

TEACHER BELIEFS OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE AS A RESOURCE FOR
LATINA/O ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

By

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To Sergio, whose advice I sometimes took

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress
BCAR	Beliefs about Culture as a Resource
BLAR	Beliefs about Language as a Resource
ELL	English Language Learner
EOC	End of Course Assessment
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act
FAA	Florida Alternative Assessment
FCA	Focused Calendar Assessment
FCAT	Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test
HC	High Community Contact
LC	Low Community Contact
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
PCAR	Practices using Culture as a Resource
PLAR	Practices using Language as a Resource

Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
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TEACHER BELIEFS OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE AS A RESOURCE FOR
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By

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This thesis addressed the issue of low academic performance among Latina/o English Language Learners (ELLs) by exploring what high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about the role of language and culture as a resource for learning. The study used a triangulation of methods. Survey data was collected from 57 teachers at a large high school in central Florida. Four teachers also participated in a group interview, and two teachers participated in a follow-up group interview conducted after the initial analysis of data. Findings revealed misconceptions and inconsistencies in beliefs and practices of home culture and Spanish as a resource for teaching Latina/o ELLs.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Overview

Shortly after viewing the latest results of the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT), the principal of a central Florida high school expressed mixed emotions concerning the scores of students designated as English Language Learners (ELLs). “We’re making progress,” she said, “but we’re not where we need to be yet, and we’ve got to figure out how to close that gap. ”

Like educators around the country, this administrator is under pressure to “close that gap. ” Since the passage of The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) in 2001, the educational environment in the United States has emphasized assessments such as the FCAT as a means to measure accountability for the learning of all students. This means that the academic achievement of ELLs is linked to incentives such as school rewards, public recognition, and achievement-based funding. Despite more than a decade of such incentives, school districts across the nation are reporting inadequate progress by ELLs on the state and national assessments required by NCLB (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Meanwhile, the number of English Language Learners enrolling in school districts in the United States continues to increase. As is the case of the central Florida high school, the majority of ELL students are Latina/o Spanish-speaking students and comprise about 80% of the national K-12 ELL population (National Clearing for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs, 2011).

The school administrator noted above echoes voices of educators across the nation in asking how to train teachers to close the gap between the achievement scores

of Latina/o ELLs and those of their mainstream peers. The specific challenge of the administrator's central Florida high school is representative of the challenge facing schools throughout the United States. The purpose of this study was to explore ways to address this challenge.

In Chapter 1, I will situate the problem posed by the principal within the historic and educational policy context of second language instruction in the United States. I will also describe the specific context of ELLs in the state of Florida. In Chapter 2, I will explain that research shows that language minority students learn best in environments in which their language and culture is viewed as a resource by educators. Chapter 3 will describe the methods I used to gather information about if and how teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners at a Central Florida high school view and use language and culture as a resource for teaching Latina/o ELLs. My findings will be presented in Chapter 4, and I will discuss conclusions and implications in Chapter 5. Throughout the work, I will be addressing the following two research questions:

- What do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about the role of language and culture as a resource for learning?
- What do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about practices related to language and culture as a resource for learning?

Historic and Educational Policy Context

In 1965, the administration of Lyndon Johnson enacted the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as part of Johnson's "War on Poverty" campaign. The act allocated federal funds to schools serving K-12 students from low-income households. It was a significant piece of legislation because it dramatically increased federal funding and regulation of education, related educational achievement to categorical factors such as poverty, and emphasized the nation's investment in the

education of children from all backgrounds. Since 1965, ESEA has been reauthorized seven times, most recently with The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001.

No Child Left Behind maintained the original rhetoric of education for all children, citing as its primary purpose the closing of the “achievement gap” between white students and Hispanic Americans, African Americans, and American Indians. This gap was set to be closed by 2014, at which point, according to the goals of NCLB, all children in the United States were to be proficient in Reading and Mathematics. As part of this effort NCLB increased funding for educational programs that served minority and low-income students. To ensure that such funding was used effectively, the act established stricter accountability measures that relied heavily on standardized tests to determine progress towards academic goals, with particular attention paid to the progress of students who belong to subgroups based on factors such as race/ethnicity, English proficiency and income. As explained by then Secretary of Education Rod Paige, “ensuring that schools are held accountable for all students' meeting State standards represents the core of the bipartisan act's goal of ensuring that no child is left behind” (Paige, 2002).

In compliance with the act, schools, districts and states submitted annual reports that showed whether or not students in subgroups made “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) in Reading and Mathematics. As part of the accountability effort, a variety of incentives to show progress were tied to the information in those reports. Because the law allowed for states to develop their own plans for NCLB compliance, the nature of these incentives varied among states. However, for all states, a school that failed to meet AYP goals for two consecutive years would be labeled as “needing improvement”

and required to allow its students to transfer to a higher performing school within the same district. Schools that did not meet AYP goals for three years would be required to offer supplemental services, usually in the form of free tutoring, to its students. After five years, more drastic actions such as the replacement of personnel or extending the school year would be implemented.

The Florida Context

When NCLB was enacted, Florida already had an accountability system in place that assigned school grades (A-F) based on academic achievement. Since 2001, Florida has kept the school grading system while also following the guidelines of NCLB. In February 2012, the state of Florida was granted a flexibility waiver by the Obama administration that allows Florida to use an amended version of the pre-existing grading system as an accountability measure instead of NCLB guidelines. Florida was one of many states (33 at the time of writing) to receive this waiver in exchange for a promise to set even higher standards for all students. According to the Obama administration, these waivers were necessary because although higher standards and accountability were the “right goals,” NCLB had created unintended consequences such as lowering school standards to avoid failure and “teaching to the test” (Obama, 2012).

Florida was granted the flexibility waiver with the stipulation that it must amend its current grading system to include higher expectations and increased accountability for English Language Learners. On July 16, 2012, Florida released the Revisions to School Grades Rule reflecting the amendments required by the flexibility waiver. Its central tenet echoed previous NCLB policy:

Student achievement data from the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT), FCAT 2.0 and end-of-course (EOC) assessments and Florida Alternate Assessment (FAA) shall be used to establish both performance

levels and annual progress for individual students, schools, districts, and the state. Results shall further be used as the primary criteria in calculating school grades, school rewards and recognition, and performance-based funding and shall be annually reported (Revisions to School Grades Rule, 2012).

In compliance with the waiver, the achievement scores of ELLs must be included in these reports unless they have been enrolled in school in the United States for less than one year. Under the previous guidelines, ELL scores were not factored until after two years of instruction in a U.S. school.

This new requirement could have significant consequences for Florida, which has the third largest ELL population in the nation. In 2011-12, Florida's public schools enrolled more than 240,000 English Language Learners, 9.2% of the total enrollment (Services, 2012). Most of Florida's ELLs are Hispanic/Latina/o (76.2%). The FCAT scores of Florida's ELL students are lower than those of the non-ELLs (FLDOE). Among ELLs, 17% in grades 3-10 scored satisfactory or above on the reading portion of the 2012 FCAT; the percentage for all Florida students in grades 3-10 was 57%. Those percentages drop significantly for older students. Twelve percent of ELLs in grades 6-8 scored satisfactory or above on FCAT Reading; for grades nine and ten, the number is 9%, compared to 57% and 52%, respectively, for all students.

The Latina/o Context

To appropriately understand the context of the achievement gap between Latina/o ELLs and their non-ELL peers in Florida, it is essential to understand the complexity of the Latina/o experience in the United States. Over 16% of the total U.S. population falls under the umbrella of the term Hispanic/Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Among the 50.5 million Latinos in the U.S are people with roots in over 23 countries, including those whose ancestors inhabited the United States well before it

was established as such. Spanish is not the first language of many Latina/os in the United States. Indeed, it may not be spoken at all by someone who identifies as Latina/o. Much debate has developed around the usefulness of grouping such a diverse array of people under one umbrella-like term, with some scholars suggesting the term is a marketing ploy (Davila, 2001) and others arguing for its usefulness as a political mobilizer (Garcia, 1997; Gonzalez, 2001).

The options given for the Hispanic origin item of the last census exemplifies the problematic nature of the term. According to the United States census, Hispanic origin may refer to the “heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person’s parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States” and may be of any race (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010, p. 2). On the 2010 Census, respondents were first asked if they were of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. Respondents then replied to a separate question that asked about race. In addition to the five race categories (White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander) used in the census, respondents could also mark “Some Other Race.” In 2010, 53% of Hispanics identified as white, and over a third identified as “Some Other Race.” A brief published by the Census Bureau presented this phenomena as problematic explaining: “racial classification issues continue to persist among those who identify as Hispanic, resulting in a substantial proportion of that population being categorized as Some Other Race” (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010, p. 4).

The issue of complexity of identity is closely related to the problem this thesis addressed. As the United States struggles to delineate its identity in a globalized,

transnational reality, questions of how to deal with culture and language manifest in all arenas, but particularly in education.

Conclusion

The current political and educational climate of the United States emphasizes accountability through high-stakes testing as a means to ensure that historically marginalized students such as English Language Learners receive the same educational opportunities as their peers. Despite decades of such measures, ELLs across the U.S. continue to perform well below non-ELL students. This national-level situation is exemplified well by a large high school in Central Florida. This high school has been rewarded for its success with non-ELL students, but continues to struggle with its ELL students, who are mainly Latina/o. This study was designed as a response to the challenge of closing the achievement gap between Latina/o ELLs and their non-ELL peers at this Central Florida high school.

In Chapter 1, I introduced the topic of the thesis by explaining the historic and educational policy context of second language instruction in the United States. In the Chapter 2, I will explain what research in the field of education shows about how Latina/o ELLs acquire second language and learn academic content.

CHAPTER 2 LANGUAGE AND CULTURE AS A RESOURCE FOR LEARNING

Overview

Chapter 1 of this thesis introduced and contextualized a problem: Latina/o ELLs at a Central Florida High School are not making adequate achievement gains as defined by NCLB. In order to solve this problem, it is necessary to know what factors facilitate the learning of academic content for Latina/o ELLs. In Chapter 2 I will describe how research has shown that Latina/o ELLs learn best in environments in which language and culture are seen and used as a resource. I will then describe studies that have shown specific ways in which language and culture may be used as a resource for learning. In the conclusion, I will use the research questions posed in the introduction to anchor the research within the context of the larger study.

The Role of Language and Culture

Two major contributors in the field of education, Dr. James Cummins and Dr. Richard Ruiz, suggest that minority students learning a second language possess linguistic and cultural resources that educators should acknowledge and utilize in their interactions with students who are linguistically diverse. Cummins relates the process of second language acquisition to social factors and provides insight as to how people develop second languages, and Richard Ruiz presents three ways of viewing language's role in society and explains how each of those ways influence bilingual education.

Empowerment of Language Minority Students

Successful schools empower their students with the ability and confidence to succeed. Language minority students are empowered through school settings that 1)

instill cultural confidence, 2) provide collaborative interactional structures, and 3) present pedagogy that liberates students from instructional dependency (Cummins, 1986). These three components are closely interrelated. Cultural confidence is instilled through the affirmation of cultural identity. The affirmation of cultural identity is dependent upon the nature of interactional structures. Interactional structures set the stage for pedagogy that draws on a student's already existing resources and thereby liberates the student from instructional dependency.

Cummins posits that the academic success or failure of culturally diverse students depends on the micro-interactions between teachers and students, because "human relationships are at the heart of schooling" (Cummins, 2000, p. 40). Through student-teacher interactions, teachers reveal perceptions and assumptions of students that may reflect broader relations of power. Cummins describes these perceptions and assumptions as "role definitions." Teachers bring role definitions to their relationships with students, and those role definitions determine the nature of the interpersonal space created between teacher and student. It is within this interpersonal space that learning occurs. The learning process that occurs in these spaces can be coercive and reinforce negative assumptions about culturally diverse students for both the teacher and student, or collaborative, which empowers and reinforces the identity of the student (Figure 1-1). Collaborative relations of power are more likely to lead to student success. For example, Cummins cites research that shows that failure is less likely to occur in minority groups that do not feel inferior (Ogbu, 1982).

