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An Analysis of English Language Learning Needs for Latino Adults Associated with a Church Outreach Program

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AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING NEEDS FOR LATINO
ADULTS ASSOCIATED WITH A CHURCH OUTREACH PROGRAM

by

Ellen E. Keesling

A Capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in English as a Second Language

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This project is dedicated to my family.

Jim: You have provided unfailing encouragement and have been my primary support and champion. You are the reason I am even pursuing this degree.

Amelia: Thank you for sharing study tips and encouragement while you were pursuing your own degree, as well as commiserating with me when we were both buried under with homework.

Adam: You continually reminded me that I was fully capable of completing this degree at my age, and you always asked me how things were going. And then really listened.

Mom: You have consistently believed in me all of my life and always encouraged me to keep learning. You and Dad taught me that Christian love means that we help others whenever possible, which is the whole point of this project.

I have been so blessed by all of you and eternally grateful for your presence in my life.

Epigraph

*“Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can.
In all the places you can. At all the times you can.
To all the people you can. As long as ever you can.”*

John Wesley

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

“Her mom worked. She would go into work at six in the morning. Her other job ended at three...She would get home at three-thirty..then her mom would leave again because her other work started at four...and ended at ten. So she would never see her mom, only for like 10 minutes every single day and then until the weekend...Then, her mom is like, ‘I wish I could have more time for you, but I need this because I’m a single parent, I have to feed you and your siblings, I just don’t have time to be with you during the week.’ And she would give her daughter more responsibilities because she was the oldest, so she had to be taking care of her brothers...She was 15...after school she would get home...have to do her homework before her siblings got home from school because once they got home from school she had to feed them and help them with their homework, and then after that she would put them to sleep. So when their mom got there everybody was sleeping so she never saw them.” ([;personal communication, April 27, 2016)

This story illustrates the struggle of one parent to provide for her family. It is a story heard often in my city, and a situation that can limit the ability of Latino parents to attend classes to improve their English. (In this paper the term Latino is used broadly to reference those who speak Spanish as a native language and whose country of origin is in Central or South America.) I was made aware of the English language learning needs of a group of Latino adults in my city who are connected to my local church through an

outreach program that was started a few years ago. It was my intent through this research project to identify their specific English language learning needs. With increased exposure to this population and more urgent requests for help, I began wondering why existing language learning programs were not working. What are the problems these adults face that are preventing them from achieving their language goals? Do they have needs and challenges that are not being addressed? What attitudes and perceptions do they have about learning English? Specifically, what are the English language learning needs of Latino adults in my community that are not being met by existing ESL (English as a second language) programs?

In this chapter I will provide background on the experiences that provided the motivation for this project, as well as a description of the group of Latino adults that will be participating in my research. I intend to provide an overview of research that has been done with similar groups. Additionally, I will describe my role in the study, including my personal background, objectives and biases, and pose the questions that will influence the design of my research.

Background

To provide background for this study, this section will provide a broad overview of my church's outreach program, and then detail three different experiences I had that increased my awareness of the problem. Then, statistics on the increasing ethnic diversity in my city will be discussed. A summary of literature related to my study will also be reviewed which details barriers to learning and perceived needs of similar groups of Latino adults. All names of individuals and organizations in this capstone have been changed to maintain confidentiality.

Outreach Program

My local church entered into a relationship with the Latino community in my city through a church outreach program in the summer of 2010. Our pastor became aware of the needs of children at the elementary school across the street from our church. Children who received free- or reduced-lunch during the school year often did not eat lunch when they were at home during the summer. Our pastor discovered that the Summer Food Service Program (United States Department of Agriculture, 2016) would provide food to those in need if someone were willing to take responsibility for serving the food. In addition to offering food to children in need, our pastor created a program called Aprender that provided activities for those children. The program has continued to grow each year with the majority of participants coming from the Latino community. It is through this outreach program that I sought out Latino adults (parents and guardians of the children involved in the program) to identify better options for them to increase their English language proficiency.

Relationships between my church and the Latino community in my city have grown since the inception of the Aprender program and also in part due to collaboration with Valeria, who is a member of my church. Children participating in Aprender come from families with low income, primarily of Latino origin. Over the past few years, Aprender has been expanded to include additional programming and funding from local businesses with enrollment in the summer of 2015 at approximately 300 children. Aprender has grown over 400% since 2010 with many local businesses partnering with the program to impact the lives of Latino families in my city (personal communication, February 24, 2016). Each fall a picnic is held at my church for all of the families who

participated in the program and church members are invited to attend. This provides an opportunity for relationship building and positive interaction between my church and the Latino community. This study will examine a small population of adults from my local area who are part of this Aprender community.

Experiences

Three significant encounters impacted the design and provided the momentum necessary to begin this study. The first experience was an awareness of the needs of Latino families in my community through the outreach program at my local church. Church members are regularly updated on the success of this program and the opportunities to become involved. The youth of our congregation volunteer each summer as assistants in the summer program, while over ten percent of our members help with a variety of outreach efforts sponsored by the church throughout the year.

Next, in casual conversations with fellow church member Valeria, it was revealed that Latino adults in our community have a need for ESL classes. Valeria used to serve as a multicultural liaison to the Latino community in our school district and has a significant relationship with many Latino families. In these conversations with her, she communicated that Latino adults in our community have a desire to grow in their English language proficiency. The language learning goals of these adults ranged from acquiring basic English language skills to obtaining the English proficiency necessary to acquire a GED (General Education Diploma) and attend college.

Finally, in the summer of 2015, I casually spoke with a fellow church member named Camila about her perception of the language needs of her Latino friends and acquaintances. Camila is bilingual and supported my research efforts as an interpreter

and translator. From her perspective, Latino adults in our community have significant barriers to obtaining English proficiency and the need for ESL classes is great. Camila expressed an urgent need for our church to offer English instruction to her Latino friends and acquaintances as she was often bombarded with requests from parents to explain communications from their children's schools. As I became better friends with Camila and our relationship developed, I became increasingly motivated to find a solution to the problem she described.

Local Diversity

The city I live in is a suburb of a large metropolitan area located in the upper Midwest. People of Latino origin comprise approximately 7.8% of the total city population, or approximately 2890 persons (U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder, 2010). This study will only be analyzing the needs of the Latino adults and does not address the needs of other ethnic groups in my city who may have English language learning needs. According to conversations with Valeria and Camila, many of the Latino adults in my target group have Mexican origins. According to the United States Census Bureau, 2010, figures indicate approximately 5.9% of the total Latino population in my city to be of Mexican origin, which is estimated to be 2,195 individuals. My research was conducted with a small subset of these potential students in order to distinguish their unique needs.

Related Studies

Needs analysis studies have been completed with similar populations (Chavez, 2011; Crandall, 1993; Csepelyi, 2009; Vassei, 2011; Thieves, 2011), but many focus on the needs of Latino adults currently attending some type of post-secondary institution.

This study aims to capture data from a segment of the adult Latino EL (English learner) population that is not often studied, namely individuals who are not attending post-secondary institutions but are parents with school-age children.

In other studies, it is common for Latino adults to report challenges in finding transportation and childcare in order to attend ESL classes and the difficulty of not being able to attend classes because of these impediments (Buttaro, 2002; Hayes, 1989). I hope to gather data that not only confirms common obstacles to learning, but also identifies other barriers to acquiring English.

In addition, some Latino adults were found to have completed fewer than eight years of schooling in their native language of Spanish, which also complicates the learning process (McKay as cited by Hayes, 1989; Csepelyi, 2009). Studies reviewed in this capstone will also examine the perceptions and attitudes that Latino adults have about attending ESL classes. Lastly, research specifically focused on church-based ESL programs will be considered.

