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2017

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The Crucial Role of Teachers of Latino ELL Students: Enactment of Language Policy in
Two Urban High Schools

by

Kristin M. Rosekrans

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of

the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Education

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

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Professor Bruce Fuller

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Spring 2017

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by Kristin M. Rosekrans

Abstract

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by

Kristin M. Rosekrans

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Judith Warren Little, Chair

Through this embedded case study I examine how ELL policy is enacted in two under-resourced high schools where 40% of students are classified as ELL, 90% of whom are Latino. I explore how ELD and Sheltered Instruction teachers perceive and respond to academic and social needs of their students in two different schools in the same district. I analyze how a district that has a language policy that promotes bilingualism and biliteracy plays out in these two schools. Specifically, I detail how policy messages are interpreted and enacted at a district and school level and the interplay of district and school level actors' beliefs and the various district mandates.

Findings indicate that district and school administrators respond to policies and external demands and compensate for their constraints differently. One school emphasizes a *sheltering* approach for Latino immigrant ELL students that creates a safe environment, emphasizes students maintaining their primary language, and prioritizes that ELL students graduate. The other school has an inclusive (non-segregated) approach that emphasizes rapid acquisition of English and holds the same expectations for ELL and non-ELL students, including meeting college entry requirements as well as graduating from high school. At each school, there are variations among teachers regarding their beliefs about students' cultural practices and learning potential, perceptions of their own constraints and opportunities, responses to the disparity of resources and support systems for ELL students, ability to draw on students' linguistic and cultural resources, and compliance with district mandates.

Implications are that program structures and school-level approaches for shaping ELL students' opportunities must be examined. Additionally, further research is needed on how to organize schools that are both safe yet not segregated to create a favorable context of reception for Latino immigrant ELL students. Finally, preparation and ongoing instructional support for teachers of ELL students must help teachers develop pedagogical strategies that are effective within constrained conditions as well as foster cultural understanding, caring, and ways to build on students' linguistic and cultural resources.

My study contributes to research on education for immigrant ELL students and the role of teachers in shaping their educational and social opportunities.

Dedicated to my entire family,
and all of my teachers and mentors.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my each member of Dissertation Committee for providing me with valuable input and feedback in different moments and spaces from the inception to the end of my thesis. In addition to introducing me to theories and methodologies, they have each challenged me to think about my conceptual lenses and methodological choices and express them as clearly as possible. I would especially like to thank Judith Warren Little, my Committee Chair, who has continually provided me with invaluable guidance and support throughout my time at UC Berkeley. Her mentorship for writing this dissertation has been exceptionally vital in helping me make important connections between the work of teachers and policy in light of the research literature and my own data. I am grateful to Bruce Fuller for helping me to understand the value of applying institutional and organizational behavior theory for understanding the context within which teachers work. I am also grateful to Cybelle Fox for helping me to develop a deeper understanding of issues around immigration and acculturation. Additionally, Kris Gutiérrez introduced me to new methodological approaches and ways of analyzing issues that have been particularly helpful for my work.

I would also like to thank the formal and informal mentorship and kindness I have received from the various professors and colleagues at the UC Berkeley Graduate School of Education. I am especially grateful to John Hurst, who lived his life as an agent of change until the end of his life. I am also grateful for my former students from whom I have learned, and am thankful that that many keep in touch and update me on the important work they are doing as educators.

I am deeply grateful to my children for accompanying me on my journey through my Ph.D. and dissertation completion. My daughters, Anais and Adriana, accompanied me from the country they were born and partially raised, El Salvador, which has not been easy for them. My son Brook came along after I began at UC Berkeley, and has been an additional joy in my life. They have all been patient and supportive throughout. I am grateful to have inherited my wonderful stepson (especially when editing my work), Eli, and my amazing mother-in-law Jane. Without Jane's constant support in every way, this dissertation would have been almost impossible. I am especially grateful to my husband, Jim, who has been by my side throughout. He has patiently and carefully helped me with revisions of my text and provided every other type of support imaginable.

I am especially deeply grateful for my parents. Without them knowing, both taught me that my education consisted of kindergarten to Ph.D. They have been important role models and also supported me to find my own passion. Though my mother did not live long enough to see me complete my Ph.D., I know she would be proud. I know my father is equally proud, and will be happy to have his daughter be Dr. Rosekrans like him.

I would also like to express gratitude to my friends and colleagues in the U.S. and El Salvador, many of whom are also educators. Particularly the constant support of Maya Akpinar and Arie Sherris has been invaluable.

Finally, I wish to thank the district personnel, teachers, administrators, and other school staff in opening up their doors and minds for me to be able to conduct my research. It is my hope that this dissertation sheds light on new ways to support ELL students and their teachers.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The English Language Learner (ELL) student population in the U.S. has been rapidly increasing over the past decade. Between 1998 and 2009, the number of ELL students in U.S. public schools increased by 51% while the general student population increased by merely seven percent (U.S. Department of Education). At present, one in ten students is classified as “ELL”, and it is predicted that 25% of students will be categorized as such by 2025 (TESOL, 2013). While the population of ELL students continues to grow, the academic performance of this group continues to evidence a consistent and substantial achievement gap over time (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010; Olsen, 2009).

The growing population of ELL students combined with the persistent achievement gap has generated concern and specific policy responses by states and districts. For example, in California, where ELLs constitute 25% of the student population (Rumberger & Gándara, 2005), ELL students are required to take English Language Development (ELD) and modified instruction (or “sheltered”) courses. Some districts and schools also provide bilingual education or dual immersion, usually with the goal of transitioning ELL students to English-only instruction. Yet these interventions are failing to close the achievement gap for ELL students. This is especially true for *Latino ELL* students, who make up 75% of the national ELL student population (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2010), and 84% of the ELL population in California (California Department of Education). The academic performance of Latino ELL students in particular remains far below that of other students (Good, Masewicz & Vogel, 2010; Kohler & Lazarín, 2007; Garcia & Kleifgen, 2010).

Research has underscored the important role of teachers in fostering academic success for Latino ELL students, especially those who are first-generation (Stanton-Salazar, 2011; Callahan, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999; Olsen, 1997). Dabach (2009, 2011, 2015) advanced research on the important role that teachers play in shaping educational opportunities for immigrant ELL students by developing the notion of teachers as the *human context of reception* for immigrant youth. She examined teachers’ perceptions and practices in relation to their institutional settings and their ability to shape opportunities for immigrant ELL students based on their decisions about who and how to teach. Dabach analyzed how teachers negotiate and inhabit their institutional environment, including how they adapt to their immigrant students within different classroom settings (mainstream or sheltered). Yet while Dabach examined how teachers mediate their institutional constraints and opportunities across districts, she did not compare schools within the same district context. In other words, she did not take into account the variation in teacher perceptions and practices in schools that differ in institutional environments yet respond to the same external pressures.

Coburn & Russell (2008) examined policy implementation across districts and in particular how policy affects teachers within schools in ways that are consequential for their professional learning. There have also been studies on school level variation in policy implementation, focusing on issues such as staffing (Little, 1982). Yet there is a lack of research on language policy implementation for EL students that compare schools within the same district with a particular policy stance towards EL instruction. Furthermore, there is a lack of research on how teachers within one district with a specific policy stance towards language policy implementation respond differently within two different schools.

As did Dabach, Coburn (2004) argued that teachers have substantial leeway in how they

put into practice instructional policies while also highlighting the importance of teachers' institutional environment in this process. Coburn (2004) also emphasized that teachers' preexisting beliefs as well as external pressures shape how they interpret and mediate policy. Yet while Coburn examined teachers' interpretations of policy and the importance of their institutional environment in shaping their classroom practices, she did not examine issues specific to ELL or immigrant students.

My study contributes to research on education for immigrant ELL students and the role of teachers in shaping their educational and social opportunities. Its specific contribution lies in the comparative approach that examines variations across teachers and between schools in one district. It extends the research on teachers as the *human context of reception*, focusing on teachers' perspectives and practices as well as the organizational and policy context within which teachers work.

I use an embedded case study approach to examine teachers of Latino immigrant ELL students in two schools within one district that promotes bilingual education. I analyze how teachers' perceptions of their Latino immigrant ELL students and work environment as well as their classroom practices vary across schools, yet also how material structural and organizational conditions shape the way that policies are interpreted and put into practice in schools.

The research questions that this study addresses are:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of the academic and social needs of Latino immigrant ELL students? How do teachers perceive their role and work environment? What are the constraints and opportunities teachers face in supporting their Latino immigrant ELL students' academic and social needs?
2. What classroom practices demonstrate how, if at all, teachers adapt to their Latino immigrant ELL students' academic and social needs? How, if at all, do they draw upon these students' linguistic and cultural resources?
3. What are the constraints and opportunities expressed by district personnel, administrators, and school support staff responsible for Latino immigrant ELL students' academic advancement? What are the contextual conditions of district and schools that interact with how policies and practices are enacted?
4. What decisions are made regarding how policies and guidelines for ELL students (such as courses, programs, ELD level placement, and curriculum) are enacted in schools? Who makes which decisions and what are their explanations regarding these decisions?

Background

It is important to locate the work of teachers of ELL students within the broader policy context. State and district language policies reflect a long-standing debate regarding the value of bilingual education for the academic performance of ELL students as well as other outcomes (such as maintaining a bilingual and bicultural identity). This debate in research and policy discourse leaves space for varied and competing conceptions and enactments of language policy,

which has implications for how districts and schools provide education for their ELL students. The research on the different views of bilingual education and its implications are relevant for framing how a district and different schools within it define their approaches and enact policies for ELL students.

Language and Instructional Policy for ELL students

There has been growing evidence over the past fifty years of the cognitive advantages of bilingualism (Peal & Lambert, 1962; Hakuta; 1986; García, 2009; García & Kleifgen, 2010). Research has demonstrated stronger long-term achievement gains for students who develop academic knowledge and skills in their primary language prior to and during the acquisition of academic knowledge in the second language as opposed to those who develop academic skills in the second language with no academic foundation in their first language (Thomas & Collier, 1997; Cummins, 1976, 1991; August, Shanahan, & Shanahan, 2006; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Research has also demonstrated that first and second generation Latinos have better academic achievement and psychological well-being when they acquire the dominant language while preserving their home language as opposed to quickly culturally and linguistically assimilating into the dominant culture (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Research shows the positive effects of bilingualism and biculturalism for Latino immigrants and their children in terms of cognitive ability and important social, cultural, and emotional resources that help youth navigate through the education system (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2008; Valenzuela, 1999).

Despite the evidence, the policies and practices aimed towards improving education outcomes for Latinos, and particularly Latino ELL students, continue to be undermined by a language ideology rooted in a one-way assimilationist view. Key to understanding language ideology is identifying the different, and often conflicting, beliefs and assumptions that undergird language policy including national identity, linguistic rights, and assimilation. For example, a pluralist view (believing ethnic and linguistic minorities do not need to assimilate) argues that linguistic rights are a matter of equity for language minority groups, while the assimilationist view promotes the socialization of these groups into the mainstream which requires adopting and prioritizing the dominant language (Schmidt, 2000).

The English-only, rapid assimilation approach has been referred to as *subtractive schooling*, which is based on research that demonstrates ways in which schools contribute to the erosion of valuable cultural and linguistic resources of Latino youth (Valenzuela, 1999). Bartlett & Garcia (2011) propose *additive schooling*, which “builds on and extends the social, cultural, and linguistic assets brought by multilingual, diverse student populations, and aims to prepare bicultural and bilingual students to negotiate their complex worlds” (p. 21-22).

Additive schooling can be accomplished through bilingual education, dual immersion, and other models and practices. For example, *translanguaging*¹ is an innovative approach to language learning that aims to build upon students’ linguistic repertoires and enhance student learning and social development (Gutiérrez, 2006, 2011; García & Flores, 2014; García & Wei, 2014; May, 2014). These different additive approaches have shown to benefit ELL students academically and socially (Bartlett & García, 2011; Canagarajah, 2011; Creese & Blackledge, 2010 Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Alvarez, H. H., & Chiu). However, as the following

¹ Translanguaging goes beyond the notion of bilingualism, which separates the use and learning of the primary and secondary language. Instead, this approach encourages students to draw upon all of their existing languages, or their language repertoire, rather than being constrained by one language or the other.

section explains, the predominant ideology and model continues to be a one-way assimilation subtractive approach to language learning for ELL students. This has implications even when a district attempts to implement an additive approach to English language acquisition for ELL students.

Implications of ELL Education Policies: Structuring Schools and Programs

California is one of the states that has been affected by substantial shifts in language policy over the past three decades. In 1998, 30% of ELL students were in bilingual education programs compared to 7.6% in 2006 (García & Kleifgen, 2010). This drastic decrease occurred when Proposition 227 was passed in California in 1998, making bilingual education unlawful unless parents signed a waiver requesting bilingual education for their child.² Proposition 227 also resulted in classifications and differentiated instruction for non-native English speakers. The Proposition defined “English Language Learner” as “a child who does not speak English or whose native language is not English and who is not currently able to perform ordinary classroom work in English, also known as a Limited English Proficiency or LEP child”³ (Unz & Tuchman, 1997). Parents indicate this information on a Home Language Survey (HLS) when they enroll their child in school. If they indicate that their child speaks a language other than English at home, the child must be tested for English Proficiency.⁴ If the child does not pass this test, she/he is classified as an “ELL” student.

Once a student is classified as “ELL”, it is difficult to get out of this category, which has serious ramifications for students once they reach middle and high school. Students in California who are classified as “English Language Learners” are required to take English Language Development, which has four levels. Students can move to the next level if they pass a “benchmark test” (along with other requirements). They are also administered the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) yearly. The student will continue to be classified as an ELL until able to test into the “English proficient” level, after which she/he is categorized as “Reclassified Fluent English Proficient”, or “RFEP”.⁵ This can be difficult even for some native English speakers if they haven’t had the necessary academic English instruction, as demonstrated by the California Department of Education’s 2012 standardized test report: 36% of Latinos reached advanced or proficient English levels, while this average was 33% for African Americans. While this test differs from the CELDT, both test for English proficiency hence underscore the difficulty of reaching this level if receiving a substandard education.

The education policies and program solutions to address the academic needs of this growing population have been to focus primarily on ELL students in elementary schools, assuming that they would have developed “English proficiency” by the time they reach high school (Olsen, 2010). In California, however, 31% of ELL students are in middle and high

² Although Proposition 58 repealed Proposition 227 in November 2016, my data was collected when it was still in place. Furthermore, many of the policies and program structures that resulted from Proposition 227 still exist.

³ In addition to the classification “LEP”, other classifications have been used such as “English Language Learner” or “English Learner” (“EL”). I believe these terms are not appropriate due to their focus on students’ limitations rather than assets. However, I use the official policy terms in this study, which is “ELL” when referring to the national and state student populations and “EL” when referring to the student population in the district selected for my study.

⁴ The Home Language Survey (HLS) is controversial for various reasons, one being the inappropriateness of such a test for a young child (i.e. 5-6 years old). The content of the survey and design of the test have also been critiqued.

⁵ There are also additional requirements for becoming reclassified, such as maintaining a minimum GPA, which may vary depending on the district.

school (Callahan, 2005). Additionally, as Garcia and Kleifgan (2010), point out, there has been a rapid increase in ELL students at the high school level in comparison to a more minor increase at the lower grade levels. The authors also highlight the high numbers of *newcomers* who are ELLs, who are students who have been in the U.S. 12 months or less and are at level 1 (beginning) as measured by the CELDT. Newcomers constitute nearly a third (31%) of ELL students and 41% have been in the country for 1 to 4 years (p.18). Furthermore, many of these students have had interrupted schooling and thus have lower literacy levels in their primary language than would be expected if they had completed the same number of school years as their peers. As Garcia & Kleifgan state (p. 20):

This fact should be of vital importance for those who coordinate and plan for the education of these students because it turns out that the benefits of what is known as “linguistic transfer” of literacy skills from one language to another will not be completely enjoyed by emergent bilinguals⁶ who are not literate in their home language.

As underscored in the above excerpt, those who coordinate and plan for the education of newcomer and other ELL students must take into consideration the education backgrounds of these students. They must structure their schools and programs to respond to the needs of newcomers and other ELL students as well as the rest of their student population.

Policy mandates for ELL students require that they take English Language Development (ELD) and modified instruction courses, such as SDAIE (or SI),⁷ which results in ELL students being segregated, or tracked. The majority of their courses are aimed to help them develop English proficiency (through ELD courses) and learn basic subject content (through SI courses). While learning English and academic content is important for ELL students, the design of these programs and courses has shown to be ineffective and detrimental in many cases (Harklau, 1994; Olsen, 1997; Callahan, 2005; Kanno & Kangas, 2014). The majority of their courses keep them separate from non-ELL students, except for several non-academic courses like P.E. Also, their ELD and SI schedules don’t allow for taking courses their non-ELL peers can take. As research has pointed out, this track for ELL students greatly limits their ability to take courses required for college as well as their opportunity to develop English through interaction with native English speakers (Harklau, 1994; Callahan, 2005; Kanno & Kangas, 2014). Additionally, these courses separate academic content from academic language development, creating limited opportunities for ELL students to learn language through content and learn language using content (Linquanti & Hakuta, 2012).

School administrators are faced with difficult decisions about how to schedule courses for ELL students so that they can graduate. Additionally, there is growing awareness of the importance for ELL students to meet requirements for attending college (Kanno & Kangas, 2014). Thus school leaders also face the challenge of helping to assure that ELL students have the opportunity to take college required courses, which is especially challenging if they do not become reclassified in their first or second year of high school (which would allow them to take courses other than ELD or SI). It is especially difficult for school leaders to assure that newcomer ELL students take the required courses for college, or even graduate from high

⁶ The authors chose to use the term “emergent bilinguals” instead of “ELLs” in this book.

⁷ Sheltered Instruction, or SDAIE (Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English), are subject courses (such as math, history, or science) that aim to make academic content more comprehensible for English Learners than it would be in mainstream classes.

school, due to the short amount of time newcomers have to complete the necessary graduation requirements. Furthermore, in addition to the need to learn English, newcomer students are faced with the challenge of acculturating to a new culture and society. When designing programs and structures, school leaders must also take into consideration how to support the acculturation process of their immigrant ELL students.

One option to meet the academic and social needs of newcomer students is to structure a program or school around their specific needs, or essentially create a *newcomer program* or *newcomer school*. These programs and schools have become more prevalent in areas of the U.S. with high concentrations of newcomer students. They have generally demonstrated positive outcomes for newcomer students when designed and implemented effectively, which has been accomplished to varying degrees by most newcomer programs and schools (Feinberg, 2000; Short, 2002; Short & Boyson, 2012). For example, Feinberg (2000) posits that newcomer programs should provide the facilities, staff, and range of courses, programs, and extracurricular activities comparable to other schools in the district. She also highlights the importance of newcomer students voluntarily attending such a program and that they should not remain in the program more than one year to avoid isolation from English-speaking students and access to college required courses. Short (2002) argues that newcomer programs should include projects and other structured activities to ensure that newcomers interact with English-speakers. She also points out the need for these programs to have a plan for newcomer students to move through the language development and content courses necessary to transition to another school. Additionally, there is a need for content area instruction to fill in gaps in education backgrounds, provide basic literacy materials and reading interventions, and build connections with families and social services (Short & Boyson, 2012). Meeting all, or even most, of these criteria presents an enormous challenge to district and school leaders, especially those in under-resourced schools.

Placing ELL students in mainstream classrooms has become a more common practice in schools. However, rather than solve the problem this can create more serious ones like ELL students not understanding the content, feeling overwhelmed, and even dropping out of school (Bunch, Abram, Lotan, & Valdés, 2001). Mixing native English-speakers with ELL students can also be done in modified instruction classes, which can be the traditional SDAIE/SI model of instruction or a different model. In traditional SI classes, however, surrounding ELL students with English-speaking peers often does not lead to interaction between ELL and non-ELL students. As stated by Bunch et al (2001, p. 29):

Even when teachers try to create activities involving pair or group work, a variety of social factors may present obstacles to effective interaction between learners of English and their mainstream classmates.

Overcoming these obstacles requires preparation and ongoing support for teachers to use interventions proven to foster effective peer collaboration (Bunch et al.). Furthermore, teaching academic content and academic language in an authentic way requires not just ongoing instructional support for teachers, but other conditions that do not typically exist in under-resourced schools.

In sum, the policy changes over the past three decades have implications for how districts and schools respond to the needs of students who must acquire English to advance academically. In particular, the shift away from bilingual education has resulted in structures that isolate ELL

students and limit their ability to meet college requirements and, for newcomers and other ELL students with low English proficiency, even graduate. Schools must prepare students to meet these requirements and make difficult decisions about how to best structure programs to meet the needs of ELL students, which is even more challenging with newcomers. In districts that aim to have an additive approach to language acquisition, these decisions become even more difficult. The competing demands for schools to attain these seemingly contradicting goals pose challenges to district decision-makers and school leaders to design programs to best meet the needs of ELL students. Furthermore, it poses challenges for teachers of ELL student in these different program structures to respond to the needs of their students.

Theoretical Framework

This study employs concepts derived from three main bodies of conceptual and empirical research. First of all, I draw upon the construct of *contexts of reception* (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006; Marrow, 2005), and more specifically *teachers as a context of reception* for immigrants and their children (Dabach, 2011, 2014, 2015). I also draw upon concepts from institutional theory, and specifically from Coburn (2004) who examined how teachers interpret and mediate pressures from their institutional environment in ways that shape their interpretations and enactment of instructional policies. Both frameworks underscore the importance of understanding teachers' preexisting beliefs and assumptions in relation to their institutional setting. Finally, I employ the notion of *policy enactment* in context put forth by Ball, Maguire, and Braun (2012). Specifically, I build upon their conceptualization of *contextual dimensions* to outline a framework for analyzing institutional constraints and opportunities perceived and experienced by teachers and other school level actors.

Teachers as a Context of Reception

The notion of contexts of reception (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001, 2006) is helpful for understanding how immigrants incorporate and acculturate into U.S. society. Acculturation and assimilation is not a straightforward path for immigrants and their children, yet one with multiple variables that influence this process. These variables include their parents' process of integration, education level, socio-economic status, and cultural and economic barriers. Yet it also heavily depends on the resources that their family and community have to confront these barriers. In examining newcomers (in this case the parents of Latino second-generation youth as well as first generation Latino youth), Portes & Rumbaut (2001, 2006) stress two key factors that are highly influential on the occupational and economic opportunities: 1) the social environment that receives them, including the host government's policies and attitudes of the population native to that community, and 2) the presence of a co-ethnic community.

Marrow (2005) employs the notion of contexts of reception through a focus on the social structures in the host society that influence immigrants' economic, cultural, and social incorporation. She stresses the importance of looking beyond the individual characteristics of immigrants and examining the variation in the structural and contextual characteristics of immigrants' destinations.

When considering the economic, social, and cultural incorporation in the host society for immigrant youth, schools are a key destination to examine. Schools have proven to be one of the few social institutions that can welcome Latino families and their children, regardless of their

“legal” status, and serve as a safe place in the community (Gonzales, 2011; Marrow, 2011). They can play a key role in preparing Latino youth (both “documented” and “undocumented”) to transition into U.S. society where they often face barriers such as discrimination based on ethnic and racial identity and socio-economic status (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006; Fox, 2012; Gonzales, 2011). The large amounts of time that students spend in schools allow immigrant youth to form relationships with adults and peers, who can influence their opportunities for academic success and social incorporation (Stanton-Salazar, 2001, 2011).

In her work, Dabach (2009, 2011, 2015) emphasizes the importance of schools in the host society for receiving immigrant youth, and in particular the role of teachers. Dabach built upon the notion of context of reception and applied it to teachers, who are the *human context of reception* for immigrant youth. As she states (2011, p. 67):

By investigating those who come into contact with immigrant youth, we can better examine and analyze the contexts that greet those who arrive at our gates; contexts that are often linked to differential opportunities available within a society.

Dabach (2011) demonstrated how teachers’ preferences for teaching ELL students (or not to) and the course placements for teaching immigrant-origin ELL students are influential for the opportunities that these youth will have within society. Furthermore, Dabach (2014) concluded that the courses and clusters in which these students are placed have implications for their self-esteem and stigmatization that often affect their ability for full social acceptance within and beyond the school context.

How teachers respond to this situation through their interactions with immigrant-origin ELL students can mediate their school and life experiences in positive, neutral, or negative ways. As Stanton-Salazar (2001, 2011) argues, teachers can serve as *institutional agents* in ways that can empower Latino immigrant youth and influence their academic outcomes and social opportunities. Teachers serve as “agent-advocate and gatekeepers” and “when they are genuinely supportive they can transform a student’s life in very positive and lasting ways (Stanton-Salazar, 2001, p. 162). Therefore, it is crucial to gain a better understanding of how teachers perceive their immigrant ELL students and how they respond to their academic and social needs.

A teacher’s ability and desire to serve as an empowering institutional agent for immigrant students depends on aspects of individual teachers, such as their perceptions and their teaching repertoire, as well as their objective contextual conditions (as discussed in the following section). Teachers’ perceptions of their own work (including status) and their perceptions of their immigrant students make a difference in the degree to which they build upon their students’ linguistic resources and help them succeed (Valenzuela, 1999; Olsen, 1997). This is also true of teachers’ *teaching repertoires*, defined as their preparation, teaching experience, and ability to connect with and understand their students. As Dabach (2011) points out, the way teachers make sense of the experiences and perceptions of newcomer students depends on the teachers’ individual differences (such as beliefs, values, normative practices, and status).

There are different elements that may influence teachers’ perceptions of immigrant students and thus how they interact with them and respond to their academic and social needs. Bartlett (2014) underscores the importance of teachers having a *cultural frame of reference for their students*, meaning they must “be knowledgeable of and take into account their students’ histories, current realities, and social and linguistic norms and traditions” (p. 112). Teachers have expectations about what students should do and achieve in the classroom. A cultural mismatch in

understanding often limits the teacher's ability to navigate school discipline and classroom management practices of the school and culture they are teaching in. This lack of a cultural frame of reference not only leads to assumptions about students' cultural practices, but also has been shown to lead to less effective teaching of academic content. This can be especially pronounced when teachers come from a different country-of-origin (Bartlett, 2014).

A cultural mismatch may also result when students come from another country and have teachers from the host country, such as Latino immigrant students in the U.S. For example, Valdez (1996) discusses the notion of *respeto* that encompasses elements not present in the term "respect", such as showing personal regard for people according to their role, which is especially important in family and school. Her research led her to conclude "various immigrant groups did not consider their values to be compatible with those held by American public schools" (p. 169). Additionally, Valenzuela (1999) explains that the term *educación* is a conceptually broader term than "education". *Educación* refers to the family's role of inculcating in children moral, social, and personal responsibilities and serves as a foundation for all other learning. It extends into academic training and schooling, and entails social competence to respect the dignity and individuality of other people. She argues that many Latino immigrant children are deprived of the opportunity to engage in such *reciprocal relationships*, and because they have different expectations of schools and teachers their notion of education/*educación* is invalidated.

The willingness and ability of teachers to value the sociolinguistic resources and cultural identity also has implications for how teachers perceive and respond to their students. As Valenzuela (1999) points out, there is a need to "examine the role of the school in fostering poor academic performance" (p. 5). She critiques the tendency of research and practitioners to characterize these students as "lazy underachievers" and argues that Latino youth are not oppositional but that they oppose a schooling process that disrespects them. In other words, teachers may perceive students as lacking motivation or being oppositional because they do not understand or value the students' cultural and linguistic resources.

Teachers' perceptions of and practices with Latino immigrant ELL students are also mediated by how they do or do not demonstrate *caring* towards their students, as well as their type of caring. Valenzuela discusses the importance of "authentic" caring, which she defines as "sustained reciprocal relationships between teachers and students for the basis of all learning" (p. 61). Though research and guidelines for teachers have assumed the notion of "caring" as a common understanding, emerging research problematizes this notion. For example, Goldstein & Lake (2000) demonstrate ways in which teachers' preconceived notions of being "caring" are often not aligned with what they encounter in the school context. They argue that caring can manifest as lowering expectations based on students' social circumstances (Antrop-González & De Jesús, 2006). Antrop & Gonzáles label this type of care as *soft care*, which is characterized by "a teacher feeling sorry for a student's circumstances and lowering his/her academic expectations of the student out of pity" (p. 411). They point to the importance of a *critical care*, which is a type of *hard care* "characterized by supportive instrumental relationships and high academic expectations" (p. 413). Thus one way that caring is demonstrated is through how a teacher adapts to her/his students regarding expectations and teaching practices.

In sum, teachers' perceptions and responses to their immigrant ELL students are influenced by their own preconceived beliefs, values, and normative practices such as demonstrating caring and valuing their students' linguistic and cultural resources. These teacher perceptions and practices constitute the context of reception for immigrant ELL students and influence how effective they are in helping their students succeed academically. I argue that this

context varies in how *favorable* it is. In this study, teachers providing a *favorable context of reception* for newcomers is characterized by the following teacher practices: 1) establishing relationships and trust with students and demonstrating critical caring, 2) building on students' cultural and linguistic repertoires, 3) advocating for students (mentoring, support, linking with opportunities), and 4) adapting curricular goals, instruction and testing to best meet students' needs.

However, as Hopkins (2014) points out, it is important to look beyond individual teachers and their beliefs to avoid the risk of placing sole responsibility on the teacher. The broader and multilayered context, including requirements to implement policies and programs, must be taken into account to understand the role of teachers in implementing language policy. As discussed, with policies and programs for ELL students, and especially newcomers, there are specific challenges that schools and teachers must face. Given the importance of their role, it is crucial to examine how teachers interpret and enact these policies within their institutional environment. As explained in the following section, their beliefs and their institutional environment shape how they interpret and enact policies in their classroom practices.

Teachers' Interpretations and Responses to Policies

Teachers work within an institutional setting (the school) that is situated within a broader policy context. For teachers of ELL students, language policy and guidelines are particularly relevant. Ricento and Hornberger (1996) describe language policy and planning as being composed of multiple layers and actors who interact, allowing for various interpretations between and across levels. They apply the metaphor of an *onion* for language to explain language policy and planning (composed of policy actors, levels, and processes). The outer layers of the onion are the "broad language policy objectives", which may then be "operationalized in regulations and guidelines" that are then interpreted and implemented in institutional settings. These institutional settings, such as schools, are "composed of diverse, situated contexts", each of which is made up of "individuals from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and communities" (p. 409). As stated by Hopkins (2014, pp. 3-4):

To fully understand how policy influences practice, one must consider multiple layers, from the official policy to the inner layer of the school and classroom. By uncovering the processes that occur at each level research can more fully illuminate the dynamic practices that occur as policy makes its way into classrooms".

In sum, though policies and frameworks originate at a federal and state level, their implementation at a district and school level leaves space for different interpretations and practices.

As Coburn (2004) demonstrated, the institutional environment within which teachers work influences how they interpret and negotiate messages about instruction. Her findings demonstrated that messages about "good" reading instruction were carried through policy at all levels (programs, assessment systems, textbooks, professional development, etc.), including formal policy at the state, district and school level. She also found that pressures from the environment created circumstances for teachers to interpret and negotiate their decisions about instructional practices, and that this process was also mediated by their pre-existing beliefs and practices.

Coburn (2004) emphasized that teacher's degree of latitude, or autonomy, influences how she/he responds to the institutional pressures. Rather than classroom practices being decoupled from the policy guidelines (i.e. keeping classroom practices unaffected), she evidenced that teachers respond in different ways and thus exercise *bounded* autonomy in their practices. As she states, "regulative pressures place technical limits on decision-making, creating pressures and priorities that teachers feel they must respond to in some fashion" (p. 35). Coburn (2004) classifies the variation in teacher responses to external pressures and messages about appropriate instruction as: 1) rejection, 2) symbolic response (such as posting a rubric on the classroom wall but ignoring it), 3) parallel structures (using more than one approach to balance priorities), 4) assimilation (such as changing instructional routines or materials but not the core pedagogical approach), and 5) accommodation (changes in underlying pedagogical assumptions about instructional approaches).

Though Coburn's study (2004) focused on reading instructional policy, the theory from her findings is applicable to language policy implementation. Like reading policy, messages about appropriate instruction for teaching ELL students is also comprised of layers of guidelines communicated over time. For example, a district may promote an additive approach to language acquisition that encourages teachers to build upon their ELL students' primary language skills for acquiring English. One teacher may have a fundamental belief that English-only immersion with no primary language use is the best approach and reject the policy guidelines. Another teacher may have visuals on the classroom walls that have both the primary language of her/his students as well as English (a symbolic response), yet make no attempt to use both languages for instruction. Yet another teacher may dedicate some instructional time to having students use their primary language to understand content and other time to teach only in English (parallel structures). Finally, a teacher may assimilate the policy by translating instructions for classroom work into the students' primary language, yet have the students use only English for learning. Finally, a teacher may accommodate by encouraging students to use their primary language as a way to scaffold learning content in their primary language and English.

The broader social policy environment and the immediate institutional environment (the school), also influence their degree of latitude and how teachers respond to the external pressures. These school contextual conditions and district pressures present constraints and opportunities for teachers, which is discussed in the following section.

Language Policy Implementation in Local Context: School Contextual Conditions

Though my study is situated within the field of education policy implementation research, I choose to use the term 'enactment' to highlight the dynamic nature of policy as practice. Ball, Maguire, & Braun (2012) do not use the term *implementation* when discussing policy, rather highlight how policies are put into practice or *enacted*. This lens emphasizes how policy is *done*, which calls into question the traditional notion of *implementation*. As explained by Ball et al. (2012), 'implementation' tends to be seen as top-down or bottom-up and thus implies a separation between policy and implementation. Policy *enactment*, however, connotes a complex process that is an interaction of the various levels and policy actors that involves interpretation and recontextualization. As Ball et al. (2012) define it, *enactment* is the "diverse

and complex ways in which sets of education policies are made sense of, mediated and struggled over and sometimes ignored” (p. 3). In other words, policy is conceived of as a complex social practice that is contextually mediated and subject to different interpretations as it enacted by diverse actors and takes on life within institutions (Levinson & Sutton, 2001; Ball et. al, 2012). This approach diverges from the normative definition of policy, which signifies it as something static that is a prescriptive solution crafted by those charged with this task. The notion of policy as an active entity acknowledges that there is scripted and official policy, yet also recognizes that it is continually negotiated and shaped by different actors as it is carried out.

Ball et al. (2012) also emphasize the importance of context in how official policies and guidelines are interpreted and enacted. They point out that studies that foreground the school context as being vital in how policy enactments are shaped are much scarcer than those that describe the context as the background, or setting, of the study. Taking into account local context is especially important when considering the constraints and opportunities faced by district personnel, administrators, teachers and other school staff.

Ball et al. (2012) provide a framework for understanding school contextual conditions and how they shape policy enactment. They consider “the diverse variables and factors (the ‘what’) as well as the dynamics of context (the ‘how’) that shape policy enactments” (p. 20). Their framework describes *objective* conditions in relation to *subjective*, or interpretational, dynamics. In other words, to make sense of policy enactments in schools, the material, structural and relational conditions must be considered. Ball et al. present four *contextual dimensions* that account for these material, structural, and relational conditions: (1) situated contexts, (2) professional cultures, (3) material contexts, and (4) external contexts. *Situated contexts* refer to aspects such as the schools setting and history. *Professional cultures* refer to teacher commitments, values, and experiences. *Material contexts* include aspects such as staffing, budget, and infrastructure. *External contexts* include pressures and expectations from the broader policy context, requirements and responsibilities, and support from external entities (such as the school district).