In the classroom, an example of an empowering process of identity negotiation is language instruction that builds on the first language of the student (Cummins, 1996,

2005). The skills gained from acquiring one language contribute to learning in another language. In fact, the conceptual knowledge developed when learning the first language serves as a base, or a common underlying proficiency, that aids in the learning of both the second language and the first language. For educators, this means that one way to reinforce the identity of a second language learner is to acknowledge and reinforce the value of the first language and use the interdependence of languages as a resource for learning (Cummins, 1979; 2005).

Another way to create a collaborative relation of power that fosters academic success is by building on the background knowledge of second language learners (Cummins, 2000). This may be achieved by incorporating content material that is relevant to the learner or through parent or community involvement. When home-school communication is increased through collaborative instead of coercive means, teachers learn more about the culture of their students and can use that knowledge to inform the content of their instruction (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001). In this setting, students learn how to create their own knowledge and are thus liberated from instructional dependency, or a dependency on schools and teachers for learning. The result of this liberation is an empowered student who is more likely to succeed academically. This idea was described similarly by Ladson-Billings (1995) as “culturally relevant pedagogy,” defined as a “theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate” (p. 469).

Cummins establishes various ways that the culture and language of minority-language students can be a potential advantage in education. He challenges that “we should be asking how we can build on this potential advantage in the classroom by focusing students’ attention on language and helping them become more adept at manipulating language in abstract academic situations” (Cummins, 2000, p. 38).

The Language as a Resource Paradigm

Cummins’ challenge requires educators to first acknowledge bilingualism as a potential advantage. This is not always the case. Published as a conceptual framework of an anthology for ESL professionals, Ruiz (1988) described three common “orientations” in language planning: language as right, language as problem, and language as resource. He defined orientations as a “complex of dispositions toward language and its role and toward languages and their role in society” and explained that these dispositions may be unconscious or pre-rational but must be made obvious for the purpose of language planning because they not only determine the way conversations about language planning are framed but ultimately inform the decisions made on the level of national and international policy regarding the role of language and cultural diversity in society (p. 4). Ruiz acknowledged the potential usefulness of all three orientations in specific contexts, but called for a greater emphasis on language as a resource as a means to “reshape attitudes about language and language groups” (p. 16).

According to Ruiz (1988), most language planning focuses on identifying and solving language problems. Ruiz surmised that the language-as-problem orientation gained credence because past language planning activities occurred in the context of national development and modernization alongside the “unique sociohistorical context

of multilingual societies” in the United States (p. 17). This orientation connects language diversity with social problems and its effects can be seen in policies that associated bilingualism with poverty (such as the original Bilingual Education Act) and policies that promoted transitional bilingual education, a model designed to transition bilingual students to English-only classrooms. Although this orientation may not always be malicious in nature, Ruiz expressed concern that it may be indicative of a more general view that sees cultural and social diversity as a negative aspect of society.

Language-as-right is another common orientation towards language planning identified by Ruiz (1988). He explained that there are many reasons people see language as a right. For one, the social and personal nature of language links it to the right of personal freedom and enjoyment or the right of freedom from discrimination. On a more practical level, language may determine the ability to participate in government-related activities such as voting, enrolling in benefits programs, and participating in legal proceedings. Ruiz described the rights-orientation as necessary particularly for legal reasons. However, it is this same association with legal matters that makes the language-as-right orientation sometimes problematic. According to Ruiz, legal terminology often creates confrontation, since a “right” is not merely a claim to something, but also a claim against someone.

In light of the imperfections of language-as-right and language-as-problem orientations, Ruiz (1988) proposed the augmentation of the language-as-resource orientation. Through the lens of language as a resource, language is viewed as an asset to be conserved and developed. Ruiz cited a number of ways in which language may be used as a resource. In transnational settings, language can be used for

purposes of international diplomacy, national security, or global business. In the domain of education, bilingualism may be used a skill that correlates to learning outcomes. Finally, language may be used a social resource that broadens the cultural repertoire of diverse communities. Ruiz hypothesized that the effects of a resource-based approach towards language would extend beyond the realm of education and policy and “contribute to a greater social cohesion and cooperation” (p. 17).

When fused with the empowerment framework presented by Cummins, the language-as-resource orientation provides a more focused lens through which to explore the question of how to best prepare educators who work with ELLs. Hence, the following research questions will be explored in this study:

- What do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about the role of language and culture as a resource for learning?
- What do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about practices related to language and culture as a resource for learning?

Empirical Studies

The assumption that both language and culture can serve as resources for classroom instruction are further supported by studies that can be divided into two distinct but related categories: those that demonstrate how culture can be successfully used as a resource and those that demonstrate how language can be used as a resource.

Culture as a Resource

Several studies that demonstrate the use of students’ home culture as a resource for learning were conducted through the Kamehameha Early Education Program (KEEP), which operated as a research school in Hawaii from 1972 until the 1990s. The majority of KEEP’s kindergarten through third-grade students were identified as high

risk for academic failure. Because careful consideration was given to the cultural distinctions of the Polynesian-Hawaiian children who attended the school, valuable studies (Au & Mason, 1981; Weisner & Gallimore, 1977; Weisner, Gallimore, & Jordan, 1988) emerged that showed a connection between academic achievement and the reinforcement of cultural identity.

Au and Mason (1981) showed the impact of teachers' knowledge of community culture on academic achievement. The study was framed as a test of the social organization hypothesis, which holds that minority school children have competencies that are manifested outside of school, but are not utilized in school. Gallimore and Au (1997) described this as the "competence/incompetence paradox." Researchers analyzed the reading lessons of two teachers, one who had low contact (LC) with the sample community of students and one with high community contact (HC). The teachers used different participation structures in their separate classrooms. Teacher HC implemented a highly collaborative structure that incorporated communicative practices from the community, while Teacher LC used a structure that reflected mainstream practices and limited student participation. Au and Mason found a relationship between the Teacher HC's approach and student time-on-task and achievement, but concluded that the connection between academic learning and social organization deserves further investigation.

Another study that derived from the KEEP program further explored the competence/ incompetence paradox. Weisner, Gallimore, and Jordan (1988) specifically sought to examine the perceived 'cultural discontinuity' (Ogbu, 1982) between natal and school settings that appeared to influence the academic

achievement of minority students. Through interviews and observations, the researchers tested the assumption of a homogenized Native Hawaiian culture that could be reproduced in classroom settings. They built on previous KEEP studies that found a positive relationship between academic achievement and the incorporation of classroom (peer-tutor) practices that mirror the sibling-care practices of many Kamehameha students (Weisner & Gallimore, 1977; Gallimore, 1977). However, the study revealed an inconsistency of practices and beliefs concerning natal, or childcare, practices that support school-relevant interactions among the Native Hawaiians who participated in the study. These inconsistencies point to the importance of “unpackaging” the cultural components of classroom learning to create a curriculum that reflects individualized, not stereotyped, conceptions of culture. Educators must avoid the temptation to go too far in assuming their students belong to a homogenized minority culture whose systems can be reproduced in the classroom. They explain that “culture can aid adaptation to the unfamiliar by providing options to resolve discontinuities between home and classroom,” but if applied too rigidly, culture may also serve to prevent adaptation to unfamiliar situations (Weisner, Gallimore, & Jordan, 1988, p. 345).

Another caution when framing diverse student outcomes in terms of “cultural discontinuity” was discussed by Vasquez, Pease-Alvarez, and Shannon (1994). These scholars questioned the consequences of positioning minority cultures in direct opposition to mainstream middle class culture. Based on three separate ethnographic studies conducted over a span of six years, the authors observed that the community members of a Mexicano community in California drew upon a diverse range of cultural and linguistic resources to help them navigate an unfamiliar and sometimes oppressive

society. This study also emphasized the importance of considering the individualized context of minority learners, but still concluded that despite the diversity within the minority community, there are ways that both culture and language (through their interconnectedness) could be used as a classroom resource. For example, they suggest that teachers can use conversation patterns such as “contingency query” (a questioning device in which an adult asks for elaboration or clarification) with students who are accustomed to such conversations at home. They also suggest that because bilingual children are also often bicultural, they “reap special benefits from participating in and negotiating their multiple worlds” (p. 108). The presence of these special benefits points to the need for a “recognition perspective” in education in which “the full range of minority children’s experiences should be thought of as a resource for learning in schools” (p. 150).

Another way to describe the experiences that Vasquez, Pease-Alvarez, and Shannon identified as resources are “funds of knowledge,” defined as the accumulated historical and personal experiences of the people in a minority community (Gonzalez et al., 1995; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001). By conducting qualitative ethnographic research in both households and classrooms, Moll et al. (2001) sought to examine the ways schools can use the resources of households and community to design more effective instruction. They found that when teachers assume the role of learners/researchers and enter the households of their students, they begin to see the student as a whole child and organize instruction that considers and uses the funds of knowledge of that child’s household. Furthermore, by visiting the households of their students, teachers see beyond the stereotypes that can impede the usefulness of

culture as a resource. For example, one teacher observed in the study described the surprise she felt when a home visit revealed that one of her students, Carlos, was an international traveler with an interest in political and economic issues, due to his frequent trips to Sonora, Mexico:

These children have had the background experiences to explore in-depth issues that tie in with a sixth grade curriculum, such as the study of other countries, different forms of government, economic systems, and so on. (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001, p. 137)

This teacher continued to explain how the discovery that Carlos sold candy to other kids in the neighborhood gave her the idea to create a learning module about candy. The module included three components identified by Cummins' as effective in second-language schooling: 1) it affirmed cultural identity, 2) included parent (home) participation, and 3) enabled students to create their own knowledge by including relevant and cognitively challenging material (Cummins, 1986). This example illustrates the conclusion of the review of literature related to culture as a pedagogical resource: Teachers can incorporate effective and culturally relevant pedagogy for minority students when they have an understanding of their students' cultural context that is not based on stereotypes but complex realities.

Language as a Resource

Although culture and language are closely related (e.g. language is a way we express and interpret our culture) there is work that focuses on the specific usefulness of language as a resource for the learning of ELLs. These studies adopt the perspective promoted by Cummins and Ruiz that bilingualism can be used as a strength in classrooms.

One way that the effectiveness of language as a resource can be observed is through the success of bilingual programs that present content material in students' L1. The more support a student is given in their L1, the higher the academic achievement of that student in the L2 (Thomas & Collier, 1997; Saville-Troike, 1984). Research has (Cummins, 1986) shown bilingual programs to be the most effective tool for improving the academic achievement of second-language learners. The logical inference is that this is due partially if not entirely due to the application of the L1 as a resource for instruction in the L2.

Unfortunately, few public schools in the United States have implemented this form of bilingual education despite overwhelming evidence of its effectiveness. Is it, then, possible to take advantage of the L1 as a resource in monolingual educational settings? Some research shows that certain strategies that rely on the L1 may be implemented in monolingual settings, and indeed Cummins (1986) allows this possibility, as long as educators communicate the value of the minority language. This could be accomplished in simple ways such as teachers encouraging students to read and speak in their L1 or displaying an interest in learning words and phrases from a student's L1. Another way the L1 can be used instructionally is through grouping strategies, where students who speak the same language but with various English language proficiency levels can work together on a task and use the L1 and English. Explicit instruction in the L1 is another way in which the value of the language (and hence the student's identity) can be affirmed.

When it comes to language learning in general, most educators and researchers these days promote instructional practices that focus on process learning instead of

explicit instruction aimed at the acquisition of a set of skills. Using this line of thought, the best way to improve reading comprehension skills is to simply read something relevant and comprehensible (Krashen, 2004; 2009). Indeed, this sort of instruction seems to fit with the common underlying proficiency model and the above described instructional practices that gave consideration to cultural contexts. One of Cummins' tenets of effective instruction is that it allows students to create their own knowledge. Nonetheless, some evidence suggests that certain forms of explicit instruction regarding language may aid second-language learners.

For example, a comparison of the reading strategies of successful bilingual Latina/o students with less successful Latina/o readers revealed that the successful readers are more aware of the connection between Spanish and English and therefore the potential of bilingualism as an advantage (Jimenez, Garcia, & Pearson, 1996). For instance, the successful readers activated prior knowledge and used cognates to identify unknown vocabulary more often than less successful readers. This suggests teachers may need to activate the common underlying proficiencies described by Cummins (1986) in order to build upon already existing language resources. Again, the first step in teachers doing this is to be aware that language can be a resource.

