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Cultural Relevance in an English Language Learners' Classroom: A Qualitative Case Study

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2016

Abstract

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MS, Adelphi University, 1995

BS, St. John's University, 1983

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

Colleges and universities typically provide remedial reading coursework for English language learners (ELL) to develop academic reading proficiency. However, a disproportionate number of ELLs fail to exit remedial classes. Prior research has indicated cultural relevance can motivate and stimulate learning; however, the extent to which a culturally relevant classroom curriculum makes a difference in the ELL classroom experience has not been fully explored. This study describes the experience of cultural relevance in an academic reading ELL college class. Moll's funds of knowledge was used as the conceptual framework in a qualitative case study to examine how cultural strengths and knowledge can be embedded into instruction for enhanced learning. Data were collected from one teacher and 10 ELL student interviews, lesson observations, and the course syllabus with instructional materials. The results from an inductive analysis revealed four major themes: cultural relevance, student characteristics, reading English, and social learning, which aligned with the funds of knowledge framework. Further, it was found that a teacher's role can serve as the cultural bridge to enhance ELL's cognition. Recommendations for future research include a larger and more culturally diverse group of participants to (a) explore if a consistency occurred that was informed by cultural experience, and (b) investigate the experience of culturally relevant pedagogy for ELL students. Social change implications include culturally relevant pedagogical practices, a cost effective instructional model, and successful academic English acquisition for ELLs.

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Dedication

Once upon a time there were two brothers who loved their Mother so much that they showered her with gifts of patience, understanding, and the very best of shoulder massages. I dedicate this project to them, my children Brandon and Thomas.

I love you.

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Thank you Dr. Carl Valdez for the professional development and support in the advancement of this dissertation and Dr. Tony Wu for serving on this committee. Thank you Dr. Susan Marcus for stepping in and saving the day by lending your expertise, being caring and compassionate, and patient with me. I will always be grateful for your self-less service during this project.

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To my darling LB JLM, thanks for reminding me "that someday I'll graduate."

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

English language learner (ELL) students face considerable challenges when attempting to acquire a college education. ELL students are for the most part from immigrant communities where college preparation may be lacking. Colleges often require ELL students to complete remedial coursework. In spite of these remediation efforts, many students fail to move into credit bearing college courses. This dilemma is consistent throughout ELL communities. Much in the same way, remediation curricula are consistent by presenting strategies that lack context and do not build upon the knowledge of the ELL student. Consequently, this phenomenon indicates further exploration is needed. The funds of knowledge and funds of identity concepts provided the theoretical framework to guide this inquiry (Moll, Gonzalez, Amanti, 2009).

Chapter 1 will provide the orientation for the study. Chapter 2 will present a comprehensive literature review about ELLs, academic reading acquisition, and the funds of knowledge theory concerning ELLs. Finally, Chapter 3 will describe the qualitative methodology, data collection and analysis procedures, and ethical considerations.

Background

Presently, a significant number of students from urban and immigrant communities enter college academically unprepared, and perform poorly on college entrance assessments (Achieve, Inc., 2007). Thus, college admissions requirements mandate these students enroll in remedial classes for support in an effort to advance the skills necessary to meet the challenges of a college curriculum. The majority of these

students (78.6%) will attend a community college and be enrolled into remedial classes (City University of New York, 2011). City University of New York (CUNY) researchers from their Community College Research Center (CCRC) reviewed patterns in a comprehensive study of developmental (used here as a synonym for remedial) education at community colleges (CUNY, 2011). The findings show that after two years of attendance, only 38% of students move out of remediation into credit bearing college courses. Furthermore, only 28% of remedial students graduate with an Associate's Degree after six years of study (CUNY, 2005).

Developmental reading courses teach reading strategies that typical readers may do naturally, such as using context clues to recognize vocabulary, and supports other word recognition skills. Additionally, remedial programs foster critical thinking skills essential for recognizing an author's topic and organizational patterns, making inferences based on written text, and synthesizing material to form critical judgments. Strengthened literacy skills encourage reading across and improve performance in content area courses such as technology and math (Hofsetter, 2003). However, trends in both retention and graduation rates of remedial students are dismal. Remedial instruction, as it stands, focuses on discrete, decontextualized skills, which may not be preparing students for the reading, writing, and mathematics assignments they will encounter in the credit courses they will take in general education and in their major (Grubb, 2010). Furthermore, developmental classes are compartmentalized and do not offer the differentiation of instruction necessary to support individual differences such as those students who are ELLs.

English language acquisition is the result of many factors (Brovetto, 2002). Through an in-depth analysis pertaining to the way the ELL college student uses language to communicate, meaningful patterns of behavior may emerge that impact English language acquisition. Factors related to first and second language exposure may provide a powerful influence on learning English. These factors include exposure to: (a) English spoken during daily activities such as work, school, or entertainment; (b) English spoken at home with family or with friends; (c) English being the preferred written language used for reading, social networking, and communicating, such as email or text messaging; (d) exposure to written text in English; and (e) the level of importance of learning English (Brovetto, 2001).

Problem Statement

ELL students are often required to complete remedial college course work in an effort to develop academic reading proficiency (Achieve Inc., 2007). Unfortunately, a disproportionate number of English-language Learner students fail to successfully exit remedial reading programs (CUNY, 2011). Much is yet unknown about the culturally relevant academic conversations that may support developmental reading for ELLs. Although much has been written about ELLs and bilingual students' academic reading acquisition at the elementary and secondary levels, the topic requires further expansion in research for ELLs at the college level. Perhaps the limited availability of research is in part responsible for the high percentage of ELLs populating remediation programs. Illumination of this topic is crucial so that evidence-based research is available to support academic reading instruction for ELLs in higher education. Educators can gain insight

from this study in in their efforts to provide alternative pedagogical practices for the teaching of academic reading. These insights may be particularly helpful in teaching the ELL student reading strategies that are grounded in culturally-based perspectives. This culturally relevant pedagogical style would be guided by the learners' worldview hence derived from the students' funds of knowledge to include the usage of language in society and its implications.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify culturally relevant experiences prevalent among ELL students. This analysis may offer new insights for facilitating instruction for successful academic reading. Moreover, this study may also inform college curriculum development by providing a greater understanding of ELL students' English reading acquisition. With this information, new pedagogical practices can perhaps effectively guide curriculum development for remediation programs serving the ELL community.

Research Questions

RQ1: What is the experience of cultural relevance for ELLs in academic English college classes?

RQ2: How can the college programs incorporate students' cultural and familial strengths into the classroom?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was the funds of knowledge concept identified by Moll, Amanti, Neff, and González (2001). The term funds of knowledge

describes the learning students gain from their family and cultural background. A student's prior knowledge gained from their lived experiences is useful in both the home and in their community and the transference of this knowledge from student to teacher is termed Funds of Knowledge (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). Moll et al. (2009) described a research scenario in which teachers take the role of a coresearcher. In a funds of knowledge environment, teachers visit the home and community of students so they can learn about their students' lives outside of school. This activity is an attempt to connect with their student's worldview in order to bring a more inclusive environment into the classroom. Furthermore, utilizing this framework allows administrators and teachers to build curricula around the events and situations observed in households and in the community and then leverage this new understanding of the student's strengths as a foundation for learning in the classroom.

As it relates to this study, the funds of knowledge can serve as an instructional support for successful learning, especially for ELLs. In this way, learning is personalized with more meaningful learning outcomes founded on the student's social schema. This study relied upon surveys, observation, and interview questions in an effort recognize culturally relevant factors that may identify common patterns. A culturally relevant educational methodology may activate cognitive processes to facilitate learning. The transfer of knowledge in Moll's theory is conceptualized as mediating the relationship between student's prior knowledge and classroom learning. The funds of knowledge served as the contextual lens for the literature review in chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

The nature of this study was to explore characteristics that may inform academic reading. In an effort to understand and identify these culturally relevant patterns, this study utilized a qualitative research methodology. A case study design was used in place as the prefatory method in the collection of interviews, observations, and audio recordings. As researcher, I acted as chief investigator and harbored no bias that would impede objectivity. The participant selection consisted of solicitation by way of Blackboard, a learning platform (i.e., e-mail and announcements) and social media. I collected data and analyzed the information via NVivo software. Details regarding data collection procedures, results, and validation through triangulation are further developed in Chapter 3. Chapter 3 also provides an explanation of how ethical considerations were addressed and participants' rights protected.

Definitions

English Language Learner (ELL): An individual who is learning English language in addition to learning in their native language. Usually the ELL student was born outside of the United States but has immigrated into and is being educated in the United States in bilingual or (English) monolingual classes (Gibbons, 2009; Moll, Amanti, Neff, and González, 1992).

Sociolinguistics: The study of language as used in a society to communicate. *Socio* means "social" and is defined as living in relation with or connected to others (Dictionary.com, n.d.). Linguistics is the science of language, or the principals that

govern language usage including phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics (Gibbons, 2015).

Funds of knowledge: The transfer of funds of identity (personal knowledge) from student to teacher about the student's knowledge learned from their family and cultural background (Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez, 2001).

Funds of identity: The learning students gain from their family and cultural background as it applies to their self-definition and self-understanding (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014).

Cultural: Relating to the ethnic, social, traditional, racial, educational, and/or national aspects of a social group (Dictionary. Reference/thersaurus.com)

Culturally relevant: The orientation of a group of individuals including attitudes, values, and behaviors unique to the community which may include language, or religion (Barrio, 2000).

Assumptions

I intended to solicit student participants from a pool of ELLs enrolled in an academic reading remediation program who had the cognitive and language abilities (both verbal and written) to read, comprehend, and discuss the interview questions. I assumed that the participants would respond honestly and accurately. I also assumed that students would be agreeable to participate in this study and that data collected from survey questions, interviews, and observations (Appendices H and J) could provide a response to the research questions.

I further assumed that faculty participants would willingly and accurately identify ELLs and that the participant faculty would post a Blackboard announcement to potential ELL student participants with objectivity and without bias. I assumed that faculty participants would respond to interview questions (Appendix I) and would agree to have a researcher conduct a classroom observation, review instructional materials, and record interactions with students. I assumed that a review of the collected data from the ELL student and faculty participants, class observations, and instructional material would reveal similarities and/or patterns in their responses and presentations.

Scope and Delimitations

The participant pool consisted of ELL students enrolled in academic reading classes who were learning academic reading and the English language in addition to learning in their native language. The worldview gained from these students' family and cultural backgrounds that is then transferred to the teacher is termed funds of knowledge, and this worldview may differ from the experiences of other, more heterogeneous student groups. For this reason, only a reading instructor for ELL students was included as faculty participant in this study (Moll et al., 2009). Funds of identity is the learning students gain from their family and cultural background as it relates to their self-definition, and therefore only ELL students were selected for the sample population under investigation in this study (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014). Finally, culturally relevant characteristics of ELLs such as their self-identity, social learning, and shared interests were under examination in this study. Hence, the potentiality for these commonalities to provide transferability for this study is apparent and should be noted.

Limitations

To study college participants, approval from the Concordia College –New York's Institutional Review Board had protocols to be determined and followed. Access to student participants through the Blackboard system required the cooperation from the faculty participant. Although the instructor may have been a willing participant, it was difficult to monitor this aspect of initial communication with potential participants. Some participants did not willingly volunteer to partake in the study, complete the survey, and/or agree to be interviewed. Also, it was difficult to receive a consent for video and audio recorded interview sessions.

This study focused on the experiences of ELL college students, although they may have been attending developmental reading courses, the ELL reading class is a non-credit course. Conditions and characteristics regarding the academic reading for heterogeneous student groups were not explored in this study, and results should not be generalized to includemonolingual student peers. This qualitative exploration did not discern a relationship or provide a quantifiable analysis about academic reading acquisition; however, themes and patterns emerged for further consideration and interpretation.

Significance

As previously noted, ELL students are failing to thrive in college developmental reading programs (CUNY, 2011). Presently, remediation for academic reading consists of skills and strategies that are out-of-context and do not build on the strengths of the student; that is, they do not take into account the funds of knowledge. An analysis of

culturally relevant perspectives can provide valuable insight in phenomom that to this date has limited resources (Moll, et al., 2009). Providing views of ELLs in relation to their experiences in higher education would compliment the existing literature by Moll et al. (2009). In addition, a skilled analysis could inform college curricula development, could lead to greater understanding of the phenomena of the ELL's academic reading readiness, and, more importantly, could aid future research aimed at remodeling remediation programs to serve the ELL community more successfully (Bettinger, Boatman, & Long, 2013). Further, this examination of culturally relevant characteristics, framed by funds of identity and funds of knowledge theory could support alternative pedagogy. Effective reading programs for ELLs could support improved learning outcomes and ultimately college success for this population resulting in enhanced quality of life for the student and the ELL community.

Chapter Summary

In an effort to support the academic reading for ELL students, community colleges provide remedial coursework. At times, underachieving students are advised to take developmental reading courses. Unsuccessful academic performance could result from poor scholastic preparation for students from urban and immigrant communities. Despite remediation efforts, many students fail to move into credit bearing college courses (CUNY, 2011). Furthermore, reading remediation curricula are relatively consistent across programs (Brovetto, 2002). Literacy skills are scaffolded in much the same way as the monolingual English student is instructed in early reading programs (Brovetto, 2002). The skills and strategies are decontextualized and may not consider the

prior knowledge of individual students. Consequently, this phenomena indicates a need for further exploration. The funds of knowledge/ funds of identity concepts provided the theoretical perspective for this inquiry.

Chapter 2 will provide a literature review about ELL, academic reading acquisition and the funds of knowledge theory as it applies to ELLs. Chapter 3 will describe the qualitative methodology, data collection and analysis procedures, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction

Researchers from the CUNY explain that students from urban and immigrant communities enter college academically unprepared and perform poorly on college entrance assessments (CUNY, 2005). Thus, students are mandated by the college admissions requirements to enroll in remedial classes for support in advancing the reading and other skills necessary to meet the challenges of a college curriculum. Developmental reading courses teach reading strategies that typical readers may do naturally, such as using context clues to recognize vocabulary. Developmental reading essentially supports word recognition skills and reading comprehension. Strengthened literacy skills encourage reading across the curriculum and improved performance in content area courses such as technology and math (Hofsetter, 2003). English language acquisition is the result of many factors (Brovetto, 2002).

Through an in-depth analysis pertaining to the way the ELL college student uses language to communicate, meaningful patterns of behavior emerge that impact academic English acquisition. Factors related to first and second language exposure may provide a powerful influence for developmental instruction. Although there has been a significant amount of literature written about the instruction characteristics for bilingual and ELL students, little information is available pertaining to the experiences of ELL students at the college level.

In this chapter, I will discuss the research strategies followed by a review of best teaching practices traditionally used for ELL students to scaffold academic English. I will

then examine research in which the connection is made between reading instruction and a student's life experiences or prior knowledge. Academic readiness will be discussed as it is evaluated by prior achievement and basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS). BICS are those language characteristics including phonology and fluency that an individual uses in everyday conversation and communication (Cummins, 1999). Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) is academic literacy and vocabulary knowledge and the potential for growth in those areas from continued education.

The relationship between BICS and CALP can cloud the reality of academic readiness. Social learning theory, the predecessor of funds of knowledge, aides in distinguishing the importance of life experience, life knowledge, and social constructs that ELL students possess and can draw upon in their academic pursuits. That said, the funds of identity are the characteristics that individuals own gained from English-language Learner experiences and interactions from their home and community. The transfer of this knowledge from student to teacher is termed funds of knowledge. Moreover, the condition that allows this transfer of knowledge to occur may involve a pedagogical consideration. Finally, these social constructs can be further analyzed to reveal ELL self-awareness and ultimately self-efficacy.

The intended goal of this study is to shift public policy, social conditions, and/or popular opinion as it relates to improving the education and quality of life of ELL students, hence creating social change.

Research Search Strategy

The learning theories searched, reviewed, and collected developed the project's foundation to guide by a theoretical perspective. I considered Vygotsky's theory on developmental learning as a theoretical foundation for this study; however, the funds of knowledge conceptual framework, a Vygotskian theory that is includes a sociocultural perspective, was better suited for this study. The Walden Library provided access to PsycINFO, PyscArticles, and Thoreau databases. However, PsycINFO and PsycArticles showed no results for the string *funds of knowledge* or Luis Moll. With Thoreau, a more comprehensive search engine, several articles surfaced using the search words *funds of knowledge*. Additional search terms used were *English language learners, ELL, remedial reading, reading acquisition,* and *bilingual academic reading.* These articles were reviewed and references from them used as resources for subsequent searches. A Google Scholar search provided additional information, some which were then located through the Walden Library for Sage and Cengage Learning. There is an abundance of literature regarding ELLs and academic reading instruction but not at the college level. Finally, a Google search revealed pertinent information about Luis Moll, who provided the term funds of knowledge and, later, funds of identity. The web search found Luis Moll's webpage at Arizona State University with a link to Dr. Moll's presentations and publications. This information was used as a source for additional references pertaining to funds of knowledge" and funds of identity, the ELL's student identity, motivation, and aspects of social learning.

Conceptual Framework

This study examined the concept of funds of knowledge and funds of identity as the theoretical framework identified by Moll et al. (2001). Funds of knowledge, later evolving to include funds of identity, describes the learning students gain from their family and cultural background outside of the pedagogical classroom. The worldview that a student gathers from lived experiences is useful in both the home and in their community and the transference of this knowledge from student to teacher is termed Funds of Knowledge (González et al., 2005). Moll et al. (2009) described teachers taking a role as a coresearcher in a funds of knowledge environment. Five teachers visited the community to learn about their students' lives in their cultural contexts in order to connect the students' life experiences with their classroom experience and create a more inclusive environment in the classroom. Utilizing the funds of knowledge and funds of identity framework in this manner allows administrators and teachers to design a curriculum derived from sociocultural linguistics that is infused with challenges that associate with student strengths.

Educators can leverage the strengths gained from students' funds of identity to offset their academic deficits by building the curriculum with themes that draw upon the strengths or information observed in the ELL's home or community (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014). Rodriguez (2013) postulated that the cultural differences between teachers and diverse students can impact student learning. The funds of knowledge can support educators to learn about student strengths and interests (Moll, 2009). Also, curriculum and lesson planning requires baseline data collection analyzing a student's prior learning

and academic skillset. The curriculum plan relies on a learning context that is inclusive of demographic discovery of all students including disabilities and technology and staffing needs. However, many curricula fail to capture the rich equity that an individual brings into the classroom (McLaughlin & Calabrese Barton, 2013). McLaughlin and Calabrese Barton (2013) developed an elementary level science curriculum that would tap into this wealth of knowledge. The funds of identity learning context can inform pedagogical procedures and be the motivating force for sustained learning.

Inasmuch as the funds of knowledge and funds of identity has been investigated and discussed in the literature, the concept has not been analyzed in relation to the remedial reading or academic reading practices at colleges. The current structure of college developmental reading remediation is the support of deficits using out-of-context reading strategies and vocabulary instruction (Hofsetter, 2003). This is a bottom-up strategy particularly disadvantageous for diverse learners who have limited CALP upon which to build and therefore rely on their BISC for learning, such as is the case with ELL students. The reliance on use of their BISC system aligns with the utilization of a student's social strengths to scaffold for learning and therefore relates to this study. In this study, I intended to answer the research questions with data obtained from college faculty and student participants via interview questions and classroom observation. Moll et al.'s (2014) research design centered on the ELL elementary students and elementary school teachers. Students may mature and changes in perceptions may occur in the ways in which they relate with teachers and peers. Hence, the current study built upon Moll's

preliminary work to provide insight on this phenomenon with students at the college level.