I adapt Ball et al.’s *contextual dimensions* framework to propose a model for analyzing constraints and opportunities faced by teachers and other school level actors. I break down the dimensions further by separating the *material structural conditions* from the *organizational conditions (or organizational structures and processes)*. As Ball et al. posit, these dimensions overlap and interact. I refer to these dimensions and contextual conditions, which are comprised of: (1) structural material conditions, (2) external demands and expectations, and (3) professional culture.

Structural material conditions include staffing, program and class structures, resources for teachers, district and school support, and external demands and expectations. For example, *staffing* considers which courses teachers are assigned to as well as the other teachers in their department and school. Program and class structures consider what students comprise a class, such as native English speakers with ELL students or solely ELL students in a class. Resources include elements such as teaching aides, textbooks, and other support materials. An example of district support would be formal professional development and coaching.

External demands and expectations are mainly district policies, guidelines, and requirements that school level actors must respond to. These include standardized testing, benchmark testing, expectations about ELL student advancement and reclassification, and other requirements specific or not specific to ELL students.

Professional culture includes both structural and organizational conditions. The structural aspects of professional culture refer to teacher assignment, teachers' time for planning and collaboration, and the structures in place for tracking students and supervising teachers. Organizational aspects of professional culture include school leadership, school norms as well as the values and commitments of teachers and other school staff. Organizational aspects of the professional culture also contemplate the oversight and guidance provided for teacher collaboration as well as instructional leadership and expectations on the part of the administration. The positionality and status of teachers, administrators and other school staff also form part of the organizational conditions, as do power dynamics and communication between school staff as well as between district personnel and school staff.

The degree of autonomy, or coupling mechanisms (Weick, 1976) that exists within the school and district, as well as between them, is part of the professional culture yet also has structural (organizational) aspects.

School contextual conditions present both opportunities and constraints. They also interact with how teachers view their role, work environment, and perceptions of their students as well as how they enact policy. For example, a teacher may interpret that curricular goals are flexible and thus try to adjust the goals to meet the needs of the majority of the students. However, she/he may have a structural material constraint of a class with students that have an extremely wide range of language abilities and the teacher may lack the resources (such as a teaching aid) to do such an adjustment. Furthermore, the school leadership may provide guidance and support for adjusting instruction to meet the needs of the students, or the leadership may constrain the teachers' autonomy and limit her/his ability to adjust the official guidelines. Another possibility is school leadership that is loosely coupled with the classroom practices, thus neither providing guidance nor oversight. As Weick (1976) points out, there are advantages and disadvantages with loose coupling as there are with tightly coupled mechanisms.

In sum, the context that teachers work within is part of a multilayered system comprised of various policies, policy actors, and multiple interpretations. Teachers, like other policy actors, operate within their contextual conditions with different degrees of latitude in how they choose to enact instructional policies. This dissertation aims to better understand how teachers of ELL students in two different schools within one district navigate and enact language instructional policy.

Organization of the Dissertation

The remainder of the dissertation is organized in the following four chapters. In chapter 2, I explain all aspects of the methodology employed for this embedded case study of EL policy implementation in one district and two schools. The sampling (including the district and school context), data collection methods, data analysis, and limitations are described. Chapter 3, *Teachers as a Context of Reception for Latino Immigrant ELL Students: Perceptions, Dispositions, and Adaptations*, examines ELD and SI teachers' perceptions of their students and their work environment, as well as the objective constraints and opportunities they face. It also examines their classroom practices and to understand if and how they adapt to their students' needs. Chapter 4, *District and School Context: Creating the Conditions for a Favorable Context for ELL Students and their Teachers* examines structural and organizational factors that either constrain or enable teachers to respond in a way that meets their Latino immigrant EL students' needs. Thus the broader context is taken into account in the analysis of the perceptions and

practices of policy actors within the district and within each school as well as the interactions between them. The objective contextual conditions at the district and school level are also examined, as well as the district and school level responses and actions in relation to these contextual conditions. This chapter identifies variation and trends between actors and schools to shed light on what fosters or limits creating the optimal context for Latino immigrant ELL students' academic advancement and social incorporation. Finally, chapter 5 discusses the key issues from the findings as well as the implications for ELL policy implementation by district and school actors. It also highlights key issues for future research.

Chapter 2: Methods

Summary

To inform the research questions introduced in Chapter 1, I employed a multiple case study with an embedded design (Yin, 2014). Data collection took place over a six-month period at two schools within the same district. I conducted in-depth qualitative interviews with teachers of Latino immigrant EL students, participated in their meetings, and had informal interviews and conversations with them. I carried out classroom observations of the same teachers. Additionally, I conducted in-depth interviews with school administrators as well as support staff. The district coordinators responsible for EL services were also interviewed. I attended all-staff meetings at each school as well as district meetings that addressed issues concerning services for EL students. I collected data from teachers, administrators, and support staff at both schools. I analyzed school artifacts, district documents, and district and school level data. Analysis of all of the collected data allowed me to use comparative approach for understanding how teachers of EL students responded to EL policies and guidelines within two different institutional contexts embedded in the same broader (district) context.

Sampling

School District

The choice of Pineview County Unified School District satisfied three selection criteria. First, and most important, it had one of the highest levels of Latino English Learner students in the region, and specifically first and second-generation youth. Thirty-five percent of the district's students classified as ELs, substantially higher than the eighteen percent countywide and twenty-two percent statewide percentages. This was important because it facilitated an analysis of how the district and school level actors responded to Latino EL students as their primary EL population. Second, the district had a history of receiving Latino immigrant youth into their schools. Immigrant flow had increased drastically over the previous five years largely due to the influx of children from Central America. A final criterion was that it was a district that offered bilingual education options and had an official policy for EL services that aimed to build on students' cultural and linguistic resources (i.e. an *additive* approach to language acquisition). This allowed me to analyze the way in which such policies and programs were put into practice at the district, school and classroom levels and how this varied by school contexts. Specifically, bilingual education was offered in one of the high schools selected for this study, but not in the other, and thus allowed for comparing different program structures within the same district.

Schools

Schools were purposively selected based on three criteria: 1) demographics, 2) geographical location, and 3) program structures. The two schools included in the sample were the public high schools⁸ with the highest percentage of EL students in the district, which was more than double the percentage of any of the other four public high schools. Additionally, these

⁸ Though the district had five charter high schools, these were automatically excluded because they are not subject to the same requirements, mandates, or funding structures as public schools. This would have made for too much variation in contextual conditions that were not relevant for the topic of this study.

two schools had the smallest percentage of non-Spanish speaking EL students. Thus they catered primarily (and almost exclusively) to EL students with a Spanish-speaking heritage, which allowed for comparing program structures and settings that aimed to serve the same population. Finally, these two schools served a much higher percentage of free-and reduced meal (FRM) students than the other four high schools and tended to serve a more vulnerable (or “at-risk”) population.⁹ Therefore teachers were positioned to respond to similar social and academic needs that were unlike teachers serving a student population that lived in less challenging circumstances. Finally, these two high schools had been receiving the highest number of newly arrived immigrant youth on a continual basis. Thus teachers and other school personnel at both schools faced the challenge of responding and adapting to these students, whose population had been drastically increasing over the past five years.

The schools were located within the same city and relatively close to each other geographically. Both were “inner city” schools in neighborhoods with the highest crime rate in the city.¹⁰ The school’s disciplinary policies were similar, such as carefully monitoring students’ behavior and assuring that they did not leave campus during the school day. Furthermore, because the schools were located in the same school district they had to respond to the same policies, guidelines, and mandates for serving the EL population. They also were faced with the same district-level constraints and opportunities. The similarities in demographics and geographic location allowed me to do a comparative analysis of school level and teacher responses to the needs of Latino immigrant EL students. Additionally, it allowed me to examine the variation in contextual conditions and how this influenced the perceptions and practices of teachers and other school personnel. This analysis was more nuanced if than if the demographic and geographic conditions had been substantially different.¹¹ (See table 2.1).

There were several differences that were important for answering my research questions using a comparative approach. The schools differed in program structures and organizational cultures in ways that directly affected learning conditions and opportunities for Latino immigrant EL students. One school provided a more sheltered (or “safe”) environment for these students by offering bilingual subject courses, more Spanish use and translation in all classes and school interactions, and Sheltered Instruction (SI)¹² courses that were segregated (i.e. composed of only ELD 1-3 students). The other school offered no bilingual courses, very little translation in any classes, and had SI courses that were composed of roughly half native English-speaking students and half ELD 1-3 students. Furthermore, the school that offered bilingual courses was considered the “Latino school” and had a predominantly Latino student body and school personnel (such as administrators and support staff). The other school was considered “African American”, even though the percentage of Latino students was greater than that of African American students. These structural and organizational differences created contextual conditions that influenced how teachers in each school responded to immigrant Latino EL students and adapted to their needs and shaped their opportunities.

⁹ Both schools served a population of students who were homeless or living in foster care or a group home.

¹⁰ During the time I was collecting data, two freshman students were killed from the same school within 10 days.

¹¹ While there was some variation between schools regarding their size (900 versus 1,500), neither was considered a “small school” nor particularly large school. This variation also allowed for the possibility of slightly different professional cultures and other organizational conditions.

¹² Sheltered Instruction, or SDAIE (Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English), are subject courses (such as math, history, or science) that aim to make academic content more comprehensible for English Learners than it would be in mainstream classes.

Because I had done research in these same two schools previously, I had detected the importance of these differences in shaping the learning opportunities and schooling experience of Latino immigrant EL students. Each school provided advantages and disadvantages for these students. However, the nature of my previous study did not allow for an in-depth comparative approach, which was the aim of the research presented in this study.

Table 2.1 School Characteristics

		Greenway High	Bloomfield High
Number of Students		1,498	963
EL Students		38%	33%
Free and Reduced Lunch (FRM)		92%	81%
Student Demographics (2015-16)*	Latino	86.5%	64%
	African Am.	5.5%	25.5%
	Asian	5%	6%
	White	1.5%	2%
	Other	1.5%	2.5%
Number of Teachers		75	46
Teacher Demographics (2014-15)	Latino	21%	16%
	African Am.	11%	27%
	Asian	8%	7%
	White	54%	45%
	Other	6%	5%
Program Structures		Bilingual classes and SI classes	Assimilated SI classes
Bilingual classes		Math	None
Sheltered (SI) classes for ELD1-3 students		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SI History and Science • Segregated: Only ELD 1-3 students • English speaking teacher with bilingual grad tutor to translate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All cores subjects are SI • Mixed: Half ELD 1-3 students and half native English speakers • English speaking teachers and no bilingual grad tutors

Source (demographics): California Department of Education

*2015-2016 demographics for teachers were not available.

Teacher Participants

The primary criterion for selecting teacher participants was that they taught the most classes comprised of ELD 1-3 students, a high number of whom were Latino Immigrant EL students. Thus, I recruited the ELD 1-3 teachers at each school to be focal teachers, meaning I would interview them and observe their classes.¹³ I also recruited subject matter teachers who

¹³ Though one ELD teacher, Ms. Hernandez, was teaching ELD 4, she had taught lower levels of ELD the previous year and was currently teaching Spanish for Spanish Speakers (a class which had many ELD 1-3 students).

taught the highest number of SI classes in their departments. To recruit the teachers, I met with the principal of each school who provided me with the master schedules. After that, the principal or vice principal introduced me to the ELD teachers (via email or in person). I sought out and recruited SI teachers in each school through the information provided in the master schedule and by talking with the ELD teachers and other support staff. My initial aim was to include SI teachers from each subject department for both schools, though this proved impossible mainly due to the different program structures.¹⁴ Ultimately I recruited 2 SI teachers in each school to be focal teachers.¹⁵ Teachers included in the study represented a range of ethnicities as well as teaching backgrounds. (See table 2.2). Four of the nine were Caucasian and two were foreign born.

Table 2.2 Teacher Participant Information

Teacher	Subject	Periods SI /ELD	School	Years teaching	At school ¹⁶	Teacher Preparation	Ethnicity/ nationality	Add. info.
Ms. Roy	ELD 3 ELD 4	4 1	GWH	20+	25	English & ESL (country of origin)	South Asian	Foreign born
Mr. Ashar	ELD 1 ELD 2	4 2	GWH	20	1	English & ESL (country-of- origin)	South Asian	Foreign born
Ms. Lamont	ELD 1 ELD 4	4 1	GWH	5	5	TFA Limited ESL preparation	Caucasian	
Mr. Sampson	SI History SI Gov.	4 1	GWH	2	2	Credentialed (History) Limited SI prep	Caucasian	
Ms. Hernand ez	ELD 4 Spanish (Basic)	3 3	BFH	2	2	Credentialed (Spanish)	Latina Mexican	2 nd gen. Mexica n
Mr. Jones	ELD 2 English 2	4 2	BFH	2	2	Credentialed (English) ELD exposure (as grad tutor)	Mixed; Latino & African Am.	
Mr. Engle	ELD 1 ELD 3	2 4	BFH	1	1	Working on Eng. credential Limited ESL preparation	Caucasian	
Ms. Heredia	SI Biology	5	BFH	1	1	Credentialed MA (Science)	Latina Mexican	2 nd gen. Mexica n
Mr. Nolan	Algebra SI	5	BFH	15	10+	Credentialed (Math) Limited SI prep	Caucasian	

¹⁴ For example, GWH did not offer sheltered math but rather bilingual math taught by a teacher from Spain. Though I interviewed her and observed her class, I did not end up using this data in my study.

¹⁵ In the case of the SI science teacher at GWH, she was willing to be interviewed but did not want me to observe her class. It was her first year teaching and she felt uncomfortable being observed at that time. Thus, I did not include her as a case for the study's analysis.

¹⁶ This includes the year that the data was collected.

Both of the foreign born teachers had received their teaching credentials in their countries of origin, where they had also taught prior to teaching in the U.S. Though the U.S. born, non-Caucasian teachers had very little teaching experience, they had a certain degree of cultural and linguistic affiliation with the EL students based on their exposure to the language (and some aspects of certain cultures). Teachers varied widely in terms of teacher preparation and years of teaching.

Data Collection

Data was collected out over a six-month period (January-June 2016), which coincided with the second semester of the school year. Data collection consisted of in-depth and informal interviews with teachers, administrators, school support staff, and district personnel responsible for serving the EL student population. (See table 2.3 for a summary).

Table 2.3 Summary of Data Collection

Data	Description	Purpose
Formal teacher interviews (N=10)	In-depth interviews with high school teachers; audio-recorded and notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 English Language Development (ELD) teachers • 5 Sheltered Instruction: 1 Math, 1 history, 2 science teachers • 1 Bilingual Math teacher 	Answer RQs in a systematic way.
Informal teacher interviews (N=3)	Informal interviews (different teachers than above); notes, no audio-recording: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 English Language Development (ELD) teachers • English teachers during department meetings 	Gather information prior to and during data collection when formal interview is not possible/appropriate.
Formal interviews with administrators and district actors (N=6)	In-depth interviews with high school administrators and other district actors; audio-recorded and notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 principals and 2 assistant principals (principal and AP at each school) • EL Services coordinator • Reclassification, Assessment, and Placement (RAP) program assist. 	Understand structure for EL services, decisions, schedules, and gather information to answer RQs.
School staff interviews (N=2)	In-depth interviews with school support staff; audio-recorded and notes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Bilingual grad tutor: assigned to assist an ELD teacher • 1 counselor: Counselor in charge EL students 	Understand decisions regarding EL students' class placements and other matters about EL students
Classroom observations (N= 19) (9 teachers)	Observation with notes (40-60 minutes) followed by debrief with teacher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 English Language Development (ELD) classes; 2-3 observations for each ELD 1-3 teacher • 6 Sheltered instruction classes: 2 science (same teacher), 2 math (same teacher), and 1 World History. • 1 Bilingual instruction classes: Math 	Observe teaching practices, interactions between teacher-student(s) and student(s)-student(s), and students' practices (verbal and non-verbal). Triangulate with interview data and student data.
Teacher meetings (n=3)	Observation with audio-recording and notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 department meetings: 1 Math and 2 ELD (one each school) 	Teacher meetings: Understand what and how often teachers discuss EL

School all-staff and district meetings (N=6)	Observation with notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 all staff school meetings (2 each school) • 2 Multilingual District Advisory Committee/MDAC (district-level) 	students, roles/position each takes, how time is used. Other meetings: learn what is being discussed regarding EL policy, guidelines, and decisions.
School artifacts and documentation	EL Services Master Plan and Reports/presentations, Local Funding plan and reports, master schedules (teachers, classes, periods) for each school, college requirements, EL policy documents and communications (e.g. regarding benchmarks and criteria for moving to next level), photos of student work (some with teacher comments), classroom displays.	Know formal EL policies and guidelines for district and schools. Student work/teacher feedback: know different teachers are implementing curriculum and supporting EL student learning.
District / school data	State, District, and school-level data over the past 5 years: 1) Graduation rates for EL and non-EL students, 2) percentage of EL and non-EL students meeting college (A-G) requirements, and 3) reclassification rates.	Examine and compare trends of each school and with the district and state in order to identify possible patterns.

Teacher Interviews

Interviews with teachers generally took place before or after a class observation. In circumstances when this wasn't possible due to the teacher's schedule, the interview would be as soon as possible afterwards (such as the next day). Intentionally linking the interview with a class observation facilitated eliciting concrete examples about students, interactions between students, interactions between the teacher and students, and specific teaching practices. If the interview was scheduled for after a class observation, I would arrive before the class started so the teacher could provide me with information about the students (groups and individuals) and contextualize the class such as the current unit being covered and specific challenges the teacher was facing with students (such as students' understanding the content and/or class management).

I used a semi-structured interview guide to obtain information about the same topics from all teachers yet also allowed for each teacher to elaborate on issues they felt were relevant. (See Appendix A for interview protocol). Teacher interviews generally lasted between 40 minutes to an hour, and in some cases I did follow up interviews. All teacher interviews were recorded and then transcribed by professional transcribers. Questions focused on the teacher's background in general and then more specifically at the school. I asked them if they had chosen to teach at that school and if they had chosen to teach the courses they were assigned. I also inquired about their disposition towards their work, having them elaborate on what they enjoy about teaching EL students and what their main challenges are both in terms of the students and their teaching environment. For example, I asked what type of support they received from the district and the school. I also asked what structural/material constraints they faced as well as organizational ones such as their ability to influence decisions that affected them or their students.

Additionally, I inquired about their curricular goals and texts, their opinion of those goals and texts (i.e. their appropriateness for their students), and if/how they adapted them to meet their students' needs. When I noticed that teachers would bring up similar issues (such as benchmark testing), I incorporated questions about them into the interviews. Finally, in order to get a sense of their knowledge of their EL students, I asked how many newcomers they had in

the observed class and if they knew these students' countries of origin and academic backgrounds. I asked them for examples of specific students who were either excelling or struggling and their perceptions of the reasons for each situation. Thus I was able to detect the variation in the degree of knowledge that teachers had of their students, their perceptions of them, and how they aimed to support them.

Administrator Interviews

Interviews with the principals and assistant principals generally lasted an hour; they were recorded and then transcribed by professional transcribers. At a school level, principals were the first people I interviewed in order to develop an overall understanding of the school's program structures and courses, goals for EL students, and information on teachers and courses. The first interview was informational; I took notes and collected key documents such as the teacher master plan (which as a list of all teachers, their class schedule, and classroom number). I then followed up with a formal interview. I decided to interview the assistant principals after initiating teacher interviews and class observations. The assistant principals tended to have more in-depth knowledge of the ELD and SI instructional practices of the teachers at their school. This allowed me to seek answers to questions that had emerged through my initial data collection. I used a semi-structured interview guide to elicit information most relevant to my research questions yet also allowed for the administrators to elaborate on issues they found relevant. (See Appendix B for interview protocol). I asked administrators about their backgrounds, which gave me a sense of their experience with teaching and specifically teaching EL students. It also allowed me to understand their knowledge and role at the school (e.g. if they had recently begun or had been at the school to witness trends over the years).

Interview questions focused on their overall perception of their EL population and specifically newcomers, such as changes in demographics and how their school had adapted to meet their needs. I inquired about the resources and guidelines they had received from the district to support their EL students and how they perceived this. I also asked them about their current ELD and SI teachers and if/how they perceived these teachers' abilities to meet the needs of their students. I also asked questions to understand their level of autonomy as a school in decision-making and about their vision to support for EL students. Additionally, I asked what district requirements and mandates they had to respond to as well as their perceived constraints and opportunities to meet the needs of EL students and respond to district mandates.

District Personnel and School Support Staff Interviews

I used a list of topics to interview district personnel and school staff who were in positions to directly support EL students. (See Appendix C for list of topics). These interviews lasted roughly 90 minutes each. The coordinator of the district EL Services was the first interview I conducted (initially an informational one followed by the in-depth interview). Near the end of my data collection, I interviewed the coordinator of the Reclassification, Assessment, and Placement (RAP) center. This allowed me to seek answers to questions that had emerged throughout data collection. I had follow up communication (via email) with both of these participants to obtain documents and data and other information. I interviewed the EL counselor

and a bilingual grad tutor at one high school because both of these participants played key roles in supporting EL students.¹⁷

Topics included the participant's role in supporting EL students and their perceptions of the needs of newcomers and EL students in general. I also asked how they perceived the district and school level support for these students and what their vision was to better meet the needs of EL students. Finally, I asked them to elaborate on their perceived constraints and opportunities for creating conditions that were favorable for the academic advancement and social incorporation of EL students and Latino immigrant EL students in particular.

Informal Interviews/Conversations

I had many informal interviews and conversations with district actors, teachers and other school staff, and students. In some cases I took notes during the conversations and in other cases wrote field notes immediately following the interactions. I conversed with several School Board members to understand their degree of knowledge about serving the EL population and their view of the priorities for this student population. I also conversed with district personnel at the Multilingual District Advisory Committee meetings that I attended. This allowed me to better understand how the district intended to respond to the EL student population as well as how they communicated with families and teachers regarding support for EL students.

Two ELD teachers were unable or unwilling to participate in in-depth and recorded interviews.¹⁸ In these cases, I did informal interviews with them, such as talking with them after a class or in another moment"). I also had conversations with the participating teachers after or before observed classes, in the hallway, or in the teacher lounge. Additionally, I talked with teachers from other departments about EL students and their teachers. All of these informal interviews and conversations were recorded in field notes.

Finally, the conversations that I had with newcomers and other EL students in both schools proved invaluable in gaining a better understanding of how these students perceived their school experience as well as their perceived opportunities and challenges. It also allowed me to understand their capacities and academic limitations (such as lack of formal education and ability to write in their primary language) as well as their interests and (usually unmet) desire for what and how to learn. Finally, I was able to understand their perception of their teachers and whom they sought out for support.

Teacher Meetings

Initially I had planned to sit in on at least two teacher meetings for both ELD and SI teachers (or their subject departments) in each school, though I had to adjust this plan to the reality of the culture at each school. ELD teacher meetings at both schools tended to be informal, inconsistent, and focus on immediate requests. The two ELD department meetings I did participate in covered topics such as student progress (or lack of), student behavior (framed as problematic in at one school and positively in the other), and providing input to the district

¹⁷ The other school did not have a counselor for EL students or bilingual grad tutors. In other words, there was not anyone who had the responsibility of providing special support to these students and thus address the topics in depth.

¹⁸ This was the case with one ELD teacher from each school (one was too busy and the other one did not want to be recorded). However, I was able to record an ELD department meeting at each school in which they engaged in conversation with each other as well as responding to my questions.

about moving ELD students to the next level, discussing test results, and other issues. These department meetings, which provided valuable data, were recorded and transcribed. Furthermore, the informal nature of the meetings allowed for my participation and a space for conversational informal interviews. This was exceptionally important for the teachers with which I was not able to have a formal interview with a teacher.

Regarding the SI teachers, teacher meetings varied by department yet none of the subject departments discussed issues specific to EL students. The exception to this is the one math department meeting that I observed in which the head teacher, Mr. Nolan, put the issue of EL students on the agenda intentionally for the purpose of my data collection. This teacher meeting centered on the teachers' perceived constraints and opportunities for teaching EL students. Each of the three department meetings (ELD and SI) lasted between 30-45 minutes and were transcribed.

All-staff School Meetings and District Meetings

I observed two all-staff meetings at each school and took detailed field notes of each one. The purpose of these observations was to better understand the organizational culture, and specifically the leadership and professional culture. I took notes of where teachers sat and how they interacted. For example, at BFH the ELD teachers sat together but were located close to the English teachers. After the all-staff meeting, they looked to the principal for guidance regarding if they were supposed to meet amongst themselves or also spend some of the meeting time with the English teachers. At GWH there appeared to be much less cohesion between the ELD teachers and less overall integration between subject departments and those teaching primarily EL students. In sum, these all-staff school meetings allowed for an additional data source for understanding how teachers interacted and leadership styles such as how principals interacted with and provided guidance to teachers.

I attended two Multilingual District Advisory Committee (MDAC) meetings during the data collection period. These meetings are held monthly for the purpose of exchanging information about EL services and issues related to the implementation of the EL Service Master Plan. Attendees include teachers and parent representatives from schools in the district that have dual immersion or bilingual education programs. At both meetings, I took field notes and collected documents that were distributed there. This allowed me to understand how EL Services and other district personnel responsible for the EL student population were communicating with stakeholders about policies and practices aimed to serve EL students and foster bilingualism. For example, in one meeting the main topic of discussion was how to better communicate with parents about the options for bilingual or non-bilingual education. In another meeting, the "home language survey" was discussed; the district sought feedback regarding the clarity of the form and how to better inform parents of its intention.¹⁹ These meetings provided a better understanding of the degree of latitude for decision-making at both the district and school level regarding EL services as well as the challenges of implementing an additive approach to acquiring English in a state and national climate that has overall subtractive approach.

¹⁹ All families must fill out this form when they enroll their child in school. Questions are aimed to understand what language(s) are used in the home. If a language other than English is indicated, the child will be tested for English proficiency when she/he begins Kindergarten. If unable to pass this test, the child will be classified as an "English Learner" and remain in that category until able to reclassify.

Classroom Observations

During the data collection period, I conducted 19 classroom observations of 9 different teachers. All ELD 1-3 teachers were observed two or three times (total of 12) and the SI teacher participants were observed twice (total of 6 observations). Additionally, I observed the bilingual math teacher at GWH once. Each observation lasted between 40-60 minutes. The observation time was determined by the block schedule. For example, in block class periods that lasted 90-100 minutes, I would observe either the first or second part of the block classes (one class period). When class periods were not in block, I observed the entire period. I took detailed field notes of each observation that focused on aspects of the teacher's instructional practices, such as how she/he presented the learning goals to the students and checked for student comprehension. I also focused on how teachers interacted with students in terms their language use (Spanish and English) and how they responded to classroom disruption, such as students talking to each other or using their cell phones when the teacher was requesting their attention.

If and when teachers addressed students by their names for discipline or when requesting participation was also noted. I captured specific interactions between the teacher and students during direct instruction and when students were working in groups. Additionally, I noted the teachers' language use at different times (Spanish or English) and students' responses in these different moments. Finally, I focused on how and if teachers would scaffold content for students and adapt to the different levels of understanding between students.

I chose to observe the same teachers teaching different classes so that I could see how they responded to different class conformations and sizes. For example, I observed Mr. Engle's ELD 1 class, which had many newcomers who had been in the country for less than six months (and in some cases only a 2-3 weeks). I also observed his ELD 3 class, where (as he had told me and I verified) he spent less time on class management and used pedagogical strategies such as group work on projects and activities (and less direct instruction). Teachers such as Ms. Lamont (ELD 1) and Ms. Roy (ELD 3) had taught the same ELD level, but had different class sizes. I observed each of them with two different groups of students. This was also the case for the SI teachers. Though the subjects were different (Biology, Algebra, History), by observing them teaching two different groups of students I was able to see how their practices remained consistent or varied in how they responded and adapted to their students. There were two ELD teachers that I observed 3 times instead of 2 because the class environment had struck me as particularly notable (such as constant class disruptions in the case of Mr. Engle and disengagement with students in the case of Mr. Ashar). A follow up observation allowed me to verify how representative of the class environment my first two observations had been.

Because the ELD 1-3 students also had SI classes, I was able to observe the same students in different settings and with different teachers. For example, there was a particular student at BFH who displayed behavior that would be described as defiant and disrespectful with Mr. Nolan (e.g. he refused to take his headphones off and do his work while sitting back with his feet up on the table). In Mr. White's ELD 2 class, this same student took off his headphones, sat up, and did his work when Mr. White asked him to do so. In other cases, patterns were observable in groups of students or as a class as a whole (i.e. overall class climate). For example, at GWH many of the students from Mr. Ashar's ELD 1 and 2 classes were in the bilingual math teacher's class. While disengaged from the academic content and teacher in Mr. Ashar's class, almost all of these same students were engaged with the content and teacher throughout the

bilingual math class. The differences in these teacher-student interactions revealed the nuances in the types of teacher practices that appear favorable or unfavorable for EL students' learning.

School and District Artifacts and Documentation

The EL Services Master Plan served to be important for understanding the official district policies and guidelines for EL students. The degree of specificity varied depending on the policy or mandate, which left room for various interpretations at a school level. It also allowed for a better understanding of the goals and intentions for serving EL students versus the practice at a school level. Other documents, such as specific criteria for moving EL students to the next level, also provided an understanding of the teachers' role in such decisions.

The master teaching schedules for each school were very important for identifying and recruiting participants and understanding their daily schedules (such as preparation time and time with ELD 1-3 students). I was also able to see how the participants' teaching schedules differed from other teachers and refer back to this when analyzing teachers' perceptions of their work environment. Additionally, I obtained the pacing schedule for ELD and was able to identify how teachers varied in their adaptation of this schedule to meet the needs of their students, especially newcomers. Photographs of students' completed work from ELD classes gave me insight into the type of work teachers were asking students to do, students' responses to this (through their work), and the variations in the type of feedback (or lack of) teachers provided. For example, while some teachers had their walls covered with students' work (that included the teachers' comments on each displayed piece), other teachers had no student work on the walls (even though they were not sharing the classroom). Some had provided feedback and others had not, and the type of feedback differed (e.g. a focus on functional language skills, emphasis on the students' expression/content, and/or a combination of both). I was able to triangulate this data with teacher interview data, such as teachers' accounts about adapting to their students' interests versus their practices.

Data Analysis

I organized my data collection by school and teacher cases, and kept a log of all relevant information. This included dates of obtaining the signed informed consent forms by each interviewee/participant, interviews and informal meetings/interviews, school visits, and classroom observations. I also noted documents and artifacts that I obtained. I kept dated field notes organized by school and teacher cases of all interviews, classroom observations, and informal interactions. I used the field notes to write narrative vignettes, many of which I transformed into analytic memos. This facilitated initiating analysis of my data while in the process of collecting it. As stated by Erickson (1986), analytic memos that are written throughout the course of the research can offer "an additional source of evidence for changes in the researchers' interpretive perspective" (p. 152). These memos also allowed me to see emerging themes and identify areas of focus and where additional information was needed.

Another way of organizing and reducing my data was by using data displays, which was a useful tool for interpreting and analyzing data. As described by Miles and Huberman (1994), a data display is a "visual format that presents information systematically, so the user can draw valid conclusions and take needed action" (p. 91). Though I had the interviews and audio-recorded teacher meetings transcribed, I wrote memos after each interview that I drew upon for

key information. I used this information in the data reduction process prior to and after obtaining the completed transcriptions. I coded the transcripts by themes using NVivo. In the case of most interviews, I listened to parts of the audio-recordings that were particularly relevant to my research questions and analysis (such as excerpts included in this study). This helped me to identify elements such as words/issues that teachers' emphasized as well as select the best pieces of supporting evidence.

Additionally, I used cross-case display matrices (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to consolidate and analyze themes that directly responded to my research questions, such as teachers' perceptions of EL students' behavior and needs, teacher practices and interactions with EL students, and teachers' perceived constraints and limitations. This proved very useful in developing a holistic and comparative perspective while also identifying the nuances between cases regarding these key themes. Though I had a priori themes and categories that informed my interview protocols, I allowed for themes to emerge that appeared to be the most relevantly related to my research questions. Case matrices were also useful for triangulating data and thus strengthening validity. For example, teachers' self-reported perceptions and practices were contrasted with classroom observation data as well as other people's accounts of that teacher.

I identified validity threats as part of the research design by using a *validity matrix* (Maxwell, 2012, pp. 129-135). Thus throughout data collection and analysis I used strategies to lessen such threats. For example, regarding researcher bias, I made sure to observe each teacher at least twice. Also, in addition to the formal interview with each interviewee, I sought out as many opportunities as possible to have informal interviews or conversations with each interviewee. This helped to assure that an interviewee's practices and self-reported perceptions and opinions were not circumstantial (i.e. due to the conditional factors of that day/moment). Additionally, I looked for disconfirming evidence in my data to check my own assumptions. When I found such evidence, I returned to the data sources for that case to seek out more evidence that could further disconfirm my initial analysis and lead me to adjust it.

Finally, I shared data charts, narrative vignettes, analytic memos, and emerging themes with peers while collecting and analyzing the data. This provided a context for helping to assure that my conceptual lens and potential biases were not imposing upon my findings.

While I had a priori theories to identify themes in data collection and analysis, I also allowed for themes to emerge. I used *open coding* (Creswell, 2013) by identifying core phenomenon from which "axial coding" could emerge (p. 86). For example, I identified categories and codes from existing theory on *teachers as a context of reception for Latino immigrant students*; these categories and codes were the core phenomenon. I then examined causal and intervening conditions around the core codes to create new codes (such as different teacher responses to EL students). In sum, I used a grounded theory approach as part of my analytic strategy.

Limitations

There were several limitations in this investigation. The main limitation is the relatively small number of participants included in the study. The small number of SI teachers limited my ability to develop a more in-depth comparative understanding of the variation in SI teachers' perceptions and practices within and between the two schools. Additionally, the number of district actors included in the study was relatively small, which limited my ability to understand multiple perspectives of district personnel responsible for supporting teachers of EL students.

Another limitation was that I was not able to have in-depth interviews with all of the ELD teachers due to the unwillingness to be interviewed in one case and the lack of availability in the other. However, as previously explained, I was able to gather information from these teachers through audio-recorded ELD department meetings and informal interviews/conversations.

Secondly, my classroom observation data may have been influenced by my presence. As Maxwell (2012) notes, it is impossible to eliminate the influence of the researcher (and cause “reactivity”). However, he also points out, “in natural settings, an observer is generally much less of an influence on participants’ behavior than is the setting itself” (p. 125). In most of my observations, I entered the class and sat at the back of the room. However, in other cases the teacher introduced me to the class of students and encouraged me to engage with the students (such as help them to understand instructions or content). On one occasion a teacher asked me to film him teaching because he needed a video recording of his teaching to submit as a requirement for obtaining his teaching credential. In all of these circumstances, I responded affirmatively to the teachers’ requests and tried to reciprocate in any way possible. As Glesne (2015) explains, this type of reciprocity is important not just for establishing a relationship with the participant in order to obtain data, but also to show appreciation and exchange favors. Thus my participation in some classes may have been a limitation in that I could not solely focus on the information directly relevant to my research questions. However, at the same time, it offered me the opportunity to directly engage with students that provided rich data. It also created a more trusting and mutually respectful relationship with the teacher that had a positive effect on our interviews and other interactions.