Teacher Beliefs/Attitudes as a Prerequisite

The above findings show that a potentially effective way to increase the progress of Latina/o ELLs on standardized achievement tests is to create a school and classroom environment that understands and draws upon the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of those students. In order for this to occur, it is important that teachers and administrators first acknowledge such resources. Many researchers in education have concluded that the acknowledgment and subsequent application of culture and language as a resource

in classrooms with second language learners is dependent upon teacher beliefs and/or attitudes (Castro, 2010; Gay, 2010; Okhee, 2004; Pajares, 1992). From this assumption, studies developed (Barry & Lechner, 1995; Byrnes & Kiger, 1994; Cabello & Nancy, 1995; Hachfield, Hahn, Schroeder, Anders, Stanta, & Kunter, 2011; Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001; Razfar, 2012; Reeves, 2006; Siwatu, 2007; Spanierman, et al., 2011; Taylor, 2001; Walker & Shafer, 2004) that attempted to measure teacher beliefs and attitudes towards cultural and linguistic diversity. While among these studies numerous variations exist among the terms and theories used to frame the research, a close examination reveals two common threads: 1) teachers' broader beliefs about language and culture are complex and may differ from their professional beliefs and/or practices and 2) professional development and increased exposure to multicultural/multilingual settings correlates to more positive attitudes towards English Language Learners.

Three studies related to teacher beliefs of language and culture as a resource framed the research focus as "teacher attitudes toward English Language Learners." The first (Karabenick & Clemens, 2004) sought to determine teachers' attitudes (n = 729) toward ELLs in a Midwestern school district that had recently experienced a rapid influx of immigrants and refugees. The quantitative survey instrument measured teachers' attitudes towards 14 "conceptual areas" related to ELLs. The results were used to inform the school district of potential areas for professional development. Although some of the conceptual areas did not relate directly to culture and language as a resource, several did, including "teacher beliefs about ELL parents," "second language learning," "relationship between language and academic skills," and "bilingual

bicultural education.” The results in these areas revealed that although teachers held generally positive attitudes towards ELLs in their classroom, many teachers held conflicting beliefs regarding culture and language as a resource. For example, 52% of the respondents agreed that using the L1 at home interferes with the learning of a second language, but 65% responded that learning in L1 does not interfere with learning in L2. However, respondents responded positively about the advantages of bilingualism. Regarding culture, the majority of respondents (89%) agreed that cultural diversity can enrich a community, although a substantial number (42%) agreed that cultural differences may be a barrier to community cooperation and socialization. The results of the study were used to implement professional development that emphasized parental involvement and engagement based on the “funds of knowledge” approach.

Similarly, a quantitative study (Reeves, 2006) of the attitudes of mainstream secondary teachers in a southeastern city revealed seemingly paradoxical beliefs concerning English Language Learners. Designed specifically to measure teacher attitudes towards ELL inclusion, coursework modification, professional development, and second language acquisition, survey responses showed that teachers in the study ($n = 279$) held generally welcoming attitudes about ELL inclusion and tolerated coursework modification. However, despite reporting that they felt inadequately trained to meet the needs of ELL students, teachers expressed little enthusiasm for professional development opportunities. Of particular relevance to this study, 82% of respondents felt that English should be the official language of the United States, although 58% disagreed that ELLs should avoid using L1 at school. Notably, that still means that nearly 40% responded that L1 use at school should be discontinued.

Nonetheless, this study also points to a potential disconnect between general attitudes towards language diversity and attitudes towards ELL instruction.

A third study (Walker & Shafer, 2004) that measured teacher attitudes towards English Language Learners also sought to understand the factors that contribute to teacher attitudes toward ELLs. Through both surveys and interviews with teachers in a Great Plains state, Walker and Shafer found the nature of teacher attitudes towards ELLs to be neutral to strongly negative, although this study has its paradoxes as well. For example, although 70% of respondents were not actively interested in having an ELL student in their classroom, 78% responded that language-minority students bring needed diversity to schools. More negative attitudes toward ELLs were dependent upon the community context and influenced by factors pertaining primarily to lack of training and support for teaching ELLs.

Walker and Shafer are not the only researchers who explored the factors that influence teachers' attitudes towards English Language Learners. A study (Youngs & Youngs, 2001) of 143 mainstream junior high and middle school teachers compared survey responses about general beliefs towards ELLs with information about general educational experiences, prior contact with ELLs, ELL training, personal contact with diverse cultures, demographic characteristics, and personality. The results showed that the strongest predictors of a positive attitude towards ELLs were completion of a foreign language or multicultural education course, ELL training, experience abroad, work with ESL students, and gender. This suggests that professional development programs that prepare teachers to work with ELLs should include a component that exposes teachers to cultural diversity.

Similarly, a quantitative study (Byrnes & Kiger, 1994) of the contextual variables influencing teachers' attitudes about language diversity pointed to a need for professional development that provides teachers with intercultural experiences in a supported setting. Using survey data from 191 teachers in 3 states, Byrnes and Kiger found that factors such as region, ESL training, graduate degrees, and experience with linguistic minority children all contribute to more positive attitudes about linguistic diversity.

Another study (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001) differentiated between educators' beliefs about diversity in personal and professional contexts. After conducting a comprehensive review of previous diversity measures, Pohan and Aguilar developed and evaluated a two-dimensional approach to measuring educator attitudes about diversity based on the premise that an educator may hold personal beliefs that differ from professional beliefs. The two scales were field tested with 756 preservice and practicing teachers from four states. Although this work was concerned with diversity in general, the specific responses to items about bilingualism are useful to review. For example, Pohan and Aguilar found that teachers could simultaneously believe that students should receive instruction in their L1 while also believing that immigrants should learn English instead of maintaining their L1. This again suggests that studies of teachers' beliefs towards ELLs should carefully consider the relationship between broader beliefs about diversity and the professional beliefs that may directly inform practice.

The complexity of teachers' attitudes towards English Language Learners is further demonstrated in an ethnographic study (Razfar, 2012) of an ESL teacher in a predominantly Latina/o urban high school. Through interviews and observations, Razfar

observed a teacher who expressed a commitment to multilingualism reflect beliefs of monolingualism and subtractive assimilation through her classroom practice and personal narratives of language acquisition. Razfar argued that this nuance might be missed in a purely quantitative study of teacher beliefs.

These studies underscore the complex challenge of understanding teachers' beliefs and attitudes about language and culture as a resource, and yet they all point to the growing need to do so in order to further inform professional development efforts. A similarly designed study would benefit the central Florida high school described at the beginning of this paper by first determining whether or not the teachers are acknowledging and using the potentially vast reserve of cultural and linguistic resources their English language learners bring to school each day. The results of such a study could then be used to determine the nature of professional development programs designed to train teachers in ways to close the achievement gap lamented by the principal. The development and design of such a study will be the focus of the next portion of this paper.

Conclusion

In Chapter 2, I explained that Latina/o English Language Learners acquire second language skills and learn academic content when their cultural and linguistic identity is affirmed through practices that value language and culture as a resource for learning. Because the application of these practices depends on teachers' beliefs, I developed the following two research questions for this study:

- What do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about the role of language and culture as a resource for learning?
- What do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about practices related to language and culture as a resource for learning?

In previous studies with similar research questions, teachers of English Language Learners have reported a wide range of beliefs about the role of language and culture as resource for learning. At times their beliefs seemed paradoxical in nature and were influenced by many factors, most notably exposure to cultural/linguistic minorities and professional development. I concluded that more research is needed in order to better understand teacher beliefs about language and culture as a resource for Latina/o ELLs and inform future professional developments aimed at closing the achievement gap. In Chapter 3, I will explain the methodology I selected and/or designed to address the research needs informed by this literature review.

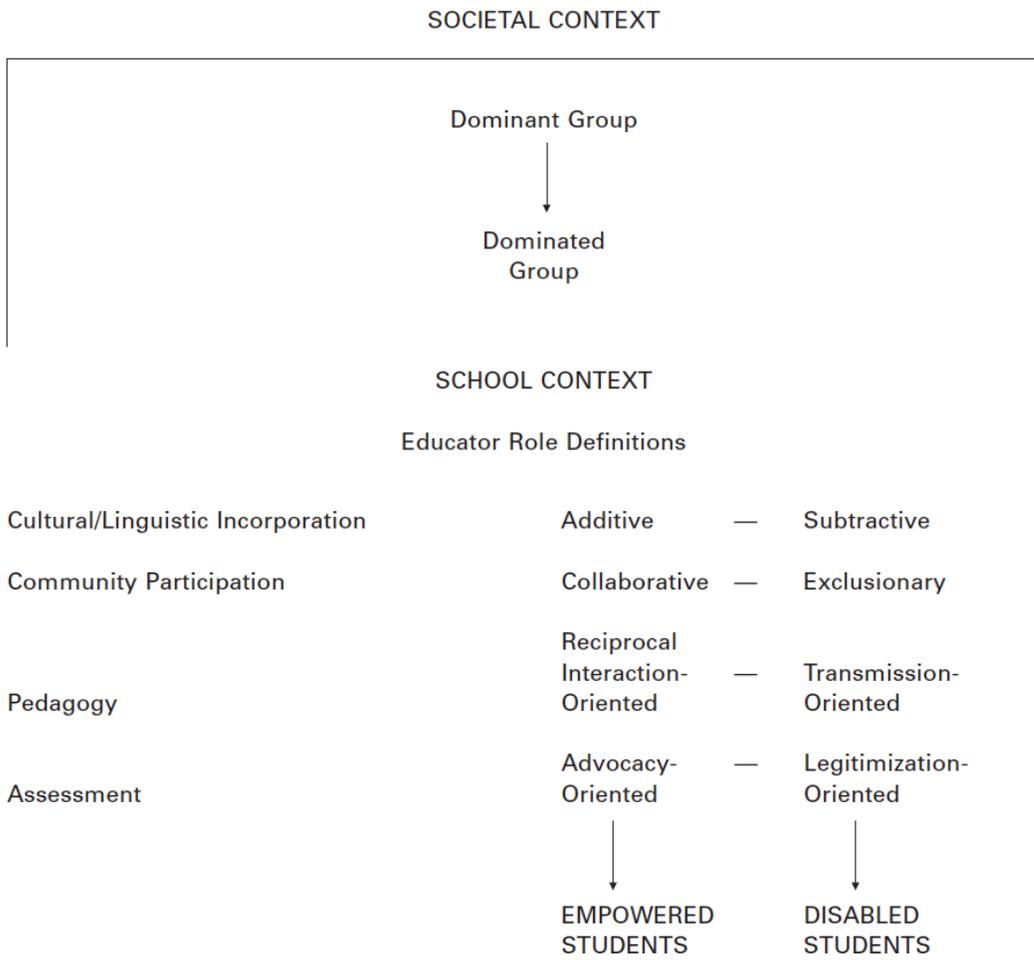


Figure 1- 1. Cummins' empowerment framework

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

Overview

The purpose of this study was to learn more about what high school teachers of Latina/o ELLs believe about the role of language and culture as a resource for learning. Chapter will 3 describe the methods of research and analysis chosen to achieve this end, offer a rationale for why each method was chosen, and describe the research setting and participants

Research Setting

The research for this study was conducted at a high school in Central Florida, The high school is located in the largest city of a county that has seen its Latina/o population double since 2000. According to the latest census data, 11.2% of the county's population is Latina/o, of which 21% is Mexican and 40% is Puerto Rican. The high school was built in 2000 as a magnet school for the visual and performing arts. It is located in a part of the county that has seen much recent growth, but is surrounded by horse farms, a major source of revenue for the county. The high school has been recognized as an "A" school for the past two school years, a designation tied to NCLB incentives. School administrators point out that this is a considerable accomplishment since 60% of the students are economically disadvantaged, a category which often equates with lower performance on standardized tests (Aud et al., 2012). Twenty-six percent of the 2,260 students at the high school are Latina/o. White students make up 45% of the student body, making the school a "minority-majority" school. Approximately, 4% ($n = 87$) of the students are considered ELL, the majority of whom are Latina/o.

While the school has experienced success with the academic achievement of its black, white, Latina/o, and economically disadvantaged students¹, it lags behind the state average for graduation rates of ELLs. In 2010-11 school year, the high school had a graduation rate of 39% for ELL students, compared to the state average of 53%. The graduation rate for white students was 80%, 71% for black students, and 70% for Hispanic/Latino students. The graduation rates for these latter three categories all exceeded the state averages of 74%, 58%, and 68%, respectively (Table 3-1).