Existing reading instruction practices may fail to recognize the culturally relevant learning experiences of ELL students, their funds of identity. Funds of knowledge play a pivotal role for the educator in understanding student motivation, priorities, and familial values as shown with research on student socialization (Zayas & Solari, 1994). Implementing funds of knowledge into college programs could tailor remediation practices to further student engagement, academic reading acquisition, and ultimately college success.

Review of Literature

English-Language Learner students may require developmental reading classes to ascertain the literacy skills necessary to meet the challenges of a college curriculum. Although remediation and academic support is available, many of these students approximately 70% will not continue to graduate (CUNY, 2005). Furthermore, research has revealed that some English-language Learner students have been educated in schools from kindergarten through high school here in the U. S. and still are considered English-language Learners (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). That said, educators must rethink remedial reading programs and develop a curriculum that engages students and builds on their strengths instead of focusing on weaknesses. This review will discuss traditional instructional models for English-language Learners and demonstrate progressive curriculums incorporating student's Funds of Knowledge.

History

Earlier in the twentieth century, during the era of World War I and World War II, English-language learning occurred within the context of language immersion in an effort to have immigrant students assimilate into the American culture (Wiley, Garcia, Danzig, & Stigler, 2014). Immigrant students attending the United States would be included into mainstream classes with the notion that English-language acquisition and curriculum learning would occur (Padilla, 1990). Vygotsky's (1978) influence suggested a student's developing cognition of how to move toward and characterize thoughts is socially constructed and supported by their teachers, parents, and other adults in their environment. World events inspired English-language instruction and by the 1960's with the influx of Cuban refugees, bilingual education became a practice in Southwest Florida (Escamila, 1989). Moving into the 1980's Education reform placed an emphasis on bilingual education by appropriating more funds for English-language Learner students and bilingual education became prestigious (Escamila, 1989).

With increased globalization and technological advancement, there has been a shift in bilingualism on the international level (Gorter, Zenotz, & Cenoz, 2014). However, there appears to be a disparity between how pedagogies differ between the United States and the migrating Latino countries, "differing in ideology and educational practice" (Wiley et al., 2014). Research findings have suggested that integration of pedagogical practices have a positive correlation with student success (Severiens & Wolff, 2008).

Inasmuch as American contemporary curriculums strive for effective pedagogical practices, our discomfort facing racial and ethnic diversity may hinder our ability to embrace multicultural identities thus avoiding the very substance provided by culture and identity (McCarthy, Giardina, Harewood, & Park, 2003). Furthermore, by lacking to include the cultural multiplicity, it may further the racial and ethnic divide (Gay, 2015; Solorzano & Villapando, 1998). This fear-based phenomenon may impede exemplary pedagogy and have additional negative curricula implications. Educators who may not share in similar demographic backgrounds as their students would be well advised to explore the community of residing students to gain insight and acquire cultural knowledge.

Moreover, globalization is leading multilingual and multicultural movement supporting the development an individual's identity (Chen, Benet-Martinez, & Bond, 2008). That said, it may very well be this culturally relevant integration that supports BICS development while neglecting to nurture CALP. Teachers for immigrant students may wish to consider that although students may appear well acculturated, they may have underdeveloped academic skills. Inasmuch as instruction may not support CALP, globalization has been a positive attribute for immigrants who migrate to a new land.

Finally, the disparity between Latino students and white American students learning outcomes continues to widen creating a crisis for Latino American students. This is especially true for college bound high school students ill prepared for post-secondary education. In a dated study, Reese, Balzano, Gallimore, and Goldenberg (1995) posited an interesting research question: "Do traditional, agrarian values put the minority culture

of Latino children at a disadvantage in an academic-occupational orientation of the American school system?" Latino culture advocates temporal self-awareness, family oriented (including respecting authority and the family), and values culture as opposed to the American school founded on individual and competitive milieus (1995). The differences in orientation and values could be misinterpreted by educators as the Latino student as unmotivated to excel in school based upon how academics is less prioritized in relation to familial concerns.

Conversely, American pedagogy is built upon the underpinnings of western psychology. Therefore it is important to briefly describe theoretical proposition that may have had influence on the development of American curriculum and educational philosophy. The focal dynamic of Western psychology is founded on the self, grounded on the foundation of building self-esteem and ego. This therapeutic model approached positive change in one's life by changing the person who has the mental health, learning, or behavioral issues (Mosig, 1989). Freud's theory of identity as well as other developmental theories will be discussed further on herewith.

As a result of the emphasis on the self, the individual, and competitive orientation persists in American schools may contradict varying cultures and values. To demonstrate this, the Latino culture prioritizes family and culture. In contrast, American culture emphasizes personal success and competition. This prominence is perpetuated by American instructors and students alike. Unfortunately, American culture having this educational persuasion differs from the Latino beliefs, creating a widening divide between white American teachers and the Latino students.

Pedagogical Practices for English-Language Learners

Reading is a complex synthesis of a variety of skills. Initially, readers must recognize and develop the sound-symbol relationship -a phoneme. Phonology is the study of the sound-symbol relations that create a language system (Nielsen, Luetke, & Stryker, 2011). Students can master phonology, decode, and read fluently while having limited comprehension of the read material (Mellard, Woods, & Fall, 2011; Kuhn, Schwanenflugel, & Mesinger, 2010). Students with lower reading level scores have a limited vocabulary and word recognition skills (Nielsen et al., 2011). Naturally or through instruction, students learn to use contextual analysis (gain the meaning of a word through the context of the sentence or paragraph) to define the meaning of vocabulary words (Nielsen et al., 2011). Vocabulary acquisition is necessary to build reading ability hence increasing reading score levels. Morphemic awareness is fundamental to reading comprehension and reading level scores (Nielsen et al., 2010). Nielsen et al. (2010) claimed that students must attain morphemic awareness in order to develop achievement in the area of reading. Reading remediation curriculums are a collection of compartmentalization of unrelated skills and strategies. Consequently, this strategy may not support a student's present level of academic English achievement or provide an individual support in the educational plan.

Contemporary pedagogical practices for English-language Learners consist of basic academic skills presented in thematic units (Garicia, 1991). Teachers use collaborative teaching strategies to engage learners through interaction. In spite of these pedagogical practices, English-Language Learner's transition from reading and writing in

their native language to English at an individual level and more importantly at their own

pace. In other words, the modeling and scaffolding of instructional strategies that have

been reliably used in regular education classes are failing to teach English-language

Learners (Guo & Hebert, 2014). Guo & Herbert (2014) postulated self-regulated learning

may be limited due to strategic language instruction, limited funding, parental

involvement (or lack thereof), and teachers with limited experiences with English-

language Learners' education. Teachers' lacking of pedagogical training in English-

Language Learner (ELL) / English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) practices may harbor an

undisclosed negative attitude against diverse students (Lo & Inoue, 2013). Thus, teacher

education programs such as English-language Learner / English-as-Second Language /

English-as-a-New Language should adopt best practices as well as monitor teachers'

attitudes and perceptions about diverse learners.

English-Language Learner's Reading Practices

Elementary schools teaching bilingual or English-language Learners use a variety

of pedagogical practices to instruct academic English reading. Emergent biliteracy is

termed for the English-Language Learner students during early childhood who are

developing language and literacy skills. Students will listen and learn to speak prior to

learning how to read (Miller, 2014). Miller (2014) wrote academic conversations promote

oral language development, which can play a supportive role in literacy acquisition.

Traditionally, beginning reading practices use discrete skills (reading orientation, word

configuration, and punctuation) as well as explicit instruction to introduce early literacy

concepts in particular phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, and sight word

recognition (Bursuck & Damer, 2011). Miller (2014) remarked that both monolingual and bilingual emergent readers learn to read outside of the classroom as well.

In 2003, the U.S. Department of Education proclaimed parents should to read to their babies to help them learn. This initiative focused on parent's role in their children's language development. Miller (2014) stated that oral language is the foundation for early literacy. To further this effort in 2008, the International Reading Association advertised, "Read aloud to your child every day and continue after your child learns to read." There is evidence in research supporting reading aloud to children and having access to books, either at home or the library correlates with higher reading scores (McQuillan, 1998; Krashen, 2004).

Rowe and Fain (2013) responded to the research advocating parental involvement for literacy acquisition with a project to support the school-home partnership. Researchers supplied dual-language books to parents so that the parents could read to their children. Parents and primary caretakers provides initial exposure to language acquisition and cultural network (Massing, Kirova, & Hennig, 2013). Massing et al., also stressed the importance family and close friends offer children by providing the "linguistic bridging" (p. 9) that can inform culturally sustaining pedagogical practices that build on parental knowledge and cultural beliefs. In an effort to tap into the families' reflections in response to the literature shared. The information gained from 249 journals positively correlated with thematic units and revealed that parents were reading and discussing (illustrating) the books. Through the parental reflections, researchers could get feedback regarding parental participation, linkage with respect to the student's cultural

identity, and evaluate the "home-school partnership" (Rowe, & Fain, 2013). The Home-School connection is particularly of interest because many U.S. state legislatures do not allocate funding for biliteracy programs (Reyes, 2006). Educators can learn important lessons from students about how their social constructs as well as how academic reading is supported outside of school. Studies have examined how the English-Language Learner students reassign linguistic and literacy skills from their native language to Academic English that is learned outside of the home at school (Reyes, 2006; Brisk & Harrington, 1999; Cummins, 2006).

Unfortunately, these findings are not realized as seen at the secondary level. The National Center for Education Evaluation, or NCEE, (2014) reviewed organizations receiving School Improvement Grants (SIG). The educational support intended to provide academics in a variety of platforms in an effort to support learning patterns. Thus, scaffolded instruction for ELL/ESL instruction was mainstreamed into regular education classrooms. Thereby, English-Language Learner students were receiving grade-level content along with their typical developing monolingual peers (NCEE, 2014). Furthermore, teachers provided alternate learning opportunities for students including one-to-one ESL instruction. Alternatively, 20% of the schools surveyed in the NCEE study used a Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP). The SIOP model provided all instruction in the student's native or primary language. Finally, a component of both aforementioned academic approaches included comprehensive services to engage parents by providing outreach services such as English-as-a-second language (ESL)

classes, English literacy programs, parenting counseling, translation services geared toward the immersion into an American Educational orientation.

Overall, it appears that academic reading instruction is consistent in the literature of best practices for English language learner students. Moreover, the movement from a self-contained ESL or bilingual classroom is evolving to a more inclusive model. That said, English-language Learner students are spending more time in their regular education classroom with monolingual peers. Academic language support is provided by classroom support personnel, bilingual education teachers, and / or an ESL pull-out program where academic English services are provided by a specially trained ESL teacher (Scarcella, 2003). Although this mode of instruction may provide appropriate pedagogical methodology, this model does not consider socio-cultural/psychological constructs which can be impeded into lesson planning for instructional support. In the end, a more multi-dimensional instructional approach may provide a more comprehensive model of instruction for English-language Learners and better serve these students for further education and / or careers.

College Success Initiatives

When a student fails to meet the admissions requirements, some colleges will offer college admission contingent upon taking remedial courses. Remediation, also termed developmental, came about in the early 19th century, aims to address academic deficiencies. Remediation is patterned by Vygotsky's Theory, the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD directs the teacher (more advanced mentor) to use test-generated data to identify student's abilities that need to be developed then scaffolds

instruction. Likewise, developmental courses offer support for the disadvantaged student and he/she theoretically gains the skills necessary to succeed in college credit bearing courses. Supportive academic environments have been shown to promote student engagement and retention (Palmer, Maramba, & Elon Darcy II, 2011).

However, remediation in Higher Education can be referred to as a broken theory because it is built upon the notion that remedial students are less proficient thus inferior to more proficient students. Bettinger & Long (2005) studied remedial students' outcomes and found that although remedial students do not present with negative effects from the remediation experience, students taking remedial math do show outcomes that are more positive. There are no effects noted for those students taking remedial academic English (Bettinger & Long, 2005). Overall, remediation has minimal positive student outcomes in relation to the time spent in developmental classes.

Attewell, Lavin, Domina, and Levy (2006) argue that remediation is a policy to lower college entrance standards for less proficient students. Historically, there have been limitations for research concerning remediation programs in part due to lack of funding and questionable findings (Merisotis & Phipps, 2000). Remediation programs carry a negative stigma, tend to be expensive propositions with unsuccessful results (Breneman & Haarlow, 1998; Saxon & Boylan, 2001). Saxon & Boylan (2001) evaluated five studies including a cost analysis for remediation showing that tuition and financial aid, in many cases more than pay for remedial instruction. Thereby, excess funds can be reallocated to other non-remedial programs and services.

A topic of interest that should be considered when addressing the social issue of poor academic performance is student motivation. The Self-determination perspective theorizes motivation is the driving force that compels individuals to produce a certain behavior (De Naeghel, Van Keer, Vansteenkiste, & Rosseel, 2012). Motivation is the foundation to academic performance. Educators in an effort to coach and instruct can support English-language Learners to develop motivation and use both intrinsic and extrinsic to the student's advantage and offer solutions in an effort to avoid interference with motivation. Our nation is in a situation where test scores and academic performance is falling behind other less developed countries. Educators, academic support personnel, and administrators can collaborate to implement programs that would enhance motivation in various ways to motivate students and direct which, either intrinsic or extrinsic, to call upon. Most importantly, educators may prevent interference from pressure for high standards on achievement tests can have on motivation (DeNaeghel et al., 2012). DeNaeghel recommended offering opportunities for staff development programs to train educators and school personnel. Furthermore, parents should be a part of this panel to learn ways to motivate students at home for independent study. Bandura ((1974) stipulated that in his observations students that try to achieve an unattainable goals and fall short may experience depressed learning cycles. Therefore, students themselves can be empowered with educational challenges that develop a strong sense of self-efficacy. This shift toward a more positive learning pattern will guide self-motivation as a means to becoming a successful student (Bandura, 1974; DeNaeghel, 2012). Self-determination is a powerful tool in the motivation equation (DeNaeghel et al., 2012).

The Language Gap

Bilingual students assimilate second language learning and develop proficient basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) so that they can gain English fluency within 2 years of language exposure (Cummins, 1999). BICS provide the English-language Learner student the means to communicate in a social context and psycholinguistic cues (Scarella, 2003). English-language fluency could be misleading to educators who may view having BICS as having English-language mastery. Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) is the language that relays higher order content knowledge. CALP development strengthens through learning experiences in school over the course of time –up to ten years. Likewise, CALP could wane if not supported by exposure to academic experiences (Haynes, 2007). Recognition of the difference between BICS and CALP can be instrumental in development of effective pedagogy through differentiation of instruction for English-language Learners (Cummins, 1996; Cummins, 2003). As an illustration, pedagogical programs for English-language Learners enhance the less proficient aspects of CALP and support those deficiencies as is seen in Bi-lingual, ESL, and TESOL programs.

On the contrary, other researchers such as Valdez (2000) relate that academic English should not be taught as a discipline due to the complexities of academic English and the lack of academic English standards across academia. Instead, Valdez suggests a universal design that teaches to all levels of English proficiency. In order to study literacy, educators must consider three dimensions of academic English: linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural/psychological (Kern, 2000). From this framework, academic

English can be taught in an effort to support academic language for content education (Scarcella, 2003).

Identity of the Learner

The Funds of Knowledge and Funds of Identity is founded on a framework focusing on the acquisition of identity for our English-Language Learner student (Moll, 2001). In an effort to establish a working definition for the term "identity" it is important to engage in a discussion of theoretical concepts about identity, the development of identify, and finally the identity of the learner. To begin, western psychology is grounded on the foundation of building self-esteem and ego. This therapeutic model approaches positive change in one's life by changing the person who has the mental health or behavioral issue (Mosig, 1989). Sigmund Freud's model of personal identity included the id, ego and superego created more of a separation and created a platform for other theories of self to evolve (Mosig, 1989). Alfred Adler offered the identity of self as a creative self that responded to social stimuli (Mosig, 1989). Other theorists including Karen Horney and Gordon Allport offered ideas of the self-relating to the real self or idealized self and self-as-knower and self-as-object respectively. Therefore, there are several theories that attempt to describe the nature of human identity development. The higher-order theory (HOT) offers a perspective on how experience can alter an individual's response. Higher-order-thought includes consciousness an intellectual component and interpreted as the perception of either thoughts or experiences

B. F. Skinner reputed these notions of the self, but his theory of behaviorism classified human behavior as being dependent upon environmental variables, thus

separating a human from his/her own reaction in response to antecedent stimulus. Behaviorist principals, Reinforcement theory, may have influenced pedagogical practices as seen in many top-down models of direct instruction. Skinner's research in behavior included the principles of operant behavior where conditioned reflexes and operant conditioning predict future behavior (Miltenberger, 2003). Modes of Behaviorist learning include (a) observational learning or modeling of optimal behavior; (b) attention - in order to learn or change behavior one must pay attention; (c) retention -one must remember what was learned; (d) reproduction -the behavior must be repeated; (e) self-regulation -Controlling ones behavior (self-observation, compensation, judgment, self-response; (f) motivation -this is the ultimate reason for production of specific behavior because motivation drives behavior. There are various factors for motivators including (1) past reinforcement; (2) promised reinforcement; (3) Vicarious reinforcement; (4) Negative reinforcement. Ward & Eisler (1985) stated that achievement of goals can further motivate effort, however, having high goals and failure to meet them can result in more future failure. An Educational psychologist can support classroom teachers in differentiating appropriate achievement goals and excessive achievement demands that may result in limiting motivation. The behavioral approach to learning may not as sustainable as when coupled with additional supports.

Behaviorism principles guide systematic instruction aimed at the breaking down of tasks. However, behavior is prefaced upon the antecedent, and not the student participants in this learning environment. That said, Behaviorism fails to address the social dynamics involved in learning especially when concerned with classroom

instruction. Both Bandura (1977) and Skinner (2011) provide a theoretical framework to address behavioral change. Nonetheless, Bandura's notion included both cognitive processes and self-efficacy. Along with Vygotsky, Bandura emphasized the importance of teacher-trainer modeling for effective mastery, yet Bandura's unified theory of behavioral change focused on providing students with opportunities to raise self-efficacy through task attainment. Bandura and Vygotsky alike supported the social aspect of learning on the other hand, Bandura sought social opportunities toward learning and behavior change as a route to efficacy. Therefore, both Bandura and Vygotsky suggested use for social learning had differing goals.

