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The effects of L1 literacy and education on point-gain in an adult Esl course

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THE EFFECTS OF L1 LITERACY AND EDUCATION
ON POINT-GAIN IN AN ADULT ESL COURSE

by

Heidi Ekstrom ElHalta

Bachelor of Arts
Brigham Young University
1998

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

Master of Science Degree in Curriculum and Instruction
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
College of Education

Graduate College
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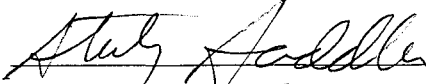
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ABSTRACT

The Effects of L1 Literacy and Education on Point-gain in an Adult ESL Course

by

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This study examined factors affecting learners' progress as measured by positive point gains between pre- and posttest reading proficiency scores for an intermediate/advanced adult ESL course. Background and self-assessment information, gathered through individual student interviews, was analyzed with reference to point gains to determine the influence of individual factors on students' progress. Due to limitations of the study, no correlation was found between education and L1 literacy and student's progress. However, the statistical results indicate slight positive correlations between students' point gains and their length of residence in the U.S. as well as the total number of instructional hours attended. Additionally, further analysis found that teachers who provided interactive classroom environments positively affected students' progress and that students who set goals relating to more immediate needs such as work, education, or participation in the community, had higher point gains than those whose goals were less specific or immediate.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	vii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
Background	1
Research Questions	3
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	5
Focus of the Study.....	5
Effects of L1 Literacy on L2 Academic Proficiency	6
Factors Affecting Second Language Acquisition.....	7
Community Adult ESL Programs	16
Assessment in Adult ESL Programs	17
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY.....	20
Setting.....	20
Participants	21
Data Sources and Collection	24
Data Analysis	25
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS	28
Statistical Results	28
Data Collected by the CALL Program and Interview Results	29
CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	34
Discussion	34
Conclusions	41
APPENDIX A	43
Interview Questions.....	43
APPENDIX B	46
Complete Interview Responses	47
REFERENCES.....	83

VITA	87
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LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Summary of Class Groups.....	22
Table 2	Summary of Participant Data	23
Table 3	Student Goals	31
Table 4	Self-described Native Language Proficiency.....	32
Table 5	Self-described English Proficiency	33

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

While researching for a TESL class I took a few years ago, I discovered the results of the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), conducted in 1992 (Greenberg, et. al., 2001). The results of this study not only greatly influenced my research at the time, but also many of the projects and much of the reading that I participated in over the following few years, finally leading me to this thesis. In the NALS study, I was impressed by the evidence of empowerment that literacy, in any language, can bring to individuals.

NALS states that 7.9% of the population of the U.S. in 1990 was foreign-born, the highest percentage in 50 years. Though not all of those born outside of the United States claim a first language other than English, the majority do. The survey also found distinct correlations between the levels of literacy that immigrants came to the United States with and their ability to function effectively in their new country, including finding and maintaining jobs as well as attaining English literacy and fluency (Greenberg, et. al., 2001).

The results of the survey define three distinctive groups of immigrants which include: those who entered the U.S. before the age of twelve and were primarily educated in U.S. schools, those who entered the U.S. after the age of twelve and had a minimum of a high

school education equivalent in their home country, and those who entered after the age of twelve with limited educational background and native literacy skills. Those who moved to the United States before the age of twelve and were educated in U.S. schools were primarily found to have comparable literacy skills to the general population. However, the majority of those who entered the U.S. after the age of twelve demonstrated lower levels of literacy (Greenberg, et. al., 2001).

In the group who immigrated after age twelve, a notable pattern emerged with native language literacy and English literacy correlating closely to employability and wages. Those who entered the United States after the age of twelve with less than a high school equivalent education were more likely to never attain fluency and literacy in English and had difficulty finding reliable employment, or earned lower wages than those who were fluent in English. Those who were literate only in a language other than English, were just as likely to be employed as those fluent in English, though they were found to have lower average earnings. And finally, those who entered the country with higher education levels and became literate and fluent in English and maintained their native language literacy demonstrated lower average literacy than those who spoke only English as adults; however, their lower literacy scores did not lower their average earnings or their probability of gaining and maintaining employment. (Greenberg, et. al., 2001).

This information leads to the assumption that there are invaluable skills associated with literacy in any language. Those who were literate only in their native language and not English were not only more likely than those who were not literate, in any language, to maintain employment, but they are also much more likely to obtain the necessary

English skills to become fluent and literate and thus eventually have equal earning power in the workplace (Greenberg, et. al., 2001).

With continuing research, my interest became focused specifically on the effects of native language fluency, literacy, and education on second language learners in adult English as a second language (ESL) programs. In the winter of 2003, I served as an intern in an intermediate ESL class at the Community College of Southern Nevada. The group consisted of students from a variety of different backgrounds and walks of life. Some were strictly students who were improving their English skills before entering a college or University. Others were immigrants, attending class in the evenings after work, striving to improve themselves to gain better jobs, to aid their families, etc. And still others were struggling to learn English in order to obtain a job.

While working with this diverse group, I became aware of many of the successes and struggles of the students. Some seemed to speak English quite well, yet struggled with reading and grammar tasks, while others were quite comfortable reading yet struggled to express themselves. Some were quite educated in their native language and others had only a few years of formal education. I saw first-hand the evidence of the NALS survey's findings and wanted to better understand the factors influencing the adult ESL student's acquisition of English as a second language, especially the role of education and literacy in the native language.

Research Questions

My initial research question dealt with the effect of students' years of education in their native language on their progress in an adult ESL class, measured by their point gain

between the pre- and posttests administered by the program. However, the sample's education levels were not as varied as anticipated. Despite this limitation, as the study progressed, I began to observe other factors that appeared to influence students' progress, such as their length of residence in the U.S., the number of instructional hours they attended, and what native language they spoke. This led to the development of a second research question. The resulting two research questions follow:

1. What is the effect of years of education in the native language and the resultant native language literacy on the student's English language progress in an adult ESL class?
2. How do other factors, including hours of instruction, length of residence, native language, and the teacher role, affect adult second language progress?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although there has been a good deal of research conducted concerning the acquisition of English as a second language (ESL) by adults, the field is still relatively new and the body of literature in the area continues to grow. In addition, adult ESL programs are adjusting and changing to better aid learners through curriculums designed to meet the language needs of the rapidly expanding immigrant populations in the United States.

Focus of the Study

This study was designed to assess which factors most influence adult second language acquisition in adult ESL programs. Consequently, the following review of literature begins by introducing the effects of native language (L1) literacy on second language (L2) academic proficiency. It continues with a discussion of specific factors affecting adult second language acquisition and concludes with overviews of community adult ESL programs and information regarding the most common assessments used in these programs.

Effects of L1 Literacy on L2 Academic Proficiency

Jim Cummins (1981), a pioneer in the second language acquisition (SLA) research arena in regards to meeting the academic needs of L2 learners, developed the idea of two specific types of language proficiency. These include Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). “Cummins’ threshold hypothesis states that BICS must develop to a certain level before CALP can be effectively added to it” (Jiang & Kuehn, 2001, p. 420). Literacy, as opposed to the oral communication skills of BICS, requires the higher academic language functions associated with CALP. Recognizing the distinction between BICS and CALP is helpful in understanding SLA.

In the study of children’s SLA, the transfer of L1 literacy skills to the learning of the L2 has been recognized and is referred to as the cross-language transfer of skills and knowledge. Cummins (1992, p. 95) states that the more developed a child’s “conceptual foundation” or CALPS is in the L1, the more likely she is to develop the same level of “conceptual abilities” in the second language. Collier (1995, p. 5) supports this idea and cites several sources that “indicate that if students do not reach a certain threshold in their first language, including literacy, they may experience cognitive difficulties in the second language.” It may take only 2-3 years to establish BICS, or conversational skills in a second language (Cummins, 1992). However, Collier (1995) found that it took 7-10 years or more for those students with no schooling in their native language to reach the same academic proficiency in English as their native English speaking counterparts, and for those students with 2-3 years of educational experience in their native language, it took 5-7 years.

Most children who immigrate to the U.S. or Canada are enrolled in schools. School classrooms, in turn, were found to be logical sites for conducting the research that led to the findings that children take between 5-10 years to develop native-like proficiency in English. However, because adult immigrants' circumstances and experiences are so varied, it is much more difficult to design and conduct such specific literacy research with this group. Because of this and other factors, including the pressing need to conduct more practical research, such as best practices for adult ESL classrooms, the research dealing specifically with adult SLA in relation to literacy is limited.

Factors Affecting Adult Second Language Acquisition

However, recently more has been done to explore adult SLA and the many factors affecting it. Jiang and Kuehn (2001) developed a study with adults that demonstrates evidence of language transfer between L1 and L2 and supports Cummins' Common Underlying Proficiency Model (CUP) which states that "Concepts are most readily developed in the first language and, once developed, are accessible through the second language" (Jiang & Kuehn, 2001, p. 420).