On the Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT), ELLs exceeded state averages for ELLs on the 2011-12 mathematics and writing tests, but performed below state averages on reading (Table 3-1). On the reading portion of the FCAT, only 28% of ELLs earned a satisfactory score, while 64% of white students, 38% of black students, and 44 % of Latina/o students earned a satisfactory score. Sixty-six percent of ELLs at the high school scored satisfactory or above on the mathematics portion of FCAT, compared to 71% of white students, 58% of black students, and 64% of Latina/o. On the writing portion of FCAT, 71% of ELLs at the high school earned a satisfactory score or above, while 87% of white students, 81% of black students, and 83% of Hispanic/Latino students scored satisfactory or above.

The Mixed-Methods Approach

This study used a mixed methods approach to research. This approach assumes that a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods enables the researcher to form a more complete understanding of the focus of their study (Creswell, 2003; Creswell, 2005; Greene, 2012; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Mixed methods research recognizes the

¹ Results for ELLs are also calculated within the categories of black, white, Hispanic/Latino, and economically disadvantaged.

complexity of human phenomena and acknowledges the role that context and values play in research (Greene, 2012). As explained by Jennifer Greene, a professor in research methodologies at the University of Illinois:

A mixed methods approach can contribute importantly to the quality and reach of a study specifically through its respectful engagement with multiple ways of knowing and multiple perspectives on the character of human phenomena and the prerequisites for warranted knowledge (Greene, 2012, p. 769).

Greene also explains that mixing methods encourages self-inquiry throughout the research process and thus provides researchers with a way to “protect their data from their [sic] selves” (Greene, 2012, p. 756). In other words, mixed methods research (MMR) can increase the validity and reliability of research by acknowledging all of the ways that validity and reliability may be jeopardized and addressing those concerns throughout the research process.

The quantitative instrument in this study was a survey created online using Survey Monkey and administered to teachers at a Central Florida high school. The survey served as a way to collect data from a larger sample of teachers than would have been possible via quantitative methods due to time and scope constraints. The survey also provided teachers with a more anonymous way to report their beliefs. Because the survey was limited in its ability to capture a more in-depth view of teachers’ beliefs, it was complimented by a group-interview and follow-up interviews, the qualitative components of this study. Questions for the follow-up interviews were developed as responses to survey results. Structuring the data collection in this way allowed me to address the limitations of the survey and created a space for reflection on the research process as the process unfolded.

Survey

The purpose of the survey was to measure teachers' beliefs and practices regarding the use of ELLs' native language and home culture as a resource for learning in the classroom. The survey items were either selected from previous studies (e.g., Byrnes et al., 1994; Spanierman et al., 2011) that sought to measure teacher beliefs about language and culture or were created based on the beliefs and practices believed by scholars in the field of education, (particularly Jim Cummins, Richard Ruiz, and Luis Moll,) to promote positive learning environments for English language learners (Appendix).

The survey was created using the website Survey Monkey and consisted of 36 statements that teachers rated strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree. Respondents could also skip a question. The questions were divided among four subsets: Ten survey items related to teacher beliefs about culture as a resource for learning (BCAR); eight related to beliefs about language as a resource (BLAR). Another eight questions related to practices of language as a resource (PLAR), and ten items related to practices of culture as a resource (PCAR).

The survey was sent out via an email with an embedded link to all instructional staff at the high school on Friday, November 30, after I briefly explained the subject of my research at a weekly staff meeting. I received immediate enthusiastic responses from several teachers who praised the topic of the research and expressed interest in the group interview. By the end of the first day, I had received approximately 20 responses. I sent out a reminder email on the following Monday and another email on the final day of the survey period, which was Thursday, December 6. By the end of the survey period 53 out of 107 teachers (roughly 50%) had fully filled out the survey. The

responses to questions about demographics suggest that I have a fairly accurate sample.

BCAR Items

Nine items from the survey sought to measure teachers' beliefs concerning culture as a resource. Three items expressed a "negative" BCAR, or a belief that does not value culture as a resource for teaching Latina/o students. The other six items expressed a "positive" BCAR, or a belief that values culture as a resource for teaching Latina/o students.

BLAR Items

Eight items from the survey asked teachers to rate statements about beliefs concerning language as a resource. Five of these items expressed a "negative" BLAR, or a belief that does not value language as a resource for teaching Latina/o students. Three items expressed a "positive" BLAR, or a belief that values language as a resource for teaching Latina/o students.

PLAR Items

Another eight items from the survey were intended to determine if teachers were incorporating practices that use Spanish as a resource for teaching Latina/o ELLs. Of these items only two were worded "negatively," describing a practice that would discourage use of Spanish, presumably negating the potential resource of the language. The remaining six items described practices of using Spanish as a resource.

PCAR Items

Items describing practices that use culture as resource for learning comprise ten of the survey items. Only one of these items was worded negatively, expressing a

practice that would negate the use of culture as a resource for learning. Nine PCAR items described a practice that utilizes culture as a resource for teaching Latina/o ELLs.

Group Interview and Follow-up Interviews

Teachers were invited to participate in a semi-structured group interview in the last email reminder that I sent for the survey. Seven teachers volunteered, but only four were able to attend on the scheduled day. They included a math teacher, history teacher, English teacher, and ESOL teacher. Each grade-level was represented and there were two males and two females. The group interview was held on December 13, or one week after the end of the survey period. During the group interview, teachers were asked to respond to three questions related to the use of culture and language as a resource for ESOL students.

After further analyzing survey results and the notes from the first group interview, I asked the original participants to participate in a follow-up interview. Two of the four original participants were available for the follow-up interviews, which were conducted separately and asked questions related to specific items from the survey.

Group Interview Participants

Carmenza²

Carmeza had 11 years of experience teaching ESOL and Spanish at the time of the study. She holds a bachelor's degree in secondary education in English as a second language from Interamerican University of Puerto Rico and M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction in ESOL and multicultural education from the University of Florida. Carmenza also trains teachers in ESOL strategies for teacher certification as an adjunct instructor

² All names are pseudonyms.

at Florida Southern College. She sponsors the Multicultural Club and writes an ESOL Q&A piece in the school's weekly staff newsletter.

Jake

Jake teaches World History and AP World History. He has six years of teaching experience. He has a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Florida and is a former member of the United States Coast Guard.

Ashley

Ashley teaches AP Calculus and Algebra Honors. She has a bachelor's degree in mathematics from the University of Florida and is certified to teach math grades 9-12. She has been teaching high school for five years.

Marc

Marc teaches English Honors. He was the 2010-11 Teacher of the Year at the high school. He finished course requirements and passed the exam to become ESOL certified in June of 2012. He was the varsity soccer coach for the 2011-2012 season.

Data Analysis

A mixed-methods approach to research implies not only the mixing of methods when obtaining data, but also a mixing of methods when analyzing data (Bazeley, 2012; Creswell, 2003; Creswell, 2005; Greene, 2012; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). By maintaining a "flexibility and pragmatism about design, openness to data, and a touch of inventiveness in approach to analysis" researchers may "fully exploit the integrative potential of their data as they seek to answer the questions they have posed" (Bazeley, 2012, p. 825). My goal when analyzing the data was to allow each source to inform the other in as many ways as possible so that I could learn as much about my research questions as the data could provide.

To analyze the survey results, the first step was to code each item BCAR, BLAR, PCAR, and PLAR. To create these subgroups, I divided each of my research questions into four sub-questions:

- What do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about the role of culture as a resource for learning? (BCAR)
- What practices of culture as a resource do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners report using in their classrooms? (PCAR)
- What do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about the role language as a resource for learning? (BLAR)
- What practices of language as a resource do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners report using in their classrooms? (PLAR)

Coding the items in this way allowed me to easily see which items addressed which sub-question. This also allowed me to organize data into four Likert-type scales and create a composite score for each subgroup to reflect a central tendency. I calculated the composite score by assigning each response a number, or “score,” one through four, where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree. I then found the average for each item, reversing the numbers for items that were negatively worded. The average score for all of the items on a particular scale represented its composite score. I also calculated the standard deviation for each item on the scale. Survey Monkey provided descriptive statistics for each item on the survey and I used those numbers to learn more about responses to individual items and double check the accuracy of my analysis.

Notes from the group interview were also coded as BCAR, BLAR, PCAR, or PLAR after they were transcribed. I also included a positive sign (+) if the comment expressed a belief or practice that values language and culture as a resource and a negative sign (-) if the comment expressed a belief or practice that does not value

language and culture as a resource. These comments were then integrated into the chart where I had organized survey results. Because questions from the follow-up interviews were based on responses to specific items from the survey, they were not coded for the four subgroups, but rather transcribed and comments marked as positive or negative dependent on the type of belief or practice expressed.

Conclusions

In Chapter 3, I explained how I developed a mixed-methods research design that uses a survey, group interview, and follow-up interviews to answer the two research questions that are the focus of this study:

- What do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about the role of language and culture as a resource for learning?
- What do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about practices related to language and culture as a resource for learning?

In Chapter 4, I will report the findings of the three data collection instruments as they relate to the research questions.

Table 3-1. ELL achievement compared to other subgroups at school and state level.
 Numbers for FCAT results refer to percentage of students scoring satisfactory or above. Graduation rates also reflect percentages.

	Graduation Rate		FCAT Writing Results		FCAT Reading Results		FCAT Math Results	
	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State
All students	77	70	85	74	54	57	67	58
White	80	72	87	76	64	69	71	68
Black	71	61	81	66	39	38	58	40
Latino	70	66	83	76	44	53	64	55
Economically disadvantaged	70	63	81	70	45	46	61	48
ELL	39	51	71	60	28	33	66	41

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

Overview

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the survey and group interviews. The first section presents the results of the demographic questions of the survey. The rest of the sections are organized by the four subgroups (BCAR, PCAR, BLAR, and PLAR) that described the items from the survey. Each subgroup correlated to one of the four research questions. Therefore, the second section presents findings related to beliefs about culture as a resource (BCAR). The third section presents findings related to practices of culture as a resource (PCAR). The fourth and fifth sections report results related to beliefs of language as a resource (BLAR) and practices of language as a resource (PLAR), respectively. Findings from the group interviews and follow-up interviews are also woven into each section.

Demographic Findings

Fifty-three people responded to the online survey, of which 58% ($n = 29$) were female and 42% ($n = 21$) were male. A large majority, 85% ($n = 42$) identified as white; 8% ($n = 4$) identified as black or African American. Seven respondents (14%) identified as Latina/o. These numbers seem to be a fairly accurate representation of the school's faculty. Thirty-three percent ($n = 15$) of respondents were bilingual or multilingual. Respondents were also asked if they had experience abroad, to which 56% ($n = 28$) responded that they had travelled to another country.

Respondents were divided fairly evenly among subject areas. Teachers of English/Language Arts were the most represented sample of the survey with 24% ($n = 12$). Twenty-two percent ($n = 11$) of respondents were math teachers, and 20% ($n = 10$)

taught Life/Physical Sciences. Fifty-two percent ($n = 26$) of respondents had over ten years of teaching. Forty-eight percent ($n = 24$) of respondents stated that they had their ESOL certification. However, the survey didn't differentiate between ESOL certification and ESOL endorsement, which are easily confounded, so this number can likely be interpreted to mean that 48% of respondents have had some sort of ESOL training to meet the state requirement. Twenty-three respondents (46%) hold a master's degree and 44% ($n = 22$) reported having a bachelor's degree.

Three of the questions from the demographic section asked participants about religion. Fifty-one percent reported regularly attending religious services. Most of the respondents with a religious preference were Protestant (44%, $n = 22$) or Catholic (22%, $n = 11$). Six (40%) of the Protestant respondents were Southern Baptist and four (27%) were Methodist. The remaining ($n = 9$) Protestant respondents chose "other" as best describing their affiliation.

Beliefs about Culture as a Resource

The results of this study show that teachers at this Central Florida high school generally do believe that the culture of their Latina/o ELLs can be a resource for learning, although there are some cases where this appears to be less so. Nine of the survey items were on the BCAR scale. The mean score for those items was 2.9/4.0, after reverse coding for negatively worded items. In the group interview and follow-up interviews, teachers also made primarily positive comments regarding beliefs about culture as a resource.