Vygotsky's philosophy emphasized the importance of social interaction in learning and believed that the construction of knowledge occurred through social interaction. Vygotsky's perspective included using language and the importance social interaction for cognitive development. Vygotsky believed that teachers should be facilitators of knowledge and not directors. Vygotsky view differed somewhat and introduced the zone of proximal development which simply put is the child's instructional level. His view was that children's mastering of skills could be more successful when being instructed by an educator or "more skilled peer" (Santrock, 2010). Vygotsky also theorized that "private talk" assisted children in their cognitions. Vygotsky views are fundamentally educational introducing the zone of proximal development, which simply put is the upper level of the child's instructional level. This approach proves reliably, when Reading Recovery instructors begin their sessions, they have students read several items accessing their zone of proximal development then begin the

instruction at that level. Additionally, when administering the Bader Inventory for

Reading Readiness, student's reading level is accessed via the student reading lists of

words; when student errors on three consecutive words that is considered their

instructional level or zone of proximal development. Vygotsky's view was that children's

mastering of skills could be more successful when being instructed by an educator or

"more skilled peer" (Santrock, 2010). Using peers that are more skilled is a contemporary

approach to learning now called peer tutoring. Vygotsky also theorized that "private talk"

assisted children in their cognitions and concluded that private talk should be observed

and monitored. He believed that language played a key role in cognition. Vygotsky also

claimed, "Cultural influence, mental processes, and language are dynamic processes that

occur simultaneously" (Gardiner, 2005, p. 103) Critics thought Vygotsky over

emphasized the role language played in thinking and development (Santrock, 2010).

Vygotsky were not in support of standardized measures of testing to access their learning.

Vygotsky said by distinguishing the upper levels of the zone of proximal development

instructors can discover the best level in which to begin instruction. Vygotsky supported

the use of real-life rather than using abstract idea to bring meaning to learning. His idea

of scaffolding supported the levels of proximal development for the learner. Scaffolding

is supporting students using dialog, and slowly removing those layers of support until the

learner is working on an independent level. A typical Vygotsky classroom has students

working in small groups. Instructors work as guiding the instruction, or as a facilitator.

Then the students work together, again utilizing the strengths of more skilled peers.

Vygotsky's method of scaffolding is motivating for students. Vygotsky perspective

embracing other cultures, viewed that skills that were needed to attain dependent on culture (Kozulin, Gindis, Ageyev & Miller, 2003).

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Cognitive Theory, Skinner's Operant Conditioning, and the Social Cognitive Theory are the most inclusive approaches to describe human development contributing to identity development. All the above said theories consider the cognitive factors such as thinking, reasoning, language, and other cognitive processes (Mcgraw-Hill, 2010). Behavioral and Social Cognitive Theories incorporate and value scientific research. They are observable and rely on the environmental reinforcers to maintain or extinguish behaviors. Behavioral theories do not consider cognition as a factor. As scientific research, documents behavioral therapeutic approaches utilized with cognitively impaired individuals in Applied Behavior Analysis can have successful outcomes. Sociocultural Cognitive theory of cognitive development includes the individual's abilities as well as socialization and their cultural background. The old saying monkey see- monkey exemplifies the sociocultural cognitive theory. Classroom teachers exploit this taking advantage by showing first so that children can copy the behavior. At first, it is modeled for the student. Secondly, "it communicates to the child that the activity is important" (Mcgraw-Hill, 2010) and this is termed scaffolding. Finally, the essence of this scaffolding method is considered a best pedagogical practice. However, modeling learned behavior mitigates the value and strengths gained from the learning that extends beyond the classroom.

Social Change

Reformation. Social change is the impetus to create a shift in public policy,

social conditions, and or popular opinion as it relates to improving quality of life (Hynson, 1974). In this case, seeking alternate pedagogical practices inspired by the insights gained from this study could offer a curriculum that is supported by the English-Language Learner's lived experience and aligns with their linguistic world outside of the classroom ultimately impacting their life and academic success. The quality of life could refer to the elimination of social injustice. Remediation policies requirements for English-Language Leaner students may be considered social injustice and a form discrimination. Implementing Funds of Knowledge into the curriculum will encourage the empowerment of this marginalized and / or minimized sect of the population. Social change, is a cognitive, socio-cultural, and psychological shift in the members of our society and somewhat correlates to historical zeitgeist. American educators play a crucial role in this movement.

Considering social change from a variety of perspectives allows the social scientist and educator to develop a dialectical model. Reflecting upon the role of the educator in social change brings to light the magnitude for which teachers inform social change with respect to the curriculum development and student learning outcomes for English-language Learners. American educators impact pedagogy with information, support, ethical considerations, and therapeutic interventions that either challenges or moves social change in a positive direction.

In closing, the scope of social change may best relate to Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory on child development. Bronfenbrenner (1990) bioecological system's theory describes development learned from their culture, societal influence,

community, family, school and religion. The bioecological theory (1990) aligns with Funds of Knowledge (1992). These conceptual frameworks both rely on information being transmitted from global assets being family, socio-culture, and community (including school).

Summary and Conclusions

Globalization has inspired immigration and many individuals are seeking higher education. Therefore, English-Language Learner students may be entering college academically unprepared, and perform poorly on college entrance assessments. This process may be an indication of student's lack of exposure to CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency). Unfortunately, students are then mandated by the higher education registrar to register for remedial classes in an effort to advance the skills necessary to meet the challenges of a college curriculum. Developmental reading courses teach reading strategies that are out-of-context. Developmental reading supports word recognition skills, vocabulary, and reading comprehension. Unfortunately, learning academic English-language acquisition is the result of many factors and requires more that vocabulary instruction and mere strategy (Brovetto, 2002). Although there has been a significant amount of literature written about the characteristics of bilingual and English-Language Learner students, little information is available pertaining to English-Language Learner students learning academic English at the college level. This study attempts to analyze culturally relevant characteristics that may emerge under the Funds of Knowledge and Funds of Identity when analyzed under this conceptual framework.

Research strategies will were discussed and was followed by an exploration into the conceptual framework pertaining to the Funds of Knowledge and Funds of Identity. A brief but comprehensive literary analysis was presented describing Funds of Knowledge and Funds of Identity research including a rationale for how the present study compliments earlier works in this regard.

The literature review presented best teaching practices used with English-language Learner students and then continued to examine the connection between developmental reading instruction with a student's life experiences and background knowledge. Academic readiness was discussed as it correlates Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS). The relationship between BICS and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) was examined as this relationship directs academic readiness. Vygotsky's Theory of Social learning, the predecessor of Funds of Knowledge Theory and Funds of Identify was identified as an individual's world view gained from life experiences, familial knowledge, and culturally relevant constructs that English-Language Learner students acquire and can draw upon during academic pursuits. Furthermore, an examination of these relationships disclosed social constructs that divulge a student's self-awareness and potential self-efficacy.

In conclusion, an examination of reading remediation is guided by the notion that there could be a better way to serve our English-Language Learner students and diverse learners. Therefore, a discussion about social change as it relates in this regard is warranted. Social change was presented as the impetus to shift public policy, social conditions, and or popular opinion as it relates to improving the quality of life. Quality of

life was defined in conjunction with social injustice, protecting human rights, preserving quality pedagogy and creating educational policy built on best-practices that are fundamental for successful learning. In an effort to deliver best pedagogical practices, educators can utilize many strategies to engage learners' motivation, activate learning, and create a foundation for successful learning partnerships. This form of social change is accessible to any and all educators regardless of the genre. Moving forward Chapter 3 will discuss the procedures for this study including restating research questions and the methodological approach, how the participants were identified, the process for organization and analysis of data collection, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 3 will also describe the qualitative methodology for this inquiry. The discussion will include research design, sample size and population, data collection methods and analysis procedures, and ethical protocol for research subjects..

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

In Chapters 1 and 2, pedagogical practices related to teaching ELL academic reading were presented. ELLs with underdeveloped academic skills may be required to take reading remediation as a conditional admission into college. However, many ELL students and diverse students spend years in remedial classes studying out-of-context strategies in an effort to improve CALP. In an analysis of culturally relevant experiences of communication that impact ELLs, this study identified influencing factors that may support CALP development and thereby successful academic reading. The conceptual framework, funds of knowledge/funds of identity, could illuminate this developmental process. In this chapter I describe the qualitative methods used to detect any emerging characteristics in this regard.

The Institutional review board (IRB) approval number is 04-19-16-0223141. Chapter 3 provides the methodological footprint for this study. The research design and rationale for the study are also addressed. The role of the researcher is discussed as well as any underlying bias that may result in preconceptions about the research. Justification is given for using a qualitative design and case study methodology as well information on participant sampling and selection criteria, data collection, and analysis procedures. Finally, issues pertaining to trustworthiness and ethics are addressed to ensure validity and participant protection respectively.

Research Design and Rationale

The purpose of a qualitative study is to obtain an in-depth descriptions of phenomena that may offer further understanding of that phenomena (McMillan, 2012).A qualitative case study approach was employed to address the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the experience of cultural relevance for ELLs in academic English college classes?

RQ2: How can the college program incorporate students' cultural and familial strengths into the classroom?

The current study utilized a case study research design to describe cultural relevance in academic reading instruction for ELL college students. The research design for this case study is based upon the foundations described by Merriam (2002). A qualitative methodology employs five strategies of inquiry including narrative research, phenomenology, ethnographies, grounded theory, and case study design. These research methods utilize several data collection strategies. Such data collection methods include open-ended questions, interviews, observation, and analysis of pictures, texts, and/or audiovisuals. Research is conducted in a naturalistic environment, and researchers attempt to interpret or recognize emerging patterns or themes derived from their exploration.

A study is based upon certain assumptions and conceptions about the nature of participants or phenomena. Narrative research reveals a chronological story of individuals' lived experiences. The researcher provides the participants' perspective,

which the researcher retells in a narrative format in collaboration with the participants. Phenomenological research also recounts lived experiences; however, there the researcher discerns the essence of the human experience (Creswell, 2009). Ethnography examines groups in natural settings over a long period of time and would be an appropriate form of inquiry for a cultural group or setting. Finally, grounded theory design calls for intermittent schedules of data collection focused on the development of new theory.

In an effort to collect data rich in content, a case study may include a smaller number of participants than other quantitative studies. This is in part due to the nature of data collection and the quality of the content being collected. Qualitative researchers focus on participants' experiences. In a case study, the researcher's involvement adds to the depth and breadth of the data. The current study attempted to build on established theory, the funds of knowledge, to recognize emerging themes in order to understand the culturally relevant experiences of the ELLs in their educational environment (Hatch, 2002). As qualitative researchers analyze their data, they may recognize explanatory patterns, themes, and relationships and make interpretations (Hatch, 2002). The depth of information that is obtained from the data presents a well-defined picture of the phenomenon being studied. The case study has a strong history of use in behavioral science research and is seen as a mode of exploration into a process or program of one or more participants (Creswell, 2003). Researchers collect data over a period as it pertains to a particular case. In this case study, insights were drawn from a series of open-ended interview questions, observations, and curricula artifacts. This case study took place in

the educational setting, where data was collected through classroom observations and personal interviews in an effort to triangulate and demonstrate relationships that emerged during data analysis (Creswell, 2003).The participant pool consisted of ELL students and college faculty.In this study I analyze the communication dynamics occurring among faculty and ELL students to reveal emerging patterns for interpretation and analysis.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher in qualitative research processes has been described as that of a human instrument for data collection and analysis (Merriam, 1998). The role is interactive because the researcher must mediate between the researcher perspective and the research participant perspective and maintain an objective observation. (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). Researchers rely on this process to explore social phenomena.

As researcher, I realize my reflective experience informed personal biases, beliefs, and values about culturally relevant pedagogy that may have influenced the identification and organizing of recurrent themes during the analysis portion of this study. However, I took measures to enhance validity and minimize risks. I used member checking to confirm that my summary of the interview narrative was accurate (Creswell, 2009; Shenton, 2004). The interview summary was sent to each participant and each was asked to review the summary of the transcript and provide feedback. Transparency is a characteristic of the research process that is intended to reveal bias (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, as researcher, I also maintained a running written record of daily activities,

reflective responses, and ideas that required further exploration (Creswell, 2009; Shenton, 2004).

Triangulation is the process of using the convergence of various data sources of evidence to develop the identified themes (Creswell, 2009). I used the triangulation of various data sources (interviews, observations, and artifacts) for reasoning to develop the identified themes. Finally, I also used rich, thick descriptions to support findings and presented discrepant cases to provide an alternate perspective of information identified from data analysis (Creswell, 2009).

Methodology

Participant Selection

Recruitment for the study took place on campus at a small liberal arts collect located in the Northeastern United States. Participants were drawn from both a criterion and convenience sampling to include approximately15 English-Language Learner students and one or two academic reading faculty member(s). Mason (1999) warns against the concept of saturation, thus this research will seek to include data until all is included and coded. The participants had been previously identified as English-language Learners by way of the college administrators. The intention of a criterion sample is to identify student participants that meet specific background factors. Likewise, the convenience sample offers ease of access to a population abundant for examining the phenomena. The inclusion class consisted of heterogeneously grouped first-year college students 1) with varying levels of academic and English-language proficiencies, 2)

English-Language Learner students, 4) having the majority of their education outside of the United States.

The faculty participants were instructors of academic English with more than five years of experience teaching college reading remediation, including English-language Learners, but not more than 20 years. A letter of intention for the study was forwarded to full-time faculty members (See Appendix B). Instructors were asked to post a Blackboard announcement to invite English-language Learners to contact the researcher if they are interested in participating (Appendix C).

Procedures for Recruitment

With permission from the college administration (Appendix A), the researcher emailed college faculty who teach the English-language Learner reading courses (Appendix B). Interested faculty members were directed to contact the researcher for a brief in-person or virtual meeting. The meeting was intended to consist of the nature of the study, outline the data collection methods, and provide information regarding informed consent procedures. If the faculty member agreed, the intention was they would post an announcement in the Blackboard classroom inviting students to participate (Appendix C). Students who contacted the researcher would be informed of the nature of the study, outline the data collection methods, and provided information regarding informed consent procedures.

All participants were advised that this researcher would be observing in the classroom recording all said and seen events using audio recordings and note taking. All participants would be invited to attend an interview (Appendix D; Appendix F) sessions,

lasting approximately 60 minutes for faculty participants, and 30-45 minute duration for student participants.

At the end of each interview, a debriefing occurred, the researcher reviewed data storage procedures, the analysis process and reported results. At that time, the researcher invited the participant to review a summary of the interview to check for accuracy and the opportunity to revise their interview remarks.

Instrumentation

Observation guide. The Academic Conversations Checklist is a matrix containing dimensions related to cultural relevance (Moll, 2001). The purpose was to record culturally relevant conversations present in academic reading classes for English-language Learners. The checklist was inspired by Miller (2010), an advocate for English-language Learner students. Miller (2010) describes factors in a classroom that may direct education professionals to implement effective teaching strategies (Appendix H).

Faculty interview guide. The faculty interview questions were intended to identify characteristics about English-language Learner faculty that may enhance culturally relevant classroom conversations. Moll et Al., 2009, investigated the teacher's ability to learn about the identity of their learners, Funds of Knowledge, hence supporting instruction in the classroom and further instructional practices (Appendix I).

Student interview guide. The student interview guide questions were intended to capture the experiences as perceived from the English-language Learner. The interview questions inspired by Tare and Gelman, (2010) who write about the bilingual student's ability to use two languages for a different set of circumstances and how students can

transition between languages corresponding to the level of difficulty of tasks. A secondary source to support these questions are founded in the works of Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky postulated that students learn through the social context of the lesson from the More Advanced Other. The More Advance Other could be the instructor or classmate peers (Moll, 2014) (Appendix J).

Procedures

Data Collection. The researcher had intended to conduct an hour interview with an academic reading faculty member(s) teaching English-language Learner students and will respond to research questions 1 and 2. The additional personal interviews were intended to be held with 15 English-language Learner students and address research question 1. All names were intended to be removed during transcription and replaced with pseudonyms to protect privacy. The faculty interview duration was scheduled to occur for approximately 60 minutes; the student participant interviews were scheduled to occur for approximately 30-45 minutes. The interviews were scheduled to occur in a neutral area such as a conference room located on the college campus.

The classroom observation took place at the college during academic English reading class. The observation focused on the frequency of culturally relevant themes and pedagogy, teacher-student interaction, and student-student communication. The duration of the observation was scheduled to extend for the 1.5 hours class during which the researcher took notes by hand and audio recording. The observation component should contribute to research questions 1 and 2. The meetings shall occur during this spring

semester. Finally, a review of the syllabus including the course description will serve as archival data. The access to archival data contributes to research question 1.

Debriefing. Upon the conclusion of the interview, the researcher will ask probing questions such as; "Is there anything else you would like to tell me about…" I will thank them for their time and for providing me information about their experiences. I will remind participants that I will email the transcription of the interview to them for review.

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Data Analysis Plan

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The data was intended to be transcribed into NVivo qualitative research software. NVivo is used for qualitative data analysis and was designed to analyze rich narrative based information. The NVivo software program would organize the narrative transcription to yield a report that will assist the researcher in identifying themes or patterns from the collected data. Themes were then analyzed investigating for emerging patterns and patterns of English-Language Learner student responses, reading faculty responses, and observations. The information gathered in relation to the research questions presented above herewith. Finally, cases yielding erroneous information were reviewed for further inquiry.

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Issues of Trustworthiness

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I used Shenton's (2004) model for managing trustworthiness in qualitative research by establishing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Shenton's model enhances the trustworthiness of the study. Implementation of known and accepted research methods, studying the participants and participant experiences, and

the triangulation of three forms of evidence (data) provided trustworthiness that the data are valid.

Credibility

Credibility can be supported by the qualifications or experience of the researcher (Shenton, 2004). My experience teaching reading to English-language learner college students fulfills Shenton's (2004) criteria to support credibility. Creswell (2002) suggest that validity in qualitative research is how strongly the assertions reported align to the stated findings. This is proved with agreement from the perspective of the researcher, participants, or other stakeholders. The researcher holds an instrumental role in data collection, analysis, and interpretation of ascertained data from interviews and observations. (Merriam, 2002). Therefore, researchers must use alternate strategies to avoid bias and ensure the validity of the study.

Credibility was also intended to be established by the identification of concepts (*a priori* codes) presented in the literature review. Through inductive data analysis, these a priori codes served to represent the relevant information in the data (Saldana, 2013), Additionally, other measures intended for employment in this study that ensure credibility were to be supported by use of triangulation, member checking, and the presentation of discrepant cases. As the researcher, I planned to maintain a running record of daily activities, reflective responses, and ideas that required further exploration.

The potential faculty participants were identified from the college administrative website. An invitation to participate was planned to be forwarded to the faculty member (Appendix B) with a request that the faculty forward the research invitation onto English-

language Learner students by way of an announcement (Appendix C) from the Blackboard, an educational learning platform. The student participants were to respond to the research invitation (Appendix D), attend a screening criteria to participate (Appendix D), and were to be informed of consent procedures for both faculty and student participants (Appendix E and F). Participants are offered the opportunity to decline to participate ensuring only those truly interested in participating are to be included in the study (Shenton, 2004). The probing execution of the interview questions also confirms credibility using iterative questioning to elicit details and promote transparency (Shenton, 2004). Member checking is completed by creating a summation of the participant's interview, which was intended to be emailed to the respective participant along with a request to review the summary, and to provide any constructive feedback for 1) mistakes and / or, 2) missing information from the interview.