Role of the Researcher

Of a potential group of adult ELs (English learners) in my city, this study will focus only on the Latino adults whose children participated in the Aprender program in 2015. This group of adults is accessible to me because of the relationship they have with my local church. It is also a manageable size. Estimates were that approximately 150 parents would form a pool for research for this study. A formal needs analysis has not been completed specifically focusing on this group.

It is imperative that the process that I facilitate does not damage relationships between this group of adults and my church. Currently, many members of the Latino

community in my city recognize my church as a safe place they can go to when they have needs. Much of the success of this study has depended on the assistance of Valeria and Camila, both of whom approached me regarding the need for ESL classes in the Latino community, and both of whom have trust and respect from the Latino community. It was my intent to identify obstacles to learning as authentically as possible by capitalizing on the open and trusting atmosphere that already exists between my church and the group of Latino adults I studied. My goal was to build on the positive relationship that already exists between the Aprender program sponsored by my church and the Latino adults I intended to study.

As I reach the end of my graduate degree program, I now feel I have the necessary skills to research the answers to the questions I have and create a partnership between my church and those in need of language instruction. I want to serve people in my community through my church, which is something I have been doing as a volunteer for all of my adult life.

To collect this data, I began with a small group of seven adults from the Aprender program who have some English language proficiency. The intent of meeting with this group was to provide clarification and confirmation of some of the challenges that have been reported by other researchers in studies of similar groups, as well as potentially provide new information on obstacles and needs not previously identified by existing studies. After this pre-survey group meeting, I intended to conduct a written survey event at my local church and invite all parents associated with the Aprender program. After an initial pilot survey to a small group of these parents, and after conferring with Valeria and Camila, it was determined that a written survey would not successfully produce data from

the target population. It was decided to proceed with personal interviews with key individuals from the Latino community to provide in-depth, authentic data on the English language learning needs of my target population. I met with a total of seven individuals who are recognized as advocates for Latino families in my community. Each individual participated in a personal interview where I asked questions about the English language learning needs of Latino adults in my city. In addition, I met with one of the founders of the Aprender program (the previous pastor of our church) as well as the coordinator of our local ESL program.

Data was analyzed to look for recurring themes, as well as to determine if methods of providing instruction that are not currently available might be effective. My role in this study was to facilitate this data collection and analysis.

Background of the Researcher

Although programs currently exist in my community for ELs, the Latino adults I am studying are not attending them. If Latino adults in my city are not attending existing programs, what are the needs they have that are not being met by these programs? Based on informational conversations with fellow church members, a gap exists between providing English learning instruction to Latino adults in my city and currently available ESL classes. My objective was to seek out information about the best way to serve this population with an ESL program sponsored by my church. The leadership at my church is supportive and eager to learn how we can utilize existing relationships and resources to serve in our local community.

As I continued to pursue my graduate studies in ESL, it became clear to me that I can use my expertise and knowledge from my courses and training to assist this group of

people. Having traveled to many different countries, I know how it feels to be isolated and unable to navigate basic tasks of daily living because of not having proficiency in the local language. Because of my experiences, I am acquiring the skills and expertise necessary to develop ESL classes to meet the needs of these potential students.

My heritage contrasts with my target research population in several ways. The majority of my life has been spent living in the state I was born in although I have lived in another large city in the United States for three years and in Canada for four years. These two moves provided me with firsthand knowledge of the adjustments required when relocating, but neither put me in the position of being part of a minority culture or language. I have been a resident in my current city for 15 years and an active member of my local church for seven years. My family has witnessed the changes in diversity in my city over the years, although the population at my church remains primarily white, with western European heritage. My husband, my children and I have all been active volunteers in our church. I currently serve in music ministry and women's ministry, and my husband is on the leadership team. We both have a strong desire to continue to serve the cultural and language minorities in our city, beginning with those who already have an existing relationship with our church.

After completing my classes to receive my TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) certificate, I began to see how I might use my skills to serve this population. As I began to look for an opportunity close to home, it became evident that I had to look no further than my own backyard. Although I have never lived abroad, both of my children have gone to Asia on international youth exchanges and our family has hosted an international student from Columbia in our home. Through these three exchanges, and

subsequent travel to Asia, I have seen through the eyes of these young persons the depth of the struggles that accompany packing up and moving to a completely different culture, and becoming an instant minority. This has allowed me to empathize with some of the situations experienced by many of the members of the Latino community in my city.

I personally brought several assumptions with me to this research project. One of the assumptions I carried with me was that the people I would be studying would be forthcoming and honest in their feedback. The assumption was that if this population already had a beneficial and trusting relationship with our local church, they would be willing to provide reliable data to me that will inform the creation of an adult ESL program sponsored by my church. Another assumption that was made was that current ESL programs are not able to meet the needs that exist in my area and that something different will need to be implemented for this population to have their English language learning needs met.

This study will inform my church of the perceived needs of this population, with the intent to begin to offer ESL classes immediately following the completion of this capstone. This data collection was intended to reveal the perceived ideals of the respondents, as well as capture the perceptions of the previous pastor of our church, Valeria, and Camila, who all know this population well. My intent was to discover potential alternative approaches of English instruction and program design that would not only overcome perceived barriers for this group of adults, but also address their unique English language learning needs. For example, would ESL classes for this population be more effective if taught bilingually? Or co-taught by a native Spanish and a native English speaker? Could classes be brought to the Latino adults instead of requiring them

to travel to attend community classes? What impact does their native culture have on their English language learning needs and how do they address those needs?

From a professional perspective, this study will inform curriculum and program design for ESL classes specifically targeted to Latinos in my city. In addition, I hoped to accomplish three other goals. The first was to provide a starting point to continue to analyze the needs of Latinos adults in my city who desire to learn English. The second was to provide material that is useful to other researchers desiring to address the needs of similar populations. Finally, I hoped to create a template for other churches and institutions to analyze needs of ELs in their own communities with the intent to serve this population by assisting them in increasing their English language proficiency.

Guiding Questions

The purpose of this research is to collect data from a small group of Latino adults in my community. What do these adults perceive as barriers to attending existing ESL classes? What are their personal and professional goals and how can learning English impact those goals? How is their involvement in the Aprender program impacting their families in regard to English language development? How can English instruction be provided to this population that might better fit their needs? How can my congregation partner with this unique community of potential English language learners to build an effective ESL program? My research question is: What are the English language learning needs of Latino adults in my community that are not being met by existing ESL programs?

Summary

In this chapter I provided key concepts, the context of my study, my background and role as a researcher, as well as any biases and assumptions that I brought to this research. In Chapter Two, I will review literature that describes work that researchers have done to identify what Latino adults need and want in regards to English language learning. The literature reviewed lists obstacles and barriers that the group of adults I am studying may be experiencing, and also describes the learning goals of similar populations. The process I used to conduct my study and why I chose the particular methods I used are presented in Chapter Three. Following the examination of my methods, Chapter Four describes the results of my data collection and analysis. Chapter Five serves as a reflection and discussion of the data collected in my research. I will also review the limitations of my study, present ideas for further research and state recommendations that will be shared with my church leadership as they consider starting an ESL program.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Overview

The purpose of this study was to determine the English language instruction needs and goals of a group of Latino adults in my community who have children involved in an outreach program sponsored by my church. My goal was to collect data directly from these individuals to identify the English language learning needs of Latino adults in my community that are not being met by existing ESL programs.

This chapter will examine a variety of studies that analyze factors that impact the ability of adult ELs to increase their English language proficiency. Although a significant number of the studies included in this literature review report data on Latinos in general, many identify the source of data to be originating from Latinos who report their country of origin to be Mexico. Based on reports from my primary contacts in the Latino community in my city, the majority of my target population is reported to have come from Mexico, although data does not exist to validate this claim, due to the high number of individuals in my community who are undocumented who do not wish to report personal information. I will aim to present findings that specifically focus on Latino adults originating from Mexico whenever possible.