In a review of research relating to reading and adult language learners, Burt, Peyton, and Adams (2003) explore the effects of several specific factors influencing SLA. Several of these studies, along with others, will be reviewed in the following subsections which detail specific factors influencing adult SLA that are relevant to this study. These factors include the effects of: native language literacy and education, goals and motivation, length of residence, attendance, and the roles of the teacher and interaction.

Native Language Literacy and Education

Rivera (1990, ¶ 4) states that one of the “basic tenets” of adult education is that “New skills and knowledge are best acquired when they build on the already existing knowledge and skills of the adult learner.” Based on this tenet, it is logical that focusing on the literacy skills that adults already have in their native languages should better help them acquire new literacy skills in a second language. In the previous section, the cross-language transfer of skills and knowledge was briefly discussed as it relates to children. This language transfer is also evident in research regarding adult SLA.

In a review of SLA literature, Carlo and Skilton-Sylvester (1996) found evidence of native-language literacy influence in both lower level tasks, such as recognizing letters, and higher level tasks, such as accessing prior knowledge about text structure. However, other researchers have concluded that even literate learners need to know approximately 3,000 to 5,000 words in English before they can effectively transfer their L1 skills to their learning of an L2 (National Center for Family Literacy, 2004, p. IV-9). It seems that learners who have a high L1 literacy as well as high L2 proficiency will be more likely to transfer their L1 skills to their learning of an L2 (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003, p. 15). Because of this, even literate learners probably need instruction with much emphasis on vocabulary building. Also, direct instruction to teach learners sound-symbol correspondence and how to use their L1 reading skills to help them read in English has been shown effective in aiding language transfer (National Center for Family Literacy, 2004, p. IV-9).

However, despite the recent studies of vocabulary and effects of direct teaching, most of the research does not detail specific language skills that transfer from the first language

to the second language during learning. Instead, the research focuses on evidence of this transfer by documenting higher achievement levels in those with higher native language literacy skills in comparison to lower achievement levels in adults with lower L1 literacy. Several of these studies are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Jiang and Kuehn (2001) looked at the influence of native language literacy levels and L1 and L2 education on two different adult immigrant groups' progress in an ESL course. These two groups included an *early* immigrant group who were primarily educated in the United States, and a *late* immigrant group who had at least 10 years of education in their native language before immigrating to the U.S. Differences in the pretest scores of the two groups were insignificant. However, though both groups made significant progress in their development of English language skills, the "late immigrant group made better progress than the early immigrant group as a result of instruction" (Jiang & Kuehn, 2001, p. 426). The researchers cite this as evidence that with the aid of formal instruction, the higher L1 CALP levels of the late immigrant group helped them to more effectively transfer skills from the L1 to L2, enabling them to progress more quickly than the early immigrant group.

In Burt, Peyton, and Adams' (2003) review of the adult SLA reading research, they cite two studies that demonstrate the influence of native language literacy skills, even with learners who are only semi-literate. The first is a study (Robson, 1982) of Hmong speakers in a refugee camp in Thailand. This study found that adults who had even minimal literacy in Hmong progressed more rapidly in their acquisition of English than those who had no literacy. The second (Burtoff, 1985) was similar, but studied Haitians living in New York City. Though the study had several limitations such as small sample

size, inaccurate attendance records, and no control of curriculum or teacher differences between the two studied groups, the researchers found that over the 24 week course period, where both classes received equal instruction time, students who received native language literacy instruction as well as English instruction in class developed greater literacy skills than those in the class receiving only English instruction.

Finally, another study of 60 classrooms in adult ESL programs in the Los Angeles Unified School District found that having higher levels of previous educational experiences significantly increased the odds of promotion from one ESL level to the next. In addition, there was a significant correlation between higher education levels and increased specificity of goals developed over the period of the course, which in turn correlated to higher promotion as discussed further in the following subsection (Rivera, 2003, p. 26).

Goals and Motivation

Zoltán Dörnyei (2002, p. 8), defined motivation as “why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity [and] how hard they are going to pursue it” (in Moss & Ross-Feldman, 2003). Motivation is a powerful influence on everything we do and especially on what we choose to learn. As a result, many researchers have focused on motivation in SLA research for years. One of the most influential of these is Robert Gardner, a Canadian linguist, who supports two primary motivation theories including *integrative motivation* and *instrumental motivation* (Moss & Ross-Feldman, 2003). Moss and Ross-Feldman (2003, ¶ 4) define integrative motivation as “wanting to learn a language in order to identify with the community that speaks the language,” and instrumental motivation as “want[ing] to learn the language to

meet . . . needs and goals.” Both of these types of motivation have been found influential on SLA by Gardner and others (Moss & Ross-Feldman, 2003), though Gardner has found that those driven by the second theory, instrumental motivation, may be even more likely to experience success in learning the chosen language (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003, p. 239).

Motivations influencing students are often evidenced through specific goals they set. Adult students cite a variety of different goals for studying and learning English that fall into both the integrative and instrumental motivational categories. Among those most commonly identified are wanting to advance in the workplace or gain a new job, further their education, and help their children at school, all instrumental motivations. However, they also commonly list participating more fully in the community as a primary goal, which could likely fall under both instrumental and integrative motivation (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003, p. 20; Moss & Ross-Feldman, 2003).

Though all students have some motivation or goal for beginning an ESL course, research has found that the specificity of student’s goals and even the types of goals themselves can affect and even predict the student’s success in that course, supporting Gardner’s idea that instrumental motivation may be even more effective than integrative motivation (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003, p. 239). In a case study exploring the changes in 12 students’ “literacy life-styles outside of class” as a result of workplace literacy programs, Mikulecky (1997, ¶ 8) found that “Learners who had clear learning goals upon entering programs made the most change in literacy practice outside of class.” Those students who did not have specific goals were often uncomfortable in class and had difficulty seeing the applicableness of what they were learning or how they would apply

the information outside of class. The students without specific goals had often joined the class at the suggestion of another and made very little progress as a result. On the contrary, those who entered the programs with at least one specific goal easily identified daily uses for their new knowledge in their jobs, homes, religion, and other activities.

In addition, in her study of adult ESL classrooms in the Los Angeles Unified School District, Rivera (2003, p. 25) found that promotion from one ESL level to the next was not related to students having more goals or to the specificity of the goals set, but to types of goals students identified. The study demonstrated significant relation between promotion and “goals and accomplishments related to employment opportunities, participation in the community, and enrollment in programs that improve skills and marketability,” all goals that have been highlighted by other researchers as well.

Length of Residence

In most studies performed, *length of residence* (LOR), or the number of years an English learner had lived in the United States or other English speaking country, was not found to be a significant factor related to attaining proficiency. However, Flege and Liu (2001) believed these results would change in a more controlled study. They listed several influences that would need to be controlled for in order to measure the true effect of LOR, such as age on arrival, the quantity and quality of L2 input that the learner receives at home and in the community, and differences in formal education. The researchers designed a study to test the influence of LOR while controlling for some of these other influences. They divided their sample of 62 participants into those with long LORs (3.9-15.5 years in the U.S.) and those with short LORs (those with 0.5-3.8 years in the U.S.). They then subdivided these two groups into *students* and *nonstudents*. Many

of the students were younger and attending college, while many of the nonstudents were older, and though then not currently students, were highly educated Chinese immigrants who worked in laboratories where they often spoke Chinese rather than English (Flege & Liu, 2001, pp. 533-535).

Overall, the researchers found that students with longer LORs obtained higher scores than students with shorter LORs. However, the effect of the LOR on the nonstudents was insignificant (Flege & Liu, 2001, p. 544). Flege and Liu (2001, p. 547) further concluded that it “seems reasonable . . . that the LOR effect observed for the students was due to the kind of English-language input or formal education that they, but not the nonstudents, had received in the United States.” This finding ties closely to previously mentioned studies regarding language transfer. In order for that transfer or progress to occur independently, students need to have reached a certain vocabulary threshold (3-5 thousand words). However, researchers believe that direct teaching, such as that received by the student groups in Flege and Liu’s study and those in Jiang and Kuehn’s (2001) research, may help students transfer their L1 skills more quickly and effectively.

Attendance

It is logical that attendance, or more instructional hours, would increase the progress of second language English students. Despite its potential significance, there has been very little specific research dealing with the effects of attendance and instructional hours on adult ESL program success. However, attendance and retention is a problem in adult ESL courses nationwide. Brod (1995, ¶ 9-11) states that “one-third of all adult ESL learners leave their programs by the end of the second month.” This is due to many personal factors, such as “lack of demonstrable progress” and “pressures from work and

home,” as well as factors related to the specific ESL program, such as “lack of appropriate materials,” “lack of flexibility,” and “lack of opportunity to achieve success.”

