

INVESTMENT, CLASSROOM CONTEXTS, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
OF FOUR CUBAN REFUGEE WOMEN IN THEIR FIRST ENGLISH-TO-
SPEAKERS-OF-OTHER-LANGUAGES (ESOL) LEARNING EXPERIENCES

By

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A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2003

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to many people who helped me in my work on this dissertation. First and foremost, I am grateful to my wife, Constance, as my support and inspiration. I can never repay her for her love, patient sacrifice, and household management as I progressed through the insanity of a Ph.D. program. She and our son, Zakhary, own a major part of my degree.

Dr. Jane S. Townsend, my guide and supervisor throughout the project, has allowed me to wonder about many facets of the study all the while bringing me closer and closer to the focus of my interest. Her editorial comments helped me polish and refine even at times when wisps of despair caused me to doubt that the end was in sight. My deep thanks to her for her continuous exhortation, "Deep breaths!"

The members of my committee each contributed their expertise and care for my work. Dr. Barbara G. Pace who introduced me to the "lens of gender" as a field of inquiry, was always available to talk, and her critique of my work enriched my writing. She convinced me to "kill my darlings" in order to write with more focus and clarity.

Dr. Rodman B. Webb, with wit and wisdom taught me to make "the strange familiar and the familiar strange" as I developed my eye for field observation in qualitative research. His classroom teaching style blended insight and substance with humorous undertones that provided me with a personal connection with new knowledge. I am always grateful for his patient counsel, "not to measure the lot."

Dr. Kesha D. Fikes taught me to consider the implications that ethnographic fieldwork has on participants and on a researcher. Her anthropological work on women's life contexts has been an inspiration to me. Her words of encouragement kept me going during the troubling times of my work. I offer her a hearty, "*Muito obrigado!*"

The late Dr. Clemens L. Hallman was my first contact with the University of Florida. He was a respected and outspoken advocate for Bilingual Education. The consummate teacher, he loved both his craft and his students. His long illness and untimely passing in April 2001 left a void in my doctoral committee that could never be filled. His motto, "*Todo lo puedo en Cristo que me fortalece*" (*Filipenses 4:13*) has been an ongoing source of reassurance. I feel blessed to have known him.

John W. Hampp, my first principal, hired me as an ESOL instructor in 1980. He saw my potential as a teacher at a time when I had not considered a career in education. He and his wife, Barbara, later became my in-laws when I married their daughter. Through the years they taught perseverance and the courage to look for challenges in life. For their love and support over the years, I remain forever grateful.

I owe an enormous debt to my dear friend and long-time mentor, Dr. Edwina Hoffman. She has always been a phone call away when I needed help making professional decisions, and her wise advice has always led to success. I thank her for counsel to apply for the OBEMLA fellowship in 1998 so that I could begin my doctoral studies. Dr. Hoffman has been a major supporter of my research for this dissertation.

Esta sombra will never forget the assistance and cooperation from Dorinda Hidalgo, Marta Camero, María Angelica González, and *Dra.* Xiomara Hernández whose contributions made the study possible. *Esta obra es para ellas.*

I thank Norma and Cyril Skuby who became my "Ph.D. Mom and Dad" when they welcomed me into their home during my data-collection trips to Miami. As a mother and wife, Norma had a way of questioning me about my study data that helped me look at the participants' lives in ways that I had not considered. Mavi and Tim Zeien also welcomed me to stay in their home during the early stages of my research. Mavi was my "big sister" at the school where we both taught for many years. She has always urged me on to excellence.

I thank *Dra. Graciela Pardo de Vélez*, Professor Emeritas from *Universidad del Valle*, Colombia who was the first to suggest that I pursue doctoral studies. Gerardo Pérez, my *balseiro* friend and *hermano cubano* provided me with cultural insight as the study evolved in its early stages.

I greatly appreciated the valuable assistance of people at the school district, especially Manny Castañeda and José Alvariño. Leidia DiMascio and Miguel Soto, school counselors at the field site, aided me at the start. I appreciate the efforts of Mirella O'Reilly-Pérez and her assistants, Yusnelis and Yvette for all their work with the participants. Mirella's personal encouragement and dedication to the project was invaluable and, *con cariño*, I am indebted to her belief in the importance of the work. Rosy Diaz-Duque and Carol Antuñano provided me with access to the classrooms. I also thank the teachers who graciously welcomed me into their classrooms. Finally, I thank Yolanda Pérez and my neighbor, Manuel Vilaret who proofread and provided suggestions for the Spanish language IRB and interview protocol translations.

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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August 2003

Chair: Jane S. Townsend, Ph.D.

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Social and familial contexts frame the learning experiences of four Cuban refugee women in adult ESOL classrooms who were beginning English language learners in a geographical area where their home language, Spanish, was dominant. The study was limited to the attendance and classroom experiences of four recently-arrived, Cuban refugee women at one school during their first two trimesters of beginning ESOL instruction. Research questions were posed to examine the influences of the women's social contexts, use of learning strategies, and opportunities to learn English. By interviewing and observing the four participants during their school activities, I investigated the aspects of their lives that related to their school attendance, language learning opportunities, and classroom experiences.

The four case studies highlighted the personal perspectives of women's learning in a field of research that has largely depended on quantitative statistics and self-report data. Methods of data collection included interviews and ongoing conversations both in and out of classrooms, multiple classroom observations, and videotaped segments of classroom interactions. Analysis produced a description of the influences from their

social and familial contexts. The women's investment issues, why they spent the time and energy in English language learning, included concerns for their children's welfare, response to pressure from spouses, thoughts of re-entering professions, and nascent feelings of patriotism to the U.S. Their classroom experiences provided limited learning activities and strategy use. Results suggested that pressures from state-mandated performance-based accountability measures had a negative effect on the women's classroom opportunities for learning spoken and written English. Additionally, their own notions of the authority of the teacher and the power structures operating in the classrooms silenced them.

Previous research has overwhelmingly revealed that people learn through meaningful communication in the target language. The four participants, however, produced little evidence of authentic language in speaking or writing because classroom interactions rarely included cooperative activities as learners completed fill-in-the-blank worksheets and repeated text dialogues. The learners' use of learning strategies was limited because teachers did not focus on learning strategies. Learners spent instructional time practicing test-taking skills. Cooperative and dialogic language learning succumbed to time constraints rooted in the pressures of completing curriculum checklists and succeeding on norm-referenced exit tests.

CHAPTER 1
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

*Cultivarle países inocentes
a la gente hace tiempo alejada
de su tierra o de sus pensares.*

Cultivate innocent homelands
for ones long distanced from
their countries or contemplations.

Juana Rosa Pita, "Minstrel Angel Pastimes"

Introduction

In the above lines, the Cuban exile poet, Juana Rosa Pita, expresses hope in exile existence as she suggests connections of past and future. She might have written those lines for the four women whom I came to know as they assisted me in this study.

Through their recent experiences of migration from Cuba Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris attempted to negotiate their new surroundings and immigrant identities and build a new sense of home for themselves and their families.

The four participants had an average of one year prior to the study adjusting to the changes in their lives after leaving Cuba. In middle age, their nuclear families were disrupted. They had to abandon their professions, temporarily at least. They were establishing new relationships while renewing old ones with relatives and friends in Miami, people from whom they may have been long separated. They sought work and attempted to understand the rights and policies of employment in a capitalistic society. They were attempting to learn a new language. At school, they encountered formal

language learning confined to the sociopolitical definitions of Workforce English, according to a set of statewide curriculum frameworks for adult ESOL. They worried about their children and, in one case, grandchildren whom they had left behind in Cuba. As they became better acclimated to their new surroundings the four women were beginning, as Juana Rosa Pita writes, *cultivarle países inocentes*, for themselves and their families. Three inspirational themes common to each emerged from our conversations during the women's cultivation of their new lives: *tener fe*; *la lucha es la vida*; and *la familia* (having faith; struggle is life; and the family) (Isasi-Díaz 1996).

Statement of the Problem and Origins of the Study

The problem of this study is that there is little information about the experiences of recently-arrived Cuban women regarding their access to and attendance in adult ESOL programs. State curriculum guidelines (FL DOE, Division of Workforce Education 2001b), in accord with theories of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), expressed the importance of knowing the needs of language learners. Additionally, adult literacy was a principle concern for the district and the refugee-assistance program that served to assist the participants in their school enrollment and attendance. Both were charged with meeting the state-mandated demands of Workforce Development that defined public noncredit adult ESOL course offerings as those courses

designed to improve the employability of the state's workforce through acquisition of communication skills and cultural competencies which enhance ability to read, write, speak, and listen in English (FL DOE 2000a, p.6).

In reality, there was little evidence that curriculum designers had considered the actual contexts and interests of learners' lives. What is generally taught in public Adult ESOL programs is dictated by what the state feels is important for learners in a capitalistic society. Thus, prescriptively, language and culture related to labor and

consumer issues take curriculum center stage. Is it enough to know content -facts and vocabulary - without understanding that social and cultural structures underlie employment and consumerism? While such content is important to survival, more information and dialogue that addresses themes of power and ownership (Freire 1970) make lesson content more relevant as immigrant learners discover aspects of their new cultural surrounds. For example, in my experiences teaching adult ESOL in the historical center of the Cuban postrevolutionary exile community, I learned about the traditional and not-so-traditional roles of Cuban women and admired their tendency for outspokenness and sense of *justicia* (social justice) (Isasi-Díaz 1996). In contrast to learners' interests, existing adult ESOL curriculum guidelines and content checklists do not address themes of social justice and community empowerment within the curriculum frameworks.

The origins of this study began in Miami in the 1980s. As a young teacher, I noticed that many Cuban women in the adult English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes that I taught were usually middle aged or older, had lived in the U.S. for about 20 years, and were just beginning to study English. There were a few younger exceptions at the time, of course, especially from among the population of Cubans who recently arrived in the Mariel Boatlift of May 1980. Out of curiosity, I asked many of the older Cuban female students why they had waited so long to enroll in English classes. The usual response revealed a kind of a dream deferred: "My kids are grown. Now it's my turn," or "My husband retired. Now it's my turn." The theme, *Me toca a mí*. (It's my turn), often followed by *Ahora tengo la oportunidad*. (Now I have the opportunity.),

replayed in my mind at the start of every new trimester as I wondered about the older Cuban women beginning, or re-entering after a long hiatus, their ESOL studies.

I pondered questions of Cuban women's learning again in 1994. *El Verano de Crisis* (Summer of Crisis) from May to September of 1994 saw the arrival of just over 34,000 *balseros* (rafters) to the shores of South Florida. The new vintage of migrants built rafts from anything that could float and cast themselves to the mercy of the sea. Many of those who survived the journey enrolled in ESOL classes at the school where I taught. Some joined my class within a week of landing on the beach or having been plucked from the waves. Some were still nursing deep, painful ulcers on their legs and backs, the effects of days of exposure to sun and immersion in salt water. The newcomers told stories of their ordeals, but I noticed that something was not quite right. In my classrooms, only men, *balseros* who made the journey, told the stories of their dangerous crossings. If there were women with similar experiences among the *balseros* attending the classes, they did not share stories of their migration to Florida. Although I learned later that women made up 24% of the Cuban rafter population (Ackerman 1996), as a teacher, I had never met a female *balsera*. Either they did not enroll in the classes I taught, or they chose to remain silent while their male compatriots spoke of decisions and trials of leaving Cuba by sea. I will never know.

Scope and Significance of the Study

My interest in immigration experiences led me to inquire about Cuban women and aspects of their lives affecting how they learn English in Miami. I chose to study recent arrivals, Cuban refugee women who arrived in the U.S. since 2000, because I wanted to capture a part of their early resettlement experience as they were trying to make sense of their new social and cultural surrounds. I could identify no previous study

that addressed such interest. The scope of the study evolved from my professional experience and my curiosity regarding Cuban women's learning in Miami. The work was limited to the conversations and classroom experiences of four Cuban refugee women (Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris) at one school during two trimesters of beginning ESOL instruction.

Previous research has shown that women are often directly involved with literacy transactions at home and at work (Rockhill 1987). With this in mind, I sought to explore the influences of the social contexts surrounding women who were beginning English language learners in a geographical area where their home language, Spanish, is dominant. I chose to conduct four case studies of Cuban refugee women because I hoped that by concentrating on the women's lives in their classrooms I could highlight the personal perspectives of learning in a field of research that has largely depended on quantitative statistics and self-report data.

As I was preparing to identify participants, I explained my research interests to the administrator of a refugee-assistance program that supports refugee learners' ESOL and vocational studies in the school district. She and her staff encouraged me to look into the actual lives of the clients they served in adult centers throughout the school district. Although the district provided statistical information about demographics, matriculation, and entry/exit test scores, no researcher had investigated the actual daily interactions in the school settings. The significance of the study is that it may inform the refugee program staff members by providing some suggestions that would help them improve client services throughout the local school district and the state of Florida (van Lier 1988).

Questions of the Study

I did not choose the classroom settings before identifying the participants. I asked them to participate first without knowing anything about their respective classroom placements. In order to guide my study, I focused on the following research questions:

- What are contextual influences that frame and shape the four women's experiences of learning English in their ESOL classrooms?
- What language learning strategies do the learners develop or employ in the classroom?
- What are their classroom opportunities for language learning?

The first question allowed me to examine the influences of the women's investments in language learning and the familial and social surrounds that framed their notions of schooling. The second question required me to identify the women's observed language-learning strategies in order to analyze what they did to help themselves learn. The final question framed an examination of the interactions in the four women's classrooms. I considered it to be an open-ended inquiry because in qualitative case studies methodology, I could not predict or hypothesize what might happen during the course of data collection.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This qualitative study examined the contextual influences on adult female second language learners' experiences while attending ESOL classes. By contextual influences, I mean those factors present in the participants' lives that frame their perspectives of identity as newly-arrived immigrants and as students in their first ESOL classroom placements. My work is informed by constructivist theory in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) that values an adult learner's life experiences and knowledge as the foundation and springboard of instruction (Cummins 1983, Krashen 1981, Freire 1970). Students and teachers are partners in the learning process where the classroom is "a social space, and this means a place where interaction is valued, not simply tolerated" (Lindfors, 1999 p. 222). Knowledge comes out of what is known and questioning is based on a comparison of what is known and what is needed. The need is what is salient to learners during a lesson and what is relevant in instructional discourse to take advantage of natural and spontaneous interactions (García 1994). I agree with Krashen (1981) and his model of the "affective filter" that influences adult learners' access to information within the interactions necessary to their progress and ultimate success. The interwoven contexts (Cole 1996) that surround a language learner (aspects of her past educational experiences, social and family networks, worries and joys, and in the case of the participants in this study, the experience of migration and resettlement) affect the extent and effectiveness of her language learning.

In this chapter, I review literature on studies conducted in the areas addressed by my questions. Areas of interest include the women's social contexts and their attendance in beginning adult ESOL classes, the learning strategies they used during class sessions, and their opportunities to learn within the frame of their classrooms. I was interested in understanding the role of adult education in the learning and professional goals of women and in the contextual influences in their lives that affect their attendance. I first discuss the issue of gender as site of inquiry, followed by research on women's participation in language learning and adult education. Next, I address theories related to the learners' contexts of experience and how internal and external factors and relationships might affect the women's opportunities for learning English, as well as their perspectives of resettlement that might have affected their personal and domestic obligation and their classroom attendance. An exploration of the historical factors is important because the four participants in this study experienced powerful cultural influences framed in their Cuban revolutionary and exile realities. Then I examine traditional notions of schooling within the theoretical frame of the classrooms in order to understand the nature of the classroom interactions I observed. Finally, since the observations took place during the participants' ESOL classes, I present an overview of some language learning theories and strategy frameworks that I found helpful in my later analysis. The chapter ends in an overview of ethnographic case study research, the format of the study.

I chose to study *women's* language learning contexts exclusively, without comparison to men's learning issues, because I subscribe to two key assumptions drawn from feminist research: (a) women's learning must be understood and valued in its own right, and (b) women's learning must be understood within a broader social context that

should encompass the social determinants of gender roles and norms (Hayes & Flannery 2001, p. xii). This work seeks to extend understanding of refugee women's contexts of learning. The research questions frame the following overlapping areas of inquiry:

- Issues related to women's life contexts, access, and attendance in a formal adult education ESOL program
- Learning strategies they developed and used to help themselves learn.
- Women's activities of learning within the environments of their classrooms, school, and state curriculum frameworks.

The inspiration for my interest has been the call for qualitative contributions to the growing body of research linking theories of second language learning (SLA) and social contexts (Dörnyei 1994, Ehrman & Dörnyei 1998, Norton Peirce 1995, Oxford & Shearin 1996, Ushioda, 1996). An emerging body of scholarship focuses solely on immigrant women's language learning (Katasse 1994, Norton-Peirce 1995; Remennick 1999, Rockhill 1987, Rockhill & Tomic 1995, Sinke 2000). However, most related studies I have reviewed either did not address gender or compared women and men's experiences and behaviors in educational settings. Norton-Peirce (1995) points to the lack of SLA theory that integrates second language learners and the learning contexts. I also found that too few studies have been based on ethnographic methods, conducted within the naturalistic settings of classrooms, that accurately described classroom activities from a learner's point of view. In related research, studies of refugee women's concerns in resettlement, in which language learning is a factor, form a growing body of work within the field of psychology (Boyd 2001, Espín 1999, Forner 2001, Saldaña 1992). Thus, in response to researchers' calls for a qualitative perspective, I explored the participants' classroom learning experiences in order to discover contextual factors situated in the social dimension of language learning.

Gender as Site of Inquiry

In the past, research in adult education has focused on perspectives of women as learners, deficient or marginalized collaborative learners, who must cope with new social roles (Hayes & Smith 1994). Other studies examine the importance of relationships, the diverse and nonlinear patterns of women's lives, and issues of intimacy and identity (Cafarella 1992). In their watershed study, *Women's Ways of Knowing*, Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986/1997) found that women learn best in environments that emphasize connected teaching and learning, that is, when theoretical models are connected to real-life experience. In these environments, the researchers conclude, women begin to recognize their own ability to think independently, to think critically, and to come to their own conclusions as they integrate the private and the public, the personal and the political. The sense of belonging in the learning environment can enhance opportunities for sharing knowledge and constructing new knowledge within a community of learners.

Interchanges lead to ways of knowing that enable individuals to enter into the social and intellectual life of their community. Without them, individuals remain isolated from others; and without tools for representing their experiences, people also remain isolated from the self (p. 26).

According to Bem (1993), "What virtually all the women-centered theorists have seen as a woman's special virtue is her ability to easily transcend the many isolated units and artificial polarities that men are said to almost compulsively invent" (p. 128).

Bearing such theories in mind, some researchers have suggested gender-specific instructional programs based on theoretical formulations for adult learning that focus on the mental construction of experience as it relates to emancipatory learning (Carmack 1992, Purcell-Gates & Waterman 2000). Tisdell (1993), referring to the Belenky et al

study, criticizes adult education classroom practices and curriculum as being driven by white male, middle class values that might not be in the interests of women, and especially women from minority populations. She claims that men's experiences and goals in adult learning are more often validated than are those of minority women.

Tisdell suggests a "liberatory model" of feminist pedagogies that deals with "the nature of structured power relations and interlocking systems of oppression based on gender, race, class, age and so on" (p. 94). The model she proposes, based on critical examination of social power structures, is parallel to that proposed earlier by Freire (1970). Tisdell's criticism of adult learning environments is a reaction to the reproduction of male power and the oppression of women inherent in workforce and domestic labor settings.

Because the curriculum, the knowledge base, and the examples used in the books and materials are created by and are primarily about the middle-class male experience, white middle-class males are more likely to be successful both in the education system and in a society that accords greater value to that experience. Therefore, white male power is reproduced by the system (p. 95).

Awareness of Essentializing Forces in Gender Research

The problem with most studies on women's learning is that they may unwittingly contribute to essentializing and stereotyping female learners while they consider the effects of gender apart from constructions of race and class. Cheng (1999) writes that "minority and third world feminists have maintained that gender should not be treated as an autonomous system independent of other systems of stratification, such as ethnicity, race and class; they have criticized the additive model of conceptualization of gender" (p. 43). Furthermore, it seems that the choice of the word, "gender," in scholarly discussions implies a markedness to the male default – the addition of the female – as if the male subject were not also a category of gender. Representation of the learners' experiences without first examining the social constructs of gender and the category of "woman"

could imply that there is some unknown and underlying common identity that the word “woman” subsumes. Such an assumption ignores the vast diversity of identities, experiences, and cultural contexts that exist for people who carry the cultural representative label, “Woman.”

Butler (1990) writes at length on the presumed universality of “women” as a topic of representation and inquiry in feminist critique. She raises the pervasive question in feminist theorizing: “What defines the category, ‘gender?’” Is it biologically linked to reproductive function? Is it based on social roles predetermined by the dominant culture? Does it essentialize and diminish women’s identities to say that transcultural structures of femininity, maternity, and sexuality make women’s life experiences universal? “When feminists theorists claim that gender is culturally constructed, what is the manner of mechanism of this construction?” (p. 11). Whatever the nature of such construction, societies set a code of gender appropriate behaviors and roles that proceed unnoticed unless they are violated.

The limits of the discursive analysis of gender presuppose and preempt the possibilities of imaginable and realizable gender configuration within a culture. This is not to say that any and all gender possibilities are open, but the boundaries of analysis suggest the limits of a discursively conditioned experience. These limits are always set within the terms of a hegemonic cultural discourse predicated on binary structures that appear as the language of universal rationality. Constraint is thus built into what language constitutes as the imaginable domain of gender (p. 13).

People's lives conform to factors of behavior such as those related to construction of the male and female identities and the materialization of gendered bodies. Butler (1993) questions how the materiality of sex difference has been presumed to be irreducible; how we speak about and situate the categories of the masculine and feminine have somehow created absolutes that bear cultural construction (p. 28). Enloe (1989), in

her examination of the roles that women have played in international politics and economics, suspects that the categories of gender are "packages of expectations that have been created through specific decisions by specific people. We are also coming to realize that the traditional concepts of masculinity and femininity have been surprisingly hard to perpetrate" (p. 3).

Bem (1993) describes the hegemonic discourse of such binary gender construction in her discussion of gender issues and inequalities. Bem posits that, in general, societies view gender in three ways or "lenses."

- a. "Androcentrism" is the assumption that men's experience is the norm. The view of woman as "the other" is still firmly embedded in Western thought.
- b. "Gender polarization" places men and women on opposite ends of a spectrum that is rigidly defined, not so much by biology as by acculturation.
- c. "Biological essentialism" forms the basis of shifting theories that share the belief that biology is destiny.

All three lenses both distort and shape reality and are culturally reproductive in nature. Arguments about whether women are or are not different from men miss the point-- women clearly are different in some ways, and these differences should be considered but not devalued. Moreover, the lenses that Bem describes focus more on the reproduction of power to control social processes than they do on difference.

The lenses of androcentrism, gender polarization, and biological essentialism systematically reproduce male power in two ways. First the discourses and social institutions in which they are embedded automatically channel females and males into different and unequal life situations. Second, during enculturation, the individual gradually internalizes the cultural lenses and thereby becomes motivated to construct an identity that is consistent with them (p. 3).

Butler (1993), in her book, *Bodies That Matter*, also speaks of the role of power in the discourse of gender and the importance of critique regarding the term, "woman."

While she argues for the use of the term without tacitly inferring limits on its meaning,

Butler also calls for subjecting it "to a critique which interrogates exclusionary operations and differential power relations that construct and delimit feminist invocations of 'women'" (p. 29). Later, Butler explains that the boundary of the material "body" is the site of lived differentiated experience where conceptions of "the other," that is, of separate individuals, are situated. "That differentiation is never neutral to the question of gender difference or the heterosexual matrix" (p. 63).

Coming to School: Research in Women's Participation in Adult ESOL Learning Contexts

Of interest to the study were reasons that drew the four women to the school and kept them attending during the first two trimesters of their 1-year funded program. Because I wanted to understand the participants' experiences in their first ESOL placements, I needed an intimate look at the daily classroom activities of the participants in order to understand their multiple social identities as learners, workers, mothers, wives, and community members. The participants' voices provided deeper perspectives on their investment in language learning (expenditure of time and effort) rooted in personal and family background, previous education, migration experience, historical context, and support networks. Norton-Peirce situates investment in language learning "in the relationship of the language learner to the changing world" (p. 17) and recognition of the complex social roles, contexts, and identities that learners must negotiate.

Women's participation in adult education is a complex phenomenon (Gómez, 2000). Perceived obligations to domestic, familial, and occupational duties are among many forces that might positively, or negatively, influence a woman's decisions to attend school and to continue doing so. In the historical context of the Miami Cuban exile community, adult female refugees, who often found work within the Spanish-speaking community, did not attend English classes as frequently as males (Rogg, 1974). As a

historical comparison, Portes and Bach (1985) reported that "between 1976 and 1979, while just less than one third of the [Cuban] men attended class, only 21% of the [Cuban] women received similar formal instruction" (p. 179).

Since the 1970s changes in labor markets and technological advances have forced people to seek education (Golden 2001, Gómez 2000, Portes & Bach 1985). In the analysis of data by gender in her study of adult education participation, Gómez (2000) found that more women than men tend to make the decision to attend on their own and that more men than women participated on the suggestion of their employer (p. 215). She also found that women rely on information and recommendations from neighbors, friends, and family members as they consider their return to formal education settings. Luttrell (1989), in her study of 30 working-class women of color, argued that there are profound reasons for women to participate in schooling. Women tend to place heavy value on the voices and knowledge put forth by school authorities (Belenky et al 1986/1997). Luttrell found that

Their identities are already embedded in cultural, community, and work relationships, yet their desire to expand, perfect, or contradict the work they do as women underlies their participation in school (p. 34).

Rockhill (1987) in her study of 50 Hispanic women in Los Angeles, found that many women express the desire to attend English classes. They first enroll in such classes soon after they arrive from another country. Women attending adult education programs are most likely to be enrolled in the lower skills classes. Gómez agrees. "The more basic the level of the course, the more women were over-represented among the participants" (Gómez 2000, p. 217). Unfortunately, despite effort and desire, many female students discontinue their studies during their lower levels of ESOL enrollment.

They explain stopping in terms of the enormous pressures of their daily lives, including resistance at home. They talk about worry, anxiety, too much on their minds, and feeling too old to concentrate upon the difficult and time-consuming endeavor of learning the language (Rockhill 1987, p. 163).

Rockhill also argues that the rates of women's attendance is proportionate to the extent that other institutional factors support women's participation and learning. What is equally important, she found, is that the proportion of women students attending class can contribute to women's feelings of belonging as they come to identify themselves as learners in the learning environment (cited in Hayes 2001, p. 32). Women may depend on schooling as the place to learn English because they are usually confined to the domestic sphere or working environments where they are not exposed to practical, and informal uses of English on an ongoing, day-to-day basis (Rockhill 1987). Additionally, Hayes (2001, citing Rockhill) argues that women's pursuit of further education can be a deliberate attempt at independence (p. 49). However, independence is a construct that is defined in different ways across cultural lines and may not be the goal of all women learners attending adult ESOL classes. In the classroom, women learners become part of a community of learners, in contrast to the isolation they often encounter in their home life, where they are less likely to interact with native English speakers.

Interactions in the classroom are strongly influenced by gender roles especially among cultures where power and patriarchy are explicit (Tisdell 1993). Officially, and idealistically speaking, discourse in adult ESOL classrooms attempts to level the playing field for all learners. However, attempts at equality in U.S. ESOL classrooms may be naïve, considering that some women come from backgrounds where their public voice is devalued, and even squelched. Luttrell (1989) concludes,

To understand women's exclusion requires an examination of the similarities and differences in the objective conditions of women's lives, as well as an analysis of

how ideologies of knowledge shape women's perceptions and claims to knowledge (p. 44).

Psychologist Espín (1999) addressed the complexities behind classroom interactions as learners attempt to learn the language, but also to acquire the skills to negotiate new cultural spheres and construct new knowledge within their new surroundings.

The immigrant learns to “live in two languages” at the same time she learns to live in two social worlds. Learning to live in a new language is not merely an instrumental process; it is not a neutral act. (Espín 1999, p. 134.).

Within the scope of this study, the spirit of Espín's statement was a thread interwoven in the fabric of the women's goals and experiences as they negotiated lives on the cultural and linguistic border between the Miami Cuban exile enclave and the surrounding English-speaking environment. Espín explains that both concern for freedom of movement and their acceptance by the dominant U.S. society seemed to reflect women's hope for greater independence and transforming identities. Norton-Peirce (1995) agrees with Espín.

When language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers but they are constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. Thus an investment in the target language is also an investment in the learner's own social identity, an identity which is constantly changing across time and space (p. 17).

Learning the dominant language can be seen as an investment in oneself, one's family, and one's social community. However, for many women, initial language learning comes from a need for self-defense in the threatening borderland between their home culture and the newly entered environment. In her study of female Spanish-speaking immigrants, Klassen (1987) found that some language learners wanted to learn English as a means of defense in their daily lives. It is important to point out that when

Spanish speakers use the cognate, *defender* (to defend oneself), the meaning is not limited to situations of conflict, but can extend to explaining one's agency, opinion, or decision. "Initial efforts to learn the language are framed in terms of self-defense, of survival" (cited in Rockhill, 1987).

Reality stands in contrast; self-defense issues and women's language learning investment are clearly not the focus of Adult ESOL. Most language teaching and materials in ESOL programs are organized into instructional units to teach the language of survival and coping with social power structures as they exist. The "client," as a student enrolled in Florida adult education is called, receives language instruction that is embedded, according to state-established goal competencies in cultural, social, and political spheres of the community and workplace (FL DOE 2001a). Such a curriculum bias seems to validate Espín's (1999) observation that language learning is not a neutral act of instrumentality: "It implies being immersed in the power relations of the specific culture that speaks the specific language" (p. 134). The cultural aims and definition of "empowerment" in Adult ESOL in the last several years have been recast to fulfill economic mandates to teach specific language and behaviors exclusively aligned with business interests and the greater consumer-oriented society.

Adult Literacy as Commodity

Locally in Florida, and throughout the United States, the philosophy of Adult ESOL has been evolving, moving more toward labor-oriented language learning under federal mandate (*Workforce Investment Act of 1998*). In 1992, the Secretary of Labor Commission on Acquiring Necessary Skills (*SCANS Report 1992*) defined the skills needed by workers to function productively and efficiently in the U.S. workplace. "The legislature has clearly designed the program to enhance the state's ability to have in place

a trained workforce. This is in keeping with early goals that the U.S. Congress had for adult education" (FL DOE 2001b).

Literacy has become the important buzzword in ESOL with the contemporary emphasis on teaching reading skills, particularly for Workforce English. Teaching "employability skills" makes efferent reading of such texts as instructions, safety warnings, and workers' rights paramount in importance over reading aesthetic texts for the simple joy of reading (Rosenblatt 1938). Furthermore, the state-mandated, seven-level curriculum frameworks for Adult ESOL are themselves entitled, "*Literacy Completion Points*" (my emphasis. See [Appendix A](#) for Florida Adult ESOL Frameworks).

For the last 10 years at least, Adult Literacy and ESOL instruction has been framed, as Rockhill (1987) observed "in terms of economic development, equality of opportunity, and the possibilities of liberty and democracy" (p. 156). Philosophically, literacy has become an object or commodity to be acquired. As a result, Adult ESOL has widely been reclassified as "Workforce English." It bears noting that the U.S. has not been the leader in this initiative and that the focus on workforce issues in adult language teaching and learning is a global concern.

Studies of teaching the local language to newcomers in Sweden (Hill 1990), France (Grillo 1985), and France and Britain (Grillo 1989) - countries in which newcomers are primarily conceptualized as labor migrants - reveal that the curriculum deals "primarily with the languages of, and behaviors appropriate to, situations that reflect roles basic to processes of production and consumption" (Grillo 1985) and "actors in a complex structure of official rights and obligations" (Selwyn 1986). (Golden 2001, p. 67).

Whereas labor and consumer language has become the framework of Adult ESOL curriculum content, Rockhill (1987) sharply condemns reliance on such a curriculum because in her view it does a disservice to female learners.

To frame literacy in terms of equality of opportunity, rights, or empowerment is absurd...in a gendered society where conception of rights is alien to women who have been told all their lives that they must obey and care for others (p. 165).

She suggests that women learners would be better served if researchers sought answers to how language in general enters their everyday lives and self-definitions. What does learning language mean to the lives of learners and what is necessary to them? If immigrant women in ESOL classrooms are to be successful, the curriculum and instruction should be relevant to their lives. Feminist theorist, Weedon (1987) asserts that language is “the place where actual and possible forms of social organization and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. Yet it is also the place where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is constructed” (p. 21).

Contexts, Surrounds, and Primary Frames

Influences from Women's Life Contexts.

The first research question addresses the contextual influences within the participants' lives and the effects such influences may have on their attending adult ESOL classes. The women in the study (recent refugees, professionals, mothers, wives, and community members) entered the long process of English language learning in a public adult education center. Historically, they found themselves among the most recent Cuban arrivals to the Miami exile enclave. Psychologist Peck (1986) offers a spiraling model of women's adult self-definition and subjectivity that can help theoretically explain the influences of the contexts that surround the study participants and their English language learning opportunities (Figure 2-1).

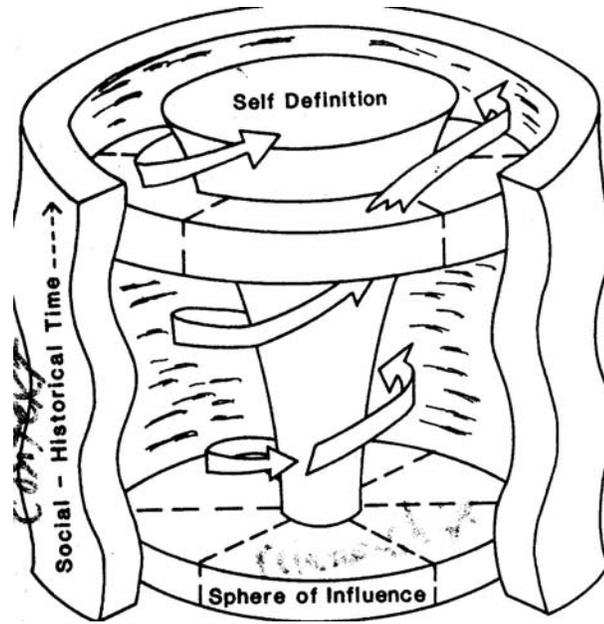


Figure 2-1 Peck's Model of adult women's self-definition in adulthood (Peck 1986, p. 278).

It is helpful to view the influences in the participants' lives according to a model that situates their identity formation within the domains of historical time, social surrounds, and personal relationships. As Peck's model shows, a woman's development of her own self-definition is not static, but continually evolving according to roles and relationships with the people, times, and places surrounding her. The spiral construction of Peck's "Model of Women's Adult Self-Definition" indicates continual change wherein the woman is subject to, and exerts her influences on, forces and contexts of relationships and chronology as she monitors her growth against the relationships with those she values (p. 281).

The model describes the process of self-definition enveloped in the powerful contexts of relationships that Peck calls the "sphere of influence." The influences function in emic-etic channels, that is, they include the affective relationships a woman has with others around her (as co-worker, wife, lover, mother, friend, etc.) and the effects

other people have on her and her identity. Peck explains that the sphere of influence is both flexible and elastic, expanding to accommodate new relationships and contracting to prevent them. "Flexibility includes the ways in which a woman is able to redistribute her emotional involvement with each relationship in order to receive support and reaffirmation of the self when necessary" (p. 279). Elasticity is the primary way a woman sees the effects she has on the people around her. Therefore she can see herself as having some control over the extent to which others' needs and expectations affect her own behavior and her ability to differentiate others' concerns from her own (p. 280).

Surrounding the immediate sphere of influence in Peck's model is the concept of "social-historical time." It takes into account the *Zeitgeist* and social attributes of the woman's lifetime, and subsumes the factors of personal chronology and physical aging. In the social-historical realm the woman defines herself at any given point in time against the backdrop of social, emotional and political contexts (p. 278). Peck's model is dialectical in its description of the internal and external forces of a woman's life and includes the influences of relationships and caring. It stands in marked contrast to models of autonomy and identity, which usually depict stages of adult identity formation, from the default of masculine perspectives.

Peck's "Model of Women's Adult Self-Definition" applies to Lindfors' (1999) discussion of the importance of considering "surround contexts" in classroom interactions. In her explanation of surround contexts, Lindfors refers to the layers of relationships located in contexts of time and space. Although people are generally unaware of contexts of daily experience, learners' identities and their life experiences frame the perceptions of learning opportunities, as well as learners' involvement and

contributions to classroom work. The knowledge, beliefs, values, expectations, experiences, expressive ways learners (and teachers) bring into the classroom interact with what is already there and they contextualize classroom discourse and interactions. "Expectations from outside and inside constitute a pool of resources for each individual - a set of possibilities and constraints - for creating and interpreting utterances" (p. 218).

In her discussion of surround and context, Lindfors credits the work of cultural psychologist Cole (1996) for the psychological metaphor of "weaving" to understand surround contexts. In his presentation of the notion of context and surround, Cole looks to the Latin root of the word "context" for inspiration in his proposal of interweaving of influences. In Latin, *contexere*, means "to weave together." Cole sees the image of weaving as salient to a discussion of the influences that not only surround learners, but construct a multidimensional matrix of experience in which an individual is an active participant. "When context is thought of in this way, it cannot be reduced to that which surrounds. It is rather a qualitative relation between a minimum of two analytical entities (threads), which are moments in a single process" (p. 135). Cole concludes that interactions have multidirectional consequences that position an individual in relation to another person. That relationship exists as cross-threads woven within the situation as a whole, that is, the surrounding context (p. 144).

Women in the Cuban Exile Context

Latina women in particular are regarded as virtuous if they demonstrate humility and selflessness in their relationships with family and community (Anzaldúa 1997). With such complexities in mind, each participant made decisions that affected her own welfare and that of the people who depended on her. Latina writer Anzaldúa (1997) explains that kinship effects powerful forces on women's (and men's) gendered lives within the

Hispanic cultural sphere. The obligations framed in kinship often define Latinas' identities and gave rise to the pressures behind their daily struggles.

From a Cuban exile perspective, *Mujerista* theologian Isasi-Díaz (1996) agrees with Butler (1993) and Bem (1993) as she, too, argues against essentializing women's experiences, especially those of women lived in exile realities. Isasi-Díaz explains that Cuban women's lives in exile follow a daily struggle of identity and liberation that she calls, "*lo cotidiano*" (the daily [struggle]). *Lo cotidiano* refers to daily life experiences that constitute Cuban women's realities and how they might characterize actions, conversations, norms, social roles, and themselves (p. 67). The experiences of daily life are *shared* among the members of an individual's social network as illustrated by the flexible and elastic "sphere of influence," the core of Peck's "Model of adult women's self-definition in adulthood" (1986, p. 275).

Lo cotidiano points to "shared experiences," which I differentiate from "common experience." "Shared experiences" is a phrase that indicates the importance differences play in *lo cotidiano*. On the other hand, "common experience" seems to mask differences, to pretend that there is but one experience, one way of knowing for all Hispanic women (p. 68).

The philosophy behind Isasi-Díaz's description of *lo cotidiano*, or daily struggle (*la lucha*, the struggle) highlights the agency that Cuban women find and locate in their own lives lived in exile space and historical context. Indeed, the common Cuban cliché, "*Hay que seguir luchando*" (Ya gotta keep struggling!) surfaced repeatedly in the study data. As if to link *la lucha* with women's resistance to oppression, Butler (1993) points out that personal agency implicates the individual in the relations of power that she seeks to oppose (p. 123). Within the relationships constructed by *lo cotidiano*, Cuban women judge their own "personal understandings, aspirations, ambitions, projects, and goals in

their lives” (p. 71) usually in their obligations to others. Cuban exile educator, J. González (1993), illustrates Isasi-Díaz's point from her own perspective.

No sólo teníamos que velar por nuestra sobrevivencia, sino que además éramos responsables para servirle de apoyo a novios, esposos, hermanos y padres. Con esa falta de dirección definida empezamos a proyectar nuestras vidas de mujer. De pronto, las reglas del juego cambiaron. No había tiempo para dedicarse a pensar en ilusiones, había que repartir el tiempo entre trabajo y estudios. Nos véamos de repente frente a problemas que jamás pensamos atravesar, con decisiones que jamás pensamos tener que tomar.

Not only did we have to watch out for our own survival, but we were also responsible for serving to support boyfriends, husbands, brothers, and fathers. With that lack of defined direction, we began planning our lives as women. Quickly, the rules of the game changed. There was no time for thinking about illusions. One had to split one's time between work and studies. We saw ourselves suddenly confronted with problems that we never thought we would go through, with decisions we never thought we would have to make (p. 39).

Cuban Revolutionary Influences

As children and young adults, the four women in the study lived through the developing ideology of the Revolution, which ineffectually tried to change in the traditional lenses of gender (Bem 1993) in the Cuban cultural context. The attempts at change caused Cuban women to be treated paradoxically in the post-revolutionary period in Cuba. Women could not only shoulder arms as true soldiers, but were obliged with added duty as caring companions at the service of their male rebel compatriots. For example, according to historian Guerra (2001), the women's rebel organization, *La Escuadra de Hijas de Fidel* (The Squadron of the Daughters of Fidel) early on established a paradox for women within the revolutionary context. Members in the *Escuadra* acknowledged the role of women in the physical revolutionary struggle while reinforcing the traditional domestic image of women as caretakers.

As the Revolution progressed, the Cuban government's perspectives on gender equality became more defined. In 1974, during the time when the participants were

attending high school (Angelica and Dora), recently graduated (Marina), or attending the university (Damaris), a law was passed that limited the types of employment that women could pursue because of the danger to women's reproductive systems. Thus, women were barred by law from working in construction, scuba diving, chemotherapy medicine, radiation related occupations, and chemical manufacture. The following year, the "Family Law" was enacted that divided domestic labor equally between spouses. Deere (1984) explains the philosophical rationale behind the law.

The traditional reproductive responsibilities of women, and the burden it places upon them, must be recognized. If domestic labor cannot be socialized, the only alternative, if women's equality is to be achieved, is for men to share the reproductive burden (p. 74).

The effect of the law was that a woman could divorce a husband who did not do 50% of the household chores and childcare. According to Guerra, many men found a loophole in the law by enlisting their mothers or other female relatives to assist them in their legally mandated domestic duties.

The gendered paradox became further developed in the framing of the 1976 Cuban constitution. In its writing, the government established recognition of gender equality as an ideal, but obscured the problem in policies of incorporation of women in all social roles. Not only were women in Cuba included in the social responsibility for upholding the revolutionary ideals and contributing their labor to the cause of the Revolution, they also were charged with the traditional domestic and reproductive roles as well. The new position on equality did not affect women's traditional identity roles established by the earlier Roman Catholic Cuban society.

In the Revolution women had two models of socially acceptable behavior: (a) The Virgin Mary, the traditional honor/shame role as the basis of domestic female power; or

(b) The Revolutionary Hero Woman with the gun who is the companion and caretaker of the male guerrilla. Guerra concludes that the Revolution did force reconsideration of women's power, but not to the point of conflict with men's power. Through the 1990s, women's issues in Cuba became even more marginalized because of perceptions of the success of revolutionary egalitarianism. All gender debate was silenced because it violated the honor code of *Cubanismo*. Any open gender critique became construed as an indictment of some failure on behalf of the government. By the time the four participants emigrated to Miami, public debate in Cuba regarding gender equality had ceased.

Frame Analysis and the Banking Model of Education

Dewey once said, "For we never experience nor form judgements about objects and events in isolation, but only in connection with a contextual whole" (1938, p. 66). In the previous section I explored theories regarding the place of learner context and surrounds that influence their opportunities and experiences of learning. In this section, I will discuss a common ideology that often underlies culturally constructed understandings of classroom discourse and experiences.

