documents during the data collection process. Ten dual language teachers in Kindergarten through 3rd grade provided their viewpoints regarding the support needed for EL students' academic development and language proficiency in Spanish and English.

This chapter is divided in two main sections, including a brief profile of each participating teacher, and a description of main themes that emerged from the analysis of data. These themes are the results of this study and respond to the four research questions guiding this investigation.

(1) How do dual language teachers of EL students communicate and interact with the Latino parents (using culturally competent approach) to better support their student?

(2) How do dual language teachers frame cultural competency in their instruction?

(3) What teaching approaches do they believe have been effective using methods that reflect cultural competency?

(4) What supports do dual language teachers believe are needed to better assist them in their work with EL students and their parents?

Participating School DLI Program and Participants' Demographics

Don Javier Elementary School Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program begins with 80% in Spanish and 20% in English for grades Kindergarten through 2nd grade, 70% in Spanish and 30% English for 3rd grade and 50% Spanish and 50% English for 4th through 5th grades. Participants' educational goals for their students was for students to achieve respect and appreciation for other cultures and languages in a multicultural setting.

All interviews included a short questionnaire of each participant's background including information on their gender, years of teaching experience in the district, overall years of teaching experience, educational level and teaching certifications, languages spoken, and their race/ethnicity. Through the review of questionnaire data, the vast majority of dual language teachers at Don Javier Elementary School were female (9) with one male teacher. All participating teachers were employed at DLI as full time teachers.

Table 2 provides demographics, as well as information about participants' teaching experience with ELLs. The overall teaching experiences for the dual language teachers ranged from 2 years to 14 years and their teaching experience working in Arbol Lindo Unified District (ALUSD) ranged from 1 year to 6 years. A total of six

Kindergarten teachers, two 1st grade teachers, one 2nd grade teacher, one 3rd grade teacher completed the questionnaire and were interviewed for this study.

Table 2. Participants' Demographic and Teaching Experience

Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Race/ Ethnicity	Years of Teaching Experience/ District	Grade Level/ Type of Teacher	Educational Level	Languages Spoken
P-1 Lucia	Female	White/ Hispanic	14/1	3rd/ Dual Language	B.A. and MS Credential/ BCLAD	English/Spanish
P-2 Lana	Female	White/ Hispanic	2/2	2nd/ Dual Language	M.A. and MS Credential/ BCLAD	English/Spanish
P-3 Ricardo	Male	White/ Hispanic	11/3	Kinder/ Dual Language	M.A. and Credential/ Admin Credential BCLAD	English/Spanish
P-4 Shelly	Female	White	3/3	1st/ Dual Language	M.A. and MS Credential/ BCLAD	English/Spanish
P-5 Inga	Female	White	2/2	Kinder/ Dual Language	B.A. and Credential/ BCLAD	English/Spanish/ German
P-6 Susan	Female	White/ Hispanic	7/6	Kinder/ Dual Language	M.A. and MS Credential/ BCLAD	English/Spanish
P-7 Ana	Female	White/ Hispanic	5/3	1st/ Dual Language	M.A. and MS Credential/ BCLAD	English/Spanish
P-8 Sarah	Female	White/ Hispanic	2/2	Kinder/ Dual Language	M.A. and MS Credential/ BLCLAD	English/Spanish
P-9 Juana	Female	White/ Hispanic	7/6	Kinder/ Dual Language	B.A. and MS Credential/ BCLAD	English/Spanish
P-10 Maribel	Female	White/ Hispanic	10/3	Kinder/ Dual Language	M.A. and MS Credential/ BCLAD	English/Spanish

All of the ten dual language teachers reported being able to speak English and Spanish, and one teacher was able to speak English, Spanish and German. All ten teachers identified themselves as being of the White race, seven of which also indicated Hispanic as their ethnicity at birth. All ten dual language teachers also reported having earned a Bachelor and Master degree, multiple subject teaching credentials, and a BCLAD.

Participants' Profile.

Participant 1 (Lucia). Lucia self-identified as a Hispanic, 3rd grade teacher with 14 of teaching experience and one-year experience in Arbol Lindo Unified School District as a dual language teacher. Her classroom consisted of 29 students, 14 boys and 15 girls. Most of the students have been identified as English language learners based on their CELDT scores. She reported having a shared ethnicity, culture, and language with her Latino/Hispanic parents, which has been influential when communicating with them. Using strategies and learned knowledge through her university diversity coursework, Lucia applied this information into her lesson plans and working with her students. She described her ability to work with Latino ELLs as a positive experience and commented. "I don't find it challenging because I am a Latino or a Hispanic person. Many of my students have a similar background than mine, so I can identify or understand where they are coming from." Lucia explained in her interview her definition of an ELL, and said, "…everyone is a language learner, including students who are learning Spanish who have English only at home. They are all, to me, language learners. They're learning another language aside from their mother tongue."

Lucia expressed her concerns about her ELLs time management skills. She thought district core curriculum and Common Core Standards did not provide sufficient time for her students to practice new material before moving onto a new concept. Lucia explained: "for me, time is a challenge. I see that if they had a little bit more time to practice certain things, then they could be more successful."

For Lucia, the classroom strategies and approaches which best support ELL instruction were: sentence frames and supports, charts, think-pair-share, and practice within their group before sharing out or writing. These strategies and supports were not learned through professional development, but from teacher collaboration and observation of other teachers modeling the strategies in their classroom. On the other hand, Lucia described inefficient strategies for ELL instruction included: insufficient time for students to understand new concepts, lack of sentence frames, no opportunities for students to speak in small groups, and teachers' reliability on and direct instruction only.

Participant 2 (Lana). Lana was a Hispanic, 2nd grade teacher with two years of teaching experience and an additional two years of teaching experience in Arbol Lindo Unified School District as a dual language teacher. Her classroom consisted of 27 students, 13 boys and 14 girls. Most of the students have been identified as Hispanic English language learners based on their CELDT scores. When Lana was a student herself, she was also identified and perceived as an ELL throughout her education, thus she was able to identify with her students and their struggles in the mastery of English. Entering into Kindergarten, Lana was a Spanish speaker and placed into a bilingual

education program. In June 1998, California Proposition 227 (Maxwell-Jolly, 2000)

passed and ended bilingual education programs statewide. Teachers could no longer help

students in any other language, except English. The impact of this proposition was

deeply felt by students like Lana and she remembered feeling marginalized by the new

identification of being ELL. This marginalization continued into her college years as a

student, she explained in her interview:

> Since the proposition came in, I was pulled into English immersion only.
> For me, being titled as an ELL, I just felt it was a title or a stigma or
> something that sticks with you forever. Like saying the words, 'Oh, you're
> an ELL.' While I was completing my student teaching, if a Hispanic said
> something incorrectly in English, a White student would say immediately
> the student was an English language learner.

Lana described the definition of an ELL as a person who "is learning English as

either a second or a third language. It also means sometimes that even though they do

know English, maybe their parents don't know English, and so they're learning through

means other than with their parents." As a first year dual language teacher at Don Javier

Elementary School, strategies that were implemented in her classroom were learned from

a mentor teacher at the school site because she had not received professional

development training for working with ELLs. Lana commented in the interview:

> I use a lot of strategies that I've learned here, namely from our Second
> grade lead Teacher. A lot of them are Specially Designed Academic
> Instruction in English (SDAIE) strategies and were learned in college.
> Some are also through the district or through other colleagues. During
> English Language Development (ELD) instruction, I use a lot of the
> Guided (GLAD) strategies and Thinking Maps. The strategies were
> learned through the district by mentor teacher. I personally have never had
> any training for English language learners.

SDAIE, GLAD and Thinking Maps are teaching approaches intended for teaching various academic content, such as social studies, science or literature, through the use of the English language to students who are still learning English. These instructional models for English development and literacy for ELLs are teacher driven by using graphic organizers, whole group input charts and high academic vocabulary.

Participant 3 (Ricardo). Ricardo was a Hispanic, Kindergarten teacher with eleven years of teaching experience and three years of teaching experience in Arroyo Lindo Unified School District as a dual language teacher. His classroom consisted of 23 students, 13 boys and 10 girls. Most of the students have been identified as English language learners based on their CELDT scores.

Ricardo was an English language learner during his own education and described the definition of an ELL as being: "a student who is learning English as a second language. Their primary language is something other than English. It could be Spanish; it could be Mandarin. It could be a different language other than English." When Ricardo was a child, he was considered an ELL, thus, he was able to empathize with his EL students and added:

> I know there are some parents that see the title, English Language Learner,
> on school forms and do not classify their as an ELL, because they think
> they are going to be assessed even more. It is just a title that is given to
> students, so sometimes they prefer to call them English Only (EO), as not
> have to have their child labeled.

In regards to effective instruction, Ricardo mentioned some classroom strategies that have supported his instruction with ELLs. These ones were to learn through the school district, and he particularly liked to use hands on activities, as well as GLAD strategies and Thinking Maps.

Participant 4 (Shelly). Shelly was a White, 1st grade teacher with three years of teaching experience and three years of teaching experience in Arroyo Lindo Unified School District as a dual language teacher. She had 30 students, 15 boys and 12 girls in her classroom. Most of the students have been identified English language learners based on their CELDT scores. Shelly was able to help her ELLs using both English and Spanish. She acquired her Spanish proficiency through her undergraduate university courses and earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology and Spanish.

Shelly defined an English language learner as someone who speaks another language primarily at home. She further argued that an ELL often was recognized as such because "the parent or whoever filled out the school information indicated they speak another language at their house and they haven't been re-designated on the CELDT."

As a primary grade teacher, the majority of her instructional day was done in Spanish (80%) and the rest, in English (20%). Most of her ELLs' dominant language was Spanish and it was also the preferred language at home. Shelly's instructional strategies included sentence frames for writing and starting conversations with the students, use of hand and facial gestures, act things out, visuals and Thinking Maps. She reflected, "I think what has been really effective is using sentence frames. I noticed that it gets the conversation going a lot better and they're able to say a lot more, if you just get them started." Shelly attributed her learning strategies through the teaching credential program, student teaching and working at another dual language immersion school.

Participant 5 (Inga). Inga was a White, 1st grade teacher with two years of teaching experience and two years of teaching experience in Arbol Lindo Unified School

District as a dual language teacher. She had a total of 24 students, 12 boys and 12 girls in her classroom. Most of the students have been identified as English language learners based on their CELDT scores. Regarding he own bilingualism, Inga's native language was German and she became a proficient English and Spanish speaker through courses she completed at the university level. She defined her students being as an English language learner as "a person who is still learning English, and to be more proficient in English." She said in the interview:

> There's some kids in the classroom, even though they basically are English only kids, but their parents marked on their entry survey or whatever that they speak another language at home, so now they're considered EL students even though they aren't actually learning English.

