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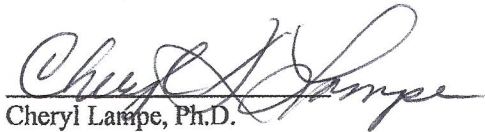
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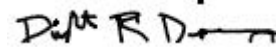


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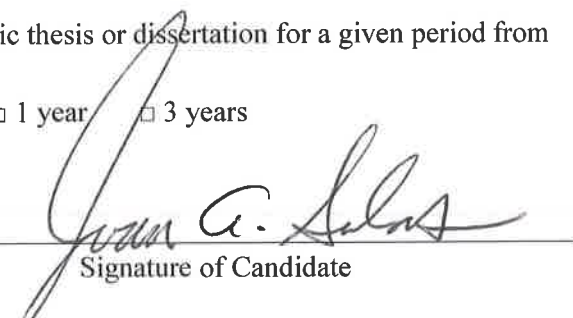
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INTRINSIC FAMILY AND SCHOOL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE ACADEMIC
SUCCESES OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN
ONE COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOL

by

Juan A. Salas

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ABSTRACT

The educational path of an English-language learner in California is affected by federal, state, and local educational policy, mandates, and practices. According to the research, after 40 or so years of government intervention from the Bilingual Act of 1974 to Proposition 38 of 2016, school districts continue to have large numbers of English-language learners. School districts also produce Long Term English Learners as high school graduates who not only face deficiencies in language acquisition in both primary and secondary languages, but are also academically unprepared for the real world.

This study was conducted to determine intrinsic family and school academic influences of English-language learners who have graduated in one California comprehensive high school in Northern California. The researcher, a former English-language learner (ELL), shared his story of growing up as a product of bilingual public education during the seventies and eighties to a selected number of graduating English-language learner recent high school graduates. A survey of 21 questions regarding the influences of English-language learners was given to 17 participants. The participants were interviewed in a focus group format and then documented their own stories as English-language learners. The results indicate several common themes that K-12 education is in need of addressing to ensure academic success of English-language learners. These themes include: English Language Learners having a wealth of knowledge, culture, language, experiences, and unique voices that educators can “hook” the student into short and long term high school education. In addition, educators need to understand how to teach the ELL’s invaluable mind, which will require some creativity on the part of educators in addition to teaching the preexisting curriculum. However, challenging this approach may be, it will undoubtedly maximize student interest, learning, and language acquisition.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In Southern California, 1984, a Mexican-American seventh-grader put the finishing touches on his homework as his father returned home from his work as a car upholsterer. His mother was a homemaker. Despite being born in Southern California, where his parents immigrated to in 1970, the seventh-grader was an English-language learner. This meant he spoke Spanish and could read, write, and speak very little English throughout his primary years. His mother took the time to teach him how to write and read in Spanish for some years, but as time progressed, homework and school life surpassed that opportunity (Ashworth & Wakefield, 2004).

In time, the family was able to move from a one-bedroom apartment to a rental house in a very poor, very dangerous part of the city. It was not until 1979 that the father and mother were able to purchase a home. It was like a dream for the family. It had taken almost ten years to save up for the down payment. On this particular day in 1984, when the father arrived home from work, the son asked him a question about what life was like for his father growing up in a pueblo (a small town) in Mexico. This interest was sparked by an assignment in his language arts class. The son had no idea that the answer to his question would open the door and provide him with a road map for his future goals.

Like every day, the mother served dinner, and the family shared a conversation over their meal. The father told his son of the hardships and experiences of growing up in town during the 1950s and 1960s in Purisima De Bustos in the state of Leon, Mexico. Similarly, the mother chimed in and shared her story of growing up in the city of Guadalajara. The son listened carefully and realized that his parents had different, yet similar lives growing up. The son's parents were raised with no luxuries—only enough money for basic needs. Both parents had

tough love upbringings from their parents of traditional Mexican family values, where punishment of children was not just verbal, but physical as well. The parents received only an elementary education, and their teenage years were spent joining their families in rearing cattle, selling food in the streets, or raising siblings. Life for the son's parents was old-fashioned, traditional, and religious.

In 1968, they'd left their homes at an early age with no money and ventured into the city of Tijuana to seek employment. It was there that they met right across the street from each other's places of work, him as an apprentice upholsterer and her in a restaurant. They married shortly after and immigrated to the United States in pursuit of the American dream.

This recollection became emotional because of the memories of hardship and growing up in poor, humble, traditional homes, and of their dream for a better life in the United States. The conversation enlightened the seventh-grader to the struggles his parents endured in the hope that their children would have better lives in the United States. It was then that the son realized his goal after high school would include going to college.

The story of this seventh-grader is similar to those of the many families that immigrated to the United States from Mexico (Garcia & Jensen, 2007). Even though the seventh-grader reclassified in eighth grade, he continued to struggle academically through the California education system for many years to come (Olsen, 2010). He was successful in high school because of the enthusiasm and grit that he carried from his parents' influences. Unfortunately, he struggled to acquire the skills needed to survive in a California university. The realities of his academic successes, failures, and upbringing while navigating two cultures is similar to many Latin American families who immigrated to California (Olsen, 2010; Noguera, 2006). The

seventh-grader is now a doctoral student, high school principal, and the researcher of this dissertation.

Similar to the researcher's story, English-language learners (ELLs) in California and around the globe have experienced cultural, linguistic, political, and academic challenges through the education system from the early 1970s to the current educational dynamics and beyond (Ashworth & Wakefield, 2004; Garcia, 2011). ELL students face challenges both at home and at school. Parents of ELLs may have personal goals and dreams in mind once in the United States, but whether or not their children understand and accept those goals is beyond their control (Noguera, 2006).

The primary culture, including the primary language, is somewhat lost in time and not by choice—but at the same time, much is gained from an American way of life (Anderson, 2015; Noguera, 2006; Baker, 2007). It has been difficult for many ELLs to understand their place in American society because of these externalities (Made in America, 2008; Anderson, 2015). The families' customs and traditions may clash with American society, making it challenging for students to live effectively in both worlds: the primary culture and the American way of life. It becomes an even greater challenge when students go to school and are unable to locate anything from their primary cultures, let alone continue learning their primary languages (Anderson, 2015). It is through the fear of educators that students may feel hesitant about being active in school.

Long Term English-Language Learner

It took the aforementioned seventh-grader-turned-doctoral student a total of eight school years to reclassify in eighth grade. Like him, there are many ELLs who were born in the United States, but are categorized as long-term English-language learners. There are two types of ELLs

that will be explored in this document. The first group consists of children born in a foreign country who immigrated with their families or alone into the United States (Olsen, 2010). The second group consists of children who were born in the United States but whose families are immigrants from another country. According to Olsen (2010), in both groups, the children have been subject to becoming long-term English-language learners: ELLs that do not acquire English in a timely manner (Olsen, 2010). The goal of the education system is to reclassify English-language learners in a timely fashion to ensure they have equal access to educational opportunities (California Department of Education, 2009). These opportunities include going to college, participation in the workforce, or career technology.

This dissertation focuses on the motivation that English-language learner graduates receive from their schools and families. Regardless of whether the graduates reclassified or not, both groups have similar home and school experiences that need to be addressed in a larger, educational context. By design, the study only focuses on Spanish-speaking English-learners from Mexico and other Latin American countries and who reside in one urban school district in Northern California.

Statement of the Problem

According to Samson and Collins (2012), in the case of English-language learners (ELLs), family influences are crucial to their academic success. Often, there is not enough motivation from home for ELLs to succeed in American society (California Department of Education 2009; Hoover, Klingner, Baca & Patton, 2008). The influences of ELLs begin in the home and can include such factors as family history, economics, culture, religion, and traditions—all of which contribute to the overall stability of the student (Hoover et. al, 2008). The question of intrinsic factors influencing ELLs in high schools and their academic successes

becomes more crucial as more and more schools show a growing ELL population throughout the United States. With that being the case, the challenge that educators face extends beyond the language acquisition and curriculum content learning; they must also understand how to motivate and engage ELL students to remain in school and become successful. At the same time, it becomes necessary to understand how much support and positive influence is provided by the families of ELL students.

Purpose of the Study

Policy changes in education in the last twenty years have caused changes to English-language learner instructional initiatives. Despite how much is known about teaching English-language learners, the research on ELLs continues to inform us there is not enough progress (Olsen, 2010). Listening to the stories of high school graduates provides an avenue for this process to adapt and continue. There are two pathways into the academic life of the English-language learner. The first approach is to explore the influences of the student's home life and all the factors that underline the culture of the family, including language. The second approach is to explore how much of an influence educational services have had on the needs of English-language learners. The purpose of this study was to determine what the intrinsic family and education motivational factors are for ELL learners who graduate from high school with perceived success.

Research Questions

This study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What external school factors influence English-language learners?
2. What intrinsic family factors influence English-language learners?

3. What is the personal story of an English-language learner as he or she transitions from high school?

Theoretical Framework

Researchers Olsen and Hakuta have studied English-language learners for the last 20 years. Their research is based primarily on the heart of English-language learner policy, pedagogy, and social context. Both researchers challenge educational reform and remind all educational stakeholders of their responsibility to educate ELLs despite changes to educational law, such as state and federal mandates (Garcia, 2011; Olsen, 2015).

Olsen has done extensive research on English-language learners. The majority of her research has been on “educational equity with an emphasis on immigrant and English Learner education, language access and rights,” (Olsen, 2016, p. 1). Similarly, Hakuta (2016) has also concentrated extensively in the areas of “...teaching and research...in the education of English-language learners, second language acquisition, education policy and practice, and research methods” (p. 33).

Both Olsen (2010) and Hakuta’s (2014) extensive research generates strong conclusive points that outline English-language learner policy progress over the last 10 to 20 years. Since the 1970s, the United States has experienced a tremendous amount of immigration (Igoa, 1995). California schools have 25 percent of students who are considered English-language learners and require greater attention to their academic, language, and emotional needs (California Department of Education, 2009). This has resulted in the ever-increasing challenge of long-term English-learners and why the subgroup evolved despite academic progress in English-learner instruction (Olsen, 2008, 2010; Hill, 2012).

Despite civil rights laws such as *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), *No Child Left Behind* (2001), Common Core reform, and the Every Student Succeeds Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2016), Olsen and Hakuta continue to insist that policy, schools, and society need to pay greater attention to English-language learners' needs. Both researchers base their recommendations on the observation that, after years of academic and language improvements, English-language learners have not shown “hoped-for results for ELLs” in assessment and performance data (Hakuta, 2007; Olsen, 2010).

Both Olsen (2010) and Hakuta (2000) recommend that English-language learners should reach proficiency between seven to ten years. In California, for example, the lack of a common norm across districts to provide proper identification, monitoring, and curriculum has created systematic deficiencies in English-language learner services that, in turn, has resulted in the greater number of long-term ELLs who are now considered a crucial subgroup that cannot be ignored (Olsen, 2010). Districts in California have used various forms of instruction, such as Structured English Immersion (SEI), bilingual education, and pullout/push-in tutoring. According to Sarah Sparks' “Teaching English-Learners: What Does the Research Tell Us?” “While all three main types of ELL instruction have been in use for decades, there is relatively little rigorous research on the general effectiveness of each method, and evidence is particularly scarce on the most effective methods for specific ELL populations...” (Sparks, 2016, p. 4).

Hakuta (2013) argues that the rigorous Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and Common Core reforms raise the bar for learning. It is important for schools to adapt language acquisition and content learning properly to meet the demands of the new, higher rigor standards (Hakuta, 2013, 2014). In her research, Olsen makes it very clear that English-learners—whether “newcomers” or “long-term”—face a “double challenge” in learning through academics and

language acquisition and that it is a district's requirement to "remedy those deficits that they do not pose '...a lingering educational impediment,'" (Olsen, 2010, p. iii).

Olsen (2008) further explains that the impact of increasing immigration in the last 20 years has caused for the majority of states to have ELLs in public schools, and not just major "gateway" cities (p. 16). This reality leads to the essence of a theoretical framework that combines both the works of Olsen and Hakuta into one simple yet powerful quote: "Teachers discover that teaching how they have always taught just doesn't work so well for students who don't speak English and whose experiences are from...different nations and cultures," (Olsen, 2008, p. 16). Olsen's quote lends support to the need to research how ELL students are motivated at home and how effectively they are serviced in schools to meet their success through content knowledge and language acquisition.

Unfortunately, after 40 years of many great ideas, reforms, and research-based strategies aimed towards improving the education and success of ELLs, the results have still been less than satisfactory. Increasing numbers of ELLs in the education system—in California, for example—including high numbers of long-term English-language learners and ELLs that are graduating with high school diplomas, demonstrates the dysfunction of ELL educational services. Hakuta and Olsen have recently co-chaired a group of state stakeholders to develop an English-language learner pathway—the first of its kind—to address the current needs of ELLs and what has not worked for them in the previous 40 years. "On July 12, 2017, the California State Board of Education (SBE) unanimously approved a new policy for English-language learners, the California English Learner Roadmap: Education Programs and Services for English Learners (EL Roadmap Policy)..." (Hakuta & Olsen, 2018). The EL Roadmap Policy is a necessary response to the passage of the Global Economy Initiative (CA Ed.G.E. Initiative) and Proposition

58, which eliminated the majority of Proposition 227's elimination of bilingual education in California.

The EL Roadmap Policy's primary focus is to ensure English-language learners are educated in content standards and curriculum that focuses on "evidence-based practices." The policy also emphasizes the importance of all English learners, regardless of immigrant status, to "...represent the newest members of our society...who bring rich diversity of cultural backgrounds and come from families with rich social and linguistic experiences," (Hakuta & Olsen, 2018, p. 1). Hakuta and Olsen's EL Roadmap Policy is the answer to ELL success due to a culmination of all policies and reforms concerning ELLs in the last 40 years.

The EL Roadmap Policy also states that English-language learners have in their possession not only "multilingual" abilities, but also rich cultural backgrounds that are contributors to society (Hakuta & Olsen, 2018). Hakuta and Olsen's EL Roadmap is a major reason why this study is so important in discovering the motivations and perceptions of ELL graduates and how educators can learn from their experiences to ensure success early in their education. Figure 1 below reflects Olsen and Hakuta's research of ELLs and shows the pathway of an English-language learner of today. The figure also applies to all ELL time periods from the 1970s to the present. The figure demonstrates that no matter the changes in federal, state, or district ELL mandates or policies, English Learners' experiences are very much the same. It is the hope of the EL Roadmap Policy that districts across the state of California can navigate any federal, state, or local mandates from here on. Figure 1 visualizes the tremendous amount of legislative pressure from federal, state, and local governments for ELLs to succeed linguistically and academically. It is important to be reminded that the courts and the Department of

Education's office of civil rights hold districts accountable for upholding ELL state and federal law in the approach to educating English-learners (Sparks, 2016).

Figure 1 is crucial because it demonstrates that, despite so much ELL reform and stakeholder input, progress for English-language learners has been minimal. More emphasis has been placed in following the law, but there is a greater need to understand what is going on in the home life and how that affects student perceptions of learning in school (Hoover et al., 2008). The theoretical framework provides the underpinnings for the challenge of educational reform to remind all stakeholders of their responsibility to educate ELLs, despite changes to educational law such as state and federal mandates.

Significance of the Study

It is essential to research why the ELLs' success data does not show greater gains despite reform after reform (Olsen, 2010). This is not only true in districts across the state of California, but it is a nationwide dilemma that needs to be analyzed and acted on. This dissertation will demonstrate and discuss several intrinsic motivational factors high school graduates voiced as critical to their personal educational journeys and how these thoughts and ideas can be used to enhance the education of ELLs and to guide families in supporting their youths.

Definition of Terms

Bilingual: The ability to speak more than one language.

English-language learners: Students identified by a school district to speak a primary language and who will learn English.

Newcomers: Students who enroll into a public school in California emigrating from their countries of origin with little or no English.

Long-Term English-language learners: students who are identified as long-term because they have not reclassified as English-only for more than five years in a public school system.

Primary Language: The first language of a student.

Reclassification: The process when students meet the English-only criteria via examination and their academic performance in the classroom.

Multicultural: Students of different cultural and linguistic customs.

Limitations

The study was conducted on a group of graduates from one comprehensive high school out of four in the same district. The results of the survey and focus interview questions may not be generalizable to all high schools in California.

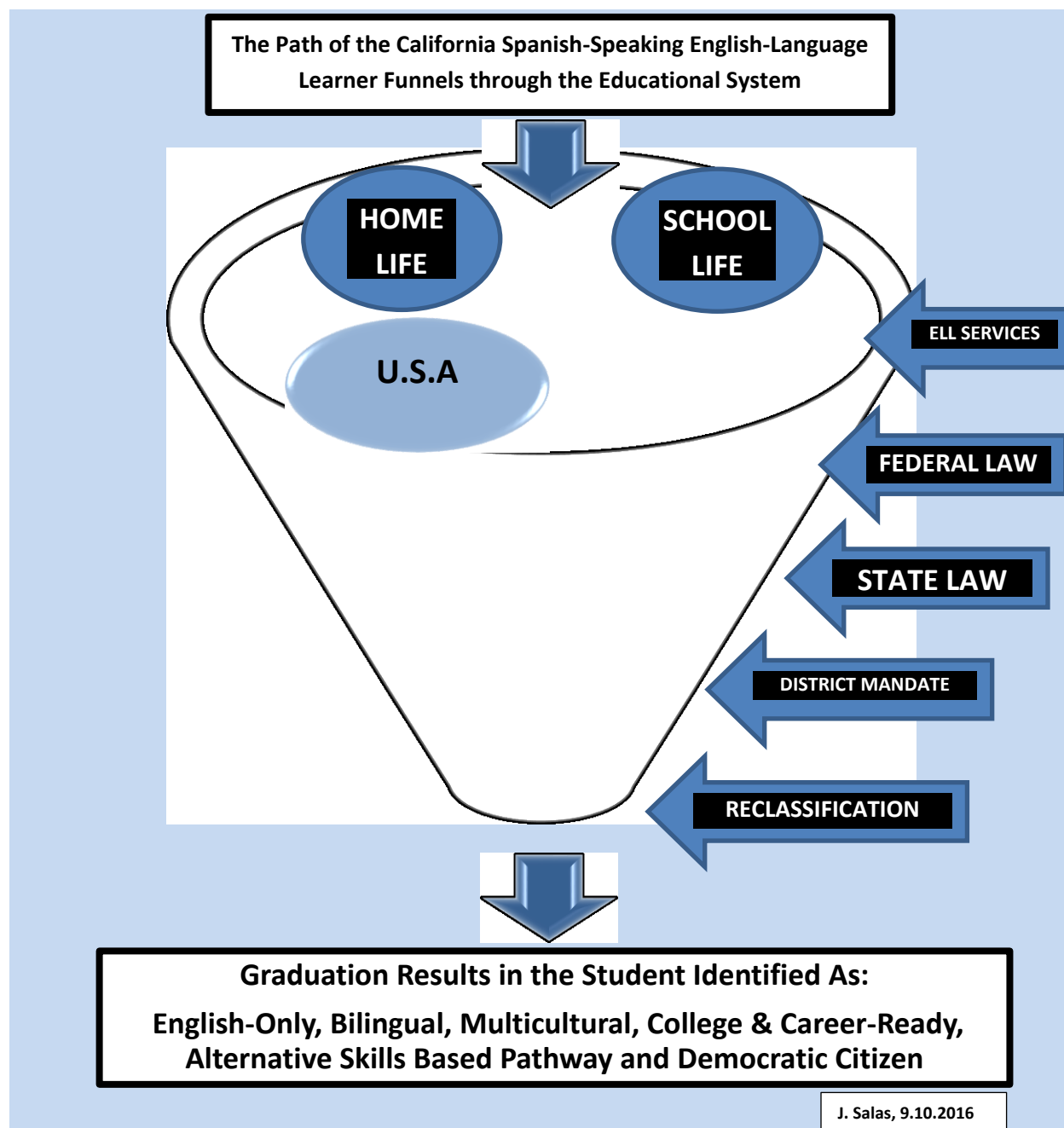


Figure 1. Through the education system.

Delimitations

In this study regarding the motivation of English-learners, the goal was to implement cluster sampling. One comprehensive high school was used to draw samples from populations to

survey the experiences of English-language learners. A sample of various levels of ELL proficiencies from *Far Below Basic* to *Proficient* and *Reclassified* students were selected for the study. There were different ethnicities in the sample, including ELL students that came from Latin America, e.g. Mexico and Guatemala, where Spanish is the primary language. Spanish is not the only foreign language represented in the district; however, it was the primary language of interest to the researcher. Also, because part of the study was to be in the students' first language, it was determined only Spanish-speakers or participants from Spanish-speaking homes would be considered for this study.

Summary

In summary, federal and state laws supporting ELLs' rights to education have been in place for a long time and are constantly changing. ELL laws require compliance, constant monitoring, and enforcement by school districts in California. Olsen and Hakuta emphasize the need to concentrate more and more on the instructional services provided to English-language learners. Despite federal and state intervention, one has to wonder why ELL success continues to struggle or why there is such a concept as long-term English-language learners. It is essential for the reader of this study to realize that California is the only state in the nation to coin the term "long-term English-language learner" (Robinson, 2014).