Generally, people are unaware of the many cultural forces that long ago established behavioral and situational expectations. Lack of awareness means that people accept many reified social structures without question. In his celebrated work, *Frame Analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*, Goffman (1974) writes about how people passively accept the actions and artifacts of their surroundings and culture.

Goffman's "frame analysis" looks at the structures that people perceive as, what Goffman calls, "primary frameworks," or the understandings and expectations about what something is (an object, a social context, etc.) and how it functions and relates to others.

Primary frameworks dictate how people will react or respond to situations. As Goffman writes:

Each framework allows its user to locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences defined in its terms. He is likely to be unaware of such organized features as the framework has and unable to describe the framework with any completeness if asked, yet these handicaps are no bar to his easily and fully applying it (p. 21).

Bruner (1990) applies what Goffman has described to the social realm. "People are expected to behave situationally whatever their 'roles,' whether they are introverted or extroverted, whatever their scores on the MMPI, whatever their politics" (p. 48). In this study, learners and teachers functioned within primary frameworks of what they might expect from a "normal" educational experience (van Lier 1988). All the participants and all the teachers experienced personal histories of schooling that set rules and expectations about how the educational process would operate.

Within the culture of the classroom, routines can evolve, becoming part of the expected framework of usual behaviors. "This leads to activities which are similar to rituals in which everyone knows what to do next, and the only surprise is when unexpected things happen" (van Lier 1988, p. 10). If, for example, learners (to recall Goffman's phrase) "locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences" that take place in the classroom in terms of passively received knowledge, they would probably accept the traditional frame that views teachers as authority figures and purveyors of knowledge. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) describe such a traditional classroom communication in much the same frame of many learners and teachers who may have not had experience or training in constructivist styles of learning.

The lecturer [teacher] can call for participation or objection without fear of it really happening: questions to the audience are purely rhetorical; the answers, serving to express the part of the faithful to take in the service, are generally no more than responses (p. 109).

Within such a frame of education, student responses are often just reconstituted, paraphrased information that the learners have received from the teacher in the first place. It is as if the teacher deposits more and more information for the learners to store in memory for later recall. Called "The Banking Model," this framework of education derived from economics models is described by Freire (1970) in his landmark work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

In short, the banking model assumes that a learner's mind is empty and impoverished, waiting to be "filled" by the enriching knowledge that the respected, well-educated teacher endows. The teacher (and/or the mandated curriculum) decides what learners need to learn, then delivers the nutritive knowledge in a lesson. Curriculum content is customarily based on what students *lack* or what is *good for them* to know in order to become productive members of society. Later, the assessment, or some accepted proof of "learning," usually comes in the form of an uncritical, often verbatim, playback of the teacher's input, orally or in writing. Bilingual educator and social critic, Macedo (1994) calls such teaching and learning, "instrumental literacy for the poor." Macedo criticizes drills and fill-in-the-blank exercises as nothing but "preparation for multiple choice exams and writing gobbledygook in imitation of the psychobabble that surrounds them" (p. 16). According to Freire, it is a type of pedagogy that protects power and prevents critical thinking and dialogue by keeping the classroom interactions in the hands of the teacher.

Many of the learner experiences that I observed, and will describe in the findings, can be categorized according to Freire's list of banking model assumptions (p.73):

- The teacher teaches and the students are taught.
- The teacher knows everything and the students know nothing.
- The teacher thinks and the students are thought about.
- The teacher talks and the students listen - meekly.
- The teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined.
- The teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply.
- The teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher.
- The teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it.
- The teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his or her own professional authority, which she or he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students.
- The teacher is the Subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects.

In the context of the banking model, learner production of original work is not an issue since the learners are expected to absorb what the teacher is presenting to them. They apparently have almost no opportunities to offer their own input to the learning event. Student work then is reduced to rehashing the teacher's ideas or the content of the textbook, filling in the blanks of worksheets and mimicking dialogues. The framework default dictates that the learners do not question content or delivery of what surely *must be to their benefit* (my emphasis). They do not really get to use the language, at least during class sessions, for their own knowledge construction. Thus, "being recipients but not sources of knowledge, the students feel confused and incapable when the teacher requires that they do original work" (Belenky, et al 1986/1997, p. 40). Newcomers in ESOL classrooms may not be equipped to understand the style of dialogic discourse necessary in language learning because their cultural frame traditionally supports the authority and power of the teacher and the inferiority of the learner (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977).

In language-learning contexts, the banking model can be a sure barrier limiting learning strategy use, acquisition of language, and communicative competence because the learner does not have frequent opportunities to practice what she has learned. Effective language learning and communicative competence develop from interactions among learners and with speakers of the target language. It is a social process in which the learner discovers the purposes and cultural variables of discourse (Woolard & Schieffelin 1994). As Norton-Peirce (1995) writes, "...language learning results from participation in communicative events; it is important to investigate how power relations are implicated in the nature of this learning" (p. 13). Fine (1991) in her critical analysis of urban high schools, claims that the muting of students and learning communities undermines the project of educational empowerment.

Language learning and ESOL

Dialogic Notions of Language Learning

The language learning process is invisible because knowledge construction is individual and personal. Teaching and learning practices must consider the interaction of language, culture, and cognition. "Because learning is an active, dynamic process, we believe that second-language acquisition will occur most effectively with high degree of learner involvement" (O'Malley & Chamot 1993, p. 97). Sociocultural theorists have long sought to describe patterns of connection within all areas of language, cognition, culture, human development, and their relation to teaching and learning. Spolsky (1989) asserts that language learning cannot progress without exposure to the language, and that learners practice the target language in two distinct qualitative settings - informally with native speakers in a natural setting and formally within the curriculum-based confines of the classroom.

Lindfors (1987) discusses two approaches to language learning. She says that some teachers see language learning as acquiring a set of habits that are internalized by repetitive practice. In contrast, adherents of another approach hypothesize that learners acquire the second language in interactive, social contexts by experiencing how native speakers use the target language. In the first approach, the first language is viewed as a liability because of the belief that it interferes with learning specific content or form and pattern in the second language. The second perspective credits learners with the resources of cognitive understanding of the general processes of language as learners infer their own rules about content, pronunciation, and grammatical rules (p. 441). Explicit instruction can have its place within the creative construction process of language learning as a teacher scaffolds knowledge previously learned in order to connect it to new learning. Language is the tool for constructing new knowledge.

Vygotsky's (1986) oft-cited model of the "Zone of Proximal Development" explains a learner's need for others help in constructing knowledge that reaches beyond that which is known. In his discussion of speech and tool, Vygotsky explains that language is a mental tool and knowledgeable others assist the learner to develop mental tools within the child's current range of development. Speech and action are part of the same complex psychological function directed at the solution of the problem at hand. The more complex the task, the more reliance placed on external or internal speech.

Bakhtin (1986) explains language in use as utterance, that which is spoken or written and is dialogic in nature. He also stresses the necessity of shared experience in learning and language development. An utterance to him is a border phenomenon that takes place between speakers and is immersed in the social factors of discourse. Meaning

comes about in the individual psyche and in shared social experience through sign and symbol. Dewey (1931) agrees in saying that thought does not deal with bare things, but with their meanings. Dewey agrees with Vygotsky that language is a tool; however, it is a tool used to preserve meanings, a store of meanings, without which intellectual life could not exist.

James and Piaget both discuss the constructive nature of learning. According to James (1899), the accumulation of a store of physical conceptions is the basis of human knowledge of the material world. Piaget (1959) says that thought occurs through the development of networks of knowledge on which learners build additional knowledge. Experience and dialogue build the mental frameworks, what Piaget labels, "schemata." Mental frameworks do not happen in a vacuum free from outside influences. Schemata are constructed within contexts and notions of reality that are culturally bound. The process of equilibrium, accommodation, and assimilation of new knowledge expands the intellectual store. The common themes among all these early theorists are that language is a tool for understanding and storing knowledge.

Learning is accomplished in association with others, in a social dialogue of scaffolding, expansion, and inquiry. Individual learning and social interaction are inextricably connected as the teacher and learner and others are constructing minds through social activity. Vygotsky's work supports this notion because he believes that language acquisition is where the internal mental representation and external reality meet. Lindfors (1999) calls this nexus the realm of inquiry where the learner uses internal knowledge and imposition on others to push to the limits of what is known.

Cognitive psychologist Anderson (1980, 1985) believes that language is a cognitive skill, that is, the ability to perform various mental procedures. He writes that knowledge can be thought of in two types, "declarative" and "procedural." Declarative knowledge is "what" we know such as accepted facts, which are static. Procedural knowledge is more complex and constitutes what we know "how" to do. It is dynamic and includes knowledge about processes of rule formation and problem solving (p. 198). Belenky et al agree with Anderson in that procedural knowledge leads to problem solving talk. "Procedural knowers are practical, pragmatic problem solvers" (p. 99).

Learning, according to Anderson's model, occurs in three stages: (a) the cognitive stage; (b) the associative stage; and (c) the autonomous stage. The cognitive stage is where declarative knowledge of facts relevant to a skill enters the memory as input, i.e. the information that the learner recognizes and accepts (Chaudron 1985). Input, as Gass (1997) describes it, is information about the environment that is "synthesized and digested in preparation for integration into a developing system" (p. 138). In the associative stage, the learner works out possible errors in skills and meaning while strengthening connections with other skills or schemata previously learned. Finally, the procedures of association and connection become more and more rapid as internalized rules become less and less consciously accessible. In short, the skill becomes so automatic that the learner does not have to think about the process (pp. 234-235). Declarative knowledge is maintained in long-term memory in terms of meaning instead of precisely replicated external events.

SLA researcher Krashen (1981) applies a similar set of language learning stages that he describes in two models, the *Input Hypothesis* and the *Monitor Hypothesis*. In the

former, Krashen situates a subconscious and intuitive process of constructing the system of language through interaction with speakers of the target language. The main assumption of the Input Hypothesis is that input must be available to the learner and comprehensible. The Monitor Hypothesis asserts that language learning is a conscious effort and that the learner uses what is known to compare and monitor language production. The learner detects errors and makes corrections based on conscious observation of language events. Krashen values input over monitoring because he believes that only large amounts of input and exposure to authentic language can lead to acquiring the skills necessary for fluency. In a comparative view of Anderson's stages and Krashen's hypotheses, Krashen might regard input as adding to the realm of Anderson's declarative knowledge, because both depend of external influences, while procedural knowledge may find a connection with monitoring, a more internally driven process.

Learning Strategies

The study describes the learning styles and observable strategies employed by the participants to learn English in their classroom settings. The choice of focusing on the experiences of female participants for this study was informed by the emerging area of research interest in women's and men's experiences in L2 learning. Since the 1970's, several measures and personal survey instruments of learning strategy use have complicated the field of language learning strategy inquiry (Tsung-Yuan & Oxford 2002). In relation to the participants in this work, a few studies that have considered gender as a factor in the data have examined classroom talk (Losey 1995), classroom teaching (Holmes 1994, cited by Schwarte 2001, Sunderland 1994), comprehension signaling (Gass & Varonis 1985, and Pica, et al. 1991), and learning strategies (Oxford

1995). Losey's (1995) study examined the classroom talk of Mexican-American men and women attending English classes in a community college setting. She concluded that the women's silence she observed arose from the fast pace of the class and frequent interruptions when they did attempt to speak. Even so, women often engaged in one-on-one tutorial interactions and unofficial sense-making talk with peers. Losey cites Davies (1983) and Stanley (1986) who have previously written about silence in classrooms as a characteristic of young women. Youth may be only one among many in women's silence. Among the women whom Belenky et al (1986/1997) identified as "silent" were the youngest, but they were also the most socially, educationally, and economically deprived of all the participants in their study (p. 23).

Oxford (1995), who has an extensive body of research on language learning strategies and motivation to her credit, found that female L2 learners who employ a wider range of L2 learning strategies, are generally field dependent and reflective, while males in the same settings are often impulsive and field independent learners. Field dependence indicates that a learner looks for clues to meaning by connecting discrete language tasks to elements in previous knowledge and in the surrounding contexts of discourse. Field independence implies that a learner is tolerant of ambiguities and does not depend on explicit connection to context when constructing meaning. Oxford also found that women employ a wider range of strategies and that women are more social and receptive to differing styles. The women in Rockhill's study (1987) of 50 Hispanic women in Los Angeles used writing more frequently than men who depended more on acquiring oral skills to speak English. Witkin, Moore, Goodenough, & Cox (1977), suggesting an important link between learner motivation and L2 learning strategies, found that field-

independent learners tend to learn more than field-dependent people do under conditions of intrinsic or integrative motivation, such as when a learner seeks to enter a new culture that speaks a language different from her own.

In their study of communicative language learning strategies, Chesterfield and Chesterfield (1985) identified 12 strategies that elementary school bilingual students employed during classroom activities (Table 2-1). Although their findings summarize what children do in language learning activities, the list of strategies is general enough to constitute a first level analysis of what might also be observed in an adult classroom.

Table 2-1. Chesterfield and Chesterfield's list of learning strategies

Repetition	Memorization	Formulaic expressions(chunking)
Verbal attention getter	Talk to self	Answer in unison
Elaboration	Anticipatory answer	Monitoring
Appeal for assistance	Request for clarification	Role play

Effective learning strategies in adult settings, both foreign language learning and ESOL/EFL, have been described within two frameworks for the purpose of observation and general analysis in this study. First, O'Malley & Chamot (1986) established a landmark learning strategy model called the "Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach" (CALLA). CALLA strategies are categorized into three domains of language learning, (a) metacognitive, (b) cognitive, and (c) social and affective. Metacognitive strategies include planning for learning, self-evaluation, and self-management. Cognitive strategies refer to active learning through note-taking, referencing, critical thinking, and elaboration. Knowledge of questioning for clarification, cooperation with peers, and issues of self-talk are social and affective strategies.

Their domains are reminiscent of Anderson's (1980, 1985) work described in the previous section of this chapter and they categorize some of the same strategies identified by the Chesterfield and Chesterfield (1985) study as listed above.

Table 2-2. CALLA Learning Strategies

Metacognitive strategies:

- Selective attention for special aspects of a learning task, as in planning to listen for key words or phrases
- Planning for organization of either written or oral discourse
- Monitoring or reviewing attention to the task
- Evaluating or checking comprehension after a receptive language activity, or evaluating language production after it has taken place

Cognitive strategies:

- Rehearsal/repeating
- Organization, grouping or classifying words, terminology, or concepts according to their semantic or syntactic attributes
- Inferencing or guessing meanings, predicting outcomes
- Summarizing or intermittently synthesizing what one has heard to ensure the information has been retained
- Deduction or applying rules to understand language
- Imagery or visual images
- Transfer or using known linguistic information to facilitate a new learning task
- Elaboration, linking ideas contained in new information or integrating new ideas with known information [scaffolding]

Social/affective strategies:

- Cooperation, working w/ peers to solve a problem, pool info, check notes, or get feedback on a learning activity
- Questioning for clarification, or eliciting from a teacher or peer additional explanation, rephrasing, or examples
- Self-talk, or using mental control for self-assurance that a learning activity will be successful or to reduce anxiety

(O'Malley & Chamot 1990, p. 44)

Most strategies described by O'Malley and Chamot appear to be easily observable in the classroom because they involve movement, vocalization, or notation. The previous table (Table 2-2) lays out the schema of CALLA strategies defined by O'Malley and Chamot. Tsung-Yuan & Oxford (2002) statistically compared and analyzed eight different theoretical frameworks of learning strategy research and concluded that the

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) CALLA framework that classifies strategies in three dimensions - metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective - "represents an important step toward a better theory of L2 learning strategies" (p. 377).

The second framework of learning strategies related to this study was developed by Rebecca Oxford (1990) when she expanded on an earlier framework of strategy theory by O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Russo, and Küpper (1985). Oxford developed her "Strategy Inventory for Language Learning" (SILL) (1986), an elaborate survey used to identify learners' perceptions of their own language learning. A self-report, Likert scale response list, SILL categorizes 64 individual strategies under the specific language tasks of speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Oxford groups learning strategies under two separate headings, direct and indirect. According to Oxford, direct learning strategies are:

- memory (creating mental linkages),
- cognition (creating and organizing knowledge), and
- compensation (negotiating and guessing).

In her framework, indirect strategies can be characterized as:

- metacognitive (arranging, planning, and evaluating),
- social (asking, cooperating, and empathizing), and
- affective (self-perceiving emotions and encouraging oneself).

SILL was tested in military language classes using the self-report checklists (cited in O'Malley and Chamot 1990, p. 104) and has been used nationally and internationally for continuing research. I considered both O'Malley and Chamot and Oxford's frameworks for analysis of the observed strategies used by the participants in this study.

Green and Oxford (1995) define the strategies most used by learners of all levels as "bedrock strategies." In their study, Green and Oxford do not explicitly name the

bedrock strategies, but they incorporate commonly reported strategies within six different classes (Table 2-3).

Table 2-3 Green & Oxford's (1995) classification of learning strategies

Class of strategy	Examples of strategy applications
Affective	Anxiety reduction, self-encouragement
Social	Asking questions, cooperation with native speakers, and becoming culturally aware
Metacognitive	Evaluating one's progress, planning for language tasks, consciously searching for practice opportunities, paying attention, and monitoring errors
Memory-related	Grouping, imagery, rhyming, moving physically, and reviewing in a structured way.
Cognitive	Reasoning, analyzing, summarizing, and practicing
Compensatory	Guessing meanings from context and using synonyms and gestures to convey meanings.

(Green & Oxford 1995, pp. 264-265).

The researchers also state that the success of the learning outcomes can depend on the number and variety of learning strategies that students incorporate in their classroom activities and communication in the target language.

A number of researchers believe that training students in recognizing and developing strategy use will improve language learning for all students. SLA researcher Yeok-Hwa Ngeow (1998) recommends teaching strategies because they (a) encourage ownership in learning; (b) promote intentionality or mindfulness to learning in various contexts; and (c) increase authenticity of learning tasks and goals. Green and Oxford emphatically recommend that students and teachers explore ways of learning for a clear and explicit focus on strategies with frequent practice opportunities, incorporation of strategy use with normal classroom activities, and the possibility of transfer of strategies to other learning contexts (p. 264). Norton-Pierce (1995) also argues for teaching

learning strategies within the contexts of authentic learning. She proposes five objectives for such classroom-based research projects (pp. 27-28).

- Investigate opportunities to interact with target language speakers.
- Reflect critically on engagement with target language speakers.
- Reflect on observations in diaries and journals.
- Pay attention to and record unusual events.
- Compare data with fellow students.

Norton's recommendation incorporates classroom-based social research as a type of critical collaborative activity for learners and teachers in order to "help students understand how opportunities to speak are socially structured and how they might create possibilities for interaction with target language speakers"(p. 26).

Case Study Research in Second Language Learning

I chose to conduct four ethnographic case studies in order to answer my research questions. Case studies research has been recommended as an effective format for studying aspects of language learning (van Lier 1988, McDonough & McDonough 1997) because of the interest in the personal perspectives and contexts of the participants' experiences. Analysis of case studies can be used to represent and make contributions to predicting behaviors in a general sense. The work, conducted over time and on a personal level with participants, differs from quantitative studies, which rely on self-report surveys and analysis of test results, because the data are collected within the learning context in the naturalistic setting of the classroom.

McDonough & McDonough (1997) cite Adelman et al (1980, pp. 59-60) to summarize the strengths and benefits of conducting case-study research in language learning settings.

- Case study data are strong in reality
- Case studies allow generalizations about an instance, or from that to a class

- They recognize the complexity of 'social truths' and alternative interpretations
- They can form and archive descriptive material available for reinterpretation by others
- They are a "step to action" (for staff/institutional development)
- They present research in accessible form (p. 217).

According to McDonough and McDonough, there are four characteristics that define case studies research in language learning: (a) boundedness; (b) emic and holistic perspective; (c) resistance to reified concepts; and (d) questions that are emergent and dependent on analysis of the data (p. 205). *Boundedness* means that the study is limited to the key players, a particular point in time, geographical parameters, group characteristics, etc. that are critical to the contexts and experiences of the participants during the study. The emic view comes from within the participant and seeks to describe what she feels and experiences within her social and educational surrounds (van Lier 1988, p. 60). The researcher is concerned with understanding people's own meanings while remaining aware of and bracketing one's own beliefs. Finally, although initial research questions frame a study, they should be considered flexible, not fixed.

Mehan (1979) (cited in van Lier 1988) proposes four components of an approach he calls "constitutive ethnography." One of the goals of Mehan's work is "to locate the organizing machinery of classroom lessons in the interaction, in the words and in the actions of the participants" (p. 61). The first characteristic of Mehan's proposal is retrievability of data from video and/or audio tapes (and field notes) that can be re-examined and re-interpreted during the course of analysis. Secondly, data should be treated comprehensibly and holistically in order to tell the story of the participant's entire experience. Third, there must be convergence between the researcher's and the

participants' perspectives. "Actions must be described in such a way as to reflect exactly the way that these structures and actions are perceived by the participants" (p. 61).

Finally, Mehan requires an interactional level of analysis to avoid unwarranted attributions regarding participants' roles, status, or intentions. Analysis must be ongoing in order to clarify, verify, or discount the researcher's assumptions during the course of data collection.

Summary

This study is informed by two philosophical perspectives. First, I maintain a constructivist view of language learning that considers the ESOL classroom as a social sphere where open interactions and inquiry situate the students and teacher as co-learners. Secondly, I value women's learning and seek answers to broader social issues connected to women's learning in the idealistic hope that teaching and learning in ESOL might eventually better serve both women's and men's language learning needs. In this chapter I have examined previous research literature encompassing five areas of interest to the study: (a) gender as site of inquiry; (b) women's access to adult and ESOL education programs; (c) contextual influences in Cuban women's lives; (d) language learning theories and strategies in SLA; and (e) ethnographic case study methods.

I was interested in the four participants' attendance in their first trimesters of Adult ESOL and found that researchers state that women depend on networks of family and friends for information about educational programs. Immigrant women make up the largest percentage of learners attending low level ESOL and work skills classes. Because of various pressures and worries, they frequently drop out of such programs before they complete a course of study. Women often view language learning as an investment in themselves and their families.

Women's contextual influences include valued relationships and social networks and their connection with time and place. Their identities are often defined in the internal and external factors of relationships, that is, the effects they have on others and the influences that important others impose on them. The four participants in this study experienced the political, social, economical, and educational influences of the Cuban Revolution. Historically speaking, social and familial contexts in Cuban Miami have included relationships on both side of the exile divide. Cubans are accustomed to the daily struggle (*la lucha*) to survive on the island and continue to situated their lives in such a struggle to build their lives in Miami.

The "Banking Model" is a traditional primary frame through which people consider education. Teachers are the authorities who dispense knowledge that students store in their memories. Knowledge is not considered a product of constructive dialogue, but rather as a commodity to be stored and retrieved as necessary. The banking model exists contrary to SLA and cognitive psychological assertions that learning is a social transaction accomplished in relationships and discourse among people.

Learners depend on knowledgeable others to assist them in making sense of the world. Language is a tool for understanding and storing knowledge and experience. Through dialogue people build culturally-constructed mental frameworks of reality. Language learning occurs in stages. New knowledge and facts accumulate as declarative knowledge before moving into procedural knowledge where rules and processes are internalized. Input in language learning must be comprehensible, and learners need abundant exposure to the target language. In addition to input, learners incorporate strategies to organize their learning, take an active part in learning, and engage in

knowledge construction with peers, teachers, and native speakers. The degree of language learning strategy use determines the success of the learning outcomes.

Finally, case studies research can present an intimate portrait of the learner and of her experiences in the classroom. Data need to be recorded in rich observation notes and audio and video recordings. Case studies make research data accessible to readers. The information gathered in such case studies applies only to the participant(s) in the study, is bound by the time and place of the study, and hinges on questions that may have changed according to ongoing data analysis. However, analysis of case studies can be used to represent and make contributions to predicting behaviors in a general sense. Case studies research is especially valuable in development or evaluation and staff development and program evaluations.

CHAPTER 3 METHOD

Study Design

The work constitutes four qualitative case studies of individual women, new clients of a refugee-assistance program beginning with their attendance in "Foundations" ESOL for the first time since their arrival from Cuba. During the second trimester, three of the four participants continued their English studies in ESOL I classes at an adult education center located in Miami-Dade County, Florida. By interviewing and observing the four willing participants during their school activities, I investigated the influences and contexts of their lives that related to their school attendance, language learning opportunities, and classroom experiences. Data collection took place over a period of seven months during their first two trimesters of formal English language learning in the U.S. The field observations began in October 2001 and concluded in April 2002 and data collected during that time were sufficient to answer the research questions:

- What are contextual influences that frame and shape the four women's experiences of learning English in their ESOL classrooms?
- What language learning strategies do the learners develop or employ in the classroom?
- What are their classroom opportunities for language learning?

In order to present a clear explanation of the study method, I have organized the progress in a table (Table 3-1) laying out the month-by-month process.

Table 3-1. Field work progress

Month	Research activities	Participant involvement
August 2001 First trimester begins	Discuss of study with principal, counselors, and SAVES administration	Participants begin ESOL instruction.
September	Identify participants	Four women agree to participate; all sign IRBs
October	Conduct initial interviews and begin classroom observations	Participants sat for interviews and Permitted me to sit with them in class
November	Continue observing; begin videotaping in classrooms; counselor conducts first focus group discussion	Three participants attended the Conversation session.
December First trimester ends	Continue observing and videotaping; photocopy notebook writing samples; counselor conducts second focus group.	Two participants attended the Second conversation session; one participant leaves the study
January 2002 Second trimester begins	Recommence observations at mid- month.	Three participants begin their Second trimester of ESOL; Of these, one participant temporarily withdraws from attending Saturday classes.
February	Continue observing and videotaping.	One participant moves from the area and withdraws from the study
March	Continue observing the remaining two participants	Participant withdrawn in January Returns to class
April Second trimester ends	Complete field work	Two participants complete LCP-B.

Qualitative data collection included the following for each of the four participants:

- One initial audiotaped interview of each participant for personal background information
- Ongoing informal conversations, taped and/or recorded in field notes, with the four women regarding their feelings of progress and change in their lives and learning
- At least three observations sitting next to or near each participant during her classes wherein I was able to talk with the participant during class sessions
- Videotaped samples documenting each participant's classroom activities during the course
- Two audio and videotaped conversation sessions with the participants, scheduled respectively at the mid point and the end of the first trimester. Discussion topics covered issues pertaining to their learning experiences at the school. The Cuban female program coordinator moderated the conversation sessions in Spanish
- Photocopied samples from the participants' class notebooks.

Identifying Participants

The study focus was on newly arrived female learners who were entering their first ESOL classrooms. At the time, the school they attended was serving over 200 clients of a social service program, which, as will be explained below, limited its support to those students who had entered the U.S. as refugees within the prior 60 months. The participants were to be selected from among the refugee-assistance program's client records. I had asked the program's counseling coordinator who had agreed to assist me in the study, to limit the choice of participants to three criteria. I wanted to select potential participants who were female, Cuban, and attending their first trimester in Foundations ESOL classes. I did not list "length time in the country" as a factor of choice because, as previously stated, the program client base included only those refugees who had come within the previous 5 years. From among the client base, I chose those women who had come the most recently.

I was looking for participants who were recent arrivals and the refugee-assistance program seemed to be the logical program where I would find such people with minimum effort. Additionally, I considered that the refugees who participate in the program receive assistance from the school district for English language instruction and counseling which in some way may contribute an incentive for attendance. I chose program clients enrolled in the daytime program because I felt that they would have the greatest potential for remaining in the program for the duration of the study. Research has shown that retention is high where adult students (a) have access to support services provided by programs (such as counseling, transportation and child care); (b) attend day classes rather than studying at night; and (c) participate in computer-assisted learning labs or in instruction that includes independent study (Seufert, 1999, p. 4). All three factors were either present at the school site and/or provided by the refugee-assistance program.

Having located potential participants in their classroom placements, I visited and briefly guest taught in their classrooms, and had the opportunity to explain my study to the classes. I believed that it would be advantageous if the learners came to see me as part of the school. After two days I approached the women, from among the sixteen names the counselor had listed for me, with my study proposal. The four women who agreed to participate shared three similarities: they were all married; mothers; and in their forties at the start of the data collection. The superficial similarities that the women shared surprised me, but I could not designate who would volunteer. My criteria had limited the pool of learners from which I could have chosen; another limitation could have been related to my own physical identity as a middle-aged male researcher. My maleness might have been disconcerting or threatening for some potential participants socialized in

the strong patriarchy of the typical Cuban family structure. Ultimately, the four participants who did assist me were outspoken, independent, and self-reliant women who welcomed my often naïve and humble questions.

Setting of the Study

Miami-Dade County, Florida holds the largest concentration of first, second, and now third generation Cubans residing in the U.S. The participants arrived in Miami as migrants as part of the latest vintage of exiles, that is, four successive and distinct migrations of Cubans from the island since 1959. The four participants became members of a school community that is well known in local and national history for its role in English language and vocational instruction. Qualitative studies do not mention the site and location of research by name or by specific city in order to guard the anonymity of the participants and peripheral personnel involved. In framing this section, I struggled with how not mention the geographic setting by name, while still providing the necessary descriptive details about its unique existence within the political and historical sphere of the post-Revolutionary era of the Cuban Exile. Discussing the location of the study in general regional terms would not suffice in this case. The participants had not migrated to a neutral, geographical locale; the space they chose to enter has been shaped and deeply impacted by U.S. immigration policy towards the participants' home country, ESOL educational initiatives, and post-Revolutionary Cuban exile politics for over forty years.

The School

Historically, The Language School (TLS) [a pseudonym] was the first center established to teach English to Cuban exile adults during the Kennedy administration in 1962. The federal government recognized the relationship of English language proficiency and economic success by providing programs and funding for English to

Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) for adults. In 1961, the Cuban Refugee Program provided for English language instruction as part of the massive government resettlement assistance aimed at ensuring the success of Cuban immigrants to the embarrassment of the Castro government and the Soviet Union (Pérez in Grenier & Stepick, p. 86). Since its inception, the school has functioned educationally as an integral part of the largest Cuban cultural and political enclave in the U.S. for over forty years; almost three generations of Cuban-American families living in South Florida and elsewhere can point to some past personal familial connection with TLS.

The school, which serves over 3,000 clients per trimester, is situated geographically in southwestern metropolitan Miami-Dade County, on the extreme southeastern coast of the Florida peninsula, the closest U.S. urban center to Cuba. In addition to an extensive multilevel ESOL program, the center provides a wide selection of computer-related vocational classes, a cosmetology school, a program for state child care licensing or Child Development Associate (CDA), High School Completion, GED Preparation, and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) programs among other services. Although the study participants attended classes only in the morning, the center operates seven days a week- Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM until 10:00 PM and Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 AM to 5: 00 PM. On-site counselors conduct all individual counseling, testing, and academic planning with clients.

Additionally, the administration inaugurated a “One-Stop Center” on campus in 1996. A One-Stop Center is a cooperative of community social service and employment agencies that offer client counseling and other services at one venue, a convenience especially appreciated by those who lack reliable transportation. The refugee-assistance

program, described below, that served the study participants' counseling needs and provided them with limited financial support, was one of the agencies housed in the One-Stop Center. The center provided support for the students as well as the residents from the surrounding community. An on-campus childcare facility, Head Start, and kindergarten programs allow parents the convenience of enrolling their small children in economical, licensed child care while attending classes at the center. None of the participants had young children, but one, under the guidance of the vocational counselor, did complete a 40-hour Child Development Associate training course at the school prior to beginning her English studies.

The four participants attended ESOL classes Monday through Friday, 8:15 to 10:45 AM during the course of the data collection period. Classes were frequently overcrowded with 45 to 52 students present, particularly in the lower levels of ESOL. Some classes were housed in the old auditorium, a large open room divided into six class areas by eight-foot high office partitions. Another classroom was accommodated behind the proscenium curtain on the stage. Most other classes met in self-contained classrooms. All classrooms were equipped with two or three networked and internet-connected computers for student use and one for the instructor. The media center also contained many computers available to students and instructors. Participants in the study attended classes in the self-contained classrooms, the auditorium, and on the converted stage. Over the course of two semesters, four of the classes I observed met regularly in the partitioned auditorium three times a week and moved for the other two days to self-contained classrooms.

The Refugee-Assistance Program

I identified the participants in this study from among the clients of a federally supported refugee-assistance program. The program offers counseling assistance and scholarship funding to refugee clients in Adult Basic Education (ABE), ESOL, and vocational education programs at district adult and vocational education centers where learners may wish to gain and improve English language literacy and workforce skills. In the legal parlance of adult education, students are referred to as "clients," and the school is labeled the "service provider." To the four participants, interacting as clients with the counselors in the program and enjoying the benefits of textbook purchase vouchers and free transportation passes were part of the experience of attending the school. I considered that the added connection to the school through their assistance program affiliation and the support that the program provided might emerge as an investment factor that influenced the women's class attendance and participation.

The Language School is one of many adult education centers of Miami-Dade County Public Schools that serve clients of the refugee-assistance program. At the time of its inception, the program was intended to provide vocational education funding for one year and unlimited English language instruction exclusively to Cuban and Haitian nationals who had entered the U.S. as refugees after 1995. The program joins other state and national educational and social service providers that have been established under *The Refugee Education Assistance Act of 1980* to provide Haitian and Cuban entrants social service and educational benefits regardless of their alien status at the time of application for the services (DHHS 2001).

Subsequently, since 2000, changes to the federal immigration laws have made the program services available, not only to Cuban/Haitian entrants, but also to any adult

refugee client, regardless of national origin. A program applicant who has been in the U.S. for a period of less than sixty months, and who meets established international refugee status definitions can now benefit from program support in their educational endeavors. According to the United Nations (1967) Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, a refugee is defined as

Any person who is outside the country of his nationality...because he has or had a well-founded fear of persecution by reason of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion and is unable or, because of such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of the government of the country of his nationality (cited in Zolberg, Suhrke, & Aguayo 1989, p. 4).

The refugee-assistance program mission is to ease the transition of immigrants into the South Florida community. “Our goal is to provide academic and vocational training to eligible refugee and asylee adults living in Miami-Dade County, Florida” (program mission statement). Funded through a contract from The Florida Department of Children and Families Refugee Services Office, the program was established to address the specific English language and/or employment needs of the local refugee/asylee population. An asylee is essentially defined in the same way as a refugee, based on the “well-founded fear of persecution” criteria. However, an asylee is distinguished from a refugee by his/her location at the time protected status is requested: he/she is in the U.S. or at a U.S. port of entry (Henken 2000, p. 10).

The refugee-assistance program extends, in the local context, the philosophical rationale of the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), “... to assist refugees and other special populations in obtaining economic and social self-sufficiency in their new homes in the United States” (excerpt of the ORR mission statement as quoted in Domínguez 2002). Of the four participants, three who entered the U.S. by the visa lottery

were classified as refugees. One, arriving illegally from Spain, petitioned for asylee status during her brief INS detention.

Statistically, 219 female Cuban refugees were enrolled at the school during the Fall 2001 trimester, the start of the data collection period. In the following term, 220 had been enrolled (school district statistics report). Some clients who actively sought assistance from the refugee-assistance program had learned about the program by word of mouth within their community and social networks; however, school personnel informed many others about the program's support only after clients initiated registration for ESOL classes at an adult education center.

In fact, none of the four participants in the study had previous knowledge about the refugee-assistance program. Initially it appeared that the four participants were not motivated to attend by the potential benefits of the program. They, too, reported that they had received phone calls from school personnel informing them of the benefits after they had enrolled. The school counselors believed that most clients initially had not been attracted to attend because of the promised program support since there was little public announcement about it. Although very little overt advertising had occurred since the inception of the district-wide funding program in 1996, a series of one-half-hour call-in radio programs on both Cuban and Haitian stations began in December 2001.

Program matriculation is limited in that the intake, counseling, and placement process must begin during the first three weeks of a trimester, a date set by district deadline. A trimester by school district definitions comprises a sixteen-week period of classroom instruction. A school counselor interviews the prospective client for refugee program assistance who is then tested for ESOL instructional placement at the beginning

of the trimester. The client and counselor together negotiate a personalized plan of study, the Individual Adult Education/Employment Plan (IAEEP) based on the client's personal and vocational needs and/or goals. The IAEEP becomes a one-year course plan for academic and vocational training, including English language instruction as needed- a personalized prescription for meeting the individual client's vocational goals within existing county adult education services. In order to assist the clients financially, the refugee-assistance program provides one-year tuition waivers for vocational classes, textbook vouchers, free public transportation passes, and child care if the service is available in the school where the client attends (Miami-Dade Empowerment, Inc. 2002). The study participants did appreciate the benefits of receiving free textbooks and bus passes.

A client's English language learning needs are defined by a set of standardized, state-imposed competency-based literacy skill frameworks for Adult ESOL, Vocational English For Speakers of Other Languages (VESOL), and Citizenship. The Florida Department of Education, Division of Workforce Development established the frameworks for mandated implementation statewide in all public adult education centers. In order to accommodate the refugee clients' special needs, funding is provided for in-service training of school personnel.

In-service training was designed and is delivered on an on-going basis to instruct teachers, administrators and support staff on the program's changes, goals and funding model. Training includes ESOL/VESOL methodology, cultural sensitivity, data base procedures for reporting client information and pre/post assessment requirements (Miami-Dade Empowerment, Inc. 2002).

Curriculum Frameworks: Florida Adult ESOL Literacy Completion Points

The state unified curriculum frameworks were another facet of the setting and learning contexts in which the participants received ESOL instruction. The curriculum

frameworks defined the scope of their English language learning opportunities, and the assessment of their mastery of the competencies that the frameworks prescribed. The study participants were attending "Foundations" or the LCP-A level of ESOL instruction at the start of the observations in October. After completing the requirements for LCP-A in December, three of the women continued on to the next level of instruction LCP-B.

Traditionally, ESOL I had been the lowest English language skill level and ESOL VI the most advanced. In August 1998, the Florida state government, under new performance based funding guidelines, began mandating the use of competency inventories for what formerly had been called ESOL Levels I to VI. The new focus provided adult language "training" in order that immigrants might enter and function more effectively in employment settings. The labor-based competencies prescribed by "Workforce English" framed the participants' English language learning. The state established the curriculum guidelines in order to bring districts into line with the new emphasis on Workforce English. ESOL curriculum planning and teaching in adult education centers in Florida must conform to state competency frameworks, which have been in effect since July 2001. In this work I have addressed only the two levels, LCP-A and LCP-B, that the participants attended.

The new performance-based curriculum for adult ESOL instruction was enacted to unify adult ESOL instruction for delivery across the state and to facilitate statewide documentation of student achievement and completion of learning competencies. "The curriculum frameworks are the minimum performance standards developed by practitioners to assist teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) in providing consistency in the delivery of instruction" (Florida Department of Education,

2000). Implementation directives place emphasis on documenting effective student orientation, assessment, and placement as key components to achieve the desired learning outcomes.

The present frameworks title learning levels by letter. Beginning with A, or "Foundations," the frameworks increase in detail and difficulty by spiraling the same set of content themes through Level F. Each level of ESOL instruction is now called a "Literacy Completion Point (LCP)." State funding allotments for administrative funding and teacher employment depend on the number of individual clients who complete each LCP at an adult education center. The paper copies of the frameworks function as checklists, maintained in each individual student's class portfolio, that the teacher initials and dates upon teaching each respective competency. By the end of a given trimester four out of five competencies under each standard must be checked in order for the student to pass to the next LCP level. Since most adult ESOL positions in public schools are filled with part-time appointments, there is tremendous pressure on teacher accountability to have as many students as possible complete each LCP.

The frameworks are comprised of headings, or standards, that label the categories of the specific learning competencies, which are stated in behavioral terms. Standards for all levels are grouped under the general listings of "Workforce Development Skills," "Life Skills," and "Academic Skills," respectively. In effect, there are now seven articulated levels of ESOL that all address the following content areas and standards in increasing scope:

Workforce development skills: These four skills are needed for the workplace.

- Obtaining employment
- Maintaining employment

- career advancement
- applied technology

Life Skills: These ten skills are needed for daily living.

- interpersonal communication
- telephone communication
- health and nutrition
- concepts of time and money
- transportation and travel
- safety and security
- consumer education
- government and community resources
- environment and world
- family and parenting

Finally, frameworks for all levels include the standards for *Academic Skills*, listing them under the standards as: "English skills necessary ..."

- to listen, speak, read and write effectively;
- to apply standard grammar structures;
- for development of pronunciation skills.

For a more detailed view of the specific individual competencies that constituted the learning objectives in actual classroom experiences of the study participants, see

[Appendix A](#).

Data Collection Methods: Interview and Observation

Design

I chose a qualitative case study methodology in order to focus on the learners' priorities and interpretations of their environment situated in the interrelation between the participants' learning experience and the contexts that surround them as mothers, wives, and workers in a new country (McCracken 1988). In case studies, the data sources include not only interview and observation, but also analysis of documents, in this study, writing samples, and other discourse samples produced by the participants (Dörnyei 2001, p. 239). The data collection took place in the natural settings of the respective

classrooms, and I tried my best not to interfere in the teaching and learning. "A naturalistic observation would need as its database the everyday lesson with its usual participants in real time..." (McDonough & McDonough 1997, p. 114).

Participant selection commenced in September 2001. Personal interviews and first classroom observations took place throughout October and continued into the following trimester, concluding in April 2002. Adult education centers in Miami-Dade County operate on a year-round semester schedule with 2-week interim breaks occurring during the middle of August and at the end of December. In January, one of the participants did not return for her second trimester. Although she did not attend classes, I was able to maintain contact with her through the refugee-assistance coordinator. Another participant moved out of the area at the beginning of February. According to student records, she did not re-enroll in any other program within the school district and was no longer available to the study.

The first phase of data collection began with individual interviews with each of the participants through which I began to gather information to answer the first research question, "What are contextual influences that frame and shape the four women's experiences of learning English in their ESOL classrooms?" Interview questions, as well as later informal conversations, probed a participant's personal background, social contexts in which she was attempting to learn English, support network of family and friends, and her classroom attendance. I included questions about a participant's educational and professional backgrounds because past schooling success or failure may inform the analysis of the learners' attitudes and feelings in their present classroom placements. In addition to the initial interviews, the ongoing conversations and data from

the later interviews with the refugee-assistance coordinator provided information about the learners' attendance pressures during the course of the trimester.

Observations of classroom activities constituted the second phase of data collection and were scheduled throughout the data collection period. I often observed a participant over the course of a week, several times during the trimester. Beginning in November, I videotaped classroom activities and interactions among learners and teachers, focusing particularly on those contexts that framed the participants' involvement in learning opportunities. Videotapes and observational field notes provided rich data for analysis in order to answer the second and third research questions, "What language learning strategies do the learners develop or employ in the classroom?" and, "What are their classroom opportunities for language learning?."

Two 45-minute conversations introduced another opportunity for data collection by inviting the four participants together to discuss topics related to the research questions. I had hoped that changing factors of influence and attitude to language learning might be revealed during the discussion sessions. Unfortunately, all four women were not able to attend the discussions; three shared their opinions and experiences at the first meeting and two were present at the second. The social service program coordinator, a Cuban immigrant herself, led the conversations, which I audio and video recorded, and later transcribed. She offered the group the comfort and perspective of another person from the same background and gender. I did not attend the conversation sessions because I felt that the female coordinator had a different functional relationship with her clients than I would have as a researcher. I also considered that the participants

might be more forthcoming talking with the coordinator rather than with me, a male researcher.