Triangulation was implemented to gather data from multiple sources, in this case the faculty and student interviews, classroom observations, and course syllabus including instructional materials. Convergent themes extrapolated from multiple sources to support the validity of the study (Creswell, 2009). A field test was conducted with the help of a colleague to test the interview questions to 1) ensure the interview questions are well articulated, 2) confirm that the interview questions align with the research questions. The colleague feedback reported, "given the research questions, the interview may ultimately be the primary source of reliable data." Finally, (one) subject matter expert and (one) methodology expert reviewed the research questions, interview questions, and methodology.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the ability for the research process to be applied in other settings, with other participants, and perhaps other methods (Shenton, 2004). This study examined the dimensions of cultural relevance for the English-language Learner college student in an academic reading class. The rich description of this phenomenon can be used to label other English-language Leaner college students of academic English or in other words transfer these findings to others. The setting, recruitment invitation procedures, data collection methods, and the systemized 20 -30-minute interview sessions and one-hour classroom observation procedures were consistent, which could be replicated in another environment with other English-language Learner college students. The student participants may vary, 1) in age from 18 – 22 years old, 2) in time residing in the United States, and 3) various degrees of English-language proficiency. The documentation of emerging themes from the convergence of data sources further contributes to the transferability to other English-language Learner students (Creswell, 2009).

Dependability

Dependability ensures reliability and employs tools to document the detailed research process so that the research could be replicated (Shenton, 2004). Therefore, each data collection process detailed as it was intended to occur. The interview questions were field tested by review from a colleague and the feedback was included. The research, interview questions, and methodology were also reviewed by 1) a subject matter expert,

and 2) a methodology expert. Multiple data resources were intended to be utilized to confirm the convergence of any emerging themes.

Confirmability

Confirmability are procedures to ensure that the research results are derived from the participants' experience, and not informed by the experience of the researcher (Shenton, 2004). This researcher had no pre-established or preferred outcomes. The respondent interviews were intended to represent the soul opinion and experience of the participant. Internal reliability would be achieved by the commonality and consistency of the participant responses (Creswell, 2009). This researcher intended to maintain a position of reflexivity regarding bias or beliefs and has had no personal experience as an English-language Learner. Confirmability was also secured with use of a running record of research related activity (audit trail). The value that I brought to the study is that of a teacher of academic English and a personal interest in identifying the instructional needs of the English-language Learner college student (Creswell, 2013).

Ethical Procedures

During the initial meeting, pursuant to the signing of the informed consent (Appendix F and Appendix G), informed consent procedures were discussed and confidentiality assured to all participants that at no time will identifying information would be used or publicly disclosed or revealed as a result of participation. All participants were assigned a pseudonym to further protect their identify. It should be noted that if the participant was involved or engaged in child abuse an exception would have occurred resulting in a breach of confidentiality as this disclosure places a duty on

the psychologist to tell the legal authorities. There was no anticipated harm that would occur as a result of participation in this study. However, a discussion about student participation did include clear language so that the student understands that they participated of free-will and can have terminated participation at any time without penalty.

The clear articulation of a participant's rights should have avoided any misconceptions the student may develop about a grade penalty as a result of participation, interview commentary, and / or terminating their part of the study. The collected artifacts, audio recordings, and transcript narratives were and will continue to be stored inside of a fire-proof file cabinet within this researcher's home office/residence and will be retained for the required period.

Summary

Chapter 3 presented an overview of the research methodology and its implementation. The rationale for choosing the case study design, the role of the researcher, and the research questions were all addressed. Participant selection procedures, data collection and analysis were explained. Information about how the data results were validated through triangulation was presented. Finally, Chapter 3 showed how ethical considerations were addressed, and participants' rights were protected. In Chapter 4 the results of the analysis of the convergence of data from participant interviews and observations are shared and interpreted.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the experience of cultural relevance in classrooms with ELL students. The funds of knowledge/funds of identity (Moll et al., 2001) was used as the theoretical framework for developing the research questions, selecting data collection tools, and constructing an analysis plan. This chapter describes the qualitative analysis process and results, and describes the results in relation to the research questions.

RQ1: What is the experience of cultural relevance for ELLs in academic English college classes?

RQ2: How can the college program incorporate students' cultural and familial strengths into the classroom?

Interviews were conducted with one college teacher of ELLs and 10 ELL students from an EELL reading class as well as observation of a class session. Chapter 4 includes the recruitment procedures, the environment for the observation, character of the participants, data collection and analysis procedures, methods to ensure the study's validity and trustworthiness, and the secure storage of the data. Finally, the resulting interpretation of themes is supported by excerpts from the participants' interview responses and realized thematic patterns are further described.

Setting

The setting was a small language arts college with a significant enrollment in arts, humanities, and divinity studies. The interviews were conducted in a conference room

that was situated in an area of the library building that was private, quiet, and less populated than other areas of the college. I used the iPhone recording application as a recording device and checked its functionality prior to each interview. This allowed the participant to become at ease with the technology. I met with the faculty participant during her lunch hour as she had requested. The teacher had arrived to the meeting area prior to my arrival and had used the space to eat her lunch. This created a relaxed and collegial atmosphere. The interview progressed without interruption.

I met with the student participants during their lunch break or after classes at the end of the day. The same conference room in the library building was used to meet the student participants to ensure a quiet and private location. The iPhone recording application was used to record each session and functioned flawlessly. There were no interruptions, and every interview progressed successfully.

There were no apparent external conditions present such as personal or organizational conditions that influenced me as researcher or the participants (i.e., changes in personnel, budget cuts, and/or other trauma that would impact the interpretation of the study results).

Demographics and Participant Characteristics

Participants included 10 ELL college students and one reading faculty member teaching ELL students. The teacher participant was an experienced teacher of English as a second language for ELLs since 1982. She was born and raised in California but spent much of her life living abroad teaching students English. The faculty participant stated that she cared about the student's learning to read and write in English and but was

mostly concerned with how well her students transitioned into American culture "without experiencing culture shock."

The student participants were 18, 19, and 20 years old and were the only child in their families. They all attended a heterogeneously grouped reading class as first-year college students. They presented (a) with varying levels of academic and English language proficiencies; (b) as ELL students; (c) as Asian (eight from China, one from Taiwan, and one from Viet Nam) and (d) as having had the majority of their education outside of the United States.

Students' cultures inform their social role as students (Rodriguez, 2013). The passivity of the Chinese students in this case was the result of their roles as students in the Chinese educational system. In China, the teacher is the lecturer, assignments are mandated, and students listen and take notes. There are no opportunities for inquisition, collaboration, or cooperative learning.

The data depicted in Table 1 describes the student participants' homeland and length of time living in the United States. It should be noted that Missy was living in the United States when she was younger but not that she can remember.

Table 1

Participants, Homeland, and Time in United States

Pseudonym	Homeland	Time in U.S.
David	China	Three months
Doris	China	Four months
Haha	Viet Nam	Two years

Jim	China	1.5 years
Joki	China	Four years
Zack	China	Five months
Michael	China	Four months
Missy	Taiwan	Eight months
Elaine	China	Six months
Laura	China	Seven months

Data Collection

Participant interviews included 10 English-language Learner college students and one reading faculty member teaching ELLs. The number of participants were less than originally proposed as discussed in Chapter 3. The reading program contained two reading teachers of ELLS, and one of the faculty members declined the offer to participate in this study. Chapter 3 also presented the 10 student participants who were enrolled in this course and were available as potential participants. All available student participant candidates accepted the offer to participate in this study.

I met with the faculty participant and ELL student participants met in separate, in-person meetings at which the informed consent procedures were discussed. At that time, the consent form was presented to the participant for signature. Each participant had one interview with me during which I followed the interview guide for faculty (Appendix I) interviews with the faculty member and used the interview guide for students (Appendix J) for the interviews with the student participants. These interview guides were used as the instruments for data collection. A debriefing was conducted at the conclusion of all interviews. All of the participant interviews conducted were completed in less than the

previously intended scheduled time as outlined in Chapter 3. The interview time resulted in meeting for 30 minutes with the faculty member and the meeting times ranged from 16 – 28 minutes in length for the student participants. The interviews were conducted in a private neutral location and recorded by way of digital audio with use of the iPhone recording application. The audio recordings were transcribed, summarized, and a summary was sent to all participants as a member's check for content verification. The transcriptions were void of all identifying information.

There were two 1.5 hours of classroom observations during which the Culturally Relevant Academic Conversations Checklist (Appendix H) was utilized as the data collection instrument. Finally, the program coordinator shared the program syllabus (Appendix G). The collected digital data is stored on a password protected and encrypted computer; the syllabus and the data collection checklists are stored inside a locked file cabinet in the my home.

Data Analysis

Process for Developing Codes and Categories

The Literature Review, research questions, interview questions, and observation checklist provided the concepts (*a priori* codes) for coding to represent the relevant information in the data (Saldana, 2013). Inductively, I listened and reviewed the transcripts of the interviews and read the observation checklist frequency data and the course syllabus to identify ideas that related to the research questions (Saldana, 2013). The terms, statements, and content that were identified included personal resources, academic deficit, academic strength, social strength, family/community issues/concerns,

and cultural awareness (Appendix I). Secondly, the interview transcripts, syllabus, and observation checklists were imported into NVivo qualitative software by QSR International for further organization and analysis. All data sources were analyzed using in vivo coding. With the NVivo program, I developed nodes (codes) as representations of concepts from the data sources. These concept representations were then labeled the words and terms used in the data sources. Additionally, I explored the data further through the use of queries and word clouds. These tools emphasized and supported my identification of concepts and provided a visual representation of the relationship between these ideas. The labeled representations of concepts (codes) included learning context, reading practices, vocabulary instruction, reading skills, curriculum, instructional strategies, student interests, cultural characteristics of the learner, common interests about the homeland, American culture, bias and prejudice, familial connection, teacher learning about the student's culture, and traditions including food.

Again, I reread the data seeking emergent concepts that were not anticipated such as teacher as personal support, self-efficacy, and self-regulated learning. I reviewed the relationships between the all the derived codes to prioritize, combine with new labels, and form categories. The hierarchal list of codes was reviewed and some categories were merged such as instructional strategies into curriculum. I was able to aggregate categories into four major themes to respond to the research questions.

Themes

The experience of cultural relevance as reported by college English-language Learner students in an academic English reading class and how college programs can

bring cultural relevance into the classroom are inter-related. The experiences students shared provide insight into the their experience and meaning of cultural relevance. Conversely, the analysis of the college program is essential in the investigation on the student's experience. The patterns that emerged as themes from the process of moving from the data to codes and categories credibly respond to the research questions. Finally, the faculty participant will be discussed later as the discrepant case. The resulting themes are presented Figure 1 and include: cultural relevance, student characteristics, reading English, social learning.
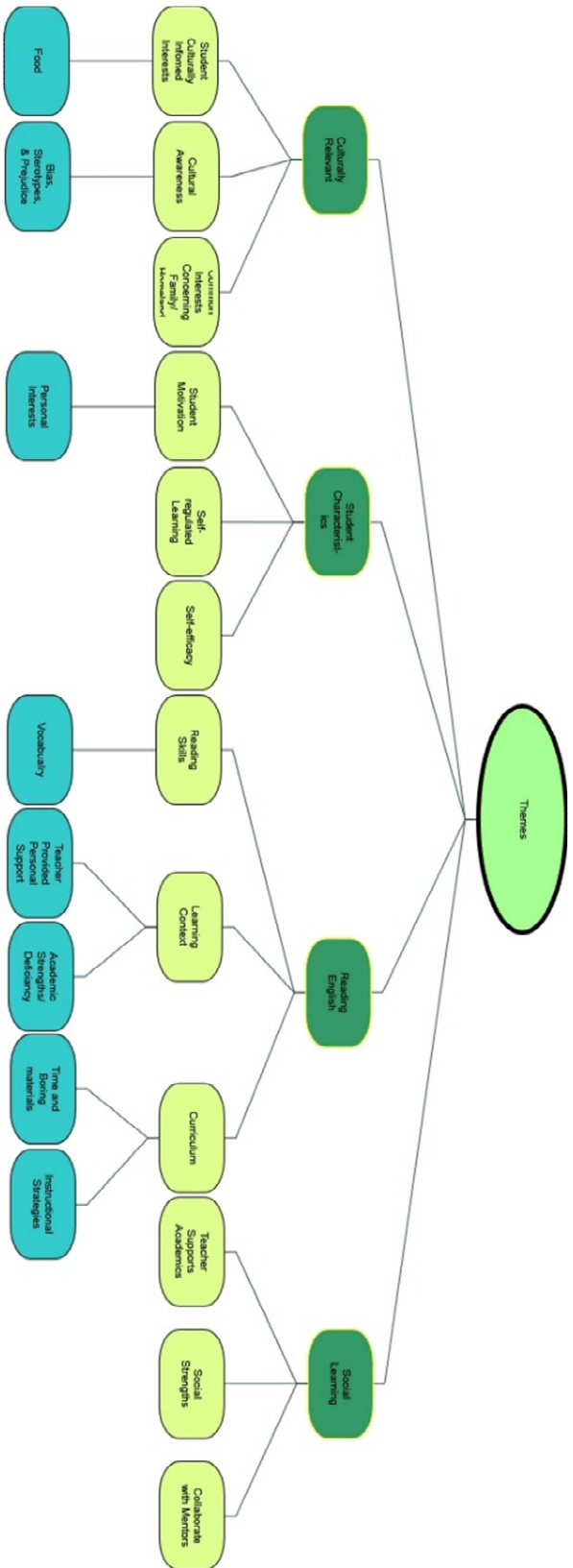
Figure 1. The above illustration depicts the four major themes with subthemes or subcategories listed below.

Cultural relevance. This theme was informed by coding cultural awareness, cultural characteristics of the learner, culturally informed interests, and teacher knowledge of cultural facts of and from the students. Students reported wanting more opportunities to discuss their culture and reported that they felt that the teacher should learn their culture as well as teaching them about American culture. The faculty participant reported that cultural relevance "was the core - embedded into the curriculum." During global issues and / or current event lessons, discussions included a contextual examination, "what would happen is this occurred in China" or "How was China effect by global warming" etc. However, Zack said that although his teacher talked about his country in this way, he stated that the program would be more relevant to him if he could speak in his native language in class.

> Zach: There is a sign in the classroom that says, "please do not speak Chinese." We play -hang out with other Chinese students. The teacher should learn Chinese culture and then the teacher should tell me more about American culture.

On the other hand, Haha said that she thought the teacher wanted to learn Chinese culture in an effort to better communicate with him.

> Haha: The teacher also wants to know some - like Chinese culture and she asks us to do the presentation to show more about Chinese culture and so they can find a better way to communicate with us and teach us.

> When asked about culturally relevant reading and assignments, most of the

students discussed recent assignments that included 1) a compare and contrasting of

Western and Eastern differences and 2) a survey of other college students to learn about the culture of another -outside of the English-language Learner group.

> Missy: Sometimes we will compare the Western and the Eastern differences. I can also learn about the Western culture and review my own culture. If the passage thing is about Chinese or something happened in history and they are connecting with my country, …, and some difference when people go to school.

> Michael: Yeah, homework is about we–our culture and family something…

> Laura: Sometimes we will compare differences between China with USA or the other countries.

> Elaine: Last time our teacher taught us and was talking about the Eastern cultures and the Western cultures.

The instructor reported "feeling" the urgency to help student to assimilate into American culture to avoid "culture shock". Hence, many students described lectures containing American history.

> Joki: [W]e learn American history and I will . . . tell her my country's history.

> Haha: She lets us work in a group sometimes and she likes to share something interesting and she would also tell something that we have to know if we want to get successful in America. We have to know the American culture. Sometime she was on video to let us know more about

American culture. She's not only teaching us the reading, writing and listening, she also teaches us the culture in America to help us get success.

David stated he understood the necessity of learning the culture of the American environment while not losing his own culture and said he accepted the teacher's points about understanding the American culture may help him to succeed here.

David: Actually I think that we are from the different culture and we just joined this existing environment and we need to cut off some of that culture of the Chinese one and try to be familiar with this environment and we try to follow this culture and the traditions here. Actually the very helpful things are teacher is like doing something like a speech to help me to understand how do we need to follow the culture or something need to do and some say afraid not to do in the public space. Something related to my culture I think it's not a match. We both try our best to join the new cultures. Actually it's not mean that we can forget our country you're just putting it somewhere just for a moment because you are in a different country.

When asked about culturally relevant topics of study, many students reported traditional "food". The compare/contrast between traditional cuisine and American food was the central focus of some lessons and was also experienced in the classroom. The students brought in a traditional Chinese dish -dumplings, eaten during Chinese New Year's.

Doris: We talked about New Year's Day in China or traditional food in China.

Jim: Yeah. Lots of time we talk about the American food and Chinese food and we do a presentation about it. We do surveys on campus so that we know that American food is not really the hamburgers and the French fries…so at home they eat the healthy food.

The Culturally Relevant Academic Conversations checklist (Appendix H) provided a data collection checklist to record the frequency of events occurring during the classroom observation. During observation 1, the data reported a frequency for themes that aligned with the student and teacher participant interview reports by confirming that discussions included such topics as traditions (i.e. food, Kung Fu, Confucianism, preserving language, women's roles), family values (i.e. marriage, death). The essay assignment was based from a writing prompt. Many students shared information about themselves, their homeland, and the death of loved one. This lesson focus extended into Observation 2 but then shifted into a new topic. The reading for discussion was "Cowboys and Culture" and the context that "Mexican cowboys are endangered" as was the rodeo. The reading included information about cowboys, animal control, poverty, and distinguished between two types of cowboys. During this observed schedule there were no frequencies of occurrence noted per the Culturally Relevant Academic Conversations checklist.

Student characteristics. This theme may be informed by a student's culture and was considered as a subtheme. The length of residency the student participants had living in the United States ranged from three months to four years. Missy said she had lived between the United States and China since she was a young girl and really cannot say

"does not remember" how long it would be cumulatively. David has been in the United States the least, for three months. Michael and Doris have been in the United States for four months, Zack five months, Laura seven months, Missy eight months, with Joki having been in the United states for four years.

Students described themselves as motivated to learn to read academic English so that they can be matriculated into their preferred program of study at the college. They said that their teacher was funny and makes jokes. David said "the teacher said funny things and some word jokes." Jim said that the teacher would "encourage them by saying jokes and make fun of them." Zack said, "my classes are interesting, my teacher is funny." Elaine also said that the teacher would, "tell something about herself, and it's funny, and not just talk, not boring and monotonous from the textbooks."

> Laura: In China the teacher just talks, and the students take notes, read, and does the assignments but does not speak or ask questions. So when the teacher talks and asks questions it is interesting.

The student participants conveyed that the teacher spoke of interesting topics such as "what fun things happened over the weekend," or "how they were feeling that day." Some days the teacher would research current events occurring in China as a topic for discussion. Laura recounted "sometimes when we learn something is similar to our life, maybe, we would write a story about this and share it with the other students in the class."

Student participants in this case had varying interests such as video games, sports, and movies with subtitles.

Laura "we should learn songs, not only words, but so they can know the song's story." She also would like to read easy-to-understand Disney story books. "There is a lot of communication in the books and you're going to learn how to talk with the other people."

A noteworthy sub-theme revealed was *self-regulated learning*. The student participants described how they accommodated their own learning by reading subtitles on TED talks or movies, reading fiction, music lyrics and using the translator application on their smartphones. David and Joki watched movies and Doris watched the news, both with subtitles. They described that their teacher showed TED talks with subtitles in class.