In the end, the needs of ELLs have been politicized for a considerably long time. Although laws to protect ELLs are necessary for the purposes of equity and opportunity, it seems that the value of ELL success lies more on political ideology than the instructional approach and the benefits of speaking English plus the primary language. There is much to learn about ELLs' richness of the home life structure that establishes their experiences to the uniqueness of their background cultures, languages, and perceptions of functioning in the United States. At the

same time, while learning about the students' motivations in their home lives, educators can concentrate on customizing, molding, or differentiating educational services that will inspire and motivate ELLs to succeed academically. Figure 1 was developed for two purposes: to visualize the key elements of the theoretical framework, and to serve as a funnel for the key headings and subheadings in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 will focus on the study of the English-language learners from one comprehensive high school. The results of the study were analyzed in Chapter 4 with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Discussion, summary, and recommendations follow in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 2: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The story of English-language learners in California is one that is interesting, yet incomprehensible (California Department of Education, 2009). For centuries now, families have immigrated to California in pursuit of a better life and the American Dream (Igoa, 1995). There have been many stories—and many of them similar—of migrant workers in the United States with either a limited or nonexistent grasp of the English language who work in low-skill jobs that no others will take because they demand long hours for low wages (Wilson, 2014). In California schools, it is a common reality that one in three students are classified as English-language learners (Education Trust-West, 2017). At the same time, immigrant students face a multitude of educational challenges in school. Immigrant students who are identified as English-language learners, according to the California Department of Education, must have access to the same content as their English-speaking counterparts while learning English at the same time (California Department of Education, 2016; Igoa, 1995). To acquire proficiency in English while still following the standard curriculum may take years, especially if the student is also facing low socioeconomic conditions in a school with limited resources (Shapiro, 2017). In addition to learning core content, the ELL student's primary language, background, and "identity" are also invaluable components that influence academic success (Isiah, 2017). It is difficult, if not incomprehensible, to understand why California's educational system—which has a legal, federal, and state responsibility to educate children—continues to graduate long-term English-learners (Olsen, 2010). This means that ELLs completed their high school credit requirements, which qualified them to participate in a graduation ceremony and receive a high school diploma, but never reclassified.

English-language learners in California account for approximately 25 percent of the student population, or 1.3 million (California Department of Education, 2016; Hill, 2012; Fensterwald, 2017). In the last 20 years, the ELL demographic make-up of schools in California has become more numerous and diverse, though funding for ELLs drops constantly (NEA, 2015). Although the majority of these students come from Mexico, there has been a surge of ELL students arriving from other Latin American countries as well, particularly from 2016 to the present (Clark, 2016; Santiago & Vasquez, 2017). Additionally, The Migration Policy Institute's census data found that 82 percent of pre-kindergarten to fifth grade ELLs and 65 percent of 6th and 12th grade ELLs are born in the United States (Education Week, 2013).

This literature review concentrates on the intrinsic and external factors that influence the academic success of English-language learners. ELLs attend school with a wealth of knowledge of their cultural customs and traditions, such as primary language, family stories and experiences, where they come from, and their beliefs and perceptions of the world (Isiah, 2017). The literature review also focuses on ELL school services, including language acquisition, core content, monitoring, placement, and reclassification. The success of intrinsic and external factors will be studied in the next chapters by surveying and interviewing students in one comprehensive California high school.

The literature review provides a historical background of English-language learners in California for the last 40 years. It also includes an overall report and comparison of ELLs in the United States, the state of California, and a district in Northern California that focuses on ELLs in two comprehensive high schools. The literature review focuses not only on the reality, reforms, and criteria of English-learner services, but the cultural influences of the students' home lives as well.

This literature review will focus primarily on California while citing relevant studies from around the world. The subheadings will include: History of English-Language Learner Students as a Significant Group, English-Learners At Home, English-Learners Require Different Needs or Strategies, Current National Reality of English-Language Learners (External), ELL Educational Policy (Federal Law), California English-Language Learners, High School Selected for the Study, and An International Perspective of English-Language Learners.

History of English-Language Learner Students as a Significant Group

English-language learners were first recognized as a significant group in the ruling of the 1974 case *Lau v. Nichols*, in which the “U.S. Supreme Court found that Chinese-American English-learners in California who were not given educational accommodations to help them learn English did not receive equal access to education” (Sparks, 2016, p. 3). But Chinese-American students were not the only English-learners who faced discrimination from federal requirements under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which was intended to eliminate violations of people’s civil rights. In particular, language barriers for students in public education resulted in “The Bilingual Education Act of 1968. This is noted as the first official federal recognition of the needs of students with limited English speaking ability” (LESA) (The Bilingual Education Act, 1974).

The Bilingual Education Act of 1974 allowed English-language learners to receive core content instruction in their primary language while studying English as a secondary language. Concerns rose that ELLs would fall behind if they received educations in two different languages (Emslie, 2015). As the ELL population grew in the 1980s and 1990s, it also became more diverse because of increased immigration from Asian and Latino countries. Opposition grew for bilingual education and, as a result, California’s 1997 Proposition 227 passed, eliminating

bilingual education altogether (Cos, 1999; Bilingualism & Education, 2015). Proposition 227 states that Californian students should not learn in any language other than English.

Proposition 227 forced California to establish Structured English Immersion Programs, wherein an English-learner would attempt to learn English in one to two years of his or her education (Changing Course, 2010). But the proposition contradicted linguistic research, which suggested that English-learners require up to seven years of English-language development (California's English Learner Students, 2012; Changing Course, 2010). Additionally, Proposition 227 was interpreted to mean students must leave their primary languages and background knowledge at home.

In the early 2000s, nine districts and groups advocating for ELLs sued the State of California for not fully executing the 2001 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Federal Educational Law. The lawsuit insisted that ELL students were not properly assessed compared to their peers, and even though the lawsuit was not ruled in favor of ELLs, it did bring attention to the partiality of Californian education (Olsen, 2015). The state has since implemented policies in response to federal law that identify ELLs and monitor their progress (Hill, 2012).

After 40 years of federal law and California's compliance, interventions, and mandates, ELLs continue to face the struggles of partiality in education. One should consider: is it fair to ask whether or not federal or state interventions have worked, or is it time for a different approach to the needs of English-language learners (Noguera, 2015)? Perhaps the answer lies not so much in the educational system, but in the rich lives of ELLs themselves, such as the individual's home life and the motivation to succeed academically.

Effects on ELL Students Due to Immigration Into the U.S.

English-language learners are not the same, nor do they all learn in the same ways (Echevarraia, 2018). English-learners require proper identification within a school system for appropriate educational placement and to understand their language proficiencies. Students who enter the K-12 school system in the United States while speaking a primary language and little or no English are considered English-language learners (Saville-Troike, 1989). These students could be either newcomer ELLs who may have recently arrived into the United States, or students born in the United States to immigrant parents and who may only speak a non-English primary language at home.

In either case, both groups enter the school system identified as ELLs and begin the pathway towards English-language proficiency in the hopes of reclassifying in a timely manner (Cummins, 1984). Long-term ELLs are those who have not reached language proficiency in a reasonable amount of time. In 2010, 59 percent of California's ELLs were reclassified as long-term English-language learners (Olsen, 2010). According to the NEA, "ELL students with disabilities, students with interrupted formal education, migrant, refugees, gifted ELLs, recently arrived ELLs, and long-term ELLs are just a few common subgroups" (NEA, 2015).

English-language learners are students of all ages and grade levels who may have immigrated into the United States. Among them, there are many young children and adults who immigrate without their families, possibly due to societal instability in their home countries, such as the threat of being forced into a gang or facing threats of gang violence (Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Economic and political hardships in their home countries tend to be the major reason these students immigrate to the U.S., including those from war-torn Latin American countries (Agirdag, 2014; Igoa, 1995; Partida, 1996). Upon entering the school system, these ELLs are

identified on record, and a paper trail or cumulative file will follow them throughout their educations (Hoover et al., 2008). Schools need to consider not only language development, but also emotional instabilities and other, individual deficiencies (California State Department of Education, 2009). It is currently estimated that "...more than one out of four of all children in the United States are from immigrant families, and in most cases these children speak a language other than English at home" (Samson & Collins, 2012, p. 4).

While immigrant parents may face considerable challenges in adapting to American society, the burdens of their children cannot be overlooked (Valdes, 1996). Many immigrant children have no choice when immigrating to the United States (Buriel & DeMent, 1997). Typically, ELLs, regardless of age, have not fully completed their primary language acquisition or learned the histories of their cultural identities (Salva & Matis, 2017).

The experiences of ELLs are very similar to those of other immigrants in United States, including the original colonists. The concept of the American Dream is still alive and is the main reason why immigrants risk so much to live in the United States. The mindset of many recent Central American immigrants is that they would rather live in the shadows of the United States than in the fear of violence in their home countries. Families that flee their home countries may not have time to process and prepare for the move and may lack the emotional preparation for the challenges of immigration (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). ELL families must learn how an American school system runs, especially the reclassification process of English-language learners (Muniz, 2017). Family support and understanding of the school system leads to higher academic achievement and social stability for the children (Booth & Dunn, 1996). Educators can be supportive by learning about the family's journey and being sensitive to the cultural adjustments to assist classroom performance (Igoa, 1995).

Living in Two Cultures

Most Latino families immigrate to the United States to escape the economic hardships of their home countries. Whether immigrating alone or with their families, leaving one's home country for the United States is an ordeal in itself made worse by the ensuing psychological harm (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). When ELLs leave their homelands, the emotional tolls can be tremendous since there may be no going back, especially if they sought asylum or if the immigration was illegal.

Once inside the United States, many families of ELLs live underground with false identities to find work and function in American society (Igoa, 1995). ELLs are very much aware of the taboo of staying silent about the legal statuses of their families. In 2012, a large group of 800,000 illegal minors applied and received protected status under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), otherwise known as "Dreamers," program created by President Barack Obama. With this particular group, not only are they considered illegal and somewhat protected, "Now, the threat of deportation has roused them to rally, propelled by polar forces..." (Kohli et al., 2017, par. 11). Many of the DACA recipients are using this opportunity to go to college, work professional jobs, and essentially have a taste of what it would be like to live the American Dream. All they need is permanent status.

English-language learners must adapt to a new language, a new history, and a new society. The reality is that a primary or secondary student who leaves his or her country without fully learning his or her native language or history now has to learn a new language and a new culture in the United States. Even though an English-learner may have a tremendous amount of background knowledge, there is a gap in his or her schema of his or her place in society (Kohli et al., 2017). Although it is necessary to examine ELL assessment data to understand a student's

deficiencies, researchers and ELL blogger Laura Lenz believe that educators “...can also stimulate growth by capitalizing on existing strengths,” (Lenz, 2016, p. 3).

With guidance from family and American schools, young ELLs can learn both English and their primary languages (Hakuta, 2014). But with only minimal American school or family support, it is not uncommon for a student who began his or her education in his or her home country to fall behind after transitioning to an American school (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). It is the responsibility of educators to provide support and prevent negative behaviors from leading ELLs to drop out of school. This is especially crucial for long-term English-language learners. The older the student, the more difficult English-language acquisition becomes. The adults in the lives of English-language learners—whether parents, family members, or educators—have a responsibility to ensure that ELLs receive as much support as possible to understand their primary and secondary languages and cultures. Functioning in two languages and two worlds can be challenging, but also rewarding. Educator, researcher, and ELL advocate Emily Francis (2017) strongly supports the notion that it takes a dedicated educator to “Guide students acculturation...Help them acquire English skills...Provide instruction in core content areas...and Develop or strengthen students’ native language...” (p. 1).

English-Learners Require Different Needs or Strategies

Despite the commonalities in the stories and cultures of Latino immigrants living in the United States, there is also much that differentiates them. The Spanish language has various dialects and accents based on different geographical regions; the vernacular of a pueblo may not match that of a city. English-language learners, whether immigrants or born in the U.S. to immigrant parents, do not fall into a “one size fits all” category. According to Professor Jana

Echevarria (2018), “A one-size-fits-all approach is ineffective in today’s classrooms. But, learning to differentiate comes with challenges” (p. 1).

In Californian schools, English-language learners are placed by English proficiency and grade levels—not by background knowledge or cultural experiences (Sanchez, 2016).

Fulfilling the academic needs of English-language learners requires teachers to understand the strengths and differences of their students (Salva & Mattis, 2017; Francis, 2017). Educators can then understand how much background knowledge their ELL students possess, allowing for the creation of a more effective curriculum (Lenz, 2016). English-learners from rural or urban areas in Latin America can be dramatically different from one another, but there is more to consider than geography and culture. A considerable number of English-learners have learning disabilities that require special attention to social, behavioral, and emotional needs (Lenz, 2016).

In California, English-language learning is categorized into five levels. Educators throughout the last 20 years have researched, implemented, and eliminated many research-based teaching techniques. One of those strategies was the Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), a once-fundamental approach to teaching content and language acquisition with possible primary language support until recent years (Sobai, 1995). Unfortunately, many programs such as this one have not delivered the expected results, leading numerous educators to develop their own research-based strategies for teaching ELLs (Pillars, 2017).

Appropriate secondary placement of ELLs is crucial for language acquisition and academic success. Additionally, even though credentialing means that all Californian educators are qualified to teach any level of English-language learners, only a unique set of teachers accepts the challenge. Unfortunately, the rapid growth of ELLs in the student population has led

to a shortage of teachers “understanding of how to best educate these students,” (Samson & Collins, 2012, p. 1). Moreover, Samson and Collins argue there is no consistent pattern or system across the nation for teaching educators the “required knowledge skills.” Those who instruct ELLs, like other teachers, require consistent professional development and classroom support from colleagues and administration (Du Four & Du Four, 2015).

Current National Reality of English-Language Learners (External)

English-learners in the United States are no longer exclusive to large cities, but inhabit all facets of American society. Surprisingly, the southeast is considered the fastest-growing region for ELL populations (Carnock, 2017). Carnock explains this is the result of Hispanic immigrant families moving where the jobs are: in “...construction, agriculture, and food processing industries and low-cost housing,” (p. 4). The majority of ELLs in the United States, 3.8 million, speak Spanish (Sanchez, 2017). While the ELL populations are on the rise in urban and rural schools, there is still difficulty in finding a common description of English-learners (Anderson, 2015).

Meeting all state and federal mandates while also providing educational services for English-language learners across the country is remarkably expensive, especially for schools already suffering from budget cuts (Anderson, 2015). The funding for ELLs is provided primarily by local and state coffers, but the U.S. Department of Education has expressed interest in the education of ELLs (Sanchez, 2017). But there is also a growing population of long-term English-learners (LTELs) who are even further behind their ELL and non-ELL peers (RelWest.WestEd, 2016). The real struggle for many district decision-makers is in finding the right approach to ensure useful services for educational success. Many districts simply did not expect the influx of English-learners from Mexico, let alone those from other Latin American

countries. And with so many English-learners from such diverse backgrounds, another challenge that educators face is in understanding that not all ELLs are the same; they require different services.

Districts across the nation grapple with the educational needs of ELL students and reach out to their families to better serve them (Carnock, 2017). The Institute of Educational Sciences conducted a large study in four states to “examine achievement” for ELLs in content and language-acquisition so that schools would understand how best to respond to their students’ needs (IES, August 25, 2016). Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and New York all shared similar findings regarding the instructional trends, successes, and challenges of educating ELLs. A large percentage of these ELLs were reclassified in the early grades, while others continued as LTELs. Language-acquisition for ELLs in special education, however, takes longer than with the other groups (Mitchell, 2016). Mitchell also reported that New York City’s K-12 public school district has 140,000 more English-learners than California, Texas, Florida, and Illinois combined.

ELL Educational Policy (Federal Law)

According to the Department of Education, approximately ten percent of the entire U.S. student population is comprised of English-language learners (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). The Department of Education reports that No Child Left Behind (NCLB), which was implemented in 2002, “represented a significant step forward for our nation’s children in many aspects, particularly as it shined a light on where students were making progress and whether they needed additional support...” (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

With the changing of the times, the world economy, national demographics, and technological advances, the focus on student success lies more heavily on college and career-readiness, therefore making NCLB much less effective. As a result, families, educators, and the

Obama administration responded with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2016. This newer law focuses on developing “key areas of progress” (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Like California and the focus district of this study, many states will anticipate the legal requirements to provide adequate services for ELLs and how this reform will either improve or deter student success. After analyzing all the unsuccessful policies and reforms of the past 40 years, researchers Hakuta and Olsen (2018) believe the EL Roadmap Policy is the answer to ELL success in California. U.S. News reported that many schools in the country are seeing increased success for their multilingual students, but that the “educational system” only recognizes the ELLs not making progress and ignores those who have been successful (Salem, 2018).

California English-Language Learners

In 2013, California had the highest Hispanic population at 28 percent of the entire nation, and it now has 29 percent of all ELL students nationwide (Brown, 2013; Sanchez, 2017).

From the Bilingual Act of 1974 to the 1998 passage of Proposition 227 that eliminated bilingual education, various laws have forced school districts in California to develop programs and services for English-language learners to meet state and federal mandates. Unfortunately, California has not had great success in this department. There are too many pieces to the English-language learner puzzle, such as student learning, teacher preparation, different mandate approaches, and state and federal political hurdles that obscure what true ELL success should look like. Educational reforms—such as Common Core, which requires skill-based, critical thinking—college and career preparation, and better data extraction of student performance has resulted in more comprehensive data for the successes and failures of ELLs (Murphy & Haller, 2015).

Current Reality of ELLs in California

On July 29, 2014, the ACLU sued the state of California, claiming that 251 school districts were not providing adequate services for English-language learners (California Report, 2014). This lack of professional development has deprived English-learners of adequate educational services despite that various programs in California specialize in teacher preparation and should train the teachers to manage issues such as these (Mader, 2013).

A Cycle of State Reform (State Law)

In 2016, Californians voted to revive bilingual education with the passage of Proposition 58, deciding it would be better for Californian students to learn more than one language to better compete in the global market. Additionally, the passage of the English Learner Roadmap, developed by researchers Olsen and Hakuta (2017), has been an immeasurable benefit for California's ELL students. One such benefit of this "roadmap" is the dual immersion classroom, "where native English speakers learn side-by-side with English learners as both work to become proficient in both languages..." (Stockton Record, Oct. 30, 2016).

As mentioned previously, state and federal mandates for English-language learners in California have not always been compatible or impartial (Anderson, 2015). Despite the appearance of practical legislation from both the federal and state sectors, the reality is there is no true mechanism to determine English-learner success in California.

ELLs in the District Where the Study Took Place (District Mandate)

The district's intention has always been to follow state and federal mandates regarding the placement of ELLs, teacher certification, parent involvement, and teacher professional development. But despite all efforts toward meeting district, state, and federal mandates, local ELL performance has made little progress. This may be attributed to continuous changes in

district leadership; three of the nine superintendents in the last 11 years were also district administrators responsible for English-language learners in the region. English-learner student placement policies and procedures are always changing and this is reflected in the data.

Current district management has requested that the school principals closer analyze the roots of this problem and reach a resolution as quickly as possible. The most prominent issue is the large number of long-term English-language learners who finish their K-12 educations without ever reclassifying. This leaves one to wonder, if LTELs may graduate without reclassifying, what becomes of them after they join the workforce?

There are approximately 36,000 students in this Northern California district. In the 2015-2016 school year, a total of 11,569 ELLs from kindergarten through 12th grade attended schools. In the secondary level, there are four comprehensive high schools, each averaging around 2,100 students in one school year. There are seven small high schools with a small percentage of ELLs as well. 86.02 percent of all English-learners in the district speak Spanish.

Current district and state mandates require all teachers to be CLAD certified and for all students to be in the correct English-language development classes. The district also ensures academic monitoring for both ELLs and Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEP) students. However, all four high schools in the district provide little or no criteria to determine which students are ELLs and which students are RFEPs. State law dictates ELLs must undergo English-language development courses as well as core content, but it is up to the high school to determine what its ELL program will look like.

Unfortunately, there is no standard process for ELL placement in any of the four high schools in the Central District. Two of the high schools are on opposite ends of the city, one in the west and the other in the east. One high school places English-learners by grade, while

another places them by CELDT level. And, while the district provides ELL training for the teachers, there is no consistent format.

In 2016, the district's Language Development Office established systems to provide instructional support for all teachers in the district. For the 2018/2019 school year, the district will fully implement the concept of "full inclusion," where both special education students and English-language learners will be placed in the same core content classrooms. This means teacher training will be crucial in handling these classrooms, and it will fall to instructional leadership to provide that constant training and support for all educators in the district.

High School Selected for Study

In the first high school—School F—students are placed in ELD classrooms by grade and CELDT level, where the goal of the class is to provide English-only instruction. The school also ensures that students are placed in core content classrooms and that all other pathways in the school are available to them, such as Career Technical Education, AVID, International Baccalaureate, and all A-G college-preparatory requirements. With support such as training from the district's Language Development Office, and ELL identification, placement, and monitoring, reclassification has become the high school's top priority.

From English-Language Learner Status to Reclassification

The district's plan is to reclassify ELLs as soon as possible, in part by providing access to CELDT and MAP assessments, though it falls on the schools to ensure that students have access to both core content and language acquisition. While the district provides professional development for teachers who instruct ELLs, the high school itself has the autonomy to further that professional development with differentiated instruction, Common Core Units of Study, research-based instructional strategies, and common formative and summative assessments.

In respect to California's history of educating English-learners in the last 40 years, one thing is certain: only in the United States has the educational system constrained English-learners by failing to teach them more of their primary language. The various political and social hurdles of American society have asserted English as the dominant language. For ELLs, this may come at the cost of their primary language skills, their cultural identity, and economic opportunity—something that ultimately harms all of American society in the global market.

While the U.S. propagates English as its dominant language and pushes for a homogenized culture, America's democratic partners and competitors encourage multiculturalism, bilingualism, internationalism, and globalism. One country in that race towards global participation, inclusion, and economic advantage is China. The researcher visited China recently to witness firsthand the country's strives towards globalization to solidify its place as a major player in the world economy. If nothing else, one thing is certain; the Chinese are serious about learning English. However, a lack of resources in China makes this especially difficult. In other parts of the world, such as Latin America, one's freedom to learn English is dictated by one's socioeconomic status.

English-Language Learners in China

From the enormous metropolises of Beijing and Shanghai to every town, province, subway, street, and building, all of China's physical locations are labeled not only in Chinese, but in English as well. One might consider this a concession for tourists, but the primary purpose is to familiarize citizens with the English language. While western tourists are doubtlessly relieved to see English translations in every aspect of such an unfamiliar society, the bilingual labeling is also a symbol of Chinese acceptance of globalization.