In Rivera’s study (2003, pp. 22-24) of 60 ESL classrooms, not only did administrators and teachers list “attendance” as one of the major factors affecting students’ success in the programs, but the researcher found that “student attendance significantly increased the odds of promotion by at least thirteen times.” In addition, Rivera found that it was the “presence of normative structure” in the classroom, including having discussions about the importance of attendance and the consequences of not attending, that most helped boost attendance. On the contrary, those classrooms that did not create a successful *normative structure* unsuccessfully focused on direct communication with the students such as phone calls, postcards, and even home visits, to try to boost attendance (Rivera, N., 2003, p. 23-24).

The Role of the Teacher and Interaction

In the previous section on attendance we glimpsed the powerful influence that a teacher can have in the success of an ESL program. The teacher’s planning, interaction of the teacher with the students, and the students’ interactions with each other, all play a role in the success of ESL learners. In a study of ESL programs in Los Angeles, students perceived the ability to “listen, imitate, receive feedback, converse, and ask questions of their teacher” as the “most helpful” factors affecting their successful learning of English (Rivera, 2003, p. 10). Mikulecky (1997, ¶ 12) also found that “every high-change learner [those in the group who made significant progress] reported high rapport with an instructor while low-change learners reported neutral [or negative] rapport.”

Rivera (2003, pp.16, 28) found this role of interaction between the teacher and student particularly important when combined with the previously discussed importance of students setting goals. She found evidence that teachers and classrooms that created “interactive” and “motivating” environments, where there were opportunities for students to set goals and monitor their own progress, showed higher occurrences of “accomplishment;” and in those classrooms with more interactive atmospheres, students developed new goals with better specificity, which in turn “demonstrated an overall effect on student promotion.”

Students in Rivera’s study also reported that “activities involving conversation/discussion . . . were very helpful in learning English,” and 14 of 59 classrooms wanted more “oral activities” and “meaningful interchanges.” The results of the research again found evidence supporting the students’ observations and requests, where “frequent engagement of students in lessons and activities involving real-life situations” was found to have a significant relation to “higher occurrences of accomplishments” (Rivera, N., 2003, p. 10-16). In a study, designed to determine how conversational interactions affect the acquisition of question formation, Mackey (1999) also found that “interaction” can actually increase the “pace” of acquisition, and Doughty & Pica (1986) found that learners tended to produce longer sentences and negotiate meaning (where the learner asks questions or makes comments that lead the speaker to restate or clarify their statement in order to increase the learner’s understanding) more often in interactive tasks than they did in traditional instruction, where the teacher stood at the front of the room and directed the discussion.

Community Adult ESL Programs

The formal teaching of ESL in the American workplace and communities first gained momentum in the early 1900s. Through the succeeding years, the concept has evolved and grown with the burgeoning immigrant population. Beginning with after-hours classes sponsored by unions, now a variety of different programs are offered through workplace and community sites (Rosenblum, 1996).

There are many issues, such as diversity, limited funding, desired outcomes, and assessment, which influence the effectiveness of workplace and community ESL programs. Participants, who come from countries all over the world, have diverse needs and desires. They face not only speech differences but also cultural, educational, and other differences. All of these needs and influences must be considered when planning and implementing an effective ESL training program (Wrigley, 1993).

Combined with improving communication and general literacy skills, effective ESL programs produce a host of other benefits. Through these courses, students are able to obtain useful cultural information that will better help them function more effectively in the U.S. society and economy, such as being proactive and aggressive in improving skills and seeking higher training and jobs in the workforce. Through an increased understanding of culture and language, students are able to better communicate their frustrations as well as more effectively perform their jobs, improving their quality of life (Horvath, 1998).

Assessment in Adult ESL Programs

Although alternative methods of assessment abound, most adult ESL programs, and especially those relying on government funding, primarily utilize standardized tests to measure students' progress. Wrigley (1992, ¶ 6) states that "One reason for the popularity of standardized assessments may lie in the history of testing in the United States, which has emphasized the need for program accountability above the need for quality teaching." During the 1990's, legislation continued to increase the accountability requirements for programs to receive federal funding. Currently, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II of the Workforce Investment Act [WIA] of 1998) requires states to negotiate the target levels of performance with the U.S. Department of Education, including percentages of students involved in government funded programs that will increase their skills and at what rate. The Department of Education established the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS) to determine and define how states would be required to report their data. For ESL students, the areas of required measurement may include speaking and listening, reading and writing, and functional and workplace skills. "These level descriptors define English language proficiency across six levels, from Beginning ESL Literacy to High Advanced." The NRS requires that measurements be accomplished through the use of a standardized assessment, though the choice of a particular assessment or assessments is left to the discretion of the state in their negotiation process (Van Duzer, 2002, p. 1).

It is not difficult to understand the preference for standardized tests in reporting. Opposed to the subjectivity involved with teacher or program-based evaluation, commercially available, standardized tests have high construct validity and scoring

reliability. In addition, these tests are easy to administer to large groups of people at a time and most require minimal training on the part of the teacher or other test giver. Because of the ease and consistency associated with these tests, nearly all funding sources, government or otherwise, require that program progress be reported based on standardized test results (Burt and Keenan, 1995, p.2).

A variety of different standardized tests are available for ESL assessment. The tests most often utilized include the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), the Adult Basic Learning Exam (ABLE), and the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) (Solòrzano, 1994, p. 13). Nevada and California, in particular, use CASAS exams to measure student progress and meet state accountability requirements. These exams focus on life skills and employability and test only reading and listening (Burt and Keenan, 1995, pp. 2).

Despite the common usage of standardized tests, nearly all published research focuses on the weaknesses of these tests for ESL programs. Van Duzer (2002) argues that too often, standardized tests are selected for their ease in administration and scoring, or simply because they are state mandated, and do not actually measure the skills taught in the specific curriculum of the program. Other weaknesses of the tests include that they ignore social contexts of literacy, do not provide information on different levels of initial literacy, do not take into account any literacy gains in the student's first language (Van Duzer, 2002, p. 3), typically do not measure literacy through writing (Wrigley, 1992, p. 3), and lastly, tests are often misused or misapplied (Solòrzano, 1994).

Because of the weaknesses associated with standardized testing, more and more educators and researchers promote the use of a variety of alternative assessments. These

assessments are primarily used within the confines of the classroom or program, though many have potential to be used in general reporting. Many of these assessments focus more on learning processes instead of just outcomes and include the learner in the assessment process through discussion of interests and individual literacy goals (Wrigley, 1992, pp. 3-4).

Several different studies discussed in the previous subsection of “Goals and Motivation” confirm the benefits of including the learner in assessing their own progress and in setting and re-setting goals during the course. These include the literature review of Burt, Peyton and Adams (2003) that states that “Having learners identify their specific literacy goals maintains their interest and motivation,” and the study by Rivera (2003) that claimed “higher occurrences of accomplishment” in classrooms where students monitored their own progress and had opportunities to discuss goal-setting.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Setting

The CALL Program

This study was conducted with two different ESL (English as a second language) class groups of the CALL (Computer Assisted Literacy in Libraries) Program at the Clark County Public Library. This program offers various levels of ESL classes as well as other adult literacy courses, such as citizenship and GED, free to the students, and available at different libraries throughout the valley. The Clark County Library location hosts an intermediate/advanced level ESL class in both the mornings and evenings.

The CALL program is a federally funded grant program, required to use CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System of California) exams to determine both pre- and posttest scores for each student who participates in the program. CASAS has developed a variety of tests to help educators measure knowledge and progress of participants in adult education programs. The particular exam utilized by the CALL program for its ESL classes is a multiple choice exam focusing on topics and skills related to employability that measures reading levels of the students.

For interpreting the results of the CASAS exams, there are tables that help administrators translate raw scores to a scaled score. This scaled score can then be

interpreted using the “CASAS Skill Level Descriptors for ESL.” The descriptors divide literacy levels into A, B, C, D, or E. Level A (scaled score of 150-200) encompasses beginning literacy, and beginning, low beginning and high beginning ESL designations, Level B (201-220) encompasses the low and high intermediate ESL groups, Level C (221-234) the advanced ESL group, Level D (235-244) the Adult Secondary group, and finally, Level E (245+) those individuals having “Proficient [English] Skills.” The intermediate/advanced level class at the Clark County Library location of the CALL Program serves those students pretesting in the 200 to 235 range. This includes a broad variety of students from low intermediate to advanced ESL levels.

Course resources include a classroom set of workbook-style texts that focus on English in the workplace, a computer lab with ESL related programs and access to the internet, as well as a variety of other educational texts and resources available for teacher and student reference.

Participants

Class Group One

The first class began May 25, 2005 and ran through June 29, 2005, a total of five weeks and 60 instructional hours, conducted Monday through Thursday of each week from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The group began with 32 students and 17 finished the class and took the posttest, a retention rate of 68%. All 17 students who finished the course elected to participate in this study. The teacher for this group was a more than 15 year veteran who had most recently worked as an educational administrator at the local community college.