Instructional strategies that Inga provided for the ELLs in her classroom included sentence frames, modeling, visuals, preteaching vocabulary, and pairing them with a partner that was more proficient in English. She further explained in the interview:

> A sentence frame as I understand is, you give them a sentence, start it where a sentence the way it should be, and there's one blank space where they can customize it to themselves. For example, right now we've been describing insects. I would give them, 'The butterfly is ____.' And then they can fill in an adjective, and I try to specifically teach them, 'an adjective goes here.'

Many of the teaching strategies Inga employed in her classroom were learned through her student teaching experience and from other teachers on her grade level team.

Participant 6 (Susan). Susan was a Hispanic, Kindergarten teacher with six years of teaching experience and seven years of teaching experience in Arbol Lindo Unified School District as a dual language teacher. Her classroom consisted of 25 students, 12 boys and 13 girls. Most of the students have been identified as English

language learners based on their CELDT scores. As a native Spanish speaker herself, Susan, shared many commonalities with her students' language acquisition. She defined an ELL as "someone who is learning English as a second language and they have already solidified one language as their first native language."

In regards to her classroom, Susan's learning strategies included oral practice with other students, sentence frames, and a tea party where students practice their oral language. Susan commented: The first strategy is what I like to call a tea party. It allows each student to talk to one another, while everybody is speaking at the same, just like as a tea party. I provide a few sentence frames and students share out two things." Many of her instructional strategies were learned from another school district during EL trainings with a large population of ELLs. Susan explained in the interview:

> A lot of the tools I used were from my first district that I worked for, they
> did supply me with a lot of support training for ELLs. They are a large
> school district and one of the techniques they used were the GLAD
> strategies.

Participant 7 (Ana). Ana was a Hispanic, 1st grade teacher with three years of teaching experience, and five years of teaching experience in Arbol Lindo Unified School District as a dual language teacher. She had 26 students, 11 boys and 15 girls. Most of the students have been identified as English language learners based on their CELDT scores. Ana described English language learners as somebody whose primary language was not English and saw herself as an ELL. She reflected in the interview:

> I consider myself to be that. When I grew up, I grew up speaking Spanish.
> Then I went to school to learn English in the school setting. This is what I
> consider an English language learner, someone who didn't learn English
> as their dominant language at home.

Discussing the types of strategies and/or methods she learned in college and the school

district, she said her "pedagogy relies on the fact the good practice is good practice for all

students." Furthermore, she argued:

> I think our students who are learning English do need more support in
> English language development, especially within our two way program
> because we are focusing on Spanish first. If we're practicing good Spanish
> strategies on how to develop full sentences, looking at language, looking
> at text, that transfers over to English.

Ana developed her educational mindset through her coursework at University of

California, Los Angeles (UCLA) teacher credential program, which focuses on urban

education.

Participant 8 (Sarah). Sarah was a Hispanic, 3rd grade teacher with two years

of teaching experience, and two years of teaching experience in Arbol Lindo Unified

School District as a dual language teacher. Her classroom had a total of 27 students, 14

boys and 13 girls. Most of the students have been identified as English language learners

based on their CELDT scores. Sarah identified with her students as an English language

learner and the importance of instructional strategies in learning English. She explained:

"I am an English language learner. I think my understanding of the definition of an ELL

is anybody who's learning to manage or be fluent and proficient in the English language,

so it can be anybody from any background."

In addition, Sarah attributed her instructional strategies been learned in college

and from mentors throughout her career. She said: "Mostly, my strategies were probably

learned in college and also some very great teachers that I've worked with. You learn

theory in college but when you see it in action, you go, Aha! That is the one strategy I want to keep."

Participant 9 (Juana). Juana was a Hispanic, Kindergarten teacher with seven years of teaching experience and six years of teaching experience in Arbol Lindo Unified School District as a dual language teacher. Her classroom had a total of 24 students, 14 boys and 10 girls. Most of the students have been identified as English language learners. Juana identified with her Latino ELL students because she was an EL student herself. She defined an ELL as, "a person learning English as a second or third language, but it also means sometimes that even though they do know English, maybe their parent do not know English. So they are learning through other means than their parents."

Juana learned many of her instructional strategies through her teaching credential program, school district and her colleagues. She explained, "I use a lot of strategies that I've learned here, namely from our Kinder lead teacher. A lot of them are SDAIE strategies, but most of them were learned in college, through the district or through other colleagues." She found the most effective strategies were repetition, and pairing EL students up with students who were not ELLs and whose first language was English.

Participant 10 (Maribel). Maribel was a Hispanic, Kindergarten teacher with ten years of teaching experience and three years of teaching experience in Arbol Lindo Unified School District as a dual language teacher. Her classroom had a total of 23 students, 13 boys and 10 girls. Most of the students have been identified as English language learners. Maribel defined being an English language learner as a "student who has acquired the English language at school or in some other way because it is not spoken at home".

She credited her instructional strategies to her teacher credential coursework and some from the school district, she commented, "the strategies that we use, or that I use are thinking maps, GLAD strategies, chants and pictorials. Through my credential program I learned classroom management and the importance of movement in the classroom." Maribel found the most effective strategies were Thinking Maps, GLAD strategies, and singing songs to break the ice and for students to interact with each other.

Participants' Classroom Settings. In this study, observations were conducted in three classrooms, Kindergarten, 2nd and 3rd grade, to collect data on the teachers' culturally competent approaches based on the Classroom Culture Observation Rubric (Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society, 2015), classroom atmosphere, and expression of children's diverse backgrounds. In these three classrooms, dual language teachers shared stories to engage student and allowed for language development in English and Spanish.

The three classrooms were decorated with multicultural images that mirror the students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and showcase diversity in society. The majority of the classroom furniture and supplies were set up for collaboration among students. All of the three classrooms were structured to maximize students' voices and participation, as well as teachers' instruction and expectations.

Teachers were observed in many occasions interacting with students in different ways, such as one-on-one instruction, small group instruction, and whole group direct instruction. Most of the time, teachers encouraged the expression of students' cultural and communication styles by attentively listening to students in a respectful and caring classroom atmosphere. The dual language teachers were observed to say "thank-you, and

gracias", and nodding their heads in affirmation to students when answering questions

and sharing their life experiences. Furthermore, it appeared that these three teachers built

a safe place for students to explore news ideas, work through conflicts, and controversy.

Teacher-students trust and rapport were developed through a sensitive classroom setting,

activities and materials that promoted and reflected the diversity of students. The teacher

modeled how to accept different opinions of her students by saying, "thank you for

sharing your viewpoint, I also liked what David said on the same topic".

During the classrooms observations, photographs were taken of the classroom

settings as well as of significant artifacts, such as students' art work, writing, and science

projects. The following Figures 3 through 7 portray photographs of teachers' and

students' classwork, in their dual language immersion program utilizing their Spanish

language and demonstrating their collaboration skills during language arts and science, as

well as celebrating a traditional Mexican holiday. The majority of instructional strategies

that were used by all the participants were Specially Designed Academic Instruction in

English (SDAIE), Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD) and Thinking Maps.

All of these English language development (ELD) instructional strategies and approaches

are described as:

> The focus and motivation component of the Project GLAD ELD
> instructional model consists of strategies designed to build background
> knowledge, motivate students, activate prior knowledge, and enhance
> academic language. The input component consists of various
> comprehensible input strategies that enable teachers to provide core
> content instruction to students at all proficiency levels in a comprehensible
> and understandable way. The guided oral practice component provides
> multiple comprehensible output strategies designed to promote the
> development of academic language. The reading and writing component
> highlights effective reading and writing strategies that can be taught whole
> group through teacher modeling, small group cooperative team

opportunities, small group teacher-led instruction, and independent activities

Thinking Maps were used as graphic organizers for students' thoughts and demonstration of their knowledge and critical thinking. Figure 3 is an example of a Circle Map, and was created by the participant to instruct ELLs on letter recognition and words that begin with Y and Z.
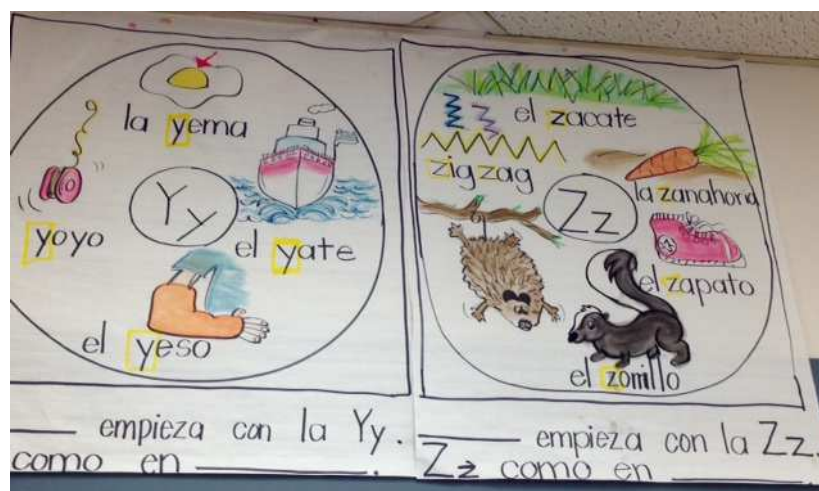
Figure 3. Kindergarten Spanish Alphabet and Sentence Writing
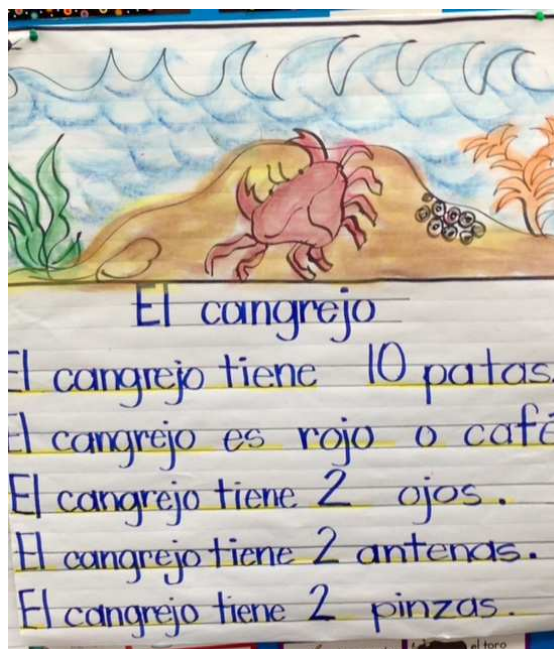
Figure 4. Kindergarten Language Arts, Writing, and Science