The English language has had a foothold in Chinese culture as far back as the early 17th century (Bolton & Botha, 2015). Western expansion during this time period gave rise to the English language throughout the world, and China saw this progression as potential “linguistic imperialism,” (Gao, 2012). China’s history is rooted in Confucian ideals, where all aspects of society are subject to “...placing emphasis on the importance of sacrificing ‘small selves’ for the ‘great self’ in political education,” (Gao, 2012).

As a result, China is innately aware of the modernizing world and has become an active participant to strengthen its own culture and economy. As more and more Chinese students study abroad to pursue undergraduate and postsecondary education, English fluency has become increasingly vital for their success (Bolton & Botha, 2015). Many Chinese businesses, both in China and abroad, require their employees to learn English (Xie, 2016).

China has the largest population in the world, and much of that population is dedicated to learning English because it is becoming “...the ‘language of opportunity’ – the passport to a coveted overseas education, a well-paid job or foreign citizenship,” (Yeung, 2017). And, whereas American vacations prioritize fun and relaxation, Chinese vacations are typically spent visiting universities in Shanghai and Beijing so the children can understand that their difficult schoolwork and exams are all in preparation for the arduous demands of college. In the city of Xi’an, for example, parents are required to help their children with their homework every day. The children’s academic performance is partly due to how much the parents support their early education.

Dr. Carrier, program director of Stepping Stones, is the author of *The Situation for Migrants in China, and the Challenges of Running an NPO in China* (Stepping Stones China, 2016). Dr. Carrier and his colleagues provide daily care to poor Chinese children in the poverty-

stricken area of Shanghai, and his efforts reveal to the rest of the world a glimpse of modern Chinese realities: migrants living in poverty, underfunded education, health problems, and limited opportunity. Stepping Stones strives to give poor Chinese children the same educational opportunities that other, more financially-secure students enjoy, such as English-language development.

A westerner who observes the efforts of Chinese education today would be amazed at the students' enthusiasm, motivation, and eagerness to learn English while maintaining their Chinese values. The current ideology of China's educational elite is to relinquish their individualistic desires and direct all their energy to the state to promote "...a strong state, a wealthy nation and a prosperous individual" (Gao, 2012).

English Language-Learners in Latin America

In resorts and hotels all across Latin America, one will likely discover that every customer service provider from the cab driver to the housekeeping crew speaks English. In many vacation spots in Mexico and South America, the workers are trained to speak not just English, but many other languages as well.

Learning English in Latin America is a privilege reserved for the upper-class. Historically, public education in Latin America has been more closely associated to politics than with the benefit of society. The wealthier one's family, the greater the education one can afford. Many academies exist in Latin America, but typically at enormous costs.

As a result, many lower-class citizens of Latin America dream of migrating to the United States to learn English there in the hopes of achieving upward mobility in the business world. This suggests that many Latin Americans understand the value of learning English, but don't comprehend why the United States has a large percentage of long-term English-language

learners. And yet, with no economic opportunities in their home countries, striving for the American Dream often seems to be the more realistic opportunity. For many immigrants, that is the case; there are numerous success stories from immigrants who crossed into the United States, perhaps even illegally, who raised families in America and gave their children the opportunity to become successful.

Summary

Several major themes emerge from all the research gathered in the literature review. First among them, English-language learners in California continue to struggle academically despite years of state and federal intervention. Even with the new California English Learner Roadmap Policy, it will take many school districts time to revamp their programs and services for ELLs to succeed in academia and language acquisition. Secondly, it is difficult to understand why high schools in California graduate ELLs that they failed to reclassify. Thirdly, there is a need to support ELLs via language acquisition in K-12 education and even after graduating from high school. Finally, colleges must also have programs and services for ELLs to be successful.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The primary goal of this study is to assess the three research questions. The methodologies used to test the research questions are outlined in this chapter. The chapter is organized into: (a) setting and participants, (b) sampling procedures, (c) instrumentation and measures, (d) plan for data collection, (e) plan for data analysis, and (f) plan to address ethical concerns.

Settings and Participants

Participants for the study were determined via convenience sampling of high school alumni who graduated as English-language learners (ELLs) or Reclassified Fluent English Proficient (RFEPs) from one of the four high schools within the Central district in a Central California city. All of the participants in the study were Spanish-speaking, 18 years of age or older, and were born in a Latin American country. The representative district has an approximate total of 11,000 English-language learners, one-third of the entire student population. The comprehensive high school chosen for the study averages 430 ELL students, including 200 reclassified students. Five percent of the selected high school ELL student population was surveyed and interviewed.

A total of 20 students participated. There was an equal amount of male and female students. Some in the study were Newcomer students when they entered the U.S. K-12 public school system. Not all participants reclassified at the same time when entering as Newcomers. Some may not have even reclassified and therefore graduated with a high school diploma and with the label of English-language learner. Also, there were ELL students who were born in the United States, but have never been able to reclassify. Whether born in the U.S. or not, these ELL students are considered long-term English-language learners (LTEs). Students past the

Newcomer status but not yet in the advanced stages are considered in the middle and are in the process of language acquisition to be able to reclassify as English-Only students.

The majority of English-learners came from Mexico; the rest came from other Latin American countries. The goal of the selection of the participants was to have a balance of student representation from the various countries of origin, level of language acquisition, and male and female participants. It was also important to note that selecting graduate ELLs for this study instead of pre-graduates is due in part to the graduation experience.

Sampling Procedures

A total of 20 English-language learner students were selected from the graduating class of 2017. They were ELL or reclassified ELL students, 18 years of age, and are no longer students of the district.

Before the survey and interview were presented to the ELL graduates on Tuesday, June 30, 2017, a pilot was conducted for the purpose of validity, reliability, opinion, and feedback. The class of 2017 graduate students from the Associated Student Body (ASB), otherwise known as Student Leadership, were invited to participate in the pilot study conducted by an administrator in the district. This group was selected due to their day to day interactions with English-language learner students. Worth noting is that the ASB members are elected by student peers to represent their class in all aspects of school culture and climate decision-making, including school spirit. Their advisor finalizes their selection process and the students are committed for an entire year. Leadership students have demonstrated high academic achievement, great school spirit, and promote student participation in ASB-related activities.

The researcher shared his story to the group of five graduate leadership students, as well as an overview and purpose of the research. This part of the pilot was conducted in a high school

classroom used for presentations. A member of the district administrative team was also present to facilitate and observe the pilot. The researcher shared his own experiences as an English-language learner, beginning in the 1970s and early 1980s up until going to college. The researcher then presented to the group the purpose of the study. The researcher felt strongly that the pilot served its purpose; the leadership group provided strong feedback and recommendations.

The researcher revised the survey to reflect the feedback of the five leadership students in Appendix A. This form of construct validity ensures an accurate representation of the items on the survey. Allowing student leaders to participate and reflect on the experience strengthens the external validity of the study. In addition, the researcher created an outline of his story in Appendix D: Outline of Juan A. Salas' Story as a Former English-Language Learner. With both instruments employed, the survey and focus questions were validated by the leadership students who participated in the pilot, the district administrator, and the researcher's supervisor.

Next, at a designated time, 20 selected former or graduate English-language learner participants received an invitation to participate in the study conducted by the researcher. Both the researcher and the students' former counselor made the selections. The counselor contacted the former students and invited them to the study. Out of the seven counselors considered, this one in particular was selected because she can communicate with the students in their primary language (Spanish) and has a pre-established trust with the students and their families. The counselor, who also serves under the role of English-language learner coordinator, ensures that English-language learners are placed correctly in their classes, monitored appropriately, tested when necessary, and she also maneuvers them through the reclassification process. Even after reclassification, teacher monitoring of academic progress is a requirement of all former English-

learners to ensure they will not regress and become ELLs again. In a way, the counselor has built relationships with the students; they trust in her professionalism, and she genuinely cares about their wellbeing and academic status. She is very well aware of their stories as ELL students, and has also built a relationship with their families.

The process of the study was to first have the students fill out the survey, followed by an explanation from the researcher as to why the study is being conducted. The next part of the study was for the researcher to share his story as a former English-language learner student from the 1970s and 1980s as an elementary student and his challenges going to college. The researcher established trust by relating his story to the participants. After sharing his story, the researcher divided the participants into focus interview groups.

There were four groups of five and four selected professional colleagues assigned to interview the graduates using the prepared questions about their experiences as English-learners. The final part of the study allowed the graduates to write their stories in Spanish or English.

Throughout the study, the researcher used a round table seating format during the storytelling and visited each group when the interviews were conducted to listen and take notes. Additionally, each of the four colleagues typed their own notes.

Instrumentation and Measures

There were several key components to the survey process in this study. An investigator-designed Likert survey of 21 questions was administered for quantitative data. The survey measured three factors influencing English-language learners. The first six questions of the survey focused on the intrinsic family factors influencing English-language learners. The second factor contained six questions that measured the participants' journeys to becoming English-language learners and inquired about their demographic information. The third factor, the next

five questions of the survey, measured the external school factors influencing English-language learners. The last section of the survey had four demographic information questions. The complete survey can be viewed in Appendix A.

In all four sections of the survey, participants were asked to rank their beliefs based on a pre-identified Likert-style scale: *Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, or Strongly Disagree*. The first questions of the survey and the demographic questions were different from the rest of the survey.

Participants were asked to answer eight interview questions directly related to the three factors influencing English-language learners. The questions were designed by the researcher based on both his personal recollections as a former English-learner and his professional educational experiences with ELLs. The eight questions follow a pattern; question one asks when the participants arrived in the United States, and the last question asks where the participants see themselves in five or ten years. The questions in-between allow for the answers to lead up to the next question. Appendix C was developed to demonstrate the alignment of the three research questions to the eight focus questions.

Validity

The researcher ensured the validity of the survey by seeking the scrutiny of experts: a Ph.D. professor of Concordia University, Irvine and an assistant superintendent of schools with an Ed.D. for the District. A pilot was conducted for feedback from 12th grade participants in student leadership who are of similar age and may have had the same high school experiences as those taking the survey. The leadership students reviewed the survey and provided comments and feedback. As a result, changes were integrated into the final survey. An administrator from

the school district facilitated and observed the pilot as it was conducted. Additionally, two expert researchers reviewed the survey and provided input.

Data Collection

The purpose of the three research questions was to gain insight into the student perspective of the English-language learner pathway policy. There was ample research regarding the best practices for English-language learners in the last 40 years.

The following is a timeline of how the study was conducted and what data was collected: firstly the survey, then the interview questions, and then the stories.

5:30 – 5:45 p.m. – Preparation

Pre-study – Preparing colleagues for the study:

1. Colleagues include: one counselor, four who will interview the graduates, four who will take notes from the group interviews, and the researcher.
2. Eight will receive a folder with contents needed for the study. The four interviewers will have notepads, while the four note-takers will have laptops.
3. There will be time for reflection at the end of the study.

6:00 p.m. – The Survey

Part I – The graduates will be handed their packets that contain all contents needed for the collection of study.

1. The graduates will review the consent letter, sign it, and turn it in.
2. The graduates will take the survey as they come in at 6:00 p.m.
3. One of the colleagues will collect the surveys.

6:20 p.m. – The Researcher's Story

Part II – The researcher will share his story of growing up as a bilingual student in Southern California in the 1970s and of becoming a high school principal in 2014. The researcher will present a PowerPoint.

6:40 p.m. – Interviewing the Graduates

Part III – The graduates will split into four groups to answer interview questions. Each folder will have a colored sticker to guide them to their assigned groups by color in four tables.

1. Four colleagues will interview the former students with the same eight prepared questions. (See attachment)
2. Four other colleagues will take detailed notes on the student answers provided.
3. Once the interviews are complete, the graduates will be invited to write their stories before helping themselves to a light dinner and refreshments.

7:10 p.m. – The Graduates' Stories

Part IV – The graduates will write their stories and turn them in when finished.

Figure 2. Timeline.

Data collection procedures included both quantitative and qualitative data. There was a combination of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The researcher collected data through the survey and interview questions. On the day of the study, the researcher began by establishing introductions. The participants reviewed the consent form and signed if they agreed to participate. The researcher administered the survey on paper. The participants had ample time to complete it. Once the survey was collected from all participants, the researcher told his story about growing up as an English-language learner.

After the researcher shared his story, the participants were divided into groups of four to participate in the focus interview questions. Four professional colleagues of the researcher were

each assigned to a group; they conducted the focus group interview questions and wrote down the participants' answers on a prepared template. It is worth noting that the four colleagues come from similar backgrounds and have similar stories as the participants.

Data Analysis

This study resulted in the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. The survey produced quantitative data from 21 Likert-style questions. The interview questions produced qualitative answers from the participants, who also had the opportunity to write their stories as English-language learners. Figure 2 shows the sequence of the data-gathering and explanation analysis.

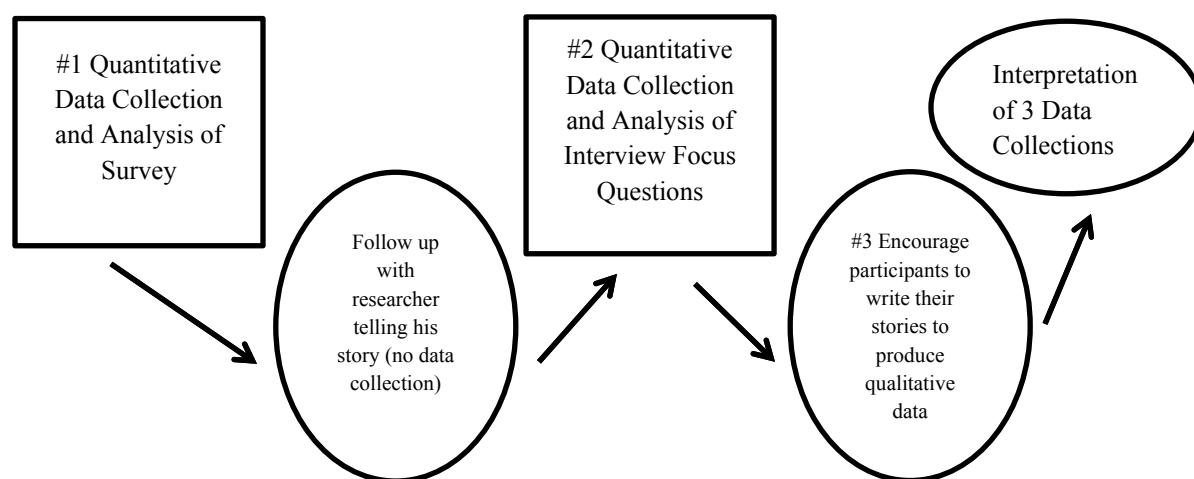


Figure 3. Collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data

The researcher collected the participants' responses to a series of multiple-choice questions. Demographic information was also collected from the participants. The researcher then analyzed the data comparing percentages of responses based on the five-point Likert Scale. Each Likert Scaled question was analyzed to determine the mean, standard deviation, and/or a percentage score.

The first step was to transcribe the participants' qualitative stories and examine common themes. Next, the researcher interpreted the themes alongside the notes from the interview questions from both the note-takers and the interviewers. The third step was to illustrate the quantitative data from the Likert survey and relate these figures to the themes that emerged during the qualitative analysis. Finally, the qualitative and quantitative data was analyzed simultaneously to closer examine the graduates' journeys and validate the intrinsic school factors.

Ethical Concerns

The first ethical dilemma will arise in studying the lives of former students who have graduated as either English-learners or reclassified ELLs: how far is too far? The extent of the study has yet to be determined regarding the participants' home lives. The second ethical dilemma lays in the degree of trust the researcher—the principal of the high school—may gain from the participants. It is also worth noting that their counselor, who has been with these students for the last three years, will invite them to the study and be present when it is conducted.

The researcher chose the topic because he could study it from both personal and professional experiences in the field of English-language learners. The study offers no financial gain for the researcher. He conducted the study in a professional and responsible manner and ensured that both the participants and the individuals who supported and assisted them were well-informed of the purpose of the study. Professional judgment on the part of the researcher coupled with the expert advice of the Department of Education made possible the research and use of tools to gain data and insight into the study of high school graduate English-language learners.

Any data collected from the surveys, interview questions, and consent forms is confidential. All information collected electronically was kept in both a district-assigned laptop and the researcher's drive. The paper surveys were also kept in a locked, secure office. The researcher's support system of four colleagues—which consists of an elementary school principal, a language development office instructional coach, an assistant principal, and a high school counselor—are all confidential employees of the same district.

Summary

The design in this chapter was used for the current study, outlining the procedure for the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data and responses. It discussed the participants of the study, the sampling procedures, instrumentation, setting, and data collection and analyses. It also included vital information on the district and schools used for the research.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This study focused on the influences of students' home lives and many of the factors that underline the family culture, including language. Additionally, the study examined the extent of influence educational services have on the needs of English-language learners. A total of 17 former high school graduates classified as English-language learners participated in the study.

The survey, interview questions, and stories were triangulated to answer three research questions:

1. What external school factors influence English-language learners?
2. What intrinsic family factors influence English-language learners?
3. What is “my” story as an English-language learner?

The researcher collected three forms of data: a survey of 21 questions, interviews consisting of eight questions, and the graduates' written stories. There were four colleagues who attended the study and assisted with interviewing the graduates. The four colleagues were assigned to one of four study groups. The colleagues who attended were an assistant superintendent, an elementary school principal, a language development specialist/instructional coach, and a counselor from the high school, all from the same district. All speak English and Spanish. They administered the surveys and interviewed the graduates. In addition, the counselor who selected, notified, and was on standby for counseling support for the participants did not interview the students, but circulated the room to ensure the study was effective.

The order in which the data was analyzed is not the same as how it was collected. The following illustration demonstrates how the data was analyzed:

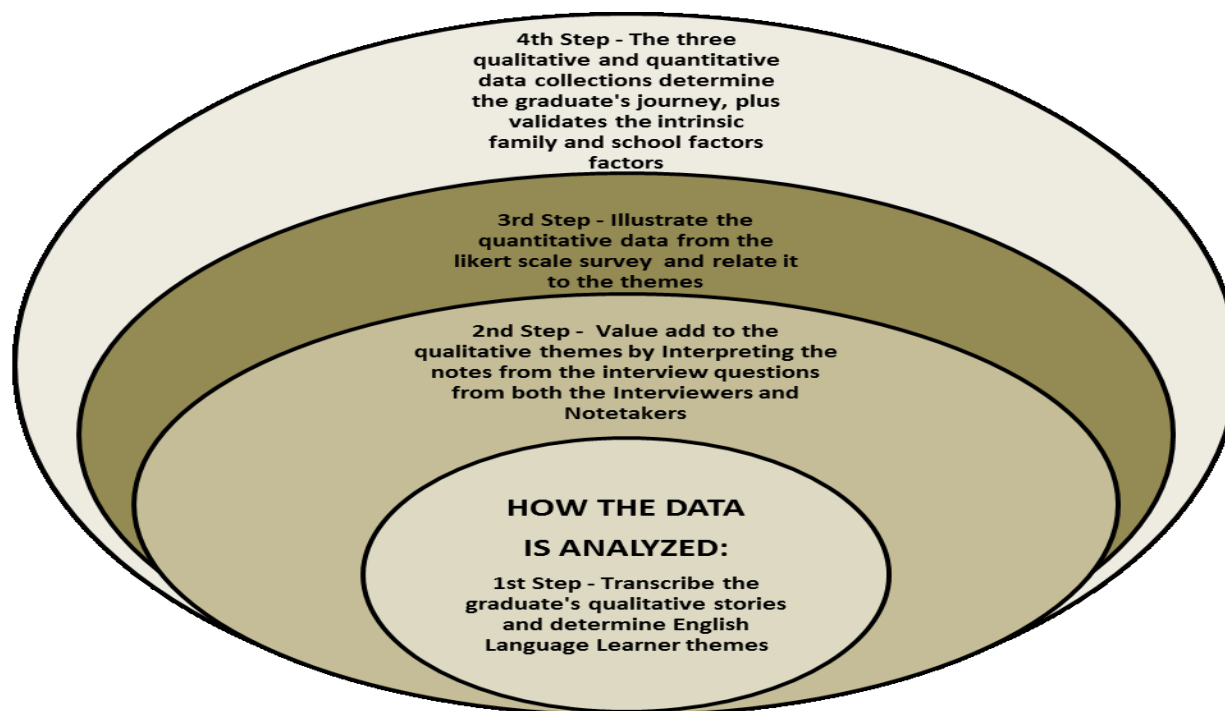


Figure 4. How the data is analyzed.

Step 1: Graduate Stories – Written in English

After the candidates took the survey and were interviewed, they all wrote their stories; 14 of the participants wrote their stories in English. The stories produced themes that affect English-language learners in California. The themes are identified on the left column of each story in Table 1.