I provided the coordinator with a topic protocol for each session in English and I asked her to process the themes through her native Spanish and present questions in her own words. The eight topics covered three general domains: (a) decision and pressures to attend; (b) learning strategies; and (c) satisfactions of learning.

- What keeps you coming to school everyday?
- How do you feel about your progress?
- Whom do you study with or who helps your English language learning?
- Who supports you in your learning outside of school?
- What do you do to learn English?
- What causes you satisfaction in your learning?
- What causes you frustration in your learning?
- How do you feel about continuing to study English?

The coordinator closely followed my suggested topic protocols, and her native language processing contributed authenticity to her conversation with the participants. After the sessions I asked the coordinator to reflect on what happened during the conversation with the participants. I wanted to know how she felt in her role as discussion leader and how she was able to process and "translate" the topics I provided from English into Spanish, her native language.

Concurrently with data collection, I transcribed all interview recordings as soon as possible. I maintained participant/observer records in four forms as recommended by Spradley (1979): the verbatim or raw data account of observations; an expanded account transcribed into field observation protocols; a research journal; and a running record of preliminary analysis.

Researcher Responsibility

My first responsibility was to my informants, and I was reminded of Spradley's (1979, 1980) ethical guidelines regarding ethnographic work. As I discovered their interests, concerns, and choices I was conscious of my responsibility to safeguard their rights and sensitivities. The participants knew the nature of this study from the start as I attempted to represent their experiences. Privacy and confidentiality were guarded at every turn and I have used pseudonyms to protect their identities. My experience has shown that upon discovery that I had been an ESOL teacher, the participants exhibited immediate trust in my efforts. I recognized the authority and respect that participants seemed to assign to my "teacher identity" and how that attitude made them potentially vulnerable to exploitation.

Data Analysis Procedures

The women's experiences within their learning environments delimited the scope of this study, which was not intended to be an evaluation of the instructional context or refugee-assistance program. The primary data source for the study came from the interview protocols, observational field notes, and recordings. I conducted all transcription and translation of collected data from the audio and video recordings, which constituted the primary level of analysis. The body of raw data amounted to approximately 225 pages of interview and focus group transcripts, 106 pages of field notes, 4.5 hours of classroom and focus group video recordings. An additional source of data was provided in the many pages photocopied from the participants' class notebooks. As a longtime ESOL teacher, I endeavored to step outside my frame (Goffman 1974) in order to "make the strange familiar and the familiar strange" (Webb 2000). Additionally, my own frame analysis extended to awareness that my own masculine identity could

influence my perceptions and later analysis of the data. I needed to understand the women's experiences as much as possible through their talk rather than by relying on my own interpretations. I employed a grounded theory approach, bracketing my preconceptions of ESOL teaching and learning (Williams & Burden 1999, Berger & Kellner 1981, cited in Hutchinson 1997) in data collection and analysis of the protocols of field observations and classroom recordings. I continually re-evaluated the data as they accumulated. As with any qualitative study, I could not predict or prescribe my findings, and I strove to resist premature prediction before more thorough data analysis.

Comprehensive analysis of interview protocols, classroom interaction transcripts, notebook evidence, and observation field notes, taken as an interrelated body of information, revealed answers to the research questions. I read the transcripts repeatedly looking for answers to the participants' motivation, patterns of classroom behaviors, and strategy use. I reviewed the videotapes to confirm my findings. The pages from participants' notebooks provided many concrete examples of language learning strategies. Using the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) (O'Malley & Chamot 1990) as a comparative framework I was able to identify patterns of observable learning strategies from the notebooks and field observations. The resulting common representative patterns provided a basis of classifying behaviors into codes (Watson-Gegeo 1988). I organized the codes into three sets of domains: (a) personal backgrounds; (b) participant classroom activities; and (c) classroom environment.

Personal background domains included information about educational experiences and previous English language learning, social and family networks, immigration and resettlement experience, present English language learning, and worries

and satisfactions since arrival in the U.S. I paid particular attention to any information that would be connected the learners' contexts that influenced their attending English classes in the U.S. The second set of domains, classroom experiences, provided a frame for discussion of what the learners did in their classrooms, what activities occurred, how they constructed new knowledge, and how participants interacted with the teachers and classmates. I examined the learning modalities of reading, writing, and oral discourse. Classroom activity domains included themes of silence, cooperative behaviors, issues of inquiry, and test taking. Finally, the data revealed issues related to classroom environments. I could not ignore analysis of the classroom environment as an important force in affording learning opportunities and strategies for the four participants. I examined and categorized codes of the language learning environment, inquiry support, assessment, and styles of classroom management and control.

Appropriateness of the Method

Reliability depends on triangulation among participant observation field notes, classroom audio recording, and interview protocols (Hutchinson 1997, Shimuhara 1997). Diversity of method and triangulation of evidence from interviews, classroom observations, writing samples, focus group discussions, and videotaped segments provided rich and thick data for analysis. Four case studies conducted over the course of seven months, which encompassed approximately one and one half trimesters of the participants' enrollment and attendance offered the opportunity for both synchronic and diachronic reliability. Synchronic reliability refers to observations within the same period of time; diachronic implies observation over a period of time (Kirk & Miller 1986). The seven-month period of data collection permitted diachronic, albeit limited,

reliability by observing possible changes in attendance motivation and a variety of classroom experiences during the course of the participants' language learning.

Researcher Background

My personal experience as an adult ESOL instructor in Miami-Dade County Public Schools inspired my desire to tell part of the story of recently arrived Cuban migrants. I am fluent in Spanish and have spent almost my entire professional career as a teacher, curriculum writer, and teacher trainer in Miami. Living and working in Miami-Dade County for nearly 20 years has provided me with a broad perspective of Cuban exile realities and the opportunity to work closely with individuals from the last two vintages of Cuban immigrants during their entry into U.S. society.

Summary

I sought answers to research questions regarding the contexts of the four womens' lives in order to understand participation in their beginning level adult ESOL program, opportunities to learn, and the language learning strategies they employed. In order to answer the research questions, I:

- conducted interviews of the participants;
- observed them in their classrooms over the course of two trimesters;
- videotaped the participants during classroom activities;
- photocopied the participants' notebook for evidence of learning strategies;
- had the program coordinator conduct two conversation sessions with the participants.

The videotapes were helpful in the coding process because I could consult them for clarification of events that were no longer fresh in my mind. Participants' notebooks offered concrete evidence of strategy use and how the learners processed some of the new information they were receiving. Notes from ongoing conversations and data from the

focus groups provided a view of the women's complex and changing perspectives as they invested their time attending their classes. By the end of the study in April 2002, only two of the original four women in the study remained to finish their LCP-B (ESOL I) studies.

CHAPTER 4 PERSONAL CONTEXTS

Introduction

The four women, Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris, who agreed to assist me in the study were among the latest "refugees" to settle in the Miami Cuban cultural and political enclave. They did not enter a neutral space to begin their resettlement process. In this chapter, I will present a view of the contexts of the women's lives in order to understand their participation in beginning level adult ESOL program. What were contextual influences that framed and shaped the women's experiences of learning English in their ESOL classrooms? An overarching reason for this question is that teachers know very little about the contexts of learners' lives as they come and go in their classrooms (Gass 1997). However, curriculum guidelines for adult ESOL stress the necessity for teachers to know their students in order to organize and plan instruction to fit the needs and goals of the learners (FL DOE 2000a).

The first part of this chapter I present portraits of the four participants followed by a discussion of the personal aspects of investment in learning English and integration in their new places of residence, factors that surrounded each woman in her resettlement and language-learning experiences. The second part of this chapter highlights aspects of the women's lives lived in exile and includes discussion of the role that gender played in the Cuban revolutionary rhetoric and government policies that shaped the four participants' life experiences and schooling as they were growing up. Social forces inherent in migration and Cuban governmental policy situated the women's experiences

in a historical context because the four participants, all close in age, left Cuba during the same period.

Four Portraits

The data revealed that social networks, sources of support, professional aspirations, matrimony and maternity formed the contexts of the four women's choices of enrolling in the school. Their contexts were further complicated by their own uncertain expectations of their new lives in Miami and the overwhelming task of learning a new language. The women (a) negotiated pressure from spouses, (b) assisted their children in Cuba financially through remittances, (c) attempted to make sense of the uncertainties of crossing cultural and linguistic borders, and (d) anticipated eventual acceptance within the greater English-speaking society.

On a personal level, appreciation of support from established family and friends already settled in the Miami Cuban exile enclave was among the immigration factors that the four women held in common. An ethnic enclave is a "distinctive economic formation, characterized by the spatial concentration of immigrants who organize a variety of enterprises to serve their own ethnic market and general population (Portes & Bach p. 202). All four entered an exile space, their new surround, where as Cuban entrants, they had deep historical connections. It is typical that those who came before provide the first line of support for newcomers upon arrival. Immigration and refugee researchers Zolberg, Suhrke, and Aguayo (1989) confirm the positive role of personal connections. They list among the factors that have attracted subsequent vintages of Cuban migrants to Miami: (a) the post-Revolution establishment of the Miami enclave, "Little Havana;" (b) migratory networks between Florida and Cuba since the beginning of the twentieth

century; and (c) family ties of the established community (p. 188). It is within such surrounds that the four women had begun to find their own places in Miami.

All four women spoke of the debt they owed to those in their families and social networks who, having left Cuba, had since established themselves successfully in Miami. Support is not only considered in material or financial means, but also, for the participants in the study, emotional and informational. The women received encouragement from their children and spouses to attend school and learn English. Their familial connections and personal inspirations led the women to enroll at The Language School, possibly their first contact with a community-based institution in the U.S. The four women's experiences, situated as they were in the historical space of the enclave, extended to the school for English language instruction, as well as to the social service program for the counseling and material support they received there. The school that they attended, a part of the same exile space, owes its establishment to the U.S. government funding for education of Cuban immigrants fleeing Castro's revolution in 1961, and the social service program was originally intended, prior to 2000, to serve only Cuban and Haitian refugees.

Angelica

"...Pero ahora mismo es la mente está nueva. Pero, bueno, yo quiero ir a poco a poco. Yo hará todo." (...But right now, it is the mind that is new. But, well I want to go little by little. I will do it all.) ---Angelica

Angelica sits, as she usually does, in the middle seat of the middle row of her "Foundations ESOL" classroom (technically speaking, Literacy Completion Point-A (LCP-A), the beginning level of the Florida Adult ESOL Curriculum Frameworks). She holds her well-thumbed Spanish-English dictionary in her hand as she writes in her notebook. She whispers and nods to her classmate, Carmen, who has been talking softly

to her. She is attending her first trimester of formal English learning in a classroom filled with women and a few men. All students, most of whom are native Spanish speakers, are seeking the same goal, to learn the dominant language of the United States in an American city where 54% of the population speaks Spanish as the home language (2000 U.S. Census). She removes her wire-framed glasses and runs her hand through her short curly hair. The teacher, Ms. R. taking roll, calls Angelica's name. "*¡Presente!*" she replies.

Angelica was a 45-year old Cuban refugee and new English language learner. She and "*tres otras muchachas*," (three other girls), her friends, came to the school to enroll together. Never having studied English made learning it now that she was in her 40's a big challenge. During her life and employment in Cuba she had had no need for English or any other foreign language. She said with a sigh, "*Pero no tenía nada que ver el inglés. Aquí me hace falta.*" (But I didn't have to see anything of English. Here I need it.) (Angelica interview transcript). "*Yo estaba sorda. Llegué aquí y era ni nada. Y me queda así.*" (I was deaf. I arrived here and there was not anything [to comprehend]. And it remains for me so.) (Angelica interview transcripts).

Outside of the classroom, Angelica had few opportunities to practice the English that she claims she needed. In the month since she started her Foundations ESOL class she became comfortable learning English in Ms. R's class. She stretched her legs under her desk and whispered something to Carmen who asked to borrow Angelica's dictionary. Before enrolling for this class, it had been a long time since she last sat in a classroom.

As a young woman Angelica completed her general education course, having attended high school in her hometown in the central Cuban province of Villa Clara. She

had married very young and soon her only child, Roberto, was born. Later she returned to school to complete the requirements for the Cuban equivalent of a high school diploma, *el preuniversitario*.

Hice de la secundaria, que no sé lo que... como un high school. Después me casé muy joven, tuve mi hijo... Entonces, ya de poco, empecé a los veinte picos de años, porque lo terminé el preuniversitario.

I did the secondary [education program], that I don't know, like high school. Afterwards I got married very young, had my son. Then in a little while, I began [working] at twenty something, because I finished the "preuniversity." (Angelica interview transcript).

Without preparation for any specific employment, Angelica worked for many years as an administrative secretary and payroll clerk for a large sugar processing plant in central Cuba. She and her husband, Alberto, were happy but had to make do with few material goods as they reared their son together. She claimed that she had had no dreams for the future in Cuba, and that the family existed from day to day, *resolviendo*, to use the popular Cuban word for "making do as best one can." Economical and political realities made it difficult for her to think of concrete goals for herself.

Esta palabra [metas] en Cuba sí se usa mucho. Allí todo los en Cuba se tratan a hacer metas. ¡Pero no se cumplen ninguno! [Se rie.] Todo es por meta, yo sé de aquí son sueños. Es distinto. Aquí Yo, personalmente, no tenía ninguna. Allí todo lo que trata es vivir. Pero tú no pueda aspirar a nada. Porque hay que aspirar. Un país donde no hay nada... El sistema. Él que lleva todo de eso no puede pensar en nada. Allí uno vive, lo que en diario...

That word [goals] they do use a lot in Cuba. There, all those in Cuba try to set goals. They don't accomplish even one! [She laughs] ...Everything is by goal, I know here [in the U.S.] are dreams. It's different. Here. I, personally, didn't have any [goals in Cuba]. There, all one does is try to live. But you can't aspire to anything. But you have to aspire. A country where there is nothing. ... The system. He who has to deal with all that cannot think about anything. There one lives, for the day...(Angelica interview transcript).

Angelica's life changed drastically when she decided to leave Cuba for the sake of her son's future. Roberto's pending graduation from the university in Cuba prompted her

to find a way to leave Cuba in any way possible. Roberto, 25 and a student of philology, had delayed his graduation from the university because he was waiting for his parents to sponsor his emigration to the U.S. As a university student, Roberto could not apply for an exit visa on his own because he owed his education to the state. If he were to graduate prior to leaving, the Cuban government would not permit his exit from the country unless he could repay the tuition cost for his entire state-funded education. For the sake of her son and under the pressure of passing time, Angelica finally made a quick decision to leave the island legally by traveling to Spain where her father was a citizen.

Her departure did not come without a personal cost and temporary trauma. The Cuban government granted her an exit visa to visit her father in Madrid only after she was forced to divorce her husband. She would have to travel to Spain as an adult dependent of her father, a Spanish citizen. Leaving her now "ex"-husband and son behind, Angelica flew to Spain. Soon after, she boarded a flight to Miami where her mother and many other members of her large, extended family had settled in exile since 1962.

Hay que salir así, con mi padre y como hija soltera. Por eso tuve que divorciarme, divorciar a todo lo mío, entonces para puede llegar aquí. Pero, bueno, la meta da esto, no me importaba llegar soltera, casada, viuda, ¡Cómo pueda!

I have to leave like that, with my father, as a single daughter. For that I had to get divorced. Divorce everything that is mine, then in order that I could arrive here. But well, the goal makes this [necessary]. It didn't matter to me how to arrive - as a single woman, married woman, or a widow - any way I can! (Angelica interview transcript).

As do many, more recent Cuban emigrés, Angelica had a network of family already in Miami (Zolberg, et al. 1989). Most of her relatives had arrived at a time when the U.S. government policy showed favor to all Cuban exiles. The special

accommodations provided by the Cuban Adjustment Act of 1966 guaranteed almost unquestioned rights of residency to all Cubans who fled the Castro regime, no matter the means. Cubans who arrived in the successive waves between 1962 and 1994 were welcomed with open arms (García 1996). After *el Verano de Crisis* (the Summer of Crisis) when, between May and September 1994, over 34,000 Cubans crossed the Straits of Florida on makeshift rafts, the political and immigration climate that had favored Cuban exiles for so long suddenly ended (Ackerman 1996, Masud-Piloto 1996, Mesa-Largo 1995). The resulting diplomatic agreement between the Castro and Clinton governments six years ago had a direct effect on Angelica and her family's plans to enter the U.S.

The Tarnoff-Alarcon Agreement, a result of emergency immigration negotiations to stem the unrestricted tide of Cuban *balseros* [rafters] made it necessary for all Cubans seeking entry into the U.S. after May 2, 1995 to register in Cuba for *El Sorteo de Visas*, popularly known as *El Loto*. *El Loto* (visa lottery) provides 20,000 visas per year to registrants whose names are selected at random in a national drawing.

The May 2, 1995, decision radically changed a 36-year-old policy designed to welcome Cubans to the US as political refugees in order to discredit and undermine Fidel Castro's revolution. Overnight and without warning, Cubans arriving illegally in the US were no longer welcomed, nor even considered special (Masud-Piloto 1996,p. 128).

Although both Angelica and her husband had registered for *El Sorteo*, she felt that she could not afford to wait for the vagaries of winning the visa lottery. With no other safe and immediate alternative but to enter the U.S. illegally through Spain, Angelica was undaunted in her desire to help her son. Leaving Cuba as she did was just another way of *resolver*, doing her best to manage under the existing conditions of life for the sake of her son.

No quise seguir en aquel país, porque, seguro que una persona joven allí es [pause] troncado. El termino de su carrera. Te corta. Que ya termina, futuro, no tiene trabajo. Entonces, a mi hijo ya allí la [pause] no tiene vida sea a él.

I didn't want to continue in that [Use of *aquel* implies a large distance]country, because, for sure that a young person there is [pause] split apart. It's the end of one's career. You are cut off and that's the end. [pause] You don't have a future; you don't have a job. Then, for my son being still there, life may be like that for him. (Angelica interview transcript).

Angelica arrived in the U.S. in April 2001. As a Cuban entering illegally through a third country, Angelica was not expecting a warm welcome from the U.S. government. Arriving as she did almost six years after the immigration policy change of May 1995, Angelica was regarded as an "illegal entrant" and was temporarily incarcerated in the Krome Detention Center, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service's holding camp for undocumented aliens, located on the remote edge of the Everglades. She was interned at Krome in compliance with the diplomatic agreement signed by the Clinton and Castro governments almost six years before.

She had anticipated a temporary stay at Krome. As an illegal Cuban entrant claiming political asylum, her case was processed quickly, and in a few days she was released into the custody of family members with the immigration classification of "asylee." As she waited for her son's (indefinite) arrival in the U.S., Angelica maintained her confidence that leaving and making a new life in the U.S. would secure his future by offering him more options in life when he finally would arrive.

Angelica, chuckling, reported that she had not "remarried" her husband in Miami, but lived with him, moving in together after he arrived legally in the U.S. via *El Sorteo de Visas* a few months after she did. They lived in the Little Havana section of Miami in a small house owned by one of her aunts. Alberto worked with a family-owned painting and wallpapering company. Angelica remained unemployed. Her extended family in

Miami was large, and she appreciated the great source of material and emotional support they had provided since she and her husband arrived. Her grandparents (since deceased), mother, and a host of other relatives had resided as *exilios* (exiled ones) in Miami since the early 1960's. Her extended family became her principal social network.

Mucha familia. Muchas tías. Y mi madre estaba aquí ya también... Yo tengo tíos aquí, que llevan treinta y picos, cuarenta años en este país, ... Casi todo están aquí. Todo en Miami. Sí, sí por eso pudemos, [pause] lo aventuramos. Por lo menos, tenemos apoyo aquí.

A lot of family. Many aunts, and my mother was here already, too... I have uncles (and aunts?) [tíos: uncles, but in plural form can semantically be gender inclusive.] here that have been here for thirty-some, forty years in this country... Almost all are here. All in Miami. Yes, yes for that we could, [pause] we risked it for at least we have support here. (Angelica interview transcript).

As she talked about the support she was receiving from her family members, she elaborated on the sacrifices she perceived they have made, difficulties they had endured, and the successful lives they built having immigrated earlier in the history of the Miami Cuban exile. She reminded me, with admiration, that they began their new lives in Miami at a time when Spanish was not the dominant language.

En aquella época, la gente ir a trabajar, no sabían el idioma, no tenían tiempo ni de estudiar. Habían muchas posibilidades... Enter todo, difícil salir de allí, pero, me da aumento mejor aquí, por el apoyo que tener.

At that time, the people going to work, they didn't know the language, they didn't even have time to study. There were many possibilities ... Overall, it's difficult leaving there [Cuba], it gets better for me here, by having the support. (Angelica interview transcript).

She continued speaking fondly of her grandparents' adaptation to life in Miami after they arrived from Cuba in 1969. Her words painted a portrait of admiration for their tenacity to build a life, as older people, without the social foundation of an established Spanish-language community. She acknowledged her need for English, but underscored,

with humor, the more pressing linguistic barriers that her grandparents faced at the time of their arrival in the later 1960's.

Bueno, todavía no tengo la experiencia de trabajo, pero hastas cuando tú vas a una tienda te sientes mal por no sabes inglés. Porque tú vas a comprar una cosa... Y aquí tengo la experiencia por los familiares míos que llegaron ya mayores, y han comido comida de perro. ¡Te lo dan la pica tan graciosa en saltine cracker! ¡No, yo me no quiero!

Well, I don't have work experience [in the U.S.], but when you go to a store you feel bad because you don't know English. Because you go to buy something... And I have the experience of my relatives who came as older people, and have eaten dog food. They offer you a piece so graciously on a saltine cracker! No, I don't want that! (Angelica interview transcript).

After having successfully completed the requirements of the Foundations (LCP-A) level of ESOL, Angelica moved out of the area and left the school suddenly at the end of her first month of ESOL I (LCP-B). By the end of the data collection period, she had not rematriculated at any other adult center in the district. Although she withdrew from the study, I had collected a wealth of interview and classroom observation data on her learning experiences that contributed to analysis of her contexts and opportunities to learn English during her time at the school. At last contact, Roberto remained in Cuba.

Dora

"¿Qué quiero cambiar? Aprender el idioma. Eso es el principal. Y trabajar en lo que me gusta a mí." (What do I want to change? To learn the language. That's the principal thing. And to work at what is pleasing to me.) ---Dora

The classroom is packed with about 40 students. Twelve new students have joined the class this morning, just over a month into the trimester. Dora is here, with determination, to learn English. She sits, arms folded on top of her desk covering her text and notebook as she watches her teacher, Mr. O process the newcomers and enter their names in his roll book.

Bueno, el primero sueño es estudiar el inglés, saber inglés, y, a ver, como yo puedo trabajar de mi enseñanza, mi profesión.

Well, the first dream is to study English, know English, and well, how I can work in my teaching, my profession (Dora interview transcript).

She glances around the room watching her classmates. Her long blonde hair drapes over the back of her chair where she sits in the center row of six rows of desks facing front. Next to her, in the adjacent row, her husband of twelve years, Raúl, is reading in his textbook. The pair attends the Foundations level, LCP-A, ESOL class together almost every day. Mr. O finishes his administrative task with the new students and returns to the lesson. Dora and her classmates begin repeating, in unison, the lines of the text dialogue after their teacher. Dora nods her head and taps the end of her pencil in rhythm with his words as she mimics his cadence and intonations.

Dora, 42, was well acquainted with classrooms. She taught high school biology for many years and held the Cuban equivalent of a master's degree in Education. In her hometown of Havana she had completed her high-school requirements and then began university studies in pursuit of her degree, *Licenciatura en Biología*. After graduating, she entered her profession well prepared to teach. Dora emphasized the time she had invested in her university studies, "*¡Siete años de carrera! Después del colegio* (Seven years of the major! After high school.) (Dora interview transcript). She displayed her diploma proudly on the wall of her tiny apartment.

As a biology major, Dora had some English instruction throughout her secondary and higher education, but she did not speak it and showed limited comprehension of spoken, conversational English during the study. Her discipline, biological science, in a global sense relies extensively on classical and international research, vocabulary, and

texts with many cognates based on Latin and Greek. Most of her school English involved reading texts, and she explained that one of her classes was taught in English.

Bueno, sí porque he tenido un año completo en la carrera. Tenía una asignatura en inglés, y que había que leer todos los días.

Well, yes, because I had it [English] for a complete year during my major. I had a subject in English and had to read every day (Dora interview transcript).

She enjoyed teaching biology and was proud of her participation with a team of Ecuadorian marine researchers who had been conducting work on shrimp breeding in the *Cayos*, the unspoiled islands along the northern coast of Cuba. In spite of her satisfactions, pressures of life and work in the Cuban economic and educational system eventually became too great for her to bear. The high school where the government had assigned her to teach was very far from her home in Havana. (As a government employee, she had no choice in her school assignment.) Given Dora's extensive education and professional training as a teacher, her meager salary made her feel under appreciated by the system while the lack of materials and equipment to teach her subject made her sense that her efforts with her students were futile.

...Porque ganaba muy poco y no me servía de nadaaa, lo que estudié, para trabajar, y después se pusieron muy malo trabajo... Yo tenía que trabajar hace sesenta y siete kilómetros de la casa todos los días en carro. Yo me tenía levantar a las cuatro de la mañana, llegaba a la casa a las diez de la noche....

Because I earned very little and it did nooothing for me, what I had studied in order to work, and after that they put me in a very bad job... I had to work 67 kilómetros from home [traveling] every day by car. I had to get up at four o'clock in the morning, arriving home at ten o'clock at night... (Dora interview transcript).

Dora owned her own house in Havana where she lived with Raúl and her teenage daughter, Yessica. Raúl's son, Raulito, 19, frequently visited. Having cared for him since he was six years old, she considered him a member of her nuclear family. Dora had

inherited the house from her father, a semi-private delivery truck owner. She and her husband also ran an art studio near the Cathedral Plaza in *La Habana Vieja* (Old Havana, the historic zone popular with foreign tourists). Dora and Raúl realized that economic conditions were deteriorating and both entered their names in *El Sorteo de Visas*, the lottery by which they hoped to win one of the 20,000 annual exit visas. The random lottery selections are made on individual bases; married couples are not necessarily granted exit visas together (U.S. Department of State, 2000). Such a fate caused the family a heartbreak when Raúl and his son received their visas and left for Miami in January 2000. Dora and Yessica remained in Cuba.

Dora waited almost a year for her fortune when, in November 2000, her own visa was granted through the *El Sorteo*. She had not seen her husband in eleven months and missed him as she waited in uncertainty for her chance to join him in Miami. When it came, winning the visa posed another serious emotional decision. Yessica at 17, was a minor and could not expect government permission to leave Cuba, under her mother's immigration sponsorship, until she reached the age of 21.

The agreement that had established *El Sorteo de Visas* prohibited Cuban government harassment of visa applicants as they waited for their fate (U.S. Department of State, 2000). Yessica, however, as the daughter of a visa recipient, was barred from attending high school in the government system and was expelled from her high school. Also, Dora's emigration constituted a legal abandonment of her privately-owned home. The house, an inherited private domicile, could not be bought or sold by law; as Dora left, the government authorities confiscated it as abandoned property. Yessica was forced

to live with her grandmother, Dora's mother, in an apartment in central Havana. Dora carried her worries and longing for her daughter to Miami.

Raúl and his son had been living in a tiny two-room efficiency apartment above a garage in Little Havana. When Dora arrived at the airport, Raúl met her and took her directly to her new home, a tight squeeze for three people.

¡Del aeropuerto vine para aquí! ¡Ay, ay, ay! Porque ya vivía Raúl.

From the airport I came here! Ay, ay, ay! Because Raúl was living here already (Dora interview transcript).

After Raulito, a student at the local community college, moved to live with his mother when she later arrived from Cuba, the couple had more space in their cramped quarters. Dora, who had seemed very close to Raulito, clearly missed his daily presence in her life.

Since her arrival, Dora had been working as a banquet server at a large hotel in the city. Her main concern was for her daughter's wellbeing and education. Since the government in Cuba discontinued Yessica's educational support and barred her from attending regular government schools, Dora sent much of her earnings to Cuba to care for Yessica's needs and to pay a tutor to give Yessica private instructions, thus enabling her to complete her high school requirements. The remittances were a necessary burden for Dora. At the end of the study, Dora had received surprise word that her daughter would be permitted to leave Cuba and that mother and daughter would be reunited shortly.

Dora's job as a banquet server presented few opportunities to use English on the job because all of her coworkers spoke Spanish. The banquet guests offered little chance for English language practice because Dora needed only a limited repertoire of words and phrases specific to her interactions with the guests. She sometimes reached out to guests

to help her understand, yet complained of feeling limited or threatened in English speaking situations.

Entonces cuando me piden algo, yo se la llevo. Entonces, si no entiendo, yo le digo, porque se yo le digo allí, "O, Señora, ¿cómo te llama _____?"

Then when they [guests] ask me for something, I bring it to them. If I don't understand, I tell her, because I tell her there, "Oh, ma'am, how do you call _____? (Dora interview transcript).

Dora claimed she was content and seemed almost resigned to her job as a server.

She had no complaints of pressing demands, and the job allowed her another place to socialize and to earn money, an aspect she mentioned frequently, for her daughter's support.

...Me siento bien porqueee, me llevo con todo lo compañero (sic) de trabajo,y entonceee, me gusta el trabajo no sé. ...Es como la música...Conozco otra vida que no veía... A veces me veo otra vida de felicidad de cargando esta bandeja. Bueno, eso es lo que tenemos ahora, pero lo me importa es ganar dinero.

... I feel good becaaaaause, I get along with all my coworkers, and wellll, I like the work, I don't know, ...It's like music. I am acquainted with another life that I didn't use to see... Sometimes, I see myself in another life of happiness carrying this tray. Well, that's what we have now, but what matters to me is earning money (Dora interview transcript).

Dora's extended family in Miami was small; she was close to only one maternal aunt in Miami and corresponded with a few cousins living in New York. She had received some material support from family and friends.

De familia o amigos, que ya estaban. Nos ayudaron unas amistades, y a mí, la familia mía. Me regalaron dinero, ropa, me dieron cosas de la cocina.

Among family or friends who were already [here]. A few friends helped us, and my, my family. They gave me money, clothing, and they gave me things for the kitchen (Dora interview transcript).

Dora relied on the new neighbors for social interaction. She did not socialize outside her Spanish-speaking neighborhood where she enjoyed the friendship and support from her elderly neighbors and landlord.

Aquí no tengo problema. Todo me quieren, aquí todas las personas mayores. Yo soy reina del dueño que me adora a mí.

Here I don't have a problem. All love me, here all the older people. I am a queen to the landlord who adores me [*me adora a mí*: emphatic semantic structure.] (Dora interview transcript).

Dora and Raúl were working at the same hotel where he became a bartender and enjoyed speaking English in his gregarious manner. Dora preferred to remain quiet when Raul spoke; he clearly enjoyed talking and did most of it when the couple was together. Raúl was an artist who works in the Afro-Cuban naïf style of the Yoruba (West African tribal) tradition. He explained that he and Dora often worked together on their fanciful depictions of the Cuban landscape inhabited by insects and other creatures offering gifts to *los orishas* (gods) such as *Changó*, *Yemayá*, and *Elegguá* and others that comprise the pantheon of the *Santería* religion. Raúl often created the schematic compositions and Dora applied the vibrant tropical colors to complete the works. She also produced her own original compositions. She showed me a portfolio of photographs from exhibitions held both in Cuba and internationally.

After Dora and Raúl successfully completed Mr. O's Foundations ESOL (LCP-A) class, they decided to attend separate classes for the next level of instruction, LCP-B. It was then that I learned of Dora's fear of speaking English and the profound frustration that she felt as a learner. We sat talking one day when I proposed, in English, that we begin to converse using Spanish and English, bilingually switching codes as necessary, to practice both languages. She did not comprehend me, and I repeated my proposal in

Spanish. With downward glance, Dora replied that she is afraid to speak English in front of every one - Raúl, her teacher, and other English speakers.

Sensing her discomfort, I changed the subject, and asked her about the research on shrimp she had told me about in a previous conversation. I asked her about some of the details of the research, and she smiled broadly as she explained that they were studying growth and methods for artificial insemination for shrimp farms. "Cuba raises a lot of shrimp," she said. I shared a little about the ESOL ecology class that I used to offer and how we, the students and I, would wade into Biscayne Bay with nets in order to investigate the sea grass habitats. With tongue in cheek, she asked me when I would be back to teach that again and then we both laughed.

I asked her if she had read anything related to biology in Spanish or English since she left Cuba. Dora replied, in a lamenting tone, that she didn't try to read anything about biology in English because it frustrated her to know all those things in Spanish, and not be able to read in English. I recommended the present month's (February 2002) *National Geographic* because it featured a wonderful article on Cuban coral reefs of the *Cayos*, the islands where she had assisted in the research project. She had never heard of *National Geographic* magazine, but went on to talk about the extensive reefs in Cuba. As we talked I interjected some thoughts about Biscayne Bay, giving some examples of animals and plants that grow there. The name for "horseshoe crab" in Spanish escaped me, but I described it for her. The animal, at least from my description, was a mystery to Dora. I then drew the animal, top and bottom views. Although I thought I drew the creature well, she still did not recognize it. Intrigued, she would consult her dictionary, she said. Dora completed LCP-B in April 2001.

Marina

"Llegar a lugares que me hablan en inglés y me queda así mirando, no sé, no sé aunque me hagan gestos." (Arriving at places where they speak to me in English, and I remain as such, looking, I don't know, I don't know, although they make gestures to me.)
 ---Marina

Shafts of sunlight stream across Marina's hands as she sits paging through her textbook at her desk next to the window. Her dark wavy hair and glasses are silouetted against the tropical brightness of the morning. As she does everyday, Marina has taken two buses with her husband, Federico, to cross the city for their English lessons at The Language School. The couple does not own a car and must depend on public transportation. Federico is in a level four (LCP-E) class the same time that Marina attends Ms. R's Foundations ESOL (LCP-A) class Monday through Friday. Today, as always, her classmate, Julia, about the same age as Marina, sits directly in front of her. Marina leans forward to talk to Julia, calling her attention to something in the book she is perusing in front of her. Julia turns in her chair to see what Marina is indicating with her index finger. Julia nods and whispers something as Marina smiles back at her. There are about thirty students present, most of them women. Angelica is one of Marina's classmates, but the two never interact and keep to their own small groups within the classroom.

Coming to school, Marina has started her usual busy day. After class ends at 10:45 AM, she and Federico make the trip home together on the two buses. Marina prepares a quick lunch for them and lays out the makings of their evening meal. He has always depended on her to handle most of the domestic chores. However, since they arrived in Miami, she has taught Federico to prepare his own rice for dinner. They eat, and then dress and leave for work - he at the Miami International Airport as a baggage

handler and Marina at a local Cuban supermarket as a cashier. Marina walks the few blocks to the supermarket to begin her shift at 2:00 PM. She will walk home alone later when she finishes working at 11:00 PM. The dangers of the late night walk alone are of great concern and fear for Marina. Briefly, she also taught piano at a local music store, but she claims that the meager pay was not worth her effort.

Marina was employed for many years as an accountant for a large polyclinic in her small town of San José, Havana Province. A devout Christian, Marina also enjoyed her work as a music minister and piano teacher in her Baptist church community. At 49, she was the oldest of the four women participating in the study and could recall many details of her life in Cuba as a small child before Fidel Castro's coup of January 1, 1959. Her father was, and remains at the age of 80, devoted to *La Revolución*. Marina in 1962, at the age of 12, had decided that she wanted to leave Cuba, but her father's dedication to the revolutionary cause prevented her earlier exile. She remained in Cuba with her parents and sister. Marina prepared to be an accountant during her high-school years and claimed to have studied English "*un poquito*," a little.

She had quietly nurtured her dreams of life in Miami until, as a married mother of two, she saw another chance during the Mariel Boatlift of 1980. She, Federico, and their two sons were preparing to join the almost 100,000 other Cubans leaving for Florida by boat from the port of Mariel in May 1980 (Garcia 1996). Again, Marina's dreams of living in the U.S. were deferred. Her older son, Gerardo, had just turned 15, making him ineligible by Cuban law to leave the country. Boarding a boat for Florida as they had planned would have separated the family, something that Marina said she could not have tolerated. They decided to remain in Cuba.

In 1992, Marina partially realized her dream to see the U.S. on a church sponsored visit to Baptist congregations in Tampa and Miami. Subsequently, she returned in 1994, and 1996 during which she built warm relationships within Baptist circles in both cities. She was offered a position of music minister in one Tampa church, but turned it down because of her insecurity with her lack of English language skills. She also could not abandon her family in Cuba.

Marina's life changed dramatically in 1999 when she and Federico, at the insistence of their two grown sons, entered their names into *El Loto*, the visa lottery that would provide them legal exit from Cuba and documented residency in the U.S. As fate would have it, their names were selected in tandem not once, but three times. Marina says that she resisted the temptation to leave at the first two chances, but her sons finally convinced her to go. Her younger, unmarried son, Eduardo, had pointed out that his name was entered into *El Sorteo*, and that he expected to be in Miami soon, too.

A los cuatro o cinco meses me llegó la, en sorteo de visas, de la visa, y, bueno, mis hijos fueron más insistieron, "No, Mima, que no tiene futuro, aquí, a Ud.. pertenemos. ...Allá, y que tenga las posibilidades." ...Una decisión bien dura, pero tomamos así. Yo creo que no estamos aquí por, por la casualidad, sino porque Dios nos permitió que estuviéramos aquí. Porque si no, sabíamos nada de esas visas, para estamos aquí.

In four or five months I got the, in the drawing for the visas, and well, my sons were insisting very much, "No, Mommy, it's that you have no future, here we belong to you....there [too], and that you have possibilities." A very hard decision, but as such, we made it. I believe that we are not here by, by coincidence, but rather that God deigned that we should be here. Because if not, we didn't know anything about those visas in order that we are here (Marina interview transcript).

Gerardo, the couple's older son was a Baptist minister, married, and the father of Marina and Federico's two beloved grandchildren. He, too, eventually planned to leave, but at

the time of the study, his obligations to his congregation would serve to keep him and his family in Cuba for the indefinite future.

Marina and Federico made their stay in the U.S. permanent in August 2000. On their third chance, they accepted their exit visas and arrived to build a new life in Miami. Marina explains the profound feeling of uprootedness she has experienced in resettlement:

Porque es una, es una, una vida dife, es como uno se muriere hubiera vivir. La sensación cuando uno la, como uno llega aquí es que te muere y resucita en una nueva vida, y que tiene que aprender a vivir, a caminar, a conducirte, es todo nuevo. ... ¡Como un NIÑO! No sabía en, en, no hubo letrero al principio cuando yo vine aquí de visita, no sabía abrir la llave. Las pilas de agua. ...No sabía porque es caliente porque no SABÍA. No, de verdad, no se ve en mi país. No se conoce.

Because it's a, a differ(ent) life, it's as if one died (yet) had lived. The sensation when one, uh, as one arrives here, you die and resurrect in a new life, and have to learn to live, to walk, and to manage yourself is all new. ...Like a CHILD! I didn't know, in, in, there was no sign at first when I came to visit, I didn't know (how) to open the faucet. The water faucets. ...I didn't know because it's hot is why I didn't KNOW. No, truly, one doesn't see that [hot water] in my country. It's not known. (Marina interview transcript).

At first Marina and her husband lived with one of his cousins, but she was quick to point out, and repeat, that they had stayed "*¡solamente veintiún días!*" (only 21 days!) with his cousin before moving into a small house within a complex of rental properties owned by the same relatives. Except for her parents who remained in Cuba, still loyal to the Revolution, most of Marina's relatives were already residing in Miami when she and her husband arrived.

...Los más han llegado, no somos tanto, somos dos hermanas, mi hermana y yo. Mi sobrina, tengo una sobrina aquí. Mis primos, tengo tíos, y una señora que, ¿cómo explico? ...que no es nada de la familia. Pero es más que familia. Mucho personas (sic) que los conozco de la iglesia de allá de me iglesia en San José que están viviendo.

...Most of them have arrived, we're not so many, we're two sisters, my sister and I. My niece, I have a niece here. ...My cousins, I have uncles and aunts, a lady that, how can I explain? ...who is nothing to the family. But she is more than family. ...Many people that I know from the church from there in my church in San José that are living (here) (Marina interview transcripts).

Marina had completed a 40-hour Child Development Associate (CDA) course (in Spanish) for childcare certification at the school but had not begun to study English until the start of this study. She said that her study time was limited because of domestic and work obligations, and the vocational counselor had advised her to take the CDA class instead of ESOL. He told her that she would be able to get a job. He had explained to her that without the CDA certification she would have no possibility to get a job working in the church day care center, a position that held only lukewarm interest for her as a trained music minister. She reminded me that she could do other things she would like to study computer office applications to find work eventually as an accountant. "People are worth much," she said when talking about the many talents an individual might possess. Marina felt that there is opportunity here, but she had thus far become demoralized because of inability to find work that interested her and paid well. The reference was to her boredom with her present position as a cashier at the Cuban supermarket near her home.

She worried deeply about her health care and expressed lack of understanding of the health insurance issues for herself and her husband. She claimed she would think about her preoccupation while attending Ms. R's class where she wished she could learn more about how to negotiate the labyrinth of paperwork related to health insurance. In her experience in Cuba, health care was provided by the medical care system free of charge. Marina had been well acquainted with medical care management since she worked for so many years as the accountant of a polyclinic.

Una cosa que se me preocupa aquí. El problema de la medicina Yo no lo entiendo aquí. Tú no sabes que tener que pagar tanto, para que lo atienda, dejar algo para mí es una trauma de mentalidad. Eso me choca. Sí me choca mucho, tienes que pagar tanto. ...Y por ejemplo, tengo miedo se me mame aquí porque tengo muy poco seguro, no tengo, uh, tengo miedo. En verdad siento miedo. ...Era que no tiene que pagar nada. Esa es una cosa que yo aquí tengo que. La otra cosa es morirme. ¡Está si no tenga terreno pago no me puede enterrar! Meterme en candela o echarme [se rie]. Eso es una forma de discutir muy diferente.

One thing that worries me so much here. The problem of medicine. I don't understand it here. You don't know that you have to pay so much in order that [a physician] attends to you, leaving it something of a mental trauma to me. That shocks me. Yes it shocks me you have to pay so much. ...And for example, I am afraid of hurting myself here because I have such little insurance, I don't have, uh, I'm afraid. Truly I feel afraid. I was that you didn't have to pay anything [in Cuba]. It something I have to deal with here. Another thing is dying. It's if I don't have a [cemetery] plot I can't be buried! Set me on fire or toss me out! [She laughs.] That's something very different to argue about (Marina interview transcripts).

At the end of her first trimester when Marina completed Foundations ESOL (LCP-A), she registered for the next level of English instruction, LCP-B (ESOL I). She did not return. She reported that the combined pressures of taking the buses to the school in the morning, attending class, returning home to prepare meals for her husband, and dressing and walking to work in the afternoon became stressful and too great a task for her. She planned to begin to save money to buy a car in hopes that the convenience of a secure and reliable means of transportation will allow her time to return to school in the future.

Damaris

"Es una situación bien difícil, pero bueno, cuando uno lo decide tomar, a la de, este paso de venir, a este país." (It's a very difficult situation, but well, when one decides to make the decision, of taking this step to come, to this country.) ---Damaris

She writes fast, copying the vocabulary list with clinical precision as the teacher, Ms. F, writes the items on the board. Damaris is intent on defining and understanding everything she is copying into her notebook. Outwardly, her narrowed eyes and animated

facial gestures seem to reflect the questioning and sense-making work going on inside her mind. Her shoulder-length, frosted curls frame her facial expressions as she reaches to adjust her bifocals. At first, while copying, she sits in the front seat of the center row, then moves to another desk along the side row next to the unused chalkboard. Each page of her notebook in front of her is filled with valued information to her and is a symbolic measure of progress to herself in this, her first English class in the U.S. Damaris is attending Foundations ESOL (LCP-A) for the first time at The Language School. She again adjusts her bifocals and pores over her writing as she underscores the lines with a manicured index finger during a pause in the lesson.