Finally, I had aimed to have equal numbers of SI teachers (i.e. two in each school) from the same subjects in at least one case. However, this was not possible because GWH only offered bilingual math (no SI math). Though I was able to interview the SI science teacher at GWH, I was not able to observe her class (due to her unwillingness to be observed). While I could have chosen to include a different science teacher, it was too late in the year. (The SI science teacher had initially told me that she was willing to be interviewed and observed and then changed her mind later about the class observation). However, having teachers from different subject areas proved to be minor in that my research questions focused on teachers’ perceptions and practices with students and not the specific delivery of academic subject content.

Despite the limitations, I was able to collect the data most essential for answering my research questions and arrive at findings that contribute to a better understanding of how district and school level actors shape opportunities for Latino immigrant EL students’ academic advancement and social incorporation.

Chapter 3: Teachers as a Context of Reception for Latino Immigrant ELL Students: Perceptions, Dispositions, and Adaptations

What does it mean for teachers to be the context of reception for Latino immigrant English Language Learner (ELL) students and how do they perceive their own role as ELD or Sheltered Instruction teachers? How do they perceive their Latino immigrant ELL students' practices and abilities? How, if at all, do they adapt their instruction and institutional mandates to meet their needs? Are there material and organizational structures in their institutional environment that constrain their ability to meet their students' needs? Examining these questions is important for understanding how to best support the teachers who come into contact with immigrant youth and create conditions for their students to succeed.

For a school to be a context of reception for immigrant youth that helps them successfully transition into the host society, it should: (a) offer opportunities to acquire the skills, knowledge, and requirements to graduate from high school and continue to college, (b) be safe from discrimination and stigmatization (that they often feel in society), (c) provide opportunities to incorporate socially rather than being segregated, and (d) foster a bicultural and bilingual identity rather than erasing it, or rather selectively acculturate to the host country (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

While some of these aspects are outside of the control of teachers, teachers can influence many of these aspects and provide a favorable human context of reception (Dabach, 2009, 2011, 2015). However, teachers operate within their institutional environment that influences their perceptions and practices (Coburn, 2004). Furthermore, the material structural and organizational conditions of their local context, including external pressures, must be taken into account when analyzing teachers' perceptions and practices (Ball et al., 2012). Examining how teachers navigate their institutional environment to respond to their immigrant ELL students is essential for understanding the opportunities that immigrant youth have to advance academically and socially incorporate.

Chapter Overview

This chapter examines how teachers of Latino Immigrant ELL students perceive their students and respond to their academic and social needs within their particular institutional setting. The questions that guide the analysis in this chapter are:

5. What are teachers' perceptions of the academic and social needs of Latino immigrant ELL students? How do teachers perceive their own role and work environment? What are the constraints and opportunities teachers face in supporting their Latino immigrant ELL students' academic and social needs?
6. What classroom practices demonstrate how, if at all, teachers adapt to their Latino immigrant ELL students' academic and social needs? How, if at all, do they draw upon these students' linguistic and cultural resources?

The first part of this chapter examines these questions using data from four teachers at Greenway High (GWH): three ELD teachers and one SI teacher. In the second part of the chapter I analyze data from three ELD teachers and two SI teachers from Bloomfield High (BFH). For

each school, an overview of the position and role of the ELD and SI teachers is provided, followed by a description of their material structural and organizational constraints and opportunities. I then analyze their perceptions towards their role and work environment and how they perceive their students. After that, I examine their classroom practices to understand how, if at all, they adapt to their students' needs given their own teaching repertoire and external pressures. After analyzing each school and the teachers within it, I identify variation in perceptions and practices across all teachers and the contextual conditions that seem to be the most important for how teachers meet their Latino immigrant ELL students' needs.

Teachers as a Context of Reception for Immigrant Youth

Teachers who come into contact with immigrant ELL students on a continual basis play a key role in shaping their opportunities available to them in the host society. They are the human context of reception for immigrant youth (Dabach, 2009, 2011, 2015). Through their interactions with immigrant-origin ELL students, teachers can mediate their school and life experiences in positive, neutral, or negative ways; they can serve as *institutional agents* in ways that can empower Latino immigrant youth and influence their academic outcomes and social opportunities (Stanton-Salazar, 2001, 2011).

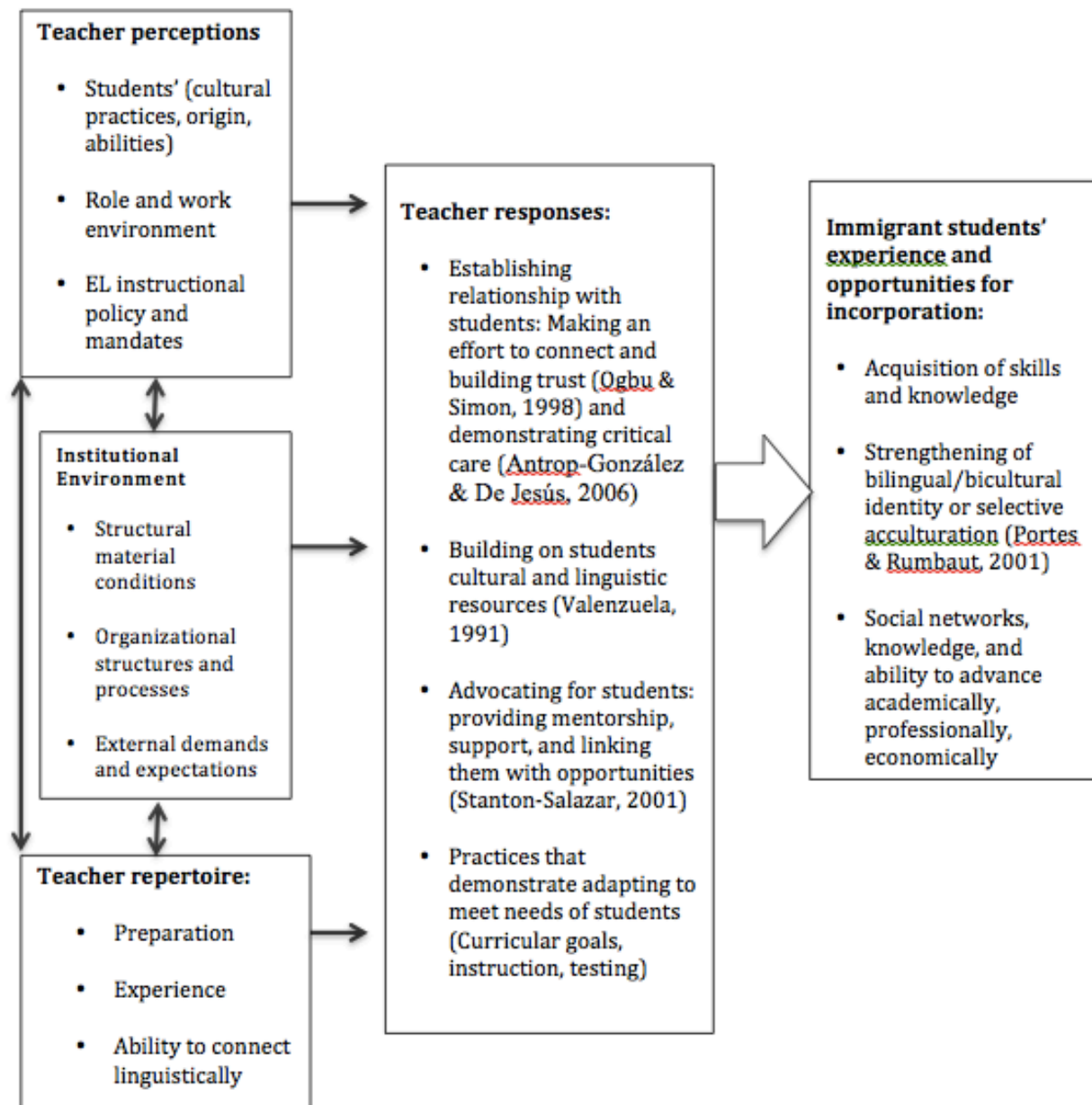
In this study, I define several teacher practices that are crucial for immigrant ELL students: (1) establishing relationships and trust with students, (2) building on students' cultural and linguistic repertoires, (3) advocating for students and provide mentoring, support, and linkages to opportunities, and (4) adapting curricular goals, instruction and testing to best meet students' needs. (See figure 3.1).

Yet these practices are linked to teachers' perceptions as well as the material and organizational conditions of their institutional environment. Thus I examined teachers' perceptions about their students' cultural practices (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003) as well as their perceptions of their own role and of their work environment. I also sought to understand their teaching repertoire, defined in this study as their preparation, experience, and ability to connect linguistically with their students.

The context of reception that teachers provide for their students is linked to their institutional environment. Teachers have certain degrees of latitude, or autonomy, in how they choose to put instructional policies and guidelines into practice (Coburn, 2004; Garcia & Menken, 2010; English & Varghese, 2010). Teachers vary in their adaptations to students (Dabach, 2009; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993) and the institutional environment influences how teachers respond to external pressures and negotiate policies (Coburn, 2004). Thus I examined teachers' practices to understand if and how they adapted to their Latino immigrant ELL students' academic and social needs.

Finally, I examined teachers' perceptions and practices in relation to the local context within which they work. The structural material conditions include staffing, program and class structures, resources for teachers, district and school support, and external demands and expectations. Organizational conditions include structures and processes such as school leadership, school norms, the values and commitments of teachers and other school staff, and oversight and guidance provided for teacher collaboration. While these dimensions of local context are differentiated in the framework for my study (figure 3.1), I also acknowledge that they overlap (Ball et al., 2012).

Figure 1: Teachers as a Context of Reception for Latino Immigrant ELL students



My analysis led me to understand that teachers varied in key ways that shape how they respond to their students' academic and social opportunities. Variations were in: (a) teachers' perceptions of their students and their own role and work environment, (b) knowledge about their students and expectations for them, (c) their teaching repertoire, and (d) their interpretation of instructional mandates and views on how to respond to them. I also found that there were external pressures, or policy guidelines, that teachers responded to differently, thus adapting to the needs of the students to varying degrees. The guidelines that showed most variation in teachers' practices were: (1) the curricular goals, content, and pacing schedule, (2) benchmark testing, and (3) their practices regarding students' primary language in order to learn. Teacher

responses to guidelines included rejection, compliance and assimilation, symbolic responses, or using parallel structures to meet instructional goals.

Who is Teaching Immigrant EL Students at Greenway High and Bloomfield High?

The teachers who are the primary receptors of newcomers at Greenway High and Bloomfield High are ELD teachers and Sheltered Instruction (SI) teachers. In both schools, newcomers and other first-generation immigrant students were spending more instructional time with ELD (level 1-3) and SI teachers than any other teachers. This was largely due to the block schedules that both high schools were using to organize their class periods. (See tables 3.1 and 3.2).

Table 3.1 Schedule for ELD 1-3 students at Greenway High

Greenway High (Mon., Tuesday, Friday)		
Period	Subject	Time*
1	ELD 1A/2A/3A	120 mins.
2	ELD 1B/2B/3B	
3	SI Math (bilingual)	60 mins.
4	SI Science (BL/SI)*	60 mins.
5	SI (BL/SI) History*	60 mins.
6	P.E.	60 mins.

* Some ELD 1-3 students had “bilingual” (BL) Science and History, which was Sheltered Instruction with a bilingual grad tutor to translate. There were bilingual teachers teaching Math.

Greenway High (Wednesday)		
Period	Subject	Time*
1	ELD 1A/2A/3A	100 mins.
3	SI Math (bilingual)	100 mins.
5	SI (BL/SI) History	100 mins.
Greenway High (Thursday)		
2	ELD 1B/2B/3B	100 mins.
4	SI Science (BL/SI)	100 mins.
6	P.E.	100 mins.

Table 3.2 Schedule for ELD 1-3 students at Bloomfield High

Bloomfield High (Mon/Wed)		
Period	Subject	Time
1	ELD 1A/2A/3A	90 mins.
3	SI Math	90 mins.
5	SI History	90 mins.
7	Elective	90 mins.

Bloomfield High (Tues/Thurs)		
Period	Subject	Time
2	ELD 1B/2B/3B	90 mins.
4	SI Science	90 mins.
6	P.E.	90 mins.
8	Elective	90 mins.

Bloomfield High (Friday)		
Period	Subject	Time
1	ELD 1A/2A/3A	33 mins.
2	ELD 1B/2B/3B	33 mins.
3	SI Math	33 mins.
4	SI Science	33 mins.
5	SI History	33 mins.
6	P.E.	33 mins.
7	Elective	33 mins.
8	Elective	33 mins.

At Greenway High, this was even more pronounced because the ELD 1-3 classes were a longer duration than at Bloomfield High and they had six periods instead of eight. Thus, ELD 1-3 students at GWH only had one period (P.E.) that was not with an ELD or SI teacher whereas at BFH they had four classes that were not with ELD or SI teachers. The fact that GWH EL students had fewer opportunities to take non-ELD or SI courses is consequential both due to their lack of exposure to native English speakers as well as having fewer opportunities than the BFH EL students to meet requirements for high school graduation and college requirements, as discussed in the following section.

The Case of Greenway High

Greenway High had traditionally been the “Latino” school with a higher Latino and EL population. Some structures for accommodating EL students and, to some degree newcomers, had been in place for many years. The services for newcomers had especially grown in the past years due to the influx of youth arriving from Latin America (mainly Central America). A “Newcomer Hub” had been in development at Greenway High over the past year, with various services for newcomers such as psychological and academic support and other structures and services that would be put into place the following year. Greenway High also hired “Bilingual Grad Tutors” to assist the non-Spanish speaking ELD and SI teachers; these were recent college graduates who were fluent in Spanish and English, most of whom were of Latino-origin.

Greenway High was structured by academies (such as Art, Law, Engineering, Health, and Media). ELD 1-3 students were automatically placed in the Engineering Academy because the ELD counselor was in charge of that academy. However, according to many teachers and other school personnel, ELD 1-3 students did not know about the academy structure or that they were in one. Because they were only able to take one class other than the core subjects (which was usually P.E.), this did not allow them to take any electives.²⁰ The ELD 1-3 teachers did not participate in academy activities as other teachers did because they did not pertain to their students. This was also the case for some teachers who taught primarily SI, such as the teacher at GWH included in this study. Furthermore, ELD was not considered part of the English Department, but rather was its own small department. In sum, in many ways the program structure for ELD 1-3 students and their teachers resulted in these teachers and students being structurally and organizationally separate from other teachers and students.

There were three ELD 1-3 teachers at Greenway High: Ms. Roy, Mr. Ashar, and Ms. Lamont.²¹ There were several teachers in the Science and History departments that taught SI courses, but Mr. Sampson had more SI classes than any other teacher. (See table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Greenway High ELD and SI teachers (cases)

Teacher	Subject	Years teaching*	At school	Preparation	Extra class support	Language Span./Eng.	Ethnicity
Ms. Roy	ELD 3; 4 periods ELD 4; 1 period	20+	20+	English and ESL; prep. in country-of origin	None	English 2 nd language; No Spanish	Southeast Asian
Mr. Ashar	ELD 1; 4 periods ELD 2; 2 periods	20	1	ESL (in credential)	Bilingual grad tutor	English 2 nd language; No Spanish	Southeast Asian
Ms. Lamont	ELD 1; 4 periods ELD 4; 1 period	5	5	TFA (working on credential)	Bilingual grad tutor and student helpers**	English; Some Spanish	Caucasian
Mr. Sampson	SI History; 4 periods	2	2	Credentialed (History)	Bilingual grad tutor	English; Some Spanish	Caucasian

*This includes the year that data for this study was being collected.

** Student helpers were students that had been in her ELD 1-3 classes but were currently ELD 4 or reclassified.

²⁰ If they reached ELD 4 before graduating, they would be enrolled in computer or technology classes for electives. The lack of participation in an academy was part of a larger limitation for ELD 1-3 students having access to electives, college required courses, and social opportunities that other students were able to benefit from.

²¹ Pseudonyms are for all informants and some identifiable information has been changed to protect anonymity.

The teachers of EL students at Greenway High varied widely in their teaching repertoires. They also had contextual conditions in their environments that created constraints and opportunities for them. These were material structures and organizational structures as well as external pressures (such as following guidelines and responding to requirements).

Teaching Repertoires and Contextual Conditions

Ms. Roy had many more years of teaching experience (English and ESL/ELD) than any of the other teachers, much of which were at Greenway High. Mr. Ashar also had many years of teaching experience (English and ESL/ELD), yet most of these were not at a high school level and it was his first year at GWH. Both Ms. Roy and Mr. Ashar had received their education and taught in their countries of origin; they lacked a cultural frame of reference for teaching Latino EL students. They also spoke no Spanish. Ms. Lamont spoke some Spanish, and had received minimal training through her Teach For America preparation (which included some training for ELD). She was not foreign born, had received her education in the U.S., and had been teaching ELD at GWH for five years. These aspects may have contributed to providing her with a better cultural frame of reference than the other two ELD teachers. Mr. Sampson also spoke some Spanish, but had not received preparation for teaching SI in his credentialing program. However, like Ms. Lamont, his own education and experience in the U.S. and GWH may have helped him develop a better cultural frame of reference (or cultural understanding) towards his Latino immigrant EL students. None of the teachers had received professional development or instructional support from the district to teach ELD/SI, further constraining their teaching repertoires.

Mr. Ashar, Ms. Lamont, and Mr. Sampson all had students with a very wide range of Spanish and English abilities and were receiving new students continually throughout the year. Additionally, Ms. Lamont and Mr. Sampson had very large class sizes (35-40 students compared to roughly 20 in the case of Mr. Ashar and Ms. Roy).

Finally, the professional culture of the school was loosely coupled. Teacher “collaborations”²² were not enforced nor guided. Though departmental collaborations were scheduled to be every other week, attendance was not enforced (and irregular in the case of ELD). The teachers were sometimes given tasks to respond to, but not guided to collaborate about their work nor was their follow up by the school administration (except in the case of requirements, such as reporting on kids performance as demonstrated by a mandated test).

As for external pressures, the ELD teachers were required by the district to administer a benchmark test to their students every three months, regardless of their students’ proficiency levels (i.e. even if five of the students understood almost no English had just arrived to the U.S. in the past week). They were expected to teach the content of the ELD textbook provided by the district according to the pacing schedule so that students could know what they needed to know to pass the benchmark tests.

As discussed in the following sections, teachers’ perceptions about the structural and organizational conditions described above varied in some ways, as did how they responded to their students given their constraints and external demands. They also drew upon their own teaching repertoires in different ways.

²² Though I use the term “collaboration” in different parts of this chapter because the school personnel termed it as such, I also use the word “meeting” because collaboration was not a practice that I witnessed in any of these meetings nor did teachers say they were collaborating.

Teacher Perceptions Towards their Work and Environment

The ELD teachers at Greenway High shared perceptions regarding their work and work environment, yet there was also some variance. For example, they shared the perception that ELD was a separate and marginalized unit within the school. They also shared the perception that their work was not valued and that there was a lack of oversight, guidance, and communication between the school leadership and their classrooms. This was reported by all three teachers in the following ways: (1) they stated that they had not been observed by anyone nor received instructional support all year, (2) they expressed a lack of responsiveness by the administration regarding their requests for changes in aspects such as class composition and testing students, and they felt that their work was not appreciated by the administration. However, their perceptions about teacher collaboration varied slightly.

The professional culture of the school reflected loose coupling between the administration and ELD teachers and a lack of cohesion between the ELD teachers. My data also revealed the ELD departments' isolation and separateness within the school, as seen in the following field note and reinforced by the teachers' subsequent statements. The following is from a field note (3/18/2016) while observing a whole school staff meeting that focused on the upcoming SBAC testing:

I walked into the meeting with the veteran ELD teacher, Ms. Roy, who went over to a table on the side of the library. Mr. Ashar was not present. Ms. Lamont was sitting with the English department teachers. The social science/history teacher who teaches Sheltered Instruction sat with the ELD teacher and they discussed logistics for the upcoming SBAC testing and how this applied to low proficiency EL students.

The following week I asked Ms. Lamont why she hadn't sat with the ELD teachers during the all staff meeting. She explained that she didn't communicate or collaborate with the other ELD teachers and stated the following about teaching ELD:

At Greenway High School they would place teachers that they didn't think were good English teachers to teach ELD and to try to push people out. It was also always like the last thing to be considered in scheduling and there's just not a lot of – it's sort of changing but for my first few years teaching here it was really seen as kind of like the pariah subject and not included, not inclusive, not included in meetings and collaboration and the department was really difficult to work with. There wasn't much collaboration.

Teacher department meetings were scheduled to occur on a biweekly basis, as indicated on the teacher department meeting schedule.²³ However, participation in all staff meetings and ELD department meetings was irregular and informal.²⁴ Ms. Lamont did not participate in these meetings unless they were mandated, which had only happened twice that academic year according to her. As Ms. Lamont stated about the teacher collaborations:

²³ I obtained the teacher department meeting schedule for the academic year, which had the dates and times for each meeting, either by department or all-staff, for the entire academic year.

²⁴ On one occasion the scheduled ELD meeting did not occur because the other ELD teacher who attended was did not attend. One the other occasion, Ms. Roy and Mr. Ashar were present and had nothing specific assigned by administration that they were to discuss or report back on.

They're just really ineffective meetings where we don't stay on topic and I honestly mostly don't know what the topic is most of the time. There's a lot of complaining and then we just all leave.

She said that ELD was “super marginalized” and that she didn’t feel respected teaching it. As stated below, she felt that the lack of respect was within and beyond the school:

From the other teachers, from administration, from the district level. It's like a lot of just like – yeah. It kind of feels like just a lot of people trying out different ideas but it never really feels like – it just doesn't feel like we're taken very seriously. So that combined with the fact that I'm not teaching what I want to teach, it's pretty frustrating.

Ms. Lamont also expressed her perception that the marginalized status of the ELD department and teaching ELD also affected the EL students:

I mean I'm sure it trickles down and they feel that way because I think they feel really marginalized in their other classes. Throughout the school they don't feel accepted by the wider population and there's not really much that I've seen that's in place that kind of helps bring the larger population that are not newcomers to another country to feel integrated and respected.

She expressed various ideas about how this could be done and how she had proposed them to the school administration and district EL Services but that she didn’t get the support needed to put this in place. She expressed frustration at this situation:

I can't speak for the other teachers but at least for me it really feels like my voice and like respect has been lost. So it's like if I were staying next year I would not want to teach ELD but I'm not staying anyway.

She was also frustrated with the professional limitations teaching ELD 1. She said that she loved her students and had seen them through to English proficiency over the past years. Though this year she had wanted to teach General English²⁵ where she is “accessing some critical thinking” with her students as opposed to “teaching kind of basics at a lower level” like with teaching ELD. She expressed feeling like she was not able to grow professionally teaching only ELD.

It was apparent by talking with other teachers, the administration, school staff, and students that Ms. Lamont was very dedicated to her students and good at what she did; she also expressed how much she loved her students. While she knew that the administration and other teachers had heard this through her students, she expressed frustration at the lack of recognition of her ELD teaching. When discussing the lack of support for teaching ELD she stated:

...a lot of times I'll hear like people say, "Oh admin's saying you're doing a really good job," and I'm always like, "How would they even know? We could be watching movies

²⁵ Though Ms. Lamont had wanted to teach English, she agreed to teach ELD 1 because she would be leaving the following year to attend a master degree program.

every day and no one would know because no one has stopped by the classroom. How do they know I'm doing a good job?"

The other two ELD teachers also mentioned having never been observed or receiving instructional support that year (and for Ms. Roy, in general). They did not talk directly about ELD being of low status, though they did discuss their separateness. For example, Ms. Roy talked about not being able to get what she needed to teach ELD because they were not considered part of an Academy:

Yes, and I wanted printers for ELD teachers. We don't have it. And because all academy teachers have it and we are not in an academy even, we don't get the funding. We have ELD kits and we don't have printers in class.

Both Ms. Roy and Mr. Ashar felt unable to influence decisions about EL student placement and other issues they perceived, as well as feeling a lack of communication regarding issues pertaining to their classes and students. As Ms. Roy expressed:

We are not told, even. All of us sit and we say, "Oh, this student is not here". No, we are not told at all. No message even that this student is being moved, how this student is doing or any teacher observation, no.

Like Ms. Lamont, the other two ELD teachers at Greenway High expressed how they had given up on trying to make changes that they thought would improve the conditions for teaching EL students. In a conversation with Mr. Ashar and Ms. Roy, they expressed feeling unheard:

Mr. A: I have a class in which I have at least seven or eight kids who are preliterate level. And then there are about seven or eight kids who are below that level. And then I have about three or four kids who are above that level. It's such a mismatch as per the level, and I can do nothing about it.

KR: And if you tell the counselor that --?

Mr. A: Well, it's their sweet word --

Ms. R: No no, you cannot.

Mr. A: I don't even want to tell the counselor now. I'm so kind of tire--

Ms. R: Tired, tired of saying.

KR: Saying it and saying it and not being heard?

Ms. R: Saying and complaining.

It was apparent from listening to all three ELD teachers that they felt a sense of teaching ELD as being marginalized and perceived as unimportant, and they all felt powerless to do anything about it. These issues negatively affected their teaching satisfaction and morale. Furthermore, Ms. Lamont felt limited professionally by teaching ELD where she could not do "critical thinking" with her students. Ironically, this notion of ELD 1-3 students being unable to engage in critical thinking reinforces rather than challenges the low status of ELD.

The SI History teacher, Mr. Sampson, had classes composed of ELD 1-3 students, yet held a different perception regarding his students' ability to engage in critical thinking. He believed that his students needed to develop their study skills because, as he stated, many

students had not learned these. For the following year he planned to get binders for them to help them organize their work. His ideas included having a section for them to work on their academic vocabulary as well as one for “sentence starters” that would be translated to Spanish so that he could “do more critical thinking work with them”. He not only believed in his students’ capacity to engage in critical thinking, but he also believed he could do this despite the many challenges faced by all of the ELD and SI teachers who participated in this study (such as large class sizes, a wide variation in language proficiency levels, newcomers arriving continuously).

Unlike the ELD teachers, Mr. Sampson did not express feeling separate and marginalized teaching EL students. He discussed not participating in an academy and thus not having a space for collaboration with other teachers, but stated:

At the moment I am kind of happy I don’t have to worry about that (participation in an academy) so I can focus on content, SDAIE strategies, trying to help them (the students).

He explained that he did not get preparation or instructional support for teaching SI, though he sought out other teachers for advice. Since he had felt so unprepared, he had been dedicating a lot of time to planning and becoming better prepared to teach his classes. Overall, he had a positive disposition towards his work:

I asked an ELD student, I think she is ELD two now, I had her last year. I was like, “oh, are you learning English in my class from this year and last year, and she’s like, “yeah”, ya know. And I felt proud of that, that I am teaching English skills.

In sum, all three ELD teachers felt disregarded due to ELD being perceived as low-status and they felt unheard and unsupported by the administration. This negatively affected their disposition towards work. The SI teacher, in turn, expressed not getting the support he needed but he had a positive disposition towards his work. As examined in the following sections, the perceptions towards the ELD students, adaptations to their needs and abilities, cultural understanding, and perception and practices of Spanish use varied between teachers.

Teacher Perceptions of their Students

In this section I analyze the perceptions that teachers have of their Latino EL students’ practices. Teachers’ perceptions of their students are tied to teachers’ individual differences such as their beliefs, values, normative practices, and status (Dabach, 2011). When working with minority groups, teachers may have a tendency to conflate ethnicity with culture as well as treat a group as homogenous and hold reductive notions of cultural practices (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). Furthermore, teachers may lack a cultural frame of reference for understanding their students’ practices, which can make it difficult to navigate classroom management and instruction (Bartlett, 2014).

Two of the ELD teachers (Mr. Ashar and Ms. Roy) expressed reductive notions of their students’ cultural practices and attributed difficulties in class management and student learning to students’ “cultures” or national origin. Mr. Ashar and Ms. Roy had both received their teaching credentials in their countries of origin, unlike Ms. Lamont whose preparation was in the U.S. Their own experiences of schooling also corresponded to their respective countries of origin, which established conscious and unconscious norms for teaching. Furthermore, the school had norms for discipline that were much harder for Ms. Roy and Mr. Ashar to navigate due to the

lack of support from the administration and other teachers. Finally, their ability to connect with students to help them learn also appeared to be limited by their level of cultural understanding.

During an ELD teacher collaboration session, Mr. Ashar explained to me the challenges he perceived in making his teaching effective. In the following excerpt, he refers to a class session I had observed earlier in the day:

You know, like if you remember I was trying to show them that little – so that was the positive part of it. When I show them a clip and I say, "Well come on, you have a visualization." So that – they will grip to it and so on. But when it came to writing and all that they could not manage that.....See, the whole idea of content, the content and then the process and then the product is not – that chain is disturbed. You know? So we have the content but then, like you saw, I showed them the visualization, I showed that that's the content for them. But the process of working on it is kind of – that's disrupted. And with the, I don't know, we may be blaming them but it has to be addressed. It's not working.

Mr. Ashar perceived class management to be a major problem, and he expressed not knowing how to “break through” to have better class management and effectiveness in the classroom:

But the self-involvement and the self-discipline, self-management, how to manage the time in the classroom, that has started suffering, probably again, because like cell phone and these things, the disadvantages. And I don't know how to break through that because there's a lot of ineffectiveness.

Mr. Ashar's lack of knowledge about his students' countries-of-origin also resulted in assumptions about them as being unmotivated to learn. In our conversations he would talk about his students as if they were from one cultural group. In an informal interview with him after my first class observation he stated, “I feel sorry for them you know” (referring to their lack of knowledge of English and their new context). On different occasions he asked me questions about Central America but never which country the different students came from, as other teachers had done. Some questions had embedded assumptions, such as when he stated, “In Central America, do they even value education? I have taught ELD/ESL to students of different countries, and they are motivated to learn”.

As illustrated in this excerpt, Mr. Ashar implied that students from Central America lacked motivation to learn, or didn't value the opportunity to learn. He also expressed feeling pity for them, rather than an understanding of the types of challenges they face or the cultural and linguistic resources they have.

Similar to Mr. Ashar, Ms. Roy discussed classroom management as a major challenge. As she stated, “I spend 50% of my time on discipline and 50% babysitting”. Ms. Roy expressed frustration over this:

But that is really a frustration with me because I know that I can teach more, I can do a lot. But because of disruption sometimes – it's only one student sometimes.

She explained that she had wanted to finish the work with her students that she had planned but because of the “disruption” of some students it wasn't possible to do all of it:

So these are the things – you have to be tough sometimes. You have to think of ways and means. And that is how I completed half of it: look at this is the work we did today.

She showed me examples of student work in which they were beginning to construct an argumentative text by first writing a topic sentence, several sentences of evidence, and then an explanation. The students were supposed to argue why they thought the school cafeteria food was either good or not good. Ms. Roy explained that she tried to choose subjects that she believed would be engaging for them.

Much of Ms. Roy's explanation of the class management problem centered on the students' behavior and possible causes for it, such as their culture, language use, or learning styles. She consistently referred to her Latino EL students homogenously, as demonstrated by the following interaction:

Ms. R: No, one thing these students lack is memorization. They don't want to memorize anything. Everything goes over there (motions as if it goes out of their heads).

KR: They don't take good notes or anything?

Ms. R: They don't want to take notes. Even if they take notes it doesn't go in their head. They're talking to other people.

As illustrated, Ms. Roy interpreted the students' lack of ability to remember and write in English to not *wanting* to do these things, not a lack of English proficiency or study skills (even though many had not received an education that helped to develop these skills).

Ms. Roy also had assumptions about her students that were linked to their nationalities. Though she had been teaching in the U.S. at GWH for over twenty years, her initial teaching experiences were in her country of origin and compared students there to her current students. The following statement followed her expressing frustration that her Latino EL students' use of their phones and earbuds, even when she had told them that it is not good for them:

But I don't know why – I mean in our countries it was – our countries, 10 years old, 11 years old, tell them what you want to be, you need to do it, "Yes, I want to be that. I don't want to do this." Yes, they understand it.

This statement reflects her belief that the students do not *understand* that they shouldn't engage in these practices, not that they make a conscious choice to. Like Mr. Ashar, Ms. Roy appeared to lack the ability to navigate school discipline and classroom management practices of the school and culture they are teaching in. As Bartlett (2014) demonstrates, this lack of a cultural frame of reference not only leads to assumptions about students' cultures, but also has been shown to lead to less effective teaching of academic content. Yet in the case of Mr. Ashar and Ms. Roy, they perceived their difficulties with class management and student learning as being due to their students' cultural practices.

Ms. Lamont expressed knowledge about her students' individual language abilities and other qualities and recognized their cultural heterogeneity. During a class I had observed, I had talked with the students in the table nearest to me. All were from Central American countries (Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras) and some had been in the U.S. for only a few months.

In an interview, I asked her how she manages having new students arriving continuously. She explained that the students come with a wide range of Spanish writing and reading skills which influences their English learning, and also that some had been in her class from the start of the year and some more recently:

So a lot of the more difficult words that we're learning here they can make that immediate connection and then they just remember it whereas like a lot of students here in first and second period are like – first of all, a lot of them are new. A lot more of them have only been here for like a few months as you probably realized. So the whole table I was working with, for the most part like probably two of the five kids there only came like a few months ago.

As illustrated in this excerpt, Ms. Lamont talked about the students as individuals and knew something about their language abilities and time in the U.S. She did not express assumptions about their lack of desire or ability to learn. She also did not mention class management problems or student behavioral issues, except when discussing the need for more psychological support because (as she stated) so many of the students have trauma and emotional distress in their lives:

That's probably why they have some of the worst behavior issues in the school and they're like really, I think, looked down upon because of that.

As mentioned, the difference in how Mr. Roy, Mr. Ashar and Ms. Lamont perceived their students lies greatly in how they perceived their students' cultural practices. This is also illustrated in how they perceive their students use of Spanish and how the teachers do or do not use Spanish.

Neither Mr. Ashar nor Ms. Roy made an effort to connect with their students through Spanish use, but they expressed slightly different beliefs regarding their students' Spanish use in class. However, both teachers linked their students' linguistic practices to their "culture" or national origins. The excerpt below is from an interaction during an ELD teacher collaboration session:

Ms. R: It's not more – it is already more Spanish speakers. It is already. But it will be the way we are trying to do that probably Spanish will be at par probably with English sometimes. This is because I go in the office and all that and you don't understand anything: Bah bah bah bah – and all of them are doing *[laughter]*. It's not that this is a school; it doesn't look like a school. There isn't any probably office decorum even. No, it's all --

Mr. A: No because it's a cultural thing because you own your loyalty to the group from where you have originated.

Ms. R: But it's not with other countries. I don't see that. It's only Spanish speakers. I have taught Japanese, Chinese students also in my class.

In addition to referring to Spanish use as "a cultural thing" and being due to "loyalty" to the cultural group, Mr. Ashar explained the students' Spanish use being due to "an emotional attachment with the language". However, he allowed the students to speak Spanish in his class,

both to socialize with each other and so that they could help each other and “transfer content” to English by looking up translations on their phones. In turn, Ms. Roy told her students to only use English in her class and attributed the Latino students’ lack of “fast learning” to their Spanish use, as demonstrated in the following exchange between her and me:

Ms. R: Yeah (Arabic-speaking students), they speak English. They're quick. And that is the reason that these kids who speak Spanish, they are slow learners in English. Others are fast. These kids from China, Guatemala,²⁶ even these students from other countries, I mean Arab countries also, they learn fast.