Class Group Two

The second group began July 18, 2005 and continued through August 25, 2005 with a total of 6 weeks and 72 instructional hours, also conducted Monday through Thursday of each week from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The class began with 40 students enrolled and 19 finished and took the posttest, a retention rate of 66%. Of the 19 students who finished the course, 14 agreed to participate in this study. The teacher of this group had more than five years ESL teaching experience in various community and college environments. Table 1 contains a summary of the data for each class group.

Table 1

Summary of Class Groups

Class Group	Instructional Hours	Students Beginning	Students Finishing	Retention Rate	Students Participating in Study
One	60	32	17	68%	17
Two	72	40	19	66%	14

Overall, participants were a diverse group consisting of 31 adults born outside of the United States, ranging in age from 19 to 49. As their primary languages, 21 spoke Spanish, four spoke African languages, five spoke Asian languages, and one spoke French. Their time in the United States varied from as little as one month to as much as seventeen years. Specific participant data is listed in Table 2.

Students joined the class with a variety of different objectives and goals, as well as varying education levels and previous experiences with English. Some students came to

Table 2

Summary of Participant Data

Student	Age	Native Language	Country of Birth	Years of Education Outside U.S.	Length of Residence
1	33	Amharic	Ethiopia	12.5	0.167
2	45	Amharic	Ethiopia	15	5
3	28	French	Canada -- Quebec	13	3
4	34	French/Malinke	Mali	13	2.5
5	30	Japanese	Japan	16	0.5
6	32	Japanese	Japan	12	1
7	38	Kinyarwanda	Rwanda	20	1.25
8	37	Mandarin	Malaysia	11	5
9	37	Nepali	Nepal	10	0.167
10	32	Punjabi	Pakistan	18	0.096
11	40	Spanish	Cuba	15	10
12	20	Spanish	El Salvador	16	2.5
13	19	Spanish	El Salvador	11	0.25
14	27	Spanish	Guatemala	15	1.25
15	24	Spanish	Mexico	6	6
16	33	Spanish	Mexico	16	6
17	36	Spanish	Mexico	17	15
18	40	Spanish	Mexico	10	2
19	24	Spanish	Mexico	9	4
20	45	Spanish	Mexico	9.1	17
21	29	Spanish	Mexico	13.5	6
22	21	Spanish	Mexico	9	0.25
23	33	Spanish	Mexico	11	10
24	25	Spanish	Mexico	14	1.67
25	27	Spanish	Mexico	21	0.5
26	22	Spanish	Mexico	12	3
27	39	Spanish	Mexico	9	15
28	39	Spanish	Mexico	9	15
29	49	Spanish	Mexico	17.5	3.5
30	33	Spanish	Mexico	16	0.083
31	34	Spanish	Mexico	9	5

the United States specifically to study English while others were immigrants who came to be with family or in search of better jobs and opportunities. Most had studied English for one or more years in a secondary school and some had further studied English in colleges and universities, English courses in their native country, or in other ESL programs in the United States.

Data Sources and Collection

On May 12, 2005, prior to the beginning of this study, approval to conduct the research was granted by UNLV's Office for the Protection of Research Subjects. Three main sources of data were collected during the research process. The first source of information was a form designed and collected by the CALL Program office prior to admitting students to the course, which requested basic information such as each student's name, age, native language, highest degree or diploma earned, and reason for taking the course. The second group of data provided by the CALL Program office included CASAS pre- and posttest scores, and the attendance record of each individual student.

The third and final source of data was a private, personal interview with each participant. Based on previous observations and interactions with students and teachers in the CALL Program, and prior to beginning this study, I developed a 25 question interview survey to support my research questions and insure consistency between each of the individual interviews. The interview questions focused on background topics regarding the participants' native country and language, as well as their educational backgrounds, experiences with English both inside and outside the United States, and

their own perceptions of their personal fluency and literacy levels in both their native languages and English. A copy of the interview survey questions (see Appendix A) and a complete record of all interview responses (see Appendix B) are provided in the appendix.

Each interview was conducted privately with the researcher and lasted approximately 15-20 minutes. Various times and places were utilized over the 5-6 week course to best accommodate the needs and desires of the teachers and students. Most interviews were conducted during the first 3 weeks of each course, though with the first group, a few interviews were still being conducted on the day of the posttest. Interview times offered included before class, during the 15 minute class break, during a portion of the independent computer lab time, or after class ended. Private rooms used for interviewing included the classroom, either before other students arrived or after they left at the end of the day, the adjacent computer lab, when not in use, or a small study room on a lower level.

Participant responses were recorded both in writing and on audiocassette. All analyzed data was taken from the written responses with the recordings serving as a backup.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data, I created a spreadsheet including all of the participants' background information and interview responses as well as the continuous variables including pre- and posttest information, the point change between these two tests, and the number of instructional hours each participant attended (see Appendix B). This allowed

me to easily find the means of each continuous variable as well as analyze the correlation between several variable combinations.

Statistical Analysis

I completed a preliminary analysis of means on my own, then met with a consultant to help determine which statistical tests should be run. We conducted a dependent samples t-test to establish the statistical significance of the difference between the pre- and posttest scores. This justified further analysis of the data collected to attempt to determine the variables that most affected and promoted the positive point gain. A series of Pearson correlation tests were run to determine the correlation between the point change and three other continuous variables including, the years of education outside the United States, the total number of instructional hours, and the number of years the participant had lived in the United States.

Interview Analysis

Though most of the interview questions dealt with background information, several required further analysis. These included the students' goals as well as their self-described fluency and literacy in both their native languages and English.

Participants' goals were categorized into seven different groups and the sum of responses for each was totaled. These categories included wanting to learn to speak, read or write English better, to further their education, to improve their job situations, to enhance their social interaction, to improve themselves or satisfy their personal interest, to help or protect themselves or their children, and finally, to gain citizenship.

The responses in each goal category were totaled and the means for the self-perceived "native language fluency and literacy" and "English fluency and literacy" were then

calculated for each possible answer. Students were asked how well they spoke, read, and wrote both their native language and English individually. Their possible responses included “very well,” “well,” “not well,” or “not at all.”

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

My original research questions dealt primarily with the correlation between participants' years of education outside the United States, and their English reading progression during the 5-6 week course period, measured by the positive or negative point gain between their pre- and posttest scores. However, small sample size and less variation in education levels than anticipated necessitated a much broader examination and analysis of the data. Following are the results of that examination.

Statistical Results

The interaction between the pre- and posttest scores (the point change) of two individual class groups was plotted. No interaction was observed. Therefore, the two individual classes were combined. Hereafter in the statistical results, these two groups will be combined to form one group.

The indicator of the participants' reading progress in the class was measured by the point change between their pre- and posttest scores. These tests were measured on a scaled score between 150 and 250. The mean of the pretest scores was 214.26 with an s.d. of 8.23. The mean of the posttest scores was 218.71 with an s.d. of 10.29.

Combining these two, the mean of the point change between the pre- and posttest scores was 4.45 with a s.d. of 6.20. A dependent samples t-test indicated that the posttest scores were significantly higher than the pretest scores, where $t = 4.00$, $p < .05$, and d.f. are 30.

The mean of the years of education outside the U.S. was 13.08. However, there was not a significant relation between years of education outside the United States and the point change between the pre- and posttest scores. In fact, though statistically insignificant, using the Pearson correlation there was actually a negative correlation between these two, with $r = -.19$, $d.f. = 29$, $p > .05$ and where only 3.6% of the variance in the point change was explained by education.

The mean of the hours of instruction was 46.84 with a possibility of 60 hours in the first group and 72 in the second. However, there was not a significant relation between total number of instructional hours and the point change between the pre- and posttest scores, where $r = .15$, $d.f. = 29$, $p > .05$, and only 2.2% of the variance in the point change was explained by instructional hours.

Lastly, the mean of the years the participants had lived in the United States was 4.60. However, there was not a significant relation between the length of residence in the U.S. and the point change between the pre- and posttest scores, where $r = .23$, $d.f. = 29$, $p > .05$, and where 5.1% of the variance was explained by length of residence.

Data Collected by the CALL Program and Interview Results

Much of the data obtained in the personal interviews provided background information for the participants. However, several categories required analysis. These included the students' goals for taking the class and their own evaluations of their native

language and English fluency and literacy proficiency. A report of these analyses is taken up in the next subsection.

Goals in Taking the CALL Program ESL course

Participants listed a variety of different goals in taking the ESL course. Specifically, participants' responses fit into seven categories. These categories include: 1) to learn to better speak, read, or write English; 2) further education; 3) improve job situation; 4) enhance social interaction; 5) improve self or satisfy interest; 6) help or protect self or children; and 7) gain citizenship.