David: [The teacher also showed] other things just with the subtitles. You can just see them . . . it's passing very quickly so you can understand both with the body language. The extra eye contact and like the story that they make . . . they maybe show what it means and you can just check the subtitles and maybe at the first time you would not catch them very well because it's passing so quick maybe after a month or two months. Even special people maybe for a week you can just be familiar to this and I think to read quick and correct is pretty much for the reading skills.

Joki: I can remember some movie titles and I can remember what I read.

Zack: I watch TED Talks. First, I watch without subtitles. Second, I watch TED Talks with subtitles and then I take notes and I look up vocabulary. Last, I watch it again with subtitles, take notes, and look up vocabulary.

Both David and Haha described themselves as committed to being successful in this English reading and writing program. Haha said he "came to this program to make changes" after not passing in the last college program he was enrolled in. Joki said that although he had taken an English class in High School, he was a child and just didn't study the English.

> Haha: If you want to improve, reading fiction is good for me because the fiction is
>
> not that boring and the plot is very interesting and you also can read the
>
> newspapers because libraries have newspapers every day.
>
> David: you need to practice...catch a lot of mistakes…Of course you are
>
> not actually the native speaker. I think the more mistakes; you'll make
>
> more improvements. I try to make mistakes and I have improved a lot . . .
>
> just try your best.

Every student participant described their use of the translator application on smartphone or handheld device. This fact was also pointed out by the faculty participant who said she did not advocate the use of their electronics to assist learning. On one occasion during the second observation, the faculty participant removed a student's cell phone and placed in into the closet for the entire period. Additionally, the teacher frequently requested that students put their phones away and not to use them in class. Students, Zack, and Doris responded that they were looking up the words for translation.

> Michael: I need to ask for something using translation to read book, so
>
> maybe first time you read a book, they don't have many vocabularies you
>
> know that, but you need to search so . . . you can get many vocabularies.

Zack: I try to listen for listening skills. I take notes about vocabulary, I

used the translator APP, and used the dictionary.

Student participants shared their "lack of confidence reading and speaking

in the class." Each student described their feelings of inadequate reading skills

and discomfort reading or speaking in class. Laura that the teacher must ask her

questions because she does not like to speak in class. She continued that in China

the teacher lectures and the students take notes. There are no opportunities for

academic discourse and questions are not welcomed.

Laura: I will feel nervous. My reading is really bad. I don't know because I

don't like to speak in the class. I think because in China, in the class we

just listen to the teacher and take notes. Just feel student will say or talk in

the class like this. I just don't like talking.

Michael said he felt he was "a little confused." Missy felt her reading was "just

so-so, I think." Elaine stated that she "will try . . . because if I speak I am afraid

that the other people can't understand my English." Doris giggled, "My English is

just not good enough." All students agreed with Doris's experience and the

participants stated they had a "lack of skills and avoided participation in class."

Table 2

Participants' Self-Regulated Learning Activities

Pseudonym	Passive Preference	Self-regulated Learning
David	Yes	Video with subtitles; electronic translator;
Doris	Yes	Video with subtitles; electronic translator; News
Haha	Yes	Video with subtitles; electronic translator; books
Jim	Yes	Video with subtitles; electronic translator
Joki	Yes	Video with subtitles; electronic translator
Zack	Yes	Video with subtitles; electronic translator
Michael	Yes	Video with subtitles; electronic translator
Missy	Yes	Video with subtitles; electronic translator
Elaine	Yes	Video with subtitles; electronic translator
Laura	Yes	Video with subtitles; electronic translator; song lyrics; Disney books

On the other hand, Jim said, he felt the same about his English skills than

he did about his skills in Chinese, "it is like speaking to any Chinese people." But

Haha said he was "more confident and comfortable" with his skills using Chinese

language when compared to his English skills. Zack stated that "Sometimes I do

not ask questions or avoid it anyway. I prefer to ask questions after class. In class

I feel I may waste other's time with my question." However, David said he

wanted to be challenged and considered communication as a means to learning,

hence success. "Interacting is the better way to learn English . . . that depends on

your confidence and the environment.. . . . life is involved in your academic study and second thing is about confidence."

David's view aside, the student participants did not have well-developed self-efficacy as it related to reading, writing, and speaking English.

The student characteristics revealed by the student participants were a component of their learning. Their characteristics, in part, were informed by classroom experience in China, cultural perceptions of appropriate classroom behaviors, and interests. Student characteristics were also influenced by the amount of time they were in the United States. Finally, students discussed self-regulation about their learning and with varying levels of reported self-efficacy.

Reading English. This theme was formed from four categories including reading skills, learning context, and curriculum. All three student participants identified that the focus of their instruction was to successfully read English so that they can continue into college credit baring coursework. Zack reported that "the course focused on reading skills" and Doris felt that they were doing mostly "reading tests and reading essays." Haha said that "about 90% of my classmates did not read the new books" assigned after the instruction. Jim stated that he read the "key details . . . or sometimes we just find topic sentences to know what the passage talks about."

Vocabulary instruction was merged into the reading skills code category. Vocabulary instruction was perceived by all students to be the key element in learning to read English. Many students explained that they relied on the use of a translator application on their handheld device and I noted this during both observations. The

teacher participant said, "the student's had a dependence on their translators." Like Doris, student participants expressed that they were trying to read and "having to remember a lot of words." Jim, Laura, and Missy all described that learning "vocabulary" was the most challenging aspect of learning academic English. David said, "Show me some pictures of vocabulary. Just research a lot pictures than they know . . . something like towers in the New York or picture of rats, and some cute animals.

The curriculum was evidenced by the Course Syllabus (Appendix G) and Instructional Material (Appendix K) but included the classroom observations and student/teacher participant testimonials. The Course Syllabus (Appendix G) depicts a curricula outline consisting of reading, writing, reading strategies, and presentations which included debates. Lesson units show topics such as:

Reading:

- Identifying subjects in complex sentences.

- Evaluating sources.

- Identifying main ideas and purpose.

- Summarizing key details.

Critical Thinking

- Interpreting figurative language.

- Evaluating reasons.

- Synthesizing information to make a judgment.

- Evaluating summaries.

- Analyzing a model essay.

These discreet skills are presented in isolation, and reading selections are provided for practice of these skills and strategies. David said that this "took a lot of time and was boring." An essay used to support these reading skills is exampled in the following excerpt taken from the Instructional Materials (Appendix K):

Directions: Here is a summary of the information about the Meyers-Briggs Personality Inventory that is in your textbook. Below each blank is some information that you should rewrite in the form of an adjective clause. Sometimes more than one relative pronoun is possible. Remember that sometimes relative pronouns may be omitted.

Practice exercise: The second dimension is connected to how a person notices and remembers information. Some people in this category are referred to as sensors: those_____ (*those people pay attention to details in the world*). They rely on their past experiences and knowledge of how science works to make objective determinations. Sensors are very practical people. In contrast, an intuitive is an individual_____ (*This individual is more interested in relationships between people and things*) ....

David said, "like his other Chinese students, he does not like to read books." Laura said that in China they had mandatory reading assignments and students complied with this directive. Instead, their learning preferences aligned with the responses of the other student participants. The students all stated that they preferred doing presentations, holding debates, conducting surveys, writing and interviewing other students, and watching TED Talks or videos. The learning context are the people, educational tools or

technology that facilitates learning. This can include commercial programs, student abilities (strengths, deficits, or disabilities), English-language Learners, teacher-student rapport (academic, personal) and technology. This commercial program is called "Kings Education for English Academic Studies."

The teacher participant said she was preparing students so that they would not experience" culture shock" therefore she said she provided her class with the information they required for both academic and personal use. She said, "teachers need to be aware of the fact that the English-language Learners in her class they can't just start speaking…It's something interesting."

Faculty participant: They (the students) miss their homes so much,…but also the psychological side is really important…so anything that is different is twice as dramatic. Because they don't have the network, they don't have the support of the mother, the brother. And most kids live with their parents.

Social learning. This theme contains four categories including collaboration with mentor (i.e. teacher, advanced student peer), teacher academic support, and social strengths. As described, the faculty participant observed that the students, "can't just start speaking" and that the "students are non-participatory.", suggesting that the students lack the experiences communicating with teachers and other students. The teacher said: "I need to ask many questions." When student participants described their interaction with their teacher they used phrases such as, "she asks questions" and "she cares if I am studying." Joki said that when he does not understand the teacher will teach him anything. Six out of the ten student participants stated that the teacher asked them

questions because they do not like to speak in class. Zack remained after class to ask questions for fear of wasting other student's time.

> Haha: Our teacher pays more attention to someone who needs to speak more, and someone who doesn't pay much attention. She would ask questions to them, then more students in the class can communicate with the teacher.

The student participants' interactions with their teacher overlaps with their social strengths and student characteristics. The faculty participant observed that the English-language Learners from this case only socialize with each other "they rarely if ever develop relationships outside of their Chinese peers." Zack said, we only play -hang out with other Chinese students." Haha noted that he communicates with the teacher or with the group of students.

Many student participants described a course assignment involving conducting an interview. Nine of the ten student participants reported it as a preferred assignment and were interested in participating in the interview assignment again with other students on campus.

Discrepant Responses

The student responses were consistent revealing similar findings. The instructor's responses and perspective were initially perceived as incongruent with the researcher's expectation of cultural relevance. For example, the instructor reported that the students were prejudiced about "big global giant, the United States" and that they had stereotypical ideas about Americans and the American diet. She stated that they needed to learn American culture to be successful, not "speak Chinese in the classroom, not use

translation applications in the classroom. She implemented a curriculum of reading skills and strategies void of any reference to their homeland, community, family, or cultural relevance. She used "tough love" by explaining, for example, that "having a cold" or "a period" is "no excuse to miss class. You take some medicine and come to class."

However, the students stated that their teacher was both personally and academically supportive. She would, on occasion, bring Chinese current events into the discussion, remind them to call their mothers, and had a class time discussion of "traditional foods" with a "dumpling" demonstration.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

Chapter 3 served as the path for all research methods including setting, participant recruitment, and data collection procedures. Credibility was established by the identification of concepts (*a priori* codes) present in the literature review. Through inductive data analysis, these a priori codes served to represent the relevant information in the data (Saldana, 2013), Additionally, other measures employed in this study that ensure credibility were supported by use of triangulation, member's checking, and the presentation of discrepant cases. This researcher maintained a running record of daily activities, reflective responses, and ideas that required further exploration. Finally, student participants shared a similarity in responses for the interview questions indicating saturation during the student participant interview process.

The faculty participant was identified by of the college administrative website. An invitation to participate was forwarded to the faculty member (Appendix B) with a

request that the faculty forward the research invitation onto English-language Learner

students by way of an announcement (Appendix C) from the Blackboard, an educational

learning platform. Each student responded to the research invitation (Appendix D), took

part in a screening criteria to participate (Appendix D) and the informed consent

procedures for both faculty and student participants (Appendix E and F) were described

and consequently authorized. The interviews unfolded as detailed in Chapter 3. The audio

recordings were transcribed and reviewed for accuracy. Member's checking was

completed by creating a summation of the participant's interview, which was then

emailed to the respective participant along with a request to review the summary, and to

provide any constructive feedback for 1) mistakes and / or, 2) missing information from

the interview. It should be noted that participants failed to respond with feedback for this

researcher.

Triangulation was also used to gather data from multiple sources, in this case the

faculty and student interviews, classroom observations, and course syllabus including

instructional materials. Convergent themes extrapolated from multiple sources support

the validity of the study (Creswell, 2009). Themes identified after participant interviews,

including discrepant data were further analyzed for consistency. A field test was

conducted with the help of a colleague to test the interview questions to 1) ensure the

interview questions are well articulated, 2) confirm that the interview questions align

with the research questions. The colleague feedback reported, "given the research

questions, the interview may ultimately be the primary source of reliable data." Finally,

(one) subject matter expert and (one) methodology expert reviewed the research questions, interview questions, and methodology.

Transferability

Chapter 3 was used to secure this study's transferability. This study examined the dimensions of academic reading acquisition for the English-language Learner college student. The rich description of this phenomenon can be used to label other English-language Leaner college students of academic English or in other words transfer these findings to others. The setting, recruitment invitation procedures, data collection methods, and the systemized interview and classroom observation procedures were consistent, which could be replicated in another environment with other English-language Learner college students. The student participants varied in age from 18 – 22 years old, were in the United States from 3 months – 4 years, and had various degrees of English-language proficiency. Some student participants lived in the both United States and China or Taiwan and shared residency in the United States during stages in their academic development.

The themes identified were consistent with the repetition of words or phrases used by the faculty and / or student participant(s). These words and / or phrases used by the faculty and student participant(s) were exemplified and quoted herewith. The documentation of the themes, converged with alternate data sources further contributes to the transferability to other English-language Learner students.

Dependability

Chapter 3 developed the criteria which was adhered to establish dependability. Each data collection process was detailed as it occurred in a continuum. The interview questions were field tested by review from a colleague and the feedback was included. The research, interview questions, and methodology were also reviewed by 1) a subject matter expert, and 2) a methodology expert. Multiple data resources were utilized to confirm the convergence of themes.

Confirmability

Chapter 3 was adhered to for confirmability. This researcher had no pre-established or preferred outcomes. The respondent interviews were authentic and represented the soul opinion and experience of the participant. Internal reliability was achieved by the commonality and consistency of the participant responses (Creswell, 2009). This researcher maintained a position of reflexivity regarding bias or beliefs and has had no personal experience as an English-language Learner. Confirmability was also secured with use of a running record of research related activity. The value that I brought to the study is that of a teacher of academic English and a personal interest in identifying the instructional needs of the English-language Learner college student (Creswell, 2013).

Results

The results of the data analyses revealed four themes: culturally relevant, reading English, social learning, and student characteristics. These themes are thought to reflect the common experience of learning in the ESL classrooms. The research questions that

guided this study are examined using the results of the thematic analysis and other insights identified during the data collection and analysis process.

Research Question 1

RQ1: What is the experience of cultural relevance for English-language Learners in academic English college classes?

Overall, inconsistencies between what the teacher stated in the interview and the course content as seen by the syllabus and instructional materials were noted. The teacher said that cultural relevance was "embedded into the curriculum." However, the both the syllabus and instructional materials focused around grammar, usage, mechanics, and phonics. The non-fiction genre of reading passages revolved around global issues, basic psychology, and anomalies. The classroom observation provided insight into the integration process between cultural relevance and the curriculum that was facilitated by the teacher. The student

Moreover, the students reported that their teacher led culturally relevant academic conversations. Although the reading skilled based curriculum did not include culturally relevant topics, students said the teacher asked questions and talked about their culture, homeland community, and family in relation to the readings and coursework. Finally, the students expressed feeling that their teacher took an interest in them personally as well as academically because she made referrals for medical visits and other supportive accommodations.

Analysis of Interviews

The interview data revealed commonalities amongst the student participant's responses about their shared experiences. Because the majority of the students shared similar culture, -Asian, this attributed to a kinship between students. As reported by both teacher and student participants. This learning community rarely developed friendships "outside of the group" and preferred to "hang out with other Chinese people" and "speak Chinese." The importance of culture was described across most interviews.

At times, students said they preferred to speak in their native language in the classroom. In contrast, the class rules dictated that students not speak in their native language. Students reported that the program would be more culturally relevant to them if they could use their native language in the classroom.

Students also reported that the instructional texts were "boring" and did not include content containing culturally relevant topics. This was the case in the class observation. The student participants noted that the teacher would, at times, include their homeland in the lesson for discussion. For an example, when discussing weather, the teacher would say, "What would happen if this occurred in China?" or "How would you feel if this happened in your hometown?" From the students' perspective, they reported their homeland, family and relatives were an area of concern/interest. The faculty participant reported using these questions as a means, "to get them to talk."

Analysis of Observations

The two class observations were quite different and provided opposing insights. In the first observation, students were given an assignment to interview another student

on campus, and ask them personal questions such as, "what is your favorite food" and presented the findings to the class by way of a Power Point Presentation. This lesson was culturally rich and students were actively involved, talking, laughing, and asking questions. The teacher used these student presentations to interject questions pertinent to the presenter's (student participant) culture, food preferences, etc. The second observation unfolded quite differently than the first lesson observation. For this Observation lesson, a personality assessment article and reading skills exercise was given. When the students were directed to open their text book and the discussion about adjectives began, the room went quiet. Students did not have eye contact with teacher and did not participate unless the teacher asked them a direct question. A topic of another example of instructional reading material was "Mexican Cowboys" and reasons why they are going "extinct." This lesson was clearly not culturally relevant.

A passive learning style was observed during the classroom visits. Students did not initiate questions, and spoke only when prompted by a direct question. Students were also observed using handheld smartphone devices with a translation application for assistance. Students reported that use of translation applications was learned from their years in school in China.

Analysis of the Syllabus and Instructional Materials

Student participants reported that the assigned readings were "boring" and they would prefer to read about things they were interested in such as basketball, video games, or lyrics from songs. One student suggested reading the video game instructions with support from the teacher, as it would be interesting to him and at the same time, help him

to learn to read English. A female student participant described her interest in reading songs, not to just learn English words but to understand the story.

The syllabus and instructional material outlined reading and writing strategies and skills. Moreover, the lessons included grammar, usage, mechanics, and phonics. The content centered on global issues, weather, and food. The teacher then introduced culturally relevant topics that were then applied to connect to the reading program.

Relevant Themes

Cultural relevance. Thematic patterns identified student's experience with cultural relevance from several categories such as common interests that are informed by culture and may concern their homeland or family. Cultural relevance is also supported from cultural awareness of their teachers and student peers. Students are immersed in academic conversations. Student peers maintain culture by the sharing of language, memories, and learning styles. When a curriculum does not align with the demographic of the learning context, it is the teacher who creatively mediates the relationship between cultural relevance and benign content. The teacher makes the strategies meaningful and develops student interest with probing questions and analogies to connect the lesson to the student's culture.

Research Question 2

RQ2: How can the college program do more to bring students' cultural and familial strengths into the classroom?

Analysis of Interviews

Students described personal knowledge and resources that have been acquired from their culture, family, or community. The students also explained that the reading curriculum was "boring, "skill based," and was "not culturally relevant." Furthermore, students explained that they experienced culturally relevant academic conversations because their teacher would "ask them questions about their family, culture, or homeland." On the other hand, the teacher said that cultural relevance was "embedded into the curriculum." Finally, the teacher said, I talk to them about things they know about and ask them questions to get them to talk."

Analysis of Observations

A student centered classroom included the student's cultural and familial strengths. Social learning methods such as peer tutoring, cooperative learning, and experiential learning are just a few instructional strategies the teacher incorporated that would build on student's strengths and knowledge. Finally, a student's culture informed their social role in the classroom, therefore, it is important that the teacher understand the cultural behaviors and have that built into the program.

Analysis of the Syllabus and Instructional Materials

In an effort to foster student interest and motivation, educators can align the lesson's central focus with some common culturally informed interests. If information about the learning context is missing, the information can be collected by way of an interest survey. In this way, educators can identify culturally relevant reading passages and materials. Educators can also utilize commercially produced instructional materials

that are developed around a specific culture. In the event that instructional materials cannot be replaced and current curriculums remain, the sensitive professional must serve as the medium to facilitate culturally relevant academic discussions.