The use of teacher generated, colorful visuals in Figure 4 provided ELLs the

opportunity to learn ocean marine life in a comprehensible manner, and Figure 5 is a

science visual displayed through a group effort of ELL 3rd graders.
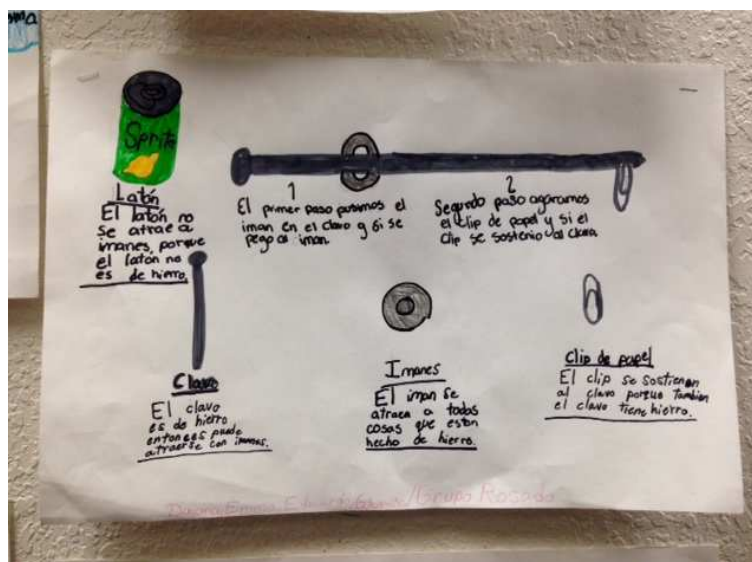
Figure 5. Third Grade Science Group Project.

Figure 6 provides evidence of cultural competency approaches being used in the classroom by teachers' and students' in celebration of holidays and traditions. Lastly, Figure 7 illustrates student collaboration and cultural competency through the use of a Circle Map. Effective instructional strategies and approaches resulted in engaging lessons for all students in the classroom.

Figure 6. Second Grade Celebrating "Dia de Los Muertos" (Day of the Dead)

Figure 7. Science- Student Generated Circle Map

Data Analysis Process

In addition to the use of the Background Information Questionnaire, all participants' interviews were thoroughly read and reviewed by the researcher a minimum of three times each during the analysis. The initial reading of the transcripts was to look for any discrepancies on the translation of Spanish terms and words, which were used by some of the participants. This first review also included how participants responded to the interview questions in relation to the 4 guiding research questions. The second reading entailed a more critical review of the transcript was to understand the responses and highlight important quotes. Every interview transcript was examined line-by-line to search for major themes and then were highlighted and coded. Each transcript was coded with descriptors which resulted in demographic comparisons and contrasts. This time consuming process provided several codes that were later sorted for patterns and relationships.

The third review consisted of highlighting and coding responses by hand, as the process for focusing on the large amount of data with the intention to empirically illuminate the responses to the research questions. Major categories were based on all data collected including interviews, classroom observations, and field notes taken by the researcher. The coding evolved from raw data to core categories, to main themes.

Development of Themes

The researcher counted by hand on how many teachers' responses had a shared commonality as a starting point for coding. As part of the emerging topics, categories, and ultimately arriving at theme identification, participants' excerpts were assigned to

their interview responses and the research questions. When a phrase was used to support the research, it was highlighted and coded. As new themes emerged during the analysis, the previous interviews were also analyzed with the new themes. Some themes eventually blended together under a more inclusive theme, and stronger themes became reinforced with additional supportive phrases. The ongoing process after each interview allowed for changes, if needed, of future interviews. After each interview, themes were sorted out and more inclusive themes were discovered.

Patterns in the transcripts were explored to discover which themes were the central issues and which codes were conditions that caused the central issue. The description and explanation of each theme and subtheme is supported by direct quotes from the participants. Themes were analyzed by exploring any differences or similarities in responses of participants.

Ultimately, five major themes emerged from the analysis process and responded to the three main research questions guiding this investigation. The rationale for assigning themes resulted from rereading and analyzing the interviews and choosing participant excerpts. The five main themes included: (1) definition of an English language learner, (2) parent involvement and communication, (3) classroom strategies and approaches, (4) cultural competences, and (5) teachers' challenges and needs. These themes also included subthemes.

Table 3 Summary of Research Questions and Related Themes

Summary of Research Questions and Related Themes with Subthemes	Themes/Subthemes
How do dual language teachers of EL students communicate and interact with the Latino parents (using culturally competent approach) to better support their student?	Definition of English Language Learner Parent Involvement and Communication
How do dual language teachers frame cultural competency in their work?	Cultural Competencies • Teaching approaches, provide visuals, share holidays, focus on similarities, and speak to students and parents in their native language.
What teaching approaches do they believe have been effective using methods that reflect cross-cultural competency?	Classroom Strategies and Approaches • GLAD, SDAIE, Thinking Maps, sentence frames, small cooperative groups, oral practice, pair students, hands on learning, pictorials.
What supports do teachers believe are needed to better assist them as they work with EL students and their parents?	Challenges and Needs • Professional development, adequate materials/resources, parent involvement.

Theme 1: Definition of an English Language Learner

An English language learner is described as a person who is learning the English language in addition to his or her native language (Breiseth, Robertson, & LaFond, 2011; Fry & Lopez, 2012). Eschevarria, Powers and Short (2006) also explain the definition as being:

An English language learner (abbreviated to ELL) is a person who is learning the English language in addition to his or her native language.

The instruction and assessment of students, their cultural background, and the attitudes of classroom teachers towards ELLs have all been found to be factors in ELL student achievement. Some ways that have been suggested to assist ELLs include bringing their home cultures into the classroom, involving them in language-appropriate content-area instruction from the beginning, and by integrating literature into the learning program.

In this study, all of the participants shared their definition of an English language learner with eight out of the ten participants being identified as an ELL in school and native speakers of the Spanish language. Lana describes her ELL identification in school prior to California Proposition 227 (California Department of Education, 2015), she explained in her interview:

I was classified as an English language learner, but back then, it was ELD. English was not my first language. It was Spanish. In Kindergarten, I was in bilingual education. Then the proposition came in, and I was pulled into an English immersion only class. To me, it was just a title or a stigma that sticks to you forever. Even today. When I was doing my student teaching, a Hispanic student teacher said something incorrectly in class, and the White professor corrected him by saying, "Oh you are an ELL". I just feel there is still that label going on for ELLs.

In addition, Juana explains her definition of an ELL in the interview as:

It's a person who learning English as either a second or third language, but it also means sometimes that even though they do know English, maybe their parents don't know English, and they are kind of learning through means other than their parents.

Two participants discussed in the interview, home language surveys that parents fill out during the enrollment process. California *Education Code*, Section 52164.1 (a) contains legal requirements which direct schools to determine the language(s) spoken in the home of each student. This sample form is designed to assist with the identification process of students entering California public schools (California Department of Education, 2015):

> *The Education Code* contains legal requirements which direct schools to
> determine the language(s) spoken in the home of each student. This
> information is essential in order for the school to provide adequate
> instructional programs and services. As parents or guardians, your
> cooperation is requested in complying with this legal requirement. Please
> respond to each of the four questions listed below as accurately as
> possible. For each question, write the name(s) of the language(s) that
> apply in the space provided. Please do not leave any question unanswered.

In these surveys, parents are asked: (1) which language did your child learn when he/she first began to talk? (2) which language does your child speak more frequently at home? (3) which language do you (the parents or guardians) most frequently when speaking to your child? (4) which language is most often spoken by parents and adults in the home (parents, guardians, grandparents, or any other adults?).

Inga is German native speaker and in her university coursework learned how to speak English and Spanish, and she also identifies herself as being an ELL. She provided her definition of an ELL:

> It means that it's someone in the classroom that is still learning English, to
> be more proficient in English. Whereas, I know that some of the kids in
> the classroom, even though they basically are English only (EO) kids,
> their parents have marked on their entry survey that speak another
> language at home. Now they are considered EL students, even though they
> are not actually learning English.

Theme 2: Parent Involvement and Communication

The importance of communication among the teacher-parent-student was essential for supporting ELL students in the classroom and their academic success. According to the teachers' responses in this study, communicating to the Latino and English Only parents was provided in many ways, which included emails, phone conversations, newsletters, and school- wide administrator telephone messages delivered to the parents'

home in English and Spanish. For example, Juana described holding parent conferences in English and Spanish to meet the needs of the parents. Juana commented, "I make phone calls. I do talk to them sometimes after school. I do send letters both in English and Spanish. A lot of parents do have access to emails, so I communicate with them through this way too."

The majority of the dual language teachers reported communication and interaction with Latino parents and parent involvement as a challenge. Sarah explained:

> In my experience parents are afraid to come forward, they feel rejected and they feel they don't know the language. They think, so how am I supposed to approach the teacher? I also think for teachers to be welcoming, to be authentic in the approach to parents, they need to say, 'I am here to help you.' We have to build relationships. As an ELD Advisor, I know many times a flyer is not going to do the trick. A piece of paper inviting them to come to the school is not going to make it happen.

In addition, Shelly concurred and said:

> All the classroom and pretty much all the school communication too, is in Spanish and English. I know which families do not have internet access or email access, sending information home is another way to communicate with the parents. I think we've done well. I send out emails to the parent list serve for my class and PACE calls also are helpful.

Additionally, Shelly found it somewhat challenging to work with some of her Latino families, she explained:

> Parents aren't as involved for one reason or another. Whether it is a lack of time or they're busy working, or they don't know how to navigate, or they don't feel they'll get answers so they don't ask. That's frustrating and it's usually my lowest kids' parents. Latino ELLs that do really well have parents who tend to be involved and accessing more of the ELAC meetings, so they can educate themselves on what they need to do. Then there's another segment, the kids are a little bit lower academically, the parents are not as involved.