Twenty-four participants stated that they wanted to learn to better speak, read, or write English, the highest number in any category. Nineteen people identified their goal as job related, either striving to obtain a job, obtain a better job, or obtain a promotion within their job. Ten listed education, either obtaining a GED, planning to attend university in the United States, or attending another form of education, as a goal. Seven people identified social reasons, such as better communicating with their friends, as a primary goal, and six listed personal improvement or interest as motivating them to take the course. Two people identified the class as a way to better protect themselves and their children from the fine print on legal documents or general misunderstandings at school or in the community. And lastly, one person identified a major goal for taking the course as gaining U.S. citizenship. Most students identified multiple goals. Information is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Student Goals

Student Goals	Number of Students
Learn to better speak, read, or write English	24
Further education	10
Improve job situation	19
Enhance social interaction	7
Improve self or satisfy interest	6
Help or protect self or children	2
Gain citizenship	1

Self-evaluation of Native Language Proficiency

Each participant was asked to rank his/her native language proficiency in the areas of speaking, reading, and writing, selecting from possible answers of “very well,” “well,” “not well,” or “not at all.” The majority of students, 29, felt that they spoke their native language “very well” while only two identified themselves as speaking somewhere between “well” and “very well.”

However, in the categories of reading and writing, there was a little more variation to participants’ answers. Still, a majority of 27 stated that they read their native language “very well.” Three others stated that they read “well,” and one identified himself as “not [reading] well.” For writing, 24 participants said that they write “very well,” 5, that they

write “well,” and only two that they do “not [write] well.” Table 4 summarizes these results.

Table 4

Self-described Native Language Proficiency

Native Language Proficiency	Very Well	Well	Not Well	Not at all
Speaking	29	2	0	0
Reading	27	3	1	0
Writing	24	5	2	0

Self-evaluation of English Proficiency

Each participant was asked to rank his/her own English proficiency in the areas of speaking, reading, and writing, selecting from possible answers of “very well,” “well,” “not well,” or “not at all.” Nine students felt they spoke “well,” while 22 answered “not well.” In comparison, 20 students felt that they read English “well,” while only 11 selected “not well.” Lastly, when asked how well they wrote in English, their answers closely matched their responses regarding speaking with 10 answering that they wrote “well,” 20 selecting “not well,” and only one participant stating that he or she could not write at all in English. See Table 5 for a summary of these results.

Table 5

Self-described English Proficiency

English Proficiency	Very Well	Well	Not Well	Not at all
Speaking	0	9	22	0
Reading	0	20	11	0
Writing	0	10	20	1

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Discussion

As explained in the results chapter, small sample size and less variation in education levels than anticipated necessitated evaluating the data beyond the relation of years of education and point gain between the pre- and posttest. This broader exploration of the data included looking not only at the influence of education but also the number of instructional hours, length of residence in the United States, the native language spoken, and the teachers' roles on the participants' progress. Each of these factors is discussed individually in the following subsections.

Education

Though the sample group came from a variety of different backgrounds and circumstances, all participants but one had at least 9 years of formal education outside of the U.S. with a mean of 13.08 years. Sixty-five percent of students had also attended a college or university or had completed additional training courses after receiving the equivalent of a high school diploma. This level of education contributed to the fact that all of the students reported high levels of native language literacy, and may account for

the lack of correlation between years of education outside the United States and point gain on the CASAS reading exam.

Hours of Instruction

The number of instructional hours appears to have had a greater influence on point gain than education. Though the results of the Pearson correlation between instruction hours and point gain was not statistically significant, when the sample is broken down into two groups, a difference becomes more noticeable.

Because the mean of the total instruction hours for the sample was 46.84, I first divided the group into those with fewer than 46.84 total instructional hours and those with more than 46.84 hours. The group with more than 46 hours of instruction had a point gain mean of 5.80 where $n=15$. The group with fewer than 46 hours had a mean of 3.18 where $n=16$. In addition, I divided the groups again along lines of those with greater than 50 hours of instruction and those with fewer than 50 hours. The difference became even greater. Those with greater than 50 instruction hours had a mean of 7.10 where $n=20$, and those with fewer than 50 hours had a mean of 3.00 where $n=11$. It appears that more instructional hours, or more consistent attendance, may have contributed to higher point gains.

Length of Residence in the United States

The correlation between participants' years living in the United States and point gains was also statistically insignificant. However, in dividing the sample, an unexpected trend of the study emerged. The group of students who had lived in the United States for 1 year or less ($n=10$) had a mean point gain of 5.5. The group who had lived in the U.S. for 1.1 to 4.9 years ($n=9$) had a mean of -.67. And finally, the group who had lived in the

U.S. for 5 or more years ($n=12$) had a mean point gain of 7.42. The students with less than 1 year of residence in the U.S. or 5 or more years of residence had significant point gains while those in the middle group actually showed a negative point gain.

Though I could find no similar results in previous studies, there were some possible explanations in the goals and life circumstances of the participants themselves. Without exception, the group who had been in the United States for 1 year or less listed jobs or education as their primary goal for taking the course. Many were new immigrants trying to find their first job in the U.S. and others were looking to find better employment. Still others were looking to improve their English in order to enter postsecondary education programs, and one student came to the U.S. specifically to study English before returning home to Mexico.

These specific goals carry a sense of urgency and need that may not have been present in the middle group who had already lived in the U.S. for 1.1-4.9 years. In contrast, most of these participants currently had jobs, though they still may have listed gaining a better job as a goal. Several of these participants used Spanish as the primary language in their job and found it difficult to even find places to speak English due to the extensive network of the Spanish community in the Las Vegas Valley. Also, several of this group listed "interest" in learning English or just wanting to speak English better as their primary goal in taking the course. Possibly, the less specific goals and aims of this group affected their progression and point gains.

The final group increasingly listed social goals such as communicating with friends as well as goals of protecting themselves and their children from things such as the "fine print" on documents. They were perhaps more acculturated into the community and had

begun to feel more urgency to participate. Also, many of these participants had children at home, who after 5 plus years of living in the United States, likely had gained some fluency in English through the school system. Increased exposure to English through their children, friends, and a desire to be more involved in the community may have positively influenced these participants' point gains.

Native Language

Students from different countries and language backgrounds face many different challenges in learning English. Depending on their native language, even literate students deal not only with different words and pronunciations but may need to learn a new alphabet or graphemic system and how to interpret it. As I examined the data collected, trends emerged among different language groups. Because of the small sample size, I divided the students into three geographic or continental language groups including American, Asian, and African. I recognized that this was an arbitrary division, with many differences between the languages and cultures within each group. However, despite the very small numbers of students speaking most represented languages, the sizable block of Spanish speakers made this division useful.

Of the 31 students, 21 of them spoke Spanish as their native language, and 1 from Canada spoke French, another romance language; these students make up the first group from the American continents. The 5 students in the second group were from the continent of Asia with 2 from Japan, 1 from Pakistan, 1 from Nepal, and finally 1, a Mandarin speaking student from Malaysia. The last group included those from African countries with 2 from Ethiopia speaking Amharic, 1 from Mali but raised speaking both

Malinke and French in Cote d' Ivore, and last a student from Rwanda who spoke Kinyarwanda.

The 21 students who spoke Spanish and the one student from Canada, who spoke French, had an average of 12.64 years of education outside the U.S., 47.45 instructional hours during the course, and an average point gain of 5.18, the highest average point gain of any of the language groups. With the exception of three, the students in this group had positive point gains. The group from the Asian countries had an average of 13.40 years of education outside the U.S., 46.20 hours of instruction, and an average point gain of 4. Finally, the African group had an average of 13.4 years of education outside the U.S., with 44.25 instruction hours, and an average point gain of 1.

In looking at the other variables that may have contributed to participants' success, the number of instructional hours for each group was not significantly different, though the African group was the only one whose mean fell below the overall mean of 46.84 hours. All the groups' years of education were comparable. The group who primarily spoke Spanish did have a higher average length of residence in the United States which may account, in part, for their higher point gain, as discussed in the previous subsection.

The African group was particularly notable because all but one of the 4 students actually had a negative point gain. Despite high levels of education, they appeared to struggle to succeed within the parameters of this course. One of the contributing factors may be the number of different languages that are commonly spoken in African countries. Several of these students spoke more than one African language and the country's official language used in the educational system may not have been the same language they most often spoke at home. Though the acquisition of more than one

language at an early age is usually seen as beneficial, if the students had developed limited or no literacy skills in the primary language, spoken at home, they may have had difficulty in developing higher cognitive literacy skills as discussed in the literature review. Other contributing factors may include the need to learn a different alphabet or simply other cultural and educational background differences. More research with a larger sample size is needed to explore these correlations more effectively.

Teacher Role

Though the two different class groups were combined for the statistical analysis of this study, there were a few notable differences between their results. Group two had 12 more instructional hours offered than group one did; however, despite this, group one achieved a slightly higher average point gain. Group one attended a mean of 36.35 instructional hours and had a mean point gain of 4.59. Group two attended a mean of 56.79 instructional hours and had a mean point gain of 4.29. This discrepancy is notable considering the positive influence that a higher number of instructional hours appeared to have with the groups combined.