KR: Because you don't think they're speaking to each other as much?

Ms. R: No, they speak to each other but they learn it. And they're not against learning it because these speakers in class also I tell them, "This is an English class. Try to speak in English. You may speak wrong English; it's okay." "No, I want to speak Spanish." "No, no English." Even though they know it they'll say no English.

Ms. Roy uses language to characterize the students who speak Spanish such as “slow learners” (in contrast to the non-Spanish speakers who are “quick” and “learn fast”). In the excerpt prior to that she refers to the Spanish-use in the school as “bah bah bah” and equates the main office’s use of it in the school’s main office as being non-school like. Her language reflects a perception that Spanish speakers (as a group) have characteristics different than other cultural linguistic groups, such as speaking their primary language with each other. These are characteristics that she believes are detrimental to learning. It also appears that the lack of linguistic and cultural affiliation distance her from the school personnel, such as her statement of going into the office and “you don’t understand anything”.

Teachers’ perceptions of Spanish use were consistent with the practices I observed in their classrooms. Furthermore, students were generally more engaged in classes I observed where teachers used Spanish to help their students learn. Also, students often made efforts to teach their teachers Spanish and/or correct their pronunciation; teachers responded differently to this. While some teachers tried to learn from their students in these occasions, some did not. For example, in one observation of Mr. Ashar’s class, he had listed some words on the board for students to make sentences. He wrote “tortila” and pronounced it as “tor-til-a”, after which several students tried to correct his spelling and pronunciation. He corrected the spelling but did not react to the verbal corrections nor try to say the word correctly. The students persisted for a few moments until they gave up (and several students shook their heads and rolled their eyes). Though Mr. Ashar did not try to use or learn Spanish, his allowance of his students to use it amongst themselves may be one of the reasons that there was apparently less “defiant” or “oppositional” behavior (even though there did not appear to be positive rapport and trust in the teacher-student relationships).

Ms. Lamont let her students speak Spanish to each other in class and, though her Spanish was limited, she would make an effort to use it sometimes; when she did this the students did not mock her but would sometimes politely correct her. Additionally, she believed it was important

²⁶ She was mentioning countries that were non-Spanish speaking yet she had included Guatemala, even though she had non-indigenous Guatemalan Spanish speakers in her class. It is not clear if she was aware that Guatemala was in Latin America and was referring to the Guatemalan students who spoke an indigenous language and therefore did not use Spanish in class.

to assess the primary language skills of newcomers and have a Spanish class for them to boost their abilities to be on par with other students.

Like Ms. Lamont, the SI History teacher (Mr. Sampson) welcomed Spanish use by his students in class. He also made an effort to learn it and speak it both in a whole group setting and while circulating. Similar to Ms. Lamont's students, his use of Spanish was well-received and sometimes they would help him to find the right word or correct his pronunciation. He said that the district had told him to use only English with the students, but he said that he didn't follow that mandate. As he explained:

So last year I wasn't speaking Spanish as much because I didn't know as much. As I taught them and spoke with them you know I have learned, um, I feel like last year I didn't get the respect from a lot of my students because I didn't know Spanish but this year some students that I feel didn't respect me I feel like I have their respect now, they are talking to me now.

As illustrated, Mr. Sampson believed it was important to use Spanish to gain his students' respect. While he also used it to help them understand content, he could have depended on his bilingual grad tutor for this. In observing his class, I saw very few students who were not engaged with the content, despite having 36 students in his class.

The following section examines teacher practices, specifically focusing on how teachers adapt to their students' academic and social needs. The examples of teacher practices regarding Spanish use in this section are meant to underscore how teachers varied in their perceptions of their students' cultural and linguistic practices. While certain cultural and/or linguistic practices were perceived to be a deficit by some teachers, others perceived these practices as an asset. Furthermore, some teachers made efforts to understand their students' histories and language while others did not. As stated by Rogoff and Gutiérrez (2003):

Equating culture with race, ethnicity, language preference, or national origin results in overly deterministic, static, weak, and uncomplicated understandings of both individuals and the community practices in which they participate.

Instead of limiting students' use of their cultural resources, teachers should seek to understand their students' histories and encourage students' engagement with familiar cultural practices (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003). As examined in the following section, the degree to which teachers sought to understand their students and build upon their cultural and linguistic resources varied amongst teachers, as did their responses to policy guidelines and how they adapted their practices for their immigrant EL students.

Teachers Adapting to their Students' Academic and Social Needs

The ELD teachers at Greenway High varied in their ability and inclination to adapt to the students' abilities and needs. This was partly explained by their different degrees of knowledge about the students' language abilities (Spanish and English) and academic and social needs. It was also explained by their perception of their contextual conditions and external pressures as well as material and organizational structures that created constraints or opportunities. In this section, Mr. Ashar and Ms. Lamont (the two ELD 1 teachers) are used as contrast cases.

Mr. Ashar's approach reflected a limited understanding of what the students could understand and accomplish, and little inclination to adapt to students' demonstrated interests and needs. He did not speak Spanish but had a bilingual tutor, Luis, to help translate when necessary. In the first observation of his ELD 1 class, it was evident that the English content level the teacher was covering was much too difficult for the majority of the students. Furthermore, even though Mr. Ashar expressed the importance of using the primary language to learn another language (as shown in the interview data following this), he did not demonstrate this in his instructional practices. The following is from my observational notes (3/23/2016):

There are about 19 students in the class seated in rows facing toward the board. They are grouped together, seemingly by national origin. The teacher puts on a short video clip from India, which ends with a boy running after a train trying to give a shoe back to a boy who had dropped it. Many students seem quite moved by the video (even with tears in their eyes) and this is the only moment that all of them are paying attention. After the video, Mr. Ashar tells them to write the story in English. Most students are unclear about what they are supposed to do, so he demonstrates how to write the sequence (and has it all written on the board to copy). A few students ask if they are supposed to write their own story. The bilingual tutor tells them that they are supposed to write the story in the video. Several students seemed disappointed about this (as seen in their expressions and comments). Of the 19 students, only about four begin to work on this task while the rest of them socialize in Spanish, do things with their phones, stare at a blank paper, or ask the tutor or me for clarification. I talked with a few students who were from El Salvador. They told me that they could not write the story in English; they had not been in the U.S. for much time. I asked them if they could write the story in Spanish first (which the teacher had told me was okay for them to do). Some began to do so. When I asked Fernando if he could write it in Spanish, he said "solo puedo un poco porque no iba mucho a la escuela. Tenia que trabajar" ("I only can a little bit because I didn't go to school much. I had to work).

Fernando had told me that he was in second grade when he had to begin missing school to help his family by doing agricultural work. He had arrived in the U.S. just a couple of weeks ago. There were at least two or three students in this class who were not only unable to read and write in Spanish, but could understand almost no English. Based on my observations of students working and conversations I had with them, it appeared that only about four students were able to understand some of the text (which required academic content knowledge about human physiology).

I asked Mr. Ashar if he knew what their literacy levels were and what he thought could be done if the students cannot even read and write in Spanish. He responded that he had some idea of who was unable to write, but that he didn't have information about their Spanish proficiency levels. He expressed that the students should be able to read and write in their native language before learning English; he had also learned English as a second/additional language and stressed the need to understand the content and then *transfer* it to English. But he cannot understand any Spanish and is unable to help them bridge, which he said frustrated him but that he feels he cannot do anything about. He said that this might be one of the reasons they didn't want him to teach there the following year.

Despite Mr. Ashar's expressed opinion that they should know the content in their primary language first, he very rarely asked the bilingual tutor (Luis) to translate content for the students. Rather he asked him to explain in Spanish what the assignment was or to pass out books, paper, or worksheets. Luis had immigrated from Mexico roughly ten years ago, was fully bilingual, had excellent rapport with the students, and was aware of their academic and proficiency levels as well as the challenges they faced. As he stated:

It's really hard for them to learn, though, because some of them stopped going to school in their country when they were in second grade. That's a challenge too that we're not dealing with... I feel like it (the ELD textbook) doesn't teach you the basic stuff. It starts with something that you will definitely not understand if you are barely getting introduced to the language.

I had looked at the beginning units of the ELD textbook, which had very basic English and general content that (even semi-literate) newcomers may be able to understand and relate to more easily than the advanced academic content that was being covered that day. I asked Mr. Ashar why he didn't go back to that material with the *new* newcomers instead of teaching the content that was roughly three-fourths of the way into the book. He told me that he followed the ELD schedule provided by the district, even if some students cannot comprehend the majority of the content. As he stated:

Mr. A: This is the schedule we are supposed to follow (pointing at the "Recommended Pacing Schedule").

KR: What if the students are not able to understand any of the content, like those who can barely write in their own language and just arrived to the U.S.?

Mr. A: Well, yes, then maybe I should have them try to write it in their own language first. I will do that. But the benchmarks you see, I must cover the units because otherwise when they take the (benchmark) test they won't have covered that content. And they come around and check you see. So I have to keep this schedule.

When I asked him if he thinks that they will do okay on the benchmark test if he covers the content, he shrugged and said that he keeps track of their progress anyway (which he appeared to be doing through their grades). In all of the class observations I conducted in his classroom, I never saw him circulating to check on students when they were supposed to be completing an assignment. He stood either at the front of the room doing direct instruction or sat down at his desk while students tried to work. In an informal conversation after the class, he told me he gets tired after about twenty minutes and when they are working he rests. He spent very little time on class management (warning, disciplining, etc.) and continued teaching despite the student side-talk and cellphone use. He did not have much direct eye contact and close interaction with students as they were trying to do their work. This distance from his students may have explained the lack of knowledge about their abilities to write in Spanish or English. When asked how he felt about teaching ELD, he said: "Well, I try to have fun with it you know".

Mr. Ashar was not adapting the pacing schedule to a level that the students may have been able to access. While his lack of knowledge of the students' proficiency levels in English and Spanish may have partly explained this, he also perceived that he had to follow the pacing

schedule. Thus he complied with the pacing schedule, even though (as shown in chapter 4), the pacing schedule was meant to be broad and adaptable.²⁷ Mr. Ashar had assimilated the new textbooks and pacing schedule he was given to follow, yet did not adjust his core pedagogical approach to meet the learning needs of the students. This is also true of his use of the primary language for learning English. While he stated the importance of the EL students being able to transfer content from Spanish to English, his instructional practice did not reflect an effort to help students do this.

Unlike Mr. Ashar, Ms. Lamont did not comply with the pacing schedule and benchmark testing. She explained that the content and testing schedule mandated by the district was not appropriate for her students. While she found the textbooks to be helpful by providing some guidance, she used them in accordance to the students' ability. As she stated:

I was only on unit three with my class at the end of last year and that was getting difficult for them.... I got in a lot of trouble for being behind and not giving the assessments on time or – I had to give assessments to them on units we never even did because they needed the data. I was like, "You do realize you're going to get really crappy data because you're forcing me to give an assessment on this because you have your own personal reasons for wanting this data. You're not even factoring in my students when you tell me I have to do this."

She said that taking an assessment that they are very unprepared for results in their doing badly, and this makes them feel bad about themselves. She commented on how she responded to the emails from EL Services requiring the data from the benchmark test:

I sent her, Wendy, multiple emails saying, "I am not on track with your timeline for assessments and that was purposeful because I want my students to feel like they can do this and they can access this and we can take six weeks at the beginning of the year to learn the verb to be and all of its various forms, to learn how to write a sentence, to understand like what it's like for some of them just to even be in school and take notes and follow along in a packet. This is new to some people. I don't feel comfortable just opening that up".... "Well I'm just going to keep doing what I'm doing because they're my students and I am not going to force them to dive into something that I know they're not ready for."

As illustrated, the perceptions and practices of these two teachers vary widely. Mr. Ashar had very little knowledge of his students' language abilities and complied with a pacing schedule that resulted in content that is not accessible to the majority. He also complied with administering the benchmark tests and did not voice concern about their ability to take these tests. Ms. Lamont rejected the practice of administering the benchmark tests, apparently as a way to protect them from feeling incompetent or bad.²⁸ Furthermore, Ms. Lamont responded to the students' needs and external pressures by using parallel approaches. While she used the required textbook for ELD, she also used other materials and instructional approaches to help them learn English.

²⁷ The Coordinator of the EL Services stated that this schedule was meant to provide a scope and sequence yet that it was very broad and not meant to be prescriptive.

²⁸ These different stances of protecting or sheltering newcomers as opposed to holding them to the same standards as all students and exposing them to risk-taking, is an issue examined in chapter 4.

Entering Ms. Lamont's class was a very different experience than observing Mr. Ashar or Ms. Roy's classes. In addition to a bilingual grad tutor, she had at least one "teacher helper" in her class at all times. They had all been former ELD 1 students who were now either reclassified or in ELD 4, and thus had time to take additional credits. These students received school credit for being a "helper", which consisted of logistical activities and sometimes assisting students. Talking with them they expressed their gratitude to Ms. Lamont and credited her support with the opportunities they now have to graduate and go to community college. The following are from observational notes of an ELD 1 class (3/24/16):

I open the door to her class and see her standing at a podium with an overhead projector that has some vocabulary words and sentences. She smiles and motions me in. There are 34 students in the class arranged in small tables of three to five students at each. All students are looking at her and listening to her except for two who whisper to each other and one who is writing and not looking at the screen. Her bilingual tutor is standing near the projected text and pointing to the words as Ms. Lamont says them. She is speaking loudly, clearly and slowly. She asks the students to repeat after her. Some students are teasing and imitating each other's pronunciation. She asks them to calm down and listen, and tells them that it is important to try so that they learn. When it gets too loud she stops talking and smiles while looking at those who are teasing each other or making noise. "Come on you guys, calm down. You really need to try". They start paying attention. I notice someone sitting at one of the chairs next to her desk at the back of the room. He is sorting through papers. When I approach him he says he is her helper. He tells me he is no longer in ELD but went through each level with her. After roughly fifteen minutes of working with the words and sentences on the projector Ms. Lamont turns it off and gives them a writing assignment. She says, "it is important to do this to get credit". Some students don't understand the assignment. Her bilingual grad tutor and her begin to circle around to each group of students and work with them until they seem to be able to work on their own.

Though Ms. Lamont spent some time on class management (e.g. asking the students to calm down and try), it was minimal. Most of the students were engaged throughout the class. Also, she explicitly expressed her expectations of them, which was to try to speak English and to do their assignment. However, she also used Spanish sometimes during whole class instruction and while circulating. She also drew upon her bilingual grad tutor to use Spanish when necessary to help students understand content. Finally, she encouraged her students to work together in groups (using Spanish if they wanted to) and had the desks arranged to facilitate this.

Ms. Lamont expressed wanting to be able to adapt the content so that all of her students would be able to comprehend it, but that the class size and variation in proficiency levels made this difficult:

I'm one person. I have like 35 people. So again, capacity question. I don't have the capacity to like – for the whole class, if they're ready to move forward and everyone's just at a different spot. So I can't go work with this student one on one when I have the rest of the class.... So sure, I would love to do that but that's where another class would just come into play because I can't have four different classes in my one class. I don't have the ability.

In this statement, Ms. Lamont comments on her inability to respond to the students' different needs. I discovered that many students had requested to be in Ms. Lamont's class instead of Mr. Ashar's, which explained the substantial difference in size: she had roughly twice as many students in her ELD 1 classes and sometimes there were not enough chairs or space for all of them. However, it is important to note that Ms. Lamont had many more human resources than the other two ELD teachers (as can be seen in table 3.3), though she did not seem to be employing them to work with groups of students.

As illustrated in contrasting the cases of Mr. Ashar and Ms. Lamont, there was wide variation in these two teachers' practices of adapting to their students' needs as well as how they responded to external demands. Mr. Ashar complied with the curricular pacing schedule and benchmark testing, covering content that was adapted to the learning needs of his students. Ms. Lamont, in turn, rejected the benchmark tests but used approaches that would allow her to cover some mandated content (from the text) yet used other materials and strategies to help her students' learn. Furthermore, each of their use of Spanish (or lack of) to help their students' learn was consistent with the individual perceptions of Spanish being a deficit versus asset, as discussed in the previous section.

Greenway High Teachers as a Context of Reception

The four teachers' disposition showed different levels of satisfaction with and attitude towards their role and work, yet they all three ELD teachers felt that the ELD department was fragmented and isolated. The four teachers shared some perceptions of their challenges, constraints and opportunities. However, they responded to these differently, which ultimately shaped the academic and social opportunities of their Latino immigrant EL students.

The ELD and SI teachers also varied in their perceptions of their students. The teachers who expressed assumptions about the Latino EL students and talked about them as a homogenous cultural group tended to focus their discussion on class management problems stemming from student behavior or lack of motivation to learn. In turn, teachers who demonstrated more cultural understanding did not focus on student behavior or cultural practices as the cause for the challenges they faced (large class sizes, different proficiency levels, and newcomers arriving continually). Also, teachers' perceptions of their students' Spanish use and their own ability and motivation to use Spanish with their students also was reflected in the level of student engagement and learning opportunities the teachers provided. There was also variation in the expectations that teachers had of their students, which was demonstrated by how they spoke of their abilities, the possibility of engaging them in critical thinking, and their expectations about completing their assignments.

They varied in their teaching repertoires, which may have posed limitations or opportunities in their teaching effectiveness. They also faced similar structural material and organizational constraints, such as a lack of instructional support and oversight, though they responded differently as demonstrated by their instructional practices. While some teachers adapted to the abilities and needs of their students and sought to understand their cultural practices and languages, others did not. Additionally, some teachers resisted or negotiated mandates (e.g. pacing and benchmark testing) while others complied and were less inclined to adapt to their students abilities and needs.

The Case of Bloomfield High

Bloomfield High had almost nothing in place to serve newcomers, even though proportionally the school received the same amount of newcomers during that academic year as Greenway High. The reason given for the lack of services for newcomers was different depending on who provided it, but the most common one was that Bloomfield High was considered to be the city's "African American" high school. There were no subject classes offered in Spanish or other (non-ELD) services to support them, except for a "Spanish for Spanish Speakers" classes provided for native Spanish speakers to develop their Spanish literacy skills. ELD 1-3 students had SI for science, math, and history. Though, unlike Greenway High, the SI classes were mixed and comprised of ELD 1-3 students and lower-performing non-EL students (native English speakers).²⁹ Also, the SI teachers at BFH did not have bilingual grad tutors to support them.

ELD was considered its own department and was separate from English. There were three ELD teachers at Bloomfield High: Ms. Hernandez, Mr. Engle, and Mr. Jones. (See table 3.4).

Table 3.4 Bloomfield High ELD and SI teachers (cases)

	Subject	Years Teaching*	At school	Preparation	Extra class support	Language Span/Eng.	Ethnicity
Ms. Hernandez	ELD 4; 3 periods Spanish for Span. Speakers; 3 periods	2	2	Credential (Spanish) No ESL	None	Spanish and English	Latina (2 nd generation)
Mr. Jones	ELD 2; 4 periods English 2; 2 periods	2	2	Credentialed (English)	None	English; Some Span.	Mixed; Latino/AA
Mr. Engle	ELD 1; 2 periods ELD 3; 4 periods	1	1	Working on credential	None	English; Some Span.	Caucasian
Ms. Heredia	SI Biology; 5 periods Biology Accelerated; 1 period	1	1	MA/Science credential	None	English; Some Span.	Latina (2 nd generation)
Mr. Nolan	Algebra SI; 5 periods AP Calculus; 1 period	15	10+	Credential; math	None	English; Limited Spanish	Caucasian

*This includes the year that data for this study was being collected.

Though the teachers of EL students at Bloomfield High varied widely in their teaching repertoires and how they drew upon them, they faced structural material and organizational constraints that limited how they could respond to their students' needs. There were similarities in how they perceived their constraints and opportunities (e.g. their own limited Spanish, large class sizes, and external requirements), and they navigated these differently though they shared much in common about their overall perceptions towards their students and their work.

²⁹ The district EL Services office had given this guideline to mix SI classes and have half native English speakers and half ELD students. The rationale provided by the EL Service coordinator, as well as the administration and some teachers, is that it is based on research that shows that this prevents segregation and offers an opportunity for EL students to develop their English skills (academically and socially). This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Teaching Repertoires and Contextual Conditions

The ELD teachers at Bloomfield High were all new teachers (first or second year), both to the teaching profession and the school. Their Spanish abilities varied from being fully bilingual (Ms. Heredia), partially bilingual (Mr. Jones), to having very little Spanish (Mr. Engle). Furthermore, Mr. Engle was in his first year of teaching and working towards his credential. None had received specialized training for teaching ELD, yet Mr. Jones had been a bilingual grad tutor thus had experience with ELD teaching. All of the ELD teachers had a cultural frame of reference to some degree. However, none of them had received professional development (with the exception of one workshop) or in-class instructional support from the district. Ms. Heredia, the SI teacher, was also a first year teacher who lacked preparation to teach SI, though she spoke some Spanish and had a cultural understanding based on her origin and marriage (to a Salvadoran). Mr. Nolan had more than 10 years of teaching experience at BFH, and had developed some knowledge of Spanish and the cultural practices of his students as well as SI teaching strategies. Though neither SI teacher had received instructional support that year from the district.

Mr. Nolan and Ms. Heredia taught more SI classes than other teachers. Each of them had five periods teaching SI classes in which about half of their students were ELD 1-3 students and half were native English speakers who had been identified as having low math or science abilities. Their classes were comprised of newcomers, other first-generation EL students (the great majority of Central American and Mexican origin), and U.S. born native English speakers who were mostly African American but also some Latino (second generation plus). Thus their classes were by far among the most linguistically and culturally diverse of all classes, as well as having a very wide range in English proficiency and academic levels. Furthermore, they both received newcomers on a regular basis, resulting in large class sizes and the challenge of adapting to students with very little English proficiency that made effective teaching difficult. Mr. Engle and Mr. Jones taught ELD 1-3 students for all or most of their periods, though Mr. Engle had the largest classes because of the newcomers arriving continuously throughout the year.

The professional culture at Bloomfield High was loosely coupled in some ways, but not so in others. Biweekly department meetings were scheduled and the administration followed up on attendance (though it was not always regular for ELD). While teachers had autonomy for their teaching, the vice-principal and principal often circulated throughout the school and entered classrooms at random times.³⁰ They sometimes provided some oversight and guidance. Furthermore, there was a certain level of cohesion among the teachers within and across departments, and frequent communication between the teachers and school leadership.

As for external pressures, like all the ELD teachers in the district, the ELD teachers at BFH were required to administer a benchmark test to their students every three months to measure the EL students' progress. They were supposed to use the ELD textbook according to a pacing schedule provided by the district.

³⁰ This is based on my observational field notes from school visits and classroom observation as well as data from teacher interviews.

Teacher Perceptions Towards their Work and Environment

Teaching ELD at Bloomfield High did not seem to be perceived as low status nor marginalized. There also seemed to be cohesiveness between the ELD teachers as well as a professional culture of communication and cohesiveness between teachers across departments. While not part of the English department, the ELD teachers sometimes met with the English teachers and the new ELD teachers often sought out English teachers for mentorship (since many English teachers had taught ELD in the past). They were integrated into the whole-staff meetings, both physically and during the group discussion. They met for collaboration regularly and sometimes had concrete tasks to accomplish assigned by administration or defined by Ms. Hernandez (the head of the ELD department).

The two teachers with the most SI classes were also the ones with the leadership position in the department. Mr. Nolan had been Head of the Math department for several years, and Ms. Heredia had been informally assuming the role of Department Head for Science and would likely be assuming it formally the following year. Thus, the (ELD and SI) teachers who spent the most time with immigrant students at BFH were all highly regarded and equally incorporated into the school and professional culture.

A similarity across all five teachers was their overall positive disposition towards their work, which was largely based on feeling they were able to help their EL students progress. Ms. Hernandez said that she did not like teaching ELD 1, but this was not because it was seen as low status but rather because her training hadn't prepared her for it. She explained that she had tried it and felt frustrated and like a failure:

My first year here I had such a bad experience because I wasn't seeing the students progress. Every day I would finish teaching and felt like I had done nothing. So I was told I should teach ELD 4. Then I was able to see progress. Before that I felt like I was making no difference at all.

Though U.S. born, she was of Mexican origin and fully bilingual. She explained that even though the class she taught the previous year was called ELD 1, she was "basically trying to help them to develop basic literacy skills in Spanish". Due to this need, the assistant principal and she decided to establish a Spanish level one class for Spanish speakers who needed to develop their literacy skills in their native language to be better equipped for acquiring English and other disciplines.³¹

Ms. Hernandez expressed that she felt like the "tia" of the students she had the year before (referring to her supporting and mentoring role), some of which she still had in the Spanish class. According to what other teachers said about her, she was a very positive influence for the Latino EL students. As Ms. Heredia stated:

I think Ms. Hernandez is really good for them, I feel like a lot of them really feel safe in her room....as far as I can tell her students love her. But she does have a few I think, (ELD level) ones in her Spanish for Spanish speakers class, so I think that's where she

³¹ In this case, the Vice Principal at the time was an exception due to her in-depth knowledge of language acquisition and bilingual education, which was her PhD specialization. If this need and its solution were common knowledge, such a class would likely be in place many other schools in the district (including elementary and middle schools) that are receiving newcomers.

connects with them. I could be wrong. I don't think they really feel connected to the school, I don't think at all.

Despite the positive difference Ms. Hernandez felt she was making and how much she was valued by students, other teachers, and the administration, she was not sure she was going to stay at Bloomfield High the next year.³² Other teachers and the administration were concerned about this, as reflected in the principal's comment when I asked him which department heads would likely be leaving the following year: "ELD. I'm praying that Miss Hernandez is gonna stay, but I'm not sure".

Both the principal and vice principal talked positively of the other two ELD teachers as well, acknowledging that they were younger and inexperienced but the administrators also recognized their growth and effort. When I went to find Mr. Engle for the first interview and class observation, the vice principal walked me to his class and commented in the hallway that Mr. Engle had a rough start of the year. He said: "The kids were out of control. Then he was in an accident and had no glasses so the kids made fun of him and even threw things at him".

Despite the rough start and ongoing challenges, Mr. Engle did not express a negative disposition towards his work. When asked if he chose to teach at Bloomfield High and if he liked teaching ELD, he explained that he was an English major and needed a teaching job. He was hired at BFH and stated that he felt fine about teaching ELD and that he planned to stay and continue teaching ELD. He described some challenges of teaching ELD 1 and ELD 3, and commented that his ELD 3 class is a smaller class and he feels he is able to make more progress.

Mr. Engle did not focus his remarks on student behavioral issues or their lack of motivation. Nor did he express feeling unresponsiveness or a lack of support from the district or administration. Instead, he had pragmatic solutions to problems such as extremely large class sizes and problems with the benchmarks and placement tests. This did not mean that he felt that his job wasn't extremely challenging. I saw him in the lunchroom several times between classes, one time in which he looked exasperated. When I asked him how he was he said, "It has been a hard day. Some are better than others". A teacher who had been at BFH for many years sat down next to him and gave him encouraging words. This interaction was just one of various interactions that reflected a professional culture of mutual support and cohesion between staff at Bloomfield High.

Like Mr. Engle and Ms. Heredia, Mr. Jones also expressed satisfaction seeing his students advance. As he stated when talking about teaching ELD, "(I)t is beautiful to see them progress". During a teacher collaboration in which the ELD teachers were deciding if their students should be moved to the next ELD level, he enthusiastically commented on different students' progress. Yet he was also hesitant to move students who were not ready, as he expressed in his statement: "I want to move more (students) but I think it might be a disservice".

Mr. Nolan, the SI algebra teacher, had been teaching Math at BFH for fifteen years and was currently the head of the math department. He chose to teach the majority of the Algebra SI classes. Though he enjoyed seeing his EL students advance, he felt that the structural and organizational constraints made this difficult. He said he thought he could make a difference teaching High School but became frustrated sometimes:

³² She had explained to me that this was due to personal and family reasons and also because she wanted to change to a career that paid a higher salary.

Sometimes it's overwhelming here. You really wonder, is it making a difference? Maybe on a small scale but it can be very overwhelming. I believe in education. I believe in public education. When I feel like we're making progress and improving the school, I'm happy to be here.

Mr. Nolan also expressed frustration about the challenges of teaching large classes with an extremely wide range of proficiency levels. However, similar to the three ELD teachers, his overall disposition was positive and this was mainly due to being able to see his students advance. However, because of the large class sizes and the (mixed SI) class structure, he expressed felt he was often unable to make much progress: “(when I feel) I'm not able to teach because of disruption in the classroom, then it's very difficult to be here”.

He was also frustrated about his unmet requests for placing students in math classes that were more appropriate for their level (such as two students in a class I observed who were clearly far more advanced in mastering the content than their peers and should have been in Algebra 2). The block schedule was another frustration for him because he felt it was too much time for students to be in an Algebra class, especially one that was too large and varied in terms of abilities and language proficiency. Because his requests for improving the conditions for teaching and student learning were not being met (such as smaller class sizes, classes that didn't last an hour and a half, and student placement that was more in line with their abilities), he would not be returning the following year. In sum, his frustrated disposition about his work was not linked to working with Latino immigrant EL students but other aspects that made his work with them more difficult.

Ms. Heredia also had frustrations about school level conditions, but they were more centered on the immigrant students not getting what they needed. She believed that there should have been more structure and coherence across the classes to help the kids, such as a common policy for accepting late homework. When I asked if this had been considered she replied, “(laughing) That would make too much sense”. According to her it was clear what these students needed: “Just consistency, structure, expectations, is what they really need.” Her other main complaint was the lack of cultural responsiveness to the students, especially the ones from Central America (as discussed in the following section). Her frustrations seemed to originate from her care for the students, which seemed to drive her to be more committed to trying to connect with and advocate for her students.

In sum, the ELD and SI teachers shared the perception that there were contextual conditions (structural material and organizational) that posed challenges for their teaching of their Latino EL students. However, they all felt they could make a difference in their students' learning, which contributed to a relatively positive disposition towards their work. Structurally and organizationally, neither the ELD nor the SI teachers were separate or marginalized, but rather integrated within the school. Finally, the frustrations with teaching did not center on the practices of their EL students for any of the teachers, but rather other constraints. The following section examines how these teachers perceived their immigrant EL students and these students' practices.

Teacher Perceptions of their Students

The ELD and SI teachers at BFH demonstrated some similarities in their perceptions towards students. For example, none of them expressed negative assumptions about their students' cultural practices nor talked about the Latino immigrant EL students as a homogenous

group. None of them attributed student behavior (such as motivation and engagement) and ability to learn to the students' *culture*. However, they had different degrees of cultural understanding, or cultural frames of reference.

Mr. Engle did not speak much Spanish, yet explained that he tried to use it to help them understand content sometimes. He did not see his students' Spanish use as a limitation. As he stated: "I think when kids get to ELD 3, some of them get stuck in ELD 3 and they get frustrated because they get stuck here". He further explained: "I think students end up in three and it isn't their home language that's preventing them from moving". His explanation for students not progressing centered on some students' maturity level for being in a classroom, emotional issues, and students who just don't turn in work. He also talked about students being in ELD 3 who were misplaced (he believed that they should be in English and not ELD), and even a student who was "only in ELD because he has a Hispanic name".

As illustrated in Mr. Engle's statements, he did not perceive the students' primary language to be a barrier. Furthermore, his discussion of the challenges he faced centered on structural and organizational constraints (such as students' class misplacement). He did not attribute the students' behavior to a lack of motivation or ability, yet perceived other issues as being the root cause (such as lack of formal schooling and emotional issues). Furthermore, when he talked about his students (such as those who are doing better and those who are struggling more), he differentiated between individual students rather than talking about them as a homogenous group.

Mr. Jones also had knowledge of his students' individual abilities and instructional needs. For example, when I sat in on a meeting between him and Ms. Hernandez in which they were preparing their recommendations to EL Services about which students to move to the next ELD level, he stated:

His writing is terrible. His spelling is also bad. But he has great comprehension and great ideas. It is about transferring those ideas into writing where he needs help.

Despite the constraint of having students arrive on a continual basis with a wide variation in Spanish and English proficiency levels, both Mr. Engle and Mr. Jones referred to their students by name (in my conversations with them and in class observation) and did not speak of them as a homogenous group.

The two SI teachers, Mr. Nolan and Ms. Heredia, had different teaching repertoires and different degrees of cultural understanding. Yet both of them talked about their students as individuals and they had some knowledge of their backgrounds, such as which country they came from. Additionally, both teachers perceived that there was a mismatch between the school culture and Latino students' cultures. They had the most culturally and linguistically diverse students of all teachers, which presented them with challenges as well as insight into the cultural mismatch with the school.

Ms. Heredia (the SI Biology teacher) was partly of Mexican origin (her mother was from Mexico) and though she had never learned Spanish, she understood some Spanish. She was also married to a Salvadoran, which (as she expressed) allowed her to better understand some of her students. She was especially careful not to make assumptions about Mexico and any of the Central American countries as being homogenous. She seemed to know which countries most of her students were from and aspects of their personal lives in some cases, such as if they had a job and what it was. She also described the general language abilities (Spanish and English) of most

of her students and said that she adapted her expectations and instruction accordingly. She was able to obtain biology textbooks in Spanish from the district, which she encouraged her students to use if it would help them. She did not assume her newcomer students weren't capable of the work, but that they faced other challenges:

I get the sense from a couple of my students that this work is too easy, and I'm not surprised. I think the rigor in some of the schools and countries they're coming from is a lot more than what we're doing here. And I think that maybe some of them, I haven't asked, are like this is not work. Why would I spend my time with this? I think a couple of them, very few. But most of it is that they don't know where to begin. They don't know how to ask for help, or they're scared to ask for help, or they feel like, going back to what we were saying earlier, the school doesn't care about them, so why should they care about the school?

When asked about the other teachers and their efforts to understand and connect with the immigrant students Ms. Heredia stated:

I think a lot of them really try (to understand students). Maybe I'm wrong, but I can't think of a teacher who doesn't care about that, I just think we're all so exhausted that where do we start? It's the same thing, we all have like a thousand things, what task do we really spend time on? To me that just happens to be really important cuz I just, for whatever reason, care that I have this huge number of ELs in my class that I need to connect with and I think that a large number of them just really don't understand why I don't speak Spanish and that just really bothers them a lot, and it bothers me too. I almost feel really apologetic about it. Like I guess it's a guilt thing, I should be able to communicate with them so I really need to try, you know?

Ms. Heredia talked about ways she had tried to connect with her students, and reflected on her interactions with the students and how they may have perceived it. She expressed wanting to do some things in her class that Ms. Hernandez did to make the kids feel more "safe" and connected, such as putting up all of the flags of Latin America and asking each student to identify which country and city/region they are from. Ms. Heredia's efforts to make her students feel safe and connected to the school were apparent when watching her classes. Most of the students were engaged throughout the class and they would ask for her guidance and help at times (including the newcomer students). As discussed in the following section, her efforts to use Spanish appeared to facilitate this connection and foster reciprocity.