Although Spanish speaking parents benefited from a dual language (English and Spanish) speaking staff at Don Javier Elementary School, English only (EO) parents found it difficult to speak to teachers during Spanish instructional time. In Kindergarten, for example, the morning began in Spanish, and dual language teachers were dedicated to staying in harmony to the 80/20 model, with students hearing their teachers speaking in Spanish. English only parents expressed their concerns in regard to needing to communicate to the teacher on an issue or converse with them, but were unable to speak Spanish when the teacher addressed them in Spanish. Often, the parent was asked in English and the teacher responded in Spanish, which presented a challenge for the EO parent. Maribel explained, "I think communicating with EO parents is a challenge during the Spanish instructional part of the day and in front of students. Sometimes EO parents come to the classroom and want to know something. I can't speak to them in English and when I am modeling Spanish to the students."

Furthermore, students were encouraged to speak Spanish only during the instructional day. When EO parents came to speak to the teacher, the teacher only speaks in the target language, Spanish. Another teacher shared the same challenge in communicating to an English only parent when they arrived at the classroom door to speak to her, and said:

> As long as the children are present, it's best for them to hear you speak in the target language. Of course, we always try to whisper to each other with questions and answers. Sometimes this could be a little bit of a barrier. Or I will say, 'Write me note, email me or I'll call you.'

On the other hand, five teachers viewed parent involvement and communication as a positive experience. For example, Maribel explained:

> They know they can knock on the door, and I'm going to open. They
> know that they can come in and say, can I take 5 minutes of your time, and
> I will say, yes. Not everyone is willing to do that. Sometimes we rely too
> much on the, well, I invite them, and they don't come, but they don't build
> the relationship. I think that if you don't have that strong relationship with
> the parents, they won't feel comfortable coming.

Shelly also explained her positive parent interactions, and said, "There are a lot of Latino ELLs that do really well and those parents do tend to be more involved and accessing the ELAC meetings. So they can educate themselves on what they need to do." Ricardo also viewed parent involvement as an important component for working with Latino ELLs. He saw working with Latino ELLs as a pleasure, and thought of them as just like any other student who wanted to do their best in school, pleased their teacher, and were equipped with a strong desire to learn. He explained:

> For a lot of parents, it's not what they don't want to, it's that don't know
> how to. We need to be able to teach our parents to be involved in the
> conversations with the teachers, with even their child about what we are
> doing in class. If we start to close the gap, then we'll see in the end, more
> Latinos going above and beyond because they'll know their parents care. I
> know parents care, but I think they need to have the tools to show their
> kids how, what they need to do is show the kids they care.

Whereas, Inga felt parents were very involved and it was challenging to bring them into the school. Not because of the lack of wanting to be involved, but their cultural understanding of what parent involvement means to them. Inga commented:

> Sometimes working with the Latino parents is a little bit more challenging,
> because they are not usually very involved in school. I feel like it takes a
> lot to bring them in. It's not for a lack of wanting to, I think that's just a
> cultural thing sometimes, like they're just not used to that and did not
> think it was an option.

To sum, all participating dual language teachers expressed that having communication and interaction with the Latino parents their involvement at the school

and home was vital to their children's success at school. Overall, all teachers attempted to have a positive relationship with Latino parents and in one way or another encouraged parent involvement in the school and their classrooms. However, the factors of what constituted parent involvement at home and at school, as well as the expectations towards involvement and collaboration were not the same for all teachers.

Theme 3: Classroom Strategies and Approaches

During the interview process, teachers reflected their cache of strategies and methods, which have been effective in reflecting their cross-cultural competencies and addressing the needs of Latino ELLs in their classrooms. The main instructional strategies and methods mentioned by participants included sentence frames, modeling, pairing students with proficient Spanish or English speakers, pictorials, small groups, and GLAD strategies. In addition, most participants used Thinking maps, hands on learning, acting things outs, repetition, small cooperative groups, and oral practice with other students, building vocabulary, and Tea Party to share two things. Visual representations, games, chants, kinesthetic movements for students and singing were also important classroom strategies and activities that participating teachers found effective with ELLs. Each teacher validated the above mentioned strategies and methods to engage all learners. Many of the strategies and methods were either learned through their teacher credential program coursework, district training or from their colleagues. Ana, for example described frequently using sentence frames in her classroom:

> We use a lot of sentence frames. I try my best to use a lot of GLAD
> strategies and one is chanting. I have used Thinking maps at another
> school district, but I learned how to use them better with this district.

> Thinking maps are a big thing that really helps the students organize language, and bring out language. I put it into context within the sentence frame, and I think it they have been really helpful. I want to say that one of the most effective strategies for my ELL students has been providing the opportunity to talk. Talk like in controlled chaos. If we're walking into a classroom and it's quiet, I'm thinking that language is a problem, because they cannot be learning it if they aren't speaking it.

Juana explained her learning strategies were learned in college, through the school district and more importantly from the Kindergarten Lead Teacher. She reported not having formal training on how to instruct English language learners in a dual language immersion program. Juana explained:

> The strategies that I found that have been effective are repetition, pairing them up with students who are not English language learners and English is their first language. What has not been effective is direct instruction and just telling them what to do or not providing them support they need. I use a lot of GLAD and SDAIE strategies, and Thinking maps.

Similarly, Sarah reflected on the importance of being a learner and considered that what was effective in one class may not be effective in her next class. She said:

> You really have to be a learner yourself because things that worked for one class, did not work for another class or set of kids. As a teacher you constantly have to modify your teaching approach to that teaching. There's times where the kids pick up on things really quickly, and you fly with things. Then there are other times when they don't. As a teacher, you have to modify how you approach the learning. To me that is the most effective, knowing your students, knowing where they are, and knowing how to move them forward.

Sarah also discussed the benefits of stepping away from the curriculum and the use of teacher's instructional edition to engage the ELLs in her classroom. She stated, "I've learned that I use whatever is required, but I will always supplement it with what kids need to learn."

Ricardo attributed the strategies and methods learned for ELLs to district trainings and being an English language learner himself. He became cognizant as a teacher that he needed to reach students in a different manner. Ricardo explained:

> As a teacher, there was a lot of hands on experiences because that's how I learned it. I know that's how a lot of my students learned it. I took a lot of classes at the district level. There was GLAD strategies, and thinking maps that helped ELLs learn the content. What we were noticing now is that our district is starting to expand those classes to non-English language learners. They realized if it is helping ELLs, it could also help non-English language learners. A lot of teachers in the teachers are now starting to take some of the classes that were specific for English language learners a few years ago.

Like Ricardo, throughout the interviews, participants described main strategies and methods to address ELLs' educational needs. These ones were learned through teacher credential coursework, district trainings, and colleague collaboration, as well as personal experiences.

Theme 4: Challenges and Needs

In response to this research question, teachers overwhelmingly agreed that more professional development, adequate materials and resources, more collaboration between teachers, and a dual language (Spanish/English) curriculum were needed for all subjects. At the time that this study took place, Don Javier Elementary School teachers were translating some of the curriculum and informal assessments in Spanish to meet their needs and respond to the district requirements. Maribel, for example, described in her interview of not having formal training through her college coursework or district trainings on the best practices for ELLs in the dual language immersion program. This limited her opportunities to properly address her ELLs.

Although, the school had an English Language Development (ELD) Coordinator that attended district meetings, the teachers stated they were not supported well in providing strategies on how to work with ELLs that were at risk. Lucia explained:

> For the BCLAD, I took three sets of tests to get my authorization. On my own, I prepared for them and I studied for them. I have not received any cultural competency training. I feel it is important because learning a language comes with learning the culture. Where it is spoken, where it comes from and traditions as well.

Lucia explained that she needed to learn more about ELL tools and resources to be better prepared with ELLs and their parents. She said in the interview:

> In this area, I feel that I need to learn more. When I have questions about them, about what I can do to include in my lesson or what supports are needed, I speak to my grade level partner. I may also speak to the person who is coordinating the EL meetings here at the school for advice. She has provided me with some sources I can refer to.

Inga stated she was 70% confident in her teaching abilities to fulfill multiple roles and responsibilities as a dual language teacher. Her 30% loss of confidence was due to insufficient resources in Spanish/English for dual language immersion teachers. She reflected in the interview:

> I feel like there's lot more to learn, and sometimes, I feel like in the two-way it falls a little bit under the rug. We're so focused on our instruction in Spanish, we don't always do our best job targeting English. There are no resources in that regard, so it feels like it is just on the sidelines. I feel confident about the strategies that I have learned, and I feel good about applying them. I just wish there was more resources, or more support, or more that I could learn to help to be better.

Whereas, Susan described parent involvement as essential component to providing ELLs with exposure to proper Spanish and English, and commented in the interview:

> In the classroom we have high expectations and give students the context that they need. Sometimes at home or whoever is babysitting the ELL, the Spanish is not always at the same caliber as at school. I think that is

> biggest challenge in getting support and assistance. Academic language
> and home language is very different and we also run into the situation
> where certain words are made up, like in Spanglish. As a child that's
> learning Spanish in a dual immersion program, it's important to establish
> and solidify one language first and then introduce the second language.

Susan's recognition of the importance of Latino ELLs learning academic language to better prepare them for the future, demonstrates her commitment to the learning process for all children to transfer this knowledge back to their home environment. Ricardo also collaborated the importance of having the right materials to educate ELLs that were in alignment with the State's Common Core Standards. He explained in the interview:

> Being a two way, its materials, is probably our biggest concern because
> there aren't many things out there that we can say, "here is a program".
> I'm not a big fan of programs because each child is a little bit different. It
> would at least be a guide for our teachers to use for the majority of the
> students, and for others, using supplemental resources to support their
> learning.

During the interviews, participants shared similar viewpoints regarding cultural competency and expressed their understanding of the difference between home language and academic language, and the importance to check their own proper usage of the Spanish language when speaking to parents. Many participants in this study indicated their multicultural coursework framed their understanding of ELLs and strategies/approaches were learned through school district trainings or collaboration with their colleagues. Their BCLAD was earned through taking three tests to be considered proficient to teach in a Spanish/English dual language immersion program, but did not include important pedagogy on how to support ELLs in the classroom.

Theme 5: Cultural Competences

The definition of cultural competence for purposes of this study is the ability to successfully teach students who come from a culture or cultures other than one's own (National Center of Cultural Competence, 1998). Participating dual language teachers were provided the opportunity to look beyond their own culture and ethnicity and into the ones of the students they were teaching. The National Center of Cultural Competence (1998) further explained in the interview:

> Cultural competence is a key factor in enabling educators to be effective with students from cultures other than their own. Cultural competence is having an awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn and build on the varying cultural and community norms of students and their families. It is the ability to understand the within-group differences that make each student unique, while celebrating the between-group variations that make our country a tapestry. This understanding informs and expands teaching practices in the culturally competent educator's classroom. (p.1)

In this investigation, seven of the ten dual language teachers that were interviewed shared the Latino/Hispanic cultural and ethnic background, with many students in their classroom. Although, three of the ten teachers were not Hispanic, they acquired knowledge on Hispanic culture and ethnicity through college coursework and from hands on experience in the classroom. Their identification of Latino/Hispanic cultural norms, Spanish language spoken at home, and the socio-economics of their families offered them unique opportunities to be positive role models for the parents and students. Susan explained in the interview:

> Many of students have a similar background like mine, so I can identify or understand where they're coming from. With my bachelor's degree in Spanish, I learned cultural information from different countries in Latin America, so it helps me understand them. Also, if I ever have a question

for the parents, I am able to speak to them in a tactful way and conduct myself in a certain manner.