Table 1

The Graduates' Stories (English)

Participant 1	The first time I was feeling like an English Learner was when I was in K-3
Theme: Struggles of	grade I was in Spanish class and in fourth grade I was put in English classes.
transitioning from one	It was hard because my grade got worse I was always in far ?? in middle
language to another.	school. By the time I got to high school I was kind of struggling but mostly

	in math and essay. I didn't really get the writing prompt I needed someone to explain it like two or three times for me to understand.
Participant 4	When I was in Kindergarten and 3 rd grade. I used to have a lot of trouble
Theme: 1. Learning two languages academically. 2.	because I was in Spanish. Then 4 grade I was in English. So It was hard because I had to learn both language at the same time. So I was confused a lot because it was a lot to me so I had to fight a lot to learn both language it
Goals and dreams of becoming an orthodontist.	more better than how I used to in my dreams I want to be an orthodontist put on some braces and know both language better.
Participant 5	My parents immigrated from Michoacán and Guanajuato, I don't know the
Theme: 1. Immigrating to a new country.	exact year. I was born in the United States, state of California in San Joaquin general hospital on September 24, 1999. I went to Van Buren elementary school all the way to eight grade, my middle school experience was boring. My high school experience was different than I expected.
Participant 6	My name is ? and my parents immigrated into the United States from
Theme: 1. Separation of families due to immigration. 2.	Guatemala. My dad was the first one to immigrate and at first it was just going to be him just to get some money for my mom but then he realized that life was way better in the United States so he informed my mom and
Teachers going the extra mile to support ELLs. 3. ELLs	she decided to come. I was born in Stockton, California on April 26, 1999. I have a younger sister and an older brother. In the school I was enrolled in which was Victory Elementary School they did not have a p0reschool so I

participating in
rigorous programs.

skipped it and went straight to Kindergarten. It was very easy for me to feel comfortable in school because I had a very nice teacher. She noticed that Spanish was my primary language so she gave me extra help in order to fully get English. Then I moved in 2nd grade to a different school called Fillmore Elementary. It was easy for me to start a new life because there was many Latinos in that school so I made many friends quickly. My middle school experience was way easier because by then I spoke English fluently and I felt way more comfortable speaking it. My high school experience was the most difficult so far. I enrolled into the IB program which was a lot more work than I thought, but thanks to that extra work I learned a lot from it. My last two years were the most difficult one because we started getting a lot more work and I started giving up. I knew I was going badly but at the same time I was lazy and felt like life was very easy. Then I realized that my parents came to the United States for a reason to have a better life. To have a better life you need an education. I knew I had to graduate and was going to no matter how difficult it was going to be. I knew that I did not want to upset my parents and would rather want them to be proud. Even though it was difficult and I knew I did something bad I had to graduate and I did. I am very proud I did and now I am going to college. I am attending the art institute in Sacramento. As a kid, I always had a passion for art so far it's going very good. I enjoy what I am doing. I want to successfully graduate from there and one day open my own shop as a professional graphic designer. I would like to accomplish this not only for myself but for my parents. I would like to pay them back for everything that they had done for me.

Participant 7	My parents emigrated from Mexico to the United States on 1998. I was
Theme: 1. Long-Term	born in Oakland, California on January 28, 1999. My elementary school
English-language	experience was hard but not impossible. In the third grade my school
learners 2. "Ever	became an only English school. I had difficulty because I had just came
ELLs." 3. What it	back from Mexico. I would cry because I couldn't finish nor do the
means to be	assignment. Thanks to a teacher names Ms. Garcia and the school counselor
Reclassified.	I started to write English and continue going on. My middle school year
	was easier because my teachers continued to push me into expand my
	English vocabulary. During high school years I had the help of two people.
	One being Ms. Ornelas and Mr. Nelson. They always kept me going. On
	march 2017 I ended up getting a certificate about me getting promoted from
	English Learner.
Participant 8	My name is ? and I attended Franklin High School. I had a great time
Theme: 1. Grateful for	during school and I'm thankful for my teachers and principals who pushed
the opportunities. 2.	me forward and helping me graduate. In my lifetime during school I was
Social/emotional	never popular I was bullied often but once I entered high school it was
awareness in ELLs.	different experience it was better and I'm thankful for the people who
	supported me.
Participant 9	I don't know when my parents immigrated to the United States. I was born
Theme: 1. Do ELLs	in Stockton California, Dameron Hospital February 23, 1999. Head Start at
understand their	Kennedy Park. Kindergarten at James Monroe up to middle of 8 th grade.
family history? 2.	Transferred to Elmwood elementary and finished middle school. Franklin

ELLs entering Head Start.	High School with a GPA of 2.9. I am going to Delta College, freshman in college.
Participant 11 Theme: 1. Similar to goals and dreams of ELLs.	My parents emigrated from Mexico 21 years ago. To give me and my sibling a better life. I was born in French Camp at San Joaquin Hospital. The first school I went to was Harrison Elementary then I went to August elementary, then to Elmwood. After Franklin High School I graduated and now I go to college and I plan to be a Highway Patrol officer and that's my story.
Participant 12 Theme: 1. Feeling scared and lonely as an ELL. 2. Struggles of growing up in this country.	Coming to the United States was not easy had to get use to this new world. I didn't know how to speak English I had so much trouble understand what everyone said I felt different from everybody felt scared lonely but It got way easy. Wants I found some friends that were just like me, it was really hard growing up in this country.
Participant 13 Theme: 1. ELL graduate writing skills in two languages. 2. Enjoying school, home, and life in the U.S. as an ELL.	Well I was born and raised in the U.S. My life story well just like any child you learn to adapt to things. I was never perfect at English and honestly I'm still not. I been living my whole life here and I would honestly move every time to a new school and it was hard because you already know you need to make new friends and you don't want to. Starting again from scratch is hard, because you don't know what to do, but I learned to adapt quickly and make new friends that I treat like family.

Over the years it was fun I met some great friends and kept in touch with them even throughout high school year. All of my four years of high school were fun, but hard though not impossible to do. I then graduated which was a great day for me I graduated with all of my friends, but even after all that we went our separate way, but we still keep in touch with one another even if we don't live close anymore. Some moved to Galt others to Fresno and even to San Francisco. Even so we hang out with each other whenever we have the free time to spare.

<p>Participant 14</p> <p>Theme: 1. The embarrassment of learning a new language at a young age may go a long ways. 2. The struggles of growing up in a dysfunctional family as an ELL. 3. A full ride scholarship to UOP as a recent RFEP.</p>	<p>My parents and I immigrated into the United States when I was 5 years old and it was in the year 2003. I was born in Jalisco Mexico, October 31, 1998. My elementary experience at first was very difficult because I was new to the language and all I knew how to speak was Spanish. So it was difficult for me to communicate with my friends and with my teachers at the time and I told myself that I didn't want to be an embarrassment anymore because my friend's would laugh at me for not knowing English. But by the 6th grade I was a perfectly English student and felt proud of myself because I would think I could of made it that far so when I went to high school, all I would tell myself is that I wanted to be a great person and that I want to give my mom the best life she can get because she did so for me and my family and I want to pay for by going to a good college and getting a good job. Also, by the end of my senior year my GPA was pretty good overall it was a 3.9 GPA and I felt proud I would become a better person so when I apply to colleges I got a full ride to my dream school for having a good grades and now I love the school and I hope to get a BS at the University of the Pacific</p>
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in Stockton, California because it's a great school and I hope to get a master's degree in mechanical engineering.

Participant 15	My parents came to the United States around 2004. My family and I lived
Theme: 1. What is	in Los Angeles, California. After like 2 years we moved to Stockton,
next after high school	California and I started going to a school names Martin Luther King
for a former ELL?	elementary school. I graduated and moved on to high school. I attended
	Franklin high School. I graduated from high school and now working in
	construction now. I would always write my essays that I would write at
	school. Soon I hope to get enough money to go to the college I want and
	have a better future.
Participant 16	My name is ?, and I am 18 years old. I was born in Michoacán, Mexico.
Theme: 1. Having to	My mom brought me at 4 months old. My mother has two sisters who lived
help out the family	in Stockton, California. When my mother had my sister here in the United
even as a student. 2.	States in San Jose. I went to Hamilton Elementary school all through 8 th
Helping siblings'	grade year. Once I hit high school which is Franklin High School. I played
dreams come true –	football all my three years. I would have liked to go to college but I
sacrificing.	decided to help my mom with my sister college money, so she could attend
	college. My sister is recently is a senior at Franklin high school, and I'm
	helping her make her dreams come true by going to college.
Participant 17	It was very difficult the idea that he will never return to my life (my father)
Theme: 1. Family	It was very painful for me and all my family, when my father died two years
hardships lead to	ago, as consequence we came here to the United States with my mother.

survive in another

country. 2. Being

poor, humble, and

proud. 3. The dreams

and goals of

immigrants.

My mother is from Michoacan, Mexico. My dad was also from Michoacan.

My mother never went to school because she lived in a very small and poor

town. My family consists of two boys and a girl including me. My brothers

and me olike to go to school. I graduated from Franklin High School and

my brothers at Hamilton Elementary. My dad study in mexico up to high

school, and he was dedicated to sale used cars until the day of his death.

My biggest obstacle in that moment was the language (English) the

pronunciation is hard, and my economics situation is difficult too. My goal

is to graduate from college. I am going to Delta College in Stockton, CA. to

continue my studies improve my English , get a degree, and exercise my

career. I want to be an electric or mechanic engineer. Have a good job and

a better future for me and my family.

Step 1: Graduate Stories – Written In Spanish

Three of the participants wrote their stories in Spanish. Similar to the English stories, the themes are on the last left column. The stories are translated on the last column to the right in Table 2.

Table 2

The Graduates' Stories (Spanish)

Participant 2	Venir a los Estados Unidos era difícil	Coming to the United States was
Theme: 1. Entering a new country and learning its customs and traditions. 2. Support from teachers and students.	<p>porque no conocía a nadie y mis primos no me ayudaron en nada. En la escuela era difícil porque no conocía a nadie y ningún maestro hablaba español y me contaban con estudiantes que no hablaban español. No entendía nada solo me quedaba viendo.</p> <p>Cuando entre a High School aprendí mucho con Ms. Chapman ella me hacía hablar en inglés y con eso mi inglés mejoro mucho y con los demás maestros también y los estudiantes también me ayudaron mucho.</p>	<p>difficult because I did not know anyone. My cousins did not help me at all. School was difficult because not only did I not know anyone, but no teacher spoke in Spanish. Teachers would sit me next to students who spoke no Spanish. I did not understand anything and all I would do is stare.</p> <p>When I entered high school, I learned so much from Ms. Chapman. She would make me speak English, it got better in time. Other teachers and students also helped me a lot.</p>
Participant 3	Venir a los estados Unidos cuando yo	Coming to the United States at the
Theme: 1. Learning a new language. 2. Not giving up, and now in college.	<p>tenía solo 1 años fue mui difícil tanto para mí como para mi hermano.</p> <p>Porque tenía que aprender una nueva lengua y por qué no tenía a nadie que me ayudara con mi tarea o cuando</p>	<p>age of one was very difficult for me as it was for my brother. Difficult because I had to learn a new language and had no one to help me with my homework or to translate</p>

	<p>alguien me habla en Ingles.</p> <p>Afortunadamente nunca me di por vencida y seguí practicando el inglés en mi casa. Me gradué de high school con un GPA de 3.8 y sigo con mis estudios en Delta College porque quiero llegar hacer maestra de español algún día.</p>	<p>when I was spoken to in English.</p> <p>Fortunately, I never gave up and kept practicing my English at home. I graduated from high school with a GPA of 3.8. I continued my education at Delta College because I want to become a Spanish teacher someday.</p>
<p>Participant 10</p> <p>Theme: 1. The meaning of family for ELLs. 2. Why can't ELLs succeed if they know what they must do?</p>	<p>Ola mi nombre es ? y esta es mi historia de un poco de mi vida. Tengo mi papa y mi mama y un hermano y viví en México por nueve años. Pobremente pero mui feliz con mis familia. En el ano que me biné para estados unidos fue en el 2010, Stockton fue el loguar donde me quede para vivir hasta que un día a la mejor me mueva para otro lugar. Pero lo primero que hice cuando llegue a que a U.S. fue ir a la escuela y si fui middle school, y high school y agarra mi diploma estoy yendo a Delta College para hacerme mecánico</p>	<p>Hello, my name is...this is a little bit of the story of my life. I have a father, mother, and brother and lived in Mexico for nine years. I lived poor, but very happy with my family. I came to the United States in 2010 to Stockton. I will stay in Stockton until I go somewhere else. The first thing I did was to go to middle and high school. I earned my diploma and currently going to Delta college to become a mechanic. I want to have a better future and all the things I desire fulfilled.</p>

automotriz para que un día tenga un
futuro mejor Y así tener todas mis
cosas que a sonado.

Step 2: Interviewing the Graduates

Participants answered eight interview questions. Due to confidentiality, Participant One in the written stories section is not the same participant as in the interview questions, and the same applies to the survey as well. The following are the responses of the participants to the eight interview questions.

The answers to question one, “What was it like coming to the United States at a young age?” are recorded in Table 3. A total of 12 participants responded with themes of a difficult life, not being able to speak English, and not being able to understand school at a young age.

Table 3

What was it like coming to the United States at a young age?

Participant	Response
Participant A	Hard for me, didn't speak English, was 11 years old, felt embarrassed and didn't understand teachers, hard time with homework.
Participant B	Didn't speak English, was 11 years old, was very hard for me especially in my English class.
Participant C	Doesn't remember, was born in the United States, elementary CELDT scores were way far below basic.
Participant D	It was a good idea because of a better life.
Participant E	I was very young, I was four, I remember it was hard for my parents.
Participant F	I was actually born here.
Participant H	I was born here.
Participant I	It was a good thing, living a better life, better than Mexico.
Participant J	I was very young, four years old. Don't remember much but my parents tell me their struggles
Participant K	I was born here. Latino parents was hard since I was only speaking Spanish at home.
Participant L	I was born here.

In response to question two, "How did you feel when you entered a new country, city, and your school?" 12 participants provided answers to Table 4 with themes such as the challenges of acquiring a second language, and the fear of being in a new country where everything is different contrasted with the excitement of beginning a new life where circumstances are better than in their home countries.

Table 4

How did you feel when you entered a new country, city, and your school?

Participant	Response
Participant A	Cousin helped me with my classes. Had to learn English so I can help my little sister with homework since both of our parents couldn't help us because they didn't speak English.
Participant B	Learned Spanish first from grades 1st – 3rd, in 4th grade started English class and lost my first language, doesn't speak Spanish that much, grades went down.
Participant C	Confused because first I learned Spanish and then English but family only speaks Spanish at home.
Participant D	Had to figure stuff out by myself, like where is the cafeteria, had to learn English so I can help my little sister with homework
Participant E	I was happy coming to this country, scared and nervous entering school, and happy and nervous in a new city.
Participant F	I was young I felt lost I asked questions in my new country. Everything was different, they all speak different languages in the city. In school, I was shy, different, I wasn't a part of it because of the different culture. I started making friend got more comfortable.
Participant H	School was difficult to me, was bullied a lot, and was hard.
Participant I	I don't remember.
Participant J	Happy entering a new school and was scary. Happy, but nervous in a new city.
Participant K	I was very young, feeling lost. I was young and didn't ask much questions. Mother would tell me we came here for a better place. Everything was difficult and it was hard to communicate with people. My new school made me feel shy, different culture and society. I stated to adopt to my surroundings in time.
Participant L	School was very difficult, didn't have a lot of friends. I was bullied a lot. People made fun of me.
Participant M	Never entered a new country or city. I can't remember.

In Table 5, “What was your perception of other students in school who were not like you and who were just like you?” question three generated answers with themes such as finding others with similar plights as the graduates’, working through language barriers, and perceptions based on not knowing English.

Table 5

What was your perception of other students in school who were not like you and who were just like you?

Participant	Response
Participant A	I thought Jasmine was smarter than her, CELDT was very hard to pass.
Participant B	I thought Hazel was smarter than me.
Participant C	I thought Diana was smarter than me.
Participant D	I saw them the same, whoever talked to me I talked too, those who didn’t I didn’t.
Participant E	I didn’t know a lot of English people were already speaking English and I didn’t. My mom didn’t speak English so I could only communicate in Spanish.
Participant F	Everybody was the same to me, have strengths and weaknesses. I am sure they saw me different because they put me down but I pushed through and moved forward. Everyone was the same just had trouble with English.
Participant H	Harder and easier to talk to.
Participant I	I would see them the same. Whoever talked to me, I would talk back and vice versa. I would tell them to do their work and stay on track.
Participant J	A lot of people weren’t like me. It was different because everyone was speaking English and I didn’t know how to speak to them. My parents (mom) didn’t know English.
Participant K	Everyone was the same, kids just had trouble with English. It wasn’t a big thing to me. It probably was to others but never to me.

Participant L Perception of others unlike you. Harder to talk to and easier to talk to.

Table 6 below poses the question, “Do you still consider yourself an English-language learner after graduating from high school?” The graduates’ answers revealed that they still consider themselves English-language learners, people do not understand them when they speak, people need to explain things to them so they can understand, the graduates have no one to explain the lessons in community college, and becoming more proficient in English means losing proficiency in Spanish.

Table 6

Do you still consider yourself an English-language learner after graduating from high school?

Participant	Response
Participant A	Yes, because people don’t understand me when I am speaking English.
Participant B	Can’t really pronounce, second time taking English at Delta, I usually need someone to explain 3 times so I can understand.
Participant C	Confusing now even more because no one can explain the lessons to me at Delta. Parents were born in Mexico and can’t help.
Participant D	Brother is in IB and makes fun of me and my sister because we don’t speak English correctly and don’t understand most of the times.
Participant E	Yes.
Participant F	No because I speak English perfectly. Now I have more trouble speaking Spanish then English but still speak it.
Participant H	Yes I do.
Participant I	Yes.
Participant J	Yes.
Participant K	No, because I can speak English now more. Now I struggle to speak Spanish since, I learned English. It was hard to communicate with family now.

Participant L Yes, I do. I feel like Spanish is my language.

The answers to question five, “Is speaking two languages very valuable to you? Do you try to speak English as much as possible?” are recorded in Table 7. The graduates’ answers generated the following themes: Spanish is used to speak to family, English comprehension remains challenging, jobs require English proficiency, and there are benefits to being bilingual.

Table 7

Is speaking two languages very valuable to you? Do you try to speak English as much as possible?

Participant	Response
Participant A	Try to speak Spanish most of the time, make conversation with grandparents.
Participant B	Yes, I try to speak English as much as possible. Need to know to improve my reading.
Participant C	Yes
Participant D	It is important to speak English when looking for a job. I try to watch kids programs on television to learn English.
Participant E	I think it is, more opportunities of getting a job, a better job than if you knew just Spanish. Yes, I try to speak English everywhere I’m at and if I need to speak Spanish I speak it.
Participant F	Yes because in the work force they always need bilingual people.
Participant H	Yes, it is. Yes, I do, both actually. Like my parents say if you don’t use it you lose it, so I practice them both.
Participant I	Yes.
Participant J	Yes, I think it is, it’s a better opportunity of getting a job or better job than if I knew just Spanish. I try to speak English everywhere I am at. If necessary I speak Spanish.
Participant K	Yes, in the workforce they always want people who can speak two languages. Especially now since there’s more bilinguals.

Participant L Yes, it is. I speak both languages. My parents say if you don't use it you will lose it.

Participant M Yes, very valuable. Speaking English as much as possible.

In Table 8, "What do you wish to accomplish now after high school?" question six provided such answers as becoming teachers, pediatricians, orthodontists, mechanical engineers, and nurses. Another goal that graduates shared was living the American dream.

Table 8

What do you wish to accomplish now after high school?

Participant	Response
Participant A	Spanish Teacher
Participant B	Pediatrician
Participant C	Orthodontist
Participant D	Pre-School Teacher
Participant E	My goal is to get my stuff together and get a college degree. Have my own house, cars, happy, and successful.
Participant F	I want to get my master's in mechanical engineering and start my own engineering business. Being able to support my family. My dream has always been to buy my mom a house to pay back for her struggles.
Participant H	Getting a good job, good career, making good money. My goals are to get a good job to make a descent good money and to support my family buy things I want. My dream is to have a good life, nice future, and nice family.
Participant I	Becoming a neo-natal nurse.
Participant J	My goal is to get my stuff together and get a college degree. I want my own house, cars, and be happy.
Participant K	Well, I want to get my master's in mechanical engineering. Start my own engineering business. My goals and dreams are to be able to support my family. Buy my mom a house with everything one suffered. It's my way of payback.

Participant L Get a good job to make a decent living so I can help my family and get the things I want. My dream is to have a good life and nice future.

Participant M Becoming a neo-natal nurse.

Question seven (Table 9) asked, “If you had the opportunity, what would you say to other English-language learners in 9th – 12th grade?” The graduates stressed the importance of never giving up, making smart use of time, taking advantage of the education provided, asking for help, staying on-task, and studying diligently.

Table 9

If you had the opportunity, what would you say to other English-language learners in 9th – 12th grade?

Participant	Response
Participant A	Don't give up ask for help. I didn't ask for help when I needed it.
Participant B	Ask for help don't be shy especially when testing.
Participant C	Ask for help.
Participant D	I would tell them not to mess around and pay attention.
Participant E	Tell them to focus in school. Everything is worth it if you really try. If you commit to something you can accomplishment your goals.
Participant F	Keep studying, practice, and keep your head in the books. It is hard sometimes.
Participant H	They can do it.
Participant I	I would tell them to not to mess around and pay attention they will regret everything they did if they don't graduate. It's an amazing feeling to walk the stage.
Participant J	To focus in school. Everything is worth it and if you try, you will accomplish your goals. Not about the “being smart” but trying. If you try you will accomplish your goals.

Participant K Keep studying and practicing might be hard but as long as they keep their goals in mind its ok.

Participant L They can do it.

For question eight, “Where do you see yourself in five years? Ten? Twenty?” the graduates gave answers such as having a career, raising a family, owning a house, and traveling.

Table 10

Where do you see yourself in five years? Ten? Twenty?

Participant	Response
Participant A	In five at UC Davis, in twenty a doctor.
Participant B	In five finishing my career, in ten working and traveling, in twenty married.
Participant C	In five years still in school, in ten raising my son, in twenty hopefully have a career.
Participant D	Bachelor degree in five, in school and working in ten, have my doctorate in twenty.
Participant E	Finishing college and working on getting a house or apartment.
Participant F	Hopefully see myself with a mechanical engineering BA degree working for a company. With my masters having a decent house able to support my family because I would have been in the workforce for a few years. Owning my own engineering business, travel the world, and visiting other countries.
Participant H	See myself with a nice job, savings for my dream car. I have always wanted my own house so in ten years with my own house. I don’t know, time will tell, hopefully still with my dream car making good money, raising a beautiful family by that time.
Participant I	Nursing and taking care of my family.
Participant J	Finishing college and working on getting a house or apartment. In ten years, my career being good in life and successful. Also, arguing with my family. Taking trips with my family. I would like to travel the world and take trips.