Five of the survey items that asked teachers to rate attitudinal statements of beliefs about culture as a resource were worded positively, expressing a positive belief about culture as a resource (Table 4-1). Of these five statements, teachers agreed most

strongly with the statements that expressed the belief that teachers are better able to meet the academic needs of their students when they know more about their students' community (3.4/4.0) and culture (3.4/4.0). Only 3.8% ($n = 2$) disagreed with the statement about community and there was only one respondent who strongly disagreed with the statement concerning culture.

Comments from the group interview corroborate this finding. Group-interview participant Jake explained that knowledge he gained while travelling to Honduras and interactions he had with Latina/o friends while serving as a member of the Coast Guard helped him to make personal connections with Latina/o ESOL students that he felt made students feel more comfortable in his classroom and therefore more receptive to learning. Another group-interview participant, Mark, agreed:

Yeah, I try to talk about places I have travelled too. For example, I had a Colombian student, and I recommended Gabriel Garcia Marquez and I could tell that that students' parents really appreciated that and were impressed that I know about Garcia-Marquez. From then on, I knew I had the support of the parents.

While speaking about these examples, both Jake and Mark made comments that related to the BCAR item that stated, "the cultural experiences of my Spanish-speaking ELL students vary significantly between students." While describing his experience with a student from Honduras, Jake began to express respect for this student and other Latina/o ELL students' he has taught for overcoming issues such as gang violence and, in the case of the Honduran student, a long journey on foot from Honduras to Texas. However, in the midst of this thought, he qualified this saying, "although, some of them do come from good backgrounds." He then continued to speak about his surprise and respect for the difficulties faced by the Honduran student. In the case of Mark, he mentioned that after travelling to Colombia, he became aware of how different things

were in Colombia compared to other places he had travelled in Central America and the Caribbean.

In the survey, forty-nine percent ($n = 26$) agreed that the cultural experiences of Latina/o ELLs vary significantly, while only 5.7% ($n = 3$) strongly agreed. Thirty-eight percent ($n = 20$) disagreed and 8% ($n = 4$) strongly disagreed. On a negatively worded BCAR item that expressed a similar idea, (Spanish-speaking countries all share a similar set of holidays, customs, and cultural activities.), only seventeen percent ($n = 9$) agreed. Most people (58.5%, $n = 31$) disagreed or strongly disagreed (23%, $n = 11$).

The positively worded BCAR item that received the lowest level of agreement was the statement that read, "Spanish-speaking ELLs have competencies that they display outside of school but not in school" (2.8/4.0). While 61% ($n = 31$) of respondents agreed with the statement, another 30% ($n = 15$) disagreed ($n = 13$) or strongly disagreed ($n = 2$).

Four of the items from the BCAR scale were negatively worded, or expressed a belief that does not value culture as a resource (Table 4-2). The highest-rated item (2.9/4.0) of these was "It is the responsibility of Spanish-speaking ELLs to adapt to American culture and school life." Sixty-two percent ($n = 33$) of respondents agreed to this statement, and 15% ($n = 8$) strongly agreed. Twenty-one percent ($n = 11$) disagreed, and 2% ($n = 2$) strongly disagreed. In a follow-up interview, Mark explained his response to this item:

I had, uh (...) mixed ideas about this. In some ways, I feel that it is, of course, (...) partly the student's responsibility to (...) attempt to learn some part, you know, attempt to (...) become proficient in the language of the place where they're living, but at the same time, I kind of felt like you needed to meet in the middle a little bit more.

In a separate follow-up interview, Ashley echoed this idea, saying that she agrees that to a certain point, Latina/o ELLs should adapt to American culture and school life, even though she is simultaneously aware she needs to adapt to the students in her classroom and is willing to do so as part of her job to teach students to the best of her ability.

Another negatively worded item that was moderately-rated (2.5/4.0) was “The cultural backgrounds of my Spanish-speaking ELLs sometimes impede their learning.” Forty-nine percent of respondents ($n = 26$) agreed with this statement, and 6% ($n = 3$) strongly agreed. On the other hand, 38% ($n = 20$) disagreed and 8% ($n = 4$) strongly disagreed. This belief was not expressed in the group interview. All four participants agreed that the families of their Latina/o ELLs are an asset. Said Mark, “most of the time, kids put school first. For the most part, school is the priority. I even had several guys quit the soccer team, because they said their moms said they weren’t studying enough because of soccer.”

The negatively worded statement, “Students who question authority in school usually have difficulty learning” also received a high ranking (2.4/4.0). More respondents disagreed ($n = 4$) or strongly disagreed ($n = 24$) than agreed ($n = 23$) or strongly agreed ($n = 1$).

Practices of Cultures as a Resource

The second sub-question of this study was: What practices of culture as a resource do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners report using in their classrooms? According to the surveys and interviews, teachers in the sample are using culture as a resource for teaching Latina/o ELLs. Ten survey items related to

practices of culture as a resource (PCAR). The mean score for PCAR items from the survey was 3.0/4.0, after reverse coding for negatively worded items.

With the exception of one item, all items on the PCAR scale were statements that reflected a positive practice of culture as a resource. All nine of these items had a mean rating of 2.8 or above (Table 4-3). The three highest-rated PCAR items had a mean score of 3.2/4.0. The first of these was “I present lessons that build upon the background knowledge of all of my students.” There were no “strongly disagree” responses for this item, and 9.6% ($n = 5$) chose “disagree.” The remainder were “agree” (69%, $n = 36$) or “strongly agree” (23%, $n = 12$). On the item, “I design lessons that help my students become independent learners, or learners who do not depend on a school or teacher for learning,” 70% ($n = 35$) agreed and 26% ($n = 13$), strongly agreed. Only two respondents (4%) strongly disagreed. The third highly rated item was “I have examined my own behavior in the classroom for signs of bias or favoritism,” with 65% ($n = 32$) of respondents agreeing and 29% ($n = 14$) strongly agreeing.

Three other PCAR statements received a mean score of 3.0/4.0. One of these was the item, “I take into account the various communication styles of racial and ethnic minorities when I plan my classroom activities and procedures,” which received no “strongly disagree” responses and only seven (14.6%) “disagree” responses. Seventy-five percent ($n = 36$) of respondents agreed and 10.4% ($n = 5$) strongly agreed. Sixty-two percent ($n = 31$) of respondents in the survey agreed with the statement “I have made contact with the parents or guardians of my ELL students,” and 16% ($n = 8$) strongly agreed. Only 22% ($n = 11$) disagreed and no respondents strongly disagreed.

In the group interview, all four teachers reported having made contact with the parents or guardians of a Latina/o ELL.

The item “I have examined the materials I use in my classroom to check for cultural bias (e.g., stereotypes, incorrect cultural information)” also received a mean score of 3.0/4.0. Sixty-four percent ($n = 32$) of respondents agreed and 18% ($n = 9$) strongly agreed. Only 16% ($n = 8$) disagreed and one respondent (2%) strongly disagreed. When asked about this item in a follow-up interview, Mark, an English teacher, admitted that he had never read a book or story before class with the explicit intent of checking for cultural bias, but says that he often has moments while teaching in which he has looked out upon a classroom of diverse faces and become aware of the various perspectives and conscious of the way he is presenting the material. In a separate follow-up interview, Ashley, a math teacher, said that she hasn’t checked her materials for bias because she is a math teacher. She explained, “numbers are numbers, so there’s no biased way to present those.”

The issue of bias in classroom materials also came up in the group interview. Participants were discussing the possibility of administering the FCAT in Spanish, when Carmenza, the ESOL teacher, interjected with a comment about a recent exam:

Did you see in the last FCAT? Everyone agrees, there was a question that you wouldn’t get if you were not, you know, if you were from a different country. I can’t remember it now, but look and you will see. So it’s not just the language of the test.

The test she referenced was one of a series of district-created English test that all 9th and 10th grade students must take periodically to predict their FCAT English success.

The items “I incorporate lessons that help my students develop a critical perspective on issues such as inequality and oppression” and “I involve my students in

the creation of classroom rules and procedures” both had a mean rating of 2.9/4.0. The lowest-rated PCAR item was the statement, “I involve my students in the creation of classroom rules and procedures” (2.8/4.0). Fifty-three percent ($n = 26$) of respondents agreed and 16.3% ($n = 8$) strongly agreed. Twenty-nine percent disagreed and only one respondent (2%) strongly disagreed.

The sole negatively worded PCAR was “I discourage my students from discussing issues such as racial inequality or social injustice.” The mean rating for this item was 1.9/4.0 (Table 4-4). Eighty-one percent of respondents ($n = 44$) disagreed or strongly disagreed, while 15% ($n = 8$) agreed and 4% ($n = 2$) strongly agreed.

During the group interview, an instance of culture being used a resource outside of the classroom was mentioned by Mark. In 2011-12, Mark was the coach of the predominantly Latina/o soccer team at the high school. He described his decision to start a “Viva ____!” campaign for the team:

We had a mostly Hispanic team and the other teams were racist against us for that. I wanted the boys to be proud, so other schools knew calling us Mexican or whatever is not an insult. Even with the soccer banquet. Instead of having it catered or ordering pizza or something, we had a potluck and all the dishes were from, you know, Central and South America and everyone brought their families. It was a real good atmosphere. I wished I could speak Spanish so I could have addressed the families. And the food, of course, was delicious.

Mark continued by explaining that because of the “Viva _____!” campaign, he built rapport with the team members, who responded to him more because as he explained, “they knew that I cared.”

Beliefs about Language as a Resource

The third research question of this study asked what teachers believe about language as a resource for teaching Latina/o English language learners. Eight items

from the survey were designed to answer this question. Teachers in the group interview also commented on beliefs about language as a resource. The responses from the survey and group interview reveal that teachers generally do believe that Spanish can be used a resource for learning. The mean score for BLAR items from the survey was 2.9/4.0, after reverse coding for negatively worded items. In the group interview and follow-up interviews, teachers made positive comments regarding Spanish as a resource for learning, although some comments expressed the belief that students in the ESOL program use their limited proficiency in English as a “crutch.”

Three of the items from the BLAR scale of the survey were worded positively, expressing the belief that Spanish can be used a resource for learning for Latina/o ELLs. All three of these items received a mean rating of 2.9/4.0 or above (Table 4-5). For the highest-rated item (3.2/4.0), 73% ($n = 37$) of respondents agreed and 24% ($n = 12$) strongly agreed that “Spanish-speaking ELLs can use their knowledge of Spanish to learn content material in English.” Only two respondents (3.9%) disagreed and no one strongly disagreed.

The second-highest rated item (3.1/4.0) on the positively worded BLAR scale asked teachers to respond to the statement, “Bilingual students have benefits for learning that monolingual students do not have.” Sixty-three percent ($n = 32$) of respondents agreed and 24% ($n = 12$) strongly agreed, while 14% ($n = 7$) disagreed and one respondent (2%) strongly disagreed.

No respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, “Whenever possible, second language learners should receive instruction in their first language until they are proficient enough to learn via English instruction,” but 31% ($n = 16$) disagreed. Fifty-four

percent ($n = 28$) agreed with this item, and 15% ($n = 8$) strongly agreed. A conversation related to this item arose during the group interview. When asked about what the high school could do to better serve Spanish-speaking ELLs, Mark immediately responded, “We need more Spanish-speakers classes. Then they can learn the subject in Spanish and English.” Carmenza agreed, saying that FCAT scores improved after the school started a Spanish for Spanish Speakers course the year before. Ashley also agreed and asked why the FCAT is not offered in Spanish. She then recounted the story of an ELL student who was placed in Ashley’s basic math class based on a low FCAT mathematics score. Ashley felt that student belonged in an advanced or honors course, but since the FCAT relied heavily on word-problems, her score was low. Ashley concluded by saying, “I mean, they’re not testing language. They’re testing the material, so they should have FCAT in Spanish.”