Susan also identified with her student's cultural background as her own, and being able to confidently recognize the norms of the Latino/Hispanic culture. Another teacher, Ana also conveyed understanding of cultural competency as how culture affected students' performance in the classroom, and said, "It means to me, trying to understand other cultures. Then also trying to understand where they came from, the effect it has on how they act, and how they perform in class."

Another participant, Shelly, recognized that although she was not Hispanic, she was able to identify with the Hispanic culture through her family association, travels throughout Latin American countries, and her college coursework. Shelly further explained in the interview:

> My step mom is Mexican. I do have some background in at least the Mexican culture. I've traveled to Spanish speaking countries. I feel like I do have a pretty good understanding of the culture. Obviously it's not like my culture that I grew up with. Speaking the language is a huge thing, I feel like I can communicate really well with parents. I do wish I had more slang and phrases in Spanish. This is what I feel I am missing and wanting to learn. I think sometime my speech is really too formal in Spanish. Some of the ways I say things in English, I don't have the same exact way of saying it in Spanish.

Shelly also compared her Spanish fluency to a native Spanish speaking teacher and realized parents were not as comfortable speaking to her in Spanish as they would be if she was of the same culture. Shelly explained in the interview:

> Maybe they don't feel as comfortable talking to me and even they know I speak Spanish, it's not like I am someone from their own culture. Theirs is nothing I can do about that. I'm friendly as I can be. I noticed when Ana speaks to her parents, they are much more open to communicate with her. Ana is straight forward, personality wise, I am not straight forward. Also, I

think I might be straight forward with my approach if I had all the phrases, and all the language, and the right way to say everything.

Another teacher, Lana, addressed cultural competence through the lens of equality for all, and reflected, "For me that just means that everybody's equal. They have equal opportunities regardless of where you come from. Regardless of your culture, regardless of your race, everybody receives the same instruction. They're at the same levels."

All participants in this study mentioned the use of cultural competent lessons to discuss traditions, holidays and various perspectives of their students' cultures. They also acknowledged their colleagues diverse cultural and ethnic background different from their own and accepted differences when they arose. Sarah explained in the interview:

In terms of cultural competence, I can go home and be a Mexican and be okay with it. Then interact with my English speaking friends and okay with that. I can also be in a work environment where the cultural environment is educational and be okay with that. I am also comfortable at my "ranchito" in Mexico and talk about my cultural experiences with my colleagues. I have learned so much from Inga, who is from Germany, and knowing what she values and what she doesn't.

The shared respect of cultural and ethnic commonalities and differences between the participants was evident during the interview process and was perceived to transfer to their instruction of ELLs. Ricardo's definition for cultural competence was, "everybody's equal. They have equal opportunities regardless of where they come from. Regardless of your culture, regardless of your race, everybody receives the same instruction. They're at the same levels." Additionally, Shelly concludes cultural competence is contingent on "validating those cultures in the classroom, and celebrating different aspects of the different cultures". Overall, all participant's saw themselves as

being culturally competent in their work with students in the dual language immersion program and embraced the Latino/Hispanic diverse cultures in their classrooms.

Summary of Findings

This study was conducted to identify, collect and analyze information on the experiences and perceptions of ten dual language teachers' regarding how they supported student's academic knowledge and language proficiency in Spanish and English. All participants aimed for their students to develop high-level academic skills, respect, and appreciation for other cultures. This case study proved to be appropriate for the analysis of the data and the four research questions guiding this investigation. Data was collected from ten interviews with dual language teachers, and observations in selected classrooms. All five main themes offered descriptive information in the form of direct quotes from the participants to answer the research questions. Research findings from this study allowed for a better understanding of ELLs' educational and socio-cultural needs, as well as teachers' implementation of effective strategies and classroom instructional approaches to attend to those needs. In addition, research findings provide descriptive information on challenges and successes resulting from teachers-parents' interactions. A discussion of these research findings as they relate to the review of literature in Chapter 2 is presented in Chapter 5. Implications of this study and recommendations for future research are also indicated.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the

way."

~Frank Smith

Over sixty years after Brown v. Board of Education (1954) and the U.S. Civil

Rights Movement, Latino school segregation was granted minor attention, one of the

significant issues was segregation not being tracked in school districts (Carnock & Ege,

2015). With the implementation of the Civil Acts of 1964, new reporting policies

required school districts to be accountable in assessing Latino students as a separate

student population, thus school districts are now mandated to include Latinos in their

ethnic composition data (Carnock & Ege, 2015). Unfortunately, Latino school

segregation continues in many school districts in the United States and has intensified,

especially, for at-risk Latino English Language Learners (ELLs) (Carnock & Ege, 2015;

Ennis, Rios-Vargas & Albert, 2010; Fry & Lopez, 2012).

The Pew Research Center/Pew Hispanic Center, reported the 2010 Census

counted 50.5 million Hispanics in the United States, and the largest population of

Hispanics were counted residing in California (Passel, Cohn, & Lopez, 2011). Latinos

are more than one-in-four state residents in Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico

and Texas, this equates to a large Latino student population in these states' school

districts (Passel, Cohn, & Lopez, 2011). The Latino/Hispanic student population has

continued to climb at a rapid rate and of the 74 million children in the United States

today, 17.5 million are of Hispanic descent (Ennis, Rios-Vargas, & Albert, 2011; Fry &

Gonzales, 2008, Fry & Lopez, 2012; Murphy, Guzman, & Torres, 2014). Additionally,

Carnock and Ege (2015) argued that due to the large influx of Latino students, whose enrollment has increased exponentially since 1968, and with over 70% of all U.S. ELLs as native Spanish speakers, Latino ELLs are the most at risk for student population with respect to segregation. Carnock and Ege (2015) also explained that what they called "triple segregation" exists for Latino ELLs along racial, socioeconomics, and linguistic isolation.

Latino school segregation has escalated even higher in relation to where a family can afford to live and the enrollment zones where Latino ELLs can attend school. Segregation by language is also problematic for Latino ELLs because they are often being sent to schools with predominantly poor, Latino, English learning populations (Carnock & Ege, 2015, Chapa & De La Rosa, 2004; Eschevarria, Powers, & Short, 2006; Gandara, 2005; Murphy, Guzman, & Torres, 2014). Hamann, Wortham, and Murillo (2002) also describe increasing numbers of Latinos are settling in areas of the United States that have been traditionally a part of their migration pattern. Instead of arriving to established Latino locations like the Southwest, where Latinos have lived for centuries, families are moving to areas such as North Carolina, Maine, Georgia, Indiana, Arkansas, rural areas of Illinois and resort towns in Colorado (Hamann, Wortham, & Murillo Jr., 2004).

Hamann, Wortham, and Murillo Jr. (2004) assert these growing areas of Latino families as the "New Latino Diaspora", who arrive in to unfamiliar places where long-term residents have little experience with Latino culture and language. In the New Latino Diaspora are confronted with questions about "who they are, who they seek to be, and what accommodations they merit as a group" (Hamann, Wortham, & Murrillo Jr., 2004).

In predominantly Anglo schools, Latino schoolchildren in the New Latino Diaspora are often viewed suspiciously, due to their different language and culture they bring with them. Few public schools in the New Latino Diaspora so far are able to meet the needs of Latino schoolchildren overcome the economic and social barriers they face (Hamann, Wortham, & Murrillo Jr., 2004). The most common educational support and accommodation to the needs of Latino ELLs is to pull them from their mainstream classroom for ESL instruction, a practice that often disrupts their acquisition of content knowledge with their unlike peers.

In California, most English learners speak Spanish as their first language, however to fully succeed academically and relate to school peers and teachers, ELLs need to learn English (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008; Gandara, 2005). The state of California has a stake in how ELLs perform academically, and although most of them learn the English language, many ELLs do not achieve an equal level of academic proficiency in main subject areas as their monolingual English classroom peers (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011; Gandara, 2005).

To address the educational needs of Latino ELLs, a new instructional model known as Dual Language Education (DLE), has become an effective educational approach (Carnock & Ege, 2015; Lindholm-Leary, 2001). The appeal of DLE is the combination of bilingual education and immersion education into one program with the goal of acquiring full bilingualism and biliteracy (Lindholm- Leary, 2001; Ruth, Anbergy-Espinoza, & DeJong, 2009). As dual language immersion programs have grown in popularity, so has the growing need for culturally competent educators. However, Lindholm-Leary (2012) argues many educators, especially mainstream

classroom teachers, are not professionally prepared to adopt DLE in the classroom. In California, elementary school teachers earned a Multiple Subject Teaching credential with an English Learner Authorization/CLAD certificate to instruct students in a self-contained classroom (State of California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2015). The English Learner (EL) Authorization and the Crosscultural, Language, Academic Development (CLAD) certificate authorizes instruction to English learners (State of California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2015). The holders of these credentials and authorizations are viewed as highly qualified educators to instruct ELLs in English Language Development (ELD) and Specially Designed Academic Instruction Delivered in English (SDAIE).

Whereas, California dual language teachers that instruct in a dual language self-contained classroom have a Multiple Subject Teaching credential with a CLAD, they must also have a Bilingual Authorization. The State of California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (2015) reports the Bilingual Authorization allows the teachers to provide instruction to English Language Development (ELD), instruction for primary language development, Specially Designed Academic Instruction Delivered in English (SDAIE), and content instruction delivered in the Primary Language (State of California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2015).

The California Department of Education (2015) recognizes Two-Way Immersion Programs as Specialized Programs, and describes them as:

> Biliteracy programs support the maintenance and/or development of language for English language learners. Other biliteracy programs (two-way bilingual immersion (TWBI) and dual language) integrate language minority students (English learners) and language majority students (English speakers) to develop bilingualism and biliteracy in English and another language.