Studies included in my review have been conducted in a number of states across the country with Latino adults who are not yet proficient in English. Some research examined absenteeism and its causes while others analyzed the impact of a lack of

English language skills on socioeconomic issues in Latino families. I first intend to consider research studies that have been completed with the purpose of identifying obstacles to attending ESL class. Then, I will move to reviewing other studies that have tried to pinpoint perceptions of Latino adults and how expectations and motivation to learn impact their acquisition of English. I will look at the effect that limited English proficiency (LEP) has on a variety of factors. Lastly, church-based ESL programs will be examined to see the impact these programs have on ESL students. After reviewing the related literature, I will discuss the gap that exists in research related to my project and identify the questions that influence this study. Following discussion of this gap, I will reiterate my research goals and rationale for completing this study. A summary of related literature will be given and an introduction to Chapter Three will be presented.

Common Barriers

A number of research projects focused on the acquisition of English language skills for Latino adults has been completed with populations of adults attending post-secondary institutions, although some studies have been done with adults desiring more basic ESL instruction. It is important to distinguish between a population of adult English language learners who desire instruction in academic English and those who have a need for more conversational English. Other studies have been completed that examine a population of adult ESL students who are literate in their native language, have achieved a high school education, and whose desire is to complete post-secondary education (Mathews-Aydinli, 2008). This population differs from a group of adults who have not completed formal education in their home country and have differing goals and needs in regards to acquiring English. Although the United States has many different

ethnic groups who desire to improve their English language proficiency, the largest subgroup of English language learners in the United States is Hispanic (Mathews-Aydinli, 2008), with 74% of foreign-born individuals reporting the inability to speak English very well (Fry & Hakimzadeh as cited by Mathews-Aydinli, 2008). Mathews-Aydinli (2008) goes on to report that no studies have been completed that specifically examine these English language learners who desire to increase their nonacademic English proficiency.

A report by Crandall (1993) examines the challenge of meeting the needs of an increasing number of LEP (limited English proficiency) adults in the United States, among them Latino immigrants. Research has been done specifically focusing on the common needs of adults Latino ELs who are not enrolled in colleges or universities (Chavez, 2005; Diaz de Sabates, 2007; Han-Carlsson, 2014; Nangle, 2013; Shanahan, Mulhern & Rodriguez-Brown, 1995; Vassei, 2011). These projects relate specifically to my target population and have provided valuable insight, specifically in recognizing impediments that Latino adults encounter when trying to attend ESL classes. Common barriers that are reported in these studies are lack of transportation, inability to afford childcare, scheduling, family responsibilities at home and unfinished formal education in native language.

As a result of having limited English proficiency (LEP), many Latino adults are not able to provide enough income to afford either transportation to ESL classes or childcare costs while they attend ESL classes (Hayes, 1989; Mathews-Aydinli, 2008). Latino adult students in northern California reported transportation and lack of childcare as obstacles to attending ESL classes (Vassei, 2011). Vassei completed a study of 34

adult ESL students from two locations using surveys, group discussions and interviews with program directors to collect data. She reported that potential ESL students who had public transportation easily available, or lived close to ESL program sites have better access to classes and more consistent attendance. In this study, Vassei found that mothers responsible for caring for their children were most affected and she suggests that ESL programs consider alternatives to providing childcare, as it can be financially difficult for ESL programs to cover those costs.

Adults indicate they do not have enough time to attend ESL classes because of work and family commitments (Hayes, 1989). Work must take priority over other activities in order to generate income, so often personal responsibilities get put on hold if an adult chooses to attend ESL instruction (Hayes, 1989; Larotta, 2007, Nangle 2013). Research done in New Jersey examined 207 Latino adults currently enrolled in ESL classes, who were given a survey describing 32 obstacles to participation. The most frequent answers included not having enough time, work responsibilities taking priority over learning, and costs involved with obtaining childcare and transportation (Hayes, 1989). Nangle (2013) personally interviewed Latino adults in her study and found that they had not attended ESL classes in the past due to working long hours and several respondents, although excited to begin studying English, shared concerns about scheduling and inability to attend class due to work commitments.

Another barrier to increasing English language proficiency that has been identified is the lack of completed formal education of adult ESL students in their native language. English language learners whose native language is Spanish have varying degrees of literacy when they arrive in the United States (Hayes, 1989). In a book that

examines how well immigrants to the United States are integrated, the authors report that the average years of education of Mexican immigrants is just over nine (Bean, Brown, & Bachmeier, 2015). Without the ability to read and write well in their native language, adults cannot progress quickly in government-sponsored programs and may have to exit the program before meeting their language learning goals (Nelson, 2013). Additionally, adults with low literacy in their native language can be intimidated by the classroom setting and become frustrated with perceived lack of progress (Vassei, 2011). If accurate assessment of L1 (native or first language spoken) literacy is not completed, it causes difficulty in ESL instruction and learners who do not speak English as their first language will inappropriately be placed in classes that they cannot succeed in (Thieves, 2011). When Latino adults who are low literate in their L1 do not make this jump forward, they are then referred out of ABE programs (Nelson, 2013). Some ELs are non-literate in their L1 and perform better in ESL programs after receiving instruction in their native language (Han-Carlsson, 2014; Ingersoll, 2001), while others have experienced trauma that needs to be addressed in conjunction with language learning (Nelson, 2013). In Rocha's (2011) dissertation examining the meaningfulness of ESL instruction in a program in Nevada called HABLE (Hispanic Association for Bilingual Literacy and Education), she indicates that less than 30% of students in the program had completed their education in their home country. It is clear that low literacy in Spanish has been reported in similar populations to my target population and this obstacle was considered in my study.

Perceptions and Attitudes

While it is imperative to recognize obstacles that Latino adults encounter when trying to attend ESL classes, research has also been done that examines perceptions and attitudes that Latino adults have regarding learning English, attending class and the impact their limited English proficiency (LEP) has on socioeconomic issues. Studies suggest that Latino adults report feeling satisfied with the level of English they have achieved (Hayes 1989) or feeling like they do not have control over their education or income (Ross, 2011). Students who are currently attending ESL classes report high motivation to continue to acquire the English language (Thieves, 2011), although some request modifications to existing classes (Buttaro, 2002; Sowa, 2001). Finally, Latino adults who remain undocumented consider the risk of deportation anytime they leave their home, which can create fear when presented with the opportunity to go to ESL classes (Bean et al., 2015).

Often, when Latino adults live in close communities where Spanish is the primary language spoken, opportunities to practice English are few and far between. Daily life can be navigated without being proficient in English so motivation does not exist to increase their proficiency (Hayes, 1989).

In a study done by Ross in 2011, Mexican women involved with a program in Pennsylvania were interviewed and asked to talk about difficulties they had speaking English. These women indicated varying degrees of effort towards learning English, often perceiving themselves as having no control over their ability to increase their English language proficiency. Ross came to the conclusion that the women in her study identified with being uneducated and did not believe they had the ability to change that

identity. She went on to suggest that participants in her study felt that because of their lack of education, they would not be able to secure better jobs.

In searching for research completed that studied perceptions of Latino adults towards ESL classes they had attended, little was available that directly asked adults about prior experiences with ESL classes that may have impacted their motivation or regularity of attendance. Most research that was found studied adults currently attending ESL classes who were already highly motivated to learn English and continue attending classes. Research done by Thieves (2011) in a large urban area in Massachusetts discovered that students already attending ESL classes were motivated to continue learning, and students understood the benefits of both increasing literacy in their native language and English. The purpose of this study was to analyze the attitudes of students about becoming literate in their native languages and also in acquiring English. A questionnaire was given to students prior to a 12-week ESL class and then again at the end of the course. The study was not limited to Latino adults, as participants came from several countries around the world. Students in the study reported that increasing literacy in their native language would not only help them to retain cultural identity, but would also facilitate increasing their English language proficiency. Interestingly, the students in this study clearly understood the benefits of being computer literate, even if they did not have the English language proficiency they were aiming for.