Though Ms. Heredia was only in her first year of teaching at Bloomfield High, she perceived a cultural mismatch between the school administration and dominant cultural practices:

I think our admin. and our people who plan things, I think they're not in touch with those cultures at all. The people who run that stuff are largely black, like Mr. Thompson, and they do great things, like they plan the rallies and they do fun stuff, but I don't think they even consider how little it has to do with our Latin-American students.

She gave specific examples of events that were organized, such as the Cinco de Mayo celebration. While she was able to see her students shine playing soccer (as she commented), she also was irritated that they played only hip-hop during the event (or music she perceived to be listened to by the African American students but not the Latino immigrant ones) and that they don't celebrate any Central American important dates. As she explained:

We spend a lot of time talking about Mexico but really, how many Mexican kids do we have? When you compare how many Salvadoran and Central American, Guatemalan, you know Angela is from Honduras, the one who borrowed the book.

Mr. Nolan had been at Greenway High for more than ten years and had seen the shifting demographics over time.³³ He also perceived a cultural mismatch. As he explained:

This used to be an African American school that had a fairly sizeable number of Latino students. It is now possibly a majority Latino school but the culture is still very much African American. I would say that the leadership positions, people who speak at rallies, it's both. But if you just looked at the student voice without looking at the demographics, you would think there were more African American students than there are.... The student culture still feels more African American.

Mr. Nolan went on to explain that Latino students had complained to him about being treated unfairly by the administration: "A lot of Latino students often feel the African American principals have been unfair to them". He gave me the example of the former vice principal who had taken hats away from the Latino students due to her association of hats with gangs, though she had not taken away the hats of African American students. He then stated, "I think they were right. There was a double standard". While he said he hadn't seen evidence of the current administration having differential treatment between Latino and African American students, he said that the Latino kids did still complain about it sometimes.

As illustrated, both Mr. Nolan and Ms. Heredia perceived this cultural mismatch being partly due to the school leadership. They also perceived the mismatch as something that made the Latino students feel distanced from the school. Both teachers aimed to breach this distance within their classrooms; they tried to make their students feel connected by seeking to understand their cultural practices and language.

Like Ms. Heredia and Mr. Engle, Mr. Nolan did not see Spanish use as a barrier for learning, rather understood its importance. He explained that he tried to help his students understand content through using Spanish despite the challenges it presented. For example, he said some of his students were helping him learn Spanish, but they also teased him sometimes:

I tried to learn Spanish.... He (a student) is one of the ones who help me to learn Spanish. We let them work together and teach each other. I've tried to learn a lot of vocabulary in Spanish. I'll try to say it both ways when I'm explaining something. The problem is a lot of times my trying to speak Spanish becomes a distraction. I'll say something. They'll all want to correct me. It becomes this big argument about how to say it. I'm like forget it. I'll just speak English.

³³ As shown in Chapter 2 (Methods; Sampling), at the time of data collection Bloomfield High had a much higher percentage of Latino students than African American (64% Latino and 25% African American).

He explained that he didn't mind being corrected or the students teasing him if it didn't interfere with instruction. His perception of his Spanish use causing disruption was consistent with what I observed; the laughing and corrections by the students did tend to move the focus away from the algebra content. However, I also noticed that he continued to do it and the students responded positively. The newcomers who spoke almost no English paid attention and engaged when he would translate, where as when he spoke only in English these students often did not look at Mr. Nolan and instead spoke with each other. Like Ms. Heredia, however, Mr. Nolan encouraged his ELD 1-3 students to speak in Spanish while working on assignments together (as he explained to me and I observed).

In sum, there were more commonalities than differences in the way that the ELD and SI teachers at Bloomfield High perceived their students' cultural and linguistic resources, their cultural practices, and their abilities. They did not express reductive notions about their EL students' cultural practices, but rather spoke about their individual abilities and circumstances and sought to understand their language and histories. Furthermore, they all perceived their Latino immigrant EL students' primary language to be an asset and made efforts to learn Spanish and use it with their students when possible. However, as discussed in the following section, their use of Spanish varied due to their Spanish proficiency as well as the material and organizational conditions of their classroom contexts.

Teachers Adapting to their Students' Academic and Social Needs

The ELD and SI teachers at Bloomfield High all showed an inclination to adapt to their students' abilities and needs, however the capacity of each teacher to do this varied depending on their own teaching repertoires as well as the material structural and organizational constraints each teacher faced. It was also shaped by their perception of their contextual conditions and external pressures, such as the policy guidelines. The guidelines that the ELD teachers responded to were the (1) the curricular goals, content, and pacing schedule, (2) benchmark testing, and (3) their practices regarding students' primary language in order to learn. The ELD teachers at Bloomfield High did not reject any of these guidelines. Rather they tended to accommodate by changing their classroom practices to meet the needs of the students, or symbolically respond as in the situation with the benchmark testing.

The SI teachers did not have the policy mandate to administer benchmark tests to their students, since this was specific to EL students' advancement in English proficiency. They did respond to the guideline of encouraging the use of EL students' primary language for their learning, however.

Mr. Engle and Mr. Jones were teaching ELD 1-3 at the time (unlike Ms. Heredia), thus they were faced with the challenges of newcomers arriving on a continual basis. This resulted in the need to adapt the goals and pacing to meet the needs of all of the students in their class. It also resulted in very large class sizes, which was especially the case with ELD 1 (Mr. Engle's classes) that received the majority of newcomers. According to Mr. Engle, passing the test to move from ELD 1 to ELD 2 was more challenging than the other levels. He thought the benchmark test should be different for that level:

ELD (level) one is hard because the class size balloons and the composition of the class is ever changing. We lost about ten students to ELD 2 recently. I made an informal

benchmark for them. An informal benchmark to move them instead of – because the class size was up to, at max, 48. Right now, it's at 38.

Everybody knew the class was too big, so I got authorization. Our first benchmark is different from all of our other benchmarks because it's only based on production. There's no testing. There's no multiple choice like that. It's just a very simple booklet essay on home and school life. Personally, I think between being able to produce a piece of writing and being able to produce orally, that's all we need to move out of ELD 1.

In this case, he had requested the authorization from his “district boss” (the coordinator of EL Services), who had agreed to his request. Mr. Engle also stated that he did not exactly follow the guidelines regarding pacing and benchmarks. As he explained:

I ignore where we are supposed to be in the curriculum now. I went back to the beginning (because I had many students who had just arrived). I don't think the benchmarks are meaningful. Even if the students work hard, they still get Christmas-treed (when they take the benchmark test). The test is not right for their level. It would be okay if it made sense and used their strengths. Then students could show they are ready for ELD 2. They should also have an oral component for ELD 1, not just written.

Mr. Engle perceived that the best way to help his students learn English was to adjust the curriculum to make it accessible for them. He did not reject the requirement to administer the benchmark test, however, as he stated, he did not find it to be meaningful.

My first observation of Mr. Engle's class was ELD 1. About half of his class time was spent on class management, with students being (what would commonly be called) defiant and disruptive throughout. Though Mr. Engle was supposed to be on unit five (according to the ELD textbook pacing schedule), he was working with material in unit two. He had students' work covering the walls and student desks arranged in small groups, facing each other. The following is from my observational field notes (3/9/16).

I came into his morning ELD1 class and sat at the back in a chair. There were 36 students grouped into tables of 5. Most of the girls were silent and doing their assignment, while most of the boys were talking (socializing or about their assigned task), or using their cellphones to socialize or listen to music. He explained that the assignment was to put the sequence of Romeo and Juliet in order and draw pictures to depict each scene. A few students were yelling things out in class. He moved a few students around and began warning students. He repeatedly told them to put their phones away; some students did and some did not. He walked around and helped the students. He came up to the group of boys I was sitting near and looked at a student's work:

Mr. E: Romeo does not say “you are the love of my life”.

S: Sí, dice “eres el amor de mi vida. Así se dice”. (Yes, he says, “you are the love of my life”. That is what he says.)

Mr. E: No, she tells him to change his name and he says “a rose is still a rose; a Romeo is still a Romeo”. And they don't dance (teacher smiles a bit and has eye contact with student, but keeps his demeanor of being serious about the assigned task).

S: Sí se bailen. La Cumbia (motions as if he is dancing and hums Cumbia music). Se casen y después bailen”. (Yes, they dance. The Cumbia. They get married and then dance after that.)

After this, a student from a table nearby loudly says “tienes que aprender a respetar” (you have to learn how to respect). Some kids say “Sí” and a few laugh. The teacher moves on to a different group. After students are finished he shares two stories (holding them up), noting that Antonio had been funny with his story (this was a different student).

As illustrated, Mr. Engle adheres to the student completing the assignment but is not rigid about how he adapts the story to something more culturally relevant to the student; he even expressed slight amusement. His relationship with his students could be characterized as semi-personal, and his approach tended to be one of medium control (which would slide towards more control if the class seemed too chaotic for him to teach). Though the class was very large and varied in abilities, at the end of the class period almost all students had completed the task. Even though Mr. Engle spent much of the time telling students to change their behavior and writing their names on the board each time they were too disruptive, many students were engaged throughout and seemed to understand the content.

Mr. Jones, the ELD 2 teacher, did not seem to have the same difficulties as Mr. Engle. He also followed his own pace, but had smaller class sizes.³⁴ He had taught ELD at BFH the previous year so had more experience than Mr. Engle. He was also able to speak more Spanish than Mr. Engle or the two SI teachers. Mr. Jones’ approach to gaining students’ respect, as he explained, was not to emphasize discipline (such as writing their names on the board when they are disruptive) but to engage them in different ways. He used humor sometimes, had continuous eye contact with the students, and would sit down next to a student or small group to help them or get them focused on their work. Watching him with the same students who tended to act the most “defiant” in Mr. Nolan’s class shed light on the teachers’ variations in their ability to get the students to engage. For example, one student who consistently listened to music during class and ignored Mr. Nolan took his headphones off when Mr. Jones leaned over next to him and put his hand on the student’s textbook; he tapped it and said, “We are on this page. You need to work on this”. The student took off his headphones and began to do the work.

Mr. Jones and Mr. Engle responded to their students’ academic and social needs by seeking to understand their levels of understanding, as evidenced by their circling around the room while students worked and checking to see if they were engaged. Both used Spanish when they felt it was necessary to help their students understand and encouraged group work in which students spoke Spanish with each other while doing class assignments. However, Mr. Engle’s classes were substantially larger and were composed of students with a much wider variation in English proficiency levels than in Mr. Jones’ classes. Mr. Engle also had more limited Spanish and less teaching experience. Despite the differences in their teaching repertoires (knowledge of Spanish and years teaching) as well as structural and organizational constraints, they worked within these contextual conditions to adapt to their students’ needs.

The two SI teachers, Ms. Heredia and Mr. Nolan, also differed in their teaching repertoires as well as their contextual conditions, yet, they also strived to adapt to their students’

³⁴ Another reason for the very large ELD 1 class sizes (in addition to the challenging benchmark as Mr. Engle explained) is because of the continuous arrival of new immigrant students. The very large class size and extreme variation in English proficiency and formal education exacerbate the conditions for effective teaching and learning.

needs. Unlike Mr. Engle and Mr. Jones who taught ELD 1-3, they had the additional challenge of native English speakers and ELD 1-3 students in the same classroom. Thus they had to divide their attention between the students and make careful decisions about when to use Spanish.

Though both Ms. Heredia and Mr. Nolan tried to speak Spanish with their students, this created some tension because of the class structure of SI students and non-SI students being in the same class.

Ms. Heredia also explained that she used Spanish while teaching and her students were helping her learn the language. She said this did not cause distraction, rather it created tension with the African American students. This is consistent with my observations of her classes. While explaining concepts and instructions to the whole class, every time she translated something to Spanish, some African American students would call out, “No Spanish” and show expressions of discontent. Ms. Heredia would smile and smooth the situation back to its normal state. Despite the challenges, Ms. Heredia explained that she understood that not all students like it when she speaks Spanish but that she thinks it is necessary and important to do so sometimes so her EL students understand what she is trying to communicate. Additionally, she encouraged her ELD 1-3 students to speak in Spanish while working together on assignments (as I saw when I observed her classes).

As discussed in the previous section, Mr. Nolan also tried to use Spanish to help his students understand content, but his attempts caused a different response. As documented in a field note (3/9/2016):

He (Mr. Nolan) walked back and forth trying to explain concepts, struggling to translate what he could to Spanish, and asking the kids for help translating. Some would help and others would imitate his pronunciation or incorrect vocabulary and tease him.

Thus, Mr. Nolan tried to translate concepts into Spanish but faced different constraints due to his limited Spanish proficiency and more limited cultural frame of reference. The material structural and organizational constraints and Bloomfield High also made it difficult for him to adapt to his students’ needs, such as a lack of a bilingual grad tutor and a very large class size with a wide range in proficiency levels.

In sum, the ELD and SI teachers at Bloomfield high all demonstrated the inclination to adapt to the academic and social needs of their Latino immigrant EL students. They all tried to use Spanish to help their students understand the content. The ELD 1-3 teachers administered the benchmark test, but this did not drive their instruction. Rather, they focused on adjusting the content and their instructional practices to help the students learn. Their practices varied in terms of how they responded to classroom disruptions, yet they all maintained the expectation that the students’ should be engaged and complete their work.

Bloomfield High Teachers as a Context of Reception

The five teachers at BFH who spent the majority of their day with Latino immigrant EL students showed some variation in the key aspects that constitute a favorable context of reception for their immigrant EL students, yet there were more commonalities than differences. For example, all of them had a relatively positive disposition toward their work. Neither the ELD teachers nor the SI teachers felt separate or marginalized. They all had some awareness of students’ individual language abilities in English and, to some degree, Spanish. The ELD

teachers did not necessarily agree that the benchmark tests were appropriate for the students, but overall they complied. One of the most important commonalities amongst the teachers at BFH is their adaptation of curricular goals and instruction in order to respond to the students' academic levels and needs. Their focus on adapting rather than simply complying allowed students to understand more content than if they had adhered to a pace that left the majority of students not comprehending the material.

The professional culture of support between staff at Bloomfield High was an organizational social structure that reflected cohesion within and between departments, and though often informal, there were coupling mechanisms between the school leadership and teachers that led them to feel somewhat supported and not isolated. This appeared to be especially important for those who faced the most difficult challenges such as the new ELD and SI teachers. It was also important given the material structural and organizational constraints faced by the teachers at BFH, such as the extremely large class sizes, mixed SI structure, and heterogeneity of cultural practices (perceived by some teachers as a being dominated by African American cultural practices that alienated the Latino students).

While they had varying levels of knowledge of their students' countries of origin or cultures, none of them referred to them as a homogenous group. Their class management approaches varied, yet all demonstrated varying degrees of cultural understanding. All of the teachers were amenable to their students using Spanish in class, and they all made an effort to speak Spanish with their students.

All five teachers spoke about the students as if they had the ability to succeed in their classes yet certain conditions made this difficult for some students (academic, social, and/or emotional problems). They all had high standards for their students but also worked with them so they could advance and tried to assure that they would not feel like failures. The teachers with the most rapport (Ms. Hernandez, Ms. Heredia, and Mr. Jones) went out of their way to speak Spanish and understand them. Mr. Nolan and Mr. Engle tried but expressed often feeling overcome by contextual and organizational aspects that made this more difficult (such as extremely large class sizes with a very wide range in student English proficiency and difficulty managing the class). These conditions intersected with their different limitations in their teaching repertoires.

Implications: Creating Conditions for ELD and SI Teachers to Better Serve their Students

There are several things that can be learned from looking at the teachers in their different contexts and how this created different learning opportunities for the students. In many ways, GWH seems like it is a more positive context of reception for immigrant students: it is the "Latino school" where the "Newcomer Hub" was being established (with some services available already), bilingual education was offered for math and other for other core subjects there were bilingual grad tutors to translate. BFH, in turn, is considered the "African American" school, has no bilingual education, no bilingual grad tutors, and no services to specifically to serve newcomers. But the degree to which a students' linguistic and cultural resources were respected and built upon depended on the individuals within the school, especially the ones with whom they spend the most time (their ELD and SI teachers). Also, as Stanton-Salazar (2001) points out, even when services and opportunities are available, teachers are key for linking students to them because immigrant students tend to not seek them out on their own.

This study showed that teachers varied within and across schools both in their perceptions of their students and how they responded to their academic and social needs. However there were also certain contextual conditions at both schools that facilitated or hindered teachers' ability to effectively respond to their students.³⁵

Both schools have the same instructional mandates and policies for EL students, but as can be seen from the data, teachers have direct contact with the district EL Services regarding issues like the curricular pacing, benchmarks and testing. Some teachers decide to use this communication to make decisions that they believe benefit their students, such as Mr. Engle's "informal benchmark" and Ms. Lamont's resistance to test students who she feels are completely unprepared. Finally, there are organizational and structural constraints in both schools that influence the degree to which teachers can learn about, connect with, and provide support for their immigrant students. For the teachers that make these efforts, changing these conditions to facilitate their ability to do this would be favorable for the students and teachers.

As research has demonstrated, low teaching satisfaction and morale negatively affect teacher performance and thus the learning opportunity of the students. Furthermore, the marginalized status of ELD is shown to negatively impact EL students' self-esteem, as expressed by Ms. Lamont in her comment about the trickling down effect. It is important for school administrators to place importance on assuring that ELD and SI teachers feel integrated within the school and have access to the same opportunities as other teachers.

Assuring that teachers of Latino immigrant EL students have teachers who demonstrate critical caring is also crucial. Valenzuela (1999) discusses the importance of "authentic" caring, which she defines as "sustained reciprocal relationships between teachers and students for the basis of all learning" (p. 61). She stresses the importance that youth place on feeling acceptance and having caring relationships with their teachers. Antrop-González & De Jesús (2006) discuss the notion of *critical care* as being different from *soft care*, which is characterized by "a teacher's feeling sorry for a student's circumstances and lowering his/her academic expectations of the student out of pity" (p. 411). Critical care is a type of *hard care*, which is "a form of caring characterized by supportive instrumental relationships and high academic expectations" (p. 413). As the cases demonstrate, teachers at BFH were more apt to demonstrate critical care.

Having ELD teachers who care about and are dedicated to their students and their learning, understand and respect them, draw on their cultural and linguistic resources, and have the repertoire to meet their academic needs (even in challenging circumstances) may be unrealistic, especially given the difficulty of hiring people to teach ELD. While teacher perceptions and assumptions about students' cultures and behavior may seem deeply-rooted and hard to change (such as in the case of Mr. Ashar and Ms. Roy), providing more information about the students' academic and personal backgrounds (and countries of origin) may be helpful. Mr. Ashar, despite his inability to meet the students' learning goals, showed some openness about students' use of Spanish to learn and connect with each other and be loyal to their country of origin. Encouraging all teachers to draw upon students' cultural and linguistic resources would be helpful for students' learning and process of acculturation.

There are other changes that would likely benefit immigrant students and their teachers such as incorporating them into the professional and organizational culture of the school, providing them structure and support to collaborate, resources and spaces for them to build their

³⁵ Chapter 5 provides a more in depth analysis of these contextual conditions by comparing and contrasting schools and teachers.

teaching repertoires, making class sizes and composition manageable, organizing schedules and classes in a way that supports learning (such as SI being all EL learners or mixed with non-EL learners), and the district and administration working with teachers to use pacing, benchmarks, and testing in a way that truly supports EL students' learning and advancement. However, these are issues that are embedded within a broader school and district context and must be analyzed taking into account the perspectives of the multiple policy actors. What adjustments can be made to create such conditions? Is it a matter of changing policies, adjusting practices, or other aspects? Chapter 4 addresses these questions by examining each school within the broader district context.

Chapter 4: District and School Context: Creating the Conditions for a Favorable Context of Reception for EL students and their Teachers

What policies and practices are the most important for improving learning opportunities for immigrant EL students? What program structures work best for improving immigrant EL students' academic performance and social incorporation? What role do different district and school actors have in creating these conditions? How are policy messages interpreted and enacted by policy actors across and between the layers of implementation? Policies and guidelines with an additive approach to English acquisition have shown to benefit ELL students academically and socially (Bartlett & García, 2011; Canagarajah, 2011; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Alvarez, H. H., & Chiu, 1999). However, policies and guidelines are implemented across and through multiple layers with actors who interact, allowing for multiple interpretations (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996). To understand how policy plays out in practice, one must examine the multiple layers and actors within them (Hopkins, 2014).

Teachers work within an institutional environment that influences how they interpret and negotiate policy (Coburn, 2004). How they enact policy is interrelated and often contingent upon the decisions and practices of other policy actors at the district and school levels as well as their contextual conditions (Ball et al., 2012). Thus, the broader context within which teachers work must be examined to understand how policies aimed to improve learning opportunities for EL students play out in the implementation process in different settings.

District officials, administrators, teachers and other school staff all face constraints and opportunities that they have to navigate within their context. Constraints and opportunities are both structural material or organizational structures and processes. For example, staffing, program structures, and other resources were structural. Contextual conditions that were organizational refer to the social and cultural context such as social relations, ideas, beliefs, understandings, values, and practices (Hamann & Rosen, 2011). In other words, the policies and guidelines and how district and school actors respond to them form part of the contextual conditions that are perceived to be constraints and opportunities.

This chapter analyzes how EL policies and guidelines are interpreted and enacted at a district level and compares how this plays out in two different schools within the district.

Chapter Overview

Chapter 3 examined teachers' perceptions of their work, environment and EL immigrant students as well as how they adapt to the students' academic and social needs. It also analyzed teachers' material structural and social organizational contextual conditions that created constraints and opportunities. Teachers perceived and responded to their contextual conditions (including external pressures) differently. Ultimately, these material structural and organizational constraints as well as how teachers navigated them shaped the context of reception that teachers provided for their Latino EL immigrant students.

This chapter examines structural and organizational conditions at a district level and school level, and the interplay between the two. It looks beyond individual teacher beliefs and practices and examines the multilayered context within which they work. Thus the broader context is taken into account in the analysis of the perceptions and practices of policy actors within the district and within each school as well as the interactions between them. It examines the perceived structural and organizational constraints and opportunities expressed by district

and school level policy actors (district personnel in charge of services for EL students, administrators, and other school personnel). After examining the district and school level responses and actions in relation to contextual conditions, the chapter identifies variations and trends between actors and schools. Specifically it asks these questions:

7. What are the constraints and opportunities expressed by district personnel, administrators, and school support staff responsible for Latino immigrant ELL students' academic advancement? What are the contextual conditions of district and schools that interact with how policies and practices are enacted?
8. What decisions are made regarding how policies and guidelines for ELL students (such as courses, programs, ELD level placement, and curriculum) are enacted in schools? Who makes which decisions and what are their explanations regarding these decisions?

Contextual Conditions and the Context of Reception

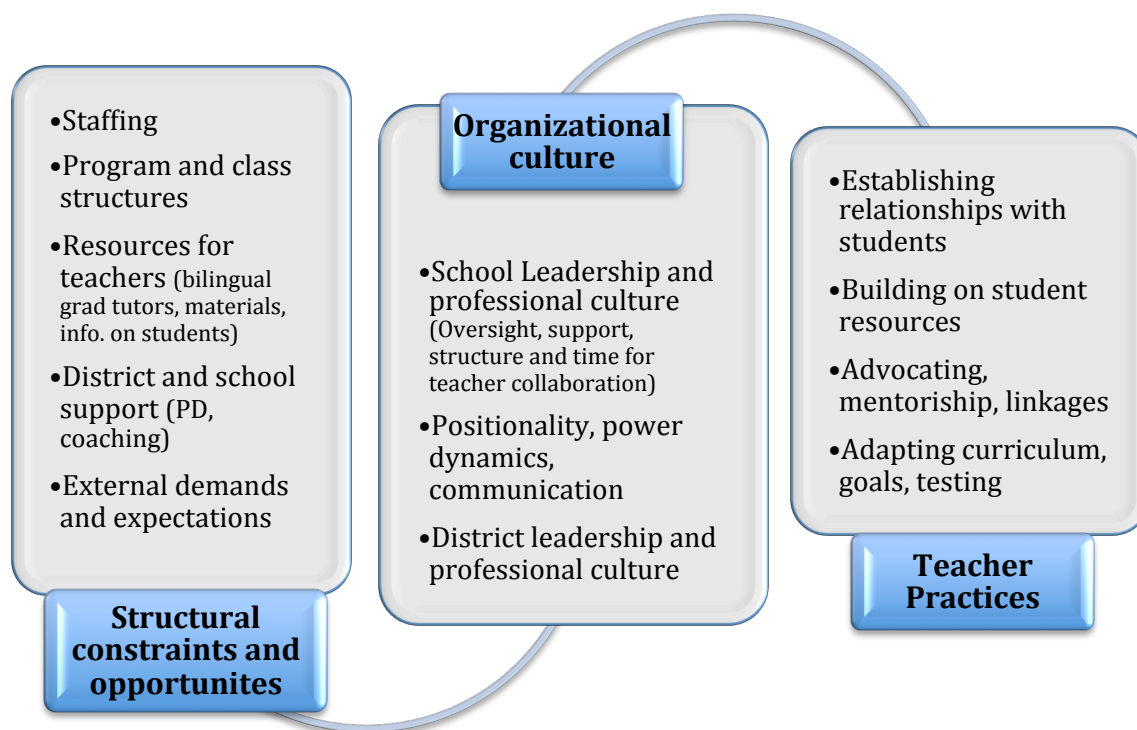
The structural conditions that were the most relevant for influencing the context of reception for EL students include program structures and schedules (number of periods, class size and conformation, opportunity to meet A-G requirements) as well as staffing and resources available to teachers such as bilingual grad tutors³⁶, materials, and information. There were also organizational structures within the district and each school that local actors perceived and responded to differently. These included leadership and other aspects of the professional culture such as teacher collaboration (time available for students, planning, and formal/informal collaboration), support and oversight from the district and the school administrators, and communication with the administration and support staff about students. Other aspects that affected, or formed part of, the organizational culture were power dynamics and the positionality of teachers and other school personnel. (See figure 4.1)

The schools were located within the same district as well as being in the lowest SES areas of the same city. Thus they share many of the constraints and opportunities within this broader context. Yet the organizational culture of each school was relevant for how school level actors responded to these district level conditions. In some cases, the way that the organizational culture mediated these policies or mandates resulted in substantial differences between the schools; this in turn affected how personnel at each school worked within their constraints and found opportunities to create a favorable context for immigrant EL students and their teachers.

This framework builds upon the notion of teachers as a context of reception, as reflected in the teacher responses and enactments. Yet it also takes into account the broader context within which teachers work. These structural and organizational conditions are examined in the findings, yet the discussion delves into the specific nature of these at a district level and in each local school context.

³⁶ Bilingual graduate tutors are students who have graduated from college, are bilingual, and have the skills and knowledge to work in ELD or SI classrooms to translate when necessary and work directly with the EL students. These are full-time and relatively well-paying positions.

Figure 4.1 Contextual Conditions: Constraints and Opportunities for Policy Enactment



Pineview County Unified School District's (PCUSD): Constraints and Opportunities

PCUSD, like all school districts, was positioned to mediate between federal and state legal requirements and policies. It had varying degrees of autonomy to shape, set, and implement these policies or mandates, as well as how to use resources. For example, the state required English proficiency testing for children who speak another language at home; if they did not pass this test they would be classified as English Learners and be required to be in English Language Development (ELD) courses for a specified amount of time every week until they became reclassified. Guidelines and procedures for reclassification were set at a state level, such as the student passing the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). Yet other requirements were left to the district to interpret and determine (such as “student’s curriculum mastery” and “parent opinion and consultation”). There was some room to maneuver how to organize instructional time and carry out the reclassification process at the district level.

Furthermore, the schools were allowed a certain degree of autonomy in decision-making about matters such as courses, scheduling, goals for EL students, and how to use resources. District level actors and school personnel often held different opinions and interpretations regarding such decisions, especially when they were more controversial. The resources, policies and requirements formed part of the contextual conditions, and the degree of latitude varied and depended on the type of contextual condition. (See table 4.1).

Table 4.1 District contextual conditions: Resources, policies, and requirements

Policies, resources requirements	State*/district mandated and/or determined	Degree of latitude for district	Degree of latitude for schools	Accepted/controversial
<i>Staffing: Personnel to support EL students; ELD and SI teachers</i>	District	N/A	Medium: Admin. can recommend candidates to HR	Controversial and mediated
<i>Funds and structures for EL students: Amount and use.</i>	State and district	High (LCAP)	Medium (LCAP)	Controversial (varying opinions) but accepted
<i>Standards, curriculum, testing (all students and EL)</i>	State: CCSS and testing (computerized); ELA framework, CELDT test	Low	Very low (or none)	Controversial (varying opinions) but accepted
<i>Curriculum and instruction (ELs)</i>	District: District determines ELD curriculum/text and pacing schedule	There are different opinions by district actors regarding this	Medium: Teachers can supplement the ELD curriculum and adapt pacing	Controversial (varying opinions) but accepted
<i>Benchmark testing and ELD level advancement</i>	District: EL Services must report “progress” to the School Board	Different opinions by district actors about benchmark tests	Medium: Teachers were required to give EL students benchmark tests	Controversial and contested
<i>Initial placement of EL learners</i>	State: Placement based on required home language survey (HLS). Must categorize as “EL” if a language other than English spoken at home	District cannot change HLS but can recommend changes (to make clearer and account for nuances)	Low: Administrators can provide input and suggest changes and exceptions	Somewhat controversial and contested
<i>Reclassification</i>	State: Reclassification based on CELDT results.	Medium: Students must pass CELDT; other requirements determined by district	Low-Medium: Can try to help students acquire necessary English and have C- minimum in core courses	Somewhat controversial and contested
<i>Program structure and schedule</i>	District	Medium-high	Medium	Controversial and adapted
<i>Instruction in student’s primary language (bilingual education)**</i>	State and district: state required parental demand if district chose to offer	Medium-high: Parental demand had to be documented but district determined how and if to promote TBE/DI	Medium-high: Parental demand had to be documented but school determined how and if to promote and advocate for TBE/DI	Accepted

* Note: Some of the state mandated policies are also linked to federal ones; this chart does not differentiate these because the focus of this study is the district context.

** While a ballot measure in 2016 made this no longer required for bilingual education, at the time parental demand had to be documented.

This section examines the key policy levers that affected how the district supported teachers of EL students so that they can provide the key elements of a favorable context of reception for newcomer EL students: (1) information about students so that they can adapt instruction accordingly and better build upon their students’ cultural and linguistic resources, (2) professional development, coaching, and materials so that they can best meet their students’ needs, and (3) communication about curriculum, instruction, and testing to allow teachers to

adapt when necessary. These elements were perceived to be important by district personnel and school staff, yet there were provided to varying degrees.

District Contextual Conditions

An Additive Approach: Building on Students' Cultural and Linguistic Resources

The district had adopted an explicitly additive approach to second language acquisition, despite the federal and state level legal restrictions limiting bilingual education. In other words, instead of eroding Latino immigrant students' primary language and cultural resources, they aimed to build them by promoting bilingualism and biliteracy. The district had bilingual and dual immersion programs (Spanish-English) in place for many years and had continually worked to expand and improve them. There were nine elementary schools that had Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) and two that had Dual Immersion (DI). One high school (GWH) had bilingual education for different subjects that varied year to year depending on teacher availability. Additionally, at the time of data collection, DI was being expanded to one middle school and high school. The district offered a Seal of Biliteracy for high school graduates who demonstrated academic proficiency in English and a second language.³⁷ This was an incentive for students to work towards being bilingual because it would provide advantages in opportunities to continue their education and/or entering the labor market.

Recently district personnel who had involvement with English Learner Services had made more efforts to increase outreach to families to promote bilingual education and help them understand the available options. Finally, in the wake of the influx of newcomers (mostly from Central America), there was recognition of the importance of gaining proficiency in the primary language when beginning school in the U.S. Thus classes were being put in place to meet this need. This was being incorporated into a broader plan that was to create a "Newcomer Hub" pilot program at a middle high school and GWH to offer more and smaller classes (ELD, SI, Spanish language, basic math proficiency in Spanish) and services for newcomer students.

However, as demonstrated in this section, having policies, structures, procedures in place to carry out this additive approach to second language acquisition entailed a multi-layered process of implementation. In doing so, policy actors came up against material structural and organizational conditions that created both constraints and opportunities.

Material Constraints and Opportunities: Personnel and other Resources to Support EL Students

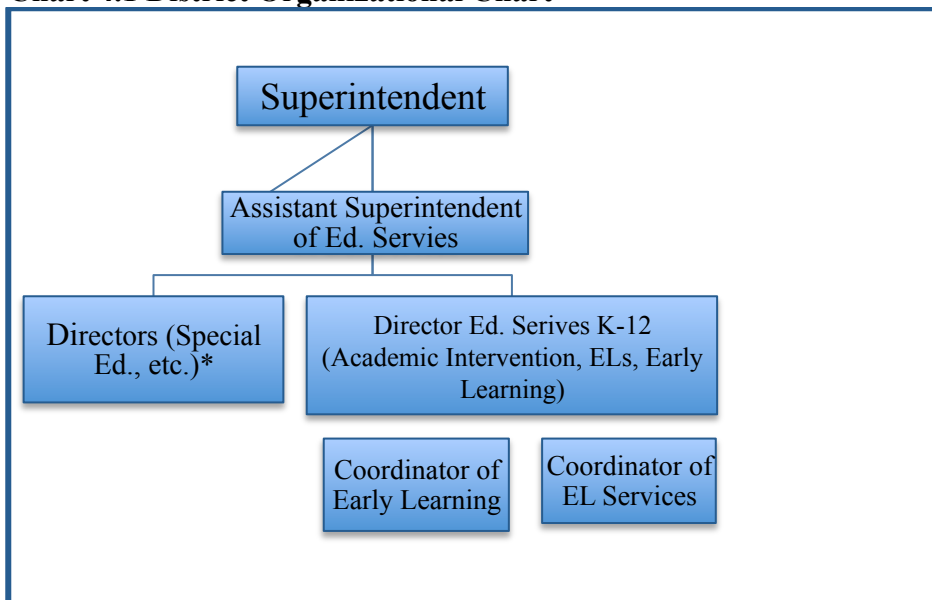
EL Services was situated within the "Education Services" department and under a sub-department referred to as "Academic Intervention". "English Learners" was one of the areas of the Academic Intervention sub-department (See chart 4.1). The EL Service Coordinator, Wendy McMullen,³⁸ reported to the Director of Education Services (K-12). The EL Service Coordinator was a very specialized position and required a person who was bilingual (Spanish-English) and had a higher degree in this area, unlike the Director position that did not require knowledge specific to "English Learners" (despite the large amount of federal and state funding designated

³⁷ Though this was most commonly Spanish, it was also available for some other languages.

³⁸ Pseudonyms have been used for all of the participants to maintain anonymity.

for EL students and hence decision-making required). Thus, if the specialist (coordinator) perceived a need for EL students and their teachers but the director was not aware or convinced about this need, it would not necessarily result in that need being fulfilled.