Most of the empirical research on dual language immersion programs have addressed the success of these programs in promoting language proficiency and academic achievement for English Learners and English Proficient students (Hernández, 2015; Lindholm-Leary, 2012; Walker & Tedick, 2000), yet limited research exists on teachers' cultural competency and cultural instructional practices, in relation to DLE (Anderson, 2011; Moll & Arnot-Hopffer, 2005; Ogu, 1994; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This dissertation examined how10 dual language immersion teachers worked with EL students, as well as how they communicated and interacted with Latino parents, using a culturally competent approach. This study utilized the Funds of Knowledge (Moll, 1992) and Culturally Responsive Teaching (Gay, 2002) as it theoretical framework and four research questions guided this investigation:

(1) How do dual language teachers of EL students communicate and interact with the Latino parents (using culturally competent approach) to better support their student?

(2) How do dual language teachers frame cultural competency in their instruction?

(3) What teaching approaches do they believe have been effective using methods that reflect cultural competency?

(4) What supports do teachers believe are needed to better assist them as they work with ELL students and their parents?

Based on the purpose of the study and the four research questions, data was collected and analyzed on participating teachers' abilities of communicating and

interacting with Latino parents, specifically using a culturally responsive approach, as well as on instructional strategies and resources implemented in their classrooms to support Latino ELLs. Data was gathered from the 10 selected teachers that provided English and Spanish instruction to Latino ELLs in a Dual Language Immersion elementary school in Orange County, California. The school district was located in an urban area that served a large, diverse student population. The first phase of this study consisted of collecting data through 60 minute face-to-face interviews with participants, as well as implementing a background questionnaire completed by each participant. Three participating teachers were also observed in their classrooms, and field notes were taken during the observations on classroom culture, teacher-student relationships, and classroom activities. Data was then analyzed and triangulated. Data collection was conducted over a three-month period from Spring 2015 to Fall 2015. The researcher met with the principal to discuss data collection and provide copies of the University of California, San Diego Institution Review Board (IRB) documents for approved data collection. Purposeful sampling was used in this case study so as to develop an in-depth description and analysis of dual language teachers' approaches to engaging Latino students in education. The instrumentation comprised of teacher semi-structured interviews, observations in three dual language teachers' classrooms, and the collection of background information on each participant.

In this chapter, major research findings are discussed in connection to the literature review and theoretical framework presented in chapter 2. Practical implications for in the field of dual language education are presented and recommendations for further

research as new directions in relation to teachers in the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program. Conclusions are included at the end of this chapter.

Discussion

In response to the four research questions guiding this investigation, five main themes emerged from data analysis: (1) definition of an English language learner, (2) parent involvement and communication, (3) classroom strategies and approaches, (4) challenges and needs, and (5) cultural competencies. Figure 8 is a graphic representation of the connections among these five main themes.

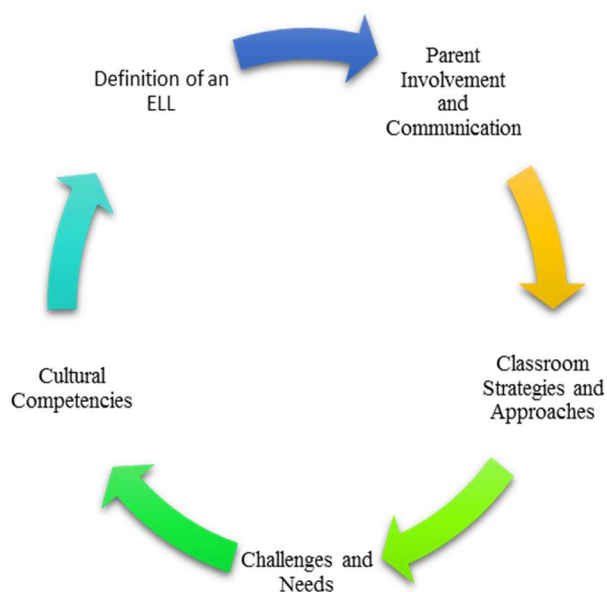Figure 8. Study's Five Main Themes

As indicated in chapter 4, most participants defined an English language learner as someone mastering a second language other than their native language. What was evident in the data was 9 out 10 teachers viewed themselves and were identified as English language learners when in school, thus they shared many of the learning experiences of their Latino EL students.

In relation to teacher-parent interactions, all participating dual language teachers described their assumptions of what constituted parent involvement and described their methods of communicating with Latino parents, mostly by home phone calls, emails, and letters sent home, or face-to-face conversations. Participants mostly described parent involvement as a way in which parents supported their children's education, for example, with homework and their moral upbringing. Many participants believed that the reason for parents not being supportive or involved in the school was due to their lack of understanding of how to support their children rather than not willing to do so. In addition, some parents were viewed as having limited support resources at home or not having the English skills to aid their children with academic school work.

In regards to best practices and strategies in the classroom, most participants used different approaches and resources including: Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD strategies, Thinking Maps, repetition, sentence frames, pairing ELLs with English Only students for modeling language, and Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE). These practices provided organizational structure for an integrated balance literacy approach with the integration of listening, speaking, reading, and writing into all content areas, including science and social studies.

As for ELLs educational challenges and needs, participants mentioned: (a) student's mixing the two languages into what they called "Spanglish", (b) parents not having Spanish or English academic language, (c) students lack of exposure to English vocabulary and language, and (d) sufficient DLE curriculum and resources to support ELLs. In connection to students' challenges another important theme, cultural competency, emerged. All participants had a positive view of DLE and an educational

approach that accepted cultural differences and more importantly, those differences were encouraged in classroom's activities and materials, as well as students' classwork.

For organizational purposes, the discussion is presented by research questions and corresponding conclusions are included.

Research Question 1: How do dual language teachers of ELL students communicate and interact with their Latino parents (usually a culturally competent approach) to better support their student?

This question addressed how dual language teachers of El students communicated and interacted with their Latino parents, using a culturally competent approach, to better support their students. Each participating dual language teacher responded with her unique definition of an English language learner (ELL) and the ways he/she communicated to Latino parents using cultural competent approaches. Using their own Funds of Knowledge, including their learned knowledge, teaching practices, and life experiences, participants defined an ELL as an individual learning English as a second language. In relation to the definition of ELL, Calderon, Slavin, and Sanchez (2011) argued it is critical for teachers to show respect for the students' primary languages and home cultures. Furthermore, Anderson (2011) study described the use of cultural proficiency as a bridge to close the achievement gap and build upon a student's sense of belonging in school. Teachers who perceive student's home as a support to the school will see their school as being culturally proficient (Anderson, 2011, Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014; Gay, 2004).

Research findings in this study suggest that one important contributing factor for parent involvement and communication was being able to tap into the parents Funds of

Knowledge (1992) and experiences within the educational system. Participants stated they encouraged Latino parent involvement in the school and with their children at home to support their academic learning. Auerbach (2011) explained that educators are too often unaware of the moral and emotional support for learning that Latino parents offer behind the scenes. Although deficit thinking about poor and minority families is less blatant than in the past, some educators continue to assume Latino parents do not care about their children's education (Auerbach, 2011). Studies have indicated Latino parents do care about their children's education and what is missing is an environment conducive to their engagement (Auerbach, 2011; Hamann, 2004; Moll, 1992; Larrotta & Yamamurra, 2011; Olivos, 2011; Rodriguez, 2013). This study supports the notion of parents' lack of understanding of how to support their children.

Parent involvement and communication were the major themes that emerged for this research question after careful and deep analysis of the transcribed interviews. The data suggests parent involvement and teachers' styles of communication with ELL parents was important to both teachers and parents. Each teacher spoke to the importance of Latino parents becoming more supportive of their children's learning through practice of the English language and academic skills at home. The existing literature indicates most teachers and students view their use of Spanish as an asset in ELL learning, as well as the sensitivity teachers' display towards the ELLs (Banks, 2015; Gay, 2002; Moll & Gonzalez, 1994; Sosa & Gomez, 2012).

Findings also indicate that not only are Latino ELLs "funds of knowledge" important to consider when developing curriculum and instruction, a teacher's "funds of knowledge" on how they integrate their perspective into their instruction and how

communicate with ELLs and parents is vital. The teachers' shared experiences as ELLs in predominant Anglo educational settings and the stigma that went with being an ELL continued to their adult lives as an educator. These experiences provided Latino teachers the insight on how to meet the needs of their diverse population of students.

Research Question 2: How do dual language teachers frame cultural competency in their instruction?

This question investigated how dual language teachers framed cultural competency in their work. The findings indicate that each teacher expressed the importance of acquiring cultural competency in their work, but were not formally educated in the approach or had the teaching credentials. In regards to this issue, Gay (2002) discussed culturally responsive teaching as the importance of knowledge and skills that teachers need in order to work with students who are not part of the U.S. ethnic, racial, and cultural mainstream. Teacher preparation for working with Latino ELLs requires knowledge of students' culture and how this one affects their learning (Banks, 2015; Gay, 2002, 2004, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2007). Banks (2015) also emphasizes the significance of educators first recognizing and understanding their own worldviews, confront their own racism and biases, and perceive the world through diverse cultural lens.

Cultural competency is a subtheme in Multicultural education, which serves as a promising alternative to bilingual education for ELLs in the public school system (Banks, 2015; Gay, 2004).

Data from this study corroborates the significance of professional development in cultural diversity for all teachers, in particularly those who work with ELLs. All

participants in this study intentionally worked with students' various cultural perspectives reflected in their classrooms to meet their socioemotional and educational needs. In this study, many teachers also found adhering to the demands of the educational system and the limited academic and cultural abilities with some Latino families, as a challenging part of their instruction, even though, existing literature describes the benefits of collaboration as being mutually inclusive for educators, parents, and more important, the students' educators serve (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 205; Olivos, 2009).

Research Question 3: What teaching approaches do they believe have been effective using methods that reflect cultural competency?

This question inquired teaching approaches participating teachers' believed have been effective with ELLs and reflected cross-cultural competency. The approaches most participants found effective included: sentence frames, modeling, small groups, pairing native English speakers with Latino ELLs and native Spanish speakers with English only students, acting things outs, visuals, and repetition with oral language. Anderson (2011) described to be culturally proficient and effective in cross-culturally settings', educators must first understand their own cultural assumptions, beliefs, and values of people who are different than themselves. By looking inward, educators, are able to relate and be sensitive to ELLs' socioemotional and academic needs (Anderson, 2011; Gay, 2002; Villegas & Lucas 2007).