Another study completed by Sowa (2001) discovered that Latino adults had ideas about how they would like to see existing ESL classes changed. Sowa administered surveys to 32 students, with the majority of students originating from Mexico. Participants in the survey had achieved high levels of education in their home countries,

with several having attended university. Sowa chose three survey respondents from an intermediate ESL class to personally interview to obtain qualitative data on their attitudes and perceptions. One student who was interviewed stated that she felt embarrassed to answer questions in ESL class for fear of being looked at as not as smart as others if she answered the question incorrectly. She also indicated a desire for classes to be divided by English proficiency level, which was echoed in another study done with eight Latinas by Buttaro (2002). Additionally, participants in Sowa's study reported an increase in their English language proficiency because of attending classes and all were highly motivated to continue coming to class. In another study, Latino adults also indicated a desire for a variety of levels of English instruction to meet the need of all potential students (Nangle, 2013).

Lastly, in the book, *Parents Without Papers* (Bean, et al., 2015) the authors describe the fear that is prevalent within Latino families who remain undocumented, even after living in the United States for years. Life is filled with stress as Latino adults who are undocumented drive without a license or interact outside of their Latino communities, as deportation is a real threat to many of them (Bean, et al., 2015). Many Latino adults who are viewed negatively due to the illegal actions of some are actually living as lawful residents (Department of Homeland Security, 2013). Stereotyping and labeling are still prevalent in American society and this particular group of adults is vulnerable to this type of treatment (Dowling, Ellison & Leal, 2012). This results in labeling, or referring to Latino adults as immigrants or illegal aliens who do not belong in the United States (Jeria, 1999). Ross (2011) states that studies have been completed that indicate persons with Mexican ethnic identity report a feeling of being discriminated against by white U.S.

citizens. Thus, Latino adults must confront stereotyping and the danger of deportation anytime they leave home, including when they go to ESL classes.

Consequences of Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

In addition to the opinions Latino adults have in regards to attending ESL classes, they can experience consequences of limited English proficiency. The impact of LEP on Latino families is significant. Family dynamics can be affected as children are depended on to translate and interpret for parents, and parents do not have the ability to assist with homework. Income can be near poverty levels because wages are commensurate with ability to speak and understand English. Latino families may find it complicated to become assimilated into their communities. If parents remain undocumented, the impact on the education of subsequent generations can be negatively impacted (Bean, et al., 2015).

Family dynamics can be impacted by parents with LEP, specifically in the relationship between parents and children. A phenomenon often found in non-English speaking families is the practice of language brokering, or children serving as translators and interpreters for their parents (Corona, et al., 2012). Parents who do not speak English are dependent on the translation and interpreting assistance provided by their children. Over 50% of Latino fifth graders reported assisting parents with translating medical bills, school communications and household documents (Weisskirch and Alva as cited by Corona, 2012). Although some youth state feeling helpful to the family when serving in the role as language broker (Corona, 2012), others express decreased ability of limited English speaking parents to be effective at parenting (Martinez et al as cited by Corona, 2012).

Parents who are not proficient in English are unable to adequately discern communication from educators, and parents who do not understand the school-parent partnership cannot effectively process information regarding their child and their child's progress in school (Manton, 1998). It has been documented that the support of parents at home can impact a child's ability to succeed in school (Early Childhood Digest as cited by Lieshoff, 2007). The education of Latino children is affected in several ways when parents do not have proficiency in the English language. Parents are unable to inform teachers of concerns they have, educators are unable to communicate directly with parents and children are not able to depend on parents to assist with homework (Lieshoff, 2007). Lieshoff examined two questions from a survey done with 155 school systems in the United States, where civic leaders and school officials were polled in regards to challenges faced in working with Latino families. Lieshoff discovered that in some cases cultural background creates an information gap. Some Latino parents believe that if they instruct their children to pay attention and be respectful, that is all that is necessary to support their children's education. But, parents with LEP who want to support the education goals of their children often experience difficulty communicating with children in English or being involved with their homework (Lieshoff, 2007). Without the ability to understand English, Latino parents struggle to assist their children with schoolwork (Bean et al., 2015). Children feel the negative impact of non-English speaking parents when doing homework or needing to interact with school officials or resources. Family literacy programs, like the one in Shanahan's 1995 study, aim to create a family environment that is supportive of children increasing their literacy, while at the same time assisting parents in increasing their English language proficiency (Shanahan et al., 1995).

This increased proficiency in English allows parents to support their children's education and capitalizes on the value placed on family in the Hispanic culture. Parents are taught English and also given instruction in how to help their children succeed at school (Shanahan, et al., 1995). An interesting approach to curriculum that was used in this particular program is to inquire about use of language and respond accordingly. If parents wanted to read to their children in Spanish, to be a good role model and to connect with their children, they were given the skills to do so (Shanahan, et al., 1999).

Limited English proficiency can cause Latino families to be constrained in the amount of money brought into the home. One commonly reported goal of Latino adults is to obtain better, higher-paying employment. Perceptions of Latino adults are that speaking better English leads to better wages, thus resulting in improved living conditions and resources (Csepelyi, 2009; Jeria, 1999; Larotta, 2007; Dowling, et al., 2012). Oftentimes the obstacle that prevents non-native speakers of English from securing higher paying jobs is a lack of English proficiency (Lieshoff, 2007). Without the ability to speak English, wages are limited and Latino families are often living in poverty (Bean et al., 2015). In fact, compared to other immigrant groups, Mexican immigrants often start at the lowest wage jobs (Bean et al., 2015). In addition, contributing to family income is a cultural value in Mexican families. Oftentimes even when both parents are working, adolescents are encouraged to secure employment to add additional earnings (Bean et al., 2015).

Buttaro (1999) suggests that Latino adults fear loss of identity by becoming proficient in English and not speaking Spanish. Spanish-speaking parents often desire that their children retain Spanish language fluency, but since many parents have not

completed their formal education in their home country, they are unable to teach reading and writing skills to their children (Bean et al., 2015).

According to a recently published book that examines integration of Mexican immigrants, negative consequences abound when parents do not speak English, and when parents are undocumented the impact is greater. Social integration is difficult and sometimes unachievable (Bean et al., 2015). Ethnic identity is extremely important to Latino immigrants, as reported by 92% of Latino immigrants in a study done that examined Mexican immigrants living in Los Angeles in 2004 (Bean et al., 2015).

Church-based ESL Programs

Some studies specifically examine how church-based ESL classes can assist Latino adults in the acquisition of not only English language skills, but also in the development of a strong support environment. Research indicates that church-based ESL programs facilitate community integration, and in addition these programs can provide an atmosphere for students that eliminates academic pressure that can be found in other ESL programs. Intangible benefits have also been reported from students in existing church-based ESL programs, including feelings of being loved, valued and accepted despite religious or cultural differences.

An intriguing study was completed by Jiang (2012) in which she examined a church-based ESL program located in the southeastern United States that had been offering ESL classes for over 20 years. Jiang utilized observation, written questionnaires and one-to-one interviews for her data collection and about half of the student participants in her research were Hispanic. Her results indicate that the program that she examined provided not only the opportunity to increase English language proficiency, but

also the chance to build relationships. Students expressed feeling loved and appreciated the lack of academic pressure. Interestingly, teachers who were interviewed in Jiang's project indicated a neutral environment where their faith was displayed, but never presented as a prerequisite for attending classes. Students expressed satisfaction with learning, a welcome classroom environment, appreciation for other religions and cultures and increased proficiency in the English language (Jiang, 2012).