Though I was not able to take fieldnotes in either course group based on my assisting role in the first class and my limited exposure to the second, I observed several distinct differences in the teaching styles of the two teachers that may have influenced this result. In group one, students most often sat around tables, working in groups of two to six, depending on the activity. The teacher usually avoided using the text, claiming it was too easy for most of the students, and instead used a variety of individual and group tasks including worksheets, activities with newspapers, short classroom presentations, etc. Tasks were often adapted for students at both the lowest and highest levels, based on their

individual knowledge and needs. The teacher circulated around the classroom, giving individual and group help where needed, as well as spot checking the students' work. She also welcomed outside help to increase the amount of time spent individually with students, and I was able to attend the class approximately three days each week for four of the five weeks, also circulating throughout the group and helping answer questions and checking student work.

The teacher for group two was uncomfortable with outside observers in her classroom, so my exposure to this group of students, and her teaching style, was limited. However, each time I entered the classroom, the students were seated two to a table, facing forward. The activities I viewed were limited to independent quiet work or whole class discussion, usually with the teacher at the front of the room, correcting and discussing an assignment from the textbook. I am not aware if the teacher utilized group activities or how often she circulated throughout the group working individually with students.

As mentioned in the literature review, Doughty & Pica (1986) found that learners tended to produce longer sentences and negotiate meaning more often in interactive tasks than they did in traditional instruction, where the teacher stood at the front of the room and directed the discussion. Perhaps the difference in teaching styles and interaction levels between the teachers and students in each of these groups explains the greater point gains in the first group, where the teacher appeared to involve students in more classroom tasks rather than leading the discussion from the front of the room as appeared to be the case in the second group.

Conclusions

Though this study found no significant interactions between the studied factors and participants' progress, all factors except education and native language literacy were found to slightly influence students' positive point gains. Through analysis of the length of residence, there is evidence of importance of learners setting specific goals as described by Mikulecky (1997) and Rivera (2003). Those who made the greatest gains were those who clearly stated specific goals that would impact their daily lives such as those related to jobs, education, and participation in the family and community.

In addition, it was found that increased attendance or total number of instructional hours was positively tied to students' progress, especially when combined with an interactive classroom environment. The combined group demonstrated a slight interaction between the total number of instructional hours individual's attended and positive point gains. However, group one's gains were even higher than group two's, despite fewer available instructional hours. The most observable difference between these groups was the more interactive environment present in the first group where students more actively participated in activities as opposed to the classroom environment of the second group where activities and discussions appeared to be primarily led by the teacher. Supporting evidence for the positive influence of the interactive classroom environment is found in Rivera (2003), as well as Mackey (1999), and Doughty & Pica (1986).

Furthermore, despite the negative correlation found between years of education and native language literacy levels and positive student progress, previous research discussed in the literature review refutes this finding. It is likely that the limitation of small sample

size and lack of variation in the education levels of the participants' greatly affected the results found by this study. Consequently, continuing research is necessary to accurately determine the effects of native language literacy and education on adult SLA.

The slightly positive correlations found between students' progress and the other factors studied as well as research discussed in the literature review imply not only that teachers and program administrators should be aware of these factors and their influence on individual students, but that they should also use these factors to better establish positive classroom environments that capitalize on students' prior knowledge and strengths. Educators need to give learners the tools to use their prior knowledge through direct teaching of skills that may transfer between the L1 and L2, help them set specific learning goals and assess and add new goals throughout the course, and finally, allow students to participate in monitoring their own progress on skills throughout the course in addition to the standardized tests utilized by the program. Through carefully considering the effects of these factors on specific participants and participant groups in ESL courses, teachers and administrators may more effectively plan and create interactive environments that positively influence the progress of the individual students they teach.

APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

- 1) Name: _____
- 2) Native Language: _____
- 3) Country of Birth: _____
- 4) Other languages spoken: _____

- 5) How long have you lived in the United States? _____ In Las Vegas? _____
- 6) What other countries have you lived in and for how long? _____

- 7) Who do you currently live with? _____
- 8) What language(s) do you currently speak at home? _____
- 9) If you currently work, how often do you speak English at work?
a. very often b. often c. not often d. never
- 10) Number of years of schooling completed outside the United States (and types of schools): _____

- 11) Highest degree or diploma earned outside the United States: _____

- 12) Why did you leave school or discontinue your studies (i.e. graduation, lack of money, family responsibilities, etc.)? _____

- 13) Number of years of schooling completed inside the United States: _____

14) Highest degree or diploma earned inside the United States: _____

15) Why did you leave school or discontinue your studies (i.e. graduation, lack of money, family responsibilities, etc.)? _____

16) What (if any) other classes, courses (including English classes), or study on your own have you done outside the United States? _____

17) What (if any) other classes, courses (including English classes), or study on your own have you done inside the United States? _____

18) If you have taken any English classes before, where were they held? _____

19) How well do you speak _____ (native language) ?

- a. very well b. well c. not well d. not at all

20) How well do you read _____ (native language) ?

- a. very well b. well c. not well d. not at all

What types of things do you read (books, newspapers, reports, etc.)? _____

21) How well do you write _____ (native language) ?

- a. very well b. well c. not well d. not at all

What types of things do you write? _____

22) How well do you speak English?

- a. very well b. well c. not well d. not at all

23) How well do you read English?

- a. very well b. well c. not well d. not at all

What types of things do you read (books, newspapers, reports, etc.)? _____

24) How well do you write English?

- a. very well b. well c. not well d. not at all

What types of things do you write? _____

25) What are your goals in taking this class (what do you hope to learn and why)?

APPENDIX B

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Group	Age at Interview	Native Language	Country of birth
1	1	33	Amharic	Ethiopia
2	2	45	Amharic	Ethiopia
3	1	28	French	Canada -- Quebec
4	1	34	French	Mali (until 2 yrs. Old)
5	2	30	Japanese	Japan
6	1	32	Japanese	Japan
7	2	38	Kinyarwanda	Rwanda
8	2	37	Mandarin	Malaysia
9	1	37	Nepali	Nepal
10	1	32	Punjabi	Pakistan
11	1	40	Spanish	Cuba
12	2	20	Spanish	El Salvador
13	1	19	Spanish	El Salvador
14	1	27	Spanish	Guatemala
15	1	24	Spanish	Mexico
16	1	33	Spanish	Mexico
17	2	36	Spanish	Mexico
18	2	40	Spanish	Mexico
19	2	24	Spanish	Mexico
20	1	45	Spanish	Mexico
21	1	29	Spanish	Mexico
22	2	21	Spanish	Mexico
23	2	33	Spanish	Mexico

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Other languages Spoken	Years in U.S.	Years in Las Vegas
1	none	0.167	0.167
2	3 other African languages	5	5
3	none	3	3
4	Malinke (w/ family at home	2.5	0.08
5	none	0.5	0.08
6	none	1	0.25
7	French, Russian	1.25	1.25
8	Cantonese, Malay	5	2
9	none	0.17	0.17
10	Urdu, Spanish, some Russian, very little French	0.1	0.1
11	none	10	4
12	French (a little)	2.5	2.5
13	none	0.25	0.25
14	none	1.25	1.25
15	none	6	6
16	none	6	1
17	none	15	0.25
18	none	2	2
19	none	4	0.58
20	some Italian	17	0.67
21	none	6	6
22	none	0.25	0.25
23	none	10	10

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Other countries lived in and length of time	Currently live with
1	n/a	friend
2	n/a	family
3	n/a	husband & daughter
4	Cote' d' Ivore -- since 2 yrs. Old	cousin
5	n/a	husband (American that speaks Japanese)
6	n/a	husband
7	Russia -- 16 yrs.	roommate
8	Singapore, 6 yrs.	children & husband
9	n/a	husband
10	Ecuador -- 9 yrs., Thailand 6 mnths.	wife
11	n/a	wife & daughter
12	n/a	family
13	n/a	parents
14	Uruguay 2 yrs., Venezuela 1 yr., Costa Rica 1 yr.	friends
15	n/a	wife, daughter, brothers, father
16	n/a	husband & children
17	n/a	family
18	n/a	n/a
19	n/a	husband
20	n/a	wife & son
21	Argentina -- 2 yrs.	wife
22	n/a	husband
23	n/a	husband & 4 kids

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Language at home	Speak English at work
1	Amharic	a. very often
2	Amharic/ some English	a. very often
3	French	n/a
4	French	n/a
5	Japanese/English	n/a
6	mostly English/ some Japanese	n/a
7	Kinyarwanda	a. very often
8	Cantonese	b. often
9	Nepali & English	n/a
10	Spanish/English	n/a
11	Spanish	a. very often
12	Spanish	b. often
13	Spanish/some English	n/a
14	Spanish	b. often
15	Spanish/a little English	c. not often
16	Spanish	n/a
17	English (w/ her children)/ some Spanish	n/a
18	n/a	n/a
19	English (husband doesn't speak Spanish)	b. often/c. not often (mostly Spanish)
20	Spanish	a. very often
21	Spanish	a. very often
22	Spanish	c. not often
23	Spanish	n/a