Related Themes

Educators may benefit from teacher training to include strategies to acquire knowledge and develop sensitivity about students' culture. In addition to cultural awareness, teachers may also be able to learn how to identify student biases. This awareness could be used to connect the student's cultural interests with the reading curriculum in an effort to illicit culturally relevant academic conversations. The teacher would recognize the student's strengths and areas requiring further development that have been informed by experience with their culture. Teachers would develop procedures to circumvent any barriers or build new paths into successful learning experiences. Finally, the exploration into student identity and the implementation of this knowledge into the learning environment, could further student engagement and motivation for academic reading acquisition powered by sustained learning.

Discrepant Case:

The faculty participant responses are considered as a discrepant case. The faculty participant (also referred to as teacher) for the student participants described an objective to her instruction in which she was helping them to avoid "culture shock." Her "tough love" attributes and her effort to protect her students may, albeit unknowingly, be an effort to have these immigrant students assimilate into American culture (Wiley et al., 2014). Learning, and in this case learning to read academic English, should occur with

scaffolded support from the teacher (Vygotsky, 1978). The teacher (faculty participant) was reported to ask students to not speak in Chinese, their Native language in the classroom. This was noted during both class observation periods. The characteristics of the student includes the student's experiences using technology. The student's reliance on the translator application outside the learning environment was not accepted in the classroom. The teacher wanted the students to rely on their knowledge or a paper American English dictionary to identify new vocabulary. Finally, the faculty participant described the student's having negative stereotypes and prejudices about America, "the big global giant" and "American unhealthy food…eating hamburgers every day." The teacher reported "some days going home and just wanting to eat a hamburger."

Summary

Chapter 4 described the collection of information from multiple sources including interviews, observations, and course materials. The rich content was derived from the lived experiences of the English-language Learners as told by personal interviews. Chapter 4 discussed demographics and character of the participants, the data collection procedures, data analysis, and the pursuant discussion of the resulting identification of themes, which emerged from the triangulation of participant interviews, two class observations, and artifacts including a course syllabus and instructional materials. The four themes, Cultural Relevance, Reading English, Social Learning, and Student Characteristics evidenced by excerpts from the data sources as noted above. This qualitative analysis for culturally relevant pedagogy addressed the research questions as follows: What is the experience of cultural relevance for English-language Learners in

academic English college classes? How can the college program do more to bring students' cultural and familial strengths into the classroom? The collection of themes provided prevailing patterns in an academic reading college class of English-language Learners and a realization of the pedagogical practices utilized as described herewith. The faculty participant was identified as the discrepant case in that her responses were inconsistent with what was found in the literature and contrary to the student participant testimonials. Student participant, as a whole would prefer to use high interest activities course work to learn academic reading instead of "boring" skills. Student participants also describe the challenges of transitioning into the culture of the American classroom emphasizing teacher / student roles and class participation requirements. This being a major obstacle for the faculty participant and a barrier to learning for the student participant. This new information may offer the opportunity to develop alternative more culturally relevant programs.

Chapter 5 will discuss an interpretation the results, limitations of the study, recommendations for future research, implications for social change, and conclusions.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

In addition to learning academic English, ELLs continue to develop understanding using their native language in an effort to extend their knowledge of the curricula (Gibbons, 2009; Moll et al., 1992). Due to limited English proficiency, ELL students may be faced with challenges when attempting to acquire a college education. Limited academic English proficiency may be a factor in resulting college entrance exams (Achieve, Inc. 2007). Colleges often require ELL students to complete remedial coursework. In spite of these remediation efforts, many students fail to move into credit bearing college courses. Developmental reading courses teach reading strategies that typical readers may do naturally, such as using context clues to recognize vocabulary and other word recognition skills. Additionally, remedial programs foster critical thinking skills essential for recognizing an author's topic and organizational patterns, making inferences based on written text, and synthesizing material to form critical judgments. These practices are used successfully when teaching reading to monolingual students. The retention and graduation rates of our ELLs are not necessarily met with the similar outcomes, however. With insights from this study, the experiences of ELL college students can be examined and used to create more effective developmental reading programs.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify cultural relevance and culturally relevant experiences of communication prevalent among ELL college students in an academic reading class. A case study methodology utilized interviews,

observations, and audiovisual recordings. The population of ELLs is continuing to grow (Migration Policy Institute, 2016). This data analysis may offer new insights for successful academic reading programs for ELLs.

The participants included one faculty member, -a teacher of ELL students, and 10 student participants who were ELL college students from an academic reading class. Other data resources included two classroom observations and a course syllabus with instructional materials. An inductive analysis of the collected data concluded with the identification of concurrent categories. A hierarchical list was developed to reveal the four major themes exposed: cultural relevance, reading english, student characteristics, and social learning. The faculty participant was labeled as a discrepant case because her intention to protect students from "culture shock" may have unintentionally promoted an assimilation toward American culture.

This study for culturally relevant pedagogy addressed the research questions as follows: What is the experience of cultural relevance for ELLs in academic English college classes? How can the college program do more to incorporate students' cultural and familial strengths into the classroom? The themes depicted the commonalities spoken by the participants in an academic reading college class of ELLs. Student participants described the necessity of using their native language in the classroom to utilize their CALP. The student characteristics, the learning context, and student interests were informed by cultural elements. The recognition that the cultural aspects of the student as a learner, could be noted as a potential factor in learning regardless of pedagogy or instructional strategies deployed. The faculty participant was identified as the discrepant

case in that her responses were inconsistent with what was found in the literature (Reese et al., 1995) and contrary to the student participant testimonials. Student participants as a whole preferred to use high interest activities embedded into coursework to learn academic reading instead of "boring" skills. Student participants also described the challenges of transitioning into the culture of the American classroom emphasizing teacher/student roles and class participation requirements. The ELL's passivity was perceived as a major obstacle for the faculty participant as teacher and a barrier to learning for the student participant. This new information may offer the opportunity to develop more culturally relevant programs and attest to the necessity for sensitivity regarding cultural awareness.

This chapter presents the interpretation of findings with a comparison to literature published on the topic and a presentation on the alignment with the funds of knowledge framework. In addition, I describe limitations, recommendations, and implications for future research. Finally, a conclusion presents of a summary of both the chapter and the overall study.

Interpretation of the Findings

This study explored the culturally relevant experiences of ELL college students in an academic reading class. A student's personal knowledge can be informed by various factors such as cultural background, community, and family (Moll et al., 2001). After an exhaustive literature review, the results from the present study support the findings in the published research. The present research identified common factors that are (a) related to a student's personal resources; and (b) informed by a student's culture.

Culture in Learning

A component of Moll's framework is the student's knowledge that is a collection of experiences from culture and family. The present study revealed that cultural relevance was also a prominent factor and may influence many student learning behaviors. There were other commonalities found between the literature and the present study. The student participants in this study reported their teacher asking questions about Chinese culture and traditions as an attempt to connect with them. Solorzano and Villapando (1998) suggested that educators who may not share in similar demographic backgrounds with their students would be well advised to examine the cultures within the learning context to gain insight and acquire cultural knowledge. The teacher in this study also attempted to protect the students in her classes from culture shock, so she developed a strict adherence to reading and speaking English, limiting the use of technology, and advised students that learning American culture would make them successful. Wiley et al. (2014) referred to this effort as a means to have immigrant students assimilate into the American culture. However, Padilla (1990) proposed that ELLs attending school in the United States should be included into regular classes with the idea that English language acquisition and learning would occur. Failure to do so may impede pedagogy and have additional negative effects (Gay, 2015). Contemporary bilingual curricula allow students to utilize their native language for CALP while developing BICS in English (in this scenario). Moreover, a multilingual environment will foster the development of an individual's identity (Chen et al., 2008). In this research outcome, the teacher prevented students from using their cognitive academic oral language skills for learning. This is an essential

component of social learning when collaborative learning is being used as an instructional method (Bandura, 1993). Student participants in this study expressed interest in having opportunities to discuss their culture and reported that they felt that the teacher should learn their culture as well as teaching them about American culture.

Reading Context

Reading is a synthesis of phonetic analysis, comprehension, and fluency (Nielsen et al., 2011). Nielsen et al. (2011) also point out that vocabulary development is necessary for reading acquisition. Vocabulary development was noted as critical for the identification and meaning of words, which was supported by the present research. The research results also showed that the curriculum for the academic reading program consisted of an enrichment of phonetics, vocabulary, and fluency as well as other language based skills. The course syllabus and instructional materials depicted the implementation of skill-based learning objectives for the ells. This is consistent with researchers Gay and Howard (2010) who reports that pedagogical practices for ELLs consist of academic skills in thematic units.

The English Language Learners as Students

English-Language Learner students are individuals who are learning the English language while gaining knowledge in their native language. Usually the English-language Learner student was born outside of the United States but has immigrated into and being educated in the U.S. (Gibbons, 2009; Moll et al., 1992). This is consistent with the student participant pool of English-language Learner students from the present study. Student participants in this study sought opportunities to utilize their own identity -

strengths or personal resources, to maximize their learning potential. For an example, they would rely on Cognitive Academic Language Proficiencies in their native language for problem solving and critical thinking. This research outcome supports Chen et al.'s (2008) thoughts concerning multilingualism and the development of personal identity.

Furthermore, there may be an intrapersonal cultural disparity existing within the schema of the English-language Learner student. Reese et al. (1995) reported that the cultural disposition of the student dictates the orientation of the student with respect to prioritizing, competition, and valued behaviors. This was evidenced in the present study when student participants reported their discomfort with academic discourse and instead were motivated to rely upon self-regulated learning. Another disparity exemplified from the study was the faculty (in this case the teacher) participants' perceptions of the English-language Learner students as "non-participatory." In an effort to meet the teacher's expectations, the English-language Learner student participants attempted to utilize technology to identify vocabulary for use in the class discussion. Because of this cultural dichotomy, the English-language Learner's classroom behaviors may be misinterpreted as has been previously reported by Reese et al., 1995).

Self-efficacy is developed from a collection of lived experiences and may lessen after failing to achieve goals and as a result may then experience depressed learning cycles (Bandura, 1974). The present research supported Bandura's assertion and concluded that student English-language Learner students reported low self-efficacy related to reading and speaking English.

Collaborative Learning for English Language Learners

The student participants in the present study excelled in collaborative learning, presentations, and conducting interviews on campus. All of these assignments fall under the category and are supported by the Theory of Social Learning as postulated by Bandura (1993). Bandura (1993; 1986) stated that individuals will learn both cognitively and behaviorally through observation from the modeling of behaviors by others as well as learn by the outcomes witnessed. This is also consistent with Miller's (2014) who wrote that these academic conversations promote oral language and literacy development. In contrast to discrete reading skills and explicit instruction which is the accepted curriculum for teaching reading in English as well as early literacy (Bursuck & Damer, 2011).

Conversely, the literature does emphasize the importance of creating a home-school partnership allowing educators to learn lessons from student's communities and families about the social constructs that create their cultural identity (Rowe & Fain, 2013). Due to the unique nature of the English-language Learners involved in this study, direct parental participation could not be forged. However, this is not an uncommon occurrence for college faculty. Due to the nature of privacy legislation in the U.S. college faculty are prohibited to communicate with parents without a documented waiver from the student (www.us.gov.org; NCEE, 2014).

Best practices for English-language Learners suggests the provision of an inclusive environment (NCEE, 2014). In contrast, many college English as a Second Language programs are homogenously grouped, not fostering the interaction with typical

monolingual English speaking students (Scarcella, 2003). This is consistent and

supported by the present study, whereby the English-language Learner students were

homogeneously grouped into the same classes regardless of their time living in the U. S.

The program under review for the present study has initiated a mentoring program to

connect English-language Learner students with other students from the college campus.

This supported Scarcella (2003) who described a multi-dimensional instructional

approach to better serve the English-language Learner.

Findings Implicated by the Funds of Knowledge

The conceptual framework that orientated this study was the Funds of Knowledge

/ Identify (Moll, 2009). Moll's (2009) theory explained that students own personal

resources that can be tapped into for learning (Funds of Identify). These assets are what

one develops from culturally relevant exposure to situations learned within households

and from the community. The transfer of this knowledge from the student onto the

teacher and is termed, Funds of Knowledge. The present research study supports what

previous studies have identified on the topic and informs readers of Funds of Knowledge

aspects as they relate to the English-language Learner college student in an academic

reading program and also confirm that these findings align with the Moll et al. (2009)

Funds of Knowledge framework.

Funds of Knowledge describes learning students gain from their family,

community, and cultural background (2005). A characteristic of the Funds of Knowledge

theory concerns personal resources. Educators can leverage the strengths gained from

students' Funds of Identity to offset their academic deficits by building the curriculum

with themes that align with the strengths or patterns observed in the English-Language

Learner's home or community (Esteban-Guitart & Moll, 2014). During the analysis of the

interview data, this theme emerged recurrently as the social culture of the student learner

was a major consideration within the dynamics of this learning context. The experiences

the student participants held had shaped their in-class behaviors. This was informed by

their exposure to the Chinese educational philosophy, affected their classroom behaviors

which then, contributed to a disparity between teaching-learning styles, misinterpretation

of behaviors, and hence a breakdown in communication. Finally, these negative

components fostered a common characteristic of low self-efficacy, which was reported by

all student participants. Rodriguez (2013) postulated that through an analysis of his

research, the cultural differences between teachers and diverse students can impact

student learning. The Funds of Knowledge can support educators to learn about student

strengths and interests and avoid miscommunications that interfere with learning (2001).

However, many curriculums fail to capture the rich equity that a student brings

into the classroom (McLaughlin & Barton, 2012). The student participants in this study

recognized that the focus of their instruction was to successfully read English so that they

can continue into college credit baring courses, but described the reading assignments as

"boring." The curriculum from the present study outlined thematic lectures focusing on

reading skills and objectives. Vocabulary instruction was an important aspect noted by

the participants and they relied on their technology for assistance. Student's motivation,

self-regulated learning, and technological savvy are examples of student's strengths that

can be leveraged for sustained learning as suggested by Esteban-Guitart and Moll (2014).

Developing a Funds of Knowledge curriculum based on student's worldview includes bringing the knowledge from the family, community, and culture into the classroom. Participants reported culturally relevant reading and assignments as 1) a compare and contrast of Western and Eastern differences; and 2) a survey of other college students to learn about the personal culture of another -outside of the English-language Learner group. The opportunity for students to discuss Western and Eastern culture gave rise to conversations about traditional Asian activities and philosophies such as Kung Fu, food, and Confucianism. Culturally relevant conversations also consisted of weather in the homeland, Mother's Day, Chinese New Year with traditional foods, and current events from the homeland. Student participants described their teacher's attempts to question them about "China as an attempt to learn about their culture" hence connect with the student. Students also described the necessity of learning aspects of American culture for perceived success.

Limitations of the Study

Issues concerning transferability were exposed from the execution of the study. Chapter 3 reported having two faculty participants and 15 English-language learner student participants. The present study contained a smaller than projected sample size. There are two programs for English-language Learners at my cooperating institution, for which, there are three faculty members teaching English-language Learners. However, two of the participant candidates refused the invitation to participate. The (one) faculty participant was later labeled a discrepant case.

The enrollment in the English reading program has been low due to the limited enrollment of international students into this institution, hence was the participant pool contained only 10 participant candidates. Each of the 10 English-language Learner participants met the inclusion criteria to participate in the study, and all of the 10 English-language Learner participant candidates accepted the invitation and was eager to participate.

Another noteworthy concern could consider the homogeneous grouping of the student participants a restrictive sample. A heterogeneous grouping may have revealed different findings. However, the grouping did satisfy the need for saturation on some topics under study. Finally, I had expected a rich dialog captured from the participant interviews. However, the student participants maintained a passive role during the interview, answering questions with brevity and without adding any new dimensions for discussion.

Recommendations

Recommendations are informed by the strengths and limitations of this study as it is supported by the research reviewed in Chapter 2. A noteworthy strength is that the present study fills a gap within the literature regarding the culturally relevant experiences of English-language Learners college students in an academic reading programs. The study revealed patterns of culturally relevant academic conversations, factors related to reading acquisition, and the resulting implications for the college-bound English-language Learner. The present study also provided an in-depth discussion about the identity of the learner which includes student characteristics, student role association, and

learning behaviors all of which are informed by one's culture. These issues remind the education professional to consider the demographics and learning context in an effort to avoid assumptions about students. This new knowledge provides insight for the pedagogical practices for English-language Learners but, the findings herewith may also generalize to other demographics (i.e. students with disabilities) that may also present in the learning context of the class.

Recommendations for future research include a larger and more culturally diverse group of participants to explore 1) if a consistency occurred that was informed by cultural experience; and 2) investigate the experience of culturally relevant pedagogy in ELL. More specifically, explore the experiences of the teachers of English-language Learners in an effort to identify their perceptions of embedding culturally relevant pedagogy into their curriculum. The identification of which could swiftly be implemented into professional development for all teachers of inclusive and diverse classrooms. Finally, research is needed to identify some best practices for reading acquisition to augment the contemporary curriculums containing disconnected units emphasizing skill acquisition.

Implications

Implications for Social Change

Social change is the impetus to create a shift in public policy, social conditions, and or popular opinion as it relates to improving quality of life (Hynson, 1974). In this case, seeking alternate pedagogical practices inspired by the insights gained from this study could offer a curriculum that is supported by the English-Language Learner's lived experience and aligns with their linguistic world outside of the classroom ultimately

impacting their life and academic success. The quality of life could refer to the elimination of social injustice. Remediation policies required for English-Language Leaner students may be considered social injustice and a form discrimination. Implementing Funds of Knowledge into the curriculum will encourage the empowerment of this marginalized and / or minimized sect of the population. Social change, is a cognitive, socio-cultural, and psychological shift in the members of our society and somewhat correlates to our historical zeitgeist. American educators play a crucial role in this movement. That said, I plan to take the results herewith and present to the New York City Council for Reading Remediation at the City University of New York. As a panel member, I have worked to develop reading exit exams for both monolingual and bilingual remedial students. These exit exams must be passed in order for students to exit remedial coursework. The research results may promote cultural relevance for question development for the evaluation pool.

Considering social change from a variety of perspectives allows the social scientist and educator to develop a dialectical model. Reflecting upon the role of the educator in social change brings to light the magnitude for which teachers inform social change with respect to the curriculum development and student learning outcomes for English-language Learners. With this in mind, I will share the results with the stakeholders at the local level by disseminating among the faculty at my community partner's institution and other institutions of education. American educators impact pedagogy with information, support, ethical considerations, and therapeutic interventions that either challenges or moves social change in a positive direction.

In closing, the scope of social change may best relate to Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory on child development. Bronfenbrenner (1990) bioecological system's theory described development learned from their culture, societal influence, community, family, school and religion. The bioecological theory (1990) has alignment with the Funds of Knowledge (1992). These conceptual frameworks both rely on information being transmitted from global assets being family, socio-culture, and community (including school).

Methodological and Theoretical Implications

For this qualitative study, a convenience sample was utilized from a small pool of English-language Learner college students in an academic English reading class. The focus of this case study was to examine the experience of cultural relevance for the class of English-language Learners. Chapter 3 served at the guide for the methods required for data collection, analysis, and instrumentation that unfolded in Chapter 4.

The interview questions with their open-ended style, gave the participant the freedom to describe their lived experiences without limitation. This opportunity allowed me, in the role of the researcher to observe and take notes. The use of the audio recordings allowed me to listen and watch for subtleties that could otherwise have been missed. Future researchers may consider alternate strategies to facilitate an open discussion such as anonymous surveys or focus groups to retrieve information and collect data.