Damaris, 48, was a psychiatrist, a medical doctor from the port city of Cárdenas in the Cuban province of Matanzas. She claimed to be deaf - to English. "*Sorda, sí sorda con la lengua cuadrada.*" (Deaf, yes deaf with a square tongue.) Her sense of deafness, however, did not constitute a barrier to learning for Damaris. "*Yo me cuesta mucho trabajo, pero, bueno, tengo esperanza de fin que voy a poder.*" (I spend a lot of work, but, well, I have the hope that finally I'll be able [to learn]). She had been a lifelong learner with extensive training in general medicine and in her specialty, psychiatry. Her positive view of her educational experience came as a statement of persistence and her faith in "cradle-to-grave" education supported by the typical and oft-repeated Cuban cliché, "*¡Hay que seguir luchando!*" (Ya gotta keep struggling!) (cf. Isasi-Díaz 1996).

¡Estoy vieja ya! Con mucha capacidad para aprender, pero tengo que seguir luchando. Y me siento bien. He pasado toda mi vida estudiando. Y quiero aprender algo ahora. De toda forma es mi misión.

I am old already! With much capacity to learn, but I have to continue struggling. And I feel good. I have spent my whole life studying. And I want to learn something now. Anyway, it's my mission (Damaris interview transcript).

She had struggled, during most of her schooling and professional life in Cuba, to obscure her true desire, namely to go to the U.S. Damaris, like Marina, spoke of her previous chances to leave Cuba. In 1967, Damaris' father was the owner of a heavy equipment company who had most of his vehicles and machinery confiscated by the Cuban government in the 1965 nationalization of small, privately owned businesses. He saw his chance to leave with his family during the Camarioca Boatlift in 1967 (Garcia 1996). The family was faced with a dilemma when confronted by the new military service law enacted earlier that year. Her brother who had just turned 16 would not be permitted to leave because of the demanded mandatory military conscription of all males 16 or older. Rather than leaving his son behind, her father decided that the whole family should stay.

From that time on Damaris had to live a lie by insisting that she was loyal to the Revolution (although she was not an avowed Communist). To do otherwise would have prohibited her from completing high school and entering the university.

Uno hace muchas mentiras. Los decía, "No, yo no tengo la intención de abandonar el país." Yo ser uno, tiene que mutarse. Si no, no podía estudiar. Si no haber estudiado medicina. Entonces, ultimamente, apliqué en dos o tres sorteos, hizo a mi en uno ...de ellos y fui aprobada.

One tells many lies. I used to tell them, "No, I don't have any intention of leaving the country." I being one, you have to transform yourself. If not, I wouldn't have been able to study. If not to have studied medicine. Then, finally, I applied in two or three [visa] drawings, I got one...of them, and was qualified (Damaris interview transcript).

During her schooling, Damaris said that she had little instruction in English although it was part of her high-school curriculum. She insisted that the instruction she received was insufficient for communication. During her university studies, she was

instructed in English medical and technical terminology, but her exposure to English at the university lasted only through her first year.

Y entonces eso también, influyó que comenzara dar un poco de inglés como estaba ya en high school, en el preuniversitario. Y mi carrera nos daba inglés - básicos, conocimientos básicos de palabras científicos, algunas, de los textos, y para eso no más que el pimer año de la cerrera.

And then that also, had influence on my beginning to take a little English as I was still in high school, in the pre-university [course], And my major offered us English, basic, basic knowledge about scientific words, some from the text books, and for that much, no more than in the first year of the major (Damaris interview transcript).

She completed her studies and married Francisco, a barber, in 1980. Three years later she completed her psychiatric specialty and soon her only child, Mileidys was born. Her daughter's future was to become the couple's driving inspiration to leave Cuba. Seeking a means for Mileidys' happiness and success was Damaris' stated "*misión de la vida*," mission in life. Indeed the final factor that confirmed Damaris and her husband in their decision to leave Cuba was, "*por la hija de nosotros. La única que tenemos.*" (for the daughter of ours. The only one that we have).

The couple had realized that there would be no career chance for their daughter in Cuba, and the poor living conditions at Mileidys' boarding school was a constant source of concern.

En medio del campo, a ver, no tenían luz, no había luz en toda la escuela. Y imagínase que los adolescentes de quince hacía diez y siete años, solo oscuro, alumbrado con mechón.

In the middle of the countryside, so, they didn't have lights, there wasn't any light in the whole school. And imagine that adolescents of fifteen to seventeen years of age, only darkness, lit by reed wicking (Damaris interview transcript).

Poor conditions, notwithstanding, it was an incident involving a physical education teacher who tried to rape her daughter that ultimately set the family's move to Miami in motion.

Pero en esa escuela, el año está allí, un profesor la trató echar en talla. Sí, un profesor de educación física a mi hija. Era una niña, cuando ella tenía catorce años.

But in that school, the year she is there, a teacher tried to seduce her. Yes, a physical education teacher to my daughter. She was a child, when she was 14 years old (Damaris interview transcript).

Damaris suffered a tremendous disappointment when it came time for her and her husband to claim their separately-won visas. Francisco would be free to leave with Mileidys, but Damaris could not gain final approval of her exit visa. The Cuban government delayed her departure because of her vital employment status as a physician. Facing the emigration obstacle, Damaris and her husband decided that in the best interest of their daughter, he should leave with Mileidys in hopes that Damaris would join them in Miami at a later date. After waiting for many months in uncertainty, Damaris and her family were finally reunited in March 2000, nine months after her husband and daughter began their lives in the U.S. Francisco had, by that time, passed the state barber exam in Spanish and was working as a barber. Mileidys was an ESOL student making rapid progress at the local community college.

Damaris, at the time the study began, had been teaching medical technology classes in a private Spanish-language vocational school in the north part of the county. An evaluation of her professional credentials had credited her as holding the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree making her eligible for work as a private school instructor. She also tended to patients as a visiting technician for a home medical care office. Damaris lamented that her employment choices were limited because she suffered

physical impairment from a degenerative spinal condition that caused her chronic pain. Her work hours did not allow her to attend English classes everyday because of her split teaching schedule, morning and evening. After changing her work schedule to evening hours only so that she could attend English classes in the morning, Damaris suffered a depressing disappointment. She lost her teaching position at the private school when the enrollment for her class dropped. Finally, after two months of unemployment, she began working twelve hours a week in the same medical office as her daughter, a medical assistant-in-training. Her schedule caused her to miss one day of English class a week.

Damaris successfully completed LCP levels A and B of her English studies after temporarily dropping out of the program for a month during her second trimester. She claimed she was dissatisfied with the LCP-A teacher's method in the Saturday classes, and the scheduling conflict with her new part-time job interfered with her attendance during the week. At last contact, Damaris was happily attending LCP-C (ESOL II) classes at the school.

Participants' Lives and Influences

The participants in the study shared certain similar life experiences and formative processes as they were growing up in the Revolution. As illustrated by Peck's (1986) model of women's self-definition in adulthood, the four participants, in effect, shared the same "social-historical time dimension" (p. 277) based on their closeness in age, marital status, maternity, and the time they left Cuba. For clarity and reference, I have listed personal data of each participant in Table 4-1 on the following page.

Overall, the participants' personal histories in Cuba were rooted in the revolutionary rhetoric and educational opportunities that at least superficially, proclaimed

the goal of equality in all social structures. . In their interviews, the four women spoke about similar life experiences that came about from government policy changes.

Table 4-1. Participants' personal data

Name of Participant	Angelica	Dora	Marina	Damaris
Age at time of study	45	42	49	48
Date and circumstances of arrival in U.S.	4/2001 Illegally through third county (Spain). Divorced husband to become a dependent of her father, a Spanish citizen.	11/12/2000 <i>Sorteo de Visas</i> Husband and stepson arrived a year previously.	8/25/2000 <i>Sorteo de Visas</i> Arrived together w/ husband.	3/2/2000 <i>Sorteo de Visas</i> . Husband & daughter arrived in Miami nine months previously. Because of her status as a physician, the Cuban government delayed her release.
Years of education in Cuba; Course of study; highest degree earned.	12 <i>Preuniversitario</i> non-specified; completed after the birth of her son	18 <i>Lisenciado en Pedagogía</i> ; Biological Science	12 <i>Preuniversitario</i> Accounting	21 <i>Doctor de Medicina</i> , specialty in Psychiatry
Employment in Cuba	Administrative secretary	High school Biology teacher	Accountant, church music minister	Psychiatrist/M D, university lecturer
Number of children, and their places of residence	One son, university student, Cuba	One daughter, high school student, Cuba with Dor's mother.	Two sons, one is a Baptist minister, Cuba (Two grandchildren)	One daughter, 19, community college student, traing as a medical technician, Miami
Employment in Miami	Unemployed.	Banquet server.	Supermarket cashier.	Part-time medical technician.

For example, Damaris and Marina recounted their feelings of resistance to the Revolution and their unfulfilled wishes to leave Cuba, attempts that were thwarted by direct identification with their roles and responsibilities as dutiful daughters, sisters, and mothers. Both Damaris and Dora were impacted economically when the Cuban state nationalized their fathers' businesses in 1965. Angelica did not see a bright future for herself after completing her schooling in the socialist system. It appeared that the four participants understood equality and agency only as far as it infringed on the lives of others who depended on them.

All four prioritized their obligations to others ahead of their own goals. For example, early in the study, Damaris stated that her mission in life was to aid her daughter's pursuit of happiness. Marina explained that she could not think of herself apart from being a mother as she suffered the separation from her sons who remained in Cuba.. Angelica had officially ended her marriage in order to become a dependent of her father, an action that facilitated her move to the U.S. in hopes of aiding her son. Dora, who saved much of her earnings to support her daughter's welfare and education in Cuba, appeared dutiful to her husband's pseudo-religious obligation to attend class each day. "The welfare of the family, the community, and the tribe is more important than the welfare of the individual. The individual exists first as kin - as sister, as father, as *padrino* - and last as self" (Anzalúa 1997, p. 261).

In the lives of Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris, the daily decision to attend school was influenced by the actions of others in their lives. For example, Dora and Marina attended school each day with their respective spouses who themselves were dedicated to learning English; Damaris reported her daughter's daily prodding about the

importance of English. Angelica depended on her aunt for rides to school. Dora arrived by car driven by her husband, while Marina and her husband relied on the public transit system, riding the bus together everyday to attend their morning classes.

Interestingly, Damaris was the only participant who drove her own car, a luxury that contributed to her feelings of independence. During one group conversation with Marina and Angelica, she insisted that Angelica should obtain a driver's license for the sake of gaining a sense of independence. Damaris situated her own sense of agency within the her life struggles. Damaris felt that without the ability to drive, she was "*esperando la flecha y el indio que la tiró*" (waiting for the arrow and the indian that shot it), an experssion of frustration when she had to depend on others for transportation.

Aspects of the Participants' Investment and Integration

I will next discuss how the four women relate to the interwoven contexts of their lives (cf. Cole 1996) in Miami and the influences such contexts have on framing and shaping their English language learning. Unanimously and unequivocally, all four women agreed that "*saber el idioma*," knowing English, was the key to future success in Miami and in the U.S. Language is the key to ways of knowing and entering the social and intellectual milieu of a community (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule 1997, p. 26). Attending school to learning English for the four women became part of *lo cotidiano*, the daily struggle described by Isasi-Díaz (1996). On the other hand, it was also not surprising that the women recognized that they could live comfortably in parts of Miami-Dade County without knowing English at all. (In the interviews I found that only Dora and her husband wished to leave Miami for New York City eventually.) Angelica and Dora both felt that the preponderance of Spanish in Miami-Dade County created an obstacle to learning English for them. According to sociologists Grenier and Stepick

(1992), "Spanish is a public language in Miami, a language not confined to the intimacy of the family or the peer group" (p. 93).

Each learner's talk, centering on social networks and personal goals, described aspects of the women's complex investment and integration issues in their resettlement processes, along with talk of their satisfactions and frustrations in attending ESOL classes. Expansion and contraction of social networks (Peck 1989) in exile experience occurred in the participants' separation from the familiar contexts and daily interactions of home in Cuba, at the same time they entered new relationships with family members and friends already residing in Miami. The four women also spoke of opportunities for new affective relationships in their neighborhoods, work sites, school, and church community.

Everyday sources of worry and obligation within their lives seemed to complicate the women's efforts to learn English in their classrooms. Dora, Marina, and Damaris said that they were strongly influenced to attend classes by their husbands and/or their children. Angelica, throughout the study, remained strangely silent about her relationship with her husband and seemed to find it too painful to talk about her son. She was unemployed and did not feel compelled to work, but planned to find employment in the future after she was satisfied that she had learned enough English. She and her three female friends had enrolled in English classes at the school together, but did not attend the same class.

The struggle against isolation was apparent in integrative themes that emerged from the women's talk regarding the importance of learning English. . In Table 4.2, I have collectively interpreted the major reasons that the women invest their time and energies

to attend school for English language learning. They wished to cross the cultural borders of the Spanish-speaking majority in Miami-Dade County to enter the larger, mainstream English-speaking society. Marina longed to understand and participate in the conversations around her, and Damaris spoke of her growing feelings of patriotism to the U.S. that obligate her to learn English.

Table 4-2. Reasons to learn English

Time frame	Investment domains	Reasons to learn English
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Immediate</u></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Long term</u></p>	Family concerns:	<input type="checkbox"/> To respond to pressure or inspiration from her spouse, children, or other family members.
	Employment:	<input type="checkbox"/> To re-enter her previous profession or related field. <input type="checkbox"/> To increase earnings in order to assist her child/children through remittances.
	"Border work" or living in two languages:	<input type="checkbox"/> To overcome perceptions of limitation on her physical movement based on language and cultural barriers. <input type="checkbox"/> To acquire confidence and ability to communicate with others outside the Cuban or general Hispanic cultural sphere.
	Achieving a sense of belonging:	<input type="checkbox"/> To honor the new country symbolically by speaking the dominant language. <input type="checkbox"/> To anticipate her eventual acceptance within the greater English-speaking society

Instrumentality of learning the language played a part as well, because the women stated a need for English in order to qualify for better paying employment. Dora and Damaris both hoped to re-establish themselves in their professions or in a related field, and Marina wished to find work as a bookkeeper. Thus, aspects of investment to learn, embedded in maternity, matrimony, professional aspirations, and patriotic obligations, were revealed by the women's connections to children, spouses, and the new country.

Children and Spouses: Pressures, Worries and Inspirations

Children

Children influenced their mothers directly by their active encouragement and indirectly as distance and the U.S. embargo separated mothers from their children. In the four cases, all the children, five in all, were adults ranging in age from 18 to their early thirties. Marina also had two grandchildren. Three of the women explained that the initial and principal factor in making the decision to leave Cuba was for their children's potential welfare. Of the four, only Damaris reported the joy of living with her daughter in the U.S.

When asked to describe her goals, Damaris stated unequivocally her “mission” to dedicate herself, perhaps in response to past traumas in her daughter’s life, to aiding her daughter’s success and happiness. Early in the study, she felt that acquiring English language skills was vital to her mission to assist Mileidys who was preparing to enter the medical field. She repeated her mission statement during subsequent discussions and during the first conversation with the counselor. As the months passed and Damaris could see that Mileidys was successfully completing training as a medical assistant at the local community college, she began to talk more about her own professional and employment needs.

Perhaps her new focus, more instrumentally motivated, signaled a change in her relationship to Mileidys, who by Damaris' reports, was rapidly acculturating to the English-speaking world in Miami as she developed her own professional identity through training at the community college (Espín 1999, p. 146). No longer was daughter to be protected by Mother, but rather it seemed that Damaris' daughter was beginning to

protect her mother. Damaris considered her daughter to be the most important inspiration for her own English language learning, and proudly reported that, "*¡Mi hija me empuja!*" (My daughter pushes me!) (Damaris classroom conversation). When she dropped out of her Saturday class at the beginning of her second trimester, Damaris said that Mileidys and Francisco, Damaris' husband, insisted that Damaris return to the school to learn English. Mileidys assisted Damaris in finding part-time work in the medical office where she was working while attending the local community college. Although at the end of the study Damaris still held no compulsion to practice psychiatry in the U.S., she spoke about the possibility of a position in social work or psychological counseling.

Dora, Marina, and Angelica all longed to have their children join them in Miami. Dora's daughter, Yessica, lived in Havana with Dora's mother. Dora had submitted documents to sponsor her eventual immigration. Angelica's son, Roberto had not yet graduated from the university. She too, had filed a petition to the U.S. INS to sponsor his coming to the U.S. Of Marina's two sons, Eduardo was waiting for a visa through *El Sorteo*, but Gerardo, a Baptist minister would probably remain in Cuba with his family to serve his church community. The mothers often spoke of their worries and longing for their children and the need to send cash and material remittances to Cuba in order to aid their children during the present period of severe material shortages on the island. According to Marina,

La única satisfacción que se podría ayudar a mis hijos, pero yo sin ellos, de verdad, no estoy completa.

The only satisfaction would be that I was able to help my sons, but I without them, in truth, am not complete. (Marina interview).

As they waited in hope for the arrival of their children from Cuba, the women and their husbands' earnings became vital sources of financial support for the children who

remained in Cuba. Remittances, while necessary, placed a financial hardship on the women as they and their husbands were building their new lives in Miami. As the women considered possible higher earnings promised by better English language competence, their language learning took on a more instrumental nature - a key to earning more money to support their children in Cuba. In the long run, Marina and Dora spoke about the potential for higher wages as a reward for English language acquisition. Marina and her husband had been also sending remittances although their two sons' needs seemed less pressing than those of the others. Angelica did not speak about sending money to her son.

Spouses

In two cases, husbands played influential roles in the women's choice to enroll and attend classes. Marina's husband was already attending LCP-E (ESOL Level IV) at the school at the start of the study. A baggage handler at Miami International Airport, he had begun his English studies before Marina because she had been encouraged by the school counselor to take a forty-hour Spanish-language Child Development Associate (CDA) certification course before beginning her English studies. Her husband who she said had disagreed with her attending the CDA classes, encouraged Marina to enroll in ESOL classes as soon as she completed the CDA course in Spanish.

"Hay más horas, pero, no, preferí darle en inglés. Me parecía que fuera mejor porque puedo comunicar y saber y poderme presar."

There are more hours [in the CDA program], but, no, I preferred to take English. I seemed to me that it was better because I can communicate and know, and be able to present myself. (Marina in focus group transcript).

She reported that her husband often encouraged her to improve her skills in English.

"Es verdad que me influyó a mí, verdad en inglés, para que ver que trabajo que entendermelo."

It's true that he [Francisco] influenced me, true in English, in order to see that I work to understand it. (Marina interview transcript).

Unlike Dora and Raúl who reported that they never used English together, Marina said that sometimes she and her husband used English at home for practice. They attended classes at the same time during her first trimester of LCP-A, but Marina did not return after registering for LCP-B. She complained that the routine of traveling to and from school on public transportation, returning home to prepare her husband's meal, dressing for work, and then working a full shift at the supermarket all became too stressful. Often she would return home after midnight, walking alone with trepidation the several blocks home. Contrary to Marina's stated investment in language learning, domestic and work obligations became obstacles to her continued attendance.

Dora had explained that she did not like to miss a class session, and except when she was called in to work, was present in class everyday. Not wishing to miss anything in her lessons, she enjoyed the day-to-day routine and continuity of her attendance.

Y si falta un día después, no sé lo que ha dado en la clases anterior. Bueno, si pierda una ya, como ayer mismo, fue el otro profesor, y no entendí.

And if I miss a day afterwards, I don't know what was done in the previous classes. Well, if I miss one already, as just yesterday, it was the other teacher, and I didn't understand anything (Dora conversation transcript).

Raúl, was also fanatically dedicated to attending English classes. The couple had been attending the same class during their first semester. In an interview that included Dora, he explained that he considered daily attendance similar to a religious obligation.

Es como el domingo la misa, religiosamente al las ocho y cuarto de la mañana, estoy en mi escuela.

It's like Sunday mass, religiously, at 8:15 in the morning, I am in my school.]
(Dora & Raúl interview transcript).

Dora simply nodded but did not voice her opinion. Although I reiterated several times that the interview was a conversation that included both of them, Raúl spoke most all the time. Dora nodded or interjected very short opinion or agreement statements. Raúl held very strong notions that learning English was a duty beholden to all immigrants out of respect for the people and government of the country. Dora did not comment. He underscored his beliefs about the importance of "*dominar el idioma de este país*." (mastering the language of this country). Again, Dora offered no comment, and I wondered if she shared her husband's dedication to English language learning or if his powerful stance was a form of coercion for Dora. It seemed certain that her attendance was strongly influenced by Raúl's integrative attitude.

Crossing Borders in Employment and Social Contexts

Although she sometimes complained about her language frustrations, Marina, in her outgoing way, rejoiced in her recall of the moments when she could understand conversations around and directed towards her. Perhaps more importantly, she discovered her ability to narrate her own actions in English, "*Mira, ya puedo que hacer lo que quiero decir*." (Look, I can do what I want to say!) (Marina, conversation notes) (Lindfors 1999; Belenky, et al. 1997). Her work as a cashier in a Cuban supermarket brought her into occasional contact with English speakers who came through her checkout aisle. She recalled counting out change in English for customers for the first time.

Entonces viene una pareja flujía y le dije el dinero en vuelto, se le dije en inglés, y aplaudieron todos. Como si estaba sienta del fuerzo por comunicarme con ellos.

Then comes in a fluent [English-speaking] couple and I told them (counted out) their change. I told them in English and they applauded everything. It was as if I was feeling a force to communicate with them (Marina interview transcript).

In her words and actions, Marina did not seem to tolerate isolation; she was one to reach out to others both from her description of her social networks and in her classroom interactions as I observed. She spoke of the language as a means of connecting, but she was also interested in the power that speaking English might impart to her. When first asked about the importance that English holds for her she replied that it was essential for her to understand conversations around her and to defend herself in the language where necessary (Klassen 1987, Rockhill 1987, Belenky, et al. 1997, p. 107).

...Como decimos los cubanos, defenderme. Defenderme en el idioma. Por lo menos, saber lo que me están diciendo. Es una barrera muy grande de que se presenta cuando te hablan y tú, desesperes que no conocer lo que están diciendo.

...As we Cubans say, "defend myself." Defend myself in the language. At least to know what they are saying to me. It's a very big barrier that presents itself when they talk to you and you despair for not knowing what they are saying. (Marina interview transcript).

Marina reported that when she had briefly worked in a day-care center, the kids would use some words in Spanish and some in English and she picked up some language from them as to what some things are called. *"Me gustaba mucho comunicar con los niños."* (I liked to communicate with the kids). According to Marina, language and communication were vital to her happiness. More so than the other three women, she appeared to be connected to the greater world, and she knowledgeably and deliberately sought to cross cultural boundaries.

Hay lugares que llevo que me limite el idioma. Me hablan en inglés, entonces ya yo...he ido a restaurán que me hablan en inglés, y, no me está llevando las cosas. Es difícil. para persona, ¿verdad? incluso ellos lugares que son de la India, eh, otros lugares pero hablan perfectamente el inglés. Entonces no me podó comunicar con ellos, porque saben sus idiomas naturales y el inglés. Por eso el interés mio es de aprender el inglés. Podemos comunicar.

There are places that I arrive at that I am limited in the language. They speak to me in English, then I, I ... I have gone to a restaurant that they speak to me in English, and, are not bringing me things. It's difficult. For a person, right, also in the places (where the people) are from India, eh, other places where they speak perfectly in English. Then I can't communicate with them, because they know their native languages and English. Because of that my interest is to learn English. We can communicate. (Marina interview transcript).

When asked about the importance of English, Angelica used the word "integration," but she did so in apparent resistance to her ambivalent perceptions and analysis of the Miami Cuban enclave's ghettoization. However, she spoke of "we Cubans" as if to situate her social identity within the cultural and linguistic tenacity of the historical enclave she was criticizing. Angelica spoke of the need for English and "opening our customs" as the keys to "*integrando*" in the larger non-Cuban society. In the following conversation excerpt, I noticed with curiosity Angelica's word choice, "opening customs," rather than "abandoning" them as in colonial acculturation models such as the traditional U.S. "melting pot" paradigm.

Angelica: ...*Por eso estoy estudiando. Una vez me voy a intergrando en esta sociedad.* ...For that I am studying. Once I go integrating into this society.

John: *¿Intergrando?* Integrating?

A: *Sí, a ver, sí. ¿No me entendiste?* Yes, well, didn't you understand me?

J: *No, no, entiendo pero me fascina la palabra que usó.* No, no, I understand, but the word you used fascinates me.

A: *Sí, formar parte de esta comunidad porque he visto cubanos viven aquí, tienen que volverse ... Hay costumbres que se lo establecen, no de, tú cerebro me lo limpio un poquito, no te integra porque tus costumbres son muy diferentes, todo.*

Yes, to form as part of this community because I have seen Cubans living here, they have to change... There are customs that established themselves, not for, your brain I clean out a little you integrate because your customs are very different, all of them.

J: *¿Los costumbres de quién?* Whose customs?

A: De los cubanos. Que tenemos que abrir un poco nuestros costumbres, para entonces entrar en esta sociedad. Porque cada país tiene sus costumbres, y forma de la vida, tiene su, aunque los cubanos tenemos la actitud muy fuerte...

Of the Cubans. That we have to open our customs a little, in order to then enter this society. Because every country has customs, and a style of life, it has its, although the Cubans we have a very strong attitude (Angelica interview transcript).

Two of the women spoke about their feelings of geographical confinement because of their Spanish monolingualism. While they felt satisfaction about living in their neighborhoods, surrounded by other Spanish speakers, Marina and Dora voiced frustration because they felt limited or threatened in English-speaking settings. Dora claimed that her only use of English was at her workplace with hotel banquet guests where, according to her account, she either occasionally reached out to guests for language assistance or avoided using English by exiting.

Que yo entender alguna palabra ¿no? ...Quiero que hablar y preguntar algo, lo que aprendí, o "¿Qué la falta, vieja?" ...O me gusta saliera.

That I to understand some word, right? I want to speak and ask something, that which I learned or, "What do you need, dear?"... Or I like to get out of there (Dora interview transcript).

Although Dora attended ESOL class "*religiosamente*," to quote her husband, for two trimesters and with few absences, she stated that she was still afraid to attempt to speak English in front of her husband or teacher. She did, however, seem to have a strong instrumental desire to learn English in order to secure her Florida teaching certificate and find a teaching job. Dora's credentials had been evaluated giving her an equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree. She would be eligible to teach when she had acquired sufficient English language skills and competencies to pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the Florida state teachers' exam.

Bueno, el primer sueño es estudiar el inglés, saber inglés, y, a ver, como yo puedo trabajar de mi enseño profesión.

Well, the first dream is to study English, know English, and well, how I can work in my teaching profession (Dora interview transcript).

In contrast to her dream, Dora's professional goals seemed tempered with ambivalence. Since she liked to talk about the research on shrimp she had conducted with an Ecuadorian research team in Cuba, I asked her if she kept up with her interest in marine biology. She said that she had not read anything in Spanish related to biology since her arrival nor had she tried to do so in English. Although she talked about the need to build English language skills and vocabulary within her field for future employment, Dora's reason for not trying to read anything about biology in English was that it frustrated her "to know all those things in Spanish, but not be able to read in English" (Observation fieldnotes).

Damaris also spoke of the instrumental importance of English in getting a job. As in Dora's case, Damaris' academic transcripts had been evaluated accrediting her with the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree. A psychiatrist, Damaris was greatly limited in practicing her profession without English skills or medical board certification. In order to earn her medical license she must take the medical board exam in English as well as pass the TOEFL. Damaris hoped in the short term to work as a social worker or psychiatric medical assistant, but still her success to secure better paid employment in her field had been limited by the demands of English. Damaris had been repeatedly thwarted in her job search by her lack of English.

Tengo ofertas de trabajo y entonces ... porque no sé inglés. El asistente de psiquiatría tiene muy buen salario, y estuvo un trabajo bien bonito. Asistente de psiquiatría. Y yo no pude trabajar como asistente de psiquiatría porque tengo que hablar inglés.

I have job offers and then, ... because I don't know English. The psychiatric assistant has a very good salary, and it was a very nice job. Psychiatric assistant. And I couldn't work as a psychiatric assistant because I have to speak English (Damaris interview transcript).

Nascent Patriotism and Belonging

Damaris held the U.S. in high regard and freely spoke about her appreciation of her new country.

¡Este país es divino! Las personas que gobierna de este país, ¡Vaya! Este es el lugar. Lo mejor del mundo. Sí, en bondad, y esto es tremendo.

This country is divine! The people that govern this country, wow! This is the place. The best in the world. Yes, in goodness, and this is tremendous (Damaris interview transcript).

With similar integrative views as those held by Dora's husband, Damaris manifested a unique perspective on her learning. In her ideology of language, English took on symbolic characteristics of belonging. While Marina integratively desired English and the social competence to move across borders of understanding, Damaris explained that the effort she put forth to learn English would be in homage to the generosity of her new country. Marina desired a means to enter society while Damaris also wanted to honor that society. When asked once why she attended class Damaris replied,

Porque quiero estudiar inglés. Quiero saber inglés. El inglés es el idioma de este país. Y aquí es un país tan bueno, la gente, y todo el mundo debe aprender, saber inglés, porque es el idioma del país. Saber inglés de respetar de la bandera. Respetar al gobernates.

Because I want to study English. I want to know English. English is the language of this country. And here is a country so good, the people, and everyone should learn, know English, because it is the language of the country. To know English to respect the flag. To respect the governing powers (Damaris interview transcript).

Damaris' views are confirmed by sociologists Portes & Rumbaut (1996) who write that in the U.S., language transcends any pure instrumental value, a mere means of

communication. "In the U.S. the acquisition of non-accented English and the dropping of foreign languages is the litmus test of Americanization" (p. 194).

Summary

Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris were influenced by personal factors situated in their pasts in Cuba and their new surrounds in Miami. As they developed their new transnational identities within the Cuban exile enclave, they worried about those left behind and about what the future held. All but Damaris had left children in Cuba when they came to the U.S. Various personal pressures caused anxieties for some of the participants. Damaris suffered from depression when she lost her part-time teaching position at the private school. She gained some satisfaction in her part-time medical technician job working along side her daughter, a medical technology student. Her work schedule interfered with her classroom attendance. Damaris' stated mission in life was to work for her daughter's success in the U.S. Re-entering her profession as a psychiatrist was not her priority.

Likewise, Dora had dreams of re-entering the teaching profession, but voiced fear that she would be carrying her tray as a banquet server for years to come. She resisted reading materials in English related to her professional field, Biology Education, because it saddened her to have subject knowledge in Spanish, but not in English. She longed to move to New York. Her husband, Raúl, was very insistent that she learn the language, but she feared speaking English in front of him or any other person. Most of all, she worried about her daughter in Cuba.

Marina also worried about her sons and grandchildren in Cuba. She was very dissatisfied with her job as a supermarket cashier and feared her late-night walks home at the end of her shift. Although she had completed the 40-hour certificate as a Child

Development Associate (CDA), she said that the work and wages of childcare was not rewarding for her. Although she was also a piano teacher, she could not earn enough working for the local music store. Marina complained that the medical care and insurance in the U.S. was a constant worry for her as someone who had worked in medical office accounting in Cuba. She was encouraged that she would eventually learn English, which would be the solution to her employment limitations. Her husband enjoyed speaking English and together they practiced at home.

Angelica had not found work, but was not actively seeking employment at the time of the study. She lived surrounded by family members who had arrived from Cuba over the previous 40 years. Her "ex"-husband often traveled for work, and she enjoyed her time with her aunts and cousins. She worried most about her son's future in Cuba as she worked to sponsor his immigration to the U.S. She and three of her friends registered for English classes together.

As they struggled with domestic and employment obligations, the four women registered at The Language School to learn English. They received encouragement in their studies from spouses and other family members. They enjoyed coming to school. Other pressures kept the participants from concentrating on their English language learning. For Marina, the pressure became so great that she felt forced to withdraw from the school after one trimester. Angelica, at the beginning of her second trimester, also left the school, but for unknown reasons.

Reasons for attending the school varied. All four women regarded English language acquisition as the key to higher pay that would allow for more generous remittances to their children in Cuba. Two of the participants, Dora and Damaris, spoke

specifically about their instrumental reasons for learning English, to re-enter their respective professions in some capacity. Additionally, Damaris felt that learning English was her duty out of respect to the U.S., the country that offered her a new home and hope for her daughter's future. Angelica and Marina felt that learning English would reduce the obstacles to interacting with people outside the Spanish-speaking community of South Florida. Marina wanted more freedom of movement and confidence that she felt English language skills would give her. Angelica also saw it as a way of reducing the cultural influences of the pre-revolutionary social reproduction inherent in the Cuban enclave. She criticized her older family members for clinging too much to the old ways, while at the same time, she gained inspiration from their tenacity to learn English and prosper economically under what she perceived to have been adverse conditions of their exile. In summary, all four women voiced their hopes that by acquiring English language skills, they would improve improve their quality of life in their new country.

CHAPTER 5
CLASSROOM OPPORTUNITIES AND LEARNING STRATEGIES OF ANGELICA,
DORA, MARINA, AND DAMARIS

What observable strategies did these particular learners employ to help themselves learn? What were the learning opportunities for the four women in their ESOL classrooms? The reason for my questions was that curriculum guidelines for adult ESOL stress the need for teachers to know their students in order to better meet the students' own needs and goals for their education (FL DOE 2000). I wanted to know how the four women in the study might voice their needs and goals to their teachers. This chapter will document their classroom experiences, their opportunities to learn and to communicate in English, and the strategies I observed them using to assist their own learning.

From the start, classroom observation data underscored the difficulties of teachers - conducting ESOL classes collaboratively, providing time for authentic language production and cognitive development, and fostering language inquiry in excessively overcrowded, noisy classrooms. Some classes observed had up to 54 students present in one classroom. What is more, not all those in attendance, in any given class, began the trimester at the same time, nor did all students complete the course. The "open-door" policy of enrollment allowed students to withdraw from attendance at will, and invited newcomers to join the classes throughout the trimester. Thus, the participants had classmates who may or may not have begun or completed the trimester with them.

The classroom contexts, overcrowding, and the learners' notions of "nutritive learning" both complicated, and contributed to, limiting their opportunities to use English, the target language. From the perspective of the learner, nutritive learning or the "Banking Model" of education as described by Freire (1970) means that the learners see the instructor as the all-knowing person who fills them with the required knowledge. The four participants trusted the teacher as the authority.

Literacy Completion Point-A: Building Foundations of Literacy

I met Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris at the end of the first month of their first trimester in September. Table 5-1 illustrates the classroom arrangements, number of students in average attendance during the observations, and information about Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris' registration and completion of LCP-B.

Table 5-1. Participants' classroom assignments in LCP-A

Participant	Teacher	Type of classroom	Approx. # attending	Completion of LCP-A
Angelica	Ms. R.	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-contained, traditional row arrangement facing front, five days per week	30-35	Completed. Registered for LCP-B.
Marina	Ms. R.	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-contained, traditional row arrangement facing front, five days per week	30-35	Completed. Registered for LCP-B
Dora	Mr. O	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-contained, traditional row arrangement facing front, five days per week	40-54	Completed. Registered for LCP-B
Damaris	Ms. F	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-contained, traditional row arrangement facing front, two days per week. <input type="checkbox"/> Converted auditorium stage, tables facing front, three days per week	40-45	Completed. Registered for LCP-B

According to the schedule of classes, they were enrolled in "Foundations," the entry-level, low literacy ESOL class that the school offered in accordance with the state mandate. At the time of the study, Foundations was listed on the state curriculum frameworks as "Literacy Completion Point-A"(LCP-A) (See [Appendix B](#)). Characteristically, the activities of the three LCP-A classrooms that the women attended demonstrated a wide range of didactic control, classroom management, and ESOL teaching strategies.

All participants attended classrooms where "English-only" was the policy during class time - with varying degrees of enforcement and adherence. Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris all reported satisfaction with their teachers and the school environment, although the three LCP-A classrooms that the four women attended were frequently overcrowded, often with up to 45 to 54 students present. Angelica and Marina attended the same class. The teachers were Ms. R, Ms. F, and Mr. O, all of whom were Cuban-American, native Spanish speakers. According to the women's perceptions, all were capable and well-prepared instructors.

Dora: Tengo un profesor magnífico. He aprendido bastante. En el tiempo que llevo un mes.

I have a magnificent teacher. I have learned a lot. In the time that I have [at the school] one month. (Dora interview transcript).

Marina: Y a la teacher, lo entiendo perfectamente. Hay cosas que, claro, ella dice pero UNA palabra, pero la entiendo lo que llama de ese.

And the teacher I understand perfectly. There are things that, of course, she says but ONE word, but I understand what she's talking about. (Marina interview transcript).

"La Sra. F. es muy didáctica." Damaris says with a smile.

"Ms. F is very didactic." (Classroom observation notes).

Actually, the participants' only complaint was in regards to a certain substitute teacher who spoke in a very gruff and gravelly voice and seemed detached from what was happening in the classroom. He had substituted several times in all their classes.

Angelica's following remark summarizes their opinions.

Angelica: La experiencia, bueno me parece una buena escuela, muy segura, eee, tengo una profesora muy buena, ... Pero con el gordo hoy no entiendo nada.

The experience, well, It seems to me to be a good school, very safe, aaand, I have a very good teacher...But with the fat guy [a substitute teacher] today, I don't understand anything. (Classroom observation notes).

Angelica and Marina with Ms. R

Two of the participants, Marina and Angelica were classmates, but did not sit together and, during the observations, never spoke to one another. Both women seemed to have their own small circle of female classmates with whom they freely interacted during class. Each had her own usual seat in the classroom where she would sit everyday, Marina next to the window behind her classmate, Julia. She said she liked to look out the window to see the sun. Angelica always sat in the center of the room, midway down a row, across from her classmate, Carmen. Both women talked frequently with their classmates. Marina often asked Julia clarification questions about the lessons while Angelica and Carmen often conferred on class work in a collaborative manner.

Their class met in a self-contained, traditional classroom with their teacher, Ms. R, a Cuban female in her early thirties. The desks were arranged in five traditional rows facing front. The students could move the desks together when working on collaborative activities. Ms. R. had placed her desk to the right front side of the room, which eased access to the front white marker board. The many posters on the walls included vocabulary-related themes and inspirational messages.

Ms. R had arrived from Cuba as a child in the Mariel Boatlift of 1980, and often referred to her own experience learning English as an adolescent. Ms. R was very relaxed, warm, and approachable to her students, and she encouraged the class members to express themselves during their activities. By her daily demeanor, she exhibited a sense of individual care and concern that the students appreciated as she voiced her expectations of success. She encouraged a lively classroom where students could spontaneously add their input to discussions without constraint. Her class shared their knowledge and opinions and was often lively with discussion of a lesson.

Ms. R's role during class was often that of a co-learner. She was comfortable admitting that she might not have known something, but was conscientious in assisting students to find answers to their questions. She used Spanish and English for official administrative announcements, but relied on Spanish sparingly during class work. She provided time for collaborative work and circulated freely among the students as they worked in pairs or small groups using a communicative approach that often departed from the textbook. Both Marina and Angelica appreciated her flexible style of conducting the class. Ms. R called the students in her class by their first names, and she personalized her teaching with humor and anecdotes. She was empathetic, recalling her own immigration experience coming to the U.S. by boat as a twelve-year-old. She had an established routine of classroom procedures that was flexible and allowed for learner autonomy.

Dora with Mr. O

Dora attended another section of LCP-A with her husband, Raúl. Their classroom was also a traditional self-contained room with desks in rows facing front. The walls

were essentially bare except for two inspirational message banners in English. The couple always sat adjacent to one another, but never interacted during my classroom observations, causing me to wonder what they might do at home together to prepare for class. (I learned later that wife and husband did not study together nor speak English at home.) Moreover, Dora did not speak to any other classmate during class. She seemed very independent and did not take the opportunity to work in class with any of her classmates. Instead she focused most of her attention on her text and notebooks on the desk in front of her.

Her instructor, Mr. O, was a middle-aged Cuban male who had arrived from Cuba in the late 1980's. Mr. O seemed very concerned with order and control in his classroom, repeatedly prompting the students to silence when the class was not repeating dialogues. All class work was text-based. The students in Dora's class did not work in pairs or groups during any of the observations. Mr. O insisted on a quiet classroom, at times moving people to other seats in order to curb extraneous conversation during class.

Activities during my observations were teacher-centered. The students repeated dialogues in choral unison while Mr. O demanded precision as he modeled an idealized form of American English speech. He insisted on perfect oral performance through repetition as he walked up and down the aisles pausing next to each student who was to recite. The learners did not formulate their own utterances outside of the text models and routinely repeated text dialogues after the teacher or in a type of "circular dialogue" reading. Circular dialogue reading took place as Mr. O chose one student to read one line of a dialogue with the next student in the row reading the following line of dialogue. The

text reading progressed from student to student along the aisles and across the room, without attention to the dialogic nature of the text conversation models.

The classroom routines for collecting homework and managing assessment portfolios were very orderly. Students responded when Mr. O called each in alphabetical order to the front to hand in assignments and test answer sheets. Midway through the class period everyday, some students had an unusual ritual of distributing small plastic cups of strong, sweet Cuban espresso from two thermos bottles kept on Mr. O's desk to those who wished to have some.

Dora, who believed that speaking during class or interrupting a teacher was rude, admired Mr. O and spoke of him with utmost respect. Although she reported that she did not always understand him, she appreciated Mr. O as a model of success for his students because of the language learning and professional progress he had accomplished since arriving in the U.S. in the 1980's. In lecturing, he explicitly upheld his notions of the superiority of the U.S. way of life. Departing from a lesson to speak about moral issues and benefits of living in the U.S., he sometimes spoke critically about what he considered faults of Latin American culture and morals.

Damaris with Ms. F

Damaris attended another section of LCP-A that met on the auditorium stage, a makeshift space behind the closed proscenium curtain, for three days a week. The class met in another traditional classroom for the remaining two days. Her teacher, Ms. F, in her early thirties, was also of Cuban heritage. Ms. F had the unfortunate burden of having to alternate her class between the stage and the self-contained classroom during the week. On those days that the class met on the stage, there were more opportunities

for Damaris to collaborate with classmates because the students were seated at long tables arranged in grid pattern across the cramped space. The arrangement allowed people to sit next to and across from one another as they worked on assignments together. Damaris frequently worked with Belkis, another Cuban woman about her age, and with Gloria, a younger classmate. The three would often sit adjacent to one another.

Ms. F encouraged the learners to work in groups or teams. Classroom routines seemed orderly and students showed respect and care for one another in collaborative work. When they met in the traditional classroom, the desks were arranged in rows facing forward, and the arrangement seemed to limit the amount of collaboration, in contrast to what happened when the class met on the auditorium stage. Often to see better, Damaris sat in the front center desk when Ms. F was writing on the board, later moving to her usual seat next to the unused chalkboard along the far wall. The walls in that room were without any graphic decoration.

Damaris said she enjoyed Ms. F's "didactic" style (Classroom conversation notes) in her LCP-A experience. (In Spanish, "*didáctico*," is taken as a notable compliment to the teacher's art of pedagogy as she imparts knowledge and information to her students.) Ms. F was warm but reserved in her approach to the students in her charge. She seemed competent, approachable, and very organized. The students were encouraged to raise their hands to contribute to class discussions, and she favored the "English Only" approach by not permitting Spanish in classroom communication. She focused on lesson content but did not usually personalize it; she did reach out to incorporate the individual talents and knowledge of the students in her teaching. Her teaching was often grammar-based and she spent much time on focus-on-form activities, direct instruction, and games

as she explicitly covered grammatical structures and vocabulary. Ms. F used her students' first names and she moved around the classroom, coaching and checking on them. She often sat at the tables with them when the class met on the stage. Ms. F attempted to make learning fun by incorporating vocabulary games and other activities that departed from the textbook.