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Years in Primary School	Years in Middle School	Years in High School	Years in College
1	6	2	4	0
2	6	3	3	3
3	6	0	5	2
4	6	4	3	0
5	6	3	3	4
6	6	3	3	0
7	8	0	6	0
8	6	4	0	0
9	(see H.S.)	(see H.S.)	10	0
10	6	0	6	2
11	6	3	3	0
12	6	3	4	0
13	9	0	2	0
14	6	3	3	0
15	6	0	0	0
16	6	3	3	0
17	6	3	3	0
18	6	3	1	0
19	6	1	0	0
20	6	3	0	0.08
21	6	3	1.5	0
22	6	3	0	0
23	6	2	0	3

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Years in University	Years in Technical or other school	Years in Other courses and certifications outside U.S.
1	0	0	0.5
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	0	0	0
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	6	0	0
8	0	1	0
9	0	0	0
10	4	0	0
11	0	3	0
12	3	0	0
13	0	0	0
14	3	0	0
15	0	0	0
16	2	0	3
17	0	3	2
18	0	0	0
19	0	0	2
20	0	0	0
21	0	0	3
22	0	0	0
23	0	0	0

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Degrees, diplomas, & certifications completed outside U.S.
1	high school; accounting certificate
2	Accounting degree
3	high school
4	Bac (high school for University entrance)
5	gerontology certificate & nursing
6	high school
7	Masters in Telecommunications (in Russia)
8	cosmetology diploma
9	high school equivalent
10	Associate -- Administration and Commerce, Bachelors -- social work
11	high school, culinary degree
12	high school
13	secondary school
14	high school, technical degree (making sugar)
15	n/a
16	high school, secretarial, computers, cosmetology
17	professional degree
18	n/a
19	computer course diploma
20	secondary school
21	secondary school, mechanic certificate
22	n/a
23	nursing diploma

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Why left school or discontinued studies	Total years of education outside U.S.
1	graduation	12 1/2
2	graduation	15
3	accounting/ lack of money, internet/ changed mind	13
4	graduation	13
5	graduation	16
6	graduation	12
7	graduation	20
8	felt practical experience would be better than school (wishes she'd finished)	11
9	graduation	10
10	moved to South America to start a business	18
11	graduation	15
12	needed to work/large family -- also came to U.S.	16
13	graduation	11
14	moved to play professional soccer	15
15	lack of money -- expensive books	6
16	got married and had children -- couldn't pay daycare for Uni.	16
17	graduation	17
18	lack of money	10
19	lack of money (needed to work to help family)	9
20	lack of money	9.1
21	didn't want to finish -- travelled w/ friends	13.5
22	family problems	9
23	graduation	11

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Schooling in U.S.	Other courses and certifications inside U.S.
1	n/a	n/a
2	n/a	n/a
3	n/a	online French course through College of Montreal
4	n/a	n/a
5	n/a	n/a
6	n/a	n/a
7	n/a	n/a
8	n/a	n/a
9	n/a	n/a
10	n/a	n/a
11	n/a	n/a
12	n/a	n/a
13	n/a	n/a
14	n/a	n/a
15	n/a	n/a
16	n/a	n/a
17	n/a	n/a
18	n/a	n/a
19	n/a	n/a
20	n/a	food & beverage course
21	n/a	2 mnth. Computer course at Cambridge Library
22	5 mnths -- 10th grade in San Diego	6 mnth. Computer course
23	n/a	n/a

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Degrees, diplomas, & certifications earned inside U.S.	Why left school or discontinued studies in U.S.
1	n/a	n/a
2	n/a	n/a
3	n/a	n/a
4	n/a	n/a
5	n/a	n/a
6	n/a	n/a
7	n/a	n/a
8	n/a	n/a
9	n/a	n/a
10	n/a	n/a
11	n/a	n/a
12	n/a	n/a
13	n/a	n/a
14	n/a	n/a
15	n/a	n/a
16	n/a	n/a
17	n/a	n/a
18	n/a	n/a
19	n/a	n/a
20	n/a	n/a
21	n/a	n/a
22	n/a	family problems
23	n/a	n/a

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	English study outside U.S.	English study inside U.S.
1	high school	first
2	high school a little English	first
3	high school	first
4	n/a	ESL class, Atlanta, GA -- 3-4 mnths.
5	conversation class in school, Japan	first
6	1 1/2 yrs. English classes in Japan after high school	first
7	n/a	10 wk. English course at a church in LV, English classes at work
8	English school in Malaysia	first
9	some English in high school	first
10	n/a	first
11	n/a	first
12	English in Uni. In El Salvador	first
13	some in high school	first
14	some in Univ., English for Engineering	first
15	n/a	n/a
16	a little in school	1 yr. ESL course in Denver, CO
17	English in secundaria	abt. 5 other ESL courses -- library & adult ed school
18	a little in school	n/a
19	a little in secundaria, w/ friends in Tijuana	ESL course Whitney Library, 3 wks. Here and there in other courses
20	n/a	Adult education English levels 1-5
21	n/a	3 mnth. ESL Course in LV
22	a little in secundaria	first
23	a little in secundaria	adult Ed. English classes -- through CCSD

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	English study on own	Speak native language
1	n/a	a. very well
2	n/a	a. very well
3	n/a	a. very well
4	reading on own w/ tapes from library	a. very well (French)
5	n/a	a/b between very well and well
6	n/a	a. very well
7	n/a	a. very well
8	n/a	a. very well
9	n/a	a. very well
10	practicing w/ international customers	a. very well
11	n/a	a. very well
12	n/a	a. very well
13	n/a	a. very well
14	n/a	a. very well
15	1 videotape -- didn't finish	a. very well
16	n/a	a. very well
17	n/a	a. very well
18	n/a	a. very well
19	n/a	a. very well
20	n/a	a. very well
21	n/a	a. very well
22	n/a	a. very well
23	n/a	a. very well

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Read native language (NL)	Types of things read (NL)
1	a. very well	newspaper
2	a. very well	letters, books
3	a. very well	books, newspapers
4	a. very well	n/a
5	a. very well	books, magazines
6	a. very well	magazines
7	a. very well	nothing
8	a. very well	all
9	b. well	books, newspapers
10	c. not well (Schooling done in Urdu)	nothing
11	a. very well	all
12	a. very well	newspapers, novels
13	a. very well	book, newspapers, magazines
14	a. very well	books, newspapers, magazines
15	b. well	books, comic, newspapers
16	a. very well	everything
17	a. very well	books, newspapers, magazines, etc.
18	a. very well	books, magazines
19	a. very well	books, magazines, newspapers
20	a. very well	magazines
21	a. very well	newspapers, books
22	a. very well	magazines
23	a. very well	magazines, books

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Write native language	Types of things written (NL)
1	a. very well	letters
2	a. very well	letters, everything
3	b. well	lists, email, homework
4	a. very well	email
5	a. very well	letters
6	a. very well	letters
7	a. very well	nothing
8	a. very well	everything
9	a. very well	letters
10	c. not well	nothing
11	a. very well	everything
12	a. very well	letters, school work
13	a. very well	letters, stories
14	a. very well	homework
15	b. well	letters, stories, song lyrics
16	a. very well	papers for doctors, school, etc.
17	a. very well	letters, stories
18	b. well	letters, songs
19	b. well	letters, notes, lists
20	a. very well	chatting & email
21	a. very well	letters
22	a. very well	letters, everything
23	a. very well	notes

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Speak English	Read English (E)	Types of things read (E)
1	b. well	b. well	newspaper, news journals
2	b. well	b. well	newspapers, magazines, classwork
3	c. not well	b. well	daughter's homework & games
4	c. not well	b. well	action books
5	c. not well	b. well	instructions, nutrition, advertisements
6	c. not well	c. not well	websites, movie subtitles
7	b. well	b. well	books, tv
8	c. not well	c. not well	letters, bills
9	c. not well	b. well	books
10	b. well	b. well	suspense novels, newspapers, magazines
11	c. not well	c. not well	newspapers
12	c. not well	b. well	books
13	c. not well	b. well	nothing
14	c. not well	b. well	books, movie subtitles
15	c. not well	b. well	books, comics
16	b. well	c. not well	books, reports for children
17	b.well/c.not well	b. well	magazines, newspapers, books
18	c. not well	b. well	books, magazines, reports on tv
19	b. well/ c. not well	c. not well	magazines, subtitles in movies, newspapers
20	b. well	b. well	newspapers, memos
21	c. not well	b. well	newspapers, books for class
22	c. not well	c. not well	magazines, classwork
23	b. well	b. well	magazines, books, books (scrapbooking)