Chart 4.1 District Organizational Chart



The demand for EL services far exceeded the number of staff members and other human resources to serve the EL population (such as outside professionals). The district served roughly 10,000 EL students, about 1,000 of which are in BFH and GWH. The EL service office personnel consisted of the coordinator as well as one assistant and one coach for the entire district. There was one support office that was in charge of Reclassification, Assessment, and Placement (RAP) for EL students. This office employed a coordinator, Letty Cervantes, and two other staff members. Like Ms. McMullen, Ms. Cervantes was very specialized in her field and had worked in the district as an ELD teacher and specialist for over thirty years.³⁹

Under “Education Services”, there were other departments that are also aimed to provide specific services to groups of students, such as Special Education. This department employed roughly 30 staff members and serves 3,500 students. So while there were six district staff members serving the needs of 10,000 students classified as English Learners, there were 30 staff members serving 3,500 students categorized as Special Education.⁴⁰ This comparison was perceived by the EL service and RAP coordinators as illustrative not only of the relative lack of importance placed services for the EL students population but also the inequality in resource distribution and disproportionate human resource supply to meet such a large demand.

The lack of resources created problems for supporting EL students and their teachers regarding information for decision-making and instructional support. Information available to

³⁹ The importance of their specialization is due to their positionality in relation to the district personnel who were hierarchically above them and thus had decision-making power. As research has pointed out, often those responsible for policy and decision-making have very little knowledge of the field they oversee.

⁴⁰ There is overlap between these groups. There are English Learners who are also categorized as Special Education, and it is not uncommon for them to be misdiagnosed. Regardless of the overlap, the services required to meet the needs of EL students are not the same as those for Special Education.

teachers to inform their instructional decisions and know more about their students could be inaccurate, incomplete, and untimely. Additionally, instructional support provided by the district was very limited, resulting in a lack of guidance and ongoing support for EL and SI teachers.

In addition to these district-level structural conditions, aspects of organizational culture at the district level presented constraints and opportunities for district actors responsible for EL students' academic advancement. These organizational conditions included different beliefs about the importance of requirements such as benchmark testing, reclassification, and goals for students. Furthermore, the positionality of the district actors responsible for supporting schools to meet the needs of their EL students limited their ability to advocate for EL students and put in place what they deemed appropriate for these students' needs.

Obtaining and Providing Information about Newcomers and Other EL students

The two informants that had the most district-level responsibility for serving EL students both expressed their discontent with the lack of departmental designation for EL Services as well as the lack of human resources, especially compared to Special Education.⁴¹ They also shared the perception that their capacity to put in place the necessary services for EL students was limited due to their positionality. For example, the coordinator of the RAP center, Ms. Cervantes explained how important she believed it was to assess newcomers' proficiency level in their primary language as well as English, instead of only English.⁴² She stated that this was not something she had authority to put in place but could only suggest and advocate for it. As she stated:

That decision (to assess newcomers' proficiency level in their L1) will have to come from the Assistant Superintendent and Director of Education Services, who are – you know we're under – (Academic) Intervention. It just kills me, and even where they put Wendy this year in People Services where Special Ed is. Why they consider us to be equal [laughs] with Special Ed is really beyond me, you know? We should be if anything under GATE because these children are learning two languages and sometimes [laughs] already know more than one language.

In this statement, Ms. Cervantes is pointing to two problems she perceived with the way EL Services was positioned: 1) that designating EL Services as a sub-division was indicative of district decision-makers perceiving bilingualism as a limitation rather than an asset (despite the formal additive approach), and 2) the lack of authority of EL Services and support staff (like the RAP center) had to make decisions regarding the needs of newcomers. Yet beyond needing approval from the higher up district authorities to assess the newcomers' primary language proficiency, they also had a lack of resources to do this. As she stated:

We'll be happy to do it (assess newcomers' Spanish proficiency). We just didn't have – we didn't have any – leadership this year and I'm not an administrator so I can't make those

⁴¹ It is important to note that the two district informants who made the comparison to the Special Education department was not because they see these areas of intervention as being similar, rather it is because both Special Education and EL Services receive categorical funding to meet the particular needs of each group of students.

⁴² Ms. Cervantes had been working in the district for over 40 years, and all of her experience had been with EL students. This included teaching ESL/ELD, Spanish to Spanish speakers, and administrative work similar to what she was doing then.

decisions. Nor did we have the staff available because what happened is they removed two of our data people, one certificated program assistant who basically owned all the EL information; however we need everybody to own it, right? So anyway he retired.

Ms. Cervantes stated that Ms. McMullen should be in a director position so that the right decisions could be made for newcomers and EL students in general and because “she gets it” (referring to the additive approach and needs of newcomers). Ms. Cervantes also expressed concern about the lack of personnel and appropriate structures to manage data:

EL data is just the trickiest to work with because you have to glean information. We’ve got our NetData. (W)hatever information gets put up in NetData ends up being incorrect so teachers are basing, or making, instructional decisions on incorrect information.

The information that Ms. Cervantes was referring to was the original English proficiency level of students, their CELDT results and other test results, and their history (such as EL classification and levels and former schools). The EL Service Coordinator, Ms. McMullen, explained that the RAP center is in charge of student placement data and that they enter it into NetData. She echoed Ms. McMullen’s concern about having the right personnel for effective data management:

The fellow who is in charge of EL data at RAP center has retired; they have not replaced him. So this year two other staff members have tried to take on a lot of his duties but a lot of the things that he did they don't know how to do or don't have the training to do or don't know about it. So it was a tremendous loss to lose him. And so some things have been delayed or not done.

Ms. McMullen explained that she helped principals and assistant principals (APs) to access the information from the databases when they were not able to, and that she compared benchmark tests scores to placement information from NetData to identify discrepancies. However, her numerous responsibilities limited her ability to cover many tasks that she considered important. As she stated:

If you were sitting in front of my big board – I mean you want to know what my job is, let's go look at it. All of the stuff I do is up on that board, and one of the corners is the website. There's all this stuff that needs to go on the website. I don't know who's going to do it. But that's something that needs to be on the website and I hear that from our stakeholders, "I didn't know we had a bilingual program."

She went on to emphasize the importance of outreach and communication to families about the benefits of bilingualism and the opportunities for enrolling their children in the district’s programs:

(Parents and students) feel the message they get constantly and consistently that being bilingual is a deficit. So we have to do a better job of communicating what an asset it is and how incredibly smart and resourceful and resilient our students really are because that's the real story. That is some of the work we're doing. That might speak to your question about what are some of the opportunities. I think everybody associated with

English learners strives to seek the opportunities because we are in a situation where we are so very constrained. I have to find opportunities.

In the above excerpt, Ms. McMullen emphasized the need to publicize and promote the options and benefits of bilingual education, yet recognized the challenges in doing this (e.g. the lack of personnel). Furthermore, as Ms. Cervantes pointed out, the categorization of the EL service subdivision already positioned it to have limited human resources compared to the official district departments. Both Ms. Cervantes and Ms. McMullen recognized the importance of having accurate and up-to-date information about the EL students which would help teachers to adapt their instruction accordingly, help administrators with course placement, and facilitate building language skills in the primary language to develop bilingualism as well as better acquire English. However, the positionality of the district personnel directly responsible for the EL student population limited their ability to request and obtain important information for effective EL placement and instruction. This combined with insufficient personnel created constraints that ultimately influenced their ability to support ELD and SI teachers and other school personnel.

Resources to Support ELD and SI Teachers: Materials and Professional Development

Ms. McMullen explained that she tried to work closely with the schools to “help them bring their vision to fruition” and said that she believed giving schools the autonomy to do this was both important and necessary, especially due to the size of the district.⁴³ However, when she received requests from schools for resources to support EL students, and/or believed certain resources were necessary, she was not always able to meet these requests due to her position as coordinator. For example, she had wanted to purchase support materials for the EL students but wasn’t able to. As she explained:

A lot of those are decisions that get made at a level higher than my own, so I'm a coordinator. And what's been really hard to learn is that I don't make those decisions. I don't get to make those decisions or have input on those types of decisions at my level.

She also expressed frustration about the inequality between Greenway High and Bloomfield High, and her inability to change this despite her attempts to advocate for BFH. She explained that she had provided data to district officials demonstrating that BFH proportionally received more newcomers that year than GWH, yet GWH had more structures in place and was chosen to be the place for the “Newcomer Hub”. Though, as she stated, her positionality limited her ability to influence decisions of district officials, such as getting structures in place for newcomers at BFH:

I don't always feel like that would be welcome feedback. Again, my role is a coordinator. I'm not a director, so I'm not in a position to politically have the kind of clout or sway that someone needs to have to really advocate for kids.

Though School Board members could make such decisions, she explained the limitations of her communication with them:

⁴³ The district was running Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) programs at ten elementary schools and Dual Immersion (DI) programs at two elementary schools.

Ms. M: I don't get direct contact with board members. I have been directly contacted by a Board member and in cases like that we're directed to direct them to Dr. Richardson (the Superintendent). So I don't have a lot of direct contact with board members except for the lovely instances when I get to see Karen (Board member) at meetings. And then when I get to go before the Board to present and then defend what we're doing.

KR: And advocate?

Ms. M: Present and defend.

When asked to elaborate on why she had to *defend* what EL Services is doing, she referred to the most recent School Board meeting where she had been asked to present and explain the data and progress on the EL students.

And in that last meeting there was a lot of defending because some people who are asking questions don't always understand the answers that they're given.... I think they don't understand how ELD instruction works and I think they don't understand the reality of mixed level classrooms.... I think they don't always understand how exactly it works. And so what I learn every time I go to the Board is I learn how I need to frame the way that I deliver stuff for next time.

The lack of authority for decision-making by people who are highly specialized and experienced with EL students and their needs combined with the lack of communication due to formal hierarchical structures seemed to pose limitations in how to best meet the needs of EL students and their teachers.

One need that teachers and administrators expressed was professional development and instructional support for ELD and SI teachers. Yet the lack of EL Service personnel made this need extremely hard to meet. As Ms. McMullen stated:

I am the coordinator. Additional support staff we have supporting the 9,766 English learner students in our district include one elementary ELD coach. We got a clerk, that's Isabel. We got a clerk in October. So now there's someone who can answer the phone or be here when I'm not here and she's bilingual, so that's phenomenal. She helps us to be able to interface with all of our stakeholders, which is extremely important. Because up until this point I would be the only person who's bilingual in the department, and I'm about as slow as a second grader on a good day. I do my best, but I don't claim in any way to be academically fluent.

Ms. McMullen had provided several workshops in SDAIE and ELD strategies for high school teachers, and stated that there was “limited coaching support for secondary teachers provided by an outside contractor”. Three outside contractors had been providing some professional development and “coaching” for teachers of EL students (elementary, secondary, and high school).⁴⁴ However, the need for teachers to receive professional development in SDAIE and

⁴⁴ Based on my interviews with the administrators and teachers, no classroom-based coaching had been provided by these specialists the entire academic year (as of March/April) for ELD or SI. As mentioned in the previous chapter,

ELD instruction was apparent to Ms. McMullen and, as she stated, “whenever we send out surveys or just talk to teachers they all want the strategies”. Yet as Ms. McMullen stated, the high teacher-turnover rate combined with the large population made it challenging to provide guidance on pedagogical strategies:

Julie (outside contractor) also has provided a couple of sessions on general introduction to California ELD standards. We do have 250 new teachers in our district this year. So we have an ongoing need to train folks on just the basics.

Despite the need for ELD and SI teachers to receive professional development and instructional support, the teacher attendance did not tend to be very high when trainings were held. For example, fewer than half of the teachers had attended a SDAIE training that had been held earlier in the school year. According to Ms. McMullen, this was because it had been difficult to schedule it at a time and place that most teachers could attend (or would make the effort to attend) even though they were paid the hourly teaching rate for this. Previously they had done “pull out” all day trainings, but finding substitutes was too difficult. The afternoon time made it challenging for teachers with families and new teachers (who were already stretched too thin). They were currently trying to set up a training teachers could do online at their own convenience. However, the reason for the low attendance may also have been due to teachers not finding it helpful to address their needs.⁴⁵

As illustrated, there were structural and organizational constraints faced by the district actors who have the specific responsibility of creating conditions to support school staff and families to meet the needs of immigrant and other EL students. Their perceptions were similar in several important ways. For example, they had a similar notion of what constitutes a favorable context of reception for immigrant students and the importance of the additive approach to language acquisition. Yet both perceived that their positionality limited them from advocating and/or establishing procedures or resources to meet the needs of EL students (and particularly newcomers). They also both perceived a lack of personnel in key decision-making positions with the qualifications and/or will to help improve the district contextual conditions to create a more favorable COR for EL students and their teachers.

In sum, they both sought opportunities to build upon the district policy and approach to language acquisition for EL students faced various challenges. However, these challenges were within the district context and control, unlike the constraints due to demands external to the district that are discussed in the following section.

Placement, Curricular Goals and Pacing, and Benchmark Testing

Issues that resulted from accountability (such as testing), both at the district and school levels, tended to be the most highly contentious. The district was required to report on results and progress for EL students by using proficiency tests. The benchmark tests served this purpose, and these tests drove the curricular pacing. Many teachers felt uncomfortable with administering

one ELD teacher, Ms. Lamont, said she had been observed by one of these specialists but not provided feedback or any instructional support.

⁴⁵ As teachers reported, ELD teachers and SI teachers had received trainings together and topics did not necessarily respond to each of their demands. Furthermore, teachers reported needing strategies to address the wide variation in proficiency levels combined with very large class sizes, which they said had not been provided.

these to EL students because so many of them were unprepared for it. The EL Service office and the RAP center had responsibility for obtaining this data, regardless of their own opinions about the usefulness of the testing and its effect on these students. As Ms. McMullen explained, the School Board's role was to ensure accountability for the progress of EL students and her role was to provide them the information:

There is incredible pressure, so the district has a desired benchmark. We call it a participation rate so they want 95 percent or more of students to have taken this benchmark. That's not set by me when it happens or how many times it happens but I am the one who has to convey okay, here's the benchmark.

All of the content areas are required to come and we give our results from the benchmarks because the Board is interested in seeing student progress because that's part of their role as overseers of accountability. That's one of the Board's roles.

She recognized the different levels of accountability and responsibility in with benchmark testing:

What would be problematic is if they didn't administer the benchmark because then what happens is the principal's on the hook for why didn't your teacher administer the benchmark because I am responsible for conveying that information to cabinet and Board or other folks who are in charge of accountability like they have put measures in place so they can assess progress in the classroom.

As these excerpts demonstrate, McMullen took for granted that the benchmark tests must be administered. She did not express a clear opinion regarding their usefulness, but did recognize that it created problems for the teachers and students, especially the newcomers. I presented her with the scenario of a student one of the ELD teachers had told me about: a girl who had recently arrived from Guatemala and was Mam-speaking (her indigenous language), spoke very little Spanish, no English, and had very little formal education. In response to the question of what she would tell a teacher who requested to not administer the benchmark test to this student, she replied:

As the coordinator for the program I have to say, yep, offer the students the opportunity. Have a conversation with them to the extent you're able to because they speak Mam. Let's try it. Let's see what you can do because now in tandem not only are we testing students' literacy skills or English language skills we're also testing their computer skills because we've switched it to an online test. And some of our students don't have much exposure to computers. Some of our teachers don't have much experience with online testing.

In this excerpt, McMullen acknowledged the difficulties posed by administering the benchmark test to someone who is so clearly not prepared to take it, and provided even more reasons for why it is too challenging for such students (such as computer use). However, in her role, she had to comply with the mandate.

Additionally, McMullen recognized the resistance of teachers to administer the benchmark test. The test was closely tied to the curriculum, which (as discussed in chapter 3) presented problems to ELD teachers who were continually receiving newcomer students:

I think teachers are not comfortable yet giving a test particularly because it is directly related to the curriculum, so like it may be like a unit test that's given. Teachers aren't comfortable giving it if they haven't taught that material so they're still very prescriptive in some regards and we're trying to make them more comfortable, not being so prescriptive.

She explained that it was necessary to provide a scope and sequence, though this was “very broad”. She perceived that teachers felt monitored to be using the right curriculum and that this was not her intention:

I try to make the messaging on my part and it's clear some folks may have gotten it one way and some folks may have interpreted it a different way but no, the intent is not that you have to be right here at this time.

McMullen explained that she often had conversations with the teachers about how to explain to their ELD students that they were required to give the test even if it may not be appropriate for many students who hadn't had sufficient time to develop their English skills. Yet, as illustrated, she was part of a chain of accountability and mediating between these pressures.

While the benchmark testing was taken for granted by the EL Service coordinator, Ms. Cervantes, the RAP center coordinator, had a different view of the benchmark tests. She felt that it did not provide reliable information on the students' English proficiency:

I think the benchmark tests – It's not valid to me because everyone takes the same test. In order for it to be valid and show growth you would have to have a test that would aim at the beginner. And then if you take it again in the winter, wow, look at how much that beginner has learned. But if they're all – You don't know who's taking – It's the same test. They're all taking it. So an advanced student – or early advanced, intermediate student is going to score really high. And maybe they'll score a little bit higher in the winter. But the beginner is going to be low, low, low because the items are not appropriate for their level....But anyway to me I would not even pay attention to those ELD benchmark assessments. They mean nothing to me if it's not valid information. You cannot really judge the growth.

Ms. Cervantes was not responsible for communicating EL progress to the district officials; this was Ms. McMullen's job. Though, according to Ms. Cervantes, these tests were not a reflection of *progress*. The district also must report on reclassification rates, which was also an issue that Ms. Cervantes and Ms. McMullen viewed differently. Ms. Cervantes' role was to assess students for EL placement (level 1-5) and reclassify them if they met the criteria. In her opinion, which is what she based the reclassification decisions on, these criteria had to include not just passing the CELDT but also having at least a C-minus or above in all core subjects. Ms. McMullen put more emphasis on the goal of reclassifying EL students, even in secondary school, and did not want grades to be taken into account. As stated by Ms. Cervantes, when it came to reclassification Ms. McMullen was “not too keen on grades”. For Ms. Cervantes, the focus on reclassifying was not appropriate for secondary school EL students, especially newcomers:

I think for them reclassifying should not be a goal because we know it takes five to seven years. Therefore the goal should be for them to be able to earn their credits. Because not reclassifying as a newcomer in high school is going to have no repercussions for them to go on to college. It's not a requirement. So for the newcomers that would be my focus. Get them confident enough and motivated enough to do what they need to do to earn their credits...I would be looking toward survival and getting to a path where they can learn either – They may not be able to go to college right away but be able to have skills to be able to work and maybe go to school at the same time. But you know put them on a path of success in life rather than worry about reclassification.

As illustrated in the above statement, Ms. Cervantes emphasized the importance of graduating with credits to go to college. Ms. McMullen had also stressed the importance of students having the opportunity to complete their A-G requirements. However, even though the criteria for reclassification was set at a district level, each high school had autonomy regarding how it structured its schedules and programs (e.g. number of periods and time each period, course offerings, and student schedules/course placements). All of these had implications for students' outcomes and opportunities such as graduating with the course requirements for college and being fluent in English. The leadership, administration, and school culture played critical roles in determining these.

School Structures and Trends in EL Student Outcomes

The two schools differed regarding how they structured their courses and set their requirements, as well as where they placed their emphasis regarding goals for EL students. For example, at GWH the administration and support staff (such as counselors) tended to place more emphasis on graduating students and less on their A-G requirements. More students were graduating but not necessarily with requirements for attending a four-year college. However, with their high school diploma, they may have the qualification and confidence to choose a different career path (e.g. community college, a trade college, or begin working). At Bloomfield High, the emphasis was both on graduating students and trying to assure EL students were meeting A-G requirements. The tendencies of each school regarding their goals for students was apparent in the interview data, yet it was also consistent with the trends in the data for the two schools. (See tables 4.2 and 4.3).

Table 4.2 Graduation Rates, 2011-2015

	Bloomfield High			Greenway High			Pineview Unified (PCUSD)			State		
	EL students	Non-EL students		EL students	Non-EL students		EL students	Non-EL students		EL students	Non-EL students	
2011-12	48%	69%		60%	54%		63%	76%		62%	84%	
2012-13	43%	76%		83%*	54%		67%	79%		63%	86%	
2013-14	56%	66%		83%	52%		69%	74%		65%	85%	
2014-15	83%**	62%		82%	53%		75%	77%		69%	84%	

Source: California Department of Education

Table 4.3 Percentage of students meeting A-G requirements, 2011-2015

	Bloomfield High		Greenway High		Pineview Unified (PCUSD)		State	
	EL students	Non-EL students	EL students	Non-EL students	EL students	Non-EL students	EL students	Non-EL students
2011-12	6%	88%	38%	44%	27%	76%	23%	87%
2012-13	19%**	90%	7%*	94%	15%	79%	9%	98%
2013-14	11%	91%	14%	89%	11%	74%	10%	98%
2014-15	14%	86%	10%	93%	11%	77%	9%	98%

Source: California Department of Education

* There was a substantial increase in the graduation rate for EL students at GWH from 2011-12 to 2012-13, as well as a substantial decrease in the percentage of students meeting A-G requirements.

**There was a substantial increase in the percentage of students meeting A-G requirements at BFH from 2011-12 to 2012-13, while graduation rates did not increase.

It is important to note that the state high school exit exam (CAHSEE) was eliminated after the 2014 school year. Additionally, in 2015 Governor Jerry Brown passed a bill (Senate Bill 172) which allowed high schools to award diplomas retrospectively for students who had not graduated prior to the elimination of the CAHSEE requirement if those students had met all other requirements for graduation. Both the elimination of the CAHSEE and the Bill allowing students to graduate retrospectively had an impact on graduation rates for BFH and GWH.

In the case of GWH, the drastic increase for EL student graduation (from 60% to 83%) is apparent between 2011-12 and 2012-13, whereas for BFH the increase (56% to 83%) was apparent between 2013-14 and 2014-15. One explanation for this is that the counselor at GWH contacted all of the EL students he could find who had not passed the CAHSEE but had met all of their other requirements. Through a network of current students and social media, he was able to contact over 300 students and make sure they received their diplomas, which would boost the graduation rates for previous years (such as 2013 and 2014). Yet GWH and BFH had graduation rates above the district and state level averages for 2015.

GWH personnel stated that the CAHSEE exam was the only thing keeping EL students from graduating. The trends in data are congruent with this as can be seen by this increase in graduation rates that has remained relatively consistent since 2012-13. BFH, in turn, reflects a pattern similar to the district and state, as well as another high school in the district that has a relatively high percentage of EL students.⁴⁶ In other words, there was a notable increase in EL student graduation rates in the year following the elimination of the CAHSEE (2014-15). Also noteworthy about GWH is the relatively low graduation rate for non-EL students (53% in 2015) compared with EL students (82%) that became even more disparate after 2011-12 (when there was a 14% gap as opposed to the 29% gap in 2015). This differs markedly from the district and state trends. In sum, GWH stands out as having a quite different pattern than other schools in terms of EL student and non-EL student graduation rates.

Similarly, data trends for BFH differ from both GWH and the district and state trends in terms of percentage of EL students meeting A-G requirements. Both at GWH and at the state and

⁴⁶ This other high school has roughly 20% of its student population categorized as EL students. It also showed a slight decrease in graduation rates for EL students from 2011-12 to the next year (68% to 65%), which then gradually increased to 73% for 2014-15. Also similar to BFH, the percentage of students meeting A-G requirements increased from 15% to 21% from 2011-12 to the following year at that school.

district levels, the percentage of EL students meeting A-G requirements decreased substantially and continually since 2012-13, where as with BFH this trend differs: there had been an overall increase in A-G requirements from 2011-12 to the following year and in 2014-15 it was 4% higher than at GWH as well as the district and state level (3% higher and 5% higher respectively). At the same time, it the percentage of students meeting A-G requirements has remained relatively stable for non-EL students at BFH. This differs from GWH as well as the state averages, which reflect a substantial increase for non-EL students meeting A-G requirements from 2011-2015. In other words, while the gap grew substantially between EL and non-EL students meeting requirements at GWH and at and state level, BFH showed the opposite pattern; though there was still a substantial gap, it became smaller rather than larger. Though no causal conclusions can be drawn, these trends may have several explanations linked to differences of BFH: the eight-period program structure that allows more flexibility in EL students' schedules to take A-G required courses, 2) more attention to the instructional core for all students, and 3) practices of school leadership (such as course scheduling, supporting teachers, etc.).

As for reclassification rates, both schools (on average) are below the state and district levels. (See table 4.4). Though the reason for this is unknown, it could be indicative of a tendency to demonstrate progress through benchmark tests and prioritize graduation rates rather than emphasizing reclassification rates. At a school level, the data show an upward trend at BFH, whereas with GWH the rates tended to fluctuate over the years. This may be indicative that GWH (more than BFH) had taken the approach espoused by Ms. Cervantes, which prioritizes that EL students graduate rather than emphasizing reclassification. The fluctuation at GWH may also be a reflection of the ELD teachers each year, which had been particularly ineffective in 2015-16 at GWH. Similarly, the increase at BFH in 2014-15 and the following year may have been influenced by the administration hiring ELD teachers that they perceived to be relatively effective.

Table 4.4 Reclassification rates for both schools, the district and the state; 2011-2016

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
GWH	4%	6%	2%	16%	4%
BFH	2.5%	1.5%	2%	9.5%	8%
District	11%	8%	9%	10.5%	8%
State	11%	12%	12%	11%	11%

Source: California Department of Education

The trends in graduation rates, proficiency levels, and reclassification rates appeared to be consistent with administration and support staff's espoused goals for EL students at the two schools. While GWH focused on graduating students, BFH kept A-G requirements as a priority. There were structural and organizational conditions that influenced these outcomes, such as program structures and the norms and values at each school. What did appear apparent, however, is that the school context and conditions contributed to producing substantially different outcomes and opportunities for EL students. The next section examines these school-level conditions and how they shape the context of reception for EL students, especially newcomers.

It is important to note that some district conditions that presented both constraints and opportunities were taken for granted at a district level but not at the school level. For example, the additive approach to second language acquisition promoted at the district level was assumed

and highly acclaimed amongst some district actors, especially the staff that had the most responsibility in serving the needs of EL students. Though, as examined in this section, this played out differently both at a district and school level. Another policy that was taken for granted was the CCSS and the shift to having students take tests electronically, even though it was recognized that these changes would further burden and challenge EL students.

The Interplay Between District and School Level Conditions

As demonstrated in chapter 3, teachers varied in their ability to meet the academic and social needs of their students. Some of their perceptions and practices were linked to their histories and deep-rooted beliefs, such as assumptions about their students' cultural practices and initial teaching preparation. However, the institutional environment that they inhabited also shaped their practices and beliefs. At the school level, the administrative team and other support staff were the ones positioned to provide teachers with the conditions necessary to be able to engage in practices that benefit their EL immigrant students. Teachers need time and encouragement to establish relationships with their students. They also need information about their students to the degree that school personnel have access to it (such as language proficiency levels, country-of-origin, years of formal schooling, and personal situations that could affect their performance). They need instructional leadership, support and oversight as well as a certain degree of autonomy (i.e. not being overly monitored). They also need time and structure for teacher collaboration. Finally, they need guidance and clarity about the expectations regarding their students' progress and learning as well as the clarity about when and how to adapt curricular goals and instruction to meet their students' needs. Yet schools are embedded within a district with contextual conditions and external demands that pose constraints and opportunities. While some of these offer little or no degree of latitude (such as state mandates and low district teacher salaries), others afford some degree of latitude for decision-making at a school level.

The district contextual conditions faced by both schools which present similar limitations and some opportunities were: (1) district support such as responsiveness to requests as well as providing instructional support and other resources, (2) state and district mandates about EL placement, reclassification, and required ELD instructional time, (3) standards, curriculum, instruction, and testing that were specific to EL students and/or apply to all students,⁴⁷ and (4) staffing (high teacher turnover rate and difficulty of hiring qualified ELD and SI teachers). The schools differed in both structural arrangements and in their organizational culture. They differed in their program structures and schedules, course offerings (e.g. bilingual education), resources available to ELD and SI teachers (e.g. bilingual grad tutors), and support structures and staff for EL students (e.g. bilingual counselors). Organizational culture differences included leadership and professional culture, linguistic and cultural climate, goals for EL students, and their responses to external demands. (See table 4.5).

⁴⁷ This refers to all curriculum, instruction, and testing for EL students: the general curriculum (such as the CCSS) and state subject proficiency testing as well as the standards, curriculum, and testing specifically for EL students.

Table 4.5 District and School Conditions

		PCUSD contextual conditions	GWH school contextual conditions	BFH school contextual conditions
S T R U C T U R A L	Material: Funding, staffing, infrastructure	Hierarchically positioned as sub-division below a district department Relatively few EL service staff members to meet demand/needs Lack of qualified personnel for data management.	-School layout has classrooms distributed widely throughout school. ELD grouped together. -Large school appearance/feeling -Qualified ELD and SI teachers are very scarce. Admin. perceived ELD teachers as incapable advancing EL student learning. Six bilingual grad tutors (to help ELD and SI classes). -Bilingual EL counselor. - Various services in place for newcomers/EL students	-School layout has classrooms less dispersed. ELD and SI are mixed in with other classes. - Small school appearance/feeling. -Qualified ELD and SI teachers are very scarce. Admin. perceived ELD teachers as capable of advancing EL student learning. Two grad tutors working at school but not dedicated to ELD or SI. - No bilingual counselor. -No special services in place for newcomers/EL students
	Program Structures	Bilingual education and Dual immersion offered (mainly at elementary schools). Any school can request DI or Bilingual Ed. if they can demonstrate enough demand.	-Bilingual classes offered in Math; some SI history and science classes have bilingual grad tutors. -SI is “bilingual”. Does not have native speakers and has bilingual grad tutors.	-No bilingual classes offered. Offers spanish for Spanish speakers to develop literacy/proficiency in their L1 -SI has low-level native English speakers mixed with ELD 1-3 students.
	External Demands: Requirements, Mandates, policies	District must report EL English proficiency and progress. EL Services presents to district every three months and CELDT scores yearly	School is audited for EL performance and services. Must report benchmark test results (EL proficiency levels) every three months. All students take SBAC (former state standardized test) except newcomers; this must be done electronically (i.e. students use tablets or computer to take tests).	
	External Support: PD, materials, etc.	District has support from contractors for material development and PD. Very limited for secondary schools	SI and ELD teachers do not receive in-class instructional support. PD offered occasionally. Receive support from EL Services.	SI and ELD teachers do not receive in-class instructional support. PD offered occasionally. Receive support from EL Services.
O R G A N I Z A T I O N A L	District/School Culture: history, values, goals, autonomy of district actors with schools	District promotes additive approach to ESL. Incentives and outreach for students to achieve biliteracy and bilingualism. EL services allows autonomy to schools to decide how to implement district EL plan.	Spanish-speaking and Latino culture is dominant. Admin. and office staff are Spanish speaking and of Latino origin. Supportive of initiatives to help newcomers. Admin. places high value on bilingualism and biliteracy and (selective acculturation, not assimilationist)	Traditionally and African American school. Nobody in admin is bilingual or of Latino origin. Supportive of initiatives to help newcomers (such as class for Spanish proficiency), but admin. view is more assimilationist (i.e. learn English fast, Spanish proficiency is important so they can learn English and subject content).
	Professional culture: leadership,	EL personnel work together and with school administrators on EL issues (student	Principal and AP go by procedures. Provided semi-structured planning and oversight for teachers. Teacher	Principal and AP plan but do not necessarily follow through on plan. Teachers and other staff (and admin) do not share

oversight, collaboration, communication	needs, requirements) Visions differ on benchmarks and priorities for EL students.	supervision/evaluation in is part of formal district requirement. Receives info. about teachers via students. Not frequent visiting and communication between and among admin. & ELD/SI teachers.	common vision on various issues (block schedule, use of resources) though issues are discussed. Communication is frequent between teachers (including ELD and SI).
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This section examines the structural and organizational constraints and opportunities that each school faced how they school level actors navigated them. While they both faced limitations, they compensated for them differently. Greenway High perceived that they did not have a very effective ELD teaching staff, and compensated by drawing upon resources such as the bilingual graduate tutors as well as creating opportunities for EL students within the school and apart from it (such as summer programs offering English, links with the local community college, after school tutoring, and organizing groups of students to strengthen their cultural and linguistic identities). BFH, in turn, lacked many of the structures and resources that GWH had, yet had a relatively strong ELD teaching team as well as a block schedule that was organized in eight periods. This allowed students in ELD 1-3 to take more classes and thus have more of an opportunity to both retake a course if necessary as well as to take courses contributing to their A-G requirements. In sum, within their constraints, both schools found opportunities to create positive conditions and opportunities for EL students, and particularly newcomers, even though the types of context of reception each provided were quite different.

Regarding infrastructure, the schools were comparable in several ways. For example, the physical appearance of each from the outside had aspects similar to a penitentiary. Both were windowless (inside and the walls facing outside), surrounded by tall fences, and had at least two ever-present police squad cars parked in front. Both had a sign outside the main entrance displaying the penal code referring to the legal consequences of having firearms or other weapons on school grounds. Students were carefully monitored to not leave campus during school hours. Furthermore, while many other schools in the district had benefited from major infrastructure improvements (including other high schools), GWH and BFH did not benefit, the justification being that they were “earthquake safe” and therefore not on the list for modification/infrastructure improvement.

Another similarity between the schools was the constraint of staffing, especially teacher staffing. Administrators and other personnel at both schools emphasized the difficulty of hiring and retaining teachers who were able to meet the needs of the immigrant EL students. One key reason for this, that is not specific to teaching EL students, was the low teacher salary compared to neighboring districts. Another reason shared by both schools is the lack of qualified candidates, or candidates that the administration in each school considered to be right for teaching these students. However, what differed between schools were the criteria for the “ideal” or “right” type of teacher as well as their approaches to hiring (or *culture* that determined how that was done at each school). (See table 4.6)

Table 4.6 Programs and structures for EL students and newcomers

	Greenway High	Bloomfield High
Bilingual Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilingual Math • Sheltered Bilingual History (“bilingual” due to bilingual grad tutor translation) • Sheltered Bilingual Science (“bilingual” due to bilingual grad tutor translation) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No bilingual classes
SI classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EL students only. Several have bilingual grad tutors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SI has low-level native English speakers mixed with ELD 1-3 students.
Spanish for Spanish Speakers	No	Yes
Schedule/periods	6 (ELD 1-3 students must be in ELD and SI for 4 periods). 2 other period to retake courses or take other courses (electives or A-G required courses)	8 (ELD 1-3 students must be in ELD and SI for 4 periods); 4 periods to retake courses or take other courses (electives or A-G required courses)
Resources for Latino Newcomers/ELs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six bilingual grad tutors to help ELD and SI classes • Bilingual EL counselor • Some services in place for newcomers/EL students and Latino students • Not a full service school (no on-sight medical and health services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two grad tutors not assigned to ELD or SI classes • No bilingual EL counselor • No specific services for newcomers/EL students or Latino students • Full service school for all students: Medical and health services available

Greenway High

GWH appeared to have most of the elements that constitute a favorable context of reception for newcomer students. They had bilingual courses and support services for newcomers and Latino students in general. The administrative team, office staff, support personnel (bilingual grad tutors, bilingual counselor, career advisors) were all bilingual. The administrative team and ELD counselor had been working with the EL student population for many years and thus had the knowledge and experience to respond to their needs. There was an explicitly additive approach to language acquisition, which was evident in the school’s culture of building on the ethnic and linguistic resources of the students. The one very evident piece missing was also one of the most vital: a team of ELD teachers to provide a favorable COR for newcomers and meet the academic and social needs of EL students in general. Additionally, their program structure and schedule made it difficult to take the required courses to meet A-G requirements.