Participant K	In five years, mechanical engineer from the University of the Pacific. In ten years, a master's degree supporting my family, since I will have a couple of years working. In twenty years, I will own a mechanical engineering business. Visiting the world, third world countries, everything is a different environment and different culture.
Participant L	In five years, a nice job and car. In ten years, always wanted my own house. In twenty years, a nice family.
Participant M	Nursing, taking care of my family. Both referring to five and ten years.

Table 11 below matches the themes of the participants' answers to the corresponding interview questions.

Table 11

Answers and Themes

Interview Questions	Themes from Interview Questions
1. What was it like coming to the United States at a young age?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult life • Not being able to speak English • Not being able to understand school at a young age.
2. How did you feel when you entered a new country, city, and your school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding others similar to the graduates • Language barriers • Perceptions based on not knowing English.
3. What was your perception of other students in school who were not like you and who were just like you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges of acquiring a second language (English) • Fearful of being in a new country where everything is different • Excited to begin a new life where things were better than their home country.
4. Do you still consider yourself an English-language learner after graduating from high school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The graduates consider themselves as English-language learners • People do not understand me when most graduates speak, needing to explain things to me so I can understand, I have no one to explain the lessons in community college • The more I learn English, the more I lose my Spanish.

5. Is speaking two languages very valuable to you? Do you try to speak English as much as possible?
 - Spanish is used to speak to the family
 - English is a challenge, especially with comprehension
 - The need to speak English appropriately because jobs require it, and the benefits of being bilingual.
 - Becoming teachers, pediatricians, orthodontists, mechanical engineer, and nurse.
 - Graduates expressed living the American dream
 - You will accomplish a lot just by trying
 - Not about being “smart” but trying, do not waste any time
 - Take advantage of your education, ask for help, and do not “mess” around, and keep studying.
 - Having a career, raising a family, owning a house, and being able to travel.
6. What do you wish to accomplish now after high school?
7. If you had the opportunity, what would you say to other English-language learners in 9th – 12th grade?
8. Where do you see yourself in five years? Ten? Twenty?

Step 3: The Survey

All 17 participants took the survey consisting of 22 questions. Figure 5 establishes who raised the participants. There were five options to choose from; 14 participants indicated both father and mother raised them. Three participants were raised by their mother only.

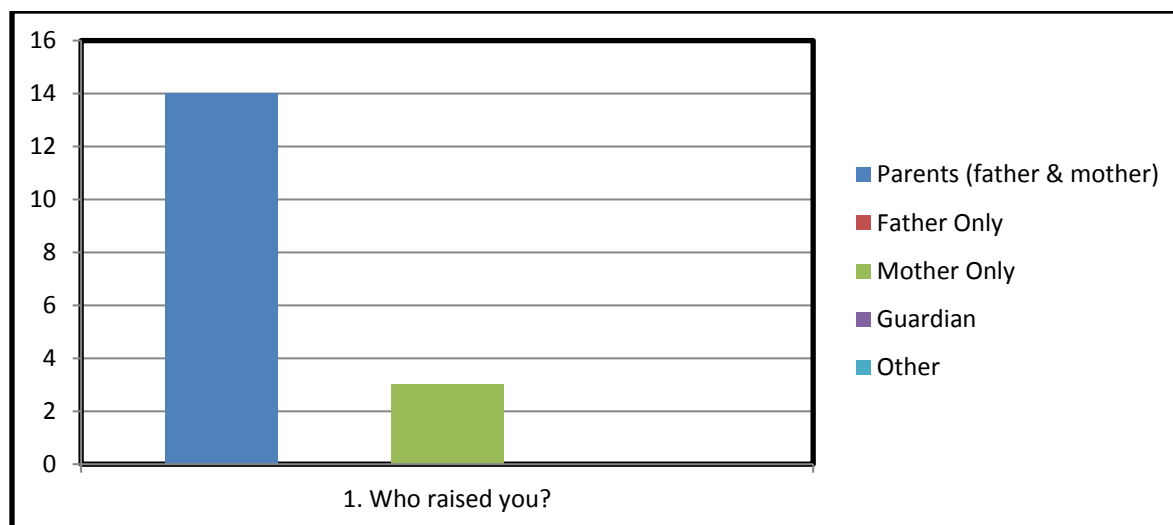


Figure 5. Who raised you?

Figure 6 illustrates the graduates' opinions of how responsible their families raised them to be in both their personal and their school lives.

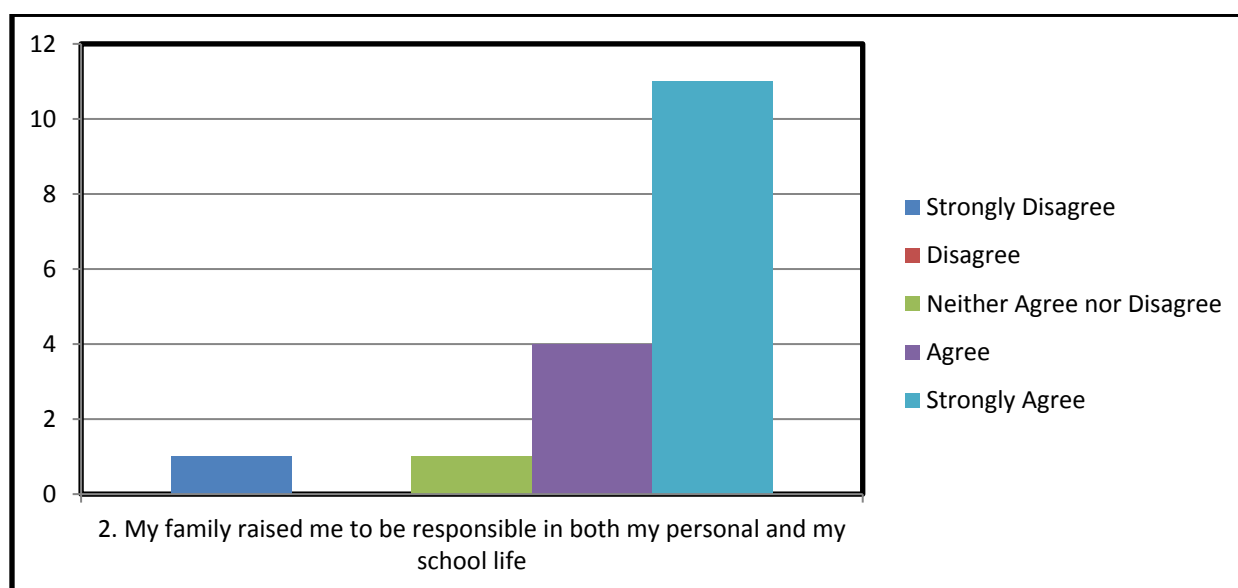


Figure 6. My family raised me.

Figure 7 illustrates how many of the candidates' families supported them with their high school educations.

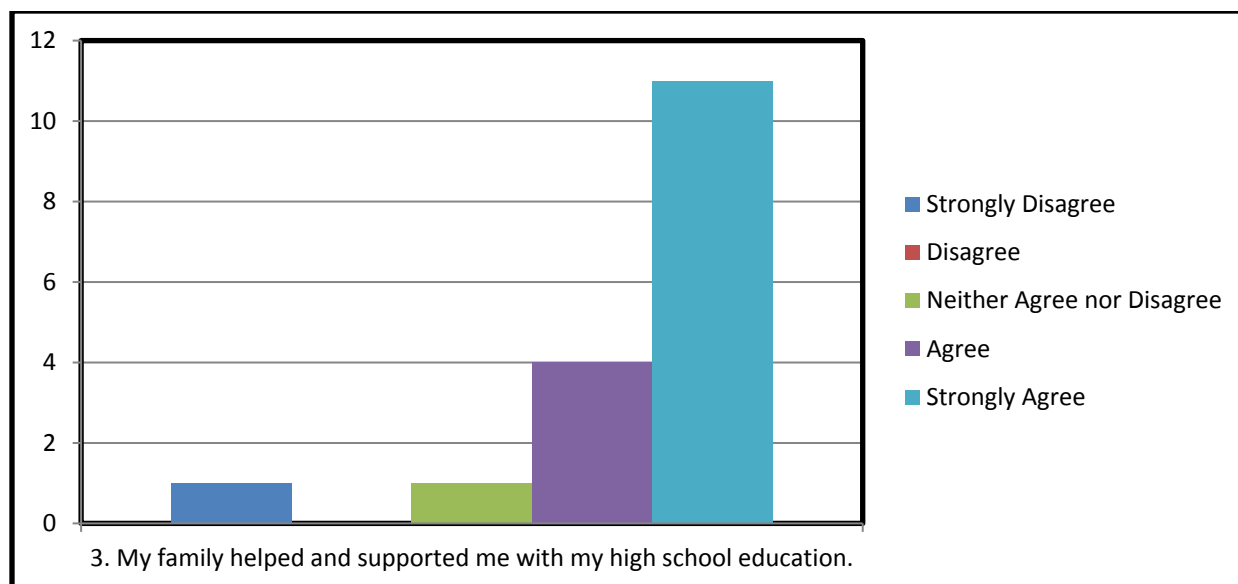


Figure 7. My family helped and supported me.

Figure 8 illustrates the extent to which the participants' families had conversations with them about their goals and dreams.

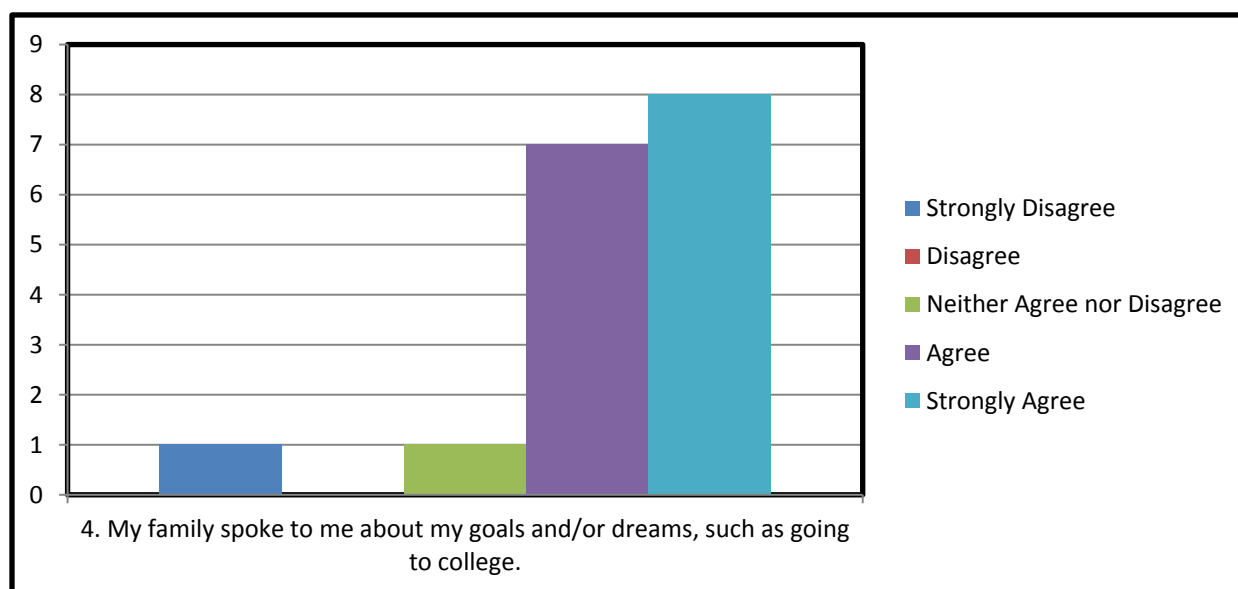


Figure 8. My family spoke to me about my goals and dreams.

Figure 9 illustrates the extent to which the participants' families helped them with their schoolwork.

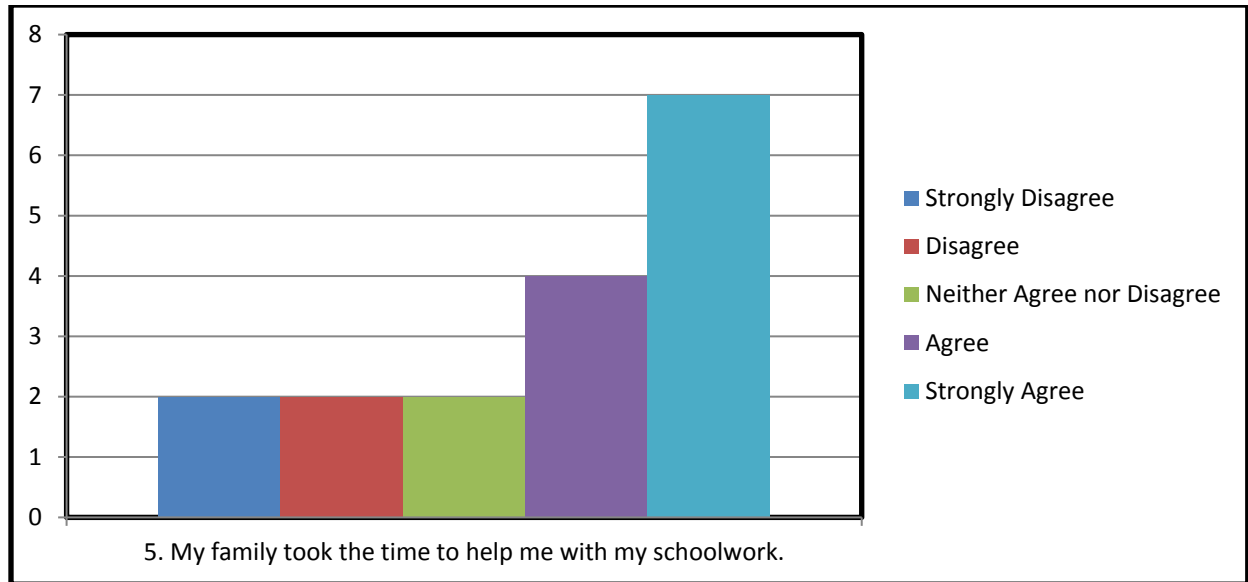


Figure 9. My family helped me.

Figure 10 illustrates the extent to which the participants' families saved money for them to attend college.

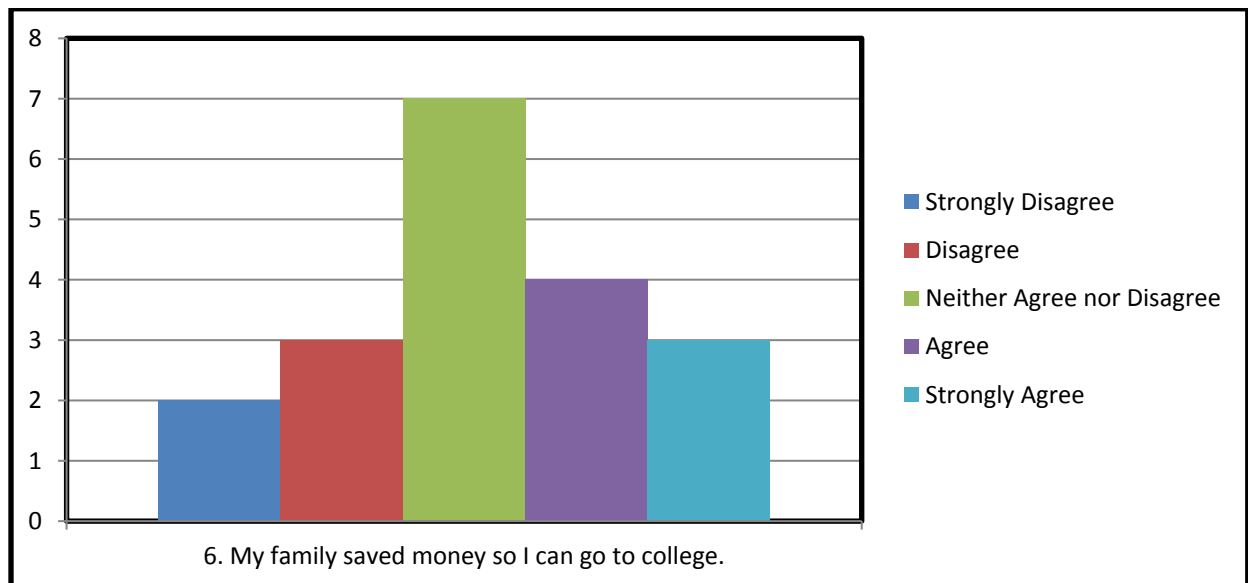


Figure 10. My family saved money so I can go to college.

Figure 11 illustrates the participants' understanding of their families' decisions to bring them to the United States.

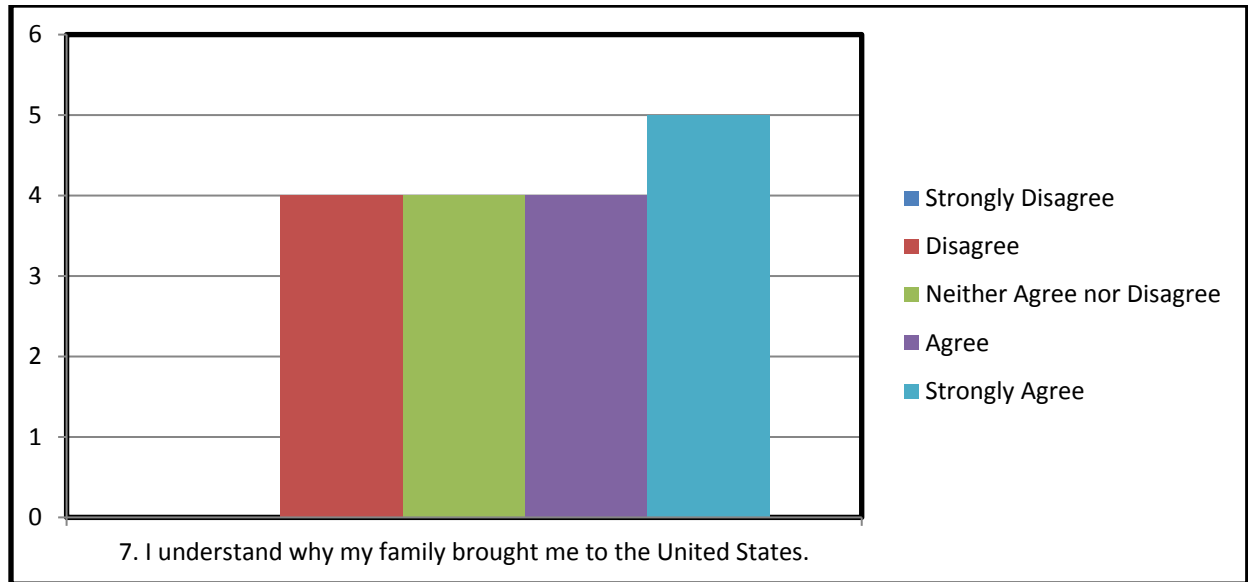


Figure 11. My family brought me to the United States.

Figure 12 illustrates the participants' levels of happiness in migrating to the United States.

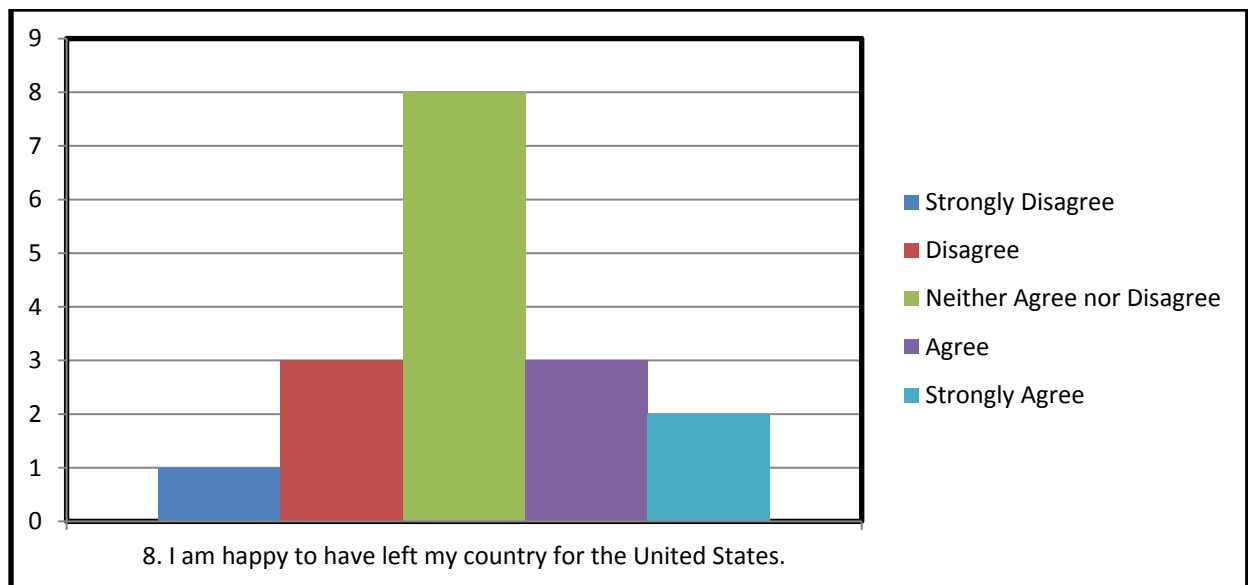


Figure 12. I am happy to settle in the United States.

Figure 13 illustrates how strongly the participants desire to return to their home countries.