In Carpenter's (2004) study of a church-based ESL program, it was found that progress in acquiring English language skills can vary based on a number of factors. Her study focused on ten Latino adults who spoke little English and had been attending classes consistently. Data were collected using spoken and written English samples which Carpenter used to assess English language proficiency. Five of the ten students were tutored for thirty minutes each week, and at the beginning and end of a 12-week session, all students were interviewed and their progress in gaining English language skills was assessed. What Carpenter discovered was that age, years of schooling and Spanish literacy level did not predict ability to acquire English. However, these three factors did decrease confidence and willingness to use English outside of the classroom. Carpenter goes on to recommend that ESL programs include instruction separately for those who are high literate in Spanish and those who are low literate in Spanish, as she concluded that the benefit of ESL classes was not teaching literacy, but providing students an environment to build confidence to use the English language skills they were acquiring outside of the classroom in daily life (Carpenter, 2004).

Kristjansson (2003) completed research with students who were attending a church-based, volunteer-run ESL program in Canada. Along with two hundred hours of

classroom observations, Kristjansson interviewed 41 students from five different levels of ESL instruction. The students in her project reported that adjusting to a new culture was made easier by being a part of a caring community and that the investment in interpersonal relationships impacted their attitudes about learning as well as their ability to become acclimated to their new environment (Kristjansson, 2003).

Another analysis of adult ESL students was completed by Chao (2013) with the intent to discover the impact of two church-based ESL programs on learners' second language socialization. Chao utilized observation, interviews, field notes and a journal to collect data for this project in a southeastern city in the United States, in what Chao refers to as an area of the country known for church influence and interaction in the community. One of the church-based ESL programs communicated their desire for friendship with potential students, and their volunteer instructors indicated being motivated to love others as they had been loved by God (Chao, 2013). The second church has similar goals and the ESL program at the second church has over 50 students who originate from Mexico. Students reported appreciation for instructors who had traveled to other countries and experienced different cultures and positive reactions to teachers who are open, accepting and willing to embrace newcomers who are different (Chao, 2013). The relationships between the volunteer instructors and the ESL students appeared to be an important component of continued attendance and motivation. Entire families became connected, students could contact teachers outside of class and a feeling of being valued and belonging was also reported (Chao, 2013).

The Gap: A Needs Analysis

Much of the literature presented in this chapter has focused on studies completed with Latino adults who are already attending ESL classes. Studies were presented that look at reasons why Latino adults encounter difficulty in regularly attending ESL classes. Absenteeism is commonly reported due to several barriers that Latino adults encounter, and the views of Latino adults towards ESL classes have been shared.

Limited research was discussed that focuses on Latino adults who are not currently attending ESL classes. Csepelyi examined studies that have been completed with populations similar to my target population (Crandall, 1993; Csepelyi, 2009; Vassei, 2011; Thieves, 2011), with the majority of research completed with Latino adults that are attending post-secondary institutions (McVay, 2004; Chavez, 2011). In addition, little research exists that identifies the unique needs of Latino adults who remain undocumented. Because my target population is primarily made up of Latino adults from Mexico who are reportedly undocumented, a gap exists in research that my study set out to address.

English language instruction classes can be offered from a variety of sources, including the U.S. government, but these programs often do not meet the needs of Hispanic adults for several reasons. First, in order to receive funding, Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs sponsored by the U.S. government in my state often require that students progress to the next level within 30 months or programs lose funding (Nelson, 2013). Standardized written tests like the CASAS (Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System) are used to assess the progress of learners, but these tests are in English and may be difficult to complete for adults with limited English

proficiency who do not have experience with taking tests and have not completed a formal education in their native country (Nelson, 2013).

Many studies attempted to uncover the reasons why students are confronting obstacles or barriers to learning, and the needs of students are uncovered through analysis of absenteeism and its causes. Relatively little research focuses on determining the actual needs of adult ESL students, and very little research exists that scrutinizes the needs of Latino parents with school-age children. Oftentimes, studies have analyzed the needs of adult ELs from the perspective of educators (Crandall, 1993; Csepelyi, 2009; Hayes, 1989) rather than interacting with this set of learners to collect actual data on perceived needs and goals. One thing I wanted to avoid is making assumptions about what my learners need, as cautioned by Csepelyi (2009) in her article looking at adult literacy in ESL instruction. Rodríguez (2009) also recommends completing a needs assessment to ensure that ESL students express their goals and their needs are met.

It has been reported that cultural differences may play a large role in the incongruent perspectives on parental role in education. That is, not all cultures have the same norms regarding parental involvement in homework, interaction with school officials and basic support of a child's educational needs (Brown as cited by Lieshoff, 2007). In the book titled *Foreign to Familiar* (2000), Lanier suggests that differences exist between what she labels as warm climate and cold climate cultures. Lanier has lived on several continents and observed behaviors and cultural norms of the communities in which she lived and interacted. Mexico would be labeled a warm climate culture, while my state would be labeled cold climate. Differences exist in many areas, but one significant area of difference is in the areas of communication. Generally

speaking, warm climate cultures are indirect, while cold climate cultures are direct. Additionally, warm climate cultures are relationship based, while cold climate cultures are task oriented. Could these differences in culture be accurate? If so, how do they affect the collection of reliable research, especially if the researcher has cultural norms that are different from the target population? These are questions that need to be considered when conducting research where cultural norms can affect the collection of data, the relationship of the researcher to the participants, as well as the expectations of everyone involved with the project.

Research Questions

This chapter has provided background on identifying the needs of Latino adults and also provided evidence that suggests that needs analysis for any group of ELs should be done carefully, thoroughly and it is essential to have the input of the actual learners an educator intends to instruct. Utilizing industry standards, making assumptions or designing ESL programs for a unique set of ELs without clearly understanding what is lacking, desired or needed by the learners themselves does not appear to be an effective method for some potential learners. Although research has shown that Latino adult ELs have some needs and barriers in common, could there be additional obstacles with my particular group of learners? Does the environment from which the ESL program is offered impact the perceptions and attitudes of the ELs in my community? How can I build upon what I perceive to be an existing positive and trusting relationship with this population to accurately identify true needs and provide English language learning opportunities for them?

Other questions that come to mind when analyzing previous research are related to specifically identifying true needs of the target population. What factors other than absenteeism significantly impact ability to acquire English? How are the needs of Latino adults identified, and are the current assessment tools accurate? How do the cultural norms of Latino families impact their perceptions, attitudes and interactions? What is the best way to collect accurate data directly from a population that may not ascribe to the belief and value systems of this researcher?

In my community I want to know how we can utilize existing resources and relationships between Aprender and my community church to provide English instruction to all non-native English speakers, regardless of their immigration status, income, gender, barriers or literacy proficiency in L1. Specifically, my research question is: What are the English language learning needs of Latino adults in my community that are not being met by existing ESL programs?

Summary

In this chapter I have presented some of the issues surrounding the ability of Latino adults to increase their English language proficiency. Research that has been done with Latino adults similar to the population I examined has been reviewed. Challenges these adults face in acquiring English language proficiency have been detailed, and attitudes these adults have towards attending ESL classes have been reviewed. In addition to the challenges these adults face, I examined some of their common goals for increasing their ability to speak English. Two of the main goals reported in the research I examined are the desire to secure employment that increases their income and the desire to provide support to their children in school. Lastly, I reviewed studies that specifically

scrutinized church-based ESL programs and the impact these programs have on immigrants who desire to learn English. The design of my research has been informed by the literature presented in this chapter, and the methods chosen are specifically detailed in Chapter Three, which follows.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The object of this research project was to obtain data directly from a defined group of Latino adults to identify what their English language learning needs and goals are and to identify specific obstacles that prevent them from increasing their English language proficiency. It was my intent to reveal opportunities for my church and the Latino community to partner together to create effective ESL instruction for all who desire it. I wanted to know what is currently lacking in ESL programs in my community, what the unique needs of this group of Latino adults are and what their goals are in regards to becoming proficient in the English language. My research question is: What are the English language learning needs of Latino adults in my community that are not being met by existing ESL programs?