Literacy Completion Point-B: "Real" ESOL I

The four women had completed their LCP-A requirements during the month of December and all four registered for Literacy Completion Point-B (LCP-B). LCP-B corresponded to the traditional first level of ESOL, as it existed prior to the implementation of the pre-literacy level; LCP-A. (See [Appendix B](#)). However, because of domestic and employment pressures, Marina did not return in January, the start of her LCP-B trimester. Fortunately, I was able to maintain contact with her through the refugee-assistance program coordinator. (At the time of this writing, August 2002, Marina had reported that she remained eager to re-enroll in order to continue her ESOL studies in the future.)

Under similar pressures from home and work, Damaris amended her enrollment, dropping the Monday-Friday schedule in order to attend the eight-hour LCP-B class offered on Saturdays. A change in her part-time work schedule did not permit her to attend class on weekday mornings.

At the start of January, Angelica and Dora continued their weekly attendance into LCP-B without change, except that Dora and her husband Raúl had decided to attend separate classes. Misunderstanding her at first, I was surprised when Dora announced to me at the start of the trimester, "*Raúl y yo nos separamos.*" (Raúl and I separated.).

Table 5-2. Participants' classroom assignments in LCP-B

Participant	Teacher	Type of classroom	Approx # attending	LCP-B completion
Angelica	Ms. T.	<input type="checkbox"/> Portion of the divided auditorium, traditional row arrangement facing front, three days per week, <input type="checkbox"/> Self-contained classroom two days per week, traditional row arrangement facing front.	30-35	Left the program one and one-half months into the second trimester, LCP-B.
Marina	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	N/A	Did not return for second trimester, LCP-B
Dora	Mr. N	<input type="checkbox"/> Portion of the divided auditorium, traditional row arrangement facing front, three days per week <input type="checkbox"/> Self-contained, traditional row arrangement facing front, two days per week	40-54	Dora completed LCP-B in April. Registered for LCP-C
Damaris	Ms. V	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-contained, traditional row arrangement facing front, Saturdays, 8 am- 4pm	N/A	N/A Not observed. Damaris dropped the class after four sessions
	Mr. Y	<input type="checkbox"/> Portion of the divided auditorium, traditional row arrangement facing front, five days per week.	30-35	Damaris absent every Thursday for work. Damaris complete LCP-B in April. Registered for LCP-C

Taking it as news of a pending marital breakup, I expressed my concern. Dora laughingly responded that their marriage was fine, but that she and Raúl had decided to attend different LCP-B classes. She confided that attending the same class had been causing a conflict in their relationship. Angelica began the trimester in January, but

withdrew from the program suddenly the following month. She moved out of the immediate vicinity of the school, and the school system records did not indicate that Angelica had transferred to any other adult center in the county during the remainder of the study period. Additionally, her common Hispanic last name made it impossible to locate her through legal and ethical channels. After the month of February, I could collect no further information about her.

All the teachers, Ms. N, Ms. T, Ms. V and Mr. Y, that the three remaining women had in LCP-B were also of Cuban extraction and bilingual English-Spanish speakers. Table 5-2 above illustrates the classroom arrangements, number of students in average attendance during the observations, and information about Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris' registration and completion of LCP-B.

Dora with Ms. N

Dora attended the entire trimester with Ms. N., a middle-aged woman who had arrived from Cuba in 1962. Ms. N taught the largest classes of all those observed during the course of the study. Dora, who always sat in the front row, often attended Ms. N's LCP-B class with about 40 to 54 classmates. Ms. N frequently complained of stress and distraction openly because the class met in the noisy auditorium three times a week where five other classes met simultaneously, separated by eight-foot-high office dividers. The students and teacher moved to the sanctuary of a self-contained classroom twice a week where they were permitted to talk. As Dora explained, "*En el auditorio no se puede hablar.*" (In the auditorium you can't talk) (Dora & Raúl interview transcript).

Ms. N. appeared to be very caring and had a dramatic and flamboyant presentation style. Hers was a teacher-centered classroom, and she directed all learning

activities, often liberally sprinkled with Spanish. Contrary to Ms. N's frequent interjections about limiting her use of Spanish in class, the observation data and videotapes revealed her extensive and on-going talk in her native language. She frequently code switched between English and Spanish to explain a lesson point, introduce a vocabulary word, or give instructions. She did not circulate around the room, limiting her movement to the front quarter of the classroom as she called on students by using their first names. She continuously peppered her class recitation and evaluating remarks with exclamations of, "Excellent!" and "Very good!" even for mundane responses. Outwardly, she maintained an affirming attitude of encouragement for her students' learning. Classroom routine was orderly and several students assisted Ms. N in the management of the assessment folders for her large class.

Dora continued in her individualistic style, as I had observed during the previous trimester. She did not like practicing with others even when, on occasion, Ms. N permitted pairs of students to practice dialogues together. She did not ask questions because she preferred not to interrupt the teacher. "*Falta de educación de hablar en la clase.*" (It's impolite to talk during class.) (Dora classroom observation notes).

Dora spoke rarely in Ms. N's classroom, reciting only when Ms. N called on her. This occurred from time to time because Ms. N routinely demanded that individuals stand to recite or respond with precision, but without rehearsal. Because Ms. N used the board for much of the class work, Dora and her classmates were often requested to go to the marker board to fill in the blanks of a sentence that Ms. N had written. During the classroom discussions and the board work, I took note of Ms. N's curious preoccupation with gender issues as she composed exercises and discussed vocabulary in a way that

habitually highlighted gender polarity and androcentric default (Bem, 1993). I have cited specific illustrative examples from the classroom observations later in this chapter.

Angelica with Ms. T

Angelica attended Ms. T's class for the month of January and withdrew in the middle of February. Ms. T. was in her late 40's, and had been born in Cuba. Angelica reported that she found attending Ms. T's class to be very difficult and challenging. The class of 25 to 35 met in the crowded auditorium as described above where the noise from other classes made listening and discussing difficult for everyone. Ms. T's voice did not carry well beyond the first row, and it appeared that she was directing all her instructional attention on those people sitting in the front. During the observations she called on those students by their first names, but she paid little attention to the students who sat in the middle or back of the classroom. Students usually sat with their heads down on their desks or read newspapers. Regularly, Angelica sat in class for over an hour without speaking.

Angelica sits quietly- she has said nothing in class since the start an hour and 10 minutes ago. Occasionally she mutters the answers quietly and correctly to herself. She often knows the answers during other's turns and quietly corrects any mistakes spoken by another student. (Classroom observation notes).

During one observation, the lesson handout was difficult to read because it appeared to have been recopied a few times. Ms. T continually departed from the lesson to talk about topics loosely related to content, but the digressions were sometimes illogical. During one class, Angelica spoke to me about her disappointment and voiced her frustration at the environment and the teaching style in her LCP-B classroom. She complained that she could not hear nor understand the teacher's rapid speech. *"Yo no puedo oír ni entender ni nada. Ella habla tan rápido. No sé porque yo la asisto."* (I can't

hear nor understand anything at all. She speaks so fast. I don't know why I attend it [the class].) (Classroom observation notes).

Angelica did not complete LCP-B. At the beginning of February, Angelica moved out of the area and, to date, had not re-matriculated at another adult center in the school system.

Damaris with Ms.V and Mr. Y

Damaris had two teachers during her LCP-B trimester. Ms. V, an elderly, retired teacher from Cuba, taught the eight-hour Saturday class that Damaris began to attend in January. I visited the class twice, but only for a short time because Damaris was absent on both occasions. I learned later that she had decided to forego attending after four Saturdays. Damaris reported that she had been dissatisfied with Ms.V.'s style of teaching and her extensive use of Spanish during class time. After four days, she felt that her experience in class was "*tanta bobería*" (such foolishness). She based her opinion of the class on the fact that in four days of eight hours each, she only had four pages of notes to show for her time. Damaris, who valued the exercise of constructing her own phrasings of grammar rules and elaborate vocabulary lists, proclaimed the class, "*Muy superficial.*" (Very superficial). She explained that she refused to return in spite of her mother, her daughter, and her husband's pleading and begging. She insisted, "*¡Yo no volvería!*" (I would not return!) (all quotes from classroom observation notes).

A month passed until Damaris decided to return to school. At the beginning of March, she began to attend Mr. Y's morning class Monday to Friday, with an agreement that she would be absent on Thursdays for work. Mr. Y, about 30 years old, had recently earned his master's degree in TESOL. Damaris' class was his first professional

placement. His classes of 22 to 30 students meeting in the loud, divided auditorium, were always well organized and he noted all planned daily tasks and upcoming events on the marker board.

Mr. Y showed enthusiasm for his new position as an ESOL teacher at The Language School. Although he was very energetic, during the observed classes he seemed detached from the actions and needs of the students in his classroom.. He did not call on students by name during the observations. Continuously he asked if there were any questions, and congratulated the class if they had nothing to ask. However, on several occasions, when they did ask questions, he did not attend to them.

Damaris enjoyed Mr. Y's classes. She commented how much she received from his instruction as she proudly showed me the many pages of notes she had written during the classes. To her delight, her notebook was brimming with lesson notes, in quantitative contrast with the four pages of notes she had written in 24 hours of attending Ms. V's Saturday classes. Mr Y's teaching style fit Damaris' notions and expectations of good teaching. It mirrored the teacher-centered, "nutritive" or "banking" model approach that she was accustomed to in Cuba (cf., Freire 1970). Mr. Y proceeded as if the students learned everything that he had written on the board. He was very preoccupied with the students' success on "the test," which he mentioned to them frequently. Once, perceiving my indiscrete show of impatience with the day's lesson content and delivery, Damaris leaned over and wrote in my notebook, "*Sin obstante, él es divino.*" (Nevertheless, he is divine). (Classroom observation notes). Damaris successfully completed LCP-B in April. After the end of data collection, I remained in contact with Damaris. At the time of this

writing, August 2002, Damaris was completing LCP-B in eager anticipation of her next ESOL level.

Overview of Classroom Findings

I have described the classroom settings in which the four women, according to their official schedules, spent two and one-half hours a day, five mornings a week. I believe that the physical classroom environment, seating arrangements, and teaching behaviors may have played influential roles in the learning strategies that I observed. Except for Marina, it was their first experience in a U.S. classroom. Marina had completed forty hours of Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate work prior to enrolling in ESOL.

The data analysis revealed little opportunity for the learners to: (a) produce their own *authentic* language; (b) receive personalized learning; or (c) practice adult metacognitive learning and critical thinking skills. By authentic language, I refer to speech and writing tasks that would involve the learners in producing oral utterances and compositions of their own invention in English, within realistic or simulated social contexts. Additionally, standardized testing preparation and assessment portfolio administration consumed large amounts of instructional time. In the previous section I described the classrooms that the four women attended during the two trimesters of the study. In summary, I concluded that the following existing pressures seemed to complicate the learners' classroom experiences and learning opportunities:

1. Classroom environment: Overcrowded with up to 54 learners in one classroom, in a noisy auditorium converted to six, open sided, partitioned classrooms made it difficult for teachers and students to concentrate on learning tasks.

2. Classroom management and documentation: Overwhelming paperwork and responsibilities covering the LCP checklists, managing assessment folders and roll books, and administering make up work consumed large amounts of instructional time.

3. Standardized testing: Systematic preoccupation with preparation for the school-district mandated *Test of Adult Basic Education* TABE caused anxieties because of the high stakes of teacher and school accountability tied directly to completed LCPs.

I will now present analysis of the classroom opportunities and learning strategies that Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris experienced during the study period. Talking to each participant during her classroom activities proved to be a valuable resource for insight into her learning experience. By observing the women's writing samples, classroom settings, and interactions with teachers and classmates, I have attempted to answer the questions: "What language learning strategies do the learners develop or employ in the classroom?" and "What are their classroom opportunities for language learning?"

Participants' Strategies and Opportunities for Learning

In this section, I present a view of Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris' activities and strategy use within the following categories: (a) reading; (b) writing; (c) oral discourse and inquiry; (d) adult ESOL teaching and learning; and (e) test taking. From a collective distillation of the data gathered over two trimesters, I have included discussion of several aspects and techniques of adult ESOL teaching and learning that are salient to the four women's observed experiences. Among these aspects are activity consensus, cooperative learning, Total Physical Response (TPR), error correction, classroom control, and notions of culture, gender, and language. I found that the learners' strategy use took place within the scope of classroom experiences in the activities shown in Table 5-3.

Table 5-3. Classroom activities

Reading:	Writing:	Speaking:	Testing:
<input type="checkbox"/> Practiced basic literacy skills such as number and word recognition.	<input type="checkbox"/> Took dictation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Repeated dialogues after teacher.	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed timed multiple choice exercises.
<input type="checkbox"/> Read dialogues silently, in unison, and in pairs.	<input type="checkbox"/> Copied material from the board or textbook.	<input type="checkbox"/> Asked classmates for help.	<input type="checkbox"/> Updated their assessment folders by providing completed assignments and make-up work.
<input type="checkbox"/> Read instructions for exercises.	<input type="checkbox"/> Filled blanks of decontextualized sentences in writing, board work, and oral recitation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Answered teachers' questions or stood up to recite.	<input type="checkbox"/> Extensively prepared for and took many tests comprised of decontextualized, fill-in-the-blanks, and lettered multiple choice test item.
<input type="checkbox"/> Mouthed words and sentences silently.		<input type="checkbox"/> Practiced choral dialogue repetition.	

I based my analysis on my observations as I sat with Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris in their respective classrooms during the course of their LCP-A and LCP-B enrollments. Videotaped excerpts, which I had recorded during several visits with each participant, allowed me to review segments of my observations. Evidence from photocopied samplings from three of the learners' notebooks were also helpful; however, by the time that I began the routine of photocopying in early December, Marina had been frequently absent from class and ultimately did not return to the school in January. Thus, my analysis of written material of all four participants was limited because I was not able to include samples from Marina's work in the section that discusses writing.

All four participants spent a great deal of time sitting quietly in class. Their body movements, gestures, notebook entries, and quiet consultations with their classmates give some clues to their attentiveness and engagement in their lessons. O'Malley & Chamot's

(1990) list of learning strategies from their Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) provided the framework for the table below (Table 5-4).

Collectively, the compilation of their observed learning strategies matched with many of those described by O'Malley and Chamot that indicate that learners who are were actively engaged in their own learning do so more efficiently. O'Malley and Chamot also conclude that successful learners use a wide variety of strategies.

Table 5-4. A compilation of the observed CALLA strategies that the participants used

Metacognitive strategies:	<input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring or reviewing attention to the task. <input type="checkbox"/> Selective attention for special aspects of a learning task, as in planning to listen for key words or phrases <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluating or checking comprehension after a receptive language activity
Cognitive strategies:	<input type="checkbox"/> Rehearsal/repeating <input type="checkbox"/> Organization, grouping or classifying words, terminology, or concepts according to their semantic or syntactic attributes <input type="checkbox"/> Inferencing or guessing meanings, predicting outcomes. <input type="checkbox"/> Deduction or applying rules to understand language. <input type="checkbox"/> Imagery or visual images. <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer or using known linguistic information to facilitate a new learning task.
Social/affective strategies:	<input type="checkbox"/> Cooperation, working w/ peers to solve a problem, pool info, check notes, or get feedback on a learning activity. <input type="checkbox"/> Questioning for clarification, or eliciting from a teacher or peer additional explanation, rephrasing, or examples.

(O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 44).

Within the scope of this study, however, each participant did not use all of the CALLA strategies. For example, Marina depended on her classmates for information and showed a strong preference for social/affective interactions. Her reaching out to others contrasted with Dora's preference for working alone. Damaris routinely organized and categorized both vocabulary and grammar rules as she actively questioned the teacher for clarification. Angelica did not question the teacher and organized her notes in a linear fashion that followed the chronology of the text book. Dora did the same. Overall, it

seemed that Damaris, who also had the most educational experience, showed the largest range of learning strategies of the four women.

The few CALLA strategies that were not apparent bear mentioning. O'Malley and Chamot list among the cognitive strategies learners use: (a) "elaboration, linking ideas contained in new information or integrating new ideas with known information" [scaffolding] and (b) "summarizing or intermittently synthesizing what one has heard to ensure the information has been retained." These higher level cognitive strategies that depend on reflection and recall of what was covered in class did not appear in the observation data.

The lack of cognitive reflection in the data is not surprising. Little in-class time was spent reflecting on learning as the participants progressed, in a linear fashion, through the competency checklists and preparation for test taking. Learners did not have the opportunity to summarize or to synthesize the class materials in their own words. They "received" information without processing or analyzing most of it because the curriculum frameworks for both LCP-A and LCP-B required the participants most frequently to "identify" items ([Appendix B](#)). Thus, their class work did not require higher level thinking because much of the learning activity appeared to be centered on discrete-item, fill-in-the-blank exercises and selection of the correct letter in multiple choice formats.

Certain strategies could not be observed for that fact that they take place quietly inside the minds of learners. For instance, "self-talk, or using mental control for self-assurance that a learning activity will be successful or to reduce anxiety" makes it

difficult to document in observation data. The internal focus of the strategy places it outside the realm of observation.

The reader must recall that only Dora and Damaris completed both ESOL levels, Angelica left the program after a month of LCP-B, and Marina completed LCP-A only. Although the work constituted four case studies, I will discuss the findings based on identified themes bridging the four women's experiences rather than on individual narratives.

Categories of Reading: Basic Literacy for the Test

I learned that teaching basic literacy skills was the rationale behind "Foundations ESOL." Basic skills in the context of Foundations ESOL include recognition of the left-to-right writing system in English, letter and number recognition, fundamental spelling, and comprehension of written representations of common public informational signage. For highly literate learners in their native language, the LCP-A level seemed too elementary; however, the assistant principal and the department head explained that the instructional level was necessary to support very basic literacy instruction. What were the participants' opportunities to read and build literacy skills in English?

Damaris and Dora, both literate in Spanish and graduates of higher education, shared their frustration with me in their reaction to the extremely low level of instruction in Foundations where they read and traced letters of the alphabet and practiced basic capitalization and punctuation rules. *¿Es que piensen que sea yo analfabeta?* (It's like they think I am illiterate.) (Damaris observation notes). *"A veces me da cuenta del kinder"* (Sometimes it reminds me of kinder[garten]) (Dora observation notes). Their dissatisfaction may have stemmed from their many years of education and their high level of literacy in Spanish. The problem that course content in LCP-A was too

elementary for many students became evident such that, by the middle of the data collection period, I learned of efforts on the state level to begin planning a separate pre-literacy course for the next year. Such a course would fulfill the needs of learners who may have had no previous schooling.

Observations revealed that classroom reality for the participants sharply contrasted with O'Malley and Chamot's (1990) assertions about the importance of a reader's active engagement in the task of reading in SLA. The researchers explain that

Whereas reading comprehension was once thought of as a process of representing with reasonable accuracy the information contained in a text, more recent views of reading focus on the constructive elements of the process and acknowledge that what is retained is the result of a dynamic interaction between the reader, the task, and the content (p. 65).

In contrast with O'Malley and Chamot's constructivist vision of reading, classroom reading for Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris, took on a narrow definition: a participant's use of printed texts, without evidence of inquiry or meaning construction, to gather preconceived information, or answer text questions. Most classroom reading resembled preparation for test taking. The data revealed no evidence of extended reading activities in the LCP-A classrooms because of the low literacy expectations of the state curriculum frameworks. The Foundations level was designed to teach basic literacy; "*identify*" was the common verb in the objective checklists. Reading activities were limited to recognition of words, phrases, and short sentences. There appeared to be no encouragement or support for outside reading. In most cases, all reading in LCP-A and LCP-B took place within the contexts of:

- following the script of role-playing dialogues;
- reading instructions for text exercises;

- answering simple questions about short dialogues or paragraphs;
- finding information in the text to answer prescribed teacher or text questions.

Evidence in the data of classroom reading strategy use was limited. Silently moving lips as a form of rehearsal and nodding heads or tapping fingers in syllabic rhythm while reading silently were common strategies that all four women (O'Malley & Chamot 1990) employed. Teachers, during the observations, did not explicitly teach reading strategies although, as stated above, building literacy skills is an important element in adult ESOL teaching and learning. In the following excerpt, a typical illustration of a "reading" activity in the classroom I observed, Dora attempted to answer orally according to the assigned text. Her miscue in pronunciation of "ball" is one of language transfer. ("ll" is pronounced in Cuban Spanish as /y/ and functions as a single letter of the Spanish alphabet.)

The teacher tells the students to open their books to page 197. Dora looks at page 197, reads and moves her lips silently. She seems to consult the notebook and shuffles her papers again.Teacher chooses Dora to answer. She has difficulty reading the sentence aloud. "I am going to a ball game." At first she pronounces "ball" as /bøy/, and on her second attempt, she omits the word, "ball." Mr. O approaches her desk and points out her choice of two possible answers. Dora seems frustrated as he taps the page in her book several times with his finger. She finally answers the question successfully. (Classroom observation notes & video excerpt).

I found little evidence regarding actual "reading for the sake of reading." Dora, Angelica, Marina did not use materials other than the textbook and teacher handouts. Only Damaris, in LCP-B, had the opportunity to read longer more interesting, aesthetically-themed adult texts from *True stories in the news: A beginning reader* (Heyer, S. (1996). White Plains, NY: Longman). On one occasion Dora received a handout from Ms. N that could be considered a reading practice. Ms. N attempted to motivate her

students to "*seguir luchando*" [Cuban Sp.: Keep on struggling] by sharing the following handout (Fig. 5-1) with them. She explained to me that she liked to distribute the poem to her ESOL I students about six weeks into the trimester in order to encourage them at a time that she felt that they may be feeling the strain and difficulty of learning English.

Don't Quit!

*When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
when the road you're trudging seems all up hill,
when the funds are low, and the debts are high,
and you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
when care is pressing you down a bit,
rest if you must, but don't you quit.*

*Life is odd with its twists and turns,
as everyone of us sometimes learns
and many a failure turns about,
when he might have won had he stuck it out.
Don't give up though the pace seems slow,
you may succeed with another blow.*

*Success is failure turned inside out,
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt.
And you never can tell how close you are.
It may be near when it seems so far.
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit.*

**IT'S WHEN THINGS SEEM WORST
THAT YOU MUST NOT QUIT.**



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Figure 5-1 "Don't Quit" Handout

Though apparently well-intentioned, Ms. N did not seem to acknowledge the obvious difficulty of the handout nor the possible negative effect it could have had on student motivation. Written in rhyming verse, the text is filled with complex idiomatic expressions, metaphors and vocabulary that would gravely challenge a beginning English language learner. Dora asked me what the handout meant and I attempted to explain. She did not understand why she had received it. She wanted to read it, but said it was too difficult, before folding the handout and placing it into her notebook.

Categories of Writing: Formulaic Contexts

The participants' opportunities to learn through writing were limited. In the majority of the writing that the participants produced, some samples of which I present in this section, formulaic patterning and vocabulary lists comprised much of the learners' work. Formulaic writing can best be defined as filling in the blanks of patterned sentences and dialogues. Activities were based on drills for practicing syntactic rules and elements such as a/an, past tense verb markers, and negative constructions. The women often noted definitions in short English citations from their bilingual dictionaries, teachers' oral explanations, or in their own words, usually translated into Spanish. Dictations of text were common. Routinely, from the board or as the teacher read text, they copied sentences with blanks to be filled in later. Several successive pages in each of their notebooks commonly contained such copied exercises, ten to twenty sentences in length. Damaris wrote extensive vocabulary lists and frequently constructed her own grammar rules, in Spanish, that included "clinical" clarification of abbreviations, typical of higher, academic-level notetaking.

As the data revealed, all writing that was not Spanish translation was teacher or test directed. There was little if any original English writing, such as learner-generated sentences, paragraphs, or essays, evident either in the LCP-A and LCP-B classes I observed or in the participants' notebook samples. The only occasional exceptions occurred in Ms. R.'s class where Marina and Angelica were encouraged to employ what they learned by writing reference notes for use during oral activities. Samples of the learners' writing were required for their assessment portfolios, but such items generally consisted of fill-in-the-blank worksheets or dictations that nominally covered the prescribed state curriculum competencies.

In the scope of the study data, I have defined writing as any physical use of pens or pencils for notation, drawing, copying, or test taking. Although two or three computers were available for student use in all the classrooms, they were never used during my observations. Students routinely:

- wrote answers to exercise items in their textbooks or workbooks;
- circled correct answers;
- drew lines to connect pictures with corresponding vocabulary words;
- completed simple crossword puzzles for vocabulary review;
- paraphrased syntactic rules and defined new vocabulary items in Spanish.

Lindfors (1987) notes that, " We have gone from thinking about writing as a product that provides new ideas, conflicts, and support to thinking about writing as a process of interacting with one's own ideas" The shift in philosophy Lindfors describes was not evident during any of the classroom observations. Her statement is reminiscent of O'Malley & Chamot's idealistic beliefs about the evolution of reading theory cited above, and it likewise does not reflect the observed reality of practice for Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris.

Dictation: Writing Other's Words

All four learners routinely enjoyed taking dictation, a form of unoriginal, externally generated writing. It was an activity they valued because it mirrored their experience in the Cuban educational style. According to each of the participants, lecture and dictation were common ways that they had always learned in school. In their Foundations ESOL classes, spelling precision was often the focus of dictation practice as teachers read sentences from a prepared text and students wrote what they thought they heard. Teachers chose dictation materials that included the names of the letters of the alphabet, numbers, dates, phone numbers, and short dialogue excerpts.

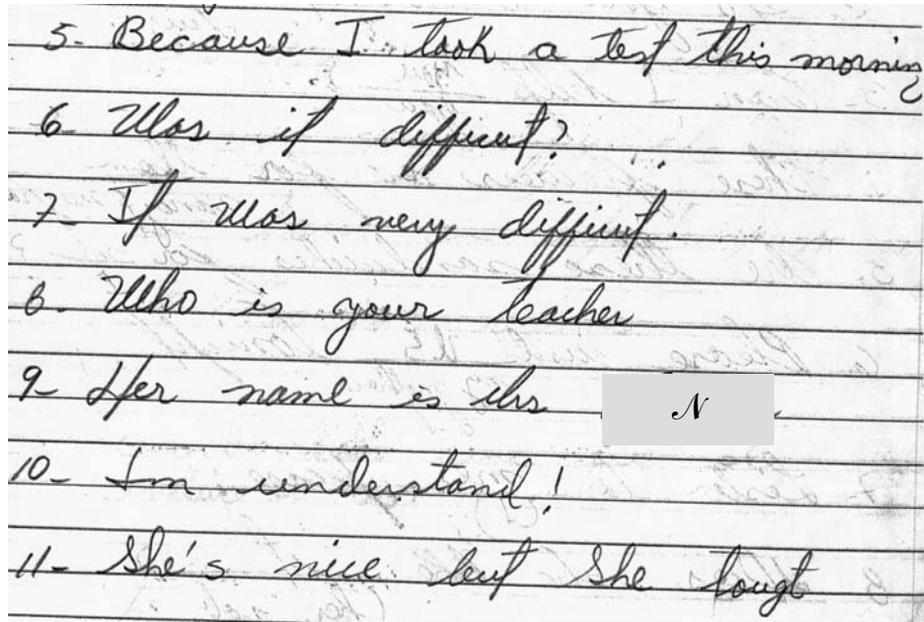


Figure 5-2 Dora's dictation excerpt

The four participants' notebooks reflect the abundant routine practice of listening and copying another person's words from texts read by the teacher. The text might be an excerpt from a reading selection, a list of sentences of the teacher's composition, the lyrics to a song, or a list of numbers, dates, or addresses. An interesting dictation passage from Dora's notebook (Fig. 5-2) revealed more than her ability to copy what the teacher was saying. In the above dictation excerpt, a "conversational" progression, Dora's writing reveals evidence of the teacher's own self-belief in the sentence she dictated to Dora: *"She's nice but She tough (sic)."* (She's nice, but she's tough.)

During dictation writing, which often functioned as a type of lesson review, there was no evidence of translation or any other notation. Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris all enjoyed dictation exercises as written proof that they were progressing in their learning. Other such proof for them came when they wrote the "correct" words or words in the blanks of text exercises, and handouts

“Fill-in-the-blank” learning.

The primary category of writing, in addition to dictation, that Angelica, Dora, and Damaris frequently practiced was filling in the blanks of decontextualized sentence drills. (As previously explained, I had no writing samples from Marina.) The sentence drills were used for in-class and homework practice of grammar rules such as regular past tense verb markers, prepositions, and indefinite article choice of "a" and "an." At times the learners copied sentences from a workbook, taken as dictation, or copied from the board. They filled in blanks such as in the excerpt (Fig. 5-3) from a larger handout collected during one of Dora's classes.

PATTERN DRILL 127

1 <i>Do they need money?</i>	No, they <i>don't</i> .
2 <i>Does he need money?</i>	No, he <i>doesn't</i> .
3 <i>Do you need money?</i>	No, I <i>don't</i> .
4 <i>Does she need money?</i>	No, she <i>doesn't</i> .
5 <i>Do you need money?</i>	No, we <i>don't</i> .
6 <i>Do I need money?</i>	No, you <i>don't</i> .
7 <i>Do we need money?</i>	No, you <i>don't</i> .
8 <i>Do they need money?</i>	No, they _____.
9 _____ he need money?	No, he _____.
10 _____ we need money?	No, you _____.
11 _____ she need money?	No, you _____.
12 _____ you need money?	No, we _____.
13 _____ you need money?	No, I _____.
14 _____ he need money?	No, he _____.
15 _____ I need money?	No, you _____.
16 _____ she need money?	No, she _____.

Figure 5-3 Handout excerpt from Dora's LCP-B class

The only teacher who did not always employ the fill-in-the-blank strategy was Ms. R., Angelica and Marina's LCP-A teacher. She dedicated time for discussion of new vocabulary words and grammar structures. In contrast, Dora's LCP-B teacher Ms. N, relied exclusively on fill-in-the-blank exercises. She twice depicted such an exercise as a model for "the test" in which she wrote three multiple choice options within a box,

allowing students to "fill in the blank" by circling the correct answer from among the teacher's offerings.

Ms. N draws more squares as before numbering the sentences 8., 9.,... Dora draws the boxes in her notebook. The formula that she creates on the board reminds me of a test form. I ask her if that is so. Ms. N replies, "Yep!" (Classroom observation notes).

The following, my recreated version from the classroom board, shows a portion of what Ms. N wrote.

7.

Does
He
Could

 they repeat their names?

9.

Oh, good!
Oops!
OK

 The soup isn't very hot!

8.

Where
Could
Can

 Does Susan get the bus?

Dora, copying the segment of the exercise in her notebook, rendered it as follows (Fig. 5-4), complete with the boxes that frame the answer choices. As shown, Dora had already circled the correct answer in item #7 as she copied. Ms. N, composing the individual items on the spot, provided eleven items in the exercise. As the bell rang, the teacher instructed the students to complete the exercise by circling the correct answers for the following day's class as homework. Dora's notebook contained many similar assignments.

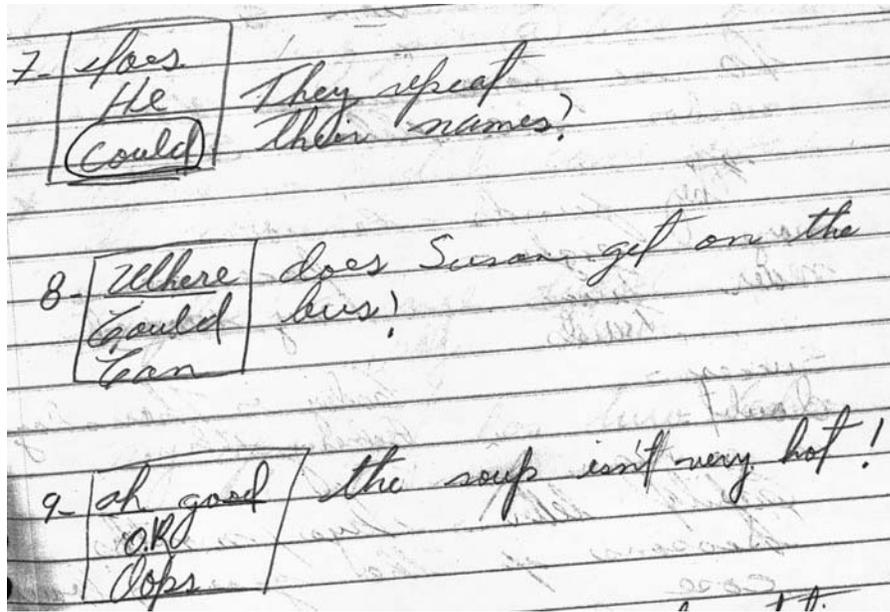


Figure 5-4 Dora's exercise excerpt

Ms. N's explicit version of formulaic patterning was linked to the format of the unit tests. Other less didactic styles of the same patterning and training for "the test" were in evidence in Angelica and Damaris' writing. The participants often copied dialogues from the textbook into notebooks without alteration. An example (Fig 5-5) from Angelica's notebook shows such an activity:

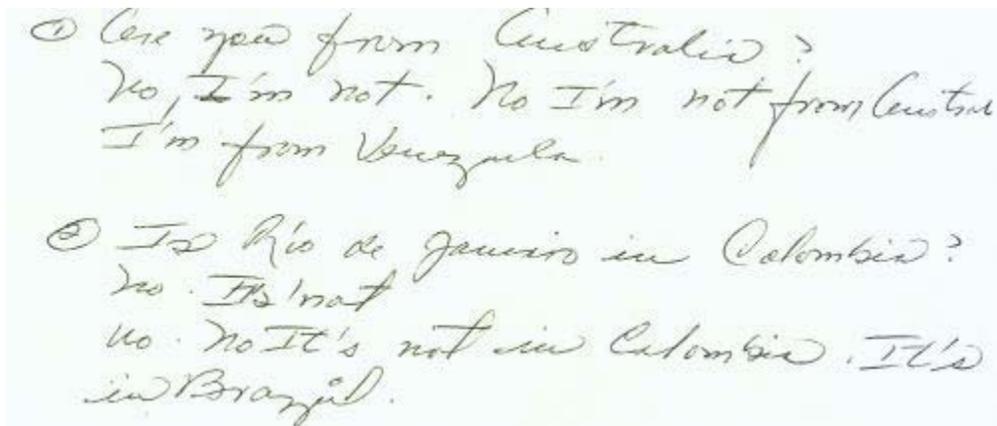


Figure 5-5 Sample of Angelica's text copying

Not all fill-in-the-blank writing assignments progressed as mechanically as those illustrated above. During one "writing" activity, I had the opportunity to assess evidence

of Damaris' deeper semantic processing and cognitive strategy of inferencing (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990) as she and two of her classmates together completed a fill-in-the-blank exercise in a workbook. As the women copied the individual, unrelated, sentences into their notebooks, they discussed how they should fill in the blanks. I asked Damaris if she knew the meanings of the words of the sentences that she was so rapidly copying. She replied, "*Sí, yo trato.*" (Yes, I try). I noticed one particular word in one of the sentences, "beard." The sentence read, *Dick doesn't have a beard anymore. He _____ it three days ago.* The verb list provided at the top of the page included the choices, "cook" and "shave." The students were to choose the correct verb and change it to its past tense form.

Damaris had paused to ponder her answer when I asked her if she knew the meaning of "beard." She looked at me flatly and said, "*Sí, por supuesto, PAN!*" (Yes, of course, BREAD!) Suspecting a problem of letter transposition, I pointed to my own beard for reference and asked her what she would answer. "*Cook. Pensé que no tenía pan.*" (Cook. I thought that he didn't have bread.) She made a shaving motion along the side of her face when I asked her if she knew the meaning of "shave". She had apparently transposed the letter "r" in the two words, "beard" and "bread." (Note that both words also have a similar schematic shape since they contain "ea" in medial position, begin with "b," and end with "d.") As I suspected, "cook" might have been a logical answer, since Damaris had decoded the word, "beard" as "bread." (Logically, the general meaning of "cook" could suffice in place of the more precise "bake" given that the class was, after all, Foundations ESOL.) I believe, in this example, that she did not translate to arrive at her answer, "cooked." I pointed to my beard again, and laughing in a

cognitive instant, she exclaimed, "Shaved! ¡Se la afeitó! ¡La barba!" (He shaved it! The beard!) (Classroom observation notes). Damaris had not used translation of language transfer. She arrived at her decision to write "cooked" because of the confusing similarities of the two English words. The past tense ending was not the challenge in this example.

Vocabulary Notes: Translation and Cognitive Strategy

Learners often made note of new vocabulary items in their notebooks, but each organized and processed the words in her individual way. Since lessons were competency based and organized around themes, the vocabulary items were often grouped or connected through contexts of health and safety, giving directions, or consumer issues. Translation occurred most frequently as the learners copied lists of vocabulary words and short phrases from the textbook and from lists the teacher would write on the board. The women wrote lists of vocabulary words, often accompanied by Spanish translations.

Translation, a common learning strategy in early stages of language learning (O'Malley & Chamot 1990), was evident throughout the participants' notebooks.

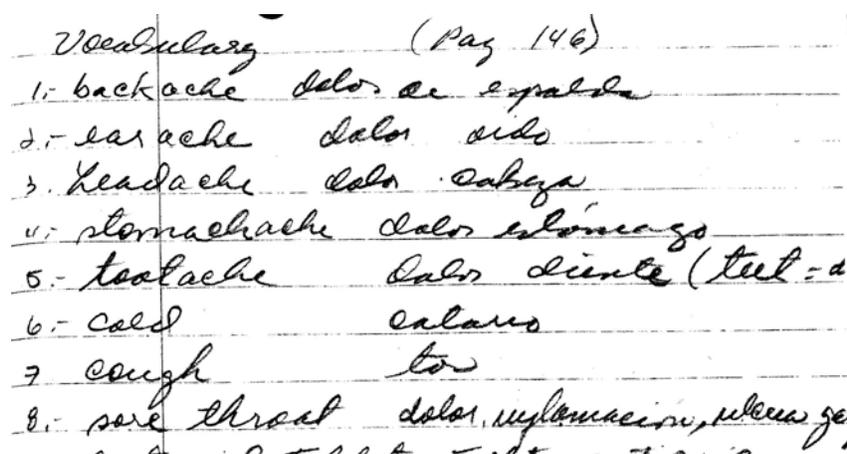


Figure 5-6 Damaris' vocabulary list excerpt

However, the perception of translation as a strategy was ambivalent- learners did it, but teachers discouraged it. The negative feelings toward the practice of translation came from the participants in the study and their teachers' stated beliefs that a learner's native language was a hindrance to learning English. Translation was sharply discouraged by Ms. N:

Ms. N: Erase the Spanish blackboard and this is it, English! (classroom observation notes).

The above bilingual notes by Damaris (Fig. 5-6), are from a lesson that focuses on health and safety issues, of obvious interest to Damaris, the medical doctor. Damaris, by habit, maintained copious notes and cognitively grouped words according to their semantic or syntactic use (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). One day in class I asked her about her note-taking. Damaris said that the margins of her college textbooks had been full of her notes, definitions and explanations to herself, "small interpretations for my own mind" (Classroom observation notes). Her reliance on her note taking strategy, developed over her extensive educational career, had caused her to criticize the effectiveness and skills of her Saturday teacher, the class from which she withdrew, dissatisfied that she had only four pages of notes to show for four, eight-hour sessions (Classroom observation notes).

The following example reveals the quantity, density, and arrangement of Damaris' writing. Her multiple Spanish language synonyms and word partners, translations of the new English vocabulary items she was learning, were frequently squeezed into the small lined spaces on her pages. They appear in layers of interpretation (Fig. 5-7) as she defined or translated related nouns and verbs in the style of dictionary entries.

* Fellow = MOZO, TIPO, SUJETO, PROXIMO, socio, pretendiente
 * peek = buscar, recorrer buscando (to peek to = espionarse)
 * advise = ^{noticia} aviso, consejo ADVISE ^{abrirse, arrojarse} avisar, advertir ^{ADVICE} consejo, consideracion
 * Avoid = evitar
 * Gossip = chisme

Figure 5-7 Damaris' translations

Angelica's work offered similar examples of translation as a learning strategy, albeit less frequently, such as translating the words "pond" and "charge" into Spanish synonyms in the Figure 5-8 below:

* Pond - estanque, charca
 * Charge - confiar, encargar, cargar
 deudas

Figure 5-8 Angelica's translations

In only two cases, Angelica and Damaris used another strategy, drawing, as they augmented their notes with graphic representations of vocabulary items. Dora's notes contained no such drawings. Two simple examples (Fig. 5-9) show Damaris' drawing of a leaf, left, and Angelica's rendering of vocabulary words from a lesson on health and medicine, right. I noticed from time to time that the teachers did draw pictures on the board as they presented new vocabulary items, but, as their notebooks exhibited, the participants rarely copied such sketches. Although the graphic nature of the representations would have made translations of the vocabulary items unnecessary, the participants seemed to prefer writing the words.

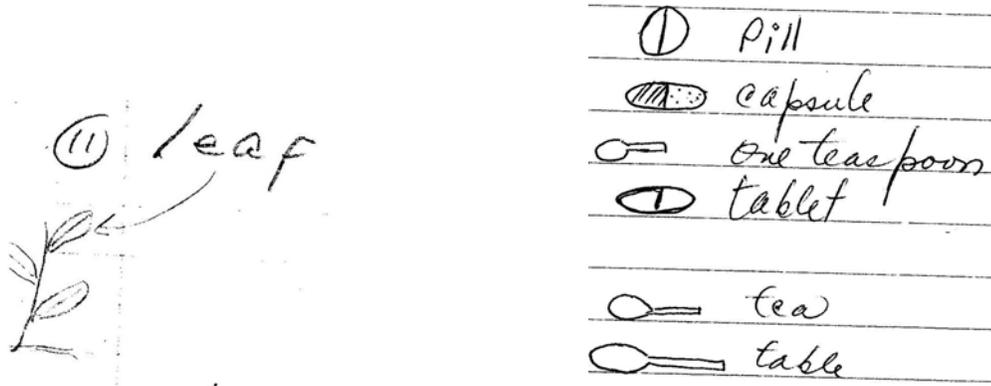


Figure 5-9 Examples of imagery: Damaris, left, and Angelica, right.

Angelica's frequently consulted her dictionary, which might account for some of the errors that I found in her notebook. She reported on her reliance on her bilingual dictionary to help her remember vocabulary items.

Angelica: La maestra explica bien con gestos pero cuando busco en el diccionario, puedo recordarme más. Lo uso aquí y también en mi casa.

The teacher explains well with gestures, but when I look up in the dictionary, I can remember more. I use it here and at home (Angelica, classroom observation notes).

Her dependence on the dictionary for translation without understanding context caused trouble for Angelica. For example, she translated into Spanish and inferred, incorrectly, a complete English phrase, a chunk of language taken as a unit. **Mejor después todo otro, otros.* (Fig. 5-10) was rendition of the phrase, "better than all other(s)." Often words with multiple meanings and idiomatic expressions, in particular, cannot easily be translated using a dictionary.

Figure 5-10 Angelica's translation miscue

Her word choice for translation, *después* [Sp.: after, then] is incorrect, but indicates transfer interference, a confusion of the English words, "than" and "then." Additionally, she confused the verb infinite form, *mejorar* [Sp.: to better or improve] with the adjectival form, *mejor* [better], equally confusing in English or Spanish, especially given the density and length of the usual dictionary citation for the English word, "better." Thus, Angelica's resulting misinterpretation, "to improve after all others," differs greatly from the original meaning of the English phrase, "better than all others."