These comments also relate to several negatively worded items on the BLAR scale, particularly the items “Students should not be allowed to speak a language other than English while in school” (1.8/4.0) and “Speaking Spanish in school impedes the learning of Spanish-speaking ELLs” (2.0/4.0). Eight percent ($n = 4$) of respondents agreed with the first item and 6% ($n = 3$) strongly agreed, while 2% ($n = 1$) strongly agreed with the second statement, and 17% ($n = 9$) agreed. On the other hand, 50% ($n = 26$) of respondents disagreed and 37% ($n = 19$) strongly disagreed that “students should not be allowed to speak a language other than English while in school,” and 64% ($n = 33$) disagreed and 17% ($n = 9$) strongly disagreed that “Speaking Spanish in school impedes the learning of Spanish-speaking ELLs” (Table 4-6).

Beliefs were also expressed concerning the effect of speaking Spanish outside of school. The statement, “Parents of ELLs should speak English with their children whenever possible” was the highest rated negatively-worded statement (2.8/4.0). Sixty-five percent ($n = 34$) of respondents agreed with this statement and 12% ($n = 6$) strongly agreed. Fifteen percent ($n = 8$) disagreed and 8% ($n = 4$) strongly disagreed.

For a similar item, 44% ($n = 23$) of respondents agreed that “Spanish-speaking ELLs would make faster achievement gains if they spoke less Spanish at home and with peers” (2.5/4.0). Another 39% ($n = 20$) disagreed with the same statement, and 12% ($n = 6$) strongly disagreed. Eight percent ($n = 4$) strongly agreed. To the statement, “Speaking Spanish outside of school impedes the learning of Spanish-speaking ELLs” (2.0/4.0), 15% ($n = 8$) agreed and 2% ($n = 1$) strongly agreed. Sixty-five percent ($n = 34$) disagreed and 19% ($n = 10$) strongly disagreed.

A belief about language as a resource was expressed in the group interview that was not measured as part of the survey. Twice during the group interview, Jake mentioned that some ELL students use their limited proficiency in English “as a crutch.” The first time he used this phrase, he was referring to ELLs and said, “It must be difficult not to speak the language. Of course, some use it a crutch.” After the second mention, Ashley agreed and told the story of an ESOL student whom she struggled to motivate. She said the student knew that he would receive a ‘C’ in her class regardless of his performance, so she felt he didn’t put forth much effort. She said that some ELL students succeed because they work hard, but “other students, it doesn’t work because they are not (dedicated). They use ESOL to say, ‘I don’t have to do this.’”

Another belief about language as a resource expressed during the group interview had to do with Spanish as a resource for teaching. While explaining the ways in which she learns about the backgrounds of her ELL students, Carmenza addressed the other teachers saying, “but don’t think that I have an advantage just because I speak Spanish.” There was immediate disagreement from the other three teachers, who insisted she does have an advantage. All three of the other teachers expressed a desire to know more Spanish so they could converse with students.

Practices of Language as a Resource

The fourth sub-question of this study asked: What practices of language as a resource do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners report using in their classrooms? Eight items from the survey asked teachers to rate their agreement to statements describing practices of Spanish as a resource. The mean score for PLAR items from the survey was 2.9/4.0, after reverse coding for negatively worded items. In the follow-up interviews, two respondents spoke about ways specific practices of language as a resource are used in their classrooms.

The most highly rated practice from the PLAR scale was the positively worded item, “I sometimes group Spanish-speaking ELLs who have limited proficiency in English with Spanish-speaking students with high proficiency so they can work together on a task in both Spanish and English” (3.2/4.0) (Table 4.7). Sixty-five percent ($n = 34$) of respondents agreed and 25% ($n = 13$) strongly agreed. No one strongly disagreed, while 9.6% ($n = 13$) strongly agreed. In a follow-up group interview, Ashley explained that for her, this means having a student who is fluent in both Spanish and English translate for a student who is only proficient in Spanish.

The second highest-rated PLAR item was, “I have learned some words or phrases in Spanish so that I can better communicate with my students” (3.0/4.0). Seventy-nine percent ($n = 41$) of respondents agreed (58%, $n = 30$) or strongly agreed (21%, $n = 11$). No one strongly disagreed and, 21% ($n = 11$) disagreed. Another positively worded item from the PLAR scale received a mean rating of 2.9/4.0. This item asked respondents to rate agreement to the statement, “I allow my Spanish-speaking students to study content material in Spanish when available.” Sixty-five percent ($n = 34$) of respondents agreed to this statement and 15% ($n = 8$) strongly agreed. Three respondents (6%) strongly disagreed and seven (14%) disagreed. Related to that item was the statement, “I have Spanish language materials available for students in my classroom” (2.7/4.0). Forty-four percent ($n = 23$) of respondents agreed and 14% ($n = 7$) strongly agreed. Thirty-seven percent ($n = 19$) disagreed and 6% ($n = 3$) strongly disagreed.

When asked about this item in a follow-up interview, Mark said that although he has many books by Spanish-speaking authors in his classroom, all of those books are in English. However, during the group interview, Mark described a project he assigned one year when he had several ELLs in his classroom. Students were asked to analyze a poem. The Spanish-speaking students were given an optional alternative assignment in which they could recite a poem in English and Spanish and explain what meanings, if any, were lost in translation. Mark said the textbook they used at the time had several Spanish-language poems that students could use or they were given the option of finding a poem online. Ashley remembered seeing a Spanish-language version of her

textbook and perhaps even using it once, but said that currently the only Spanish-language material she has in her classroom is a Spanish-English dictionary.

The mean rating for the item “I use cognates (words with similar linguistic roots and corresponding meaning) to show similarities between Spanish and English” was 2.7/4.0. The majority of respondents (51%, $n = 26$) agreed or strongly agreed (12%, $n = 6$). Seventy-five percent ($n = 37$) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the positively worded statement “I have used an interpreter to communicate with the parents or guardians of a Spanish-speaking student.” Twenty percent ($n = 10$) disagreed.

Two of the items on the PLAR scale were negatively worded, describing a practice that does not utilize language as a resource for teaching Latina/o ELLs. The item, “I discourage my students from speaking a language other than English in my classroom” had a mean rating of 1.9/4.0 (Table 4-8). No respondents strongly agreed with that statement; 15% ($n = 8$) agreed. Most respondents disagreed (58%, $n = 30$) or strongly disagreed (27%, $n = 14$). The other negatively worded item was “I am hesitant to call or email the parents or guardians of students whose parents I suspect do not speak English” (2.2/4.0). Only one respondent (2%) strongly agreed to this statement, while 37% ($n = 19$) agreed. Thirty-nine percent ($n = 20$) disagreed and 23% ($n = 12$) strongly disagreed.

Other practices of language as a resource outside of the classroom were mentioned during the group interview. Carmenza described how she hosts a bilingual open house at the beginning of each school year. Parents are invited to the open house via a Spanish-language “all call.” Four years ago, Carmenza convinced the principal to

allow her to translate all messages from the school into Spanish. If a students' records show that Spanish is the primarily language of the household, those students receive phone messages from the school in Spanish. Mark, who coached a largely Latina/o soccer the year before, mentioned how he printed Spanish-language T-shirts to support the team. He also convinced the principal to say "Viva _____!" after announcing soccer wins during morning announcements.

Another practice of language as a resource that was mentioned three times during the group interview was the use of ESOL paraprofessionals. Paraprofessionals are hired to provide extra support for ELLs. In 2011-12, the high school only had one paraprofessional on staff. After teachers complained that they needed more support, the school petitioned for funding to hire another paraprofessional. For the 2012-12 school year, the school had 2 paraprofessionals, but all participants in the group interview agreed there should be more. Jake explained that he uses the paraprofessional regularly to provide accommodations for his ELLs, such as translating test materials. Ashley said that she has also used ESOL paraprofessionals to act as interpreters when she needed to phone the family of an ELL.

Conclusion

In Chapter 4, I described how the results of the survey, group interviews, and follow-up group interviews answered each of my four research questions. In Chapter 5, I discuss the conclusions drawn from my findings and the implications of the research professional development and future research.

Table 4-1. Beliefs about culture as a resource (BCAR), positively worded items

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
Spanish-speaking ELLs have competencies that they display outside of school but not in school.	2.8	0.78
Spanish-speaking ELLs bring needed diversity to schools.	3.3	0.72
The cultural experiences of my Spanish-speaking ELL students vary significantly between students.	3.2	0.59
The more I know about my students' community, the better I am able to meet their academic needs.	3.4	0.57
The more I know about my students' culture, the better I am able to meet their academic needs.	3.4	0.61

Table 4-2. Beliefs about culture as a resource (BCAR), negatively worded items

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
Spanish-speaking countries all share a similar set of holidays, customs, and cultural activities.	2	0.69
Students who question authority in school usually have difficulty learning.	2.4	0.74
The cultural backgrounds of my Spanish-speaking ELLs sometimes impede their learning.	2.5	0.72
It is the responsibility of Spanish-speaking ELLs to adapt to American culture and school life.	2.9	0.66

Table 4-3. Beliefs about practices of culture as a resource (PCAR), positively worded items

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
I involve my students in the creation of classroom rules and procedures.	2.8	0.72
I assign readings that provide alternative historical accounts or perspectives.	2.9	0.71
I incorporate lessons that help my students develop a critical perspective on issues such as inequality and oppression.	2.9	0.75
I have made contact with the parents or guardians of my ELL students.	3	0.62
I have examined the materials I use in my classroom to check for cultural bias (e.g., stereotypes, incorrect cultural information).	3	0.65
I take into account the various communication styles of racial and ethnic minorities when I plan my classroom activities and procedures.	3	0.5
I present lessons that build upon the background knowledge of all of my students.	3.2	0.6
I design lessons that help my students become independent learners, or learners who do not depend on a school or teacher for learning	3.2	0.51
I have examined my own behavior in the classroom for signs of bias or favoritism.	3.2	0.55

Table 4-4. Beliefs about practices of culture as a resource (PCAR), negatively worded items

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
I discourage my students from discussing issues such as racial inequality or social injustice.	1.92	0.79

Table 4-5. Beliefs about language as a resource (BLAR), positively worded items

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
Whenever possible, second language learners should receive instruction in their first language until they are proficient enough to learn via English instruction.	2.90	0.69
Bilingual students have benefits for learning that monolingual students do not have.	3.10	0.68
Spanish-speaking ELLs can use their knowledge of Spanish to learn content material in English.	3.20	0.51

Table 4-6. Beliefs about language as a resource (BLAR), negatively worded items

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
Speaking Spanish in school impedes the learning of Spanish-speaking ELLs.	2.04	0.69
Speaking Spanish outside of school impedes the learning of Spanish-speaking ELLs.	2.04	0.77
Spanish-speaking ELLs would make faster achievement gains if they spoke less Spanish at home and with peers.	2.48	0.83
Students should not be allowed to speak a language other than English while in school.	1.81	0.82
Parents of ELLs should speak English with their children whenever possible.	2.81	0.74

Table 4-7. Beliefs about practices of language as a resource (PLAR), positively worded items

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
I have learned some words or phrases in Spanish so that I can better communicate with my students.	3.00	0.66
I sometimes group Spanish-speaking ELLs who have limited proficiency in English with Spanish-speaking students with high proficiency so they can work together on a task in both Spanish and English.	3.15	0.57
I allow my Spanish-speaking students to study content material in Spanish when available.	2.90	0.72
I have Spanish language materials available for students in my classroom.	2.65	0.79
I use cognates (words with similar roots) to show similarities between Spanish and English.	2.73	0.70
I have used an interpreter to communicate with the parents or guardians of a Spanish-speaking student.	2.94	0.77

Table 4-8. Beliefs about practices of language as a resource (PLAR), negatively worded items

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation
I discourage my students from speaking a language other than English in my classroom.	1.88	0.65
I am hesitant to call or email the parents or guardians of students whose parents I suspect do not speak English.	2.17	0.81

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Overview

Chapter 4 reported the findings from the survey, group interview, and follow-up interviews. In Chapter 5, I discuss the conclusions and implications of those findings as they relate to my two research questions:

- What do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about language and culture as a resource for learning?
- What do high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about practices related to language and culture as a resource for learning?

Findings show that teachers generally do believe in the value of culture and language as a resource for teaching Latina/o ELLs. However, after examining individual items from the survey more closely and comparing those items with findings from the interviews, I identified four misconceptions about the role of language and culture in teaching ELLs that are inconsistent with other beliefs expressed through the survey that value the role of language and culture. Data from the follow-up interviews suggest that these misconceptions and inconsistencies stem from limitations of the survey design that resulted in a masking of beliefs and practices that may not value the role of language and culture as a resource for learning to the extent needed to create the culture-affirming learning environment that foster academic success for Latina/o ELLs.