Overview of the Chapter

In order to answer my questions, I originally intended to use three different methods of collecting data, including both quantitative and qualitative methods. This mixed methods approach was intended to validate data throughout the process and provide a variety of ways for needs to be identified. My procedure was initially designed to have three distinct steps. The first and third steps were personal interactions that were intended to collect qualitative data. The second step was intended to be a written survey that would provide a substantial amount of quantitative data. The data for this study was

collected from a large group of Latino adults involved with a local church outreach program, drawing key individuals from this population for the qualitative data steps. By using three methods, I hoped to collect data that was valid and reliable. The methodologies I used in my study are included in this chapter. This chapter begins with a detailed description of the mixed methods approach I used, including a rationale for the design I chose. Descriptions of the three phases of my data collection will be detailed, as well as an explanation of how data analysis was completed when all three phases were finished. At the end of this chapter, my research questions are restated and an overview of Chapter Four is presented.

Mixed Methods Research Paradigm

The design of this study used a mixed methods paradigm, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data collection. Through the use of quantitative data I hoped to gather significant statistics to address my research question. Using qualitative data allowed respondents to speak openly without limits. Initially, qualitative data was collected through the use of a pre-survey group meeting. The Latino adults that participated in this meeting have firsthand knowledge of what is personally lacking, what is needed and the personal goals they have in regards to English language learning, which made them suitable participants for this group (Merriam, 2009). Using this group at the onset of my study was intended to specifically identify perceived needs and goals of this population in order to inform the written survey process.

Using the information collected in the pre-survey group meeting, I collected quantitative data using a written survey with questions developed from the data collected in the pre-survey group and data from previous research studies. Quantitative data was

used to confirm the data collected in the pre-survey group meeting and a written survey allowed for a large sampling of respondents (Merriam, 2009).

The survey was piloted with the intent of administering it to a larger group during an event held at my local church. Based on input from Valeria and Camila, and interactions I continued to have with the target population through Aprender outreach events, it was decided to conduct personal interviews with several advocates for the Latino community in my city in lieu of a large survey event. Although quantitative data was collected in the initial pilot of the written questionnaire, the number of respondents was small and this segment of my data collection was not the most significant. However, the data that was obtained was consistent with data collected in the other two steps in my data collection process.

Following the written questionnaire phase of my data collection, I turned again to collecting qualitative data through personal interviews with seven Latino adults from the target population. Interviews were structured around a list of questions intended to draw out opinions and personal stories. Several questions posed hypothetical situations and at times the interviewer was able to ask follow-up questions to participants to build upon the existing conversation. The types of questions included in the interview ranged from fact collection to hypothetical questions to open-ended questions. Probing questions were added at times to provide more detail.

The use of qualitative data is based on grounded theory, where the data are grouped and categorized to discover patterns that will lead to a theory grounded in the data (Merriam, 2009). Since my goal was to capture real, authentic information from the group of Latino adults that I was studying, the data collected led me to themes and

patterns that helped me to identify the English language learning needs and goals of this population as I moved through the steps of data collection.

Through the use of three separate types of data collection, understanding of the needs of this population was continually enlarged. Additionally, observations made by this researcher at Aprender events contributed to the on-going design of my methodology throughout the data collection process. Through this research study, I wanted to discover why Latino adults in my city were not attending existing ESL classes. I questioned what obstacles or barriers they had that prevented them from increasing their English language proficiency. Could there be unique needs of this population that were not being met? What other factors influenced their attitudes towards learning English? Specifically, what are the English language learning needs of Latino adults in my community that are not being met by existing ESL programs?

Data Collection

My data were collected using a variety of techniques and the study was administered in three steps. First, I collected data from a pre-survey group meeting with seven Latino adults who participate in our local church outreach program. It was the intent of this researcher to utilize the first phase of data collection to begin building rapport with members of the Latino community in my city. Recognizing that this would take time, additional efforts were made during the course of the study to be involved with the Latino community through the relationship between the researcher, Valeria, Camila, and their families as well as through participation in Aprender outreach events.

The data from the pre-survey group meeting was used to inform survey questions that were administered to a pilot group of Latino adults. In the third and final step of my

data collection, I conducted personal interviews with Valeria, Camila, and key individuals from the Latino community. In addition, I interviewed the coordinator at our local ESL program to become informed about the class offerings in my area. In order to better understand the Aprender program, how it was created and the population it serves, I met with our previous pastor who helped to co-found Aprender and has a positive relationship with many Latino adults in my community.

Five important issues were communicated at the onset of the pre-survey group meeting and personal interviews, as recommended by Taylor and Bogdan (as cited by Merriam, 2009). These issues included expressing the explicit goals of the study, the confidentiality of data collection, how the data would be analyzed and reported, and the general design of the interview procedure.

A future goal of our church is to sponsor ESL classes to Latino adults so it was important to determine the level of support this will receive with our membership. Following the completion of this project, my pastor, Valeria, Camila, members of our church leadership team and I will meet together to discuss all of the data collected and feedback received.

Several problems could have been encountered by this researcher when collecting data. Because of my familiarity with church members, it might have been difficult to maintain an objective distance (Seidman as cited by Merriam, 2003). Throughout this entire research study my friendship with both Valeria and Camila grew and I became a familiar face at many Aprender events. In my observations of members of the Latino community at Aprender events, it appeared that sharing of information was preceded by relationship. This appears to be a cultural norm and my lack of relationship with most of

the adults involved with the Aprender program became a barrier to collecting large amounts of quantitative data, although my interactions with key advocates for the Latino community allowed me to openly converse with them about the challenges they face. In my opinion, my willingness to sincerely care about the Latino community and their needs was paramount and significantly contributed to the quality of data I obtained.

Discovering how cultural views and norms impact my target population's ability to increase their English language proficiency is outside the scope of this project, but appears to be an opportunity for further research.

This researcher also had personal biases that were brought to the research process, and neutrality may have been difficult to achieve (Merriam, 2009). My personal assumptions, stereotypes and prejudices were challenged throughout this research process. Prior to beginning this project I had minimal interaction with Latino adults in my community. I had little understanding of the life stories of many fellow community members, and carried with me negative attitudes towards undocumented persons. As my interactions and understanding increased, my desire and urgency to improve the English language proficiency of this population grew exponentially. I listened to stories and trials of Latino families in my city, the obstacles they face, their family dynamics, their cultural norms and their desire to become proficient at English.

In addition to the above-mentioned obstacles, the amount of transcription that had to be completed was cumbersome and additional assistance was required. A family friend who majored in Spanish was able to assist with translation of key documents. Another family friend who works locally with refugees volunteered to transcribe all

seven personal interviews, which took nearly 20 hours. Their assistance and willingness to support this effort were a vital part of my data analysis.

Participants

The participants in all three phases of my study had several things in common. All participants are over the age of 18, are native Spanish speakers, reside in my city and are involved in some way with the Aprender outreach programs sponsored by my local church. With one exception, all adults are parents with children in our local school district. All participants consider themselves Latino or Chicano (used in this paper to designate someone who is second generation Mexican American). Most of the individuals in the first and third phases of my data collection are recognized by the Latino community as advocates for Latino families in my city. A parent advisory board and an Aprender team of coordinators have been established and most of the advocates are involved on both boards, but often it is difficult to distinguish between which organization the activities of these individuals are originating from. The majority of participants in the pre-survey group meeting and the personal interviews assist with coordinating and communicating Aprender events, are well-connected to Latino families in our community and regularly volunteer in a variety of settings and situations that involve meeting the needs of Latino families in my city. These individuals regularly speak and advocate for other Latino families and are considered valuable sources of authentic needs and perceptions of persons in the Latino community in my city.