Angelica did not always translate words directly in her notes. Her writing provides evidence of extension of meaning and association of related grammatical forms.

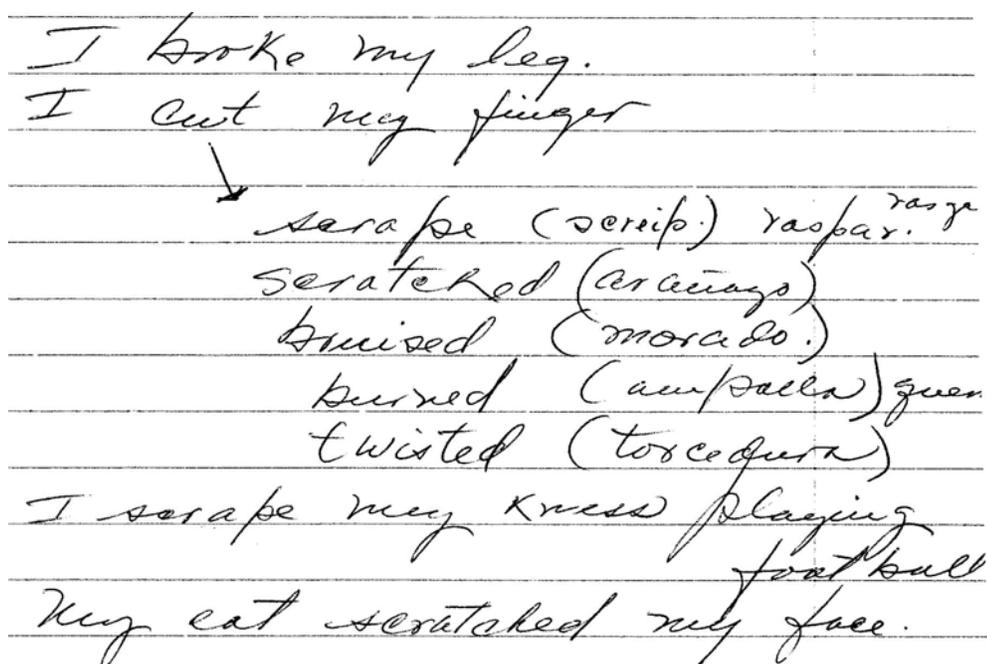


Figure 5-11 Angelica's vocabulary notation.

For example, Figure 5-11 shows that, while she was learning past tense verbs related to injury and skin wounds, she noted the corresponding nouns in Spanish translation. Angelica enriched her notes with meaning by writing the noun forms for "scratched," *arañazo* (n. scratch) and "twisted," *torcedura* (n. sprain). Furthermore she provided a phonetic rendering of "scrape" as, "*screip*." and wrote the verb form, *raspar*

and the noun, *raspa*. Two of her words actually describe respective symptoms of being bruised, *morado* (adj. purple) and burned, *ampolla* (n. blister), and can be interpreted as a form of word mapping, or connecting lexical items according to connected meanings. Angelica used the symptom words as keys to remembering the new vocabulary items. They do not appear to have been copied as dictionary entries such as those shown above in Damaris' notes (Fig. 5-7). Thus, her written words appear as "signs" described by Vygotsky (1978), i.e., "auxiliary means of solving a given psychological problem (to remember, compare something, report, choose, and so on...)" (p. 52). Angelica used her native Spanish to form new semantic relations that aid memory of the new English vocabulary items.

Evidence of "summarizing or intermittently synthesizing what one has heard to ensure the information has been retained" (O'Malley & Chamot 1990), another strategy occasionally employed, turned up in Damaris' writing. As she copied, vocabulary and patterned sentence examples, Damaris would frequently add her own phonetic notation, informed by her native Spanish, of the English pronunciation such as can be as seen at the lower section of the following Figure 5-12, "*Jao mochdo aiouiu.*"

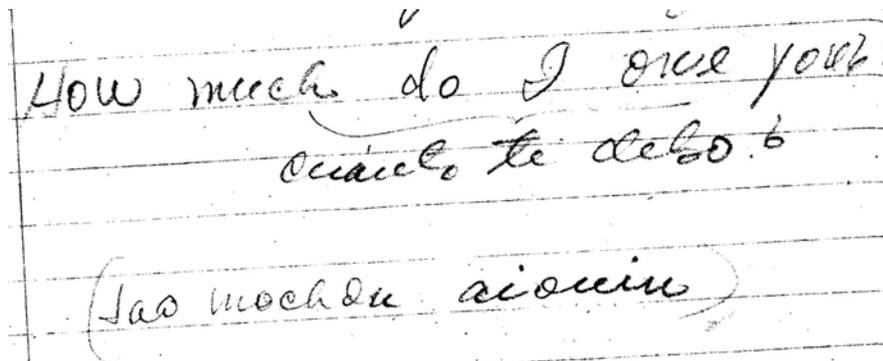
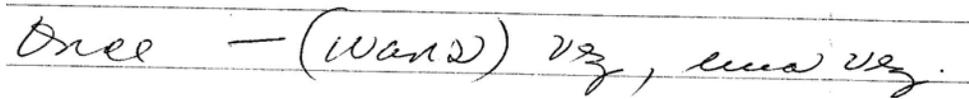


Figure 5-12 Damaris' phonetic representation and translation

Angelica, less frequently than Damaris added her own phonetic representation of particularly difficult words to her notes. For example, in Figure 5-13, the English word, "once" is both opaque orthographically, this is, the spelling does not indicate pronunciation, and it invites transfer interference in its resemblance to the Spanish word for "eleven," *once*, pronounced, / n tse/. Angelica noted the confusing word as "(wans)" accompanied by its Spanish translation.



The image shows a handwritten note on lined paper. The word "Once" is written in cursive. To its right is a dash followed by "(wans)" in parentheses, also in cursive. Below this, the words "vez, una vez" are written in cursive.

Figure 5-13 Angelica's phonetic representation with translation

Dora did not show any phonetic representation in her notes, but did frequently pair English words with Spanish translations, as discussed above, a common strategy shared by all three learners who provided notebook excerpts. Instead, Dora seemed to prefer translating rules as she focused on form and grammar.

Rule Writing: Schemata in Translation

Evidence of original writing and self-expression did not appear in English in any of the learners' notebooks. Self-expression did occur in Spanish, as the women attempted to make sense of grammatical rules and confusing lexical items either by paraphrasing the stated rule or by deducing and applying their own version of rules for understanding (O'Malley & Chamot 1990). They paraphrased text or teacher instructed rules and wrote their own versions of grammar rules. All of Dora's writing occurred in the form of rule writing.

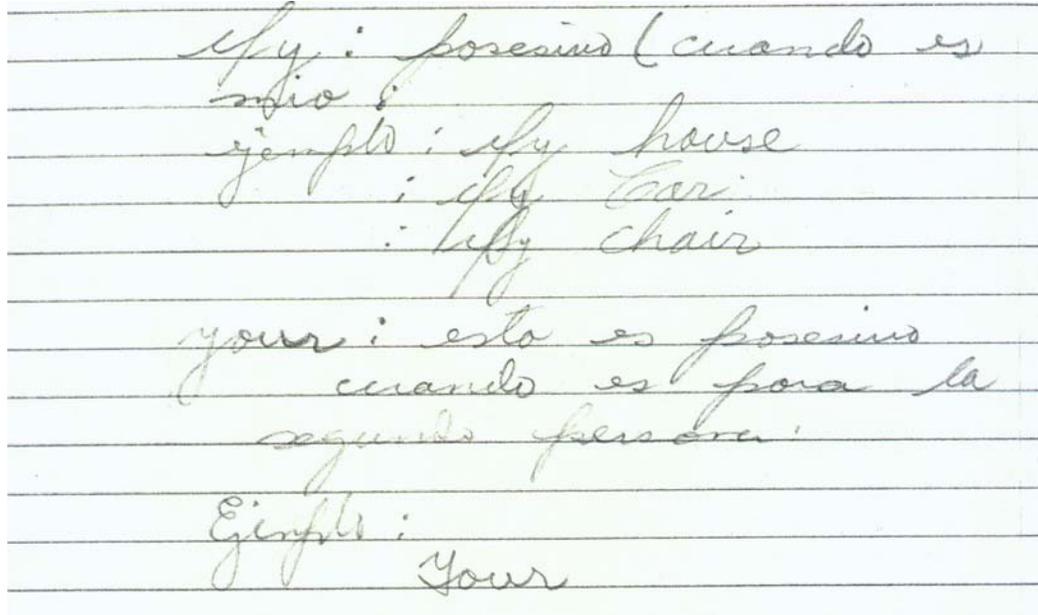


Figure 5-1 Dora's rule description and examples

Dora presented, as seen in the above notebook excerpt, a schematic description of personal pronouns (Fig. 5-14); her explanations are entirely in Spanish. Parenthetically she wrote that "my" is used "*cuando es mio*" (when it's mine). Her description for the possessive adjective, "your" is "*cuando es para la segunda persona*" (when it's for the second person).

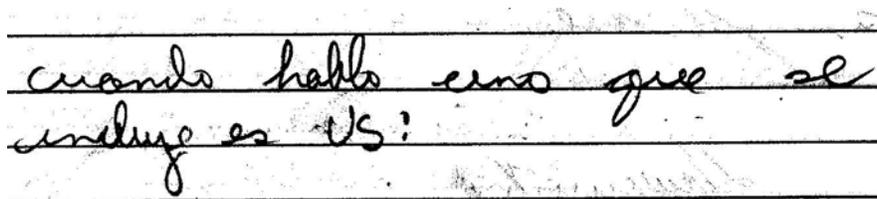


Figure 5-15 Rule explanation in the native language

On the next page of her notebook (Fig. 5-15), she renders the object pronoun, "us" as "*cuando hablo uno que se incluye es us*" (When I speak of one that is included, it's us). Damaris was most prolific in this category perhaps because of her clinical training in medical school and her years in psychiatric practice. Her rules included both semantic and syntactic sense-making. In Figure 5-16, she defined the difference between

"bathroom" and "restroom," as the former being a place "where one can bathe" and the latter being "where one cannot bathe." (The distinction between the two words cannot be made in a one-word translation in Spanish.)

bathroom = baño donde se puede bañarse
 restroom = baño donde no se puede bañarse

Figure 5-16 Defining new words by using the native language

Elsewhere, Damaris graphically combined syntactic and semantic explanations in a complex, layered description of the usage and meaning of "this /that" and "these/those." At the top of the following writing sample (Fig. 5-17), Damaris defined the dichotomy of distance in the semantics of "this" and "that" and she labels "these" and "those" as plurals.

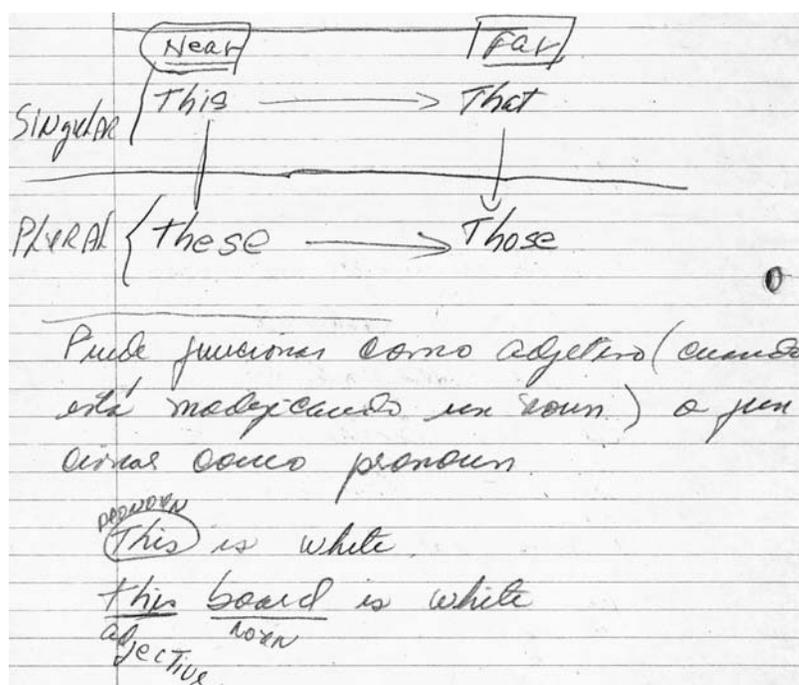


Figure 5-17 Grammar rule schema

Furthermore, she addressed the syntactic ambivalence of the words as she explained that the words can function both as adjectives with nouns and as pronouns. Deeper analysis reveals evidence of Damaris' internalization process. Curiously, she did not use the

Spanish, *sustantivo* [noun], in her schema, but switched codes as she placed the masculine Spanish indirect object, *un*, in front of the English word, "noun." She also retained the English word, "pronoun" in place of its lexical counterpart in Spanish. Damaris' usage of the English might indicate that those particular grammar words have already been internalized in the learning process as procedural knowledge.

Procedural knowledge involves our ability to understand and generate rules to solve a problem (Anderson 1980, cited in O'Malley & Chamot 1990). Vygotsky (1978) speaks of a similar step in his description of the internalization process. Conceptualization occurs first between people and then inside a learner. "All higher functions originate as actual relations between human individuals" (p. 57). The ESOL teachers often used grammar label words such as the names of the parts of speech in their lesson presentation. Her code switching might indicate that Damaris had internalized the English grammar words to such an extent that she used them in the explanatory notation to herself.

Categories of Oral Response: Repetition & Recitation

Oral response, defined as talking or vocalization in the context of instruction, was as limited for the learners as reading and writing opportunities; learners were not customarily asked to produce original utterances. They also asked few questions. An answer to a direct question or repetition of text in role-play or dialogue practice constituted most forms of oral responses. All the participants gave individual, "stand-and-deliver" responses. Data revealed the following general categories of actual speaking during the course of the lesson wherein the learners:

- responded individually to a direct question from the teacher;
- routinely repeated dialogues in choral unison after the teacher's vocal modeling;
- role-played dialogues by filling in the blanks of patterned responses;
- were called on to stand up and recite or answer a question without preparation.

Dialogue and drill practice

The favored and most documented activity found in the data was choral repetition of dialogue drills. Lindfors (1987) describes the behaviorist rationale underlying choral repetition in language learning.

Group response increases the number of times the learner gets to practice saying particular forms exemplifying new language patterns. Reinforcement for the second-language forms he uses will help to establish the new language habits (p. 442).

Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris had few opportunities for authentic conversational communication. In fact, only Damaris engaged her teacher in inquiring exchanges of vocabulary definitions and rule formulation. The participants' own beliefs about classroom instruction and language learning seemed to treat the complex work of language learning as if it were only a matter of developing the correct habits and memorizing vocabulary lists. The reliance on pattern and dialogue drills showed that repetition was a valued tool for teaching and learning. Lindfors writes about such an attitude towards language learning.

...The learner is one who must practice (rehearse) new forms required by the new language. The more practice he has in using new forms correctly, the more firmly they will be entrenched and the more likely he will be to continue to use these correct forms. Thus a great deal of practice in error-free responding will be the learner's major occupation (p. 442).

In several cases, Ms. N voiced her rationale supporting her preference for vocabulary and grammar drills in the following explanation to her class.

Ms. N passes out a worksheet and explains, "It is a drill, like in the army." She gestures as if she is doing calisthenics.

Ms. N: You know, drill. In language it's a drill. The more you repeat, the more you learn. (Classroom observation notes)

The method often fit the materials. Along with the drill patterning seen on photocopied handouts (see Fig.5-1), the textbook series that the school adopted, *Expressways* (Bliss, B. & Molinsky, S. White Plains, NY: Longman), contains competency-based lessons designed in an illustrated, situational substitution drill format. For example, in a lesson on giving directions, the text presents a model dialogue pattern related to the topic. What follows is a series of drawings and vocabulary words, such as "turn right (or left)," "go (number) blocks," etc. The students study the picture cues and the vocabulary, plugging the new information logically into the master dialogue to produce a variation on the original. According to the authors, the text is best used when teachers provide sufficient time for pairs of learners to practice the dialogues, and to have the opportunity to add their own variations and extensions, in addition to the given text cues.

Angelica, Marina, and Damaris, in their LCP-A Foundations classes with Ms. R and Ms. F spent generous amounts of time dedicated to the task of dialogue pair work. The teachers often modeled the dialogues, discussed and defined all new vocabulary in context, and practiced pronunciation before setting the students to the task of pair practice. Students took the time to practice the dialogues in the textbook before the teachers called on pairs to recite them for the class

Ms. R previews and pronounces all parts of the pair work examples, modeling the pronunciation. She previews the spelling of each last name of the characters in the text exercise.

Ms. F begins modeling the text dialogue: A: May I help you? B: Yes, I'm looking for a pair of pants. A: Pants are over there.

Ms. R asks a female student to go to the door. Teacher asks as a model, "Where are you going?" She quickly indicates to the student at the door to repeat, "I'm going to the bathroom." (Classroom observation notes and videotape recordings).

In contrast, Damaris had no opportunities, during the observations, to practice text dialogues in Mr. Y's LCP-B. Most of her class work centered on learning individual vocabulary words and sentence patterns for the upcoming test. While Dora did follow the text dialogues in class, during the time I spent observing the LCP-A classes, Mr. O maintained control over all exercises. Dora did not practice the text dialogues as pair practice in her LCP-A class, nor did she, according to the observations, the following trimester in her LCP-B class with Ms. N. Both Mr. O and Ms. N paid particular attention to precise, prescribed pronunciation and intonation elements while modeling the dialogues. Mr. O always responded as if he were one of the partners in the dialogues, choosing students to respond or take the other dialogue part at random.

Mr. O reviewed and modeled all text conversation. Dora is reading in unison with the class after his modeling line by line (Classroom observation notes).

As a variation of the dialogue activity, Mr. O appointed a student to read the first line of a dialogue orally, followed by each student in the row taking the next line in turn through the entire dialogue, repeating a particular "conversation" as an unending loop around the classroom. The effect was to decontextualize and break the intended dialogic nature of the practice. On the other hand, Dora rarely heard Ms. N model a complete practice sentence or dialogue in its entirety with normal intonation.

In Dora's LCP-B class, Ms. N's dialogue modeling usually reduced utterances into phrases or discrete elements that she never presented in complete and normal conversational style. She interjected information or remarks that did not appear in the text. The dashes in the following excerpt from the classroom observation notes faithfully represent the typical, fragmented style of dialogue modeling Dora heard as her teacher presented a sentence, with variations, from text dialogues. The following example, about

parts of a house or apartment, included the patterned sentence: "Is there a/an (architectural element or appliance) in the (name of a room)?"

Ms. N: Number 2! Is there ---- a /eɪ/ fireplace --- in the livingroom? No, This is Miami. We don't need fireplaces! [Female student asks where that is in the book!] Yes --- there is --- there's a /eɪ/ ---- very nice ---- fireplace --- in the living room. Is there a /eɪ/ stove --- in the kitchen, not chicken! Oh, yes, there is --- a very nice stove ---- in the kitchen. Is there --- a /eɪ/ closet --- in the bedroom?

Ms. N's asides were not completely out of place because the text introduced new vocabulary within the dialogue contexts. Learners came to rely on the teacher for pronunciation of the any new items and for oral definitions during the initial presentation of a text dialogue.

Explaining, discussing, and contextualizing

The participants listened as their teachers defined new vocabulary, drew representations on the board, and personalized meanings where necessary. In all cases the teachers functioned as human dictionaries. Angelica and Marina enjoyed the demonstrative manner that Ms. R. used in clarifying definitions:

Ms. R: The "s" on "jeans" indicates the plural nature of the article of clothing, but there is no "s" when the word is used as an adjective in the phrase, "jeans jacket" because "it describes the material of the jacket. ...Shoes can mean any style, but we are talking in general." "Pajamas," just like in Spanish." Elsewhere she writes on the board: "Leather." Ms. R, pointing to her shoes: It's a material that comes from animals. Your shoes might be leather (Classroom observation notes).

For Damaris' class, Mr Y also put vocabulary into context, but the choice of lexical items did not have any apparent connection to one another. His attempts at defining new items were often very brief, and student responses indicated that they needed more in order to capture the meaning of his explanations. Damaris copied everything he wrote on the board into her notebook. I have cited examples from Mr. Y's

vocabulary lessons, with samples from Damaris' notebook later in this chapter where I address the use of *EDL Vocabulary* and preparation for testing.

Sometimes during the observations learners did not receive clear and comprehensible input (Krashen 1981) because a teacher might appear rushed, not wishing to spare the time on a question about vocabulary. At other times, the participants were inundated with either excessive or illogical information that left them bewildered. For example, as a visual aid, Angelica received an unclear photocopy of a page from a picture dictionary for Ms. T's discussion of a department store directory. Angelica reported that she had a difficult time interpreting both the handout and Ms. T's explanations. Angelica listened as the teacher presented a detailed explanation of the word "elevator," an element in the handout. Ms. T's definition of "elevator" progressed in tangents, one of which led her to describe the British use of the word, "lift" as a synonym for the American "elevator." Ms. T also explained that Thomas Jefferson was the inventor of the dumbwaiter for his Monticello home. Angelica and Damaris experienced language learning as a matter of filling a void in the learners' minds with disconnected bits of vocabulary and tangentially-related trivia. Interestingly, Angelica, Dora, and Marina never asked questions of their teachers during class observations. Damaris did so on occasion to extend the knowledge she already had.

Inquiry and speaking

Inquiry is one way that learners make sense of the world. The notion of questioning and its relationship to extending an individual's understanding applies both to children and to adults. Lindfors (1999) underscores the role of inquiry as she explains, "By questioning, a child is able to initiate and actively search for what he wants to know

in order to continue building and revising a theory of the world" (p. 264). In the context of the study, an inquiry utterance usually involved dependence on another, teacher or classmate, related to understanding the lesson, materials covered, or the task at hand. During the observations, I began to notice three general characteristics emerge regarding the participants' oral participation in the classrooms: (a) silent or "silenced" learners; (b) few learner questions directed to the teacher; and (c) frequent and routine choral repetition of text dialogues. The data provided few examples of the women's inquiry in their classrooms.

O'Malley & Chamot (1990) list two social/affective learning strategies that apply directly to inquiry acts: (a) "cooperation, working w/ peers to solve a problem, pool info, check notes, or get feedback on a learning activity," and (b) "questioning for clarification, or eliciting from a teacher or peer additional explanation, rephrasing, or examples" (p. 44). Although Angelica, Dora, and Marina did not direct any questions to their teachers, Mr. O pointed to the value of questioning the teacher, saying at one time to Dora's class, "You have to learn to listen. If you don't understand the question, you have to ask" (Classroom observation notes). In contrast to such a directive, Dora, Angelica, and Marina reserved their inquiry events for classmates (Losey 1995).

The data revealed no questions directed openly to teachers. All but Dora often inquired of each other. In contrast to the other three women, Damaris occasionally questioned Ms. F about grammar rules and vocabulary meaning; however, analysis of the infrequent questions to a teacher in the data revealed a pattern. Teachers: (a) attended to students' questions; (b) dismissed them; (c) ignored them; or (d) postponed them.

Ms. R and Ms. F were the most open and accommodating to student questions and Angelica, Marina, and Damaris benefitted from the dialogic teaching styles that were supportive of discourse and inquiry in their LCP-A classrooms. The opportunities to question in Ms. R's class were evident, but Angelica and Marina did not reach out to the teacher. Ms. F often circulated among pairs and small groups answering individual questions as she coached learning tasks. Once, during Dora's class, Mr. O supported a learner's question in the following example and offered an alternative answer:

A female Portuguese speaker asks about the apparent redundancy of the grammar construction "I am going to go to the store." Mr. O explains that, while the repetition of "go," is redundant it is acceptable. A variation, he says is, "I am going to the store. He points out that the case only holds with the verb "go" (Classroom observation notes).

In the observed experiences of Damaris and Angelica in their LCP-B classes respectively, Mr. Y and Ms. T seemed not to hear student questions and did not attend to them. In the excerpt below, Mr. Y had difficulty understanding the question that many students were struggling with as he presented *EDL Vocabulary* (discussed later in this chapter). He had drawn the form of a ship on the board, then added the figure of a person standing in the deck at the bow end of the vessel. He was explaining the word, "deck" that led to a confusing exchange:

Damaris (to Mr. Y): Ship es *proa*? [bow] Teacher, don't understand (sic)
(Teacher, I don't understand.)

Mr. Y: The floor of the ship.

Male student: ¿*La proa de barco*? (The bow of the ship?)

Others have problems comprehending. The male student keeps asking if the deck is the cover. Mr. Y asks if he means "the roof." The male student asks if it's only outside. Finally Mr. Y continues on to the next vocabulary item without resolving the confusion. Students are still asking each other attempting to make sense of the meaning of "deck" (Videotape recording).

Ms. N frequently postponed answering student questions or dismissed them completely. During one class, one of Dora's classmates asked a question about writing a series of destinations to answer a text question. Ms. N replied, "Not now, *después, después.*" (after, after). She continued at the board without answering the student's question, never returning to it. Another student wrote, "He's going at school." on the board. Ms. N corrected by erasing the student's "at" writing "to" in its place. When the student asked why not put a "the" before "school," Ms. N explained that it was an exception "for now." She did not take time to explain the difference between "to school" and "to the school." When a student remarked that she was confused, Ms. N conceded that the grammar point was confusing. As consolation, she offered, "I know it's a little confusing, but don't worry about it" (Classroom observation notes).

Ms. N frequently told students that their questions about grammar were not appropriate for Level I (LCP-B) and that they would learn the answer in a higher level. Her refusal to answer students' questions contradicted idealistic research opinion that says "effective ESL practitioners adapt instruction not only for literacy levels and learning styles, but also for individual learning goals..." (Seufert 1999, p.4). Dora and her classmates could not cross the curriculum line of what they should know in LCP-A ESOL. Ms. N would only entertain "Level 1 ESOL" specific inquiry while suppressing "advanced" questions. In her way, the teacher often silenced or dismissed inquiry at times that were apparently salient to student learning.

Dora copies the following sentence, which Ms. N has written on the board, for practice of negative verb construction:

"9. I _____ cook very well, but I dance beautifully."

It is possible to write "do" in the blank. A student offers that option, inferring an emphatic meaning in the sentence. Ms. N does not recognize the ambiguity,

crosses out the student's writing, and to the class dismisses it as ungrammatical English.

Ms. N: This is Level 1! She then explains that "but" always takes the opposite, affirmative/negative "99% of the time."

At another time, in a grammar lesson about the auxiliary use of "do," Ms. N wrote, "What does Dan do?" She pointed to the verb "do," the last word in the interrogative form of the sentence.

Ms. N: Same verb as the auxiliary "do." Same verb.

A student asks about "do" in the sentence "How are you doing?"

Student: Is it the same?

Ms. N: Completely different. (She turns to me) I can explain, but not in Level 1.

Marina did not ask questions, but would frequently nod and say, "*O, sí.*" to herself as her teacher explained elements of a lesson. Inquiry for Marina took place in intimate exchanges with her classmates. She seemed to rely on one particular female classmate, Julia, as her "knowledgeable other" (Vygotsky 1978). She frequently conveyed her questions in both oral utterance and gesture. In a dialogue practice with Julia, Marina came across a new word, "leather."

Marina: May I help you?

Julia: I am looking for a white, eh, leather jacket.

(Marina indicates with her facial expression that she did not understand.)

Julia: Leather is *cuero*.

(Marina nods to indicate comprehension.)

Marina: Leather jacket is over there. (Classroom observation notes)

During the same lesson the small group that included Marina and Julia asked me the English word for the checked or checkered fabric pattern as they pointed to one

student's jacket. To explain, I pointed out to the group that the pattern is like the tablecloth in an Italian restaurant and they all agreed. I offered the origin of the pattern name from the board game, checkers [Sp. *damas*]. Marina showed her pleasure at using the new word, "checkered," as she described the jacket. Then, continuing her inquiry to extend her knowledge, Marina turned and asked me what English speakers call "*aljedrez*," a game that also uses a checkered board. I replied, "Chess." Smiling broadly, she repeated "chess" several times to herself and wrote it in her notebook.

Damaris needed clarification of the difference between "scratch" and "scrape" in the lesson related to health and nutrition. Her style, distinct among the four women, was to turn immediately to her teacher, Ms. F. for information. Damaris sought Ms. F's attention. When the teacher came to her aid I recorded the following exchange:

Damaris: What is scratch and scrape?

Teacher demonstrated by scratching her fingers across her own hand.

Ms. F: They're the same thing.

Damaris: Not different?

Ms. F: No same thing. (Classroom observation notes)

Ms. F. then turned back to the class leaving Damaris with a quizzical look on her face. Feeling that the distinction of terminology between the two superficial wounds would indeed be important to a physician, I could not resist writing a note to Damaris with illustrations to demonstrate the difference. Damaris responded with a wide smile and a knowing nod, noted my definition in her notebook, and went back to watching the actions of the teacher.

Damaris engaged in bilingual sense-making on one occasion where it appeared she was trying to make sense of the English use of two semantically related infinitives,

"to make" and "to do" and the existential "to be." Idiomatic phrasal verbs

notwithstanding, she was determined to get a concrete answer from the teacher about the correct application of each verb. In the following excerpt from the observation notes, I observed Damaris engaged in sense-making.

Damaris calls Ms. F over to question her about *hacer* and *estar* in the context of *hice* high school (I did high school) or *estuve* en high school (I was in high school). Damaris is not sure which is the meaning shown in the text. There is interference with Spanish, I think, because translation of these separate idiomatic forms in Spanish blur the meaning in English. Damaris explains the rule in Spanish to the teacher. (Classroom observation notes).

Damaris and two classmates worked together through translating concepts back and forth between English and Spanish. Belkis asked Damaris about her understanding and Ana offered clarification. A short time later, Damaris called Ms. F. back to the table for another and this time she challenged the teacher with her own version of a rule.

Ms. F explains the rule that applies to *verbs* and Damaris replies, "Noooo!" and circles the word "nouns" with her pencil. The teacher concedes when Damaris does find the rule in her previous notebook. She orally reviews the rule of third person "-s" endings she has written in Spanish in her notebook, evidence that Damaris works very systematically with rules that she explicitly writes out in her own words. Ms. F accepts her explanation (Classroom observation notes).

While Marina and Damaris, by talking to classmates or their teachers, were vocally active in constructing meaning around what they were learning, Angelica and Dora generally remained quiet during class and rarely spoke. Angelica frequently consulted her dictionary and took notes. Dora constantly consulted her notes and textbook, but spoke to no one during class. Although I came to accept that Angelica preferred to remain quiet and aloof, I felt that Dora's silence was a self-protective and face-saving response to a feeling of oppression in her classrooms. In her first trimester, Mr. O had demanded perfection in learners' oral responses on the first try. Ms. N, Dora's second teacher, also demanded perfection and had an intimidating daily routine of calling

on students cold without preparation, asking them to stand to recite, and correcting errors publicly as the student stood in the midst of her seated peers. In reference to Dora's stated reluctance and lack of confidence in speaking English in our interviews, I began to see that the feeling of intimidation might be a possible reason for her taciturn attitude in class. The following exchange illustrates a type of intimidating discourse that Dora experienced.

Ms. N: Who's finished?

Dora raises her hand without looking up from her book. The teacher begins to call on individuals to answer questions.

Ms. N: There's a /eɪ/ park across from the house. (She has the students repeat "There's /eɪ/ " several times.)

Ms. N: Please repeat.

Dora repeats.

Ms. N: The museum is, (.5) next to the park.

Ms. N calls on people at random to answer the questions. Dora gets called for #8.

Dora: Nancy likes the neighborhood. (She has trouble pronouncing "neighborhood.")

Teacher repeats the word. Dora repeats quickly. Ms. N then points out the 's' ending of the verb, a detail unrelated to the lesson at hand.

Ms. N: You must pronounce the "s." (Classroom observation notes & videotape).

Dora keeps her eyes on her book.

Often observations of the women's gestures provided external glimpses of their sense-making and attempts to internalize grammar rules and vocabulary. The women spoke to themselves. Silent lip movement and repeating vocabulary or grammar rules quietly to herself are types of cognitive strategies that O'Malley & Chamot (1990) describe as repetition or rehearsal of rules. Such silent articulation may also be a quiet

way of summarizing or synthesizing what she has heard to ensure that the information has been retained (p. 44). Dora, who did not have the opportunity to work with others, continuously moved her lips silently in reading or repeating text to herself as in the following excerpts from the classroom observation notes.

Dora moves her lips silently reading.

Dora mouths words silently as T reads, "My apartment has two bedrooms."

Dora writes in her textbook and quietly mouths the words to herself.

Other participants also moved their lips in response to new input or to make sense of content. Marina practiced vocabulary words quietly to herself as the teacher presented clothing vocabulary.

Marina repeats the vocabulary words to herself as T continues her explanation. Ms. R: "Pajamas, just like in Spanish." Marina nods and says to herself, "/piy ßa' m\/" (Classroom observation notes).

Damaris quietly recited the complete rule of regular past tense verb endings. Her expressive facial movements seemed to present a constant and fascinating silent dialogue - questioning, approving, or showing open frustration - during the teacher's explanations, silent reading, and test taking. In her elaborate clinical style described in previous sections, Damaris' lip movements often indicated that she was silently or in a whisper repeating entire grammar rules to herself.

Moving her lips in a quiet whisper, Damaris reviews the rule of third person "-s" verb endings. Afterwards she checks her notebook. (Videotape recording).

The labor of their learning found outward expression in the women's body language. As a class session ended I often watched as the learners dropped their shoulders or placed their hands on their desks, usually with a sigh of apparent relief from

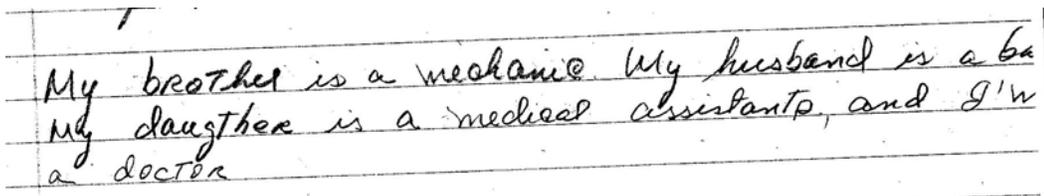
the tension of a lesson. All four learners demonstrated such gestures, but Damaris and Marina were usually the most dramatic.

Class ends at the sound of the bell. Damaris lets out a sigh, drops her shoulders, and smiles broadly

When Angelica completes the four descriptions in the exercise, she lets out an audible sigh and shakes her head in relief. It appears to have been a chore to complete the exercise (Classroom observation notes).

Teacher questions

The general rule in most classrooms I observed was: The teacher asks a lot of questions and students are expected to respond. With a fill-in-the-blank approach to instruction, teachers asked questions that required one-word or short-phrase answers in the typical patterned classroom exchange: teacher initiates; student responds; and teacher evaluates the response by saying "Good!" or "Excellent!" (Mehan 1979). Most all question forms noted in the observations were evaluative, occurring in the usual classroom style "Initiation/Response/Evaluation" (IRE) pattern. There was little evidence of questions of a substantive nature that might have engaged the learners' interests. In the writing samples, only one piece of personalized learning could be identified. In Figure 5-18, Damaris wrote a response to a question about her family members' occupations. (Note: At the far right in the sample, the end of the word "barber" had been cut.)



My brother is a mechanic. My husband is a barber. My daughter is a medical assistant, and I'm a doctor.

Figure 5-18 Writing from personal experience

Questions from teachers were common in classroom discourse. Questions to test preconceived answers, a common form of "teacher talk," (Lindfors 1987) occur when the

teacher asks students for an answer that is already known to the teacher. In the classes I observed, teachers also asked questions as the means to control classroom talk or to direct distracted individuals to the lesson task at hand. At times, such questions were actually assessment events when teachers asked explicitly for definitions or explanations of vocabulary items. In one case, Angelica watched as Ms. T, attempting to review question/answer patterns, engaged a student who resisted the contextual falsity as he chose a more truthful response.

Ms. T: Are you British? The answer is, "Yes, you are." (She writes the question and answer on the board as "Are you British?" "Yes, I am." She demonstrates the dialogue herself.)

Ms. T (to male student): César, are you British?

César: No, I am not.

Ms. T tells him to answer in the affirmative, but he reminds her that he is not British. He resists and substitutes,

C: No, I am not British. I am Venezuelan (Classroom observation notes).

Two of the teachers asked questions that sometimes confused students. In the following, Ms. N attempted to set the scene for a discussion of prepositions. Oddly, she answers her own question before explaining the use for prepositions.

Ms. N: What are you practicing? You are practicing prepositions. It tells you what place you are in the neighborhood.

As seen in the examples below, Dora heard teacher questions that were inherently problematic on different linguistic levels.

Ms. N: Am I asking you a question right now?

Male student (looking dazed): Yes she is, uh, yes you are.

Ms. N to another student: Are the words "post office" very small? Are, are, plural? Are the words "post office" very small?

Female student: Yes they are.

Ms. N: [very high pitched voice] Yes, very small. *Son letricas!* (They are little letters!)

Ms. N: Do I like my class?

Female student: Yes, I, you do.

Ms. N: Yes you do.

None of the above questions would logically take place in a natural, conversational setting between adults. Furthermore, the third example above was semantically confusing because of the change in the pronoun reference. More importantly, the question is inherently illogical on the psycholinguistic level since the student, in truth, could not be expected to answer such a query without possessing clairvoyant powers.

Angelica noted explanations that commonly became disconnected from the lesson content. Ms. T, on several occasions, digressed into lectures of vocabulary description or definition.

Ms. T departs from lesson as she explains the context possible in one of the worksheet examples. She says that she might be lost. Then she mentions that there is a famous mental hospital in NYC called "Bellevue." She states that people on the street might think she is crazy (Classroom observation notes).

Angelica could not focus on the principal topic, but rather attended to tangents of vaguely related information about the vocabulary that she was attempting to learn. She voiced her frustration to me, but remained silent in class.

Observed Aspects of Adult ESOL Teaching and Learning

"English-Only" and classroom policy on translation

In contrast with the recognized theoretical value of translation or evidence of meaning construction as in Angelica's "signs" as a learning strategy (see Fig. 5-10), some teachers exhorted the learners to exclude Spanish and rely completely on English.

Although Dora could not understand much spoken English yet, Mr. O and Ms. N told her

to think in English only by "erasing the Spanish blackboard" in her mind.. Ironically, Ms. N was the one teacher who routinely used Spanish in her teaching. Ms. N, as an authoritative figure in her learners' lives, commanded them in her statement to negate a portion of their existence and knowledge of the world. As if such erasure were possible, the teacher's words show a profound theoretical assimilation belief that learners must deny their identities, their linguistic foundations, and their cultural schemata in order to learn the new language. Although she was speaking to Dora's class, Ms. N's belief statement that translation was to be discouraged, further examined, would run counter to the investment goals of both Marina and Angelica, discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Both women viewed English as a means of acquiring the social and cultural capital of true bilingualism/biculturalism (Espín 1999, Norton-Peirce 2001). They wished to move across cultural and linguistic borders while maintaining their Cuban/Spanish speaking identities.

Mr. O shared his own anti-translation belief several times during Dora's LCP-A class. He resisted using Spanish during class and encouraged an "English only" rule. As Dora looked on, her husband, Raúl, asked a question about an idiomatic expression, Mr. O took almost ten minutes to argue against the use of translation as a learning strategy.

Raúl: Teacher, is it "make an appointment" or "do an appointment" because I use my hands? (Classroom observation notes).

As he spoke, Raúl gestured dialing a phone with his finger in the air. His hand movement, contrary to the teacher's interpretation, indicated that Raúl was not relying on translation. He was attempting to apply the common instructional generalization that the verb "make" is used when using one's hands to accomplish or construct something. "Do" is the verb that describes general action or performance. Mr. O did not answer Raúl's

question, but reminded him that there is no direct translation and then made several unrelated examples.

Mr. O: In Spanish: "*tomar una decisión*" translates exactly as "take a decision" but we don't say that in English. *¿Qué edad tiene?* = What age do you have? But we never say that in English.

Mr. O continued lecturing and cited examples of false English/Spanish cognates to support his argument against translation. I noted that false cognates seemed to be a favorite topic because Mr. O had spoken about them during other occasions. He reviewed pairs of false cognates such as *constipado* [congested] vs. constipated and *embarasada* [pregnant] vs. embarrassed. He pointed out how funny it would be if a man went to the doctor and said he was *embarasado*. Some people laughed. Mr. O definitively concluded with the statement,

Mr. O: "You understand the problem with translation? No translation!"
(Classroom observation notes).

Activity consensus

Activity consensus in ESOL lesson planning refers to the recommended progress in task responsibility from the largest number of students to a pair or individual. Levels of consensus, in the practice of ESOL instruction, prescribe a suggested progression of learner involvement and responsibility through learning tasks in reading, writing, and speaking. In an inverted triangle model (Fig. 5-18), the teacher introduces a lesson to the entire class, a high consensus activity. As the lesson progresses, the students break into smaller cooperative groups or pairs. Finally, individual students respond or present their work individually or in pairs, a low consensus activity.

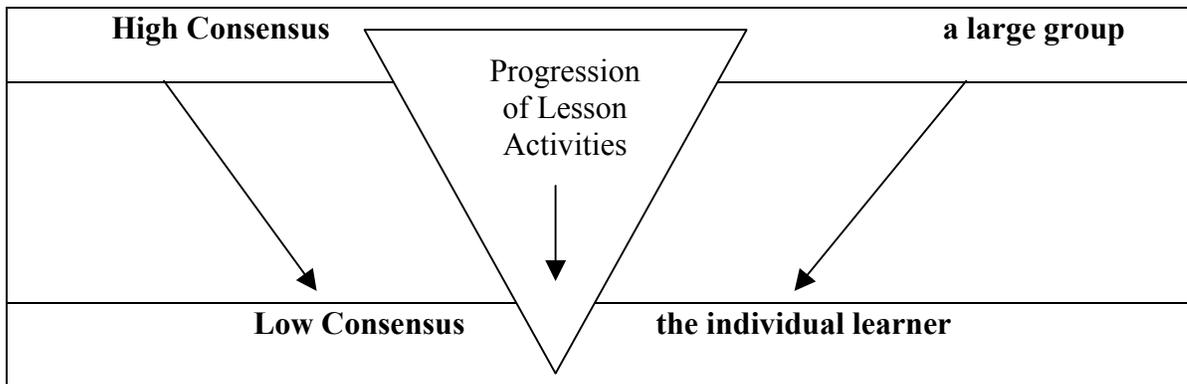


Figure 5-18 Activity consensus model

High consensus distributes the responsibilities for learning among a large number of learners. Low consensus places the responsibility on the least number needed to complete a task. The effect is to build learner knowledge and confidence while lowering the affective pressures of the learning.

Ideally, a lesson plan begins with initially high consensus activities that lead ultimately, through the course of instruction, to low-consensus, individual production and assessment. Much of the study data revealed dependence on high consensus activities such as choral repetition, entire class discussion, and lecture in all classes. Students did not progress gradually from high to low consensus activities or individualized production. In some classrooms where cooperative activities were few, the activities progressed immediately to low consensus, individual oral answers or responses.

An extreme case of low consensus work was played out in a daily routine in Dora's LCP-B class. Although Ms. N also conducted choral repetition of dialogues, low consensus questioning and individual response for review and evaluation of oral production occurred during large blocks of class time. She discouraged collaboration.

Ms. N begins calling on pairs of individuals, making them stand, and feeding one information with which she/he is to form questions to ask the other standing person.