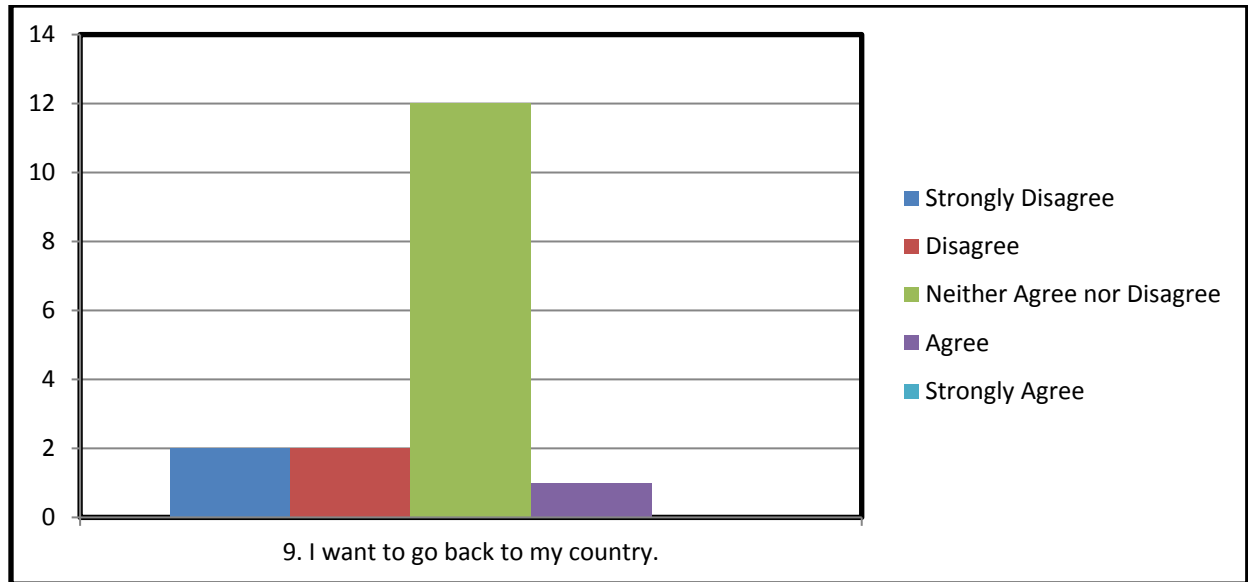


Figure 13. I want to go back to my country.

Figure 14 illustrates the extent to which the participants perceive having a higher standard of living in the United States as opposed to their countries of origin.

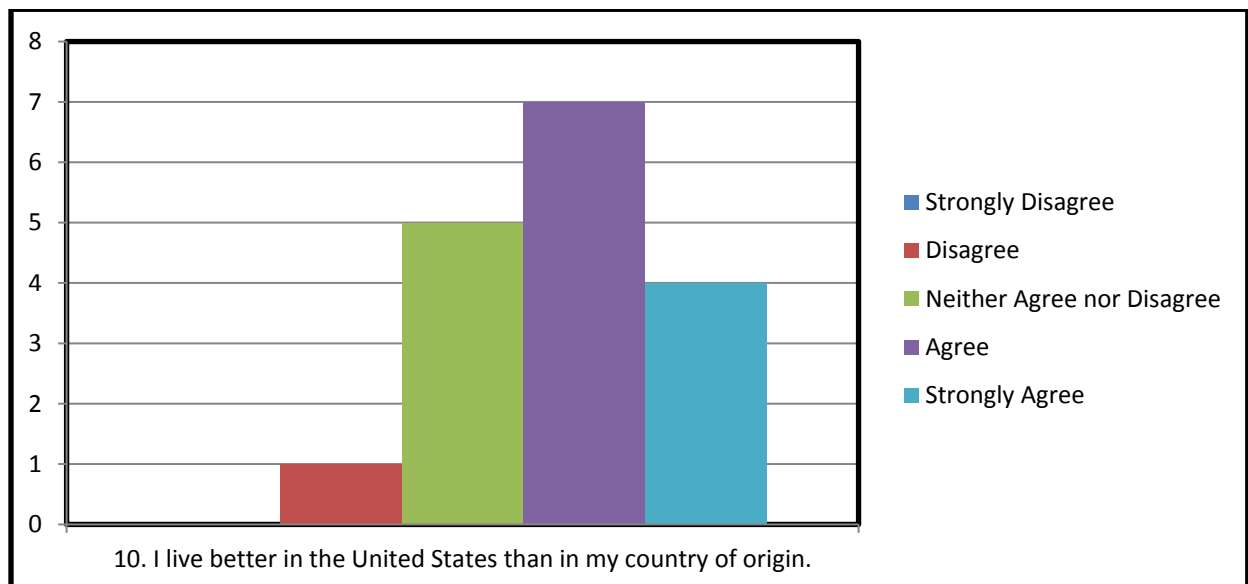


Figure 14. I live better in the United States.

Figure 15 illustrates the extent to which the participants disagree with their families' decisions to bring them to the United States.

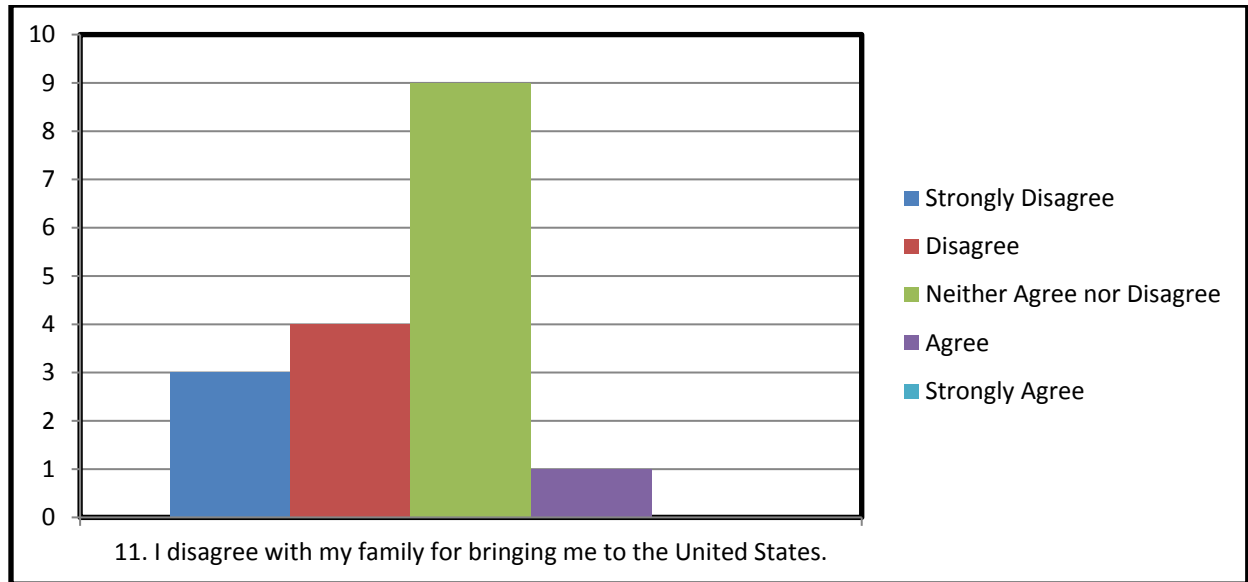


Figure 15. I disagree with my family for bringing me to the United States.

Figure 16 illustrates the extent to which the participants desire to finish college with a degree and have a career.

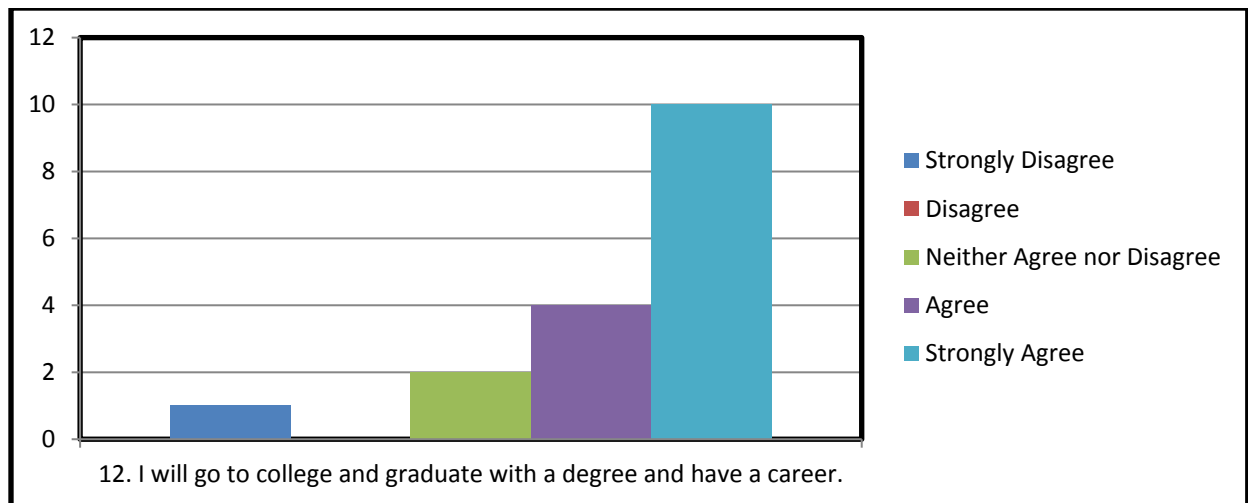


Figure 16. I will go to college.

All participants either graduated as English-language learners or reclassified during their senior years. Figure 17 illustrates the extent to which they understood their roles as English-learners.

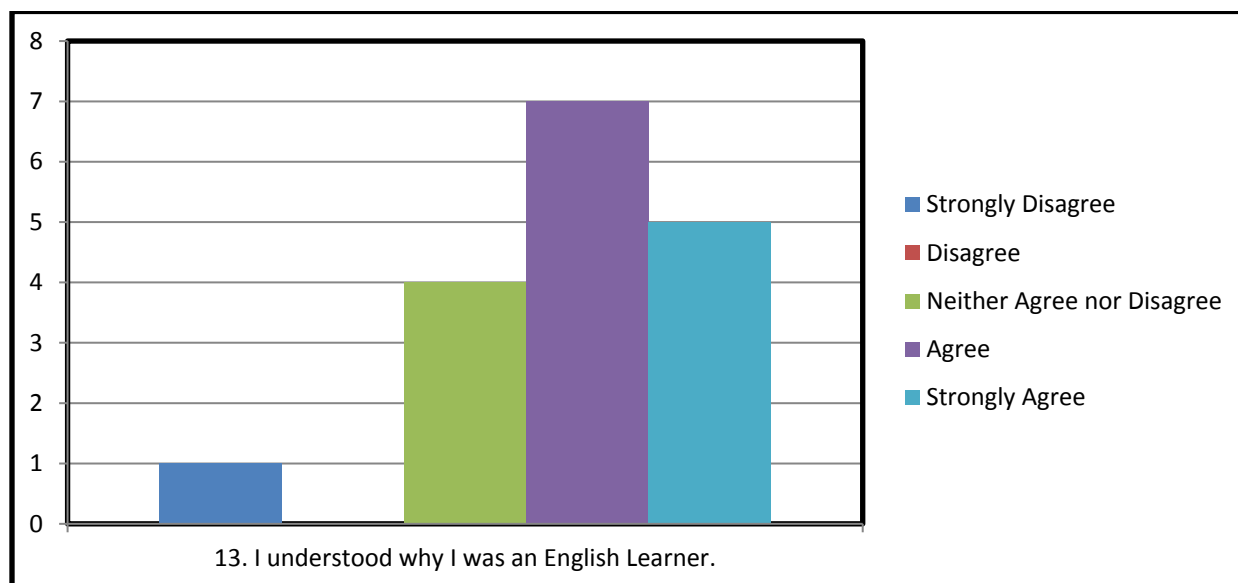


Figure 17. I understood why I was an English-learner.

Figure 18 illustrates the extent to which the participants felt embarrassed of their limited abilities to speak English.

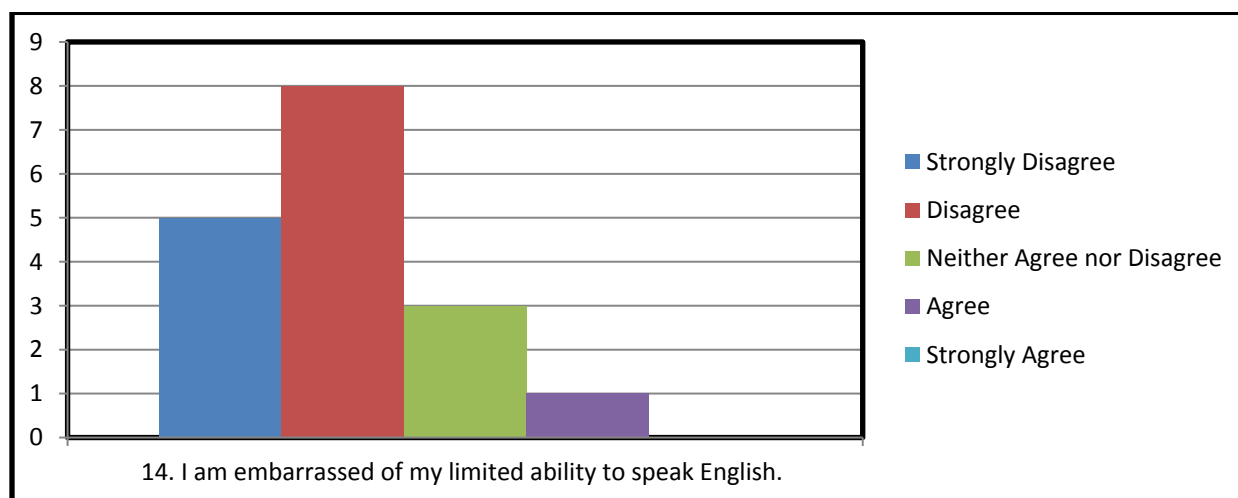


Figure 18. I am embarrassed of my limited ability to speak English.

Figure 19 illustrates the extent to which the participants use English in everyday interactions.

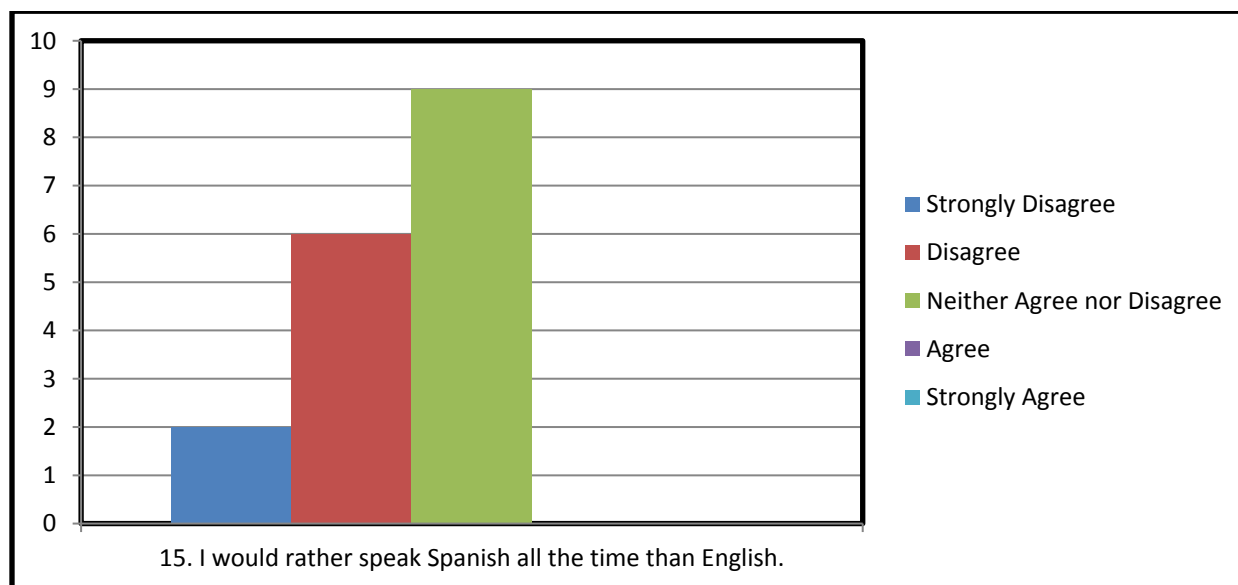


Figure 19. Speaking Spanish rather than English.

Figure 20 illustrates the extent to which the participants felt their teachers helped them learn English and graduate from high school.

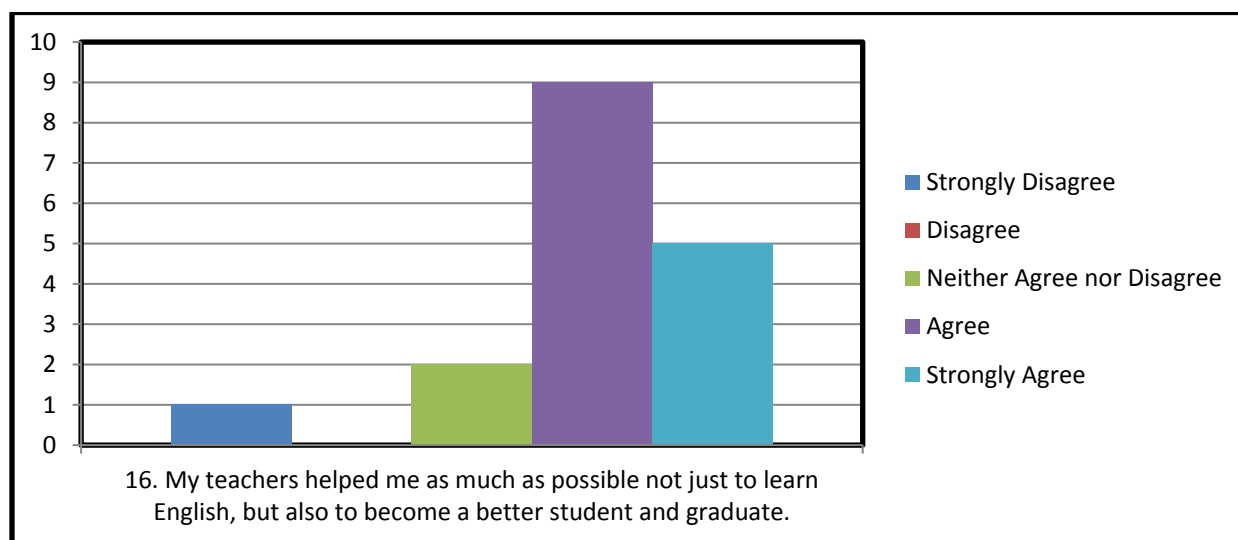


Figure 20. My teachers helped me learn English and graduate.

Figure 21 illustrates the extent to which the participants felt their schools motivated them to learn English, become better students, and go to college.

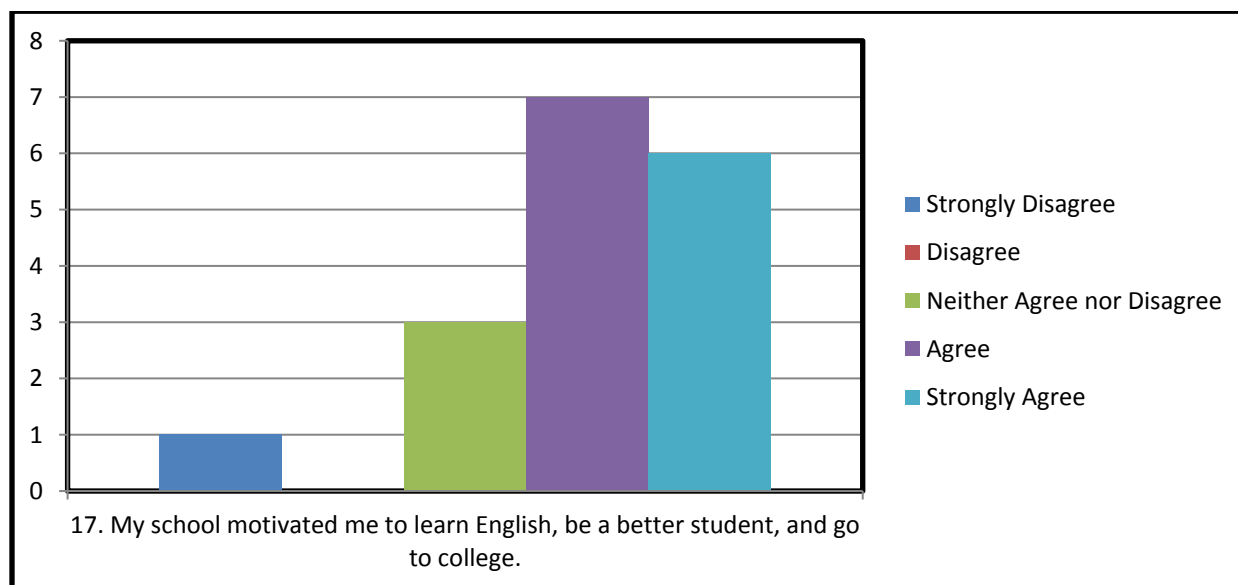


Figure 21. My school motivated me to learn English.

Demographic Information

As seen in Figure 22, a total of 17 graduates, nine males and eight females, participated in the study.