All participants for the pre-survey group meeting were chosen by Valeria based on my request for six to ten individuals who would be willing to share their English language learning needs with me. Participants in the written questionnaire were

randomly selected individuals who attended a local Aprender event at my church and were acquainted with Camila. For the last phase of my data collection, the personal interviews, individuals were spoken to directly at an Aprender outreach event. Valeria introduced me to potential participants who spoke English and I was able to invite them to participate, choose a tentative interview date and exchange contact information with them. Table 1 displays personal information about all of the participants in my data collection process.

Table 1

Data Collection Participants

Participant	Group Meeting	Questionnaire	Interview
Alejandro	Male, lived in my city for 19 years, married with four children (21, 19, 12, 10). Has other family in my city. Attends my church but no ESL classes. Printing company work. Native Spanish speaker. Completed technical college in home country. English proficiency: 4		Male, between ages 31-45, lived in my city for 20 years, two school-age children, member of Latino advisory board.
Alfonso	Male, lived in my city 13 years, married with two children (17,9). No other family in my city. Construction worker. Attends local church but not ESL classes. Native Spanish speaker. Completed high school plus 3 years of technical school. English proficiency: 2		

Camila	Female, lived in my city 14 years, married with three children (18, 16, 11). Has other family in my city. Housecleaner. Attends my church but no ESL classes. Native Spanish speaker. Completed high school (up to grade 9). English proficiency: 4-5	Female, between ages 31-45, lived in my city for 14 years, two school-age children, member of Latino advisory board.
Carmen		Female, between ages 18-30, lived in my city for 10 years, no children.
Daniela		Female, between ages 31-45, lived in my city for 13 years, two school-age children
Estela		Female, age 46 or older, lived in my city for 16 years, two school-age children, member of Latino advisory board.
Laneli	Female, lived in my city 16 years, one child (13). Has other family in my city. Hotel worker. Does not attend church or ESL classes. Native Spanish speaker. Completed high school plus two semesters of computer school. English proficiency: 2	
Para1		Data not available.
Para2		Female, between ages 27-40, speaks English not very well, has children who participated in Aprender summer program

Para3	Female, between ages 27-40, speaks Spanish very well, speaks English not very well, has children who participated in Aprender summer program	
Para4	Female, between ages 27-40, speaks Spanish very well, speaks English not very well, has children who participated in Aprender summer program	
Para5	Female, between ages 41-62, has children who participated in Aprender summer program	
Rosalita	Female, lived in my city 13 years, married with two children (17, 9). No other family in my city. Fast food worker. Attends local church but not ESL classes. Native Spanish speaker. Completed high school (grade 9) in home country. English proficiency: 2-3	Female, between ages 31-45, lived in my city for 20 years, two school-age children, member of Latino advisory board.
Susanna	Female, lived in my city nine months, three children (23, 20, 18). Has family in my city. Fast food worker. Does not attend church or ESL classes. Native Spanish speaker. Completed <i>preparatoria</i> (high school). English proficiency: 2	

Valeria	Female, lived in my city 19 years, married with four children (21, 19, 12, 10). No other family in my city. Homemaker. Attends my church but no ESL classes. Native Spanish speaker. Completed grade 2 in home country, then moved to U.S. English proficiency: 4-5	Female, between ages 31-45, lived in my city for 20 years, two school-age children, member of Latino advisory board.
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Location/Setting

All three steps in this study were completed in a suburban city in the upper Midwest of the United States. Although the community is only about 30 minutes from a large metropolitan area, the city functions more like a rural town, with significant growth in the past decade. Although this community offers some public transportation and suburban benefits, the area where the majority of adults in this study live would be considered low-income, as most families currently live in one of three mobile home parks in town. The city doubled in size from 1985 to 1995, but recently has seen a decline in new growth. In 2010, according to the United States Census Bureau, the population of my city was over 40,000. A diversity alliance was formed to reach the city's population that was becoming more diverse, recently reaching about 25% of the total city population (personal communication, February 24, 2016). My study will focus on a portion of this diversity, specifically on a small population of Latino adults.

The location of the study was my church, which is a site that is familiar to all participants because of their association with the Aprender outreach program. Refreshments were provided and children were welcome to remain on site during the pre-survey group meeting. Both the pre-survey group meeting and the personal interviews

were conducted in a private meeting room at my church. Written questionnaires were collected during an Aprender sign-up event at my church.

Materials

As a non-speaker of Spanish, I needed to enlist the aid of bilingual community members to serve as translators and interpreters. Two bilingual church members and a bilingual family friend offered to assist in my research study. In the pre-survey group meeting, questions were read orally to accommodate participants who were not literate in either English or Spanish. The written questionnaire was translated from English to Spanish by a family friend, and edited afterwards by Camila, who is a native Spanish speaker.

Audio recordings were created for both the pre-survey group meeting and the personal interviews. The pre-survey group session was audio recorded and later transcribed with the assistance of a bilingual translator who is a family friend. A member of my church assisted with interpreting during the pre-survey group meeting. Each personal interview conducted with Latino adults was audio recorded and later transcribed by a family friend. Audio recordings were captured through the use of recording software on my personal computer and kept in a password-protected folder.

All written questionnaires and consent forms were kept in a locked file box. Personal notes from interviews with our previous pastor and the program director of ESL classes in my city were captured immediately following the interviews, and were kept in a password protected folder on my personal computer.

Pre-survey Group Meeting

Focus groups are often used when the people involved in the focus group have firsthand knowledge of the topic and where their interaction with each other provides in-depth, high quality data (Patton as cited by Merriam, 2009). Although I did not conduct a formal focus group, my pre-survey group meeting was modeled loosely on formal focus group conventions. My pre-survey group meeting was conducted with seven participants who have firsthand knowledge of the topic and it was intended to provide interaction between participants. As recommended by Merriam (2009), the focus group participants were chosen based on their ability to share their own personal experiences. Merriam (2009) also recommends that the size of a focus group should involve from six to ten participants and I used my previous experience as a facilitator to moderate the session.

A pre-survey group meeting was conducted with a group of participants who felt comfortable speaking to me (with the use of an interpreter) and sharing their opinions. Participants were selected by Valeria based on their willingness to participate and their knowledge of the subject matter. Two men and five women participated in the meeting and they are all native Spanish speakers, born in Mexico, and have children. The leader guide that I used in this meeting, as well as the personal information sheet, is shown in Appendix A.

Questions were spoken to the group and individuals were asked to approach the recording device to answer the questions orally in front of the group. Valeria interpreted the questions orally and also interpreted their responses to me in English. Based on my literature review, several barriers to increasing English language proficiency are often reported and these obstacles were discussed in the focus group. Also, in my literature

review I discovered a variety of reasons that Latino adults stated they wanted to increase their English language proficiency. Open-ended questions were used to draw out the unique English language learning goals of these ELs, as well as obstacles the participants face in meeting these goals. Additionally, I explored what skills each participant had that might be considered a resource in assisting others in reaching their English language learning goals, such as providing transportation or childcare. My goal was that this pre-survey group meeting would collect realistic data from the learners whose needs I am trying to identify and provide a starting point to create the survey I would use in the second step of my data collection.

The key questions that were used in the pre-survey group meeting fell into two sections. The first category included questions relating to personal information about the recipients. Questions in this category collected data on their families, length of time they have lived in my city, employment status, Spanish literacy of the participants and their ESL experiences while living in the United States. In this first section of the meeting, data was collected in written format on paper and then shared orally with the entire group. Valeria attended the meeting and interpreted orally for both the participants and me. Camila also attended the meeting and assisted with translation of the written personal information sheet.