In the first section of Chapter 5, I describe the misconceptions about second-language acquisition revealed in the findings and identify inconsistencies among survey items or opinions expressed in the group interview. The second section explains those misconceptions and inconsistencies using information from the follow-up interviews.

The next section describes the limitation of the study, and the final section discusses the implications of the findings.

Misconceptions and Inconsistencies

Language minority students such as Latina/o ELLs learn best when their cultural identity is affirmed through an empowering learning process and their first language is seen as a resource instead of a problem (Cummins, 1986, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ruiz, 1988). Teachers must believe that the culture and language of their Latina/o students is a resource for learning in order to empower those students and affirm their cultural identity (Castro, 2010; Gay, 2010; Okhee, 2004; Pajares, 1992). Any belief expressed through the survey, group interview, and follow-up interview that did not value the language or culture of Latina/o ELLs is a misconception about the role of language and culture for teaching Latina/o ELLs. Data from the survey revealed four such misconceptions that were inconsistent with other beliefs professed through the survey, group interview, and follow-up interview that value the role of language and culture in teaching Latina/o ELLs.

The most obvious example of such an inconsistency is seen in the response to the first item of the survey: “It is the responsibility of Spanish-speaking ELLs to adapt to American culture and school life.” This statement expresses a belief that devalues the culture and language of Latina/o ELLs by assuming that “American” culture and school life is superior to the cultural experiences of language-minority students. As Cummins explained, this type of belief creates a coercive instead of collaborative relation of power between student and teacher, and coercive relations of power inhibit academic success for language minority students (2000).

The survey data showed that the idea that ELLs should adapt to American culture and school life is a misconception held by 77% ($n = 41$) of the teachers in the study. Yet, among the 77% of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, none disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “The more I know about my students’ culture, the better I am able to meet their academic needs” (Figure 5-1). The rationale behind this survey item was that if teachers believe that they are better able to meet the academic needs of their students when they know more about their students’ culture, they are more likely to activate culture-affirming practices (Cummins, 2000) such as using their students’ funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 2001), presenting culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995), and developing a non-stereotyped view of minority experiences (Weisner et al., 1988; Vasquez et al., 1994) (Appendix).

Using these culture-affirming practices are examples of *teachers* adapting their curriculum to meet the needs of their students, and not an example of *ELLs* adapting to American culture and school life. Therefore, the idea that it is the responsibility of ELLs to adapt to American culture and school life is a misconception that is inconsistent with the belief that teachers can better meet the needs of their students when they know more about their students’ culture.

On a second survey item, seventy-six percent ($n = 25$) of the same respondents (that agreed or strongly agreed with Item 1) agreed and 22% strongly agreed with the culture-affirming belief that Spanish-speaking ELLs bring needed diversity to schools. This particular survey item was borrowed from a 2004 study that measured teacher attitudes towards ELLs in mainstream classrooms. In that study, the item received a

strong positive response when given to a group of teachers who otherwise professed strongly negative attitudes towards ELLs (Walker et al., 2004). The authors of that study found that teachers responded positively to general questions about diversity but on items specifically related to their classroom practices, displayed more negative attitudes toward ELLs. In this study the inverse seems to be true: teachers reported believing in and utilizing specific practices that value culture and language as a resource, but expressed a more general belief that devalues the culture and language of their ELLs. This finding is more consistent with the Pohan and Aguilar study (2001) that differentiated between teachers' professional and personal beliefs concerning diversity. They found that teachers held personal beliefs that devalued the L1 of bilingual students, but nonetheless believed that the L1 should be a resource for learning in the professional context of their classroom.

This sort of inconsistency of beliefs can be further seen through responses to survey items related to specific practices of language as a resource (PLAR). Seventy-three percent ($n = 24$) of those respondents who agreed or strongly agreed to Item 1 responded that they had learned some words in Spanish to help them better communicate with Spanish-speaking ELLs. Eighty-eight percent ($n = 29$) agreed or strongly agreed that they allow students to study content material in Spanish when available. Respondents also reported that they used cognates to show similarities between Spanish and English, interpreters to contact parents of ELLs, and grouping strategies to accommodate ELLs in their classroom. Again, these practices are all examples of teachers adapting to meet the language needs of their students and not vice versa.

In fact, responses to all items on the PLAR scale, which received a moderately high mean rating of 2.9/4.0, seemed inconsistent with several survey items about beliefs of language as a resource (BLAR). For example, the statement, “Parents of ELLs should speak English with their children whenever possible” was rated 2.8/4.0. Seventy-seven percent ($n = 40$) of respondents agreed with this statement or strongly agreed. Only four respondents (8%) strongly disagreed. On another item from the PLAR scale, over half of the respondents ($n = 27$) agreed or strongly agreed that “Spanish-speaking ELLs would make faster achievement gains if they spoke less Spanish at home and with peers” (2.5/4.0). Both of these items revealed a significant misconception about second-language acquisition that was inconsistent with survey items where teachers reported using practices that valued the role of the second language in learning. These survey items are furthermore inconsistent with other BLAR Items that received high-ratings such as, “Whenever possible, second language learners should receive instruction in their first language until they are proficient enough to learn via English instruction” (2.9/4.0), “Bilingual students have benefits for learning that monolingual students do not have” (3.1/4.0), and “Spanish-speaking ELLs can use their knowledge of Spanish to learn content material in English” (3.2/4.0).

Both of the misconceptions from the BLAR scale relate to speaking Spanish outside of school, yet teachers agreed that Spanish can be a resource *inside* of school. This suggest that teachers believe that the common underlying proficiency described by Cummins (2005) should be activated in the classroom but ignored in the home. In other words, if it is useful for learning English, then speaking Spanish is just fine, but only if the goal is still to learn English. Previous studies of teachers’ beliefs about ELLs

revealed similar inconsistencies. For example, Karabenick and Clemens (2004) also found that teachers believe that bilingualism is an advantage for learning, but as in the case of this study, teachers believed that speaking the L1 at home hindered the academic progress of ELLs. Another study by Reeves (2006) showed that despite a generally welcoming attitude towards ELLs, most of the teachers in the study (82%) believed that English should be the official language of the United States. This assimilationist belief devalues the culture and language of Latina/o ELLs. That message is likely not missed by the student who needs to feel her culture and language is valued to have the surest shot at academic success (Cummins, 2000).

Another way in which this problem manifested was through the survey item “The cultural backgrounds of my Spanish-speaking ELLs sometimes impede their learning.” Fifty-five percent ($n = 29$) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, which expressed a belief that directly devalues the culture of Latina/o ELLs. As in other cases, this misconception seemed inconsistent with opinions expressed in the group interview and the survey items mentioned above in which teachers reported that they value culture as a resource. All participants in the group interview commented positively on the support from families of their Latina/o ELLs as a resource for learning. Of course, the belief that the culture of Spanish-speaking ELLs sometimes impedes their learning *is* consistent with the high rating of Item 1 of the survey. In fact, those who agreed or strongly agreed with Item 1 agreed or strongly agreed at a similar rate (56%, $n = 19$) to this BCAR item. As in the case of beliefs about language as a resource, this may also suggest that teachers believe that the culture of their Latina/o ELLs may

sometimes be useful in the classroom, but that does not necessarily equate to a broader belief that values the culture of Latina/o ELLs.

Meeting in the Middle: Explanations and Limitations

The follow-up interviews with Mark and Ashley introduced the idea that inconsistencies between responses may be due to a tendency to please the researcher and a lack of specificity on items that asked about practices. If these explanations are accurate, then beliefs that value language and culture as a resource may not be as pervasive as the first glance at findings suggested.

In her follow-up interview, Ashley volunteered her response to the Item 1 of the survey (It is the responsibility of Spanish-speaking ELLs to adapt to American culture and school life), by saying:

I mean, if you come here, it's probably because you want an American education. I pressed 'agree' for that question, even though probably, I honestly 'strongly agree.' I just didn't want to say 'strongly agree' because I knew it was wrong, that it would look racist, but that's probably what I actually think.

Ashley's response indicates that one explanation of inconsistencies in responses might be the tendency to choose the "politically correct answer" vs. a teachers' true belief.

This could also be another explanation for the high-level of positive ratings for practices of culture and language as a resource. Teachers might self-report practices they know they *should* be using but actually are not. Also, because of lack of specificity in the survey items that asked about classroom practices, teachers could be partially implementing practices that view language and culture as a resource without making any significant changes to their lessons and assignments. For example, although Mark's poetry-translation assignment used language as a resource, it primarily required students to look up poems online because he admitted that while he has Spanish-

language authors in his classroom, they are all English translations. He said he agreed with the survey item, “I have Spanish language materials available for students in my classroom,” but said that is simply because one of the textbooks he used included a few Spanish translations of poems. He admitted that he has never intentionally sought Spanish-language materials for his classroom library. In her follow-up interview, Ashley said something similar:

I do have Spanish-language materials in my classroom, as long as Spanish-English dictionaries count. I have two of those. Also, now that I think of it, I remember a long time ago seeing a Spanish-language version of one of my textbooks lying around, and I said ‘Hey, this will help _____!’ and I do think I let _____ use that book a couple of times, but I have no idea where that book is now. Maybe _____ still has it.

At best, these two examples show teachers using culture and language as a resource when it happens to be convenient to do so.

The follow-up interview revealed this phenomenon in another way as well. When asked about if/how she uses grouping strategies to aid ELLs, Ashley explained that she chooses a student whom she knows is proficient in English and Spanish and asks him/her to translate for a Latina/o ELL. She said this decision is usually made at the last minute or during class. That is not the same as using an intentional grouping strategy that considers the precise proficiency level of the grouped students (Diaz-Rico, 2004; Herrera, 2010). One can speculate that other practices of culture and language as a resource that received a high rating might mask a similar occurrence. For example, 93% ($n = 48$) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they “present lessons that build upon the background knowledge of all my students.” On another item, 85% ($n = 41$) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I take into account the various communication styles of racial and ethnic minorities when I plan my classroom activities

and procedures.” However, it is not clear through the survey exactly what these practices look like in the classroom.

When probed specifically about bias in the classroom, Mark and Ashley’s responses again cast doubt on the high rating of a survey item. Sixty-four percent ($n = 32$) of respondents agreed and 18% ($n = 9$) strongly agreed with the statement, “I have examined the materials I use in my classroom to check for cultural bias (e.g., stereotypes, incorrect cultural information).” However, in her follow-up interview, Ashley, a math teacher, said that she hasn’t checked her materials for bias because she is a math teacher, and “numbers are numbers, so there’s no biased way to present those.” In actuality, researchers have identified forms of cultural bias in mathematics classrooms, ranging from a Eurocentric presentation of the history of mathematics in textbooks to biased assumptions of knowledge in word problems (Davison, 1991; Sleeter, 1997; Sleeter & Grant, 1987).

When asked if/how he has checked for bias in his classroom, Mark, an English teacher, said that he never explicitly considers the bias of his classroom material before creating a lesson. However, he recalled that in his first year of teaching at a primarily African-American high school, his students pointed out that all of his assigned readings were written by white males. He said that since then, he has tried to diversify the selection of assigned readings, but admitted that it is often in the midst of a lesson when he sees the reactions of his diverse students that he realizes the importance of being “as open-minded as possible about what somebody might be thinking.” To illustrate this point, he provided an example from earlier that day:

Just today, I think, they were dissecting cats next door and I (...) uh, made a joke about somebody taking out chopsticks, and I noticed I was getting a look from a girl in the middle of the room who is part Chinese.

He explained that his realization that the comment was inappropriate came too late, and he had to apologize to the student after class, but said, “not that I could have prevented that by reviewing subject matter.”

This way of approaching culture and language as a resource is similar to the above discussion of grouping strategies and Spanish-language content material in that they are all examples of practices implemented partially and as an after-thought, instead of intentionally, as the result of reflection, training and planning. As the chopsticks episode illustrates, that semi-approach to utilizing culture and language as a resource can nonetheless result in a student receiving the message that his/her culture and language are not valued.