Leadership and District Support

The physical layout of GWH made it feel as if were a relatively large school, even though the great majority of classrooms were all within one building. It was a one-level building with the main office and library in the most central areas and roughly ten different hallways that stretched out in all directions around the center. One distinctive characteristic of GWH was the frequency of Spanish being spoken in the hallways, main office, and just about everywhere in the school’s public/common areas.

Either due to the school layout, or the leadership and professional culture of GWH, it appeared that the principal (Mr. Jiménez) did not often circulate around the school corridors. During each of my visits, he was either in his office or standing in a central area between the main office and the main school entrance talking with teachers or other school staff. There seemed to be day-to-day urgencies such as parents needing to talk with the principal or AP. For example, Mr. Jiménez had to pause one of our meetings to take care of a custody issue of a student. Other occasions he would ask parents if they could wait a few more minutes. All communication I witnessed that he had with parents and students was in Spanish.

Mr. Jiménez had a schedule for all staff meetings that would take place during the year, which included department collaborations and all-staff meetings. He prepared topics for the teachers to cover, for which they were supposed to report back to him. He appeared to have a consistent formal approach for teacher oversight. When talking about teacher evaluations:

KR: So do you, as the principal, do you do evaluations yourself? You go into the classroom and you watch them?

Mr. J: Yeah.

KR: And you do that for all the teachers?

Mr. J: Depending when their years come up, yeah. Like any new teachers, it's every year for the first three years. After the third year, you become tenured, then it's every five years.... The formal district evaluation.

In addition to providing some structure and oversight for all of the teachers, he talked of the importance of teachers having the support they need. During the interview he frequently used the word *support* in reference to the district support for GWH, support for teachers, and support for EL students. For example, in response to my question about teachers wanting to teach EL students or not, he replied:

It's about the support. If we have the support for the teachers, then teachers usually are okay. So if I have six ELD students that don't speak -- I have a grad tutor that will be there for an hour that will help them through this and that. That's better. The teacher won't manage the whole class but at least they know that they won't have six kids sitting in the corner that don't understand anything just glaring at them or finding other things to entertain themselves with. They need somebody to say, 'hey, do this,' and the district supports, I think. We have books in Spanish for most of our core subject matters. I know we have 'em for biology, I know we have 'em for a couple of grade levels of history and we have 'em for math, the other ones that are more like the non-traditional classes like graphic design or band or art. The teachers will use the scaffolding strategies to help you learn and then your peers will help you through the process.

He also expressed feeling supported by the district:

So we work with the EL service Director and Coordinator and they interact with the ELD program for the whole district, so we're able to talk to them directly about the needs of the students as the students come in and then they support the program as needed. If we get more students in, they will support with extra teachers, grad tutors and extra hours for training as needed. Right now we're in the works of creating a program for next year

that's focused on rapid learning of the students when they're coming in behind and also making sure that we have enough teachers to support the ELD population coming in. So it's more like we plan together with the district on the needs for the students. We do have one of the larger ELD populations in the district, so they work with us a lot to support us.

He did not see monetary resources as being a problem and spoke clearly about how they should be used to best support the needs of newcomer students. He referred to the importance of grad tutors frequently throughout the interview. They had six currently and were continuing to expand this number.

The resources are usually done, you can call it, by bodies and seats as long as we prove we have the bodies in the seats, the resources come along. The new one is the support with the grad tutors, which are an extra adult in the classroom to help the ELD students, which has been very helpful and also the support in reducing the class sizes, the class sizes for ELD students. The ideal class size should be around 25.

The assistant principal, Ms. Ramos, also emphasized feeling very supported by the district. Sylvia was actively engaged in different initiatives to try to meet the needs of the EL students, as evidenced by how the two district coordinators, school personnel, and students talked about her. She was also the one more frequently referred to as being in charge of issues related to EL student testing and placement as well as initiatives in development for newcomers and other EL students. During my visits she was rarely in her office but instead moving around the school working on different issues. She said she typically stayed until about 8pm to catch up on deskwork that needed to be done. She discussed the plans they had for next year, including adding a basic math proficiency class (in Spanish) and a class for developing basic literacy skills in Spanish. As she commented:

For me, it's exciting to be part of creating that. The district – EL services – is really open to what would be your ideal program. I think with myself having taught ELD1 for eight years and knowing who these students are that are coming in, being able to give that input has been – it's exciting for me to know that they're supportive of what we're asking.

Sylvia mentioned several initiatives that she and the grad tutors had started, such as afterschool tutoring offered by the grad tutors and a Saturday seminar for EL students to discuss issues they are grappling with as well as creative expression like dance and art.

That's the great thing about being here and I really like that about the high school is we really try to provide the after school extracurricular that the students are asking for. We try to provide it. Like I said, the students mentioned to Luis they would be willing to come on Saturday. They want to learn English. He mentioned it to me, and it's like, "Let's make it happen. Why not? What's the worst thing that can happen if we ask?" Like I said, our district has been really helpful in the sense of, "Sure, let's do it."

Yet she also pointed out that some of these initiatives were put into place in response to students not getting their needs met in the classroom:

I don't know if we would need all this extracurricular if things were happening in the classroom. Unfortunately, that's the reality. Because things are not happening in the classroom or their needs are not being met in that class, they're looking for – Luis is enrolling them at CC colleges for the summer because they know they're not going to be able to get the language needs in the summer and summer school.

In sum, at a school-level the administration and other personnel were requesting resources and finding ways to meet the needs of newcomers and other EL students despite the constraints. These constraints were not perceived by the administration to be a lack of resources, but due to the limitation of finding ELD and SI teachers who were qualified and could meet the needs of the students. Yet there were other structural and organizational constraints and opportunities as well, which are discussed in the following section.

Goals for students: Opportunities to learn English, graduate, and meet the A-G requirements

The perception of several district actors and personnel at both schools was that Greenway High was well set up for newcomers. This was due to their history of their student body being predominantly of Latino-origin and receiving the highest number of newcomers over the recent years. It also had to do with the school leadership, as stated by Ms. McMullen, the EL Service coordinator:

Again, when you look at Greenway High and you feel they are better set up and have these resources, some of that comes from the vision and the focus of leadership. Sylvia was an English learner – she is a Greenway High grad. Jimenez has been very connected to the English learner population within our district so they've really set the tone to make sure those programs are in place at those schools.

The principal of GWH also recognized the strengths of the school regarding meeting the needs of EL students:

I think some of our strengths is that we've been working with EL students for so long that we understand better their needs and we keep adding to our toolbox to meet their needs. We've worked with the health center to have a bilingual counselor that'll better serve the EL population. We work with outside agencies like Manos Unidas, etcetera, to bring in programs for the parents. We're also working with a couple other programs that are doing newcomer workshops and they meet once a week with our new students.

The goals for EL students that GWH personnel emphasized were, in many ways, congruent with the official goals of the district for EL students. This was to help students maintain their primary language and cultural identity while also learning English and transitioning into a new culture. As stated by the principal of GWH in talking about the EL Service Master Plan:

It's about how do we better serve the students in learning English while supporting them and maintaining their primary language. The program is mainly directed at Spanish speakers, just because that's the larger population, but that's in place and right now, what we're working for next year is a newcomer plan where, since we get majority of

newcomers here, how we can support them and integrate 'em into a new educational system and a new lifestyle.

As illustrated, there is an explicit goal of helping students to maintain their Spanish while also developing their English, and class structures and conformation is planned accordingly:

The way we try to do it is we try to put the ELD threes and fours with the native speakers or with the English speakers. So therefore, they can practice their English to improve but they should have enough English, verbal and reading to be able to do the classwork. The ones and twos, we do our best to hire teachers with BCLADs so we can offer them at least two classes a day that are language maintenance.

The principal's reference to hiring BCLAD⁴⁸ teachers is in relation to the sheltered instruction classes. When it wasn't possible to hire a BCLAD teacher, a bilingual grad tutor would be placed in the class to translate.⁴⁹ However, the predominantly Spanish-speaking climate of GWH also provided limited opportunities to EL students to practice their English.⁵⁰ As stated by Mr. Jimenez:

I think we have one of our largest Spanish speaking front offices and counseling services which is a plus and a minus in different ways because it makes it too comfortable to just stay in Spanish, it doesn't help the English learning but it makes our parents feel comfortable to come in and ask questions. So we gotta find a balance on that a little bit more but we do try to service.

In the above excerpt, Mr. Jimenez highlights an issue that surfaced in several interviews with district personnel, administrators, and teachers. GWH aimed to support students in maintaining their Spanish while acquiring English. They also emphasized the importance of building on their cultural resources, which was demonstrated through their various groups and linkages with Latino organizations. However, students also had the pressure of becoming bilingual and biliterate, including knowing enough academic English to pass the CELDT test, and take courses other than ELD to help them meet graduation requirements. The principal and AP were aware of these conflicting priorities, but faced the limitation of class conformations with wide student proficiency levels and teachers lacking pedagogical strategies to help students reach these goals.

Another challenge that GWH faced was both assuring EL students graduated as well as students taking the courses required to not only graduate, but also meet requirements to apply to a four-year college or university (A-G requirements). In the end, the school was held accountable for graduation rates, as stated by Mr. Jimenez when asked what the school was ultimately held accountable regarding EL student outcomes:

⁴⁸ BCLAD stands for "Bilingual, Crosscultural, Language and Academic Development". This is a credential that teachers in California must obtain to have bilingual teaching authorization (i.e. provide instruction in a language other than English).

⁴⁹ SI non-BCLAD teachers with bilingual grad tutors were given guidance to speak English while their grad tutor was to speak Spanish. This was not the practice, as in the case of Mr. Sampson who spoke Spanish (albeit limited) with his students in order to gain their respect.

⁵⁰ The lack of exposure to English was also something that students commented on. For example, a teaching assistant of Mr. Sampson (who was an EL student) had told him that she doesn't like the bilingual classes because they don't learn English.

Well, it's always graduation rate. It used to be the CAHSEE that would hurt our ELD students and we would have to do extra stuff to help 'em pass the CAHSEE. Now, it's credits and it's reclassification. And that's the big issue. I think all of the classes our students take are A through G except ELD.

In this statement, Mr. Jimenez recognizes that ELD 1-3 students were not able to take the necessary courses to meet their A-G requirements.

[W]hat happens is that ELD four is the first ELD course that universities accept towards A through G, so if they can't get through ELD four, they'll get English credits to graduate from high school, but they won't be able to apply to universities or they won't have that English requirement. ... They can go to community college, they could go to vocational fields, etcetera, but if their desire is to be a first-year freshman, it's very hard.

With the elimination of the CAHSEE, many more EL students were able to graduate and, according to Mr. Jimenez, the counselors were doing a good job at making sure students take the credits necessary for graduation. He recognized the challenges of students being prepared enough for college and saw various routes for them to continue their education and/or join the labor market:

That's always gonna be a struggle because preparedness -- I think that it's interest-based, what are they prepared to do? They're prepared to get a job, they're prepared to go to community college, it's also what options we give the students. Some of them, they take the information from the AB540 and they enroll in community college and they look for a vocation. Some of them, who did do the right credits, to apply the way to a four-year university right away. But I think we're still falling short for them being 100 percent ready for completely bilingual.

As demonstrated in the principal's statements, priority was placed on students becoming fully bilingual and graduating. Graduation rates were also what he perceived as the primary indicator the school was held accountable for EL students. While he stated that EL students were being hurt by not reclassifying and meeting A-G requirements, there did not appear to be a solution in sight for this.

This limitation was also recognized by the EL counselor, Enrique Lorenzo, who perceived that the class schedule and structure was a limitation for the students to take the courses they need both for graduation and meeting their college requirements:

Throughout the day now they're in blocks, 1A and 1B has to be included or 2A, 2B. That limits the flexibility of my trying to give the kids another class they need because the blocks. They have to be in the block together. What kinda stupid decision was made from downtown who have all the research justifications to make it more inflexible. So look my kids can't go into Play Production or Theater Tech, why? Because they have to take ELD1A and ELD1B. You need ELD1A and 1B, Math, History, Science, PE, those are six classes. The first two or three years they don't have room in their schedule.

According to Mr. Lorenzo, the only way to help the students take more courses was to bring in bilingual teachers for core subjects. According to Mr. Lorenzo, “(T)hey can teach anybody anything”.

In these statements, Mr. Lorenzo recognized the limitations of the program structure, and as discussed in the following section, emphasized the most important conditions being students learning in L1 and having a teacher who understands them so that they can pass their core subjects and graduate. As he stated:

Okay that’s where I put my emphasis. All I want is a kid to be able to graduate... You have to take a kid and a family where they’re at and the best you can with ‘em.

However, the expectations for EL students and his decisions were not one embraced by others. For example, the EL Service coordinator believed it was not helping students to develop other fundamental skills for social incorporation:

So if a student comes to you as a counselor and says “this class is too hard. I can't do this,” are you giving the students more support by telling them, “I know you can do this. You are smart. You have all the skills. I know it's hard. Here are other resources that you can go to”? Or is it giving the student more support to say, “Mm, I know another teacher who will give you an A just for showing up and smiling.”

And it makes sense. We have to teach all kinds of skills. Yes, we have to teach the language but also resiliency and how to advocate for yourself and advocating is not always taking the easier path that's really not going to prepare yourself.

Luis, a bilingual grad tutor, perceived that many of the teachers were not necessarily preparing them for college. He gave an example of a biology teacher who spoke no Spanish and had ELD 1-3 level students in his class:

These kids were lost, but the funny part is they were still passing the class. I don't know how they managed to do that. That's why I'm telling you that some of the teachers feel sorry for them and they just help them get by, but they don't actually teach anything to them. It sucks because students want to learn.

When they have these students in their class, they're not really meeting their needs, but they're still passing them. They're still giving them passing out of pity. They feel sorry for them because – that's what I feel like. That's what I felt when I was here.

As illustrated, administrators and support staff had somewhat different views about what the goals for immigrant EL students should be. The principal perceived the competing goals of these students graduating while also trying to create opportunities to become fluent in English (while maintaining Spanish) and meet A-G requirements. The AP, Ms. Ramos, and Luis were creating opportunities for students to develop their English outside of ELD. The EL counselor recognized the need for students meeting A-G requirements, but in light of not being able to change the conditions for this to happen, was focusing on graduating them.

These priorities point to the need for a balance between creating conditions that are sheltering and safe as well as creating opportunities for taking risks and developing resilience

and self-advocacy. Yet, as illustrated, in practice the main goals of the administration and support staff at GWH appeared to orient towards helping ensure that newcomer EL students strengthen their bilingual and bicultural identity and graduate.

Overall, GWH provided many elements that constitute a favorable context of reception for EL immigrant students at a school level such as an environment that sought to strengthen their bilingual and bicultural identity and strive towards them graduating as well as providing them with certain services and opportunities. Though lack of exposure to English was a limitation recognized by the administration, the expectation of the administrative team was that the ELD teachers would be able to help students develop their academic and social English. Also, while the six-period block schedule presented a constraint in terms of ELD 1-3 students taking courses necessary for graduation and college, a solution to this was having bilingual teachers for core subject courses. However, as much as the school sought to provide a favorable context of reception for EL immigrant students, ultimately their opportunities and outcomes depended heavily upon the ELD and SI teachers.

Hiring and Retaining ELD and SI Teachers: Structural and Organizational Constraints

The teacher turnover rate at GWH was between 20-30 percent yearly. The reasons provided for the difficulty of retaining and hiring teachers generally coincided among the administrative staff and counselor at GWH. The principal stated several reasons for teachers leaving: retirement, to pursue a higher degree, due to the expense of living in the area, and because “some teachers are not meant to teach in an urban school 'cause it's just not their setting”.

Though math and science tended to be the most affected by teacher loss each year, all departments were affected and it varied year to year.⁵¹ However, losing ELD teachers presented additional challenges because they tend to be the most difficult to hire. According to district and school personnel, there are several different reasons for this and, depending on the informant, some reasons weighed in more than others. As mentioned, the fact that the teacher salary in the district was substantially lower than nearby districts made hiring teachers challenging in general. Additionally, there was a teacher shortage in the district and even a greater shortage of BCLAD teachers.⁵² Issues of teachers' subject preference were also an issue. As GWH assistant principal stated:

Unfortunately, it requires a teacher who knows how to create interventions, and knows how to scaffold, and is familiar with language acquisition. That, ideally, is someone who has taught English before. Those teachers who have taught English that are really good don't want to teach ELD.

⁵¹ That particular year they would be losing two ELD teachers; one because she would be pursuing a masters degree and one they decided not to rehire. They did not want the other teacher to teach EL students anymore (due to many student complaints and their belief that she was not meeting ELD student needs), but due to her tenure she could not be removed. Thus they would be having her teach English instead. This was perceived by the administration as an opportunity to build a new ELD team, also doubling the number of teachers.

⁵² According to the EL Services Coordinator, there is a need for roughly 50 BCLAD credentialed teachers only taking into account the elementary schools that have Transitional Bilingual Education or Dual Immersion. Yet there are only 40 BCLAD teachers in the district, out of a total of 1,200 district teachers.

At GWH, one solution has been to assign Teach for America (TFA) teachers to ELD because they don't have a choice about what subject they teach. In response to my question about the likelihood of getting the ELD teachers they need for the following year,⁵³ Sylvia stated:

Probably not. We'll get a say in who is here, but a lot of teachers, like I said, are not applying for ELD jobs. You don't have people coming and saying, "I'm here to teach ELD."..... A lot of the people who interview are new teachers, so it's either going to be TFAers who don't get an option – they just want a job, so they don't really get an option of teaching English or ELD. We'll be like, "We need an ELD teacher," and they'll fit that need. They might be good. Miss Lamont, I think she was a TFA core member and she stayed for a couple of years. You never know how long they'll stay and you've done all that training to try to build up a program and then they're gone.

Luis, a bilingual grad tutor for ELD, also expressed the view that having TFA teachers for ELD is problematic due to their tendency to not stay long,⁵⁴ though added an additional difficulty with this:

Yeah, so they just come and do their three years, deal with the students for three years and then most of them leave. I feel like they don't really get to know the students.

When I asked Luis why he thought it was hard to hire good ELD teachers, he mentioned several compounding factors, including that teachers don't "want to teach ELD in the low income communities" and the school's "bad reputation".

The ELD counselor, Enrique Lorenzo, also expressed that it has been hard to hire good bilingual ELD and SI teachers, especially in the last few years. He expressed frustration that the district didn't make more of an effort to create incentives for getting these teachers as well as using programs to bring them in like they had before. As he stated:

That's why I blame the district not trying to get teachers. They got 'em from Spain and not from Mexico and not other places.
I had a guy – Elmer Moreno – from Mexico who was here on some Mexican-American teacher thing. He was so good even black kids wanted to be in his classroom. Because they knew his quality was better.

For him there was a clear solution, which is paying bilingual ELD and SI teachers more, as they do in other districts and at another high school in this district.⁵⁵ He explained:

But my frustration is we can't get qualified bilingual teachers to teach bilingual US History or bilingual Government or bilingual World History because this district doesn't pay \$8000.00 to \$10000.00 more if someone's bilingual like (two other local cities)....

⁵³ GWH would be losing/replacing all three of its ELD teachers and needed an additional three for the following school year.

⁵⁴ It is important to note that statistically, TFA teachers do not necessarily have a tendency to leave low-income schools (in low paying districts) more often than non-TFA (credentialed) teachers. However, Luis seems to be referring to the lack of commitment to teaching at GWH and, in particular, teaching ELD.

⁵⁵ This school actually has amongst the best RFEP and EL proficiency rates in the district.

If we could give ten percent more to bring qualified teachers who are willing to come if for nothing else but for the increase in salary that's so basic, ELD and then the (SI) History classes. So the district, the Personnel Office, has failed greatly in not making an extra effort even to the point that, and the union won't like this, come work at a flatland, ghetto school like Greenway High, and we'll pay you ten percent more, you know?

He said that the district will not do this "for a school like Greenway High", and also that bad teachers wouldn't be tolerated at "the upper-class white schools because the parents would be all over the damn place". He expressed that decisions about what to fund did not benefit the EL students at GWH:

So from my point of view it was better (in the past). There's more software, there's more this, there's more tests and exits and this and that but it's just clutter that justifies the Bilingual Office's existence because the government, the state or the feds have this and this, everyone's building their empire for themselves with maybe ten percent getting to The Great Unwashed.

Mr. Lorenzo's comment about there being more software and more tests is consistent with what the coordinators of the EL Services and RAP center explained, though they were not framing this as a trade off in terms of what funds could be used for instead.

The principal and assistant principal both recognized the challenge of hiring and retaining good teachers for EL students, yet did not express this being a fault of the district's policies such as not creating incentives. Unlike Mr. Lorenzo and Luis, they did not stress the "bad reputation" of the school or bias against the type of school or population. (Mr. Jimenez stated it more as not being a good fit). These differences in perceptions may be attributable to the degree of contact and role of the administrators versus the counselor and grad tutor. The counselor and grad tutor were positioned to understand the needs of the EL immigrant students and their role was to advocate for them. Though the administrators were also advocates for the EL students, they were positioned to mediate between the district and the needs of these students, with whom they had less day-to-day contact.

Despite the different perceptions about where the blame lies, the constraints of hiring and retaining ELD and SI teachers were apparent. As illustrated, the perception of the administrators, counselor, and bilingual grad tutor was that it was especially difficult to fill the positions to teach EL students. Additionally, as alluded to in this section and discussed in the following, the personnel stressed the importance of having the *right* teaching staff for ELD and SI.

Hiring and Retaining ELD and SI teachers: Finding the Right Teachers for EL students

The principal, AP, counselor, and bilingual grad tutor had similar views about the qualities and characteristics that were the most important for teachers of EL students. These included being bilingual (Spanish) and reflecting their cultural heritage, understanding the students and supporting them as they transition into a new language and culture, and building on their cultural and linguistic resources. Providing them with high quality learning experiences was also mentioned by each of them, though the degree to which they emphasized this varied slightly.

Sylvia was in her first year as AP at Greenway High and was happy to return to the school she graduated from sixteen years prior. As she stated: “I always knew if I worked at a high school, I wanted to work here”. She was of Mexican origin (not first generation) and fully bilingual. She also had a master’s degree in Language and Literacy with a focus on ESL instruction. She had taught ELD for eight years at GWH’s main feeder middle school where she had also and had worked as an instructional coach. According to Ms. McMullen, she was an example of how GWH was so good at “growing their own”. In Ms. Cervantes’ opinion, “they should have a Sylvia in every high school” and she should be “training other APs on what they’re doing”. She had a particular interest in making sure that the school had the right people in place to teach EL students and tried to be involved in the hiring process to the extent possible. As she stated: “I like going in the interviews because I want to see who is applying and who would be a good fit. I sort of sign up for all interview panels.” She expressed the difficulty and importance of hiring ELD teachers in particular:

Staffing is really important in that sense because the students can only learn so much from the textbook. It’s really dependent on who the teacher is. Some of our veteran teachers teach ELD in the summer. I met some students this week who had had Miss Roy for ELD1, 2, and 3. They’re currently in her class and they’re just like – they’re done getting what they can out of her as a teacher.

In the above quote, Sylvia explicitly mentions the importance of ELD teachers knowing the right pedagogical approaches and strategies for teaching ELD. Yet her perception of the necessary teaching repertoire went beyond pedagogical strategies and pointed to key aspects for creating a favorable context of reception:

To me, if I could build an ELD team it would be people who are bilingual from the community... The other really big thing is being familiar with – I didn’t experience coming from a new country, but being familiar with what they could experience because one of the biggest things that they need that I notice as a teacher is support in transitioning.

One of the biggest things that I don’t think people realize when they go into teaching ELD is that you also have to be the person teaching them about acclimating to a new school culture, and what the school system is here, and how to navigate that, and being able to almost be a therapist and a case manager for them. It’s a lot more than just teaching them grammar and English. It’s about helping them understand that they have a lot to offer, that it is going to be challenging, meeting their parents. A lot of our students are meeting their families for the first time – stepparents for the first time – and have a really hard time with that. That really affects how they’re behaving here at school. That ELD teacher should be that person, as well, who can have those conversations. You have them for two periods. You want to make sure that you’re addressing them. ... They don’t feel connected to the school as is, so that’s the one class that they should be connecting to.

In the above excerpt, Sylvia underscores the key role that ELD teachers can and should have in helping students to transition into a new language and culture, as well as supporting them with experiences that many of them have outside of school. Though she had not had that experience herself, she had been dedicated to teaching ELD and couldn’t understand why teaching ELD had

a negative stigma. As she stated, “I have nothing but positive things to say about the students”. Being bilingual and from the community were characteristics that Sylvia perceived to be important. Also, in her opinion being able to relate to their experience was fundamental and something teachers could do even if they hadn’t had similar immigrant experiences:

I think they need to have those conversations with the students to understand it. That's how I came to understand it because it wasn't my experience. In talking to them, it's like this is what's pressing and what's on their mind. There's so much more than just teaching them English. The teacher needs to take the time to do that in their classes. I don't think our teachers currently do. That, I think, really, really affects the progress of the students because now they're just going to another class.

Sylvia touches upon several qualities that she sees as fundamental for teachers of ELD students: 1) the importance of being able to teach effectively, 2) reflecting the language and culture of the students, 3) understanding the students and providing emotional support for them, and 4) helping them transition to a new language and country.

Luis expressed similar views about the most important qualities and characteristics that teachers of EL students should possess. He was situated in a unique way to be able to understand and relate to the immigrant EL students due to his own experience of immigrating to the U.S. at the age of sixteen.⁵⁶ He attended GWH for his junior and senior years and was thus another example of how GWH *grew their own*. His decision to return to GWH after attending college was motivated by his desire to prevent other immigrant students from having the same negative experiences he had.⁵⁷ He perceived that many teachers were not meeting the needs of the EL students so he sought out the class where he thought he could make the most difference. He stated: “There's really few teachers who are actually trying to meet the needs of the ELD” and expressed how important it was for the administration to hire teachers who “understand and care about these kids”. One aspect of understanding that he referred to was the need to help immigrant students navigate:

One of the things that they don't realize is that a lot of these kids – and I count myself in because I came as an immigrant at the age of 16. I was already an adult. We come with low self-esteem. We come to a different culture. We don't know the language. We don't know the people. People have different traditions, customs. It is hard to navigate the system.

Luis was of Mexican origin and may have come to the U.S. under different circumstances than many of the newcomers at GWH, though he had learned about many of the students through the tutoring and informal mentoring he had done with them. From his perspective, the goal of rapid assimilation through English was not effective:

⁵⁶ He did not tell me his story of immigrating to the U.S. and I did not ask him, though he did mention having arrived in this country with the benefit of having had an education in Mexico that allowed him to do well in school in the U.S. His first year in the U.S. he had attended a Newcomer school in a nearby city that he believed had helped him a lot due to his exposure to English (since there were immigrants from many linguistic backgrounds) and the structures the school had in place.

⁵⁷ Luis had found out the last day of his senior year that he couldn’t attend a four-year college because he didn’t have four years of English. He had learned about college from a cousin after he graduated from GWH, but when he was there was not told anything about college requirements and believed his only option was community college.

...to force them to start learning because the main goal, I guess, of the school system is to make these kids so they learn English or part of the language so they can start to navigate the system. That's not how it works. These kids are coming to the school – to the country, the different programs. If we don't take care of those programs first, there's no way they're going to start learning English. Everybody has a different story. I know there are some kids that are doing pretty well. They're picking up their English pretty well. That's because maybe they didn't went through the same issues that some students from El Salvador, Guatemala, they had to go through to come here.

Similar to Sylvia, Luis emphasized the importance of trying to understand the students and their personal stories and providing the support they need. For both of them, teachers of newcomers meant much more than just using the right pedagogical strategies. It meant, as Stanton-Salazar writes, acting as “co-parents, informal mentors, child advocates, and informal psychologists” (2001, p. 162).

The ELD counselor, Mr. Lorenzo, prioritized ELD teachers being bilingual and bicultural and caring about the students, above all else. District actors and school staff all expressed strong opinions about him whenever his name came up in an interview, many of which were unfavorable (e.g. “he does whatever he wants”), though many recognized his advocacy for EL students.

Mr. Lorenzo referred to himself as a “loose cannon” who speaks his mind and isn’t afraid to. He had worked in the district for over forty years and dedicated many of these to working with EL students. According to him, GWH “need(s) to improve the ELD Department 100 percent”. He expressed being *disturbed* by GWH ELD teachers:

The most disturbing thing for me here for my students is that we have had and still have some ELD who are not native-born, who don’t give a damn about where students come from and their sensibilities and they teach the way they taught in their own countries. The bottom core is we have a lousy, obnoxious ELD teacher who isn’t worth shit. We’ve got another one who just is almost as bad. Last year we got one, some guy that didn’t give a damn and just stood in the back.

In referring to native-born, he meant that they were from non-U.S. countries and were not familiar with the Latino population. Enrique appreciated having the math and science teachers from Spain, despite the occasional difficulties of the students’ understanding and “cultural conflicts” that sometimes occurred. He added:

But I’d rather have that than have American-dominant teachers who supposedly can teach because they’re BCLAD and don’t give a damn.

As demonstrated, the administrative and support staff share the perception that the EL students should have effective, caring, and bilingual ELD teachers who understand and respect their culture. Yet they also recognize that this is not what they currently have. Overall, they seek to provide a supportive context for EL students and respond to the particular needs of newcomers. However, there are slight differences in what they emphasize most. The program structure and requirements for ELD 1-3 students limits their ability to take A-G requirements and learn English. In other words, setting high standards for the students at a school level remains

challenging and those who have the most influence (the principal and counselor) appear to be practicing a type of care that may be perceived as lacking high expectations. In other words, this may demonstrate a lack of *critical care*, which includes both understanding and supporting the students while also holding them to high expectations.

However, in another way GWH appeared to be practicing critical care in their tendency *grow their own*. Critical care also refers to “the ways in which communities of color may care about and educate their own” and are able to create “culturally additive learning communities” (Antrop-González & De Jesús, 2006, p. 413). GWH had an overall approach and intent to create this type of community. Their primary limitation was not having the right teachers to meet the needs of the students. Yet they compensated for this in other ways such as afterschool tutoring offered by the grad tutors, weekend activities for EL students, creating linkages to other opportunities, and assuring that there was bilingual and bicultural support staff.

Bloomfield High

In many ways, Bloomfield High was not set up as a place that could provide a favorable context of reception for EL students, and particularly newcomers. The school’s demographics over the years had shifted to higher percentage of Latino students as well as an increase in the number of newcomers (mostly from Central America), yet the school lacked the structures and resources to respond to this growing population. They did not have a bilingual counselor that year, and had only two bilingual grad tutors who were not dedicated or assigned to working with ELD or SI classes. While they had a bilingual teacher who could teach science, his responsibility at that time was not to teach science but to help develop BFH’s new STEM initiative.⁵⁸ The administrative staff and majority of support staff were not Spanish-speaking or of Latino origin. Furthermore, it was slightly more challenging to attract teachers to BFH due to its reputation of being dangerous (such as student gang involvement, fighting at school, etc.). For example, over the time-period that I collected data, two freshmen had been killed within a ten-day period; this put an additional emotional stress on the students and staff at BFH and made teaching conditions more challenging.

However, there were several aspects about BFH that facilitated providing a favorable context of reception for EL students and their teachers. Most importantly, they had a team of three ELD teachers who the administrators perceived to be relatively effective with their students as well as an SI teacher who was partially bilingual and bicultural and also perceived to be effective. Also, it was a smaller school, which (as a newcomer student had commented to me) made navigating in the school easier both physically and in terms of relationships with staff and other students. BFH also offered a class for Spanish speakers who needed to raise their Spanish proficiency levels. Finally, it was more feasible for ELD 1-3 students to meet graduation and A-G requirements due to BFH’s eight period block schedule; in addition to their required ELD and SI periods, they were able to take four other courses instead of two, which a six-period schedule would limit them to.⁵⁹ This also provided more opportunity to retake classes they hadn’t passed.

⁵⁸ The school had received roughly five million dollars in the form of a grant to develop a new science and technology program and reorganize to create academies for students, along with other new programs.

⁵⁹ The eight-block schedule had some disadvantages as well, such as students having to manage more courses.

Leadership and District Support

Physically, BFH was smaller than GWH. It had two levels with classrooms, all of which were relatively closely grouped together. There were no inside walls, rather fencing on the second level that allowed for visibility of the courtyard and classrooms. The principal and AP often walked around the school talking with teachers, students, and other school personnel.⁶⁰ They stopped by classrooms for various reasons, as relayed by the teachers and also observed during my visits. As the AP stated, “(I)t's small. It's very – it feels like a big family. You really know everybody. I know their business and they know yours. It's just nice.”

The “family” feeling amongst the staff allowed for communication and informal support between administration and teachers and amongst teachers. Yet even though the school culture seemed to be relatively cohesive, there was also tension and a lack of agreement and/or common vision on issues like the schedule (eight periods) and instructional practices. What appeared to create the most tension, however, was the STEM initiative that was driving many changes. While a few teachers were involved with it, most teachers and the administration did not know much about it.

I don't know what it really looks like, and I'm not gonna talk to you too much about this, but it's kind of the opposite of what I really wanna do...I think the money could be better spent.

Mr. Thompson perceived that the STEM initiative to be taking resources and attention away from other priorities:

So they wanna prioritize it toward building a strong STEM programs here. If I had my druthers, we would build on our ELD population and make that stronger. And in their schedule, they don't account for ELD.

In this excerpt, Mr. Thompson was referring to the new academy system that was being planned in tandem with the STEM initiative, which in his opinion would not benefit EL students. Yet, as he explained, “I've been told to follow direction because they don't wanna lose \$5 million”. He expressed disagreement with the idea to restructure the courses and replace ELD with other classes:

So right now, they don't want to have ELD classes for ninth-grade students. This is the new academy model. They want it to be contextualized within each class, and I disagree with that. I mean I just I disagree with that, and I think it's illegal, so...

The person that is doing this grant, she believes she has a good foundation in ELD, and she's read material suggesting that if you contextualize it into the curriculum that students, they do better, but I don't see it.

There is research that suggests that contextualizing English within other subjects can be beneficial for EL students. However, the administration and many teachers were not familiarized with the specific plans or the rationale behind many of the changes. This lack of a common

⁶⁰ This is based on the visits that I made there. During the majority of my visits, I found the principal or AP walking around campus at some point.

vision and communication about the STEM initiative and the academies caused friction among the staff, especially the administration and those leading the STEM initiative. Though ultimately, as stated by Mr. Thompson, it was a district decision that BFH would prioritize the STEM initiative and not dedicate significant resources to support newcomers/EL students at BFH.

As previously mentioned, the newcomer hub would not be located at BFH (rather at GWH), even though they had received more newcomers that academic year than any other high school in the district.⁶¹ Mr. Thompson expressed a lack of clarity about how or if BFH would benefit from the newcomer hub's services.⁶² Though he did state that there were funds he could decide how to delegate:

We get, probably, the same funding because of our delegation. I mean we're free and reduced lunch. We get all these LCAP money and all this kinda stuff. But what do you really wanna focus your money on? And that's the thing.

Despite not feeling supported by the district in his priorities, he did feel the support of the EL service office: BFH administration felt supported by the EL Service office. This may have, in part, been due to the fact that Ms. McMullen had worked as an administrator at the school previously. As stated by Mr. Thompson:

I mean because Wendy was here, she helps me out immensely. She makes sure that we're up to date with all the things that we do. Wendy helps us out a lot. We're on task, but our WASC report came back, and that's what we're judged on. And one of our things that we were knocked on is our ELD population was graduating at less than 50 percent.

Mr. Thompson had worked with the former administration to bring the graduation rate up, and explained ways he had been trying to put structures in place to meet the needs of EL students, and particularly newcomers. He had requested a bilingual grad tutor and found one, but had been waiting for HR approval:

So I mean that was the thing. Nobody knew where the funding was coming from, and thank God I have Wendy because Wendy knew where the funding is through. So Wendy did a personnel requisition form for me.

As I learned through an interview with the AP, Mr. Hayden, this bilingual grad tutor was assigned to teach AP Spanish, even though, as he stated, "(i)t would have helped to have her in those (SI) rooms". The two other grad tutors were also not devoted to SI classes: one was working with special education students and, according to the AP, the other one was used for "just about everything" that they could use him for.

The school still lacked the bilingual support staff they needed in terms of both bilingual grad tutors (in SI classes) as well as counselors. According to Mr. Thompson, BFH had a harder

⁶¹ As discussed, according to the EL Service coordinator, decisions such as the newcomer hub and other initiatives that required a higher investment (and larger and structural decisions) were decisions made at a higher level than the offices responsible for the EL student population.

⁶² He was under the impression that all of the high school newcomers, including those at BFH, may be going to GWH for the six to eight week intensive "newcomer" course (English and orientation). But the EL Coordinator clarified that this was not the plan; it would be only for newcomers at GWH.

time finding bilingual grad tutors in part because they didn't have the high number of graduates that GWH had. They also lacked a bilingual counselor at the time, which had made a positive impact in the past. Ms. McMullen had put this in place when she worked there:

I saw the English learners needed someone they could communicate with, that their families could communicate with and who might follow them and be a consistent support throughout their school... We learned so much more about our kids once we had one person who was bilingual who could talk to them... And just after that first year (of having the bilingual counselor) we saw that we tripled the number of students who reclassified that year, and then we I think doubled the number of kids who got their seal of biliteracy, which is huge. And all it takes is someone focusing on their efforts and being aware of it. So we put a spotlight on something that was needed.

However, since her departure from the school, this bilingual counselor had been reassigned to being the career counselor for all students. Thus there was no longer somebody to interface directly with EL students (especially newcomers) and their families.

Additionally, various practices appeared to be unsystematic and inconsistent. For example, the dates and topics for all-staff meetings and teacher collaborations would vary from the intended plan. There was a lack of follow up on some initiatives, such as the department goals developed by the teachers at the beginning of the year that were not revisited afterwards. Teacher collaboration tended to be driven more by teachers than the administration; while the principal sometimes had tasks that he requested of the teachers in their collaborations, the teachers had the liberty of making or adapting their agendas.⁶³ Teacher collaborations were not structured or overseen by administration. Overall, there was a lack of formal and consistent guidance and structure by the administration (or very "loose coupling").

According to the AP, Mr. Hayden, one of the reasons for the lack of consistency in school norms and practices was due to the changes in administration over the years:

I would say you have veteran staff members that have seen many changes in administration and are just like, "Well, that's the way it is here." It's hard, really, to make any significant change. You're really swimming upstream. I'd say that's my biggest challenge at this point.

When I receive an answer back from the staff, "Well that's the way it is here." Well, we need to change that. "No, you're not going to. No, you're not going to because there's five people who aren't going to budge from their ways to make a change.

In sum, BFH faced various structural and organizational constraints. There were competing priorities for how to use resources and a lack of a common vision on how to best support newcomers/ELD students. The administration expressed feeling support from the district EL Services. Yet this did not extend to the district as a whole, which he perceived was prioritizing an initiative (STEM) that would not benefit EL students.

⁶³ This is based on the collaborations that I participated in, which was science, math, and ELD.

Goals for Students: Opportunities to Learn English, Graduate, and Meet the A-G requirements

As mentioned previously, there was a perception by district personnel and staff at both schools that BFH was not set up to meet the needs of newcomers. According to the EL Coordinator, Ms. McMullen, the approaches of the administration were different:

I think a lot of it comes from personal expertise and personal experience too. I mean it's very different if you were one yourself and you know the support you would have liked and you're in a position to do something about it than if it's not really something you have a lot of exposure to or expertise about.

However, According to Ms. McMullen, BFH had put in a request for newcomers support that was similar to GWH's, which was "intensified instructional program". Though ultimately, the decision was made to allow BFH autonomy to set up structures for newcomers instead (and locate the newcomer hub at GWH).

Mr. Thompson stated that something needed to be in place for newcomers, though was not sure how this could be done. Though his statements reflect that the overall goal should be making sure they learn English before entering their "regular high school":

I think the newcomers program would be great. So you come to this country. You don't speak English. We stick you into a school, and for eight weeks, they teach you, basically, how to speak English....After you graduate, after your eight weeks, they put you into your regular high school. Let's say they send them here to BFH. And then, they put them into classes. The only problem is they're eight weeks behind.

It appeared that he was not aware that the "newcomer hub" pilot program was going to be at GWH (and one middle school), and not benefit BFH students. This is indicative of an overall lack of communication with the district officials about the plan for putting structures in place for newcomers. It also reflects the principal's vision of an more assimilationist approach to language acquisition: instead of emphasizing the importance of maintaining and building on the EL students linguistic and cultural resources, the focus was on them learning English as soon as possible. Despite this, the administration did have structures in place to benefit EL students such as the eight-period schedule.

Mr. Thompson explained that the school had switched from a six-period schedule to an eight-period schedule so that students would have more of an opportunity to obtain their credits:

I wanted the eight-period schedule because, for one, at a regular high school, you have six classes. So you can get 60 credits first year, 120 credits second year, 180 third year, and then you graduate with 225. Well, in the first year that I got here, we lost all damn near half of our freshman class to getting *F*s. So there was no credit recovery. So if you flunk the class, you're pretty much – you're gonna have to go to continuation to take those classes over again.

As he explained, this was specifically important for ELD students:

So I mean all the freshmens will take eight classes. So the reason why we went to eight classes is because I thought six was unfair to our ELD population, to our special ed, and I also thought it was unfair to our AP students because you have six classes and you have four mandated core classes, so your math, your history, your science, and your English.... So then, that left room for P.E. and room for language, so that's your six classes. It didn't account for ELD classes. It doesn't account for special ed classes, and it doesn't account for, really, AP classes.

The eight-period schedule was a decision that was made at a school level. However, other decisions were made at the district level, such as the conformation of the SI classes. At BFH, these classes were a mixture of EL students (often levels one and two) and native English speakers who were performing at a lower level. The EL Service coordinator, Ms. McMullen, had explained the rationale for this:

There's not anything in writing that says sheltered students have to be by themselves. And we know the research indicates that segregating students and not allowing them to interact with native speakers of the English language does not support their language development. And we know a real balance – so in an ideal setting if you as a researcher were going to create the ideal setting for language development it'd be 50/50 balance: native English speakers and English learners. And the English learners are really going to have the opportunity to learn best when they're exposed to contextually rich academic English, when they're going to learn the content in English. If we're going to learn the content in English they're going to do so in an environment where they get to interact with native speakers.

As stated by Ms. McMullen, an ideal setting would allow for EL students to be exposed to contextually rich academic English as well as interact with native English speakers. However, in all of the classes I observed, I saw very little of either.

The SI Algebra teacher, Mr. Nolan, perceived this district decision as problematic both because of the very large class sizes (such as 38 students) combined with the wide variation in English abilities. As he explained:

Because it allows them – well first of all they used to have separate sheltered sections because the state required those sections to be smaller. And so it used to be the fact that if you wanted to include sheltered students with regular students the total class size still had to be 25. And so they didn't spread the sheltered kids throughout the whole day because then all those classes would have to be small.

And then when the budget problem happened the state cut the budget and said, "Okay, you can use your categorical funding for anything, and all the class size limitations don't apply anymore for sheltered." That's when they started mixing them in. ... I think that makes a lot of sense to me because I can understand the argument – and certainly for 4s and possibly for 3s. But for 1s and 2s they're not interactive.

While some research does indicate that mixed SI classes can be beneficial, research also indicates that the right conditions must be in place for this to happen (Bunch, Abram, Lotan, & Valdés, 2001). It also indicates that interaction between native English speakers and non-native

speakers does not necessarily lead to interaction. Additionally, it can lead to bringing learning opportunities down for all of the students, as expressed by Mr. Nolan:

And it's just it's a weird thing with – we had to make a decision as to how many we thought we would need of everything. But my point to the counselors is when you make an intervention class too big it's not serving its purpose anymore. And so you might as well take those students coming in late and just put them in the regular class. Because not only are they not going to get the intervention, now nobody is.

Most of the conditions were not in place for mixed SI classes to benefit the students, though according to the administrative team, this was something that the teachers could resolve if they knew the right strategies. As Mr. Thompson explained:

You need to do things that keep the students interested. Those student, those teachers that are most successful with a 90-minute period, they have great classroom management, and that's what it boils down to. You can't tell me that students automatically get bored after a certain amount of time. They automatically bored when they're doing boring things.

Mr. Thompson, expressed that the newer teachers were more inclined to learn and practice pedagogical strategies that, according to him, would keep the students engaged:

They're the newer teachers (that can get kids engaged for 90 mins). The older teachers find it more difficult to do the 90-minute period.

While the AP, Mr. Hayden, agreed that it was difficult to convince older teachers to change their practices, he mentioned various challenges with novice teachers:

I think as far as the sheltered instruction, we have way too many brand-new teachers trying to teach sheltered instruction with no idea of how to do so.

BFH was not receiving enough instructional support from the district, however they were trying to compensate by providing this at a school level. In other words, while the school was not receiving the support it needed for the newcomers and EL students in general, there was an emphasis on instructional improvement. This, coupled with the opportunity for ELD 1-3 students to take more courses, presented opportunities. Further, as discussed in the following section, the ELD staff was perceived to be relatively effective with their students.

Hiring and Retaining ELD and SI Teachers: Structural and Organizational Constraints

Bloomfield High faced a high teacher turnover rate yearly, and that year in particular was losing roughly 30% of their teachers (many of whom were department heads). According to Mr. Thompson, reasons for high teacher turnover and difficulty hiring were the relatively low pay, the difficulty of the job, and the lack of desire to teach in a school with a “bad reputation” and/or “difficult kids”. As the BFH principal, Mr. Thompson, stated when referring to the teacher responses on their exit survey (before leaving the school):

And the number one reason why we were losing teachers was because our students were difficult. Number two was that they were being spread too thin.... And then, the third reason was pay. Why should I work my butt off for here, and I can go over the hill and make \$10,000.00 – \$15,000.00 more?

The difficulty of hiring teachers resulted in BFH relying on TFA⁶⁴ teachers as well as hiring many new teachers. The fact that many of their current teachers were novice to the teaching profession presented an additional challenge to the administration. According to the Assistant Principal (AP), Mr. Hayden, this especially presented difficulties in terms of instruction:

(w)e have so many new teachers. When I say new teachers, I don't mean new to Kennedy, but new to the profession. I've spoken with their coaches this year on what I would like to see – increase student-centered work, project-based learning and things like that – and was told, "Direct instruction and classroom management. They can't handle anything more than that.

Mr. Hayden and Mr. Thompson emphasized the need for instructional support for teachers, which Mr. Hayden appeared to be actively practicing. He gave several examples of the need for providing instructional support, especially to new teachers:

It's extremely limiting. If we take a look at our sheltered instruction and we put those kids with a brand-new teacher – I actually had to go to one teacher this year and inform him that it was okay to let those kids talk to each other and to help each other because that's why they're in there together in these sheltered bubbles. He was not allowing them to speak.

Similar to GWH, it was difficult for BFH to hire and maintain teachers, though this was not specific to ELD or SI teachers. BFH did not offer bilingual SI classes, and thus was not seeking BCLAD teachers for these positions. The administration recognized the challenges of hiring teachers without adequate preparation or support, but, as discussed in the following section, placed high importance on instruction and providing as much school-level support as possible.

Hiring and Retaining ELD and SI teachers: Finding the Right Teachers

Mr. Thompson aimed to assign a credentialed English teacher to ELD, and he tried to put teachers in these classes who were bilingual or at least understood some Spanish. His reason for doing this seems to be more pragmatic rather than cultural-linguistic. In discussing his own experience teaching an SI course, he stated:

(t)hey don't give you any training on that. You're getting a sheltered class, and you notice that you have people that are Hispanic or of all different types of cultures and nationalities. But it doesn't dawn on you that you just think that they're quiet. And then, I

⁶⁴ TFA stands for “Teach for America”. This is a pathway into teaching in which teachers are hired (usually based on their academic preparation from their four-year college degree) and given some general training. They are required to enroll in a credentialing program while they teach, though TFA teachers do not always complete their credentials.

realized that, hey, some of them don't speak English. So I was able to get a grad tutor for that particular class, and I saw that we progressed a lot faster.

Mr. Thompson, the principal, at did not emphasize the need for a caring teacher who was able to culturally and linguistically connect with the students, but rather focused on pedagogical aspects:

I think you look at your upper-level ones. You give them something to do. They can be either helping the lower-level ones. I mean usually that's what happens. If you're high, we'll have you help the lower-level ones, and the middle ones, you kinda work with them. I mean it's just all about how you develop your game plan for your classroom. I mean you can be very effective with a 90-minute period.

There seemed to be an emphasis on actively changing the practices at BFH, which the AP (who had taught for many years) appeared to be taking a lead role in:

I've spoken with their coaches this year on what I would like to see – increase student-centered work, project-based learning and things like that – and was told, "Direct instruction and classroom management. They can't handle anything more than that.

He explained plans he had plans for the following year to help improve instruction:

(o)ne change that will be coming next year is we're going to be adapting our walkthrough. Basically, we have a rubric for walkthrough observations and I'm going to kind of do a very, very simplified version of that and say, "This is what we'll be looking for when we walk into your room, one of which will be language objectives," because they're not evident anywhere in the school.

Both the principal and the AP centered much of their discussion around working with the teachers they have and instigating changes in instructional practices. For ELD and SI classes, they aimed to have “bilingual”⁶⁵ teachers, but did not mention the need to have ethnic affiliation.

As demonstrated by the case of Bloomfield High, the goals for the students and school organization provided limitations and opportunities for Latino EL immigrant students. As mentioned, perhaps the most important is having teachers that provide a favorable context of reception for these students. Overall, BFH had teachers that were striving towards this, despite their structural constraints and limitations in their teaching repertoires. Furthermore, they had an administration and professional culture that was supportive and strove to provide instructional support. At a school level, there seemed to be a cultural mismatch and there was not an explicit focus on strengthening the cultural and linguistic resources of Latino immigrant EL students. Yet the ELD and SI teachers aimed to do this and their practices reflected their intentions.

Bloomfield High's goals for Latino immigrant EL students were not solely focused on making sure they graduate. They had a program structure that provided more of an opportunity for them to meet the A-G (college) requirements. Furthermore, teachers tended to hold them to the same expectations as non-EL students, which demonstrates the *hard care* aspect embedded in

⁶⁵ While the principal and AP referred to Mr. Engle and Mr. Jones as being bilingual, both teachers stated that they knew some Spanish. In talking with them and observing them, it was clear that they were not fluent, yet using Spanish words and phrases to help students understand content or instructions.

the notion of critical care. Yet they were not successful at *growing their own*, most likely because they were perceived as an “African American” school despite the rapidly changing demographics.

Implications: Creating the Conditions for Schools to Better Serve their EL Students

Greenway High and Bloomfield High are both located with a district that formally adopted an additive approach to language acquisition for English Learners. However, structural and organizational constraints at a district and school, as well as different interpretations and beliefs, resulted in the approach being enacted differently within in each school. The district faced the material structural constraint of having extremely limited human resources to meet demand of their EL population. They were unable to provide accurate and timely information to the administrators, support staff, and teachers regarding students’ proficiency levels and histories. Furthermore, they did not have information on students’ Spanish proficiency levels, which made it more challenging for teachers to build upon their primary language as well as for administrators to put the right classes in place (e.g. a Spanish for Spanish-speakers class, including the number of classes required and the levels). Also, the lack of human resources severely limited their ability to provide professional development and instructional support to teachers. As discussed in chapter 3, the teachers of EL students expressed a need for such support and this need was evidenced in their classroom practices.

For teachers to provide a favorable context of reception for newcomers it is important that they establish relationships and trust with students, build on their students’ cultural and linguistic repertoires, providing mentoring and support for their students, and adapt curricular goals, instruction and testing to best meet students’ needs. At the school level, the administrative team and other support staff are the ones positioned to provide teachers with the conditions necessary to be able to engage in such practices. Teachers need time and encouragement to establish relationships with their students. They also need information about their students to the degree that school personnel have access to it (such as language proficiency levels, country-of-origin, years of formal schooling, and personal situations that could affect their performance). They need instructional leadership, support and oversight as well as a certain degree of autonomy (i.e. not being overly monitored). They also need time and structure for teacher collaboration. Finally, they need guidance and clarity about the expectations regarding their students’ progress and learning as well as the clarity about when and how to adapt curricular goals and instruction to meet their students’ needs.

The district contextual conditions faced by both schools presented similar limitations and some opportunities: (1) district support, such as responsiveness to requests as well as providing instructional support and other resources, (2) state and district mandates about EL placement, reclassification, and required ELD instructional time, (3) standards, curriculum, instruction, and testing that were specific to EL students and/or apply to all students,⁶⁶ and (4) staffing issues such as high teacher turnover rate and difficulty of hiring qualified ELD and SI teachers. The schools differed in both structural arrangements and in their organizational culture. This included differences in their program structures and schedules, resources available to ELD and SI teachers, and support structures and staff for EL students.

⁶⁶ This refers to all curriculum, instruction, and testing for EL students: the general curriculum (such as the CCSS) and state subject proficiency testing as well as the standards, curriculum, and testing specifically for EL students.

Greenway High emphasized a *sheltering* approach for Latino immigrant EL students that created a safe environment, emphasized maintaining their primary language, and assuring they graduate. Bloomfield High had an inclusive (non-segregated) approach that emphasized rapid acquisition of English and held the same expectations for EL and non-EL students.

Program structures and school-level approaches for shaping EL students' opportunities must be examined in relation to these students' outcomes and pathways for positive social incorporation. Additionally, further research is needed on how to organize schools that are both safe yet not segregated to create a favorable context of reception for Latino immigrant EL students. Finally, preparation and ongoing instructional support for teachers of EL students must help teachers develop pedagogical strategies that are effective within constrained conditions as well as foster cultural understanding, caring, and ways to build on students' linguistic and cultural resources. These key issues are discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Implications

Towards Inclusion: Finding the Balance Between Sheltering and Segregating

The district and the schools were required to follow the policy guidelines for EL students, such as a specified amount of ELD instructional time and modified instruction such as SI. PCUSD provided some guidelines to schools, but ultimately let the school leadership choose how to structure their programs and courses to meet these requirements. Greenway High emphasized a *sheltering* approach for Latino immigrant EL students that created a safe environment, emphasized maintaining their primary language, and prioritizing them graduating. They did not emphasize integration with non-EL students. Bloomfield High had an inclusive (non-segregated) approach that emphasized rapid acquisition of English and held the same expectations for EL and non-EL students. Each of these structures and approaches has been shown to be helpful or detrimental for EL students, depending on how they are implemented.

In the case of Greenway High, the majority of the courses that EL students had to take kept them separate from non-EL students, except for several non-academic courses like P.E. Also, their ELD and SI schedules did not allow for taking courses their non-ELL peers could take. As research has pointed out, this tracking structure greatly limits the ability of EL students to take courses required for college as well as their opportunity to develop English through interaction with native English speakers (Harklau, 1994; Callahan, 2005; Kanno & Kangas, 2014). Yet Greenway High did provide the opportunity for Latino EL students to take courses in Spanish (such as Math) and have translation in their SI courses. Furthermore, there were formal structures (such as clubs and groups) as well as school language and cultural practices that helped them maintain their cultural and linguistic identities. This may also have helped them feel more connected to the school than students in a school without these structures and practices.

Considering that Greenway High was in the process of becoming the *newcomer hub*, their sheltering approach seems to be a logical approach to take. However newcomer programs and schools must take into consideration various elements to be effective: (1) the facilities, staff, and range of courses, programs, and extracurricular activities comparable to other schools in the district (Feinberg, 2000), (2) projects and other structured activities to ensure that newcomers interact with English-speakers (Short, 2002), and (3) content area instruction to fill in gaps in education backgrounds as well as basic literacy materials and reading interventions (Short & Boyson, 2012). Greenway High lacked the majority of these provisions. However, as stated by the assistant principal, they were creating opportunities for EL students within the school and apart from it, such as summer programs offering English and links with the local community college. They were also planning to put in place courses for newcomers to develop their basic Spanish and Math skills. Despite this, the overall program structure was segregated.

Bloomfield High had a program structure that segregated EL students less than Greenway High. They also lacked conditions that have been shown to be important for immigrant EL students such as content classes in Spanish (or in English with Spanish translation) as well as formal structures and school cultural practices that helped them maintain their cultural and linguistic identities. EL students were placed in SI content courses (such as math and science) with native English-speakers, reportedly because of research showing the detrimental effects of segregation. However in traditional SI classes, surrounding EL students with English-speaking peers often does not lead to interaction between them (Bunch et al., 2001). This also appeared to be the situation at Bloomfield High. Certain conditions must be in place for this to occur, such as

ongoing instructional support for teachers, including learning interventions proven to foster effective peer collaboration (Bunch et al., 2001).

Policy implications are that program structures and school-level approaches for shaping EL students' opportunities must be examined in relation to these students' outcomes and pathways for positive social incorporation. Additionally, preparation and ongoing instructional support for teachers of EL students must focus on helping teachers develop pedagogical strategies that are effective within constrained conditions as well as ways to foster cultural understanding, caring, building on students' linguistic and cultural resources. Finally, further research is needed on how to organize schools that are both safe yet not segregated to create a favorable context of reception for Latino immigrant EL students.

Goals for EL Students

The district personnel responsible for assuring the academic success of EL students shared the view that these students should be graduating having met their A-G requirements. However, the material constraints they faced (such as lack of human resources) resulted in important limitations (such as lack of support for teachers and untimely and inaccurate information). Furthermore, the loose coupling with the district may have accounted for each school structuring its programs in ways that created differential opportunities to take courses necessary for meeting college requirements. As research has demonstrated (Callahan, Wilkinson, & Muller, 2010), the courses that ELL students are placed in "exit high school with significantly less content, even when accounting for English proficiency, prior achievement, generational status, ethnicity, parental education, years in U.S. schools, and school level factors" (p. 108). Special care must be given to assure that the structural and organizational conditions at the district and school levels result in opportunities for students to take these courses, whether by progressing more rapidly through ELD, having options for other courses while in ELD, or both.

Responding to External Pressures

The accountability measures placed a high emphasis on measuring ELD progress through reporting on benchmark tests, CELDT scores, and reclassification. Benchmark testing was the most controversial, especially at the school level. Views about benchmark testing differed among district personnel and school personnel, yet most teachers believed that these tests were ineffective and even detrimental to their students (as discussed in chapter 3). This was a tightly couple mechanism (Weick, 1976) at all levels: the district officials, the EL Service office, the school administration, and the teachers. However, other decisions and mechanisms were loosely coupled, such as the structuring of programs and courses for EL students at a school level. This presented differential opportunities for EL students. Beliefs about what the overall goals for EL students should be differed within the district and school personnel, and the loose coupling resulted in school leadership making decisions about programs and courses based on their own values and beliefs. As Coburn found, pressures from the environment created circumstances for teachers to interpret and negotiate their decisions about instructional practices, and this process was also mediated by their pre-existing beliefs and practices. In this case, schools responded in a non-uniform way to district policy mandates for EL students, as did teachers within and across schools. Different from research that shows that policy actors respond differently to policy based on their interpretations and beliefs (Coburn, 2004), this study demonstrated that administrators

and teachers made conscious practices mainly based on their beliefs and values. Further research is needed on teacher variation in how they enact policies for EL students that also takes into account how this changes over time and what other factors influence their decisions.

Furthermore, unlike some research findings that show that EL students who are in mixed traditional SI classes may have a higher tendency to drop out (Bunch et al.), EL students at Bloomfield High did not appear to be dropping out of school at a rate higher than at Greenway High (and in fact were graduating at a higher rate than the district and school averages for EL students). While no causal conclusions can be made about the reason for this difference in outcomes, there are several possible explanations that could be inferred from my research findings. One explanation is the difference in the professional cultures of the schools. Bloomfield High had greater cohesion between staff. They also had more tightly coupled practices regarding classroom instruction, perhaps focusing more on the technical core of teaching. Further research is needed to examine differences between schools regarding EL students meeting A-G requirements. Specifically, research is needed that parses out the different factors that could be contributing to more students meeting these requirements.

The Right Teachers for EL Students

The leadership in the two schools varied in what they perceived to be the most important qualities for teachers of EL students. While Greenway High placed a high value on cultural and linguistic affiliation, Bloomfield High emphasized instructional approaches, and the teachers' ability to speak Spanish was seen as an advantage because students could better understand the content. The GWH principal and counselor were particularly disturbed by the teachers who were foreign-born because (according to the counselor) they did not care about the students and they taught the way they learned to teach in their own countries. As discussed in chapter 3, teachers' cultural frame of reference was an issue that surfaced in examining their perceptions of their students' cultural practices. As Bartlett has demonstrated (2014), it is important that teachers have knowledge of their students' histories, current realities, and social and linguistic norms and traditions. This can be especially pronounced when teachers come from a different country-of-origin, yet as demonstrated in this study, teachers' varied in their degree of cultural understanding. This mainly stemmed from the material structural and organizational constraints of the school, as reflected in Ms. Heredia's statement that she believed all teachers cared about understanding their students but they felt too overtasked to dedicate the necessary time to this. Research on teachers as a human context of reception can be extended to examine what contextual conditions contribute to teachers' inclination to understand their immigrant EL students' histories and cultural practices, beyond the teachers' own perceptions and beliefs.

Towards Critical Caring in the School and Classroom

Teachers who teach EL students, particularly those who are newcomers, are uniquely positioned to be able to influence these students' opportunities for learning and social incorporation. They are the human context of reception for immigrant youth, and their beliefs about their students and practices with them can shape the experience and opportunities of these students (Dabach, 2009, 2011, 2015). In this study I have defined a teacher providing a favorable context of reception to their immigrant EL students by demonstrating the following practices: (1) establishing relationships and trust with students and demonstrating critical caring, (2) building

on students' cultural and linguistic repertoires, (3) advocating for students (mentoring, support, linking with opportunities), and (4) adapting curricular goals, instruction and testing to best meet students' needs.

The notion of caring is central to all of these practices. As Valenzuela (1999) points out, the sustained and reciprocal relationships between teachers and students are fundamental for their students' learning. According to her, engaging in such relationships is authentic caring. Yet, this notion has been interpreted differently, even leading teachers to lower expectations for their students out of pity rather than maintaining high expectations (Antrop-González & De Jesús, 2006). As this study showed, teachers varied in how they demonstrated care, ranging from expressing "feeling sorry for" the newcomer students and having a hands-off approach to teaching to striving to continually engage and challenge newcomer their students. Their perceptions of their students tended to correspond with their practices. In classes with teachers who had negative assumptions about Latino EL students' cultural practices, such as being unmotivated, students tended to be much less engaged with the content. In classes where teachers did not hold such reductive notions of cultural practices, students tended to engage with content. Thus, it is important for teachers to seek to understand their students' histories and languages and check their assumptions about their students' cultural practices.

Furthermore, as emphasized by Gutiérrez & Rogoff (2003), teachers can seek to understand their students' histories and familiarities with cultural practices and introduce them to new approaches to learning. One way to do this is to build upon their students' cultural and linguistic resources by encouraging language practices such as translanguaging that transcend the binary approach of restricting students to one language or another. Such practices, however, require professional development and instructional support that, for the schools examined in this district, is not provided even for the most basic instructional approaches for teaching ELD or SI. Regardless of the existing constraints, as this study has shown, teachers can provide a human context of reception for their immigrant EL students in important ways. Furthermore, district and school leadership can seek to create conditions that enable and encourage teachers to provide such a context. It is my hope that this study sheds light on how to work towards this important goal.

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Appendix A: Teacher Interview Protocol

School Code_____ Teacher Code_____ Date_____

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with me. As you know, I am interested in learning more about how you making sense of and put into practice the various instructional policies and guidelines for EL students. I am especially interested in what challenges and opportunities you are most frequently presented with, as well as the types of constraints and supports you have for best supporting their academic and social needs. Everything you say will be kept confidential, and all information will be coded. Please feel free to share your thoughts as honestly as possible. Your responses will help me understand more about your work.

1. First of all, could you tell me a bit about your history as a teacher?
 - a. How long have you been a teacher?
 - b. Did you get specific preparation for the subject you teach?
 - c. How much and what type of preparation have you had for teaching EL students?
2. How long have you taught at this school?
 - a. Why did you choose this school?
 - b. What do you especially like about it?
 - c. What do you least like about it?
 - d. Did you choose to teach the classes you are teaching?
 - e. If you did choose them, why? If not, are you happy with teaching them? Why(not)?
3. How would you define/explain the current curriculum and mandates that you are using with you EL students? (*Probe: CCSS, testing, ELA framework, etc.*)?
 - a. Are you working with materials that reflect this current framework? Which ones?
 - b. How would you define/explain the curriculum and mandates that you were using for EL students prior to the current one? When was this change? Do you still use them?
 - c. What is different in terms of the materials that you used? What is similar? Can you give some examples of each (different/similar)?
4. To what extent would you say the current curriculum, guidelines and mandates support the needs of EL students?
 - a. Do you think they are aligned with the needs of most of your EL students?
 - b. Are there some students for which they are better suited and less well suited?
 - c. In what ways would you change the standards, curriculum, and/or testing to better meet the needs of your EL students (and in particular 1st and/or 2nd generation EL students)?
 - d. How much adaption/creation can you do and do you do? Can you give an example?
5. What kind of preparation have you received since the new/current standards, curriculum, and testing has been put into place?
 - a. How much of this has had specific attention to EL students? How about for Newcomer students?

- b. Who provided this professional development opportunity? Was it mandatory?
 - c. Do you feel like it was sufficient and aligned with what you needed to support your EL students?
 - d. What else do you seek out to as knowledge/resources to help you teach EL students?
6. In general, what are the academic and/or social needs of your first and second-generation Latino EL students? Please do not give specific names.
- a. What resources/strengths do you think they have in comparison to other students?
 - b. Think about an EL student (or students) that is (are) doing well in your class (*ask which class if not mentioned*). Could you tell me about her/him/them?
 - c. Think about an EL student (or students) that is(are) struggling (*ask which class if not mentioned*). Could you tell me about her/him/them?
 - d. Which class do you teach where you think your EL students are doing the best? Which is it? Why do you think they do better in this class? In which class do they struggle the most?
 - e. Can you give me an example of a lesson/class activity that you did that worked well with an EL student (or students) that were struggling? How did you come up with that? Is there anything that limits you from doing that more often?
7. What kind of support do you receive from the district for teaching your EL students?
- a. Do you have adequate textbooks and other materials resources?
 - b. Is the coaching useful and frequent enough? What is the most useful?
 - c. In general, are you getting the support you need from the district in order to teach your EL students? *If answer is not affirmative, then ask: Why do you think this is the case?*
 - d. If you could change anything about the type of support provided, what would it be?
8. What support structures are in place at the school level to help you support your EL students?
- a. What is the most helpful (dept. meetings, all staff meetings, informal meetings, etc.)
 - b. What structures/meetings, etc. that are aimed to support teaching EL students are the least helpful?
 - c. Do teachers collaborate with each other to work on meeting the needs of EL students? How often and with which depts./areas? What do you tend to discuss or do?
9. What constraints do you experience at the school level in your teaching and specifically teaching EL students (and newcomers)? (*Probe: lack of materials, time for preparation, teacher collaboration, coaching, support from admin./staff/teachers support, teacher turnover, low reclassification, too much or way of testing, etc.*)
- a. Why do you think these constraints exist?
 - b. If you could change something at the school level to better support EL students (and newcomers), what would it be?

10. Are you familiar with the way the new local funding works (*mention the formula and the action plan as prompts if necessary*)? How would you describe it?

- a. Have you had the opportunity to participate in decision-making regarding how these funds will be used?
- b. Do you notice a difference in the way it affects support for EL students? *If affirmative, ask for examples. If not affirmative, ask: Why do you think there are no changes?*
- c. If you could decide what to designate funds for to better support EL students, and in particular first and second-generation EL students, what would you decide?

11. Is there anything else that you would like to add that I haven't asked you, especially about teaching Latino first and second-generation EL students?

Appendix B: Administrator Interview Protocol

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with me. As you know, I am interested in learning more about how you making sense of and put into practice the various instructional policies and guidelines for EL students. I am especially interested in what challenges and opportunities you are most frequently presented with, as well as the types of constraints and supports you have for best supporting EL students as well as the teachers and other staff working with EL students. Everything you say will be kept confidential, and all information will be coded. Please feel free to share your thoughts as honestly as possible. Your responses will help me understand more about your work.

Code: _____ Date: _____

1. How long have you been working at this school as a principal/vice principal? How about in the district?
2. What do you like about working here? What are the biggest challenges?
3. Since you have been here, what changes have you perceived and experienced?
 - a. What about changes in student demographics? EL students in particular?
 - b. In terms of staffing, structure, professional development, and resources?
 - c. How about in terms of the relationship with the district and decision-making?
4. Can you talk about the Local Funding Formula (LLFF) and how that has affected your school?
 - a. How much involvement have you had in deciding how this money is used in your school?
 - b. How much and what type of involvement have the teachers had?
 - c. How, if at all, do you see this affecting the EL student population?
5. How would you define/explain the current instructional policy (curricular framework, standards, testing) that you are working with? What about it is specific to EL students?
 - d. Who did you receive guidance from about the new standards, curriculum, and testing? How was this communicated? Was their particular guidance provided for the needs of EL students? Who was this provided by and how?
 - e. What substantial differences in guidelines and demands on your role as an administrator have you experienced? Has this changed your daily routine/practice?
 - f. What do the teachers of EL students express to you about the new standards, curriculum, and tests (content and procedure)?
6. What are the primary concerns and requests for support that teachers express to you regarding EL students? How about other staff members? How about parents?
 - a. Which of these requests are you able to respond to?
 - b. Which are easier to respond to? Can you give me an example?
 - c. If you could change one or two things about how to respond to these requests, what would it be?

7. Who is primarily in charge of making decisions about teachers' class assignment?
 - a. How is it decided which teachers will teach EL students?
 - b. Do teachers tend to want to teach EL students? Why do you think that is?
 - c. Are certain subjects harder to staff for EL students than others? Why do you think that is?
8. What are the expectations for the school regarding EL students' academic outcomes?
 - a. How and by whom were these communicated? What are the implications if they are met or not met?
 - b. To what degree do you think they are aligned with what is possible and necessary?
 - c. Are you getting the resources and district support to meet these expectations? Can you please give me an example?
9. What changes would you like to make in your school to better support EL students?
(Probe for department meetings, staffing, resources, parental involvement, testing, etc.)
 - a. Have you proposed these changes?
 - b. What, if anything, is preventing these changes from taking place?
10. Is there anything else that you would like to share about your school, teachers and staff, and/or EL students?