Using an inductive coding strategy grounded the analysis in the research presented in the literature review in Chapter 2. NVivo software was a worthwhile tool for

organization and categorization of information. Through the analysis of the data, and the emergence of patterns, the research questions were realized.

The Funds of Knowledge framework conceptualizes student's resources as strengths and knowledge gained from family, culture, and community (Moll, 2001). This is the learning that occurs outside of the school environment. The patterns emerging from the testimonials of the participants and other data sources are aligned with the three dimensions noted in Moll's (2001) Funds of Knowledge. Furthermore, upon review of the four major themes and sub-themes, which are directly supported by the dimension of culture, community, and family. It is the opinion of this researcher that the dimension of family may have weighted heavier upon analysis had the English-language Learners not 1) living in a country outside of their homeland; 2) living in a country in another time zone; 3) pursuing an education / career that had been planned for them since birth.

Recommendations for Practice

Educators, curriculum developers, and administrators must recognize the implications when teaching English-language Learners in English-as-a-Second Language courses, bilingual education classes, and English immersion programs. That said, continuing education, professional development, and commercially developed educational programs are warranted. Based on the findings of the present study, which is supported by the research presented in the literature review in Chapter 2, recommendations for practice include:

Teacher Education

Mandatory preservice training, continuing education, or professional development in effective pedagogical practices for teaching English-language Learners. This education should include sensitivity and cultural awareness training. Finally, a composite presentation should be introduced to showcase common ethnic, racial, and cultural characteristics that are present demographics in the school/district.

Learning Context

Every teacher has an obligation to understand the demographics deeming from the learning context of the students in the learning environment and the implication of these factors. The identification of the student demographics informs the educator of the racial and ethnic background of the class. Teachers should create a Funds of Knowledge environment to include this information into their curriculum and learning environment.

Aspects of Student Characteristics

Much in the same way educators rely on student achievement data, teachers must explore aspects of the student's identity, self-efficacy, motivation, and social skills. This is information may enhance learning and identify potential barriers to learning. *Home-School partnerships*: Although this may be difficult to maintain at the college level, initiatives to enhance communication and partnership should be established. Information gained about families' experiences is an opportunity for learning in the classroom.

Linguistic Bridging

Like the Home-School partnership, Linguistic Bridging creates a connection to the community outside of the classroom. Community programs, attendance a community sponsored activities, and a general presence in the community. Community knowledge and strengths can be utilized for learning in the classroom.

Conclusion

The search for cultural relevance in an English-language Learner student's college Academic reading class resulted in patterns identified through the examination of interviews, observations, and instructional materials. The Funds of Knowledge served as the conceptual framework, the dimensions for which include personal strengths and resources. This is the knowledge that is learned from family, one's culture, and community. Aspects of cultural relevance were revealed in the culturally relevant academic conversations, student's characteristics in and outside of the classroom, and students' experience with social learning. Conversely, the reading curriculum was void of any cultural elements except for when the teacher augmented the lesson to create the cultural connection.

These findings are important for educators of English-language Learners as well as the English-language Learner students. English-language Learners are often required to complete preliminary course work in an effort to develop academic reading proficiency (Achieve Inc., 2007). As was the case with one participant student named HaHa, a disproportionate number of English-Language Learner students fail to successfully exit developmental reading programs (CUNY, 2010). The present study has revealed

interesting information about cultural relevance and the culturally relevant characteristics that may support developmental reading for English-Language Learner students at the college level. Educators can gain insight from this study in an effort to offer alternate pedagogy utilizing best practices to teach reading. Thereby teaching the English-Language Learner reading strategies that are rich with culturally relevant pedagogy and grounded by the students' worldview, from *their* Funds of Knowledge.

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Appendix A: Research Site IRB Approval
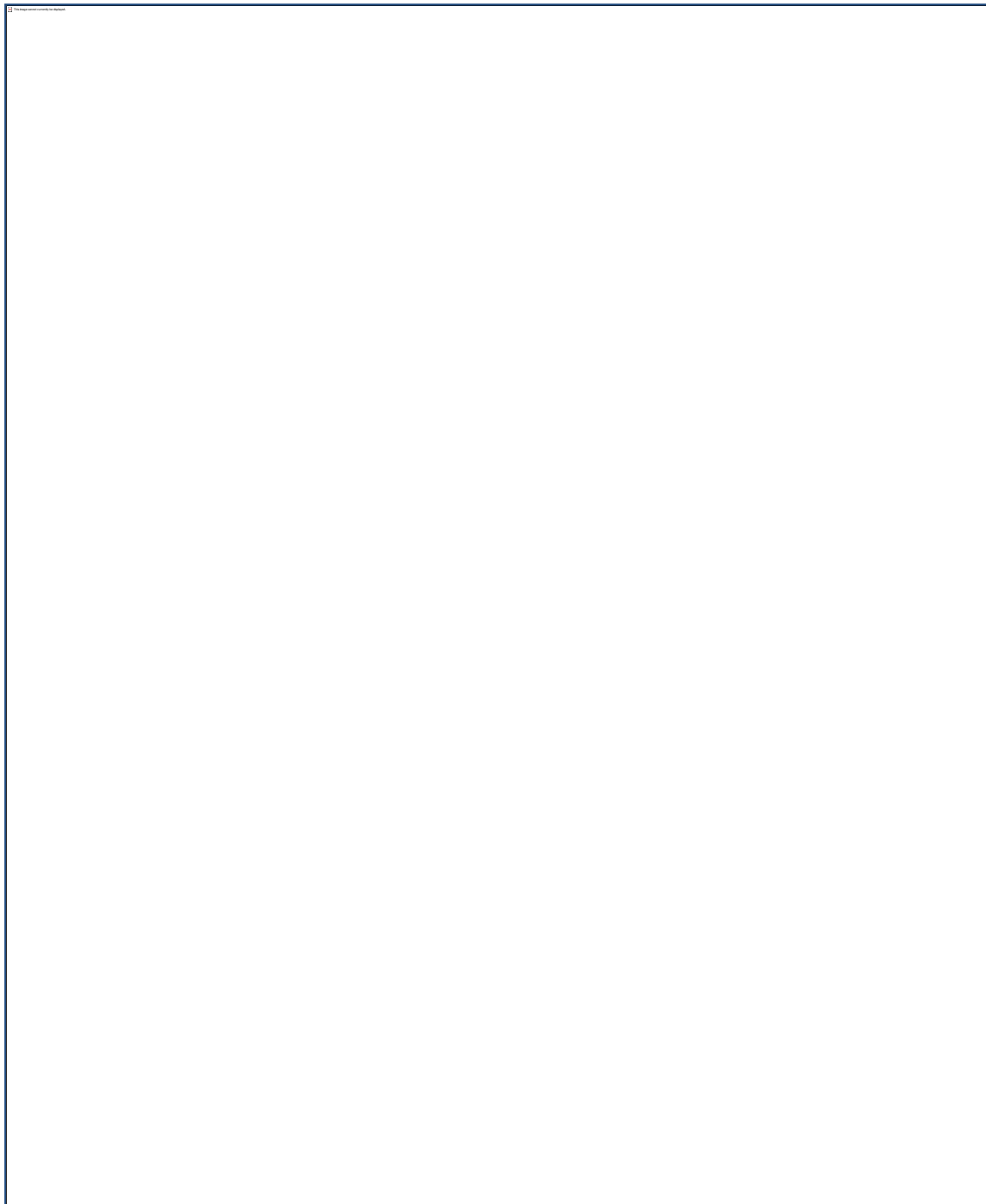
Appendix B: Email Letter for Faculty to Introduce Study

Date:

Academic Reading Professor
Concordia College-New York
Department of Academic English
Bronxville, NY 10709

Dear Professor,

My name is Katherine Roe and I am a doctoral candidate at Walden University. I am conducting dissertation research on the experiences of English-language Learner students in an academic reading class. The purpose of this study is to identify culturally relevant conversations that may be present during academic reading class for English-language Learner college students. The study will also examine the experiences and interactions occurring in an academic reading class, the communication between teacher and student, and interactions between student peers.

I am writing to invite you to participate in this research study. I ask to conduct a classroom observation, a personal interview, and as well as a copy of the course syllabus. If you are willing, I am also asking that you use Blackboard to announce this study to the students in your academic reading class and ask that interested students contact me directly. Once identified, I would like to meet with students to discuss the nature of this study. All participants are free to choose whether or not to participate and can discontinue participation at any time. Information provided by the participants will be kept strictly confidential.

I would welcome a telephone call from you to discuss any questions you may have concerning this study. I can be reached at (917) 971-8942 or emailed at Katherine.roe@waldenu.edu.

Sincerely,

Katherine Roe
Doctoral Candidate
Walden University

Appendix C: Invitation Announcement to Student Participants

Dear Students,

This is an announcement of an opportunity to participate in a research study.

Katherine Roe is a doctoral candidate at Walden University, and is conducting dissertation research on the experiences of English-language Learner students in an academic reading class.

The purpose of this study is to explore the experience of cultural relevance in classrooms with English-language Learner students.

The results of this study may inform teaching practices and instructional methods to improve the student experience.

Please call her at (917) 971-8942. Or, email her at Katherine.roe@waldenu.edu. She will explain the details of the study so that you can choose to participate.

Appendix D: Criteria for Participation

Date:

Email: Course:

Text:

1. Country of birth:

2. Native Language:

3. Do you speak another language other than English?

Appendix G: Course Syllabus

Summary: The following is an outline of units for the EAS 4 curriculum. In the Reading and Writing class there are 10 units. Discuss with your AAM about the number of weeks for the term, this will vary. The amount of time spent on each unit will change depending on the length of the term. In the Listening and Speaking class, the textbook is followed for the most part, with a few chapters taken out in order to allow ample time for exploration and expansion on each topic. Because the varying term lengths (again, check with the AAM about the number of weeks), each unit may have different lengths. Teachers should expand or condense each unit as they deem necessary based on the students' needs and interests.

In addition to this outline, some teachers will need to examine the separate "Friday Seminar" curricula to decide which Seminars they will be teaching at the end of each week. These curricula and objectives are not connected to the morning and afternoon classes, and should be taught as indicated. Please speak to the AAM for further information about Friday Seminars.

Although the textbooks come with their own unit objectives (see the scope and sequence in each book), each unit has also been aligned with the overall course objectives of the EAS program. This ensures that all the course objectives are constantly being considered and re-considered by both the teacher and the students. Course objectives that don't explicitly appear below should be spiraled throughout the curriculum and addressed on a weekly basis.

Daily/weekly requirements: ***All grades must be entered into the online grade book. Speak to the Academic Affairs Manager if you have questions or need guidance***

• Reading/Writing Class – Vocabulary Quizzes: Teachers will quiz their students at least once a week on words acquired over the term. Types of quizzes can include, but are not limited to spelling quizzes, using the words in a sentence, giving the definition, or matching words to definitions. Quizzes should also include a grammar or composition component (see below "Writing Class Grammar and Composition Component")

Reading/Writing Class – Unit Tests: Teachers must give a Unit Test at the end of each unit, typically once a week or so, depending on the pace of the class.

• **Reading/Writing Class – Essays**: Students must write an 8 – 10 page research paper (5 – 8 pages for the 8-week accelerated term).

Teachers should plan out and teach components of this type of essay, and decide on the due dates from the first draft to the final paper.

• **Reading/ Writing Class – Journals**: Students will write a minimum of 10 paragraphs in their journals every week. Topics to be determined by the teacher. Teachers can choose weekly topics, or can have students read a book in English (books to be chosen by student), and write a reflection based on what they have read (one notebook

should be set aside for journals). Teachers will collect these journals every week and record for effort. Teachers will also make the necessary corrections on the texts.

- **Reading/Writing Class – Grammar and Composition**: Please prepare a weekly grammar or composition component. Base this off of assessed student needs, and/or it can be an extension of grammar or composition points in the Pathways textbook. Suggested weekly topics include articles, coordinating and subordinating conjunctions, collocations, transitions, diction, denotation/connotations, tone, and wordiness. Etc. Teachers should plan to include this as part of the weekly vocabulary quiz (See above in section called "Reading Vocabulary Quiz"

Listening and Speaking – Class Presentations: Students must give a presentation (an oral essay) every Thursday (Friday for 8-week accelerated terms). Students must also participate in verbal discourse, and will be graded according to the rubric (ask AAM if you do not have). All presentations must gradually increase in time per week, and teachers will ensure students' time management. Moreover, each presentation must contain citations, and an MLA work cited page and the speaker must use the lecture language and/or tactics practiced during the week

- Listening and Speaking – Class Lectures: Students will be required to listen to a weekly lecture and then they will organize the oral lecture into notes using the learned strategies from the class. Students will then answer fact-checking questions about the lectures.

- Homework: Teachers are expected to give *homework to their students everyday*. All homework must be returned to the student within a few days with the necessary feedback.

- Midterms and Finals: On *week 6 and week 12 (Weeks 4 and 8 for accelerated terms)*, students will have their midterm and finals respectively. Speak to the AAM about a detailed schedule for exam weeks. All exams must be given to the AAM after individual conferences with students. Please keep in mind term lengths vary, ask your AAM for the term length!

- Advising Sessions: It may be necessary for students to meet for advising *every other week* to discuss academic progress. This can be scheduled with the AAM. If students are struggling in class they must be put on an Academic Support Plan, which will be created by the AAM and discussed with the teacher. This could result in mandatory tutoring hours for the student.

- Academic Profile Building: Students will be engaged in extra-curricular and volunteer work to acculturate them with the full American scholastic experience, as well as to add to their future application.

- Attendance: Teachers must monitor student attendance. Tardiness is not tolerated and students are not allowed in class until after the break if they are late. Students can either wait or see the AAM for permission. If permission is granted, a "tardy slip" will be issued. Attendance affects the students' final marks.

Textbooks: The primary textbooks are as follows:

Morning: 		*Pathways 4: Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking* (Heinle Cengage)
Afternoon: 		*Considering Cultural Difference (Pearson Longman)*

Supplementary textbooks are as follows:
Morning: Great Writing 4: Great Essays (Heinle Cengage)
Afternoon: Lecture Ready 3: Strategies for Academic Listening and Speaking
(Oxford Univ. Press, 2nd Edition).

Morning Class – Reading and Writing

Unit/ Theme	Skill-focused Objectives	Course Objectives	Materials	Assessment
Unit 1: **Our Human Impact** Academic Track: Health Science	Reading: • Understanding cohesion • Analyzing arguments • Identifying main ideas and key details • Understanding info-graphics Writing: • Essay writing • Writing a cause and effect essay • Using cohesive devices Critical Thinking • Evaluating causes and effects • Synthesizing information to make connections • Evaluating thesis statements • Analyzing a model essay • Analyzing arguments	(10) Students will use prior knowledge and context to infer meaning of unfamiliar words and concepts. (11) Students will synthesize and summarize information using their own words. (19) Students will make educated guesses while interacting with given language in order to infer an author or speaker's meaning and intent when it is not explicitly stated.	Primary: *Pathways 4, Unit 1* Supplemental: *Great Essays, Unit 5*	• Unit 1 test from Examview Test Generator • Writing a research paper
Unit 2: **Conservation and Protection** Academic Track: Environmental Science/Life Science	Reading: • Understanding Appositives • Analyzing text organization • Identifying main ideas • Scanning for key details • Identifying reasons and solutions Writing: • Writing a thesis statement • Writing a persuasive essay • Using appositives Critical Thinking • Analyzing and evaluating text organization • Inferring meaning from context • Synthesizing information to make a comparison • Evaluating thesis statements • Justifying an opinion • Analyzing a model essay	(7) Students will regularly initiate and engage in a range of classroom discussions (whole class, small group, partner-based) and give, share, and evaluate diverse viewpoints using evidence from assigned sources to support their findings. (10) Students will use prior knowledge and context to infer meaning of unfamiliar words and concepts. (11) Students will synthesize and summarize information using their own words. • (20) Students will give personal opinions about course content.	Primary: *Pathways 4, Unit 2* Supplemental: *Great Essays, Unit 5*	• Unit 2 Test from Examview Test Generator • Writing a research paper

Unit 3:
Beautiful
Academic Track:
Sociology/Aesthetics

Unit 3:
Beautiful
Academic Track:
Sociology/Aesthetics Reading:
• Using a concept map to identify supporting details
• Applying ideas
• Identifying main ideas and key details Writing:
• Good qualities of a research paper
• Avoiding plagiarism
• Using the university library for research
Critical Thinking
• Applying ideas to other contexts
• Reflecting on a writer's opinion
• Synthesizing information to apply criteria
• Analyzing a thesis statement and supporting ideas
• Analyzing a model essay   (7) Students will regularly initiate and engage in a range of classroom discussions (whole class, small group, partner-based) and give, share, and evaluate diverse viewpoints using evidence from assigned sources to support their findings.

(9) Students will use prior linguistic knowledge to explain an unknown word or concept in order to be understood.

(18) Students will use prior knowledge to and connect with information. Primary: Pathways 4, Unit 3

Supplemental:
Great Essays, p. 181

Unit 4: Powering our Planet Academic Track:
Interdisciplinary   (12) Students will conduct research to investigate a problem, question, or inquiry, identify appropriate sources of information, evaluate the strength of sources, analyze findings, synthesize information gathered, draw conclusions, and make appropriate observations

(17) Students will classify information from various sources, group information accordingly, present information in a logical manner.

(21) Students will assess the validity, bias, reliability, and origin of varied sources.
        Primary:
Pathways 4, Unit 4

Supplemental: Great Essays, Unit 5 and Unit 1
•   Unit 4 test from Examview Test Generator

•   Test on incorporating sources into writing and other weekly teachings

•   Writing a research paper

Unit 5: Working
Together
Academic Track: Life
Science/Sociology   Reading:
•   Identifying subjects in complex sentences
•   Evaluating sources
•   Identifying main ideas and purpose
•   Summarizing key details Writing:
•   Peer Editing and revising
•   Building Better Grammar
Critical Thinking   (5) Students will assess their peers' writing for organization, clarity, content, and grammar and be able to provide feedback regarding weaknesses and strengths in the writing.
•   Evaluating Sources
•   Analyzing Information
•   Synthesizing information to make a hypothesis
•   Analyzing essay notes
•   Analyzing a model essay
(11) Students will synthesize and summarize information   Primary:
Pathways 4, Unit 5

Supplemental:
Great Essays, p. 171
using their own words.

(21) Students will assess the validity, bias, reliability, and origin of varied sources

- Unit 5 Test from Examview Test Generator
- Test on evaluating a research paper
- Writing a research paper

Unit 6: Language and Culture Academic Track:
Interdisciplinary   Reading:
- Inferring an author's attitude
- Understanding Verbal Phrases
- Identifying main ideas and key details Writing:
- Analyzing content and organization
- Creating a work cited page
- Diction, connotation/denotation
Critical Thinking
- Inferring an author's attitude
- Analyzing types of language
- Personalizing an author's experience
- Synthesizing to make a comparison
- Analyzing an introduction and a conclusion
- Analyzing a model essay   (19) Students will make educated guesses while interacting with given language in order to infer an author or speaker's meaning and intent when it is not explicitly stated.