Other approaches used by participating teachers in this study included hands on learning, GLAD strategies, Thinking Maps, and SDAIE strategies. Calderon, Slavin, and Sanchez (2011) described that the elements of effective practices for ELLs begins with

capitalizing on all their assets and be aware of why students are succeeding or failing, as well as determining which support and strategies are not working. Teachers must also be prepared to restructure and align their teaching practices to students' needs and be encouraged to participate in professional development (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008; Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005).

Regarding teacher preparation in culturally responsive teaching, many of the participants in this study indicated they were not formally educated in cross cultural competency, although many topics were covered by their multicultural coursework. In this respect, Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, and Driscoll (2005) recommends school districts to give high priority to professional development needs of teachers of ELLs. Teacher credentialing programs must also consider a more explicit focus on EL education, particularly for teachers in schools with large numbers of ELLs (Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005)

Research Question 4: What supports do teachers believe are needed to better assist them as they work with ELL students and their parents?

This question explored supports that participating teachers believed were needed to better assist them as they worked with EL students and their parents. The major theme named "Challenges and Needs" emerged from data analysis. All participants indicated not being properly trained to assist Latino ELLs that were at risk of academic failure. Karabenick and Noda (2004) stated research-based professional development is essential for districts and teachers, and vital as a means to provide a quality education for the diverse population in the U.S. Equally important are teachers' attitudes towards ELLs and bilingual education, which ultimately affect a teacher's motivation to engage all

students in the classroom (Becker & Epstein, 1982; Karbenick & Noda, 2004; Petit, 2011). Furthermore, a teacher's attitudes towards ELLs can also affect him/her of being receptive to professional development and the ways to support students in the classroom (Gandara, 2009; Karbenick & Noda, 2004).

This study also found that most participants thought Latino parents needed to model correct usage of the Spanish academic language, in order to support their language instruction at school. While researchers have focused on the schools and the various strategies that teachers can implement to improve parent involvement, there has been less research on Latino parents' point of reference (Moll, 1992; Orozco, 2008). A parents's home language and culture must be taken into account in order to build a trusting relationship to increase parent involvement in schools (Dotson- Blake, Foster, & Gressard, 2010; Orozco, 2008; Quiocho & Daoud, 2006).

The Intersection Between Cultural Responsive Teaching and Funds of Knowledge

This study examined two conceptual frameworks and through data analysis, themes from both frameworks intersected and shared commonalities. Findings indicate both frameworks are essential considerations for policymakers, administrators, and educators in designing relevant curriculum and professional development for dual language educators.

Gay (2013) established that culturally responsive teaching connects students' cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles to academic knowledge and intellectual tools in ways that legitimizes what students already know. Teachers play the important role of facilitating the social and academic curriculum for ELLs. Culturally responsive teaching bridges different ways of knowing and engages students from non-

dominant cultures in demonstrating their proficiencies in language usage, grammar, mathematical knowledge, and others tools they use to navigate their everyday lives (Kozleski, 2010). Kozeleski (2010) describes the key features of culturally responsive teaching as:

1. Communicate high expectations. Make sure each student knows they are expected to engage, perform, and achieve at a high level, rather than making excuses not to participate.

2. Actively engage your students in learning. Coach your student to question, consult original material, connect content to their own lives.

3. Facilitate learning. Build students' capacity to handle new material, solve complex problems, and develop new skills by scaffolding their learning from what they already know.

4. Understand the assets and capabilities that students' families bring to their parenting. Understand the cultures represented in your classroom by getting to know your students. Try to understand their reality by actively listening to them and the sense that they are making of the curriculum.

5. Anchor your curriculum in the everyday lives of your students. Connect their knowledge and skills to content knowledge. Use real life, authentic texts.

6. Select participation structures for learning that reflect students' ways of knowing and doing.

7. Share control of the classroom with your students. Challenge yourself to see yourself in the opposite situation you identify. Explore your own privileges and the impact those have on the organization and the people in it.

8. Engage in reflective thinking and writing. Teachers must reflect on their actions and interactions as they try to discern the personal motivations that govern their behaviors.

Whereas, Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (1992) coined the term "Funds of Knowledge" and developed a qualitative way to connect the home to the classroom. Funds of knowledge should not be confused with prior knowledge and background knowledge. Prior knowledge often has to do with what a student knows on a particular topic, with the focus on what the child knows. This term can be viewed as more of a cognitive approach and something a child carries with them into the classroom from home, the community, books, and previous classes (Moll & Arnot-Hopffer, 2005). On the other hand, funds of knowledge involves the study of culture or the cultural practices as resources for the survival of families and communities (Moll & Arnot-Hopffner, 2005; Olivos, 2009). Although, educators have in the past attempted to make this connection, what became evident to Moll and his researchers was to frame the term in the home-school connection within a cultural perspective of anthropology (Moll & Arnot-Hopffner, 2005; Olivos, 2009). Much of Moll's initial research was gathered from home visits and the community. Other researchers would later use this information to develop curricula that would connect homes to schools. Funds of Knowledge emphasizes the importance as the community or family unit as the holders of historical and cultural knowledge (Banks, 2015; Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014; Moll, Amanti, Neff, Gonzalez, 2005; Olivos, 2009.

Findings in this study report culturally responsive teaching and funds of knowledge frameworks intersect and share commonalities of important themes, and depicted in Figure 9.

1. The significance of family involvement,

2. The use of native language of ELLs

3. The contributions that the community and family culture have on Latino ELLs.
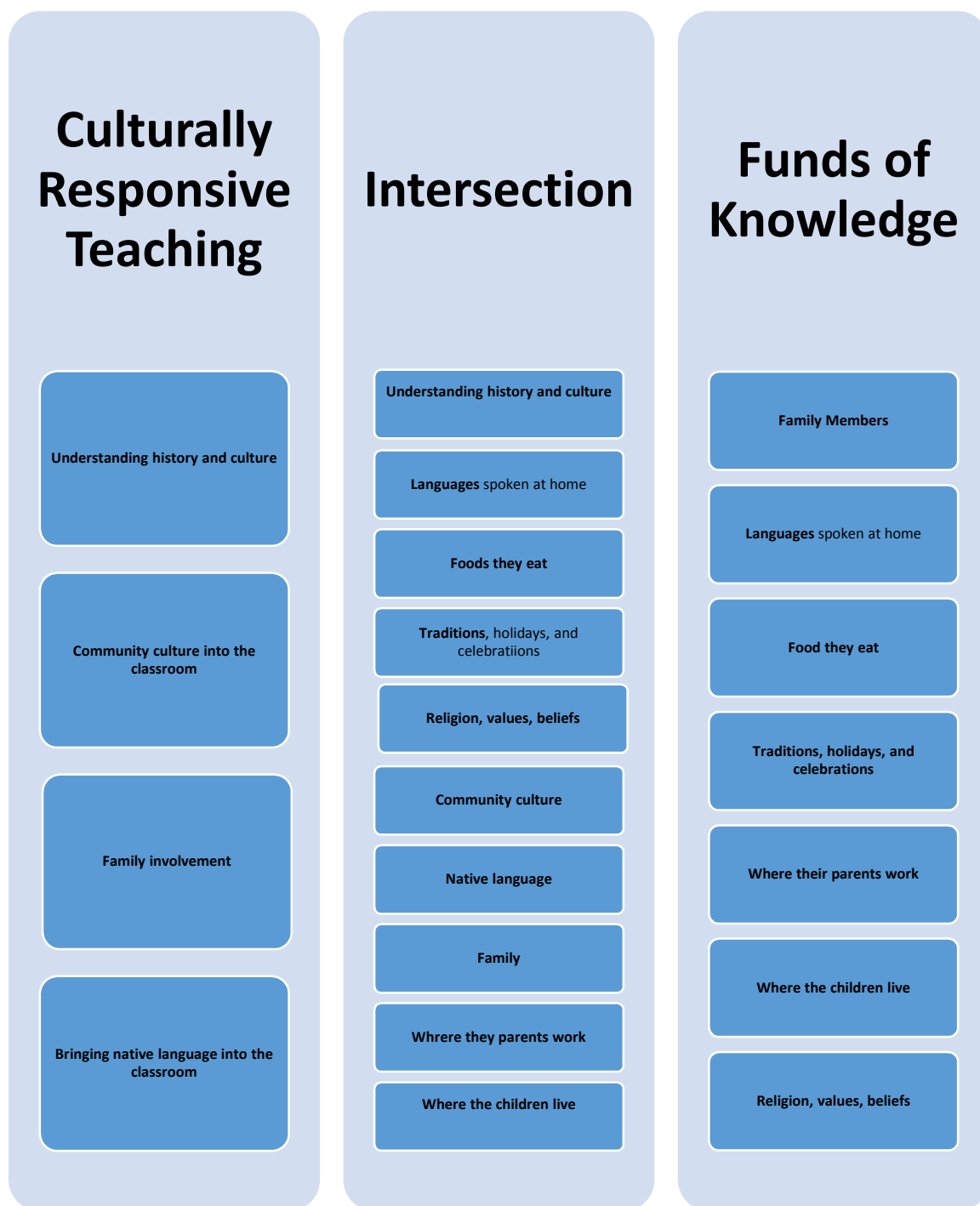
Culturally Responsive Teaching

- Understanding history and culture
- Community culture into the classroom
- Family involvement
- Bringing native language into the classroom

Intersection

- Understanding history and culture
- **Languages** spoken at home
- Foods they eat
- **Traditions**, holidays, and celebratiions
- Religion, values, beliefs
- Community culture
- Native language
- Family
- Whrere they parents work
- Where the children live

Funds of Knowledge

- Family Members
- **Languages** spoken at home
- Food they eat
- Traditions, holidays, and celebrations
- Where their parents work
- Where the children live
- Religion, values, beliefs

Figure 9. Intersection Between Culturally Responsive Teaching and Funds of Knowledge

Limitations of this Study

The findings of this study are limited in terms of generalizability due to data collection took place at one dual language school in only one district, located in Orange County, California. Likewise, since the study was conducted with diverse teachers that instruct Latino ELLs, the results of this study may be generalized more appropriately to Latino/Hispanic, and low Socioeconomic Status students only rather than underserved, minority students as a whole.

Implications and Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the discussion presented above, the following implications can serve as lessons learned to assist dual language teachers, administrators, and policy makers to better assist Latino parents and close the cultural gap for Latino ELLs in Dual Language Education elementary programs. This study provides data that may help to build culturally competent partnerships between teachers and Latino parents in the community where ELLs are educated.