In the second section, participants were asked questions to collect data relating to increasing their English language proficiency. Goals that I had discovered in previous studies as common for adults participating in ESL classes were shared with the group and then participants were asked to tell me their personal goals for increasing their English language proficiency. Participants were asked about barriers to attending local ESL

classes and about their prior experiences in attending ESL classes. Participants were also asked to describe their idea of a perfect ESL class. Participants were able to talk about things they are skilled at and would be willing to make use of to assist others in reaching their English language learning goals. The final question in this section gave participants a chance to share any other specific information with me that they thought was valuable.

I served as moderator and recording technician. Since participants were not familiar with the moderator, I hoped they might be more comfortable expressing their opinions in a group with their peers, rather than alone with this researcher (Rubin & Rubin as cited by Chavez, 2005). In addition, since this study will hopefully lead to the creation of an ESL program sponsored by my church, the leadership team at my church was updated regularly on my progress and will eventually be given my findings.

A number of potential problems could have surfaced while conducting the pre-survey group meeting. First, participants may not have exhibited a high level of trust or openness with me, because at the time we had never met or spent time together. Both Valeria and Camila were present at the meeting and spoke to the participants prior to the start of the session to provide my history of involvement with my church and their personal feelings about my intentions and trustworthiness. Another problem could have been the setting of expectations for an ESL class to be started immediately. Valeria has been asking our church for ESL classes for several years and it may have been difficult to explain the delay in actually starting a program sponsored by my church. Fortunately, participants seemed engaged and responsive during the meeting and most requested that we begin ESL classes as soon as possible.

Written Questionnaire

Following the pre-survey group meeting, responses were analyzed and summarized with the intent of creating a written questionnaire that reflected data collected from the meeting. The purpose of the survey was to confirm data collected in the pre-survey group meeting and expand on the themes discovered. The original intent of this researcher was to pilot the questionnaire with a few Latino adults from my target population, and then invite all parents who had children involved in the Aprender program in the summer of 2015 to attend a survey event at my church where they would complete a written questionnaire. In this way, a significant amount of quantitative data could be captured. The questionnaire was designed using guidelines found in Dornyei's book on designing surveys (Dornyei, 2003). Consent forms were included with each survey and results were not included in the final data collection process unless explicit permission was given by the respondents. As surveys were analyzed, they were each given a unique identification code (Dornyei, 2003).

A pilot of the written questionnaire was done with Camila, who provided feedback on the types of questions asked, the wording and concerns she had about questions that she considered sensitive. Camila felt that some of the demographic questions I had originally included on the questionnaire would put respondents who are undocumented in a difficult position and that they might not complete the questionnaire if they felt that answering those questions would put them in danger. Because many of the adults in my target population are undocumented, we agreed to remove any questions that might be offensive or make the respondents uncomfortable.

It was impossible to determine how many parents would actually attend the survey event. Although interpreters would be available to assist with translating the written forms, some potential participants may have chosen not to complete the consent form or questionnaire. Every effort was made to establish an environment of trust.

Originally I intended to use the Likert scale (Dornyei, 2003) in the written questionnaire. However, Camila indicated that the Likert scale might be confusing to potential respondents, so questions were altered to be specific and focused on minimal choices to simplify the design. Camila also ensured that the Spanish translation of the questionnaire was accurate, had clear directions and would provide the data I needed to answer my research question. The piloting process took place in February 2016. The written questionnaire used in phase two of my data collection is included in Appendix B.

Following the pilot study with Camila, a flyer announcing the survey event was distributed at an Aprender sponsored outreach event in March 2016 and also was intended to be mailed to every parent who enrolled a child in the Aprender program in the summer of 2015. The flyer explained the purpose of the survey, which included details about who was conducting it, why the research was being conducted, and how the data would be utilized. Confidentiality was stressed as well as the value and importance of each individual response. The flyer included contact info for the researcher, Valeria and Camila in order to provide a contact point for questions, and also to increase the parents' comfort with returning the survey.

Unfortunately complications arose and the flyers were not mailed to any of the 150 Latino parents who were in my target population, so the survey event had to be cancelled. Although flyers had been distributed to many Latino families at the Aprender

event, I had no way to contact any of the individuals who had been given a flyer to tell them the survey event was cancelled. Camila accompanied me to my church to greet any potential respondents who intended to attend the survey event and had not heard that the event was cancelled. To my great surprise, not one individual came to my church. This experience provided valuable insight into the population that I was trying to reach for my study and created questions surrounding the effectiveness of hosting a large survey event. It seemed improbable that I would be successful in collecting quantitative data at a large survey event at my church. In discussions with both Valeria and Camila, we concluded that it was likely not a cultural norm for the potential respondents to provide data to a complete stranger. It was decided that a more personal interaction with recognized advocates for the Latino community would be most effective at capturing the data I was seeking.

Personal Interviews

Based on data collected in the pre-survey group meeting, the process of piloting the written questionnaire and observations and interactions I had with my target population, a decision was made to conduct personal interviews with key individuals from the Latino community in my city. The participants for these interviews are all adults involved with the Aprender outreach program sponsored by my church and are all considered important advocates for the Latino community. Personal interviews were used to provide a third source of data and to ensure that the themes and categories emerging began to feel saturated.

Personal interviews included open-ended questions using the four categories of interview questions recommended by Merriam (Strauss, Schatzman, Bucher & Sabshin as

cited by Merriam, 2009). The types of questions in the interviews were hypothetical, devil's advocate, ideal position and interpretative in order to understand in-depth what is lacking, what is needed and what the barriers are to Latino adults achieving their English language learning goals in my city (Merriam, 2009). For example, I included several interpretative questions in my personal interviews that asked respondents to give an example of a topic that could be included in an ESL class. Hypothetical questions were used in the personal interviews when respondents were asked to evaluate a proposed ESL class setting and give their opinions about the possibility of success in the given scenarios. Not every interviewee answered every question, as often the interview became more of a conversation between the participant and this researcher. Questions were occasionally modified based on the interaction we were having and additional questions were posed when appropriate. Interview questions are displayed in Appendix C.

Interviews were structured around a list of questions intended to draw out opinions and personal stories. Several questions posed hypothetical situations and at times the interviewer was able to ask follow-up questions to participants to build upon the existing conversation. The types of questions included in the interview ranged from fact collection to hypothetical questions to open-ended questions. Probing questions were included a few times to provide more detail. All interviews were conducted in English.

Data Analysis

Prior to beginning my data collection, obstacles to attending ESL class had emerged from reviewing related literature, these being lack of transportation, lack of childcare, and scheduling issues. This information was utilized in designing questions to use in the pre-survey group meeting. Categories were built upon in the pre-survey group

meeting and those themes were conformed to during the next two phases of data collection. This is often due the nature of qualitative data collection, where additional themes or categories emerge throughout the phases of data collection (Merriam, 2009). In the on-going analysis of data collected throughout this project, two broad categories began to emerge: obstacles or barriers, and perception or attitudes.

Data analysis for the first step of data collection was done in several steps. First, the audio recording from the pre-survey group meeting needed to be transcribed and typed into a Word document by a family friend who is bilingual. Then, the document was printed for reference and responses from participants were cut from the Word document and pasted into a pre-formatted Excel worksheet. Questions from the group meeting were broken into separate worksheets, data was printed and data was analyzed looking for common answers and themes that provided input to my research paradigm (Merriam, 2009). Summarized data was evaluated to determine meaning (Merriam, 2009) and how the data would inform the design of the written questionnaire.

The second set of data collected came from five written questionnaires. The data from this phase of my project were entered into an Excel spreadsheet and color-coded using themes and categories from the first step of data collection, as well as major categories discovered in the literature review. Since the purpose of my research was to identify needs, questions on the written questionnaire were intended to draw out the needs of my target population.

Data collection and analysis began to happen simultaneously as