(17) Students will classify information from various sources, group information accordingly, present information in a logical manner.   Primary:
Pathways 4, Unit 6

Supplemental:
Great Essays

- Unit 6 Test from Examview Test Generator

- Test on writing organization, diction, connotation/denotation

- Writing a Research Paper

Unit 7: Resources and Development Academic Track:
History/Economics

Reading
- Identifying a writer's point of view
- Understanding cohesion
- Identifying chronology

Writing
- Peer reviewing the first draft
- Correcting misused words

Critical Thinking
- Identifying a writer's point of view
- Evaluating a writer's text organization
- Synthesizing to make an interpretation
- Evaluating and applying research information
- Analyzing a model essay

(7) Students will regularly initiate and engage in a range of classroom discussions (whole class, small group, partner-based) and give, share, and evaluate diverse viewpoints using evidence from assigned sources to support their findings.

(5) Students will assess their peers' writing for organization, clarity, content, and grammar and be able to provide feedback regarding weaknesses and strengths in the writing.

(21) Students will assess the validity, bias, reliability, and origin of varied sources.
     Primary:
Pathways 4, Unit 7

Supplemental:
Great Essays

Unit 8: Living
Longer
Academic   Reading:
• Predicting a conclusion
• Asking questions as you read
• Identifying main ideas and key details   (18) Students will use prior knowledge to predict content and connect with information.
     Primary:
Pathways 4, Unit 8

Supplemental:

Track: Health and Medicine	• Identifying supporting examples • Understanding infographics Writing: • Unclear Pronoun Usage Critical Thinking • Predicting a conclusion • Making inferences from an infographic • Synthesizing to make inferences • Evaluating research topics and evidence • Analyzing a model essay	(10) Students will use prior knowledge and context to infer meaning of unfamiliar words and concepts.	*Great Essays*	
Unit 9: Memorable Experiences Academic Track: Interdisciplinary	Reading: • Making inferences • Analyzing a personal narrative • Identifying purpose and structure • Identifying key details Writing: • Using Sensory Details • Writing an extended personal narrative Critical Thinking • Making inferences about a text • Personalizing an author's experience • Synthesizing to make hypotheses • Analyzing an author's sensory details • Applying information • Analyzing a model essay	(10) Students will use prior knowledge and context to infer meaning of unfamiliar words and concepts. (19) Students will make educated guesses while interacting with given language in order to infer an author or speaker's meaning and intent when it is not explicitly stated.	Primary: *Pathways 4, Unit 9* Supplemental: *Great Essays, Unit 2*	• Unit 9 test from Examview Test Generator • Writing a Research Paper
Unit 10: Imagining the Future Academic Track: Interdisciplinary	Reading: • Reading literature critically • Identifying literary elements • Identifying main ideas and key details Writing: • Writing critically about literature • Writing an analysis of fiction excerpts Critical Thinking • Reading literature critically • Interpreting figurative language • Inferring motivation and purpose • Synthesizing to make hypotheses • Evaluating analysis topics and evidence • Analyzing a model essay	(19) Students will make educated guesses while interacting with given language in order to infer an author or speaker's meaning and intent when it is not explicitly stated.	Primary: *Pathways 4, Unit 10* Supplemental: *Great Essays*	• Unit 10 test • Writing a Research Paper FINAL EXAM COVERING THE FULL TERM

Afternoon Class – Listening and Speaking

Unit/Theme	Objectives	Materials	Assessment

Unit 1:
Schooling
New Trends in Marketing Research
	• Recognize lecture language that introduces the topic and presents a lecture plan
	• Organize your notes by outlining
	• Express your ideas during a discussion
	• Students will be able to use academic language that introduces their opinion.
		Primary:
		Considering Cultural Differences: Part 1: Schooling. p. 3-38. Useful texts: 9-14, 20-27.
		
		Supplemental:
		Lecture Ready 3, Ch 1 p.2-12
			• Students will create a presentation that responds to a prompt: Is education accessible to all the world's children?
			• This presentation must include:
			  ○ Lecture language that introduces a topic.
			  ○ And lecture language that introduces a plan as well as a specific slide that introduces that plan.

Unit 2: **Sports** Business Ethics	• Recognize lecture language that signals new idea or transition to a new idea in a lecture • Use symbols and abbreviations in note taking. • Ask for clarification and elaboration during a discussion • Students will be able to write a thesis and then create a presentation that proofs a thesis. • Students will learn how to write a survey using the interview method. • Students will be able to interview a person and report information back in interview form.	Primary: *Considering Cultural Differences. p. 38-p.67. Useful texts p. 55-60, p.60-67.* Supplemental: *Lecture Ready 3, Ch p. 12-22.*	• Group project: Write a brief report on a specific support service offered on campus by interviewing key staff members. Present key findings to the class. Students will first be asked to create a survey that they will use when they interview a key figure on campus. After they interview the key figure they will present their oral interview to the class in presentation form. This is a partner presentation. Moreover, this presentation does not have to include a thesis since it is informative. A student still needs to incorporate lecture language, how to introduce a topic, a plan, and present found information.

Unit 3:
Media
Trends in
Children's Media
Use   ●   Recognize lecture language for generalizations and support
●   Practice noting key words in a lecture
●   Give your opinion and ask for the opinions of others during a discussion. Learn the lecture language to do this.
●   Students by now should know how to write a thesis, a plan, introduce a topic and focus on looking and inserting citations into their presentation and also have them write an MLA formatted slide that shows where they got their information,

    Primary:
Considering Cultural Differences: p. 83109. Useful texts p. 83-91, 102-109, 109-117.

Supplemental: Lecture Ready 3, Ch p.36-34 • This week students will have a presentation that answers the following prompt: How does the media perpetuate stereotypes?

• Students will need a thesis and their presentation needs citations and the presentation should prove their thesis.

• Moreover have students answer the above question by picking any television show and discuss how that tv show perpetuates stereotypes.

• The weekly lecture quiz: students should be able to listen to a lecture and organize the notes, using key words, and symbols as well as the other key advice from Lecture Ready 3.

Unit 4:
Visibility

- Recognize lecture anguage that signals repetition of information for clarification or emphasis
- Use a split-page format to organize your notes
- A discussion
- Students will be able to ask presenters questions that challenge and ask for more clarification.

Primary:
Considering Cultural
Differences: p.117

Supplemental:
Lecture Ready 3, Ch
4 p.34-44 p.117154. Useful texts, p.117-123, 123130, 144-154. • Students will be required to create a presentation that analyses a group's privilege in America.

• At this point students will need to introduce a topic, a plan, noted, cited key information and an MLA cited work page slide.

Unit 5:
Language
The Placebo
Effect

● Recognize lecture language that signals causes and effects
● Note causes and effects
● Agree and disagree during a discussion. Students will be able to use academic language that offers a differing opinion.
● By this time student should: use lecture language that presents a topic, presents a plan (with a slide), highlights key information, have citations, have an MLA work cited page.

●   Introduce how to use a counter argument and reject one.

      Primary:
Considering Cultural Differences p. 161192. Useful texts: p.167-176, 176184.

Supplemental: Lecture Ready 3, Ch 5 p.45- p.56.   •   Students will create a presentation that answers a phenomenon that revolves or connects around the use of language. Their presentation should by now be strong and contain all the lecture language points seen in lecture ready.
•   They should also be given a weekly listening quiz and their notes should reflect the organizational tactics covered in class. Moreover, teacher created questions should be given that test students on the knowledge of the lectures.

Unit 6:
Workplace
●   Recognize lecture language that helps you predict causes and effects
●   use arrows to show the relationship between causes and effects
●   Learn to compromise and reach a consensus during a discussion. Use
      Primary:
Considering Cultural
Differences: 199-   •   Students will create a presentation that analyses a phenomenon of American work

Intelligent Machines	language that helps a person know that you have a differing yet respectful opinion.	*235.* Supplemental: *Lecture Ready 3, Ch 6*	culture. This presentation should have all the points covered in the past, and should be clean polished and effectively proof a thesis.
Unit 7: Sibling Relationships	• Recognize non-verbal signals that indicate when information is important • Represent information in list form • Keep the discussion in a topic. • Give a brief statement that gives your opinion. • When speaking use transition mechanisms.	Supplemental: *Lecture Ready 3, Ch 7*	• This week students will be given a free choice presentation. They will think of a question that interests them, then they will create a thesis that answers that prompt. • By this time students should be able to listen to a 20 minute lecture then answer questions about the lecture as well as organized their notes in a clear and polished way using symbols, key words, arrows and cause and effect relationship indicators.
Unit 8: Multiple Intelligences	• Recognize lecture language that signals a definition • Review and practice all note-taking strategies Indicate to others when you are preparing to speak or pausing to collect your thoughts	Supplemental: *Lecture Ready 3, Ch 8* Writing Great Research Papers	• Each student will be given a different topic by the teacher. Then the student should answer the question with an original thesis and then use their presentation to answer the thesis. If applicable have the students use their EAS 4 term paper as a platform for their presentation. Either way the presentation must be a culmination of the lecture language mechanisms as well as the speaking mechanisms learned throughout the term.

Appendix H: Culturally Relevant Academic Conversations Checklist for Class

Observation Data Collection

Classroom description and notes:	Date:

Culturally Relevant Academic Conversations Checklist					
Time:	Family Values	Tradition	Community Issues	Customs	Notes

Researcher's signature: _____Date: _____

Appendix I: Faculty Interview Questions

Name of Interviewee: _____

Can you tell me how long you have teaching English-language Learners?

How do you demonstrate your cultural awareness to your students?

Can you describe an example of a lesson, reading activity, and/or an assignment that

contained content that was culturally relevant (family values, community, or

traditions) for your students?

What could the program add to make the learning experience more relevant for the

non-native English speaker?

Is there any additional information and/or experiences that you would like to share

about teaching English-language Learners academic English.

Interview Protocol

Date:_____

Location:_____

Name of
Interviewer:_____

Name of
Interviewee:_____

Appendix J: Student Interview Questions

Name of Interviewee: _____

How many years have you lived in the US?

Tell me about your comfort level in speaking English in conversation?

Tell me what occurs in a typical class?

Describe the ways in which you teacher makes you feel comfortable?

Can you give me an example of when your teacher discussed family values, community, or traditions that were culturally relevant to you?

Can you describe an example of a reading activity, and/or an assignment that was cultural relevant to you?

Is there any additional information that you would like to share about your college reading experiences or experiences learning academic English (reading in English)?

What could the program add to make the learning experience more relevant to you as a non-native English speaker?

Is there any additional information that you would like to share about your college reading experiences or experiences learning academic English (reading in English)?

Interview Protocol

Date: _____

Location: _____

Name of Interviewer: _____

Name of Interviewee: _____

Appendix K: Instructional Material

Here is a summary of the information about the Meyers-Briggs Personality Inventory that is in your textbook. Below each blank is some information that you should rewrite in the form of an adjective clause. Sometimes more than one relative pronoun is possible. Remember that sometimes a relative pronoun may be omitted.

Of all the personality measurement instruments that exist today, perhaps the Meyers-Briggs Personality Inventory is the most well known. It is used extensively by human resources departments in an effort to help them understand the people who work in their company. What is the Meyers-Briggs Personality Inventory? Simply put, the Meyers-Briggs is a test <u>which / that indicates an individual's personality type</u>. According to this test, there

1. (The test indicates an individual's personality type.)

are four main dimensions, or categorizations, of personality. For each dimension, there are two categories.

The first dimension is a basic one: extrovert or introvert. An extrovert is a person

_____. An extrovert is not very comfortable

2. (This person feels energized around others.)

or productive being alone. In contrast, an introvert is a person

_____. An introvert feels most comfortable

3. (This person's energies are activated by being alone.)

when he or she is alone.

The second dimension is connected to how a person notices and remembers information. Some people in this category are referred to as sensors: those

_____. They rely on their past experiences

4. (Those people pay attention to details in the world.)

and knowledge of how science works to make objective determinations. Sensors are very practical people. In contrast, an intuitive is an individual

_____. Intuitives usually focus on

5. (The individual is more interested in relationships between people and things.)

what will probably be a successful move, mostly because they sense it is what people want. They are sensitive to other people's feelings and act accordingly.

The third personality dimension _____ is

6. (This test measures this dimension.)

that of thinker or feeler. Have you ever had a boss _____?

7. (Your boss made decisions objectively.)

Maybe you thought some of his decisions were cold or impersonal. Perhaps they were.

Perhaps your boss was a person _____

8. (The person has a primary way to reach a conclusion.)

was to determine what makes sense and what is logical. That boss was not a person

_____. Your boss was a thinker, not a feeler.

9. (The person took other people's feelings into consideration.)

A feeler, unlike that boss, makes decisions based on his or her own personal values and the

feelings _____ about the anticipated results

10. (He or she has feelings.)

of those decisions.

The final dimension deals with the type of environment in

_____: planned or unplanned. Judgers

11. (We prefer to live or work in this type of environment.)

are people _____; they judge, or anticipate,

12. (People prefer a planned and predictable environment.)

what is going to happen and try to live their lives in accordance with these plans.

In contrast, perceivers are more interested in keeping their options open. They want

to be able to respond to the needs of the situation and the moment

_____. Are you the kind of person

13. (They find themselves in the situation and the moment.)

_____, or do you prefer to take life one day

14. (The person's life must be planned in advance.)

at a time, and with some room for spontaneity?

A test such as the Meyers-Briggs may help determine what type of personality an

employee has and the spot _____. At the

15. (He should be placed here to most enhance the company.)

same time, you as an employee might benefit from a test like this because you might find

the place in _____

16. (You would be the happiest and most productive here.)

D | Add more information to your Free Writing sentences using nonrestrictive relative clauses.

Writing Skill: Supporting a Thesis

As you saw in Unit 2, a thesis statement expresses the main idea of an entire essay. Each body paragraph in an essay then provides details for and explanation of the main idea. To effectively support a thesis statement, make sure you do the following:

- Order your body paragraphs according to the order of the key concepts in your thesis statement.
- Restate the key concepts of the thesis statement in the topic sentence of each body paragraph.
- Develop the key concepts in the body paragraphs.
- In the body paragraphs, provide adequate details, facts, and examples that develop each key concept in your thesis statement.

E | **Critical Thinking: Analyzing.** Read this excerpt from an introduction to an essay on Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater. Underline the key concepts in the thesis statement and then answer the questions (1–3).

The term *organic architecture*, which was coined by the American architect Frank Lloyd Wright, applies to structures that create a sense of harmony with the natural world.

Thesis Statement — Fallingwater, the western Pennsylvania house designed by Wright, is a perfect example of the organic approach to architecture due to the way the house is integrated into its natural surroundings and because of the materials used in its construction.

1. How many body paragraphs will the essay have? _____

2. What ideas will appear in the topic sentences of the body paragraphs?

_____

_____

_____

3. Number your answers to question 2 above to show the order in which the body paragraphs will appear.

Free Writing. Write for five minutes... some of the words and phrase... exercise **B**, discussed in exercise **A**. Try to use some of the words and ph... ...you

C | Read the information in the box. Then read the pairs of sentences below (1–4). The seco... sentence in each pair provides extra information. Join the sentences using a nonrestricti... adjective clause for the extra information.

Language for Writing: Using Nonrestrictive Adjective Clauses

Writers use adjective clauses to give more information about nouns. An adjective clause has a subject and a verb.

Palette refers to the selection of colors in a photograph **that** <u>create a visual context</u>.

Susan Sontag was a writer **who** <u>was interested in photography</u>.

Restrictive adjective clauses give essential information about a noun, as in the examples abo... Nonrestrictive adjective clauses give nonessential information, as in the following examples.

Our concept of beauty has been influenced by photography, **which** <u>is a relatively recent art for...</u>

Annie Griffiths, **who** <u>is a professional photographer</u>, is the executive director of an organization t... empowers women in developing countries.

Annie Leibovitz, **whose** <u>photographs have been published in several magazines</u>, is famous for her use of light and color.

Nonrestrictive adjective clauses are a good way to add details to your writing. They help var... your sentence types and make your sentences more interesting.

Note: Remember to use commas in nonrestrictive adjective clauses. Use one comma before a nonrestrictive adjective clause that appears at the end of a sentence. Use commas before and after a nonrestrictive adjective clause when it appears in the middle of a sentence. Use *which* (not *that*) for objects in nonrestrictive adjective clauses.

1. Vivian Maier was an amateur photographer. Her work was discovered after her death.

2. Ansel Adams was an American photographer. He was most known for his images of the Californian wilderness.

3. The house known as Fallingwater was designed as a country retreat. It was built for a wealthy family who owned a department store in Pittsburgh, USA.

4. Vincent van Gogh was influenced by Japanese art. He made a copy of Hiroshige's print *Sudden Storm Over Ohashi Bridge*.

⬥ DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN IDENTIFYING AND NONIDENTIFYING CLAUSES

Read the following sentences about the Moonrise Film Festival. Each of the sentences contains an adjective clause of either the identifying or nonidentifying type. For each, decide whether A or B describes the first sentence. Pay special attention to punctuation.

1. Moviegoers, who appreciate fine films, were very satisfied with the Moonrise Film Festival this year.

    Ⓐ Moviegoers in general appreciate fine films.

    B. Only some moviegoers appreciate fine films.

2. Moviegoers who appreciate fine films were very satisfied with the Moonrise Film Festival this year.

    A. Moviegoers in general appreciate fine films.

    B. Only some moviegoers appreciate fine films.

3. The films, which were chosen for their artistry in cinematography, left vivid and lasting impressions.

    A. The films in general left vivid and lasting impressions.

    B. Only some films left vivid and lasting impressions.

4. The films that were chosen for their artistry in cinematography left vivid and lasting impressions.

    A. The films in general left vivid and lasting impressions.

    B. Only some films left vivid and lasting impressions.

5. Offbeat films brought critical acclaim to directors, who are normally very profit oriented.

    A. Directors in general are normally very profit oriented.

    B. Only some directors are normally very profit oriented.

6. Offbeat films brought critical acclaim to directors who are normally very profit oriented.

    A. Directors in general are normally very profit oriented.

    B. Only some directors are normally very profit oriented.

7. In the animation category, the audience was surprised and satisfied by Hollywood's new-style cartoons, which address serious social concerns.

    A. Hollywood's new-style cartoons in general address social concerns.

    B. Only some of Hollywood's new-style cartoons address social concerns.

8. In the animation category, the audience was surprised and satisfied by Hollywood's new-style cartoons that address serious social concerns.

    A. Hollywood's new-style cartoons in general address social concerns.

    B. Only some of Hollywood's new-style cartoons address social concerns.

9. The foreign entries, which were brilliantly directed, unfortunately may not succeed at the box office here.

    A. The foreign entries in general were brilliantly directed.

    B. Only some of the foreign entries were brilliantly directed.

Appendix L: A Priori and Emergent Codes Table

Table L1

A Priori and Emergent Codes

A Priori Codes	Emergent Codes
personal resources academic deficit academic strength social strength family/community & issues/concerns cultural awareness	learning context
	reading practices
	vocabulary instruction
	reading skills
	curriculum
	instructional strategies
	teacher academic support teacher personal support student interests
	self-efficacy
	self-regulated learning
	cultural characteristics of the learner
	common interests about the homeland
	American culture
	bias and prejudice
	familial connection
	teacher learning about the student's culture
	traditions including food

Note. *n* = 11