If a student cannot produce the question or the other cannot answer, Ms. N asks the person to sit and requests another to stand. She cautions other students not to help their "friend" with the answer (Classroom observation notes and videotape recordings).

Ms. N called on individual students to stand up at their seats and wait until she asked them a question or proposed a conversational discourse with another student. As if to avoid eye contact, Dora kept her head down and seemed to focus on her book or notebook. If called on she would have to respond or act out Ms. N's dialogue content and directives without rehearsal such as in the following:

Ms. N: Myra, please stand up.

Myra stands up. Teacher introduces the word, "learn."

Ms. N: Please tell me the verb in the progressive.

Myra conjugates: I am learning. You are learning. He is learning... (Classroom observation notes).

In another instance, Ms. N required a pair of students, Monica and Cristina, to form a dialogue based on the following directive:

Ms. N: Monica, ask Cristina if her husband is working today. (Classroom observation notes).

The frequent pauses and silence of the LCP-B respondents demonstrated the complexity of converting the grammar structures from Ms. N's "reported or embedded speech" proposal to a direct utterance in normal conversational style. The complex task required Monica to decode Ms. N's original embedded sentence, change order of syntax, and choose the appropriate pronouns thus yielding the following response:

Monica: Is your husband working today? (Classroom observation notes).

Christina, in turn, had to decode Ms. N's directive, listen to Monica's new question, and respond grammatically, "Yes, he is." Or "No, he isn't." Such embedded, complex sentence structure is usually presented in more advanced levels of ESOL.

Cooperative learning opportunities

I define cooperative/collaborative work in the context of the study as an opportunity for two or more students to interact for the purpose of accomplishing a learning task. Cooperative learning, a mainstay among ESOL teaching strategies, gives learners an opportunity to manipulate, produce, and rehearse language skills and oral production. Learners who work together benefit from each other's knowledge by talking about and questioning content relative to a lesson. They receive feedback from one another. Learners have more occasions to practice language skills and can take charge of their learning in peer groupings. The interactions may occur formally as part of a teacher's lesson plan or informally as learners share information or inquiry on their own. It is a common and recommended teaching strategy in adult ESOL wherein learners solve problems, create stories, and share information through language experience. Furthermore, research has shown that cooperative learning techniques are superior to teacher-centered teaching because researchers claim that motivation to learn is increased and learning energized (Dörnyei 1997; Sharan & Shaulov 1990).

Angelica, Marina, and Damaris, in their LPC-A classrooms, seemed to enjoy cooperative learning events; however, the formulaic nature of their class work, as described in previous sections, left little space for authentic, collaborative projects. The women generally sat with the same classmate or groups of classmates. Only Dora did not engage in cooperative learning opportunities. In the classes I observed, cooperative

learning lacked the creative, problem-solving element. In the teacher-centered, test-driven classrooms, the learners were not required to solve problems or produce original work, but rather they completed worksheets, text exercises, and test reviews together. They routinely practiced repeating dialogues, substituting vocabulary words provided in the textbook to modify the dialogues.

Angelica and Marina, though classmates, did not work with each other, but did share learning activities with others. Ms. R frequently gave students in her class time to work on textbook or workbook assignments together. In her classes, Angelica and Marina completed vocabulary exercises, practiced dialogues, and reviewed lesson content through collaboration with others. The following observation notes describe three separate times that Ms. R encouraged students to work together.

Ms. R has assigned students to work in the spelling and vocabulary book in pairs or small groups. Marina is talking with Julia.

Teacher instructs students to work in pairs to recite the dialogue and do the variations per the text. Female student moves her desk next to Angelica. They share Angelica's dictionary.

Ms. R says, "Do the conversations with another person. I'll let you do it in pairs." Angelica and Carmen begin to do the pair practice. Marina and Julia start to work together (Classroom observation notes).

During one observation Ms. R asked the class to form groups of five or six in order to write descriptions of classmates each student had chosen by drawing names from a hat. For example, in learning about clothing and personal descriptions, Mr. R's students did the following:

Ms. R directs students to form groups of six.

Ms. R: Take out a little piece of paper. Little, little. (She goes on to show a small scrap of paper.) Put your first name on the paper. (Students write as instructed.) Little piece! She repeats. Now fold the little paper. (She shows everyone to collect

the six papers in one group and then allow each person to select one of the folded slips.)

Ms. R: OK, the person you have, you are going to describe what the person is wearing. Keep it secret, don't share who you have! (Classroom observation notes).

Although done individually, each learner had to describe another person in the classroom, Ms. R gave the class sufficient time to write and rehearse their individual descriptions in cooperation with others. Marina and her classmate, Julia worked together within their larger group of six.

Learners helped each other remember vocabulary words, grammar, and pronunciation necessary to accomplish their tasks. In Damaris' class, students brainstormed the list of body ailments and remedies with the entire class before she divided the class into teams to play "games" at the board. Ms. F often set aside blocks of time for students to work in pairs or small groups. Damaris enjoyed working with Belkis, another Cuban woman as they completed exercises from the grammar book. Ms. F also allowed for time for the students to discuss and complete dialogue and grammar exercises together as they were seated at tables. On one occasion, Ms. F played a vocabulary review game by dividing the class in two parts. The pair of team representatives that she called to the board were to write the part of the body indicated by the teacher, an ailment associated with that body part, and an appropriate remedy.

Ms. F points to her ear. Both students write "ear, earache, and ear drops." Teams from both sides call out the correct spellings. Teams receive one point for each correctly spelled element - body part, ailment, and remedy. Some students are writing at their seats.

Ms. F: No writing for now. You are to help your partners at the board.

Both sides got three points and passed the markers to two more players. Damaris is looking at the board and writes down what the students at the board write.

Teacher points to her leg, and play continues. Damaris tells her teammate at the board to write "L, E, G." Then she says, "Broke leg." Others help and shout spelling to the players who have trouble with this one. ... Two more students go to the board and the teacher points to her nose. Damaris shouts to her team mate, "Ehpray nasal!" (Classroom observation notes).

The following trimester, Damaris seemed to be on her own in Mr. Y's class because there were few planned cooperative learning opportunities. The students did not sit in pairs. The class read silently and answered comprehension questions individually. Dora, likewise, did not have the opportunity to work with other students because her two instructors, Mr. O and Ms. N., taught their large classes using a teacher-centered approach. In her classroom situations all interactions were initiated by the teacher and took place between learner and teacher. Although I spent the most time observing Dora (she attended both trimesters without interruption), I never observed an opportunity for Dora or her classmates to share personally in the learning process with other students. She spent her class time in silence, mouthing words, repeating teacher dialogue modeling, writing in her text or notebook, and observing the actions of those around her. Mr. O, in the following manner, routinely called for silence as the students completed writing assignments.

Mr. O: I don't understand the conversation! No conversation! (Classroom observation notes and videotape excerpt).

Total Physical Response

TESOL expert, James Asher (1977) introduced a popular teaching strategy, Total Physical Response (TPR), as a holistic method of teaching, learning, and assessing in ESOL and foreign language learning. The technique is so prevalent in ESOL teaching and learning practice, especially in the lower levels of instruction, that the paucity of TPR use in the participants' observed classroom experiences was problematic for me. In TPR,

the teacher calls out a number of imperatives such as, "Stand up.; Sit down.; Touch your nose." or other commands appropriate to the lesson at hand. Learners indicate comprehension by doing the task of the command. It is usually done as an exercise with a group and is not intended as an individual task. Ideally, as TPR becomes part of a classroom routine, the learners themselves may become "callers" during such activities. The technique is especially effective in the beginning levels of language learning when students experience what has been termed, "the silent period" (Krashen 1982). During the silent period, a learner may resist or have difficulty producing speech in the target language, but can often comprehend when spoken to. The data show only one instance where a teacher used a limited form of TPR. Mr. O, checking for comprehension, called on individuals to identify vocabulary items by pointing to parts of their bodies he announced.

Mr. O: Please touch your neck. Female student does as instructed.

Mr. O: Dora, show me your right leg.

Dora points to her left leg. He corrects her. Dora nods and touches her right leg. He continues with other individual students.

Mr. O: Please touch your left shoulder. Please touch your front teeth.(Classroom observation notes).

Error correction

Styles of correcting oral errors varied with the teaching style. Observations during the study showed that precision or oral production was a priority with some teachers, but not with others. Evidence of learning in the participants' classroom experience consisted of answering questions according to the pattern of grammar and vocabulary drills. They learned habits of the standardized testing culture. Practice and mastery of prescriptive habits of usage and memorization of vocabulary items comprised the majority of their

work. The women repeatedly demonstrated their proficiency at test taking; however, over the course of the study, they did not acquire the skills, confidence, and competence of producing spontaneous English speech.

If language learning was about answering questions on tests in order to pass on to a higher ESOL level, then students needed repeated correction. Among the teachers in the study, Mr. O and Ms. N, who preferred grammatical prescription, demonstrated the most frequent oral language correction events. Both teachers demanded that Dora and her classmates produce near perfect pronunciation and syntactic form on the first attempt. The opposite case was Ms. R, who in her relaxed manner, did very little oral language correction. She offered Angelica and Marina a coaching approach to errors wherein she modeled the correct response and often paraphrased the same sentence for reinforced comprehension. Ms. F often did the same, usually in the context of sentences, a style that Damaris said she preferred. Mr. Y and Ms. T did not appear to correct oral language, but rather spent most of the time talking as the students sat quietly conferring among themselves.

Dora learned the importance of precise pronunciation and it was a source of anxiety for her. She resisted speaking in English because she could not pronounce it correctly. Both of her teachers emphatically presented an idealized form of American English as the model of "correct" speech. As an English language learner himself, Mr. O demonstrated a respect for book forms of the language while he actively dismissed dialect variations as inferior styles to be avoided. He had a particular disdain for reducing the intervocalic "t" in words such as, "letter" and "butter" to the alveolar tap

more typically heard in American English. The data report several examples such as the following:

Hearing some students pronounce "What are you...." as /wʌ' D\ y\ / Mr. O insists that the students pronounce the letter "t" as /t/ instead of the alveolar tap /D/. He models and the students repeat, /wʌ't ar yiu/ (Classroom observation notes).

Ms. N also frequently resorted to hypercorrection of detailed distinctive features.

Most of the data examples show that Ms. N focused on the morphemic and phonemic levels of speech, often out of context of the task at hand. The impromptu "focus on form" digressions departed from the task at hand and confused Dora as she worked through the lessons alone. An extreme example of hypercorrection can be seen in the following dialogue excerpt about reporting emergencies to the 911 dispatcher.

Ms. N: This is a typical mistake that Americans make. It is easy to learn correctly. "My son is bleeding very badly." Not "bad," badly. Say it correctly.

Given the urgency of the context, the "correction" of adding the English adverbial morpheme, "ly" would not contribute to misinterpretation and would hardly be noticed in such a dire emergency. I noted that a few of the students chuckled at the grammar directive.

Ms. N attended to fragments of pronunciation as she often reminded learners of the correct way to say a particular word as in the following:

Ms. N: "What is Nancy's last name? Remember "nammmmmme"
/neym m m m m m m / not "nenngg" /ne / !"

Her attention to the phonological difference was not unfounded. Some Spanish speakers, and many Cubans in particular, through language transfer, typically substitute the velar nasal sound variation, /ŋ/, for a final English bilabial nasal, /m/.

Culture of Test Taking

One thing was certain: the learners proved that they could take tests. Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris were always studying for "the test." While they learned to fill in the blanks, and choose the correct multiple choice item, I did not observe their developing ability to produce original English language utterances outside the chunks and patterns they routinely repeated. All the test taking was paper based; valued language for "the test" was written. Oral language learning, much more difficult to measure in such large class settings, was largely ignored in testing. As observed, the four women did not practice authentic oral English because speaking was secondary to what could be assessed on checklists and *Scantron* answer sheets.

Teachers taught test-taking strategies, test vocabulary, test formatted exercises and multiple choice thinking in the limited time they had to cover the state-mandated competencies. As Ms. N states in the following quote, testing was an accepted part of classroom business.

Ms. N: My opinion about tests: They're necessary, but number one, you listen and speak and you learn (Classroom observation notes).

From the time a student enrolled, she took routine tests often made of decontextualized, fill-in-the-blanks, and lettered multiple-choice test items:

- Placement tests;
- Pre-tests;
- Unit tests;
- Final exams;
- Practice tests for the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE);
- Exit test: TABE.

Assessment is an important component in language learning. Progress and authentic use of language should be measured using a variety of methods, in a range of

contexts, to assess the processes as well as the products (Law & Eckes, 1995, p. 9). Yet, state legislated accountability and performance-based funding depend on the success of as many students as possible. Success in Adult ESOL in the women's classrooms was measured by completion of LCP points demonstrated by completed checklists and the results of multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank tests. Competence in oral production and listening comprehension was not stressed.

There are two ways to measure and judge course "completion"- competency checklists and test scores. Presently, school districts determine the instruments of LCP completion assessment, whether test scores or checklists, or a combination of both. (See [Appendix B](#)). Standardized tests - the Test of Adult Basic Education, Form L and E (TABE-L, TABE-E) (CTB/McGraw-Hill 1994),- were the instruments used in LCP-A and B. Foundations students were pre and post-tested using TABE-L. According to the school testing coordinator, the more challenging TABE-E was used in LCP-B, and as a post-test for Foundations students who had earned a score of 1.6 on their TABE-L pre-test. Curiously, many school districts in Florida depend on results of the TABE, an instrument normed to native speakers of English and not designed to measure the progress of ESOL students.

Finally, on several occasions, whole or partial class periods were dedicated to make-up sessions. For their assessment portfolios, students had to produce worksheets or assignments that they had not completed during previous lessons. During make-up times teaching was suspended.

Ms. R is calling out names from the box of folders in front of her as I enter for the observation. She tells me that it is "make-up" day, saying, "Teaching's over for today, John." [It is 9:15AM] ...Ms. R is continuing to call out names and the number distinction of the test(s) each student is missing from her/his file.

The work was evidence of completed LCP competencies that was to be filed in each student's portfolio. Students also had time to make up tests that they had missed because of absence. Frequently a student would take two or three tests in the same class meeting. Student time in class on make-up days depended on the amount of incomplete work. Those who had little work to complete or few tests to make up had only to stay a short time that particular day.

Multiple Choice Language

Unit tests, based on the textbook, were multiple choice. The learners used answer sheets to mark their choice of A,B,C,or D. or wrote short responses. Some of the teachers used *Scantron* bubble answer sheets that only required the students to fill in the bubble indicating her answer choice. The learning activities that Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris experienced were often explicitly tied to testing format and timing. As previously discussed, their reading, writing and speaking activities were simple, formulaic, and patterned question/response or dialogue based. Activities often took the form of test-taking skills training.

Ms. N: Open the book to page 126. Please read with me this little paragraph. Please repeat. (She reads the "paragraph" that is really instructions for the exercise. The students repeat after her in unison.)

Ms. N: You have exactly five minutes. Imagine it's a test. (Videotape recording).

During another observation, Ms. N composed multiple choice sentences as she wrote them on the board. The format was the same as noted in the writing section earlier in this chapter.

Ms. N draws rectangles and writes three words inside and the rest of what appears to be a multiple choice sentence... I ask her if this is a test format. She replies, "Of course!" (Classroom observation notes).

Elsewhere, during a lesson exercise, she reiterated the need for the students to learn the habits and rules of good test-taking

Ms. N: Please stop. Five minutes! It's important that you get used to work on time. Please stop! *¡No me escriban más!* (Don't write me more!) That is test-taking instructions, tests are important! (Classroom observation notes).

In the women's ESOL classrooms, it was obvious that tests were important, clearly the most important task in which the students and teachers were engaged. Test review, preparation, and answer sheet instructions consumed large chunks of instructional time. Teachers took time for the procedural tasks of testing.

Mr. Y passes out the answer sheets to a practice test. This is in preparation for the upcoming TABE. Students must fill out the answer sheets before the test giver arrives (Classroom observation notes).

Test forms necessitated the use of Scantron or other separate answer sheets. Answer sheets were often multiple use, containing columns of numbered lines that corresponded to the text units.

Mr. O. announces Test 11 and tells students to read the number eleven orally several times in unison.... He wants students to be sure that they write their answers in the correct column. (Classroom observation notes).

A short time later he continues preparing to give the test in the following:

Mr. O: OK We're ready for the test! Everything off your desks! ... Move your chairs. Get in lines. ...He writes on board: Nothing on your desks ! [He exaggerates the exclamation points.] Everything under your desks ! ...Mr. O: Let's read here again. I'm waiting. ...He writes on board: Do **not** write on my tests! Write **exclusively** on your answer sheets! T tells class to read above orally in unison. Mr. O: It is test number? Students: Eleven!

The unit tests, that teachers requested from the office, were either laminated or enclosed in plastic sleeves. Students could not write on the test forms.

Damaris told me that it is a practice test. She joked that it may be in English, but as she added, 'it might as well be in German for as much as I can understand' " (Research journal entry).

EDL Vocabulary and Testing

SLA researcher Steven Krashen (1981) explained in his "Input Hypothesis" that input must be comprehensible, in context, and should contain meaningful language. Cognitive and constructivist theories of lexical development (O'Malley, Chamot & Küpper 1989; Tanenhaus, Dell,& Carlson 1989) emphasize contextualized, meaning-embedded instruction; however, in some cases, teachers taught directly from commercial texts that were nothing more than alphabetical lists of English words. Damaris' LCP-B teacher, Mr. Y was the only teacher observed routinely using such a text called, *EDL Core Vocabulary* (Steck-Vaughn) during the observations. Mr. Y spent so much class time teaching *EDL Core Vocabulary*, and he considered the content to be of such importance that it bears separate mention here.

Daily, Damaris copied a list of twenty words written on the board accompanied by their corresponding International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) renderings. IPA is the usual style of representing pronunciation in linguistics and international language dictionaries. The activity consisted of the students copying the words and sentence context examples that Mr. Y composed. He often drew pictures to illustrate meanings. Mr. Y began by talking about each word in turn. He defined each word orally and gave examples. As can be seen in the following examples, some of his definitions were illogical or tautological. Some items depended heavily on contexts that he did not provide. He talked about the words in isolation without connection to the lesson or any other learning task. The students tried to ask questions as he continued at a fast pace. Written on the board was the following:

kangaroo (ká ɹu)

kiss (k ss)

knife (nayf)

known (nown)

Damaris noted the vocabulary items as shown in Figure 5-19:

-
- ② Kiss She kissed her son
- ③ Knife Use the knife to eat meat.
- ④ Knight The knight in shining armor jousted.
- ⑤ Known (PP of knew) IT is known that the sky is blue
- ⑥ Laid (past lay) The customer laid the receipt on the table
- ⑦ Lap The boy sat on his grandfather's lap.

Figure 5-19 Damaris copies EDL Vocabulary and context sentences

The following excerpts from the classroom observation notes are also documented on videotape.

Mr. Y: "Known" means that something is known. People know it. It's a fact "Know" means to know something, Like the sky is blue. Everybody knows it.

Mr. Y writes on board, "knight." "The knight in shining armor jousted." He reads it and tries to explain. Many students around me ask, "What is joust?" He asks if there are any other questions about knight, turns to the board, and goes on to the next word (Classroom observation notes & video recording).

As he continued, Mr. Y wrote, "The homeless man is lazy." Possibly in the interest of political correctness he edited his first example, but continued to support a stereotype. "Let's take out homeless man and put in vagabund (sic)." He continued at a frenetic pace:

Mr. Y: Let's do "less." The opposite of "more." "Less" means less. Like fewer. Any questions? Now let's do "lead," the past is led. He seems to be talking to himself. Students in back of me are still trying to work on "law." Mr. Y: Any

questions? No? Let's do "lie." He writes: "The children lie to each other for fun." (Classroom observation notes & video recording).

Damaris did not have the opportunity to use any of the *EDL Core Vocabulary* items in her own way during class. Students did not discuss the items as they followed Mr. Y's board notations.

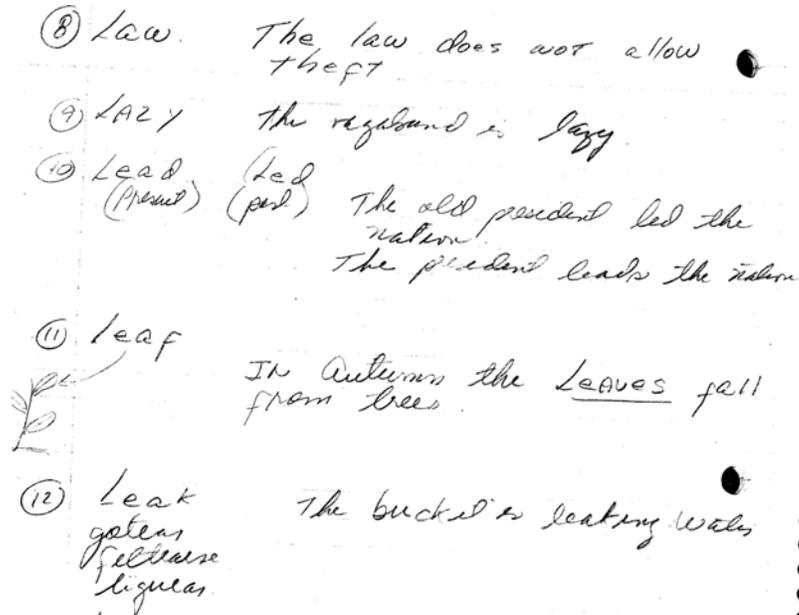


Figure 5-20 Excerpt of vocabulary Damaris copied from the board

Figure 5-20 shows how Damaris faithfully copied, with syntactic notes for "lead," and a drawing of "leaf," and translation of "leak" listing three Spanish synonyms. Everything in her notebook excerpt appears as Mr. Y wrote it on the board:

I asked Mr. Y about the origin of the alphabetical lists he wrote on the board and why the items were all out of context. Mr. Y showed me the list of materials that he was required to use, which included *EDL Core Vocabulary*. Not being familiar with *EDL Core Vocabulary*, I spoke with the ESOL department head about it. She said EDL stands for "English Developmental Laboratory." They are alphabetical lists of vocabulary words used on standardized tests such as the TABE, TOEFL, SAT, etc. ETS draws on

the vocabulary lists for developing its standardized tests and the students must be familiar with the words.

According to the administration, all ESOL planning at the school was to include vocabulary prescribed by the appropriate level of *EDL Core Vocabulary*. The department head explained that the teachers had received instructions and training to use the lists effectively. I learned that all teachers were required to teach the content of the level-appropriate, master vocabulary lists of which the text was comprised, but they had the option of how they would accommodate the content in their lesson planning. The department head reported that one of the teachers had developed activities and games to use in the classes when teaching from the *EDL Vocabulary* lists. In sum, the purpose for teaching the content of *EDL Core Vocabulary* was correlated directly to the standardized testing instruments that the school administration used for placement and promotion.

Successful Testing: The Goal of Learning

Not surprisingly, the tests that the participants routinely took did not require higher order thinking such as elaboration, analysis, or synthesis using their purported new language skills. They simply had to fill in a blank or mark the letter corresponding to the answer of their choice. Evidence of what I call, "assessment of testing," began to emerge. By assessment of testing, I mean that test preparation and the actual testing are distinct from actual usage and the real intent of English language learning, i.e., acquiring the skills to use the language competently and communicatively in social contexts. Without a doubt, learners did "pass" their tests. The system of evaluation proved their success, but success at what?

Learners and teachers treated the test content and answers as if they were separate from the realities of language function. The assessments failed to provide evaluation of communicative competency or evidence of practical language acquisition. The testing method and follow-up "correction" reviews ignored both oral and written production of syntactic structures. Instead of reading and reviewing the actual language skill content of the lesson being tested, students routinely wrote, and later called out only the corresponding letter answers of multiple choice items. Neither the teacher nor students vocalized the actual language content during oral correction of assignments. The same procedure applied to reviewing worksheets.

Ms. N does not model a normal complete conversation. The exercise answers are by letter from a multiple choice selection. She does not read the text of the answers, only the corresponding letters. She calls on students to give the letter answer only.

Ms. R. writes the letter of the correct answer on the board without speaking the words of the answer.

Mr. Y goes over answers. Students call out letter answers and he writes the corresponding letters on the board. (Classroom observation notes & videotape).

Something in the language teaching/learning/assessment process appeared to be missing. Data revealed that English language learning and linguistic competence could not have been the reasons for teaching and learning. The crucial indicator in my analysis came as I observed how students and teachers reviewed the answers on routine unit tests and the preparatory exams for the TABE. The administration used the results of the TABE to document complete LCPs. In classroom talk, for example,

The post office is, "B," from the school. ["B" = three blocks]

"C," you please call her tomorrow? ["C" = would]

Maria, "A," her room every Saturday. ["A" = cleans]

I discovered that providing correct answers on the tests was the main objective for learners and teachers. Real language use was not valued or even necessary to the intent and outcome of the practices or tests. Entire sentences became reduced to abstract groups of words with a letter- A, B, C, or D- inserted. Decontextualized language was tested in an abstract format that reduced complex linguistic processing to multiple choice items that could be scored more easily than authentic learner-produced writing and oral samples. Learners did not have to demonstrate actual language competencies. They simply circled or wrote the letters of answers from among a list of possible responses that the tests or teachers provided. Thus, answers to test items became further abstracted because learners interpreted responses orally and in writing using the multiple choice letters exclusively without connection to or production of original oral utterances in the target language

Summary

Opportunities to learn in the classrooms were often limited by teaching styles and learners' limited knowledge of the metacognitive and cognitive skills that could facilitate language learning. The women demonstrated learning strategies as they translated, took notes, analyzed semantic and syntactic rules, used dictionaries, and collaborated both formally and informally with their classmates. The learners did not, nor were they expected to, produce any original work either in writing or speaking. Reading activities, with one exception, were short, text-based dialogues, instructions, or short explanations. The majority of their learning was often formulaic in nature; they completed multiple choice or fill-in-the blank exercises on worksheets and in their textbooks. Orally they routinely repeated dialogues modeled by their teachers.

Teaching styles varied, as one would expect; however most teachers, working in overcrowded classrooms, did not incorporate proven and accepted ESOL teaching strategies such as cooperative learning techniques, Language Experience Approach (LEA), TPR, journaling, etc. Teachers and students apparently subscribed to cultural notions of teacher authority and student passivity. Teaching was often based on a banking model; teachers tried to deposit knowledge, but students were not seen to be constructors of their own knowledge. Most teachers relied on a narrow repertoire of choral dialogue repetition, grammar-based instruction using decontextualized language, and vocabulary memorization. With a few exceptions, adult students were expected to obey teacher directives quietly and without resistance. Teachers spent much instructional time preparing and administering tests and maintaining students' assessment folders.

Success was measured by completed competency check lists and the results of standardized tests. Their results proved that the the participants learned how to take tests; all four succeeded in their first trimester of ESOL. Nevertheless, by the end of their second trimester and successful completion of LCP-B neither Dora nor Damaris, who among the four participants had completed both trimesters, could converse in English, although both reported that they could comprehend more than when they started their English studies. Testing methods and results did not provide convincing evidence of actual language learning and linguistic competence because the participants did not speak in English, the stated goals of the curriculum. It proved instead that the learners were well-trained test takers.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Angelica sat quietly thumbing her dictionary. She turned her head when her classmate tapped her on the shoulder to whisper a question about the grammar exercise they were working on. Marina, in her seat across the room, was nodding her head as her classmate explained a vocabulary word in Spanish. In another classroom, Dora stared down at her book as her teacher urged the class to silence. She spent the next 50 minutes mimicking the sounds that the teacher modeled as he read verbatim from the text dialogues. Although Dora said that she preferred to work alone, the classroom culture did not offer the opportunity to work with others even if she had wished to do so. Damaris, whispered something to her classmate, Belkis, at their table in the makeshift classroom on the stage. She nodded at Belkis' response as she squinted at the board. Damaris was delighted to enter new vocabulary items into her notebook. Her facial expressions displayed the intensity of her work.

The purpose of the current study was to explore the influences of social contexts on four refugee women's school attendance and second language learning as they began their first formal educational experiences in the U.S. My intent also was to discover the opportunities that each woman had for learning and using English, and to document what language learning strategies each employed during their class time. I conducted interviews with the four women, observed them during their classes, and reviewed and analyzed photocopied pages from their notebooks. I also invited the four to conversation

sessions with the refugee-assistance coordinator at the school site. I videotaped the conversations that she conducted as well as samples of classroom interaction. The observations in the four women's beginning ESOL classes revealed several areas of concern for their language learning. What I found suggests that performance-based accountability measures, in the experiences of all four women, had a negative influence on the women's classroom opportunities for learning spoken and written English.

The data analysis revealed that the four learners' use of learning strategies was limited because classroom time did not include instruction in learning strategies. Learners spent instructional time practicing test-taking skills. I concluded that cooperative and dialogic language learning succumbed to time constraints rooted in the pressures of completing curriculum checklists and succeeding on norm-referenced exit tests. In this chapter, I summarize my findings about the women's surround contexts, what the women did in their classrooms, and the implications for adult ESOL learning and teaching. I discuss the limitations of the study, directions for future research and implications for Adult ESOL programs in Florida.

Discussion of the Findings

Influences of Personal Contexts and Surrounds

The four women had come to school to learn English. Reasons for their attendance varied depending on their interests, educational backgrounds, and their social and familial surrounds. Influences on their decision-making included wanting to help their children, responding to pressure from spouses, feelings of limitation of movement because of perceived language barriers, and re-entering a profession. According to Peck's (1986) [Model of Adult Women's Self-definition in Adulthood](#), Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris were immersed in a spiral of transnational identity development through

interactions with family members and friends who lived in the Miami Cuban exile enclave. Their interactions and identity transformations were complicated by new educational experiences of language learning at The Language School. Except for Dora, their relationships with classmates seemed to enrich their experiences at school. The culture of Dora's classrooms and her personal learning preferences caused her to work alone in class. In both Dora and Marina's cases, they attended school with their husbands, both of whom exerted pressure on their wives to learn English. Damaris, the only participant with a child living with her, also received encouragement and inspiration from her daughter in Miami.

Within the historical axis of the model, all four had grown up in the social and educational systems of revolutionary Cuba where the aspect of women's equality was treated ambivalently. In these women's lives, agency and self-determination were defined and constrained by the Revolutionary government's initiatives of equality of opportunity for women in most careers and workplaces. During the same time women were charged with domestic and reproductive duties of care household management and child care for the success of the Revolution (Guerra 2001). Women claimed most of the responsibility for family survival in "*la lucha cotidiana*" (the daily struggle) to "*resolver*" (get by) or make do with the shortage of food and supplies on the island (Isasi-Díaz 1996). All four participants spoke of personal independence, but qualified that independence insomuch that their own happiness depended on the success of their children.

They liked attending school, but three of them worried about the children they left behind in Cuba. All but one, Angelica, worked to earn money to send to Cuba in order to

support family members there. (Angelica's husband provided remittances to support their son in Cuba because at the time of the study she remained unemployed.) Only Damaris was able to see her daughter prosper in Miami. Participation in the refugee-assistance program and the support they received had little apparent influence on their continuing attendance although each participant was grateful for the benefits of book vouchers and free public transportation passes. In summary, I recall the women's stated reasons for attendance, quoting each as she spoke about the contexts of her life.

- Angelica □ *"Para integrarme."* Angelica hoped to integrate into her new geographic surrounds. Her perceptions that some of her family members who preceded her to Miami have retained too many Cuban customs and maintained closed minds towards the mainstream U.S. society have caused her to resist isolation in the historical exile enclave.
- *"...cuando tú vas a una tienda te sientes mal por no saber inglés."* She wished to overcome her insecurities about being in non-Spanish speaking places.
- Dora □ *"Para ganar más dinero."* Dora saw English language acquisition as the key to higher paid employment.
- *"Como yo puedo trabajar en mi profesión."* English was necessary for her to gain her teaching certificate and become a biology teacher again.
- Marina □ *"Hay lugares que llego que me limite el idioma."* Marina was limited by language, but desired to interact with people outside her Spanish-speaking contexts.
- *"Defenderme en el idioma."* She wanted to know what was going on around her in order to interact with others and state her mind as necessary.
- Damaris □ *"Tengo ofertas de trabajo y entonces ... porque no sé inglés."* Like Dora, Damaris needed English to re-enter her profession.
- *"Saber inglés de respetar de la bandera. Respetar al gobernantes."* Knowledge of English was a complement to her emerging patriotism towards the U.S.

With their varied reasons to learn English, the women sought out the school as a place of learning opportunities. The refugee-assistance program, a surprise bonus because none of the women knew of its existence before enrolling, offered them counseling support in a personally planned course of study and some financial benefit in book vouchers and public transportation passes. However, their opportunities for learning were limited by the institutional need to meet state-mandated curriculum performance standards.

Silence and Language Learning Strategies

I was struck by the learners' silence in most of the ESOL classrooms. By silence, I mean a lack of student-initiated discourse and evidence of original thought in speech and in writing. Following their own cultural patterns of respect for "the teacher" and the authority that that position represents, Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris repeated dialogues, filled in blanks on exercises, and memorized rules and vocabulary lists with little if any opportunity to produce their own original utterances or writing (Freire 1970). The data show that Dora, Angelica, Marina, and Damaris spent most of their classroom time without producing their own original utterances, either orally or in writing.

She [Dora] has been sitting for over an hour without moving or speaking; She has not spoken in English since I arrived [1hr.10mins] (Classroom observation notes.).

What happened to ideals of communicative and dialogic classrooms? My growing concern during the fieldwork centered on the women's' collective silence in class. While Damaris seemed the exception with her occasional direct questions to the teacher, her accepted role as "student" did not permit her to question the content or methods. With no other model of education within their experience or culture, how could any of the women challenge or resist the norm? The paradigm shift lay in the hands of

the teachers to develop a discursive, communicative, and cooperative model of English language teaching and learning. Teachers needed to teach learning strategies as tools to make learning more efficient. Faced with many similar quotes from the observation field notes such as in the example above, the overwhelming questions for me became, "What happened to 'good' ESOL teaching?" and, "Why don't the students get to speak?" (Seufert 1999). The answer lies in the four women's perceptions of respect to power and authority, and in the teachers' reactions to institutional constraints of overcrowding, standardization, and accountability. Both learning and teaching behaviors, affected by institutional pressures, limited the opportunities for language learning.

The participants in the study were silenced by standardized speech demands, choral repetition, and on-the-spot oral checks that demanded idealized perfection. Overall, in the classroom experiences of Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris, observed learning strategies, as compared to O'Malley & Chamot's (1990) CALLA framework, were few and varied little. The following table (Table 6-1) presents a compilation of the language learning strategies that I observed across the four case studies. The findings do not reflect the strategies of one individual. During review of test results and grammar exercises, the learners responded with the multiple-choice letter instead of reading the actual word or phrase in English. Only Damaris, a medical clinician and highly educated woman in her home country, broke free of the silence occasionally by writing her own version of grammar rules and by questioning the teacher when she felt that the teacher might have been unclear or in error.

Table 6-1. Comparison of CALLA strategies and observed strategies used by study participants

CALLA Learning Strategies	Observed strategies
Metacognitive strategies: <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring or reviewing attention to the task <input type="checkbox"/> Selective attention for special aspects of a learning task, as in planning to listen for key words or phrases <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluating or checking comprehension after a receptive language activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Read instructions for exercises and tests <input type="checkbox"/> Found information in the text to answer teacher questions
Cognitive strategies: <input type="checkbox"/> Rehearsal/repetition <input type="checkbox"/> Organization, grouping or classifying words terminology, or concepts according to their semantic or syntactic attributes <input type="checkbox"/> Inferencing or guessing meanings, predicting outcomes <input type="checkbox"/> Deduction or applying rules to understand language <input type="checkbox"/> Imagery or visual images <input type="checkbox"/> Transference or using known linguistic information to facilitate a new learning task.	<input type="checkbox"/> Read dialogues silently, in unison, and in pairs following the script of role-playing dialogues <input type="checkbox"/> Mouthed words and sentences silently <input type="checkbox"/> Practiced basic literacy skills such as number and word recognition <input type="checkbox"/> Paraphrased syntactic rules and defined new vocabulary items in Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Drew diagrams <input type="checkbox"/> Translated from English to Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Guessed meanings
Social/affective strategies: <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperation, working w/ peers to solve a problem <input type="checkbox"/> Questioning for clarification, or eliciting from a teacher or peer	<input type="checkbox"/> Asked classmates for help and shared information <input type="checkbox"/> Asked teacher to clarify rules

Silence was the norm because of cultural notions of what classroom behavior should be: "teacher talks, learners listen, and speak when spoken to." I recall that during an interview with Dora and her husband, Dora attributed her silence to the rules of her classroom. Three days a week her class of approximately 45 students attended class in the divided auditorium where six other classes met simultaneously. The observation

notes recorded many instances when her teachers repeatedly reminded students to speak softly.

John: *Sí, observé a Uds. en clase, y casi nunca hablaban durante la clase uno a otro*

Yes, I observed you (plural) in class and almost never did you (plural) speak during the class to each other.

Dora: *No, no se pueda hablar.* No, you can't speak.

J: *Sí se quedaban en silencio por la mayoría de la clase*

Yes, you (plural) were staying silent for the majority of the class period.

D: *En el auditorio no se puede hablar.* In the auditorium, you cannot speak.

A learner-centered explanation for the silence, situated in his cultural belief system came from Dora's husband, Raúl, during an interview with the couple. I had interviewed the pair because they were both attending the same class together. Raúl shared a very dogmatic view about "correct" student behavior in class that Dora, emphatically nodding her head, seemed to validate.

Raúl: *Nosotros tenemos una, una, regla elemental. A nuestra forma de ver, por un problema de educación, si alguien está hablando, maxime un profesor, Ud. debe de prestar atención. Si Ud. no quiera prestar atención, Ud. quiere perder su tiempo miserablemente, bueno, que por yo le sugiero que no vaya a la clase. Se dedica pescaaar, o otra facilidad.*

We have a, an elemental rule. In our view, regarding a problem of etiquette, if someone is speaking, most of all a teacher, you should pay attention. If you don't wish to pay attention, you wish to waste your time miserably, well, for that I suggest that you don't go to class. Take up fiiiiishing or other pastime.

John: *Así uno hace falta de educación* So, one is being rude.

R: *De educación* Rude.

Dora: *Exacto* Exactly.

R: *Yo lo veo a eso como una flagrante falta de educación. Y una invasión de la privacidad de los demás. Cuando una persona está hablando, o está sonando un teléfono celular, o está haciendo algún tipo de ruido, está invadiendo, la privacidad de los, de tus compañeros de clase, Y le estás indirectamente,*

haciendo el perder el tiempo allí porque interrumpe el profesor, y interrumpe su atención, y eso hace daño al profesor, a los alumnos, y a tí también.

I see it as flagrant impoliteness. And an invasion of privacy of the others. When a person is speaking, or a cell phone is ringing, or is making some kind of noise, he is invading the privacy of his classmates. And you are indirectly wasting your classmates' time because you interrupt the teacher, interrupt his attention, and that injures the teacher, the students and you, too.

The same rule of classroom etiquette must have also applied in the self-contained classrooms as it had in the open environment of the auditorium. It was in the classrooms, too, that the teachers did most of the talking. The only difference was that the students in the self-contained classroom setting could repeat after the teacher more often and more loudly as part of the lesson exercises. The passive attitude toward learning that Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris shared, I came to understand as a possible cultural construct of expected behavior within the learners' culture and personal educational histories (Goffman 1974, Remminick 1999, Rockhill 1987).

Learning Opportunities and Primary Frameworks

The participants may have been silenced by the performance-based curriculum that did not hold much interest for their learning. Inquiry comes from what is known and what interests learners (Lindfors 1999). There was little evidence of the "personal" in any of my observations as teachers followed the prescribed checklist of competencies, rarely linking the content with learners' lives. The women did not talk or write about anything connected with their personal lives. Damaris provided the only exception in her written sentence by listing the occupations of her immediate family members. Similarly, in a study of Russian immigrants in Israel, anthropologist Golden (2001) remarked about a lack of attention to the personal in adult Hebrew classes. "Markedly absent in the classroom agenda was any discussion of the immigrants' pasts" (p. 58). Linguist Seufert

(1999) explains that the silence and passivity I observed among the four women might have been expected. She writes that refugees were

often educated in systems that stressed listening, observing, and reading; imitating and responding to teachers' questions; and taking tests that required only the recall of factual information (Cheng 1998). Initially, some refugees may be reluctant to express their opinions and ideas in classroom activities (p. 4).

Nevertheless, the four women were generally satisfied with their classroom experiences. "The teacher explains well." "Interrupting the teacher is very rude." "You're not supposed to talk." "When the teacher is talking you must listen." "What the teacher says is right." "He [the teacher] is prepared and knows what he is talking about." (These remarks were extracted and translated from observation notes). To Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris the above quotes collectively constitute expressions of a deep faith and trust in the person who embodies the definition of "teacher" (Belenky, et al. 1997). They were perhaps behaving within their cultural constructs or "primary frameworks" (Goffman 1974) of "school," constructed to the reified "Banking Model" of education described by Paulo Freire (1970). I recall Bruner's statement, "People are expected to behave situationally whatever their "roles..." (Bruner 1990, p. 48). By their statements and actions, the four women demonstrated that they came to school to be "given" English, the knowledge of which the teacher imparts during the course of the trimester. What is more, many of the teachers, all of Cuban extraction, might have shared degrees of the same educational opinion. The scope of the study lay principally in the realm of the four learners' experiences; I did not interview teachers except to ask about curricular issues. Nevertheless, Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris' experiences and strategy use were in alignment. Their classroom experiences mirrored the "Banking Model."

Limitations of the Study

The findings reflect only the experiences of Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris who attended classes taught by a total of eight teachers. Their learning took place at one adult education center. As with all case studies, the research was limited to the contexts of the participants. Additionally, a case study researcher can only hope that the conclusions of such a study will find application in the greater world. The four women were unique individuals, but they shared several personal aspects - maternity, matrimony, and middle age. However, I believe that a greater range in ages and marital status could have broadened the results of the study.

Time was a limitation of the fieldwork. As a researcher, I had to commute weekly a great distance to conduct the field observations, and I was under pressure to collect as much data as possible in a short period. While I believe that the body of data collected during classroom activities of the participants' first two trimesters of ESOL was sufficient, the study would have benefited from more opportunities to collect data and from a wider circle of sources.

In hindsight, not interviewing the teachers during the course of the study became a limitation. All the teachers graciously welcomed me into their classrooms. A few of them I had known as colleagues during my teaching tenure at the school; however, I resisted comment based on past acquaintances as I attempted to focus on the four learners' perspectives. Although I set out to capture only the experiences of the four women, my analysis was limited by lack of data that explained the teaching side of the classroom observations. I struggled with the fact that I could not dismiss the teaching half of the learning/teaching transaction if I were to do justice describing the four

women's opportunities for learning. Except for questions that arose about pertinent curricular or classroom management issues, I did not talk to the teachers.

Time constraints kept me from gathering additional information regarding the teachers' beliefs about the participants and their learning. Such information could have aided my understanding of the classroom interactions and teaching styles. It would also have enriched the study to have asked questions about teacher's beliefs about language, language learning strategies, and their roles in the women's classroom experiences. Future research should include input from the classroom teachers.

In a naturalistic research model such as the design of this study, I had expected that a participant might withdraw from school and, thus, the study. The small number of participants became a drawback when two of them left the study before the data collection concluded. I was further limited by not having writing samples from Marina's notebook. Additionally, I was unable to discover the reason for Angelica's sudden departure at the beginning of the second trimester. She moved out of the area, but left no forwarding address. Of course, such is the case in a naturalistic study. Angelica's common Spanish surname made it impossible to locate her unless she re-enrolled at another adult center. If she had done so, her social security number used for registration would have helped to locate her.