When asked about Item 1 in a follow-up interview, Mark’s response included two phrases that might be all too revealing about teachers’ approach to culture and language as a resource. He explained that although he does feel that Latina/o ELLs should adapt to American culture and school life, he also thinks he, as a teacher, should also adapt to accommodate Latina/o ELLs. In the course of this explanation, he spoke slowly and paused often, seeming to choose his words carefully:

I had, uh (...) mixed ideas about this. In some ways, I feel that it is, of course, (..) partly the student’s responsibility to (...) attempt to learn some part, you know, attempt to (..) become proficient in the language of the place where they’re living, but at the same time, I kind of felt like you needed to meet in the middle a little bit more.

Findings show that he is not the only teacher with “mixed ideas” about how to see his role as a teacher of Latina/o ELLs, and unfortunately, it seems that when teachers ask

those students to “meet in the middle,” the message they receive is still one that devalues their culture and language.

Summary of Conclusions

This study was based on the premise that teachers must value the language and culture of Latina/o English Language Learners in order for those students to experience academic success. As Cummins articulated,

The root causes of academic failure among subordinated group students are to be found in the fact that the interactions between educators and students frequently reflect and reinforce the broader societal pattern of coercive relations of power between dominant and subordinated groups. Reversal of this pattern requires that educators resist and challenge the operation of coercive relations of power and actively seek to establish collaborative relations of power both in the school and in the broader society (Cummins, 2000, p. 2).

Although the data revealed a general attitude that values the language and culture of Latina/o ELLs, this study did not find that teachers are *actively* seeking to establish collaborative relations of power. Instead, findings suggest that teachers believe that the language and culture of their Latina/o ELLs are sometimes convenient as a tool for teaching, but they may still hold beliefs about language and culture that “reflect and reinforce the broader societal pattern of coercive relations of power.” These beliefs lead to partial implementation of the culture-affirming practices that lead to academic success for language minority students.

Limitations

The interpretation of these findings must take into consideration the limitations of the study. One potential limitation was sample size and scope of the study. This study focused on teachers from one high school in Central Florida. Only 53 of the 107 teachers at the high school responded to the survey. Four teachers participated in the

group interview, and only two teachers participated in the follow-up interview.

Presumably, greater participation in the qualitative aspects of the study would have yielded a greater variation of responses. Likewise, a larger sample for the survey would have increased the validity of the results.

Another limitation of the study was the design of the survey. Items for the survey were selected from previous studies (Barry & Lechner, 1995; Byrnes & Kiger, 1994; Cabello & Nancy, 1995; Hachfield, Hahn, Schroeder, Anders, Stanta, & Kunter, 2011; Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001; Razfar, 2012; Reeves, 2006; Siwatu, 2007; Spanierman, et al., 2011; Taylor, 2001; Walker & Shafer, 2004) that sought to measure teachers' attitudes towards ELLs. However, the quantitative nature of the survey resulted in a limited view of beliefs of culture and language as a resource. For example, a teacher could respond "agree" or "strongly agree" to an item that asked about practices that values culture and language as a resource, but I could not deduce from that response the nature or extent of that practice in the classroom. As was highlighted through the interpretation of group-interview findings, the lack of specificity in survey items had the effect of masking certain beliefs that do not value language and culture as a resource.

A final limitation of the study was the subjectivity of the researcher and the effect this may have had on survey responses. I am a second-year teacher at the high school where the study was conducted. Teachers were informed of the study at a weekly faculty meeting at which the principal introduced me and asked me to briefly describe the study. Most of the teachers know me and hear me speaking Spanish with students in the hallway, which would be a fairly good indicator of my stance on survey items

related to language as a resource. During the follow-up interview, Ashley admitted to choosing survey responses that she knew I would approve of. She also stated that she felt the presence of an ESOL teacher in the group interview might have resulted in more positive comments regarding ELLs. Indeed, both Ashley and Mark shared more negative beliefs during the follow-up interview than they expressed during the group interview.

Implications

The goal of this study was to learn what high school teachers of Latina/o English Language Learners believe about the role of language and culture as a resource for learning. This research was conducted as a response to a challenge by the principal of the Central Florida high school to help her find a way to close the achievement gap between ELLs and mainstream students. My implications center around the specific context of this Central Florida high school, but because the situation at this high school is indicative of a nationwide problem, my conclusions have the potential to apply to a broader context. In this spirit, I will discuss implications for professional development at the research site and implications for future research.

Implications for Professional Development

The analysis of data showed that teachers at a Central Florida high school do not believe that language and culture are a resource for teaching Latina/o ELLs to the extent necessary to create the kind of truly identity-affirming environment in which Latina/o ELLs may best learn academic content. Professional development programs that address this issue should not only encourage teachers to challenge their assumptions about the value of language and culture in the learning process of Latina/o

ELLs, but should also encourage teachers to challenge their assumptions about the value of language and culture of Latina/o ELLs in general.

It seems that teachers generally know how language and culture can be used as a resource in the classroom, but unless they believe in the value of Latina/o ELLs' language and culture, they will not be challenging the broader societal structures that contribute to academic non-success (Cummins, 1986). This could be addressed through professional development that emphasizes transformative or culturally relevant pedagogy, or pedagogy that fosters the collaborative relations of power that lead to student empowerment (Cummins, 1986; 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1995). If teachers acknowledge and address the way that their interactions with Latina/o ELLs reflect broader relations of power, the problem of partial-implementation of practices that value language and culture as a resource would be more easily solved, and the academic success of Latina/o ELLs should increase as a result. Professional development programs that merely provide teachers with strategies and practices that value language and culture may not be sufficient to solve the problems of partial implementation.

Implications for Future Research

Educators continue to struggle to close the achievement gap between ELLs and their non-ELL peers, despite mounting pressure by the United States government to do so (National Evaluation of Title III Implementation--Report on State and Local Implementation, 2012). This indicates a clear need to continue exploring the factors that contribute to non-success for ELLs. The findings of this study suggests that future research in this area should 1) recognize the importance of using qualitative data to inform the quantitative data, 2) explore predictors of teachers' beliefs of culture and

language as a resource, and 3) analyze professional development programs that could address misconceptions about culture and language as a resource for teaching Latina/o ELLs.

Future studies of teachers' beliefs should consider the importance of qualitative data because quantitative data may mask more negative beliefs. In this study, the qualitative data shed important light on the findings of the survey and revealed limitations of the survey design that are not easily remedied without incorporating qualitative methods. The survey from this study could be replicated and used in other schools to increase the sample size, but would need to be used in collaboration with other qualitative methods

The data set from the survey also includes information pertaining to various demographic characteristics that could be used to study predictors of teachers' beliefs about language and culture as a resource. This information could in turn be used to further determine the nature of professional development programs that address the achievement gap.

Because this study revealed multiple misconceptions about the role of language and culture as a resource, future research should explore the types of professional development that would address such misconceptions. Because I hypothesize that the misconceptions in this study stem from beliefs that reinforce broader relations of power than inhibit minority success, research should more specifically seek to identify the professional development programs that most successfully challenge these kinds of beliefs.

APPENDIX
SURVEY ITEMS TABLE

Table A-1. Survey Items Table

Item	Subset	To which components of Latina/o ELL academic success does this item relate?
It is the responsibility of Spanish-speaking ELLs to adapt to American culture and school life.	BCAR	Affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 2000)
Spanish-speaking countries all share a similar set of holidays, customs, and cultural activities.	BCAR	Complex (not stereotyped) view of minority experiences (Weisner, Gallimore, & Jordan, 1988; Vasquez, Pease-Alvarez, and Shannon, 1994)
The cultural backgrounds of my Spanish-speaking ELLs sometimes impede their learning.	BCAR	Affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 2000); funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001)
The cultural experiences of my Spanish-speaking ELL students vary significantly between students.	BCAR	Complex (not stereotyped) view of minority experiences (Weisner, Gallimore, & Jordan, 1988; Vasquez, Pease-Alvarez, and Shannon, 1994)
Spanish-speaking ELLs have competencies that they display outside of school but not in school.	BCAR	Affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 2000); funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001)
Spanish-speaking ELLs bring needed diversity to schools.	BCAR	Affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 2000); funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001)
Students who question authority in school usually have difficulty learning.	BCAR	Affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 2000); culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995)
The more I know about my students' community, the better I am able to meet their academic needs.	BCAR	Affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 2000); funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001); Complex (not stereotyped) view of

Table A-1. Continued

Item	Subset	To which components of Latina/o ELL academic success does this item relate?
The more I know about my students' culture, the better I am able to meet their academic needs.	BCAR	minority experiences (Weisner, Gallimore, & Jordan, 1988; Vasquez, Pease-Alvarez, and Shannon, 1994); culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995) Affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 2000); funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001); Complex (not stereotyped) view of minority experiences (Weisner, Gallimore, & Jordan, 1988; Vasquez, Pease-Alvarez, and Shannon, 1994); culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995)
Whenever possible, second language learners should receive instruction in their first language until they are proficient enough to learn via English instruction.	BLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005)
Students should not be allowed to speak a language other than English while in school.	BLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005)
Bilingual students have benefits for learning that monolingual students do not have.	BLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005); funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001)
Speaking Spanish in school impedes the learning of Spanish-speaking ELLs.	BLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005); funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001)

Table A-1. Continued

Item	Subset	To which components of Latina/o ELL academic success does this item relate?
Spanish-speaking ELLs would make faster achievement gains if they spoke less Spanish at home and with peers.	BLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005)
Spanish-speaking ELLs can use their knowledge of Spanish to learn content material in English.	BLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005); funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001)
Speaking Spanish outside of school impedes the learning of Spanish-speaking ELLs.	BLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005)
Parents of ELLs should speak English with their children whenever possible.	BLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005)
I have learned some words or phrases in Spanish so that I can better communicate with my students.	PLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005)
I sometimes group Spanish-speaking ELLs who have limited proficiency in English with Spanish-speaking students with high proficiency so they can work together on a task in both Spanish and English.	PLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005)
I discourage my students from speaking a language other than English in my classroom.	PLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005)
I allow my Spanish-speaking students to study content material in Spanish when available.	PLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005)
I have Spanish language materials available for students in my classroom.	PLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005)

Table A-1. Continued

Item	Subset	To which components of Latina/o ELL academic success does this item relate?
I use cognates (words with similar roots) to show similarities between Spanish and English.	PLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005)
I have used an interpreter to communicate with the parents or guardians of a Spanish-speaking student.	PLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005)
I am hesitant to call or email the parents or guardians of students whose parents I suspect do not speak English.	PLAR	Language as a resource (Ruiz, 1988); CUP and affirmation of cultural identity (Cummins, 1996, 2005)
I present lessons that build upon the background knowledge of all of my students.	PCAR	Creation of collaborative relations of power by building on background knowledge (Cummins, 2000); funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001); culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995)
I discourage my students from discussing issues such as racial inequality or social injustice.	PCAR	Culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995); creation of collaborative relations of power (Cummins, 2000)
I have made contact with the parents or guardians of my ELL students.	PCAR	Creation of collaborative relations of power by building on background knowledge (Cummins, 2000); funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001); culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995)
I design lessons that help my students become independent learners, or learners who do not depend on a school or teacher for learning	PCAR	Liberation from instructional dependency (Cummins, 2000); culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995)
I have examined the materials I use in my classroom to check for cultural bias (e.g., stereotypes, incorrect cultural information).	PCAR	Culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995); collaborative relations of

Table A-1. Continued

Item	Subset	To which components of Latina/o ELL academic success does this item relate?
I take into account the various communication styles of racial and ethnic minorities when I plan my classroom activities and procedures.	PCAR	power (Cummins, 2000); Collaborative relations of power (Cummins, 2000); funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2001);
I have examined my own behavior in the classroom for signs of bias or favoritism.	PCAR	Culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995); collaborative relations of power (Cummins, 2000);
I assign readings that provide alternative historical accounts or perspectives.	PCAR	Culturally relevant pedagogy that challenges inequalities (Ladson-Billings, 1995); creation of collaborative relations of power (Cummins, 2000)
I involve my students in the creation of classroom rules and procedures.	PCAR	Culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995); collaborative relations of power (Cummins, 2000);
I incorporate lessons that help my students develop a critical perspective on issues such as inequality and oppression.	PCAR	Culturally relevant pedagogy that challenges inequalities (Ladson-Billings, 1995); creation of collaborative relations of power (Cummins, 2000)

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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