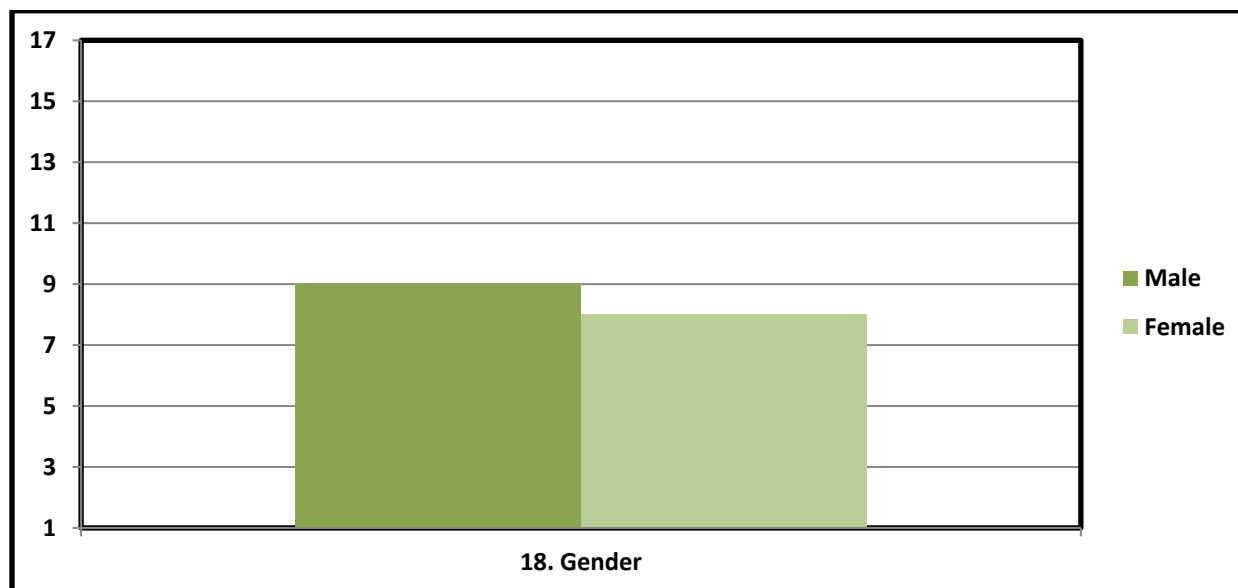


Figure 22. Gender.

Figures 23 and 24 illustrate what languages the participants prefer to speak at home and elsewhere.

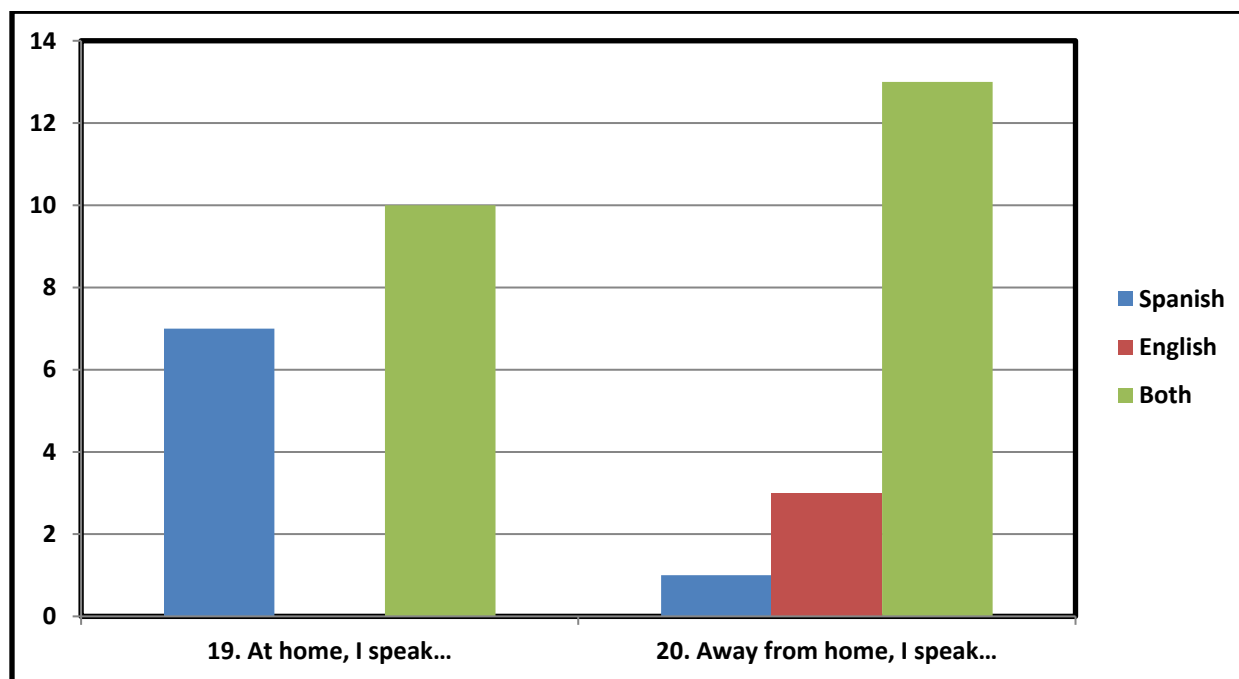


Figure 23. What I speak at home.

Figure 24. What I speak away from home.

Figure 25 shows the last question on the survey. The participants were asked their preferred identities with six options to choose from, including the option to write in their identities if they chose “Other.”

21. I consider myself to be:						
Graduate:	Country where you were born:	Country you immigrated to – American:	Identity - American	Latino/a	You are not sure:	Other:
#1	Leon, Mexico		Mexican-American			
#2	Jalisco, Mexico					
#3	Mexico					

#4	Mexico		Mexican-American	Latino		
#5	Guatemalan		Guatemalan-American			
#6	Mexico		Mexican-American	Latino		
#7	United States					
#8			Latino-American			
#9				Latino		
#10				Latino		
#11				Latino		
#12	Mexico		Mexican-American			
#13	Mexico		Mexican-American			
#14	California		Mexican-American			
#15	United States		Mexican-American	Latina		
#16			Mexican-American			
#17						

Figure 25. My identity.

Two of the participants also included the names of the cities they were born in. Five participants wrote they are from Mexico.

Summary

The purpose of collecting qualitative and quantitative data via stories, interview questions, and surveys was to examine the graduates' journeys with consideration given to the intrinsic family factors and the school factors that influenced their academic success.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The unique struggles that English-language learners face, particularly in California, have existed since the Bilingual Act of 1974. The existence of the phrase “long-term English-language learner” is cause enough for concern, especially in a technologically-advanced society such as the United States. But as this study has shown, the academic experiences of English-language learners are forged not just by educational services, but also by what happens at home. The survey, stories, and interview answers provide a glimpse of the wealth of knowledge, culture, language, experiences, and unique voices that ELLs have. Tapping into these invaluable minds will require some creativity on the part of educators in addition to teaching the preexisting curriculum. However challenging this approach may be, it will undoubtedly maximize student interest, learning, and language acquisition.

Graduate Experiences

The study provided various ELL perspectives of the program they received services from. The graduates felt that educators, researchers, and state and federal educational policy makers all have a say in student learning. Completing the survey, which included interview questions and writing their stories, resulted in the ELL graduates yielding a deeper understanding of how teachers can provide effective educations to English-language learners. In turn, the study allowed the researcher—and hopefully other educators—to understand how motivation from the home setting is a crucial factor in ELL academic success.

From the researcher’s observation, the graduates were grateful to have participated in such a unique event. They felt that someone from their high school still cared for their wellbeing and their pursuits of their goals and dreams. For them, the experience was about much more than the researcher conducting his study.

One female graduate broke into tears during the presentation portion of the study and had to be escorted away by a counselor for some downtime. She later apologized to the researcher and explained that listening to his story reminded her of how she lost her father two months prior and did not have the opportunity to mourn him until the day of the study. She thanked the researcher for the cathartic opportunity, and the adults involved in the study encouraged her to continue pursuing her dreams of going to college.

Reflections of Interviewers and Note-Takers

One note-taker wrote, “Thank you so much for the opportunity to join you and witness the study. It was an amazing experience listening to the background stories, goals, and dreams of the students, and yours as well.” She added, “...from the concrete, grew a flower, definitely the theme of the whole night.”

Perhaps the most surprising aspects of the study were the impact of the researcher’s story and the interviews conducted. Aside from benefitting the researcher, everyone involved believed the study also encouraged the graduates to continue pursuing their goals and dreams. One interviewer expressed that it might be beneficial for any high school to invite graduates to a forum to share their stories about how they feel one year after high school, what they could have done differently, and other reflections on their lives as they move forward.

The researcher’s colleagues were satisfied to learn that the participating graduates were doing well with their lives, but there was also some frustration in learning the graduates were struggling in the real world. Money is more important than ever for the graduates, but their low-paying jobs make it difficult to afford expensive college textbooks and tuition fees.

Researcher Reflection of the Study

The study yielded more results than initially expected. Despite the generational gap, there are many parallels between the lives of the graduates and that of the researcher and his colleagues.

Based on the graduates' answers to the study, the researcher determined that their teachers focused primarily on curricular standards, assigning grades to their work, dealing with student behavior, and spending little time, if any, learning about their lives. If educators would devote more time to learning about their students, they would most likely acquire the students' trust and inspire interest in the educational material. Without that trust, many ELLs fall behind in their schoolwork and their social lives. Ideally, educators should learn about their students before the students can be taught.

But learning about the students' experiences will require more than class presentations via PowerPoint or poster board. Educators will need to understand why their students live the lives they do and how to imbed life experiences into curricular lessons so the students can connect what they learn to their personal lives.

The study was about more than learning whether or not the graduates remembered the curricular material they studied as English-language learners; it was also about listening to the personal stories the graduates had to share about their lives and high school experiences. If high school leadership would apply this approach as well, it would be much easier to identify and address early deficiencies to enable greater success for 9th grade ELLs.

Graduate Stories, Survey, and Interview Themes

Data collection yielded themes relating to the home lives and school experiences of English-language learner graduates. The survey produced quantitative data, while the graduate stories and interviews produced qualitative data.

All 17 participating graduates have different stories of how their families immigrated to the United States. Two common themes emerged in these stories. The first is the economic hardships of their home countries and the hopes of a better life in the United States. The second theme is that none of the graduates had previously shared their immigration stories with others before these interviews. Perhaps the most touching story is of the graduate who had to immigrate at an early age with her mother because she lost her father. The most commonly heard stories about immigrants from Latin America are of economic hardship and the search for a better life in the United States.

Typical of many immigrant families from Mexico, the parents may have had limited formal education, if any at all. Whatever the case, immigrant children enter the United States with both parents, one parent, a relative, or completely alone. According to Figure 5, 14 graduates were raised by both parents. Three graduates were raised by their mother. The study involved eight male and nine female graduates.

Almost all graduates have dreams of the future and understand their families' struggles. Many also understand why their families immigrated to the United States. One graduate's family immigrated 21 years ago. This graduate understands the parents' choice and dreams of going to college to become a highway patrol officer.

A different graduate's family came from Michoacán and Guanajuato, Mexico. The graduate did not share the details of this journey, but there is a tremendous difference between

immigrating alone and immigrating with the entire family. The graduate was born in the United States. It is interesting that, in Figure 12, eight out of the 17 graduates *neither agreed nor disagreed* with their families bringing them to the United States. Significantly, not all graduates were born outside the U.S. Three of the graduates *strongly disagreed* with their families' decisions to immigrate, and four *disagreed*. Only one *agreed*.

A male graduate's father came to the United States with the intent of raising money before returning to Guatemala, but soon realized that life was better in the U.S. and so convinced his wife and family to immigrate with him. The graduate did not provide details of the journey, but it is much more challenging to travel from Guatemala than from Mexico.

Life tends to be better for immigrants when raised by both parents. According to Figure 6, 11 graduates *strongly agreed* that their families raised them to be responsible in both their personal and school lives. Four of the graduates *agreed* to the same question, one *neither agreed nor disagreed*, and one *strongly disagreed*.

The graduates' stories share a common theme of adapting to the United States' customs and traditions to some extent. One graduate born in Mexico graduated as an English-language learner and can only write in Spanish; she explained in her story how difficult it was to learn English in high school. The graduate shared that coming to the United States was difficult because she did not know anyone, and her cousins already living in the States refused to help her. Immigrating to the U.S. was difficult enough, but having to settle down with uncertainty regarding one's immigration status can make the situation significantly worse.

When asked what it was like coming to the United States at an early age, the graduates expressed that it was difficult, especially in addition to their low socioeconomic standings, lack of education, and personal struggles. Arriving in the U.S. introduced new obstacles in the forms

of learning English and adapting to culture shock. A new teacher, new school, and new language can take a significant toll on the developmental growth of a young immigrant.

One of the graduates explained how much of a struggle it was for her to learn English at an early age without anyone's help. Fortunately, she was able to graduate with a 3.8 grade point average and continues her education at a community college. All the graduates involved grew up with Spanish as their first language and began learning English either in the primary years of school or as soon as they entered the U.S.

Those who began learning English as late as elementary school or even high school faced severe educational, social, and emotional challenges. To them, home was their comfort zone where they were free to practice familiar customs and beliefs.

In immigrant Latino families, Spanish is often used when speaking to the family, especially the elders. All the graduates believe that learning English is important because "jobs require it," as one graduate stated, and that there are "benefits to being bilingual," as another phrased it. The challenge, then, is retaining their ability to speak Spanish while learning English.

But learning English comes with its own slew of obstacles, including limited communication skills at school, practicing proper pronunciation, speaking through a strong accent, and imperfect comprehension. Because of these factors, many of the graduates experienced and continue to experience embarrassment when speaking English. Many graduates in the study have known each other for years because they grew up in the same communities. There is a sense of comfort for the graduates because their peers share the same language, customs, and traditions.

A major barrier that graduates face is not having enough opportunities to practice English to fully grasp the language. One graduate said that he would have to go far away from his

friends and family to practice English more effectively. The graduates admitted to feeling isolated and intimidated by their school and society because of the language barrier.

They also shared that some teachers supported their efforts and encouraged them to learn English as soon as possible, though many wish they could have learned it much sooner. Graduates attending college are now faced with more rigorous classes that offer no support, unlike high school classes offering bilingual assistance or one-on-one support from the teacher.

Arriving in the United States overwhelmed the graduates with fears of the unknown, yet also excited them with the promise of beginning new lives in a nation with greater opportunity than their home countries. Many of them have never gone back to visit their home countries, yet it is unknown if they are able to return because of immigration status.

Through all the challenges of learning a new language and understanding a new school culture, the graduates endured with the emotional support of their families. According to Figure 7, 11 out of 17 graduates *strongly agree* that their families supported them in their high school educations. Four *agree*, one *neither agrees nor disagrees*, and one *disagrees*. When asked if their families spoke to them about their goals and dreams of attending college, only one graduate responded with *strongly disagree*. Eight *strongly agree*, seven *agree*, and one *neither agrees nor disagrees*.

One graduate was brought to the United States from Mexico at age four, and his sister was born in the U.S. The graduate played football, but decided not to go to college. Instead, he chose to work to support his mother and sister. The graduate writes, “My sister is a recent senior in high school, and I’m helping her make her dreams come true by going to college.”

The graduate’s story raises several questions about his decision to support his sister and not go to college himself. Why was the graduate not enrolled in DACA? Is he a long-term

English-learner who never received academic support for reclassification? What could the educational institution entrusted in providing the best-quality academic success not provide to this graduate? And how much academic support did the graduate receive at home?

When asked if their families took the time to help them with their schoolwork, seven graduates answered *strongly agree*. Four *agreed*, two *neither agreed nor disagreed*, two *disagreed*, and two *strongly disagreed*. It is not uncommon in Latino families for both parents to work and not afford childcare, leaving older children to take care of the younger ones.

One graduate shared, “My mother never went to school because she lived in a very small and poor town.” The graduate’s father died years ago, causing the family to immigrate to the U.S. Humility and pride have allowed the graduate to endure a “very painful” journey to the United States and now attend community college. Even though the “...language English, the pronunciation is hard, and my economics situation is difficult too,” the graduate intends to earn a degree and become an electrical engineer with a great life.

Few can fully appreciate the economic hardships the graduates faced in their home countries that warranted immigration for only a chance of better living conditions. This is in addition to the difficult road to college and procuring the means of affording it. When asked if their families saved money for college, three of the graduates *strongly agreed*, four *agreed*, seven *neither agreed nor disagreed*, three *disagreed*, and two *strongly disagreed*.

Like many Americans today, a considerable number of the graduates grew up with only one father or mother. One graduate stated, “I want to give my mom the best life she can get because she did so for me and my family...”

But despite the struggles of immigration, several graduates also expressed how much they enjoyed school and growing up with their friends and families. One graduate wrote,

“Coming to the United States was not easy had to get used to this new world. ...I felt different from everybody felt scared lonely but it got way easy...I found some friends that were just like me...” Another wrote, “I learned to adopt quickly... All of my four years of high school were fun, but hard though not impossible to do.”

When asked if they understand why their families brought them to the United States, five graduates answered *strongly agree*, four chose *agree*, four wrote *neither agree nor disagree*, and four answered *disagree*. When asked if they were content to have left their home countries for the U.S., eight wrote *neither agree nor disagree*, three chose *disagree*, and one picked *strongly disagree*; only two answered *strongly agree*, and three wrote *agree*.

Because they are categorized as English-language learners, the graduates were required to be enrolled in English Language Development, leaving no room to study Spanish academically, except as an elective in high school. Ten graduates speak both Spanish and English at home, while seven speak Spanish only; 13 graduates speak both languages away from home, while three speak only English and one speaks only Spanish.

When asked if they understood why they were categorized as English-language learners, five graduates *strongly agreed*, seven *agreed*, and four *neither agreed nor disagreed*. Only one *strongly disagreed*, meaning this graduate did not understand why he or she was an English-language learner. When asked if they were embarrassed by their limited abilities to speak English, the majority of graduates chose *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, and *neither agree nor disagree*. Only one *agreed* to feeling embarrassed. The graduates believe that speaking two languages is invaluable, but the greatest challenge is comprehension.

One graduate said, “On March of 2017 I ended up getting a certificate about me getting promoted from English Language Learner,” meaning this graduate was reclassified just before

graduating from high school. Though most of the graduates seem to understand why they were categorized as English-language learners, the data also indicates that schools need to improve in helping students understand this as early as elementary school while ensuring they don't forget their primary languages. It is the ultimate duty of the high school to reclassify ELLs as soon as possible—definitely before graduation.

Based on the interview questions, the graduates still consider themselves English-language learners even after graduating from high school. One graduate comments, "People do not understand me when most graduates speak, needing to explain things to me so I can understand, I have no one to explain the lessons in community college." Another is concerned that, "The more I learn English, the more I lose my Spanish."

While not all ELLs share a common nationality, many of them are not from families of professionals; the graduates' parents may have had only limited educations in their home countries. And yet, one graduate who was considered a long-term English-language learner managed to become an orthodontist. All the graduates dream of becoming professionals, but recognize that economic and linguistic barriers stand in their way. Some want to become teachers, pediatricians, mechanical engineers, and nurses.

When asked if they prefer life in the United States, only one graduate *disagreed*. Five *neither agreed nor disagreed*, four *strongly agreed*, and seven *agreed*. When the graduates were asked if they want to return to their home countries, 12 answered *neither agree nor disagree*, two chose *disagree*, and two said *strongly disagree*; only one answered *agree*.

One graduate said, "I don't know when my parents immigrated to the United States." He only knows he was born in the U.S. The graduate's story raises the question of whether or not he understands his family's history, but most graduates expressed their love and care for their

families and dream of having successful careers so they can give back to their families for supporting them, especially in single-parent families.

The graduates had powerful recommendations for other English-language learners, such as, “You will accomplish a lot just by trying,” and “Take advantage of your education, ask for help, and do not ‘mess’ around, and keep studying.”

The graduates have endured many lasting challenges of immigration, such as learning a new language, emotional stress, and family drama, all in addition to the inherent trials of high school. But perhaps the greatest challenge graduates face in the U.S. educational system is never moving beyond the label “long-term English-language learner.” There is no ELL support system for the graduates in the real world; even in college, they must make every effort to work through the language barrier and still be able to complete their studies.

But beyond the language and cultural barriers is the crucial theme of identity. “I consider myself to be...” is not a phrase imposed on the graduates very often. They seemed confused by the terminology, according to their responses in Figure 25. It is concerning that their schools may not have taught them the different labels or identities that come with nationality. Understanding one’s familial history makes one more conscious of who he or she is and grants newfound appreciation for one’s place in society.

Many of the graduates are considered “Ever-English Learners,” meaning they will most likely never reclassify. There are two groups of Ever-ELs in the Californian educational system. The first is the long-term English-language learners who fall through the cracks in the K-12 school system and are failed consistently. The second group is the graduates of the study who, despite enduring throughout their K-12 educations and making it to college, still struggle with

language acquisition. The sheer number of Ever-ELs is an indictment of the school system's incapability of reclassifying enough ELLs at an early age.

Many of the graduates were grateful for their teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators in all grade levels for going the extra mile to not only teach curriculum and language acquisition, but to motivate them to succeed academically. One graduate wrote, "My teachers helped me as much as possible not just to learn English, but to become a better student and graduate." Only one student *strongly disagreed* with this sentiment. Two *neither agreed nor disagreed*, nine *agreed*, and five *strongly agreed*.

But besides receiving instruction and support from their teachers, several graduates mentioned that other students helped them with their English and academics as well.

It is wrong to assume that English-language learners cannot qualify for rigorous programs; International Baccalaureate, or IB, is one such program that educates former English-language learners. Rigorous programs, such as IB, promote the learning of two or more languages, while schools with ELL programs do not share these objectives. Two of the graduates had to drop from IB in high school because they could not handle the workload.

To the researcher's surprise, the graduates were tremendously grateful for being involved in a study on ELLs. Many expressed regret for not doing better in high school, but felt that the researcher and his colleagues cared deeply for them, even after finishing high school. This validation from their former high school further inspired the graduates to pursue their dreams. It is important to note that, even if high schools graduate their students, this does not mean they are prepared for the real world.

When asked if their school motivated them to learn English and go to college, six graduates chose *strongly agree*, seven answered *agree*, three wrote *neither agree nor disagree*,

and one chose *strongly disagree*. If learning to speak English passably is already a monumental trial, then learning to write it must seem impossible. The graduates experienced severe difficulties in writing college-level essays and can trace their shortcomings back to high school. Some expressed regret for not paying attention or taking advantage of their high school educations.