I listened to the women's stories about their lives, their husbands, and their children; however, I could have collected more detailed data about their family contexts if I had asked the women to invite me into their homes and community contexts. My data depended on self-report information as each participant and I conversed over course of the data collection period. I did not meet the important people that each woman

described. While it was easy to get to know Dora's husband, Raúl, because the couple attended Foundations ESOL class together, I might have met Marina's husband, Federico, who was also an ESOL student at the school. Marina said he loved to use English with her at home. A conversation with Mileidys, the daughter Damaris spoke so much about, could have helped me understand her mother's dedication. I could have had my hair cut by Damaris' husband, Francisco the barber. I wish Angelica could have introduced me to her "ex-"husband, and "*las tres muchachas*" [the three girls] with whom she registered at the school. Finally, as I recalled our talk during the first interview, I wondered if Angelica's elderly aunts might have offered me "*la pica tan graciosa en saltine cracker*" [a nice morsel (of dog food) on a saltine cracker]?

Implications for Curriculum and Instruction

Learning and Teaching Driven by Assessment

Standardized testing preparation and administration consumed the majority of the classroom time for the four participants. Instruction centered on test-taking strategies, test vocabulary, test formatted exercises and multiple choice thinking. Observation data and analysis led me to conclude that ESOL teaching and learning, at least in the participants' experiences in instructional levels LCP-A and LCP-B, was about getting test items correct in the high stakes game of performance-based funding. Assessment of learning is an important component in schooling, but it is not and should not be the objective of learning. Furthermore, "evaluation needs to reflect the life-contexts and personal goals of the students" (Purcell-Gates & Waterman 2000, p. 193).

The competency checklists used to evaluate the participants' learning were problematic. Many of the competencies on the checklists might have been satisfied by the multiple-choice worksheets that are easy for teachers to file in the students'

assessment portfolios. It is possible that some teachers might have signed off on completed competencies by assuming the stance of: "I covered it, so the students learned it." Adult education researcher Oliva (2002) concurs in her quantitative examination of the possible implications of complying with the same state-mandated, performance-based curriculum that framed the participants' ESOL experiences in this study. Teachers, especially part-time instructors, might be pressured by accountability issues into passing students to the next level in order to earn LCPs and to keep classes full. Students would end up suffering the effects of a program that considers earning an LCP more important than the students' learning experience (p. 17).

In the scope of this study, I am unsure about what the four women learned in their classrooms. I know from observation that they had little opportunity to develop *communicative* English language skills and learning strategies, while forming their own questions about language and cultural aspects of English language use in Miami. They did learn to answer *other* people's questions as they attempted to do so in perfect form. They seemed to learn the prescribed *content*, but I was unconvinced during my conversations with them that they could effectively talk about the content in English. Part of the problem may lie in the curriculum frameworks as a context for the women's learning.

Critical Examination of State-Mandated Curriculum Frameworks

What did the state standards and competencies ask learners to do? In a compilation of all the "Workforce" and "Life Skills" benchmarks in Literacy Completion Points (LCP) levels A and B (see [Appendix A](#)), I found that 85 out of 134 competencies were stated in lower level behavioral terms (cf. Bloom 1956) such as "identify," "recognize," and "demonstrate." Pointing, answering with one-word responses, or using

physical movements could assess the comprehension of the competencies, but learners were not necessarily asked to produce longer, original utterances. In essence, learners would not have to talk in order to demonstrate the competencies. Moreover, such competencies are easy to assess using the types of instruments and work sheets adopted by the school administration. SLA research consensus insists that language learning comes from using the target language in meaningful interaction with other people. Yet in the Florida Adult ESOL curriculum frameworks for LCP-A and LCP-B, only 27 out of the 134 competencies require learners to use language, by "defining," "describing," "expressing," "requesting," "setting goals," and, thus to produce, answer and respond using original and authentic utterances with other people.

The four participants did not produce original language in class because oral repetition of the text dialogues and fill-in-the-blank assessment were the rule and constituted the criteria of learning outcomes. The women were silenced by classroom management styles and their own notions of schooling. Application of the state frameworks, although rich in content, did not support authentic language learning and production in the participants' experiences. In the realm of language learning, the behavioral terms of "identifying," "recognizing," and "demonstrating" within the state curriculum standards were mostly about declarative knowledge (Anderson 1980). Superficially, the benchmarks of the state curriculum frameworks did not address the development of deeper procedural knowledge related to language necessary to produce and manipulate original utterances.

Without a doubt, Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris learned the facts and concepts of their lesson content. They could identify, recognize, and demonstrate content

according to the benchmarks. As learners, they were satisfied that they had improved themselves by coming to school. They filled in the blanks of worksheets and passed tests successfully. Most importantly, the women could explain their understanding about the content they learned - in *Spanish*, but not in English. They did not have the opportunities to acquire the language skills to do that. What then were they attending class for if not to learn English?

Underlying Forces of "Workforce English"

I have considered that there is more to the argument, something that may be situated in the ambivalent attitude of adult ESOL instruction in the U.S. While the focus should be on the women's personal learning goals and interests, the underlying state needs drive the desired curriculum outcomes. The ambivalence is apparent in the support literature that the state offered to administrators and instructors. The mandate exhorted teachers to recognize student motivation to learn and to respond to the needs and goals of the learner as much as possible. "The targeted level of English proficiency, the content of instruction and its sequencing should be determined by the goals of the students" (FL DOE 2000, p. 15). The goals of students, however, must agree with the intent of the state-mandated curriculum, which seemed to override student goals that might fall outside the vocational or consumer-based frameworks.

Since the legislature clearly had a vision that all adult education should enhance workforce development, the curriculum frameworks for the Adult ESOL program courses have been developed to reach that goal (p. 13).

I found that there appeared to be two sets of learning and teaching goals operating in Adult ESOL in Florida: (a) learners who enroll in public adult ESOL classes want to learn English, for whatever reason, and (b) the state wants learners enrolled in state-funded programs to be prepared to enter the workforce. The reasons may not be entirely

in conflict for some learners; nevertheless, the same set of "needs" is routinely generalized and imposed on the entire population of ESOL students. Although they conducted their research in Canada, Kathleen Rockhill and Patricia Tomic (1995) write that ESL instruction is not so much about language teaching and learning as about instruction in state expectations of what constitutes learner needs - needs prescribed by others. Are such prescribed "needs" authentic and valid for individual learners? The focus is not upon integrating English into the lives of diverse populations of immigrants, "but upon using ESL as a tool for bringing those populations into the [White] Canadian mainstream" (p. 218).

Following Rockhill & Tomic's theoretical view, I took a deeper look at the Adult ESOL Frameworks for LCP Levels A and B (the levels attended by the participants) imposed by the Florida legislature on all adult ESOL teaching in public schools. I reviewed the standards and competencies and the ambivalence began to make more sense. How did instruction based on the frameworks address the needs of Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris? Would adult ESOL instruction assist their language learning according to their maternal, integrational, and professional interests? The mismatch became obvious. Almost all of the competencies taught in the classrooms had to do with integrating into a power system (employment, health care, U.S. social constructions of personal hygiene, child care, etc.). Very few of the competencies were personal or asked a learner to *produce language from within her own experience, beliefs, emotions, or goals* (my emphasis).

I concluded that the nature of the women's silence might be situated in part within the structure of the curriculum itself. Anthropologically, I came to view the mismatch of

personal needs and state mandate as an "emic/etic dichotomy." Emic aspects of learning refer to internal influences and interests coming from *within* an individual, such as illustrated by the inner spiral of [Peck's Model of Women's Self-definition in Adulthood](#) (1986), the site of the women's agency. Etic influences constitute those originating from contexts *outside* the person, the outer wall of Peck's model. Very few of the framework competencies addressed crucial and personal, emic themes. Lesson content and objectives were imposed on, not elicited from learners, contrary to the recommendations of the state curriculum planners (FL DOE 2001b). The outer wall of Peck's model became less flexible in the women's experiences as their agency in the learning contexts became constrained by the forces of the state curriculum. What is more, expectations of schooling based on their own frame analysis of the school environment (Goffman 1974) coupled with their traditional notions of nutritive education (Freire 1970, Macedo 1994) contributed to their observed passive behavior in the classroom. Making the etic curriculum perspective all the more powerful, the teachers, authoritative agents of the power structure in the participants' eyes, worked as civilizers of immigrants, erroneously or stereotypically positing the learners' origins in unfortunate, faulty, or incomplete cultural backgrounds. Complicity, it appeared that the learners themselves validated the treatment. They respected both the teachers' roles and the prescribed curriculum frameworks (Bartky 1990).

Did Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris know that they themselves were, by the written official statement, instrumental in their own needs assessment? Could they see themselves in the schooling context empowered with such decision-making? (Bartky 1990, Pace 1996) Coupled with the strongly etic philosophy of the frameworks, I see this

as the issue most crucial to my argument. From the government side, it would be incongruent to think of students as empowered to negotiate their own goal decisions with instructors while the frameworks demanded that they adhere to and buy into a power structure that treated them as potential labor. From the learners' side, they responded passively to the teachers as figures of authority. It would be very presumptive to think that foreign-born students, especially the four participants whose educational experience came under a totalitarian system, could see a government institution, the school, and an authority figure, the teacher, as parties with whom learners CAN negotiate. Does it happen normally in mainstream, "good ole American" public schools? What are immigrant English language learners to do?

Recommendations

How can learners expect to become competent in spoken and written English and build communicative competence if they do not use the language in their classrooms? As happens in qualitative research, more questions arose during observation and analysis than were apparent at the start of the study. The questions weigh heavily on the implications for the state-mandated, performance-based curriculum and the theoretical understandings of the women's social surrounds that affected their attendance and learning opportunities.

The learning opportunities for the four participants could have been enhanced in several ways. Based on the analysis of my findings, I summarize my recommendations in Table 6-2. Learners would be more engaged in the instructional activities if the curriculum competencies were more closely aligned to the personal needs and goals of learners, rather than to the prescribed ideals of labor interests. Learners would benefit from a more communicative teaching and learning style wherein they could, at times,

practice actual language that they actively produced, rather than passively mimicking the words written on the pages of a textbook.

Table 6-2. Researcher recommendations.

1. Review and re-examine the state mandated ESOL curriculum frameworks.
<input type="checkbox"/> Rewrite the competencies to reflect a more personal perspective in order to boost relevance in a learners' lives. <input type="checkbox"/> Add more competencies or adjust existing ones to meet the literacy needs and interests of women.
2. Adopt a more communicative, project based instructional style.
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce class size and construct classroom environments where students and teachers can work collaboratively and dialogically. <input type="checkbox"/> Cultivate teacher awareness and attention to learners' interests, personal surround contexts, and life stories. <input type="checkbox"/> Instruct teachers to adopt a more guiding, facilitating stance where they recognize and incorporate the talents and expertise of the students.
3. Teach language learning strategies explicitly.
<input type="checkbox"/> Develop teacher awareness of learning strategies (Green & Oxford 1995, Oxford 1999, Tsung-Yuan & Oxford 2002). <input type="checkbox"/> Promote a socially critical view through literacy practice (Freire 1970; Purcell-Gates & Waterman 2000). <input type="checkbox"/> Foster learner's language skills and inquiry through community research projects (Norton-Peirce 1995).
4. Involve the refugee-assistance program in refugee mentoring support.
<input type="checkbox"/> Increase personal attention to clients by the refugee social service coordinators and counselors. <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage clients to consult the refugee-assistance program counselors regularly. <input type="checkbox"/> Build client learning support networks through peer tutoring and focus groups.

Overall, learning could become more efficient and dynamic if the students had become aware of their individual learning styles and strategies as the teachers assisted them in developing and expanding their repertoire of language learning tools. Finally, as clients of the refugee assistance program, the participants could have enjoyed another layer of support if they had been aware of the ongoing availability of counseling.

Additionally, the assistance program could add value to the learner's school experiences and opportunities to learn by initiating peer tutoring and mentoring programs among the clients of the program.

Implications for Future Research

What do women do to balance the time and energy demands of studying ESOL and attending to the demands of everyday life? This study could be considered a pilot for future research on the influences of social contexts of women in adult and ESOL learning situations. It is an exploration that contributes in a small way to the growing body of literature of refugee women's educational concerns in the resettlement process.

Researchers need to consider the place of language learning in immigrant women's lives, whose family structures have been altered, and connections with familiar spaces and social networks have been shattered and reordered. I think it is important to capture qualitative views of learners' first experiences of language learning by focusing on their classroom interactions and the strategies they employ. We need to understand how such experiences influence changes in traditional gender roles as a result of on-going and future learning experiences. Because adult educators are exhorted to know more about their students' home and community contexts, additional qualitative research that makes such information available to practitioners would be valuable to faculty development and teacher education programs (cf. van Lier, 1988).

Considering that women are responsible for many of the literacy activities in households, more attention must be paid to researching the literacy needs of adult female learners and how literacy practices play a role in their family lives. We need to know what constitutes literacy practice in different cultural settings - households, workplaces, and communities - as we find a balance in future curriculum design. Such research conducted as needs assessment or program evaluation could inspire curriculum developers to design and adapt programs of study that facilitate rather than hinder women's efforts in language learning.

Most importantly we need more analysis of what actually goes on in adult classrooms. Multiple studies have shown that gender differences do exist in language learning. We need to know more about the variables of adult immigrant women's learning and how ESOL curriculum and instruction can better address their needs regarding literacy and empowerment. While qualitative interest in children's contexts of language learning has captured the interest of researchers (cf. Valdés 1996, Zentella 1997, Townsend & Fu 2001), adult learning has usually been subject to quantitative methods of research and interview data. Few studies have looked at actual adult language learning and classroom interactions (Losey 1995, Purcell-Gates & Waterman 2000). More descriptions of the classroom from the learners' perspectives would augment what we know from quantitative sources.

In conclusion, the beginning ESOL experiences of Angelica, Dora, Marina, and Damaris could have been enriched by more personalized learning aligned to their needs and interests through deeper understanding of the women's social contexts. Their opportunities to learn might have been broader and more efficient if they had received instruction on how to develop the strategies that would have made them more competent as adult language learners.

APPENDIX A
FLORIDA ADULT ESOL COMPETENCIES FOR LCP-A AND LCP-B

Literacy Completion Point A, Literacy (Foundations ESOL)

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SKILLS

The student is able to...

Standard 10: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to Obtain Employment.

- 01.01 Identify entry-level jobs and workplaces of various occupations.
- 01.02 Recognize procedures for applying for a job and complete a simplified job application form with assistance.
- 01.03 Demonstrate ability to respond to basic interview questions.
- 01.04 Produce required forms of identification for employment.
- 01.05 Define job benefits vocabulary, understand W2 & W4 forms and complete sample W4 form.

Standard 2.0: Demonstrate English skills necessary to Maintain Employment.

- 02.01 Demonstrate understanding of generic work standards, requirements and rules.
- 02.02 Demonstrate ability to ask for assistance and clarification on the job.
- 02.03 Recognize safety procedures appropriate to the job.
- 02.04 Demonstrate ability to read a simple work schedule.
- 02.05 Recognize pay stub and deductions.

Standard 3.0: Demonstrate English skills necessary for Career Advancement.

- 03.01 Identify job promotion requirements.
- 03.02 Set education and employment goals.
- 03.03 Recognize importance of interpersonal communication skills on the job.
- 03.04 Demonstrate ability to use basic test taking strategies.

Standard 4.0: Demonstrate English skills necessary to access Applied Technology.

- 04.01 Demonstrate knowledge of operating equipment necessary for home and work.

LIFE SKILLSStandard 5.0: Demonstrate English skills necessary for effective Interpersonal Communication.

- Use appropriate greetings, introductions and farewells.
- Identify self and personal information.
- Express likes, dislikes, feelings and emotions in culturally appropriate ways.
- Use and respond to polite expressions.

Standard 6.0: Demonstrate English skills necessary for effective Telephone Communication.

- 06.01 Demonstrate ability to use basic residential telephones.
- 06.02 Answer the telephone and respond or express a lack of understanding.
- 06.03 Use basic emergency vocabulary and 911 procedures.
- 06.04 Recognize and identify a telephone book, calling card, and a telephone bill.

Standard 7.0: Demonstrate English skills necessary to communicate effectively on Health and Nutrition topics.

- 07.01 Recognize and identify basic body parts.
- 07.02 Recognize basic vocabulary relating to illness and accidents.
- 07.03 Recognize basic health care vocabulary (doctor, nurse, dentist, hospital, clinic, health department, emergency room).
- 07.04 Request a doctor's appointment & read an appointment card.
- 07.05 Identify various medications, their usage, request assistance with dosage and recognize requirements for immunizations.
- 07.06 Identify personal hygiene products and daily grooming routines.
- 07.07 Identify basic foods, food groups and healthy eating habits.

Standard 8.0: Demonstrate English skills necessary to understand U.S. concepts of Time and Money and how to use these skills to function.

- 08.01 Recognize cardinal and ordinal numbers.
- 08.02 Tell time using analog and digital clocks.
- 08.03 Demonstrate the use of a calendar by identifying days of the week and months of the year using words and abbreviations.
- 08.04 Convert dates to numeric form.
- 08.05 Recognize U.S. currency, symbols relating to money and read prices (dollar/cent signs, decimal point).
- 08.06 Recognize a check and a money order and read amount.

Standard 9.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to access Transportation and Travel.

- 09.01 Identify basic types of transportation (bus, taxicab, car, plane, and ship).
- 09.02 Identify signs using sight words and symbols (enter, exit, push, pull, men, women, caution, no smoking, no swimming, arrows, directional signs, bus signs).
- 09.03 Use vocabulary to ask for and give simple directions (turn left, turn right, go straight, next to, between, in front of, behind).
- 09.04 Identify safe driving practices (seat belts, child safety restraints).

Standard 10.0: Demonstrate English skills necessary to understand Safety and Security issues.

- 10.01 Demonstrate understanding of common safety procedures (walking, biking).
- 10.02 Demonstrate ability to respond to emergency procedures (fire, crime, medical crisis).
- 10.03 Identify warning symbols (poison, flammable, danger).

Standard 11.0: Demonstrate English skills necessary to understand Consumer Education Issues.

- 11.01 Name and state the cost of basic food items.
- 11.02 Recognize and interpret concept of measurements (cup, quart, gallon, pound).
- 11.03 Name and state cost of basic clothing items.
- 11.04 Recognize and identify basic American clothing sizes (S, M, L, XL).
- 11.05 Identify types of housing (apartment, house, mobile home).
- 11.06 Identify basic utilities (water, gas, electric, phone, cable).

Standard 12.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to utilize Government and Community Resources.

- 12.01 Identify basic government agencies (post office, social security, health department, Department of Children and Families).
- 12.02 Identify community services (hospital, police, fire, public schools, library, parks and recreation areas).
- 12.03 Demonstrate ability to purchase stamps and mail a package.
- 12.04 Demonstrate understanding of U.S. holidays and social customs.
- 12.05 Identify the current U.S. President.

Standard 13.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to understand issues relative to Environment and the World.

- 13.01 Identify seasons and weather and respond appropriately to weather emergencies (hurricanes, tornadoes, floods).
- 13.02 Locate the United States and Florida on a world map, locate county and city of residence on a state map.

- 13.03 Identify key elements of recycling.

Standard 14.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary for Family and Parenting.

- 14.01 Identify family members (mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister).
- 14.02 Recognize compulsory schooling for children 6-16, enrollment procedures and the importance of regular school attendance.
- 14.03 Recognize proper care of children (requirement of food, shelter, hygiene, childcare providers).

ACADEMIC SKILLS

Standard 15.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to Listen, Speak, Read and Write effectively.

- 15.01 Recognize, identify and trace basic shapes and numbers.
- 15.02 Identify basic colors.
- 15.03 Recognize, state, read and write the alphabet (upper and lower case) and numbers.
- 15.04 Alphabetize basic word groups.
- 15.05 Use a picture dictionary.
- 15.06 Recognize, state, read and write vocabulary for personal information (first, middle, last name, number, street, zip, phone number and social security number) and fill out personal information form.
- 15.07 Trace and sign name (signature).
- 15.08 Recognize, state, read, and write basic questions and answers.

Standard 16.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to apply standard Grammar structures.

- 16.01 Use subject pronouns (I, you, he, she, it, we, they).
- 16.02 Use common verbs (affirmative, negative, yes/no questions, short answers): present continuous, to be (present), simple present, modal “can”
- 16.03 Use adverbs: here, there, today, always, usually, never
- 16.04 Use demonstratives: this, that, these, those
- 16.05 Use information questions: who, what, when, where
- 16.06 Use common and proper nouns.
- 16.07 Use prepositions: in, at, from, on, for, with, of, under, next to, between, in front of, behind
- 16.08 Use articles: a, an, the
- 16.09 Use possessive adjectives (my, your, his, her, our, their)

Standard 17.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary for Development of Pronunciation skills.

- 17.01 Produce consonant and vowel sounds.
- 17.02 Recognize, state and link letters and sounds.

Literacy Completion Point B Low Beginning (ESOL 1)

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SKILLS

The student is able to...

Standard 18.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to Obtain Employment.

- 18.01 Identify different kinds of jobs using simple help-wanted ads.
- 18.02 Describe personal work experience and skills.
- 18.03 Demonstrate ability to fill out a simple job application without assistance.
- 18.04 Produce required forms of identification for employment (photo I.D.).
- 18.05 Identify social security and income tax deductions. Understand W2 & W4 forms and complete sample W4 form.

Standard 19.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to Maintain Employment.

- 19.01 Demonstrate understanding of employment expectations, rules, regulations and safety.
- 19.02 Demonstrate understanding of basic instruction and ask for clarification on the job.
- 19.03 Demonstrate appropriate treatment of co-workers (politeness and respect).
- 19.04 Identify parts of a pay stub and deductions.

Standard 20.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary for Career Advancement.

- 20.01 Identify job promotion requirements.
- 20.02 Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills and positive attitude at work.
- 20.03 Explore educational opportunities for job advancement.
- 20.04 Demonstrate ability to use basic test taking strategies (circle, bubble in, dictation).

Standard 21.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to access Applied Technology.

- 21.01 Demonstrate knowledge of operating equipment necessary for home and work.

LIFE SKILLSStandard 22.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary for effective Interpersonal Communication.

- 22.01 Demonstrate ability to report personal information including gender and marital status.
- 22.02 Demonstrate ability to make appropriate formal and informal introductions, greetings, and farewells.
- 22.03 Use appropriate expressions to accept and decline offers, and to express feelings and emotions.

Standard 23.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary for effective Telephone Communication.

- 23.01 Demonstrate ability to request operator assistance and use of 911.
- 23.02 Use appropriate telephone greetings, leave an oral message and take a written message.
- 23.03 Demonstrate understanding of basic parts of a phone bill.
- 23.04 Demonstrate ability to operate public and cellular phones, pagers and use a phone card.

Standard 24.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to communicate effectively on Health and Nutrition Topics.

- 24.01 Identify body parts.
- 24.02 Define health care vocabulary (emergency room, doctor, nurse, dentist, hospital, clinic, and health department).
- 24.03 Request doctor's appointment, communicate symptoms and injuries, and follow doctor's instructions.
- 24.04 Read and interpret information on medicine labels.
- 24.05 Identify basic foods and food groups, including nutritional information on food labels.
- 24.06 Identify basic personal hygiene products and daily grooming routines.

Standard 25.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to understand U.S. concepts of Time and Money and how to use these skills to function.

- 25.01 Identify and use ordinal and cardinal numbers.
- 25.02 Interpret clock time.
- 25.03 Demonstrate use of a calendar by identifying days of the week and months of the year.
- 25.04 Convert dates to numeric form.
- 25.05 Count and use U.S. coins and currency.

- 25.06 Identify checking and savings accounts, write a check and record information in checkbook and savings register.

Standard 26.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to access Transportation and Travel.

- 26.01 Identify transportation options.
- 26.02 Identify transportation costs, schedules and practices (exact change, tips).
- 26.03 Demonstrate ability to follow simple instructions related to geographical directions (N, S, E, W).
- 26.04 Read and understand traffic signs.
- 26.05 Identify required documents related to transportation (driver's license, insurance card, registration, passport).
- 26.06 Identify safe driving practices (seat belts, child safety restraints).

Standard 27.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to understand Safety and Security Issues.

- 27.01 Demonstrate knowledge of emergency procedures at home and work.
- 27.02 Interpret product label directions, warning signs and symbols.

Standard 28.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to understand Consumer Education Issues.

- 28.01 Identify food items, state costs and demonstrate use of coupons.
- 28.02 Identify clothing, read clothing labels (sizes and laundry instructions).
- 28.03 Read sales ads and compare prices (clothing, cars, food).
- 28.04 Identify types of housing (apartment, house, mobile home, condo).
- 28.05 Identify basic utility companies (water, gas, electric, telephone and cable).

Standard 29.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to utilize Government and Community Resources.

- 29.01 Identify places in the community and describe public services.
- 29.02 Demonstrate ability to purchase stamps and mail a package.
- 29.03 Demonstrate understanding of holidays and social customs.
- 29.04 Identify the current U.S. President, Vice President and Governor.

Standard 30.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to understand issues relative to Environment and the World.

- 30.01 Describe various weather conditions and respond appropriately to weather emergencies.
- 30.02 Locate the United States and Florida on a world map and locate county and city of residence on a state map.

Standard 31.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary for Family and Parenting.

- 31.01 Describe family members.
- 31.02 Locate neighborhood school or day care and follow enrollment procedures.
- 31.03 Demonstrate understanding of parental responsibilities and acceptable discipline.
- 31.04 Demonstrate importance of communication between home and school.

ACADEMIC SKILLS

Standard 32.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to Listen, Speak, Read and Write effectively.

- 32.01 Recognize, state, read and write statements and questions.
- 32.02 Listen to short conversations and answer questions orally and in writing.
- 32.03 Preview and make predictions prior to reading.
- 32.04 Demonstrate ability to read and comprehend silently and aloud and answer questions.
- 32.05 Determine the main idea in a simple paragraph.
- 32.06 Demonstrate sequential ordering of events.
- 32.07 Demonstrate ability to read a simple table or chart.
- 32.08 Write a dictation based on life-skill topics.
- 32.09 Use a bilingual and/or picture dictionary.
- 32.10 Write legibly upper & lower case letters and demonstrate use of capitalization.
- 32.11 Write a basic friendly letter and address an envelope including the return address.

Standard 33.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary to apply standard Grammar structures.

- 33.01 Use subject pronouns.
- 33.02 Use common verbs (affirmative, negative, yes/no questions, short answer): to be, future will, “going to,” present continuous, simple past, simple present tense, modals
- 33.03 Use adjectives: descriptive, possessive, demonstrative.
- 33.04 Use prepositions.
- 33.05 Use definite and indefinite articles.
- 33.06 Use common and proper nouns (singular and plural).
- 33.07 Use information questions.
- 33.08 Use adverbs: yesterday, tomorrow
- 33.09 Use articles: a, an, the

Standard 34.0: Demonstrate English Skills necessary for Development of Pronunciation skills.

- 34.01 Demonstrate ability to recognize and pronounce various beginning, middle, and ending sounds.
- 34.02 Articulate the sounds associated with consonants.
- 34.03 Articulate the sounds associated with vowels.

APPENDIX B
COMPETENCY CHECKLIST FACSIMILES FOR LCP-A AND LCP-B

The following pages are facsimilies of the checklists used by the classroom teachers in the study in order to document the learners' progress thorough the state-mandated ESOL competencies in levels LCP-A and LCP-B. The checklists are kept in the individual student portfolios. Teachers must sign and date each competency and the department head must verify the documentation.

FLORIDA ADULT ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES CURRICULUM CHECKLIST

ADULT ESOL LITERACY/FOUNDATION

Literacy Completion Point A

Student: _____	ID#: _____	Entry Date: _____
Institution: _____	Withdrawal Date: _____	Date Achieved: _____
Site: _____	Instructor(s): _____	

PLEASE CHECK CORRESPONDING BOX AS EACH STANDARD IS ACHIEVED.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SKILLS	
The student is able to...	
STANDARD 01.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English Skills necessary to Obtain Employment. Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
01.01	Identify entry-level jobs and workplaces of various occupations.
01.02	Recognize procedures for applying for a job and complete a simplified job application form with assistance.
01.03	Demonstrate ability to respond to basic interview questions.
01.04	Produce required forms of identification for employment.
01.05	Define job benefits vocabulary, understand W2 & W4 forms and complete sample W4 form.
STANDARD 02.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English skills necessary to Maintain Employment. Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
02.01	Demonstrate understanding of generic work standards, requirements and rules.
02.02	Demonstrate ability to ask for assistance and clarification on the job.
02.03	Recognize safety procedures appropriate to the job.
02.04	Demonstrate ability to read a simple work schedule.
02.05	Recognize pay stub and deductions.
STANDARD 03.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English skills necessary for Career Advancement. Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
03.01	Identify job promotion requirements.
03.02	Set education and employment goals.
03.03	Recognize importance of interpersonal communication skills on the job.
03.04	Demonstrate ability to use basic test taking strategies.
STANDARD 04.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English skills necessary to access Applied Technology. Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
04.01	Demonstrate knowledge of operating equipment necessary for home and work.
LIFE SKILLS	
STANDARD 05.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English skills necessary for effective Interpersonal Communication. Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
05.01	Use appropriate greetings, introductions and farewells.
05.02	Identify self and personal information.
05.03	Express likes, dislikes, feelings and emotions in culturally appropriate ways.
05.04	Use and respond to polite expressions.

STANDARD 06.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English skills necessary for effective Telephone Communication. Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
06.01	Demonstrate ability to use basic residential telephones.
06.02	Answer the telephone and respond or express a lack of understanding.
06.03	Use basic emergency vocabulary and 911 procedures.
06.04	Recognize and identify a telephone book, calling card, and a telephone bill.
STANDARD 07.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English skills necessary to communicate effectively on Health and Nutrition topics. Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
07.01	Recognize and identify basic body parts.
07.02	Recognize basic vocabulary relating to illness and accidents.
07.03	Recognize basic health care vocabulary (doctor, nurse, dentist, hospital, clinic, health department, emergency room).
07.04	Request a doctor's appointment & read an appointment card.
07.05	Identify various medications, their usage, request assistance with dosage and recognize requirements for immunizations.
07.06	Identify personal hygiene products and daily grooming routines.
07.07	Identify basic foods, food groups and healthy eating habits.
STANDARD 08.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English skills necessary to understand U.S. concepts of Time and Money and how to use these skills to function. Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
08.01	Recognize cardinal and ordinal numbers.
08.02	Tell time using analog and digital clocks.
08.03	Demonstrate the use of a calendar by identifying days of the week and months of the year using words and abbreviations.
08.04	Convert dates to numeric form.
08.05	Recognize U.S. currency, symbols relating to money and read prices (dollar/cent signs, decimal point).
08.06	Recognize a check and a money order and read amount.
STANDARD 09.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English Skills necessary to access Transportation and Travel. Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
09.01	Identify basic types of transportation (bus, taxicab, car, plane, and ship).
09.02	Identify signs using sight words and symbols (enter, exit, push, pull, men, women, caution, no smoking, no swimming, arrows, directional signs, bus signs).
09.03	Use vocabulary to ask for and give simple directions (turn left,

09.04	turn right, go straight, next to, between, in front of, behind). Identify safe driving practices (seat belts, child safety restraints).
STANDARD 10.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English skills necessary to understand Safety and Security Issues.	
Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
10.01	Demonstrate understanding of common safety procedures (walking, biking).
10.02	Demonstrate ability to respond to emergency procedures (fire, crime, medical crisis).
10.03	Identify warning symbols (poison, flammable, danger).
STANDARD 11.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English skills necessary to understand Consumer Education Issues.	
Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
11.01	Name and state the cost of basic food items.
11.02	Recognize and interpret concept of measurements (cup, quart, gallon, pound).
11.03	Name and state cost of basic clothing items.
11.04	Recognize and identify basic American clothing sizes (S, M, L, XL).
11.05	Identify types of housing (apartment, house, mobile home).
11.06	Identify basic utilities (water, gas, electric, phone, cable).
STANDARD 12.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English Skills necessary to utilize Government and Community Resources.	
Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
12.01	Identify basic government agencies (post office, social security, health department, Department of Children and Families).
12.02	Identify community services (hospital, police, fire, public schools, library, parks and recreation areas).
12.03	Demonstrate ability to purchase stamps and mail a package.
12.04	Demonstrate understanding of U.S. holidays and social customs.
12.05	Identify the current U.S. President.
STANDARD 13.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English Skills necessary to understand issues relative to Environment and the World.	
Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
13.01	Identify seasons and weather and respond appropriately to weather emergencies (hurricanes, tornadoes, floods).
13.02	Locate the United States and Florida on a world map, locate county and city of residence on a state map.
13.03	Identify key elements of recycling.
STANDARD 14.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English Skills necessary for Family and Parenting.	
Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
14.01	Identify family members (mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister).
14.02	Recognize compulsory schooling for children 6-16, enrollment procedures and the importance of regular school attendance.
14.03	Recognize proper care of children (requirement of food, shelter, hygiene, childcare providers).

ACADEMIC SKILLS	
STANDARD 15.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English Skills necessary to Listen, Speak, Read and Write effectively.	
Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
15.01	Recognize, identify and trace basic shapes and numbers.
15.02	Identify basic colors.
15.03	Recognize, state, read and write the alphabet (upper and lower case) and numbers.
15.04	Alphabetize basic word groups.
15.05	Use a picture dictionary.
15.06	Recognize, state, read and write vocabulary for personal information (first, middle, last name, number, street, zip, phone number and social security number) and fill out personal information form.
15.07	Trace and sign name (signature).
15.08	Recognize, state, read, and write basic questions and answers.
STANDARD 16.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English Skills necessary to apply standard Grammar structures.	
Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
16.01	Use subject pronouns (I, you, he, she, it, we, they).
16.02	Use common verbs (affirmative, negative, yes/no questions, short answers): present continuous, to be (present), simple present, modal "can"
16.03	Use adverbs: here, there, today, always, usually, never
16.04	Use demonstratives: this, that, these, those
16.05	Use information questions: who, what, when, where
16.06	Use common and proper nouns.
16.07	Use prepositions: in, at, from, on, for, with, of, under, next to, between, in front of, behind
16.08	Use articles: a, an, the
16.09	Use possessive adjectives (my, your, his, her, our, their)
STANDARD 17.0	
<input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate English Skills necessary for Development of Pronunciation skills.	
Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
17.01	Produce consonant and vowel sounds.
17.02	Recognize, state and link letters and sounds.

Effective as of July 1, 2001

ADULT ESOL LOW BEGINNING

Literacy Completion Point B

Student: _____	ID#: _____	Entry Date: _____
Institution: _____	Withdrawal Date: _____	Date Achieved: _____
Site: _____	Instructor(s): _____	

PLEASE CHECK CORRESPONDING BOX AS EACH STANDARD IS ACHIEVED.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SKILLS	
The student is able to...	
STANDARD 18.0	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate English Skills necessary to Obtain Employment Date: _____ Instructor: _____
18.01	Identify different kinds of jobs using simple help-wanted ads.
18.02	Describe personal work experience and skills.
18.03	Demonstrate ability to fill out a simple job application without assistance.
18.04	Produce required forms of identification for employment (photo I.D.).
18.05	Identify social security and income tax deductions. Understand W2 & W4 forms and complete sample W4 form.
STANDARD 19.0	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate English Skills necessary to Maintain Employment. Date: _____ Instructor: _____
19.01	Demonstrate understanding of employment expectations, rules, regulations and safety.
19.02	Demonstrate understanding of basic instruction and ask for clarification on the job.
19.03	Demonstrate appropriate treatment of co-workers (politeness and respect).
19.04	Identify parts of a pay stub and deductions.
STANDARD 20.0	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate English Skills necessary for Career Advancement Date: _____ Instructor: _____
20.01	Identify job promotion requirements.
20.02	Demonstrate interpersonal communication skills and positive attitude at work.
20.03	Explore educational opportunities for job advancement.
20.04	Demonstrate ability to use basic test taking strategies (circle, bubble in, dictation).
STANDARD 21.0	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate English Skills necessary to access Applied Technology. Date: _____ Instructor: _____
21.01	Demonstrate knowledge of operating equipment necessary for home and work.
LIFE SKILLS	
STANDARD 22.0	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate English Skills necessary for effective

Interpersonal Communication. Date: _____ Instructor: _____	
22.01	Demonstrate ability to report personal information including gender and marital status.
22.02	Demonstrate ability to make appropriate formal and informal introductions, greetings, and farewells.
22.03	Use appropriate expressions to accept and decline offers, and to express feelings and emotions.
STANDARD 23.0	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate English Skills necessary for effective Telephone Communication. Date: _____ Instructor: _____
23.01	Demonstrate ability to request operator assistance and use of 911.
23.02	Use appropriate telephone greetings, leave an oral message and take a written message.
23.03	Demonstrate understanding of basic parts of a phone bill.
23.04	Demonstrate ability to operate public and cellular phones, pagers, and use a phone card.
STANDARD 24.0	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate English Skills necessary to communicate effectively on Health and Nutrition Topics. Date: _____ Instructor: _____
24.01	Identify body parts.
24.02	Define health care vocabulary (emergency room, doctor, nurse, dentist, hospital, clinic, and health department).
24.03	Request doctor's appointment, communicate symptoms and injuries, and follow doctor's instructions.
24.04	Read and interpret information on medicine labels.
24.05	Identify basic foods and food groups, including nutritional information on food labels.
24.06	Identify basic personal hygiene products and daily grooming routines.
STANDARD 25.0	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrate English Skills necessary to understand U.S. concepts of Time and Money and how to use these skills to function. Date: _____ Instructor: _____
25.01	Identify and use ordinal and cardinal numbers.
25.02	Interpret clock time.
25.03	Demonstrate use of a calendar by identifying days of the week and months of the year.
25.04	Convert dates to numeric form.
25.05	Count and use U.S. coins and currency.
25.06	Identify checking and savings accounts, write a

check and record information in checkbook and savings register.

STANDARD 26.0

- Demonstrate English Skills necessary to access Transportation and Travel.

Date: _____ Instructor: _____

- 26.01 Identify transportation options.
 26.02 Identify transportation costs, schedules and practices (exact change, tips).
 26.03 Demonstrate ability to follow simple instructions related to geographical directions (N, S, E, W).
 26.04 Read and understand traffic signs.
 26.05 Identify required documents related to transportation (driver's license, insurance card, registration, passport).
 26.06 Identify safe driving practices (seat belts, child safety restraints).

STANDARD 27.0

- Demonstrate English Skills necessary to understand Safety and Security Issues.

Date: _____ Instructor: _____

- 27.01 Demonstrate knowledge of emergency procedures at home and work.
 27.02 Interpret product label directions, warning signs and symbols.

STANDARD 28.0

- Demonstrate English Skills necessary to understand Consumer Education Issues.

Date: _____ Instructor: _____

- 28.01 Identify food items, state costs and demonstrate use of coupons.
 28.02 Identify clothing, read clothing labels (sizes and laundry instructions).
 28.03 Read sales ads and compare prices (clothing, cars, food).
 28.04 Identify types of housing (apartment, house, mobile home, condo).
 28.05 Identify basic utility companies (water, gas, electric, telephone and cable).

STANDARD 29.0

- Demonstrate English Skills necessary to utilize Government and Community Resources.

Date: _____ Instructor: _____

- 29.01 Identify places in the community and describe public services.
 29.02 Demonstrate ability to purchase stamps and mail a package.
 29.03 Demonstrate understanding of holidays and social customs.
 29.04 Identify the current U.S. President, Vice President and Governor.

STANDARD 30.0

- Demonstrate English Skills necessary to understand Issues relative to Environment and the World.

Date: _____ Instructor: _____

- 30.01 Describe various weather conditions and respond appropriately to weather emergencies.
 30.02 Locate the United States and Florida on a world map and locate county and city of residence on a state map.

STANDARD 31.0

- Demonstrate English Skills necessary for Family and Parenting.

Date: _____ Instructor: _____

- 31.01 Describe family members.
 31.02 Locate neighborhood school or day care and follow enrollment procedures.
 31.03 Demonstrate understanding of parental responsibilities and acceptable discipline.
 31.04 Demonstrate importance of communication between home and school.

ACADEMIC SKILLS

STANDARD 32.0

- Demonstrate English Skills necessary to Listen, Speak, Read and Write effectively.

Date: _____ Instructor: _____

- 32.01 Recognize, state, read and write statements and questions.
 32.02 Listen to short conversations and answer questions orally and in writing.
 32.03 Preview and make predictions prior to reading.
 32.04 Demonstrate ability to read and comprehend silently and aloud and answer questions.
 32.05 Determine the main idea in a simple paragraph.
 32.06 Demonstrate sequential ordering of events.
 32.07 Demonstrate ability to read a simple table or chart.
 32.08 Write a dictation based on life skill topics.
 32.09 Use a bilingual and/or picture dictionary.
 32.10 Write legibly upper & lower case letters and demonstrate use of capitalization.
 32.11 Write a basic friendly letter and address an envelope including the return address.

STANDARD 33.0

- Demonstrate English Skills necessary to apply standard Grammar structures.

Date: _____ Instructor: _____

- 33.01 Use subject pronouns.
 33.02 Use common verbs (affirmative, negative, yes/no questions, short answer): to be, future "will," "going to," present continuous, simple past, simple present tense, modals.
 33.03 Use adjectives: descriptive, possessive, demonstrative.
 33.04 Use prepositions.
 33.05 Use definite and indefinite articles.
 33.06 Use common and proper nouns (singular and plural).
 33.07 Use information questions.
 33.08 Use adverbs: yesterday, tomorrow.
 33.09 Use articles: a, an, the.

STANDARD 34.0

- Demonstrate English Skills necessary for Development of Pronunciation skills.

Date: _____ Instructor: _____

- 34.01 Demonstrate ability to recognize and pronounce various beginning, middle, and ending sounds.
 34.02 Articulate the sounds associated with consonants.
 34.03 Articulate the sounds associated with vowels.

Effective July 1, 2001

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

John S. Butcher, the son of Jack and the late Dorothy (LaCrosse) Butcher, was born in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania and grew up in the coal region in the northeastern part of the state. After graduating from West Hazleton High School in 1974, he attended the Pennsylvania State University where he earned a B.A. in Spanish Linguistics in March 1979. He began his teaching career in Adult ESOL in Miami, Florida in January 1981. His students were predominately Cubans who arrived during the Mariel Boatlift in May 1980. After teaching in North Miami for a number of years, he began working in Hialeah, Florida where one of his teaching assignments was at a senior citizen center with elderly Cuban retirees. Later at a school in southwest Miami, he taught content-based ESOL classes in Florida Environment and Ecology, Listening Comprehension, Consumer Economics and American Food and "Accent Reduction" (Pronunciation). He completed an M.S. in Bilingual Education at Nova University in 1990. Starting in 1991, he began conducting teacher certification workshops in Language Acquisition, Cross-cultural Communication, and Vocational English to Speakers of Other Languages (VESOL). He was founding member of the Dade County Adult Assessment System (DCAASE) committee that established the unified, competency based curriculum for Dade County, Florida and was a contributing writer of the AEGIS Training Guide for part-time ESOL teachers. Upon receiving the OBEMLA Fellowship in 1998, he began his doctoral studies in Bilingual/Multicultural Education at the University of Florida, College of Education where he became assistant to the Graduate Coordinator of the

School of Teaching & Learning. During his studies he was contracted as a team member to design and teach the English Language Program at Princeton University for two summers. He is also a member of the State of Florida Task Force for Adult ESOL, the committee charged with directing Adult Education curriculum and training issues in the state. He is married to Constance (Hampp), and they have one son, Zakhary.