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Write English	Types of things written (E)
1	b. well	letters
2	b. well	classwork
3	b. well	homework, mail, school reports for daughter, lists
4	c. not well	email, job applications
5	b. well	letters, resume, applications, classwork
6	c. not well	classwork
7	b. well	applications, classwork
8	c. not well	letters, forms, requests
9	c. not well	classwork
10	b. well	poetry, applications, letters, emails
11	c. not well	classwork
12	b. well	notes, classwork
13	b. well	classwork
14	c. not well	homework
15	c. not well	classwork
16	b. well	letters, cards, to teachers and friends & family
17	b. well	classwork, letters for daughter, lists
18	c. not well	applications, classwork
19	c. not well	homework, grocery lists, notes
20	c. not well	reports
21	c. not well	reports, classwork
22	c. not well	notes, classwork
23	c. not well	classwork, letters (to teachers)

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Goals for this class and English study in general
1	speak English better, job with more communication, attend Uni. In a few years
2	talk English & write it better -- talking w/ friends, etc.
3	for future work -- living here now and needs English every day!
4	to prepare to go to college to study computers
5	improve English to get citizenship -- to get a job
6	speak better English -- more natural conversation
7	improve English proficiency -- to get a better job (in degree field).
8	better pronunciation, to read better, to protect herself (from the fine print), American pronunciation
9	wants to speak English -- likes learning English -- wants a job
10	Improve grammar, speaking, understanding, and pronunciation of English, learn culture and improve himself
11	learn more English and grammar, job communication
12	to get a better job
13	learn to read and speak English, study business administration at Uni. In U.S.
14	learn English better, for job but more because it is important to him personally
15	learn more English, understand and speak better -- Job -- train to be lead cook and kitchen manager
16	Learn vocabulary, to find answers to questions, speak better to get a better job w/ more opportunitites -- more money and benefits
17	understand English better to help children w/school & homework. -- to speak to people
18	improve pronunciation -- to listen & understand more, for a job, and because it's interesting
19	learn better English and finish course, to prepare for GED class & to study to be a nurse & a doctor
20	to keep job -- to improve career and gain promotions
21	Speak English very well, write well, Personal goal (which is better for the job), feel more comfortable speaking with others
22	learn to speak English, write better, for a better job in Mexico, finish high school
23	more English for education -- get nursing degree here

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Point change	Total Instruction Hours
1	201	214	13	18
2	204	199	-5	69
3	225	232	7	39
4	218	217	-1	48
5	220	230	10	72
6	220	222	2	27
7	233	230	-3	42
8	213	220	7	69
9	205	199	-6	30
10	218	225	7	33
11	206	214	8	27
12	218	225	7	39
13	205	206	1	45
14	209	214	5	24
15	206	220	14	48
16	212	220	8	51
17	206	211	5	66
18	205	211 196	6	48
19	228	226	-2	42
20	227	232	5	36
21	222	227	5	48
22	212	222	10	60
23	217	232*	15	72

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Group	Age at Interview	Native Language	Country of birth
24	1	25	Spanish	Mexico
25	2	27	Spanish	Mexico
26	2	22	Spanish	Mexico
27	1	39	Spanish	Mexico
28	2	39	Spanish	Mexico
29	1	49	Spanish	Mexico
30	1	33	Spanish	Mexico
31	2	34	Spanish	Mexico

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Other languages Spoken	Years in U.S.	Years in Las Vegas
24	none	1.67	1
25	none	0.5	0.17
26	none	3	2
27	none	15	0.67
28	none	15	0.67
29	none	3.5	3.5
30	none	0.08	0.08
31	understand some Italian	5	5

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Other countries lived in and length of time	Currently live with
24	n/a	rent room
25	Venezuela 2 yrs, Cuba 3 yrs.	sister & nephew
26	n/a	wife
27	n/a	husband & son
28	n/a	husband & son
29	n/a	family
30	n/a	relatives
31	n/a	family

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Language at home	Speak English at work
24	Spanish	b. often
25	Spanish	b. often
26	Spanish/ a little English	b. often
27	Spanish	n/a
28	Spanish	n/a
29	Spanish	b. often
30	Spanish	a. very often
31	Spanish	a. very often

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Years in Primary School	Years in Middle School	Years in High School	Years in College
24	6	3	3	0
25	6	3	3	0
26	6	3	3	0
27	6	3	0	0
28	6	3	0	0
29	6	3	3	4
30	6	3	3	0
31	6	3	0	0

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Years in University	Years in Technical or other school	Years in Other courses and certifications outside U.S.
24	2	0	0
25	8	0	0
26	0	0	0
27	0	0	0
28	0	0	0
29	0	1.5	0
30	4	0	0
31	0	0	0

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Degrees, diplomas, & certifications completed outside U.S.
24	high school (w/technical cert. water contamination)
25	Bachelor's in Psychology
26	accounting degree in high school
27	n/a
28	n/a
29	college degree, cosmetology certificate
30	Bachelor's
31	n/a

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Why left school or discontinued studies	Total years of education outside U.S.
24	lack of money -- school left no time for job.	14
25	graduation/ others didn't want to finish	21
26	graduation	12
27	lack of money	9
28	lack of money	9
29	graduation	17.5
30	graduation	16
31	lack of money	9

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Schooling in U.S.	Other courses and certifications inside U.S.
24	8 mnths. Public school CA -- age 12	n/a
25	n/a	n/a
26	n/a	n/a
27	n/a	2 mnth. Computer course in LV
28	n/a	2 mnth. Computer course in LV
29	n/a	n/a
30	n/a	n/a
31	n/a	n/a

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Degrees, diplomas, & certifications earned inside U.S.	Why left school or discontinued studies in U.S.
24	n/a	family moved back to Mexico
25	n/a	n/a
26	n/a	n/a
27	n/a	n/a
28	n/a	n/a
29	n/a	n/a
30	n/a	n/a
31	n/a	n/a

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	English study outside U.S.	English study inside U.S.
24		first
25	a few classes in school	1 mnth course at adult ed school in CA
26	n/a	first
27	n/a	3 mnth ESL course in CA
28	n/a	3 mnth ESL course in CA
29	n/a	2 mnth. ESL course in LV
30	2 levels (5 wks. Each) English in Mexico -- focus grammar	first
31	English school in Mexico -- basic English course 5 mnths.	first

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	English study on own	Speak native language
24	reads books with hard copy and audio	regular -- a. very well technical -- b. well
25	n/a	a. very well
26	n/a	a. very well
27	n/a	a. very well
28	n/a	a. very well
29	n/a	a. very well
30	n/a	a. very well
31	n/a	a. very well

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Read native language (NL)	Types of things read (NL)
24	a. very well	history, motivational, news
25	a. very well	books, newspapers, etc.
26	a. very well	books, magazines
27	a. very well	books
28	a. very well	books
29	a. very well	books, newspapers, magazines
30	a. very well	newspapers, books
31	b. well	newspapers

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Write native language	Types of things written (NL)
24	a. very well	everything
25	b. well	writes about politics, justice and economics
26	a. very well	letters
27	a. very well	letters
28	a. very well	letters
29	a. very well	letters, everything
30	a. very well	when necessary
31	c. not well	n/a

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Speak English	Read English (E)	Types of things read (E)
24	c. not well	c. not well	book w/ tape, newspaper
25	c. not well	c. not well	sports & politics, newspapers, magazines, books
26	c. not well	c. not well	internet, newspapers
27	c. not well	b. well	newspapers, school reports, documents
28	c. not well	b. well	newspapers, school reports, documents
29	c. not well	b. well	nothing -- likes to watch movies and listen to tapes
30	c. not well	c. not well	newspapers, signs
31	c. not well	c. not well	magazines,

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Write English	Types of things written (E)
24	c. not well	unknown vocabulary lists while reading
25	c. not well	lists, applications, etc.
26	c. not well	classwork
27	c. not well	notes to teachers
28	c. not well	notes to teachers
29	c. not well	n/a
30	c. not well	nothing
31	d. not at all	n/a

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Goals for this class and English study in general
24	learn English better, finish University
25	to understand the important literature, go to University & then a job etc. (here in U.S.)
26	to speak English well with his wife, to study air conditioning & heating -- better job
27	learn to speak better to get a job
28	learn to speak better to get a job
29	to speak English better, for a better job, to study nails
30	to learn English very well -- personal goal, came to U.S. specifically to learn English
31	feel more comfortable in U.S. -- job applications, promotions, etc. -- learn to read & write better

COMPLETE INTERVIEW RESPONSES

Student	Pretest Score	Posttest Score	Point change	Total Instruction Hours
24	213	215	2	36
25	221	225	4	30
26	213	215	2	66
27	207	215	8	42
28	212	218	6	54
29	209	202	-7	6
30	225	232	7	45
31	212	225	13	66

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