The findings and conclusions developed from this study have provided recommendations for future research. Through this research, various subtopics emerged that led to future research recommendations. Each recommendation will add to the present body of research on the nation's ELL achievement gap that continues to persist. The research in each recommendation will serve as a means to assist in the closing of achievement gap that continues to face public school education. The primary areas for future research include additional studies of dual language teachers' cultural approaches

to engage Latino ELLs, more studies on how Funds of Knowledge (1992) and Culturally Responsive Teaching (1995) frameworks and how they can better assist preservice teachers', and continued professional development in the education of Latino ELLs. Listed are the recommendations:

- o The first recommendation for future research is how to provide teachers with are not successful with Latino ELLs a pragmatic skills set that more effectively prepares dual language teachers to work in socioeconomic schools. These skills include the use of a students and parents Funds of Knowledge (1992) to support the learning of Latino ELLs and diverse students.

- o The second recommendation for future research is to find out if there a correlation between mainstream and dual language teachers have the abilities to provide instruction in a culturally responsive teaching framework. Teachers and school leaders who engage in conversations about their own cultures and the cultures of their students, emphasizing the positive aspects of the students' community and families, increase teacher connections to the parents (Anderson, 2011).

- o The final recommendation for future research is to provide professional development to teachers' in cultural proficiency leadership. Research indicates that in order for educators to be able to be culturally proficient and effective in diverse classrooms and settings, they must clearly understand their own assumptions, beliefs, and values about people and cultures that are different from themselves (Anderson, 2011; Gay 2004, Rodriguez, 2013).

Recommendations for Practice

The findings and conclusions indicate each teacher in this study valued their relationship with their parents and students, and created trusting and culturally responsive classroom where Latino ELLs where able to speak in their native language and engage in collaborative small groups with English only speaking students. This study adds to the current body of literature with practical strategies related to teacher practices that can be shared and taught to pre-service teachers, current teachers, and administrators. This study is also a practical dissertation that can be used to influence practitioners in the classroom as well as leaders of schools. The following recommendations for practice not only serve to address the present marginalization of Latino ELLs in the present public education system, but also offers opportunities for educators to grow in their professional skillset.

- o Provide ongoing parent education and training so parents can help their children with classwork and homework.

- o Affirm a student's and parent's informal home language.

- o Link student learning to families and communities

- o Tailor curriculum to the particular needs, interests, and learning styles of Latino ELLs.

- o Train high quality teachers who have appropriate teaching certification and knowledge of subject matter, curriculum, instructional strategies and classroom management for the growing population of ELLs.

Together these recommendations provide a tangible guide for schools on how to better serve Latino ELLs and provide them a successful educational journey in today's competitive global society.

Conclusion

Through the lens of dual language teachers, this qualitative study examined effective culturally responsive strategies and resources teachers can use in the dual language classroom to not only bridge the achievement gap of at-risk Latino English learners that has been prevalent in the United States education system, but also to provide a rich, meaningful, and supportive diverse educational environment. As an education specialist, this study was initially chosen due to the observed disconnect that I witnessed between teachers and parents in discussing Latino ELLs during Student Success Team (SST) and Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings. I wanted to know why teachers' perceived Latino parents as not being involved with their children's education and their frustration of Latino ELLs not completing their homework. Whereas, some Latino parents expressed their concern of not being able to help their child with the current Common Core Standards, not being involved in school due to work commitments, being a single parent, and not having transportation to come to the school.

In this study, it was a privilege to work with a team of teachers that are committed to their profession and working with Latino ELLs. Many of these teachers provided extra support to their students through before and after school tutoring, modifying classwork to students' academic level, and implementing strategies to the best of their professional ability. The aim of this study was to better understand the educational partnerships between teachers, parents and Latino ELLs, and contribute to the literature on effective DLI classroom practices and strategies.

APPENDIX A

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. In what program did you receive your undergraduate degree? Do you have any other additional certifications related to education?

2. In total, how many hours of the credential program would you estimate were spent on learning about:

   - Practical ELL strategies

   - Diversity issues

   - Classroom learning needs for linguistically diverse children

   - Second language acquisition

3. What does the term, "English Language Learner" mean to you?

4. What types of strategies or methods do you use for English Language Learners? Where these strategies learned in college or were they through the district?

5. What other ELL tools or resources do you use? Why and where did you learn these from?

6. What approaches have you found to be particularly effective when providing instruction to ELLs, and what approaches have not been effective?

7. Do you feel confident in your own abilities to fulfill multiple roles and responsibilities of the dual language teacher for ELLs?

8. What is the most challenging aspect of working with Latino ELLs?

9. What do you see as the obstacles to the academic progress of ELLs?

10. What kind of barriers do you face as a dual language teacher in the classroom?

11. What does cross-cultural competence mean to you?

12. What type of cultural competency training have you received? If no training, why do you feel it is important when educating ELLs?

13. How aware are you of cultural differences between your students and yourself?

14. Explain if you see similarities between your cultural backgrounds to that of your students? If so, elaborate on those aspects?

15. When working in small groups or teams, are students culturally integrated to allow many perspectives into discussions and group work (integration can be measured in a number of ways, including: sex, race, ethnicity, learning level, age)

16. How has your dual language teacher training prepared you consider cultural differences of your students?

17. How can cultural awareness affect student learning in your classroom?

18. How is cultural awareness integrated in your instruction of ELLs?

19. What culturally competent practices do you use when communicating with parents of ELLs?

20. In what ways do you use culturally competency practices in your classroom?

Background Information Questionnaire

Below are some questions regarding your background and education, please respond to all of the questions.

Gender: I am a Female___ Male ___
____I am a support teacher
____I am a full time teacher

Years of teaching experience in the district_____
Overall years of teaching experience_____
I teach _____grade.

Most of the EL students in my class can be classified as Hispanic/Latino.
Yes____ No___

Educational level (Circle all that apply):

Multiple Subject/ Single Subject/ Special Education/ Bachelors with some
Graduate courses/Masters/Masters with some graduate courses

Specialized Authorizations: _____

Certifications: _____

Do you identify yourself as a Two-Way Immersion, Mainstream or ELD teacher?
_____

Languages spoken: _____   _____ _____ _____

Ethnicity:

African American/Black_____
American Indian/Alaskan Native_____
Asian/Pacific Islander_____
Hispanic_____
White_____
Other_____

APPENDIX C

Classroom Culture Observation Rubric

Does the teacher share stories that make room for student sharing?					
Are desks arranged in a U-shape?					
Is the teacher's desk is in the front center of the room?					
Is the classroom decorated with multicultural images that mirror student backgrounds and showcase the diversity of our society?					
Is the classroom furniture and supplies set up to support collaboration between students, fostering dialogue, encouraging ownership and ensuring comfort?					
Is the classroom structured to maximize student voice and participation?					
Do classroom norms and expectations take into account cultural and communication styles, as well as gender differences, language needs and the desire to					

challenge stereotypes?					
Listening. Does the teacher deeply listen to what students say and to the feelings, experiences and wisdom behind what they say?					
Trust. Has the teacher built a safe space for students to explore new ideas and work through conflicts, controversy and painful moments that may arise when talking about issues of injustice and oppression?					
	Never	**Sometimes/ Occasionally**	**Fairly Often/ Pretty Well**	**Always/Very Well**	

APPENDIX D

University of California, San Diego
Consent to Act as a Research Subject

Dual Language Teachers' Approaches
to Engaging Latino Students in Elementary Education

Who is conducting the study, why you have been asked to participate, how you were selected, and what is the approximate number of participants in the study?
Irma Fernandez, graduate student, is conducting a research study to find out more about your experiences as a dual language teacher. You have been asked to participate in this study because you are a dual language teacher at a dual language immersion elementary school. There will be approximately 10 participants in this study.

Why is this study being done?
The purpose of this study is to learn more about the issues facing dual language teachers and parents of Latino ELLs, by exploring and describing teachers' perceptions of how to increase student achievement through quality instruction and parent engagement.

What will happen to you in this study?
If you agree to be in this study, the following will happen to you: You will be asked to participate in a background questionnaire that asks about demographics and teaching experience, and an individual interview for approximately one hour.

How much time will each study procedure take, what is your total time commitment, and how long will the study last?
The total time commitment is no longer than 1 hour. Interviews will take approximately an hour, which includes the background questionnaire.

What risks are associated with this study?
Participation in this study may involve some added risks or discomforts. These include the following:
1. A potential for the loss of confidentiality. However, your name will not be used in the report findings. You will be given a pseudonym to protect your identity. The school site and district name will not be published in this study.
2. Other risks may be discomfort, fatigue, stress or boredom from the interview or being digitally recorded.

Research records will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law. All study materials will be maintained in a secure manner and data will be anonymized. All data will be kept on the researcher's laptop and in password protected files. Study ID numbers will be assigned to all interviewees. A separate file will include the correspondence between IDs and names. Analysis and presentation of results will be in aggregate form and the individual study participants will remain anonymous.

Research records may be reviewed by the UCSD Institutional Review Board. Because this is a research study, there may also be some unknown risks that are currently unforeseeable. There are minimal risks to participating in this study.
What are the alternatives to participating in this study?
The alternative to participation in this study is simply not to participate.

What benefits can be reasonably expected?
There may or may not be any direct benefit to you from participating this study. However, program changes may occur as a result of your feedback for program staff and faculty. Thus, you may benefit from such program modifications depending on the duration of your participation in the dual language immersion program. In addition, the investigator may learn more about the role of dual language teachers in a dual language immersion elementary school in preparing the next generation of scholars and higher education as well as society may benefit from this knowledge.

Can you choose to not participate or withdraw from the study without penalty or loss of benefits?
Participation in research is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw or refuse to answer specific questions in an interview or on a questionnaire at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. If you decide that you no longer wish to continue in this study, you will be asked to inform Irma Fernandez in a timely manner.

You will be told if any important new information is found during the course of this study that may affect your wanting to continue.

Can you be withdrawn from the study without your consent?
The PI may remove you from the study without your consent if the PI feels it is in your best interest or the best interest of the study. You may also be withdrawn from the study if you do not follow the instructions given you by the study personnel.

Will you be compensated for participating in this study?
No compensation will be provided for participating in this research.

Are there any costs associated with participating in this study?
There will be no cost to you for participating in this study.

Who can you call if you have questions?
Irma Fernandez has explained this study to you and answered your questions. If you have any other questions or research related problems, you may reach Irma Fernandez at i1fern@ucsd.edu or by phone at (951) 440-4355.

You may call the Human Research Protections Program Office at (858) 657-5100 for more information about this, to inquire about your rights as a research subject or to report research-related problems.

Your Signature and Consent
You have received a copy of this consent document.

You agree to participate.

_____   _____
Subject's signature   Date

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