One graduate who was not in a rigorous program and was an English-language learner all throughout high school graduated with a 3.8 GPA. This graduate applied to college and received a full, four-year scholarship. He was raised by a single mother, became a citizen during his sophomore year of high school, and defied all odds of becoming “at risk.” What drove this graduate’s success story? Motivation. His teachers recognized and encouraged this motivation in him, which, in turn, supported him throughout his high school career. As expected, the student is struggling in his first year in college, but the researcher predicts that this motivation will drive him to earn a degree and accomplish his goal of becoming an electrical engineer.

Although high schools themselves are not obligated to continue supporting ELLs after they graduate, it falls on the district leaders to establish some measure of support for students even after high school. One graduate said of the study, “We should do this more often...we needed it...it helped me a lot.” What began as social research became more of an emotional support session for the graduates. Witnessing them sharing their stories, being validated by their former educators, and spending time with their friends was emotionally rewarding even for the researcher and his colleagues. When asked if they believed they would attend college, earn a degree, and have a career, ten graduates answered *strongly agree*, four chose *agree*, two wrote *neither agree nor disagree*, and one answered *strongly disagree*.

One of the graduates, after taking the survey and answering the study questions, asked, “Why can’t ELLs succeed if they know what they must have to do?” This is an essential question that applies to all ELLs, educators, and their families. The graduates believed that, if they were able to go back to the beginnings of their high school careers, their academic outcomes would be significantly different. High GPAs, better grades, perfect attendance, and academic enthusiasm would be common among the graduates.

There is still hope for many of the graduates. They all believe they have a chance at living the American Dream, and they all understand the vocational benefits of being bilingual. They all fervently desire to have careers, raise families, own houses, and be able to travel.

The Spanish-Speaking Researcher’s Former English-Learner Experience in China

The researcher’s trip to China reminded him of his K-12 and college years as a former English-language learner and allowed him to better understand the graduates’ experiences in the U.S.

The researcher has always been interested in China because of his passion for history. He remembers vividly the news coverage of the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, the one child policy, and various other stories about China through the American media from the last 30 years. Unfortunately, the researcher’s pursuit of a bachelor’s degree in business administration and his subsequent employment as a middle and high school history teacher left him with little time to study Asian history. It wasn’t until July of 2016 that he finally saw China firsthand, rather than on television or in the movies.

Arriving in China

On July 13, 2016, the researcher and his doctoral cohort arrived in China for a two-week trip to better understand Chinese culture and its educational system, primarily how the Chinese

learn English. This latter topic was especially fascinating to the researcher, a former English-learner, who wanted to know how a former ELL would adapt as a tourist in China. To him, arriving in Shanghai and Beijing was exhilarating; that exhilaration became anxiety when he fell behind the cohort and ended up lost.

The next morning, the researcher realized what an invaluable experience it was to lose and find his way again in an unfamiliar environment. One can only imagine the alienation and isolation that an immigrant must feel after arriving in the U.S. for the first time and how arduous it must be to adapt to life in a country so radically different from one's own. It may be difficult, but not impossible. The researcher's confidence in this regard would be tested while acclimating to Beijing.

City of Shanghai

Amazingly, every sign or label in China is written in both Chinese and English, which certainly helped the researcher when he was lost. Seeing English present in all manner of signs and labels in Chinese society—whether in the streets, buildings, restaurants, etc.—confirmed that China welcomes visitors from all over the world since English is so widely used. But the bilingual signs aren't exclusively for tourists; they also function to help Chinese citizens learn English.

The researcher could not help but compare Chinese and Mexican societies. He has traveled to Mexico many times before and has a deep appreciation of its history, and he felt a similar obligation to appreciate Chinese culture for its uniqueness and historical significance, especially after visiting Zhouzhuang, a water township established between 772 BC and 476 BC. Visiting this ancient town with its numerous canals and traditional homes and architecture gave an impression similar to going back in time. By contrast, joining the Bund Tour later that

evening felt like returning to the present, complete with a view of the amazing Shanghai skyline that has recently become famous in American cinematography.

A previously-viewed documentary of Confucius helped the researcher understand how the Chinese continue to uphold traditional values despite the challenges of technological advancements changing their society. Dr. Carrier, the program director of Stepping Stones, delivered a powerful presentation: “The Situation for Migrants in China, and the Challenges of Running an NPO in China” (Stepping Stones China, 2016).

This presentation provided a glimpse into the various realities of modern Chinese society—such as immigration, poverty, education, health, and opportunity—and even provided abridged English-language development lessons to school-age children. The cohort was amazed at the students’ enthusiasm, motivation, and grasp of the English language.

After spending a day at the new Shanghai Disneyland, the researcher met a student studying to become an English translator for the SUNSEA School at Fudan University. She was assigned to translate the researcher’s presentation: “Home Life and School Experiences: What Factors Motivate English-Language Learners to Succeed in High School?” The researcher felt some apprehension and excitement at the prospect of giving a presentation to a group of adult students studying to become English translators, but who couldn’t yet speak his language. Fortunately, the assigned translator conducted herself very professionally and prepared extensively for the researcher’s presentation, despite having only ten minutes before the presentation began. This lecture about the struggles of ELLs in California was delivered in a PowerPoint format consisting of 15 slides with several graphs and diagrams; 20 physical copies were provided to the students.

Upon discovering this wouldn't be enough for the translator to understand, the researcher used the classroom's whiteboard to create a graphic organizer to better explain various details of the PowerPoint. She was visibly relieved, and now the graphic organizer is an official component of the study. The experience was like teaching an English-learner without the benefit of a shared primary language.

The researcher shared the story of his experience as an English-learner and of the struggles he faced from elementary school to teaching credential courses in college. For the researcher, this lecture was not so much about the content, but the presentation itself. Lecturing before these Chinese students and his colleagues was perhaps one of the most fulfilling experiences in the researcher's professional career. He told the translator how often English-to-Spanish translation and vice versa was necessary while growing up in California. The translator later told the researcher through WeChat that the professionalism of his presentation made it much easier for her to translate.

Shanghai is a port city where modern technology and architecture contrast its colonial-era buildings and societal inequities. Upon taking the bullet train back to Beijing, the capital, the researcher believed he had not spent enough time in Shanghai to see and understand all of it.

From what the researcher could gather, not even the people of China know much about the events of Tiananmen Square in 1989, but it still evokes a solemn atmosphere and stands as an important symbol of Chinese government: thousands of cameras, not just in the square, but almost everywhere in society. Not all of the Chinese people paid attention to the cohort, yet those who did were overawed and asked to take pictures with them. There was something extraordinary about Chinese strangers asking where the cohort came from and why they were visiting.

The researcher felt some frustration while visiting the Forbidden City because it is a place one wishes to experience alone. The palace complex was featured in Bernardo Bertolucci's *The Last Emperor*, the cinematography and storyline of which left a powerful impression on the researcher at an early age. But despite visiting with a group, experiencing Tiananmen Square and the Forbidden City was fulfilling nonetheless, and the Great Wall was worth every step. It took seven days for the cohort to finally explore Beijing without the lead guide, followed by the ancient city of Xi'an, best known as the eastern terminal of the "Silk Road." And though it may be difficult to imagine 1,000 statues of warriors buried strategically for two millennia to protect the first Chinese emperor in the afterlife, such is the site of the famous Terracotta Warriors of the Qin Dynasty.

The Chinese believe in "religion not of a shared God, but of a shared past." This seems to coincide with the qualities of synchronicity and the "unity" of family and tradition that many Chinese citizens share. In the researcher's experiences from the Shanghai Stepping Stones migrant camp, the SUNSEA translating school, and the student exchange foundations, the core of Chinese education seems to value "the political and economic landscape, the power of ritual and etiquette" (Confucius, 2016).

The Researcher's Similar Experience to the Graduates'

The story of the researcher is somewhat similar to those of the graduates. The researcher is a product of the Bilingual Education Act from Southern California in the 1970s and 1980s; attended universities in Southern and Northern California for his bachelor's degree, teaching credentials, master's degree, and he currently strives for a doctoral degree; he has been an educator for 17 years; and he has gained insight into the realities and experiences of today's English-language learners.

The researcher grew up with two parents who provided economic, social, and emotional support. The researcher's mother was a homemaker, and the father worked as a car upholsterer since immigrating to the United States in 1968. The researcher's mother immigrated soon after. Despite not knowing English, the researcher's parents raised a successful family. The parents are now at retirement age and speak English with a strong accent.

The researcher's parents instilled the following values in their three children: humility, kindness, motivation, respecting the customs and traditions of both parents' sides of the family, understanding the mother's city life experiences and the father's pueblo life experiences by traveling periodically to Mexico, and striving for upward mobility both personally and professionally.

In the researcher's opinion, the graduates in the study have struggled more in the 2000s than he did as an English-language learner in the 1970s and 1980s. Two of the graduates were raised by their mothers, while the rest were raised by both parents. The researcher reclassified in eighth grade, but there are a number of graduates who didn't reclassify until senior year or who haven't reclassified at all.

The researcher was the first among his friends to attend a four-year university. Similarly, of all the graduates in the study, only one attends a university, and several others are enrolled in community college. And, like the graduates, the researcher faced his own linguistic and academic challenges while attending college. But, whereas the researcher felt embarrassment when informing friends and family of his academic failures, such as misunderstanding the lectures because of limited English comprehension and graduating with a 2.3 GPA, the graduates of the study shared their dilemmas freely, such as dealing with the language barrier and finding the means to pay for college.

What are the External School Factors Influencing English-Language Learners?

To instruct English-language learners effectively, educators must understand not only language acquisition and access to the core, but how to motivate each individual ELL; one crucial aspect of that involves tapping into the students' rich lives of culture and experience (Garcia & Jensen, 2007). As the number of ELLs enrolled in schools increases, so does the demand for bilingual educators (CABE, 2018). These teachers are motivating ELLs to learn English and better themselves academically, almost like a coach. The graduates of the study craved motivation, guidance, support, instruction, and care from their teachers. If teachers are unqualified or lack the creativity to engage the students with the curriculum, the students will not receive the educations they deserve.

What Intrinsic Family Factors Influence English-Language Learners?

In the graduates' stories, interview answers, and surveys, they expressed great love and care for their families for all the sacrifices they made when raising them. The graduates recognize the hard work their families do that do not generate middle class income or higher. Those jobs are more agricultural, industrial, and laborious and demand long hours for little payment. What potentially holds the graduates back from pursuing a college education is economics. There is hope among the graduates to continue with their college studies, the reality may be that affordability may hold them back. This is a major dilemma that society needs to step in and support ELL students financially.

What is "My" Story as an English-Language Learner?

The greatest strength ELLs have is their own stories. Teachers must be able to, in their own professional ways, be creative with the curriculum and allow ELL students to share these stories so that, in addition to teaching them, educators can also listen to and learn from their

students. In doing so, educators will learn that there is more to their students than they initially believed. They will understand their students' behaviors, their family situations, and levels of comprehension. From this, teachers will know how to format the lessons so that all the students may better comprehend the curriculum. Teachers can use the following graphic organizer to understand the stories of their English-language learners:

History – What is your story?

Sociology – Who is your family? Who are you?

Economics – How does your family survive?

Government – Who is raising you? Who do you help raise?

Religion – What are your beliefs? Do you have any?

Geography – Where do you come from? Where have you traveled? Where do you live?

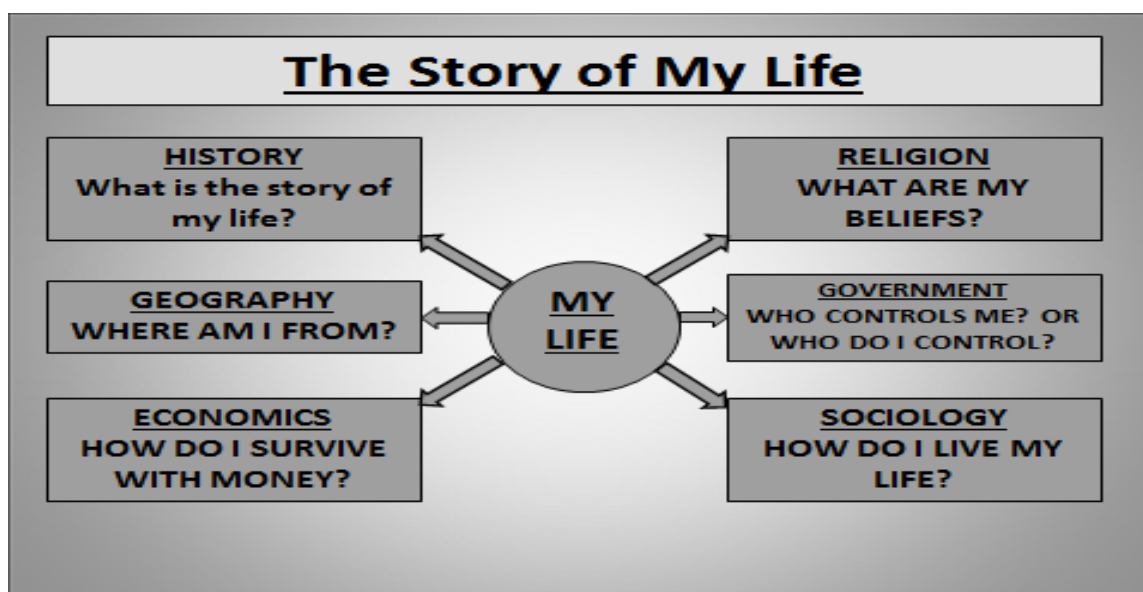


Figure 26. The story of my life.

What the Graduates' Futures Hold

The graduates involved in the study endure significant trials every day, and their high school educations can no longer help them. It is too late. It rests entirely on the graduates to continue dreaming, believing, and pursuing their goals. The researcher and his colleagues can only hope that the education system did enough to prepare these young English-language learners for the real world.

What the Researcher Learned From the ELL Graduates

The researcher—a high school principal—plans to use what he has learned from the English-language learners in the study to develop a successful ELL program for his incoming students. Although peer-reviewed strategies and scholarly research are vital to prepare English-language learners for school and the world beyond, the input of the graduates themselves can be invaluable in training ELLs to be academically and socially successful. Those lessons taught by the ELL graduates include:

1. It is important to spend non-instructional time to better know the students before teaching language acquisition and core content.
2. High school leadership needs to ensure that ELL systems are well-calibrated.
3. Administrators, counselors, coordinators, Integrated ELD teachers, and paraprofessionals must be on the same page when establishing a mission, a vision, norms, and commitments with ELL short- and long-term goals.
4. Ideally, ELL students should be reclassified before 9th grade.
5. Educators must ensure that every ELL understands why he or she is an English-language learner.

6. Educators must also strengthen student understanding of what it means to be multilingual and multicultural.
7. Educators must ensure that every ELL has a five-year plan: four years of high school, and one year for life as a college freshman. The fifth year can have two components, the first being school-hosted forums for ELL graduates similar to the researcher's study, and the second would be providing counseling and administrative services for one year after high school.

Recommendations for Further Research

It is the researcher's belief that the ELL experience, primarily in California following the Bilingual Education Act of 1974, is often overlooked and needs considerably more attention. These and other ELL graduate experiences, voices, and opinions can provide invaluable feedback in regards to improving the educations of English-language learners who haven't yet finished high school. The following are recommendations for further research:

1. Replicate this study on a larger scale.
2. Restructure ELL curriculum to give more focus to the lives of the students.
3. Conduct a study on how to extrapolate background knowledge (cultural, ethnical, traditional, etc.) from every ELL student so they can learn more effectively throughout their educations.
4. Have every ELL write their stories in a book format at an early grade that is due as a senior project. Study the behavioral, academic, and motivational changes recorded in these books.
5. Conduct a study on how to motivate ELLs to take greater interest in their high school academics and career pathways.

Summary

The researcher continues to question why, despite the ruling of *Lau v. Nichols*, so little progress has been made for ELL education in California. Fortunately, with the passage of Proposition 38—which repealed 1997’s Proposition 227 (the elimination of bilingual education)—California is back on course to ensuring that English-language learners are valued for their linguistic and cultural backgrounds. A major task lies ahead for all educational programs and services and decision makers and educators of ELLs.

The English Learner Roadmap acts as a guide to assist Californian school districts in developing these ELL programs. The Roadmap lays out four principles in its mission statement; this study focuses on the first. And while the study provided ELL graduates with the opportunity to share their stories, the researcher’s experiences growing up and the learning experience to China reminded him firsthand what ELLs endure when they first arrive in the United States. In addition, the Seal of Biliteracy initiative in California, and most other U.S. states, is one of the most effective celebratory initiatives that values the primary languages that ELLs speak and is perhaps the most beneficial development for ELL education since 1974.

Compared to other California ELL reforms of the past, initiatives such as the Roadmap and Seal of Biliteracy are major improvements for empowering ELLs and supporting their quest and educators’ duty towards societal equity. It is recommended educators listen and learn to the voices of English Language Learner students beginning with their rich stories.

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APPENDIX A

Final Survey Protocol for English-Language Learners

Instructions: Please take the survey below:

Factor #1:

What intrinsic family factors influence English-language learners?

1. Who raised you?
 - ☐ Parents (father & mother)
 - ☐ Father only
 - ☐ Mother only
 - ☐ Guardian
 - ☐ Other
2. My family raised me to be responsible in both my personal life and my school life.
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Strongly agree
3. I felt that my family helped and supported me with my high school education.
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Strongly agree
4. My family spoke to me about my goals and/or dreams, such as going to college.
 - ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Strongly agree
5. My family took the time to help me with my schoolwork.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Strongly agree
6. My family saved money so I can go to college.
- ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Strongly agree

Factor #2:

My journey to become an English-language learner

7. I understand why my family brought me to the United States.
- ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Strongly agree
8. I am happy to have left my country to settle in the United States.
- ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
 - ☐ Agree
 - ☐ Strongly agree
9. I want to go back to my country.
- ☐ Strongly disagree
 - ☐ Disagree
 - ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
 - ☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

10. I live better in the United States than in my country of origin.

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

11. I disagree with my family for bringing me to the United States.

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

12. I will go to college and graduate with a degree and have a career.

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

Factor #3:

What external school factors influence English-language learners?

13. I understood why I was an English Learner.

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

☐ Agree

☐ Strongly agree

14. I am embarrassed because of my limited ability to speak English.

☐ Strongly disagree

☐ Disagree

☐ Neither agree nor disagree

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

15. I would rather speak Spanish all the time than English.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

16. My teachers helped me as much as possible not just to learn English, but also to become a better student and graduate.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

17. My school motivated me to learn English, be a better student, and go to college.

- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly agree

Demographic Information

18. Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

19. At home, I speak mostly...

- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ English
- ☐ Both

20. Away from home, I speak...

- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ English
- ☐ Both

21. I consider myself to be...

- ☐ The country where you were born – Mexican, Guatemalan, etc.

- ☐ The country you immigrated to – American.
- ☐ _____-American (Ex. Mexican-American, Guatemalan-American, etc.).
- ☐ I consider myself to be part of many cultures/countries/Spanish - Latino/a.
- ☐ I am not sure how to identify myself.
- ☐ Other: _____

Next – Mr. Salas will share his story.

Mr. Juan A. Salas will explain why he is conducting the study and would like to share his story as a former English-language learner.

Followed by – Mr. Salas will interview the students.

A group of four selected colleagues will each be assigned a group of students and interview them further about their experiences as English Learners.

Last – Former students will write their stories.

Now that Mr. Salas has shared his story, he is interested in the graduates' stories. They may take the time to write their stories in Spanish or English. They may also email their stories to Mr. Salas if they prefer.

APPENDIX B

Post-Survey Interview Questions for English-Language Learners

1. What was it like coming to the United States at a young age?
2. How did you feel when you entered a new country, city, and school?
3. What was your perception of other students in school who were not like you and who were just like you?
4. Do you still consider yourself an English-language learner after graduating from high school?
5. Is speaking two languages very valuable to you? Do you try to speak English as much as possible?
6. What do you wish to accomplish now after high school? What are your goals and dreams?
7. If you had the opportunity, what would you say to other English-language learners in 9th – 12th grade?
8. Where do you see yourself in five years? Ten? Twenty?

APPENDIX C

Alignment of Research and Focus Questions

<u>Alignment Of Research and Focus Questions</u>	<u>Research Question #1: How did external school factors influence you?</u>	<u>Research Question #2: How did intrinsic family factors influence you?</u>	<u>Research Question #3: How has your story as an English Learner influenced you?</u>
1. What was it like coming to the United States at a young age?			
2. How did you feel when you entered a new country, city, and school?			
3. What was your perception of other students in school who were not like you and who were just like you?			
4. Do you still consider yourself an English-language learner after graduating from high school?			
5. Is speaking two languages very valuable to you? Do you try to speak English as much as possible?			
6. What do you wish to accomplish now after high school? What are your goals and dreams?			
7. If you had the opportunity, what would you say to other English-language learners in 9th – 12th grade?			
8. Where do you see yourself in five years? Ten? Twenty?			

APPENDIX D

Outline of Juan A. Salas' Story as a Former English-Language Learner

- I. My parents immigrated to the United States - 1969
 - A. I was born in Artesia, California, September 16, 1971
- II. My elementary experiences
 - A. Burbank Elementary in Norwalk, California – 1979
 - i. Bilingual Education Act of 1974
 - B. Rustic Lane Elementary in Riverside California
 - i. No bilingual education
- III. My middle school experience at Mission Middle
 - A. From English-language learner to English-Only in 8th grade
 - B. Mrs. Kason (bilingual aide) & Ms. Kason (EOP counselor at UCR)
 - C. My father shared his story; I decided “I am going to UC Riverside someday.”
- IV. My high school & UCR experiences
 - A. Rubidoux H.S.: 9th – 12th grade – 3.8 GPA
 - B. University of California, Riverside: 1989 – 1994 (5 years) – 2.5 GPA
- V. From UCR (1994) to becoming a teacher (1998)
 - A. My epiphany: hist.-340 African-American history (1620-1865) at Cal. St. San Bernardino, Spring of 2000
- VI. (2015 – Present) Principal of Franklin High School in Stockton, California
 - A. I am a lead learner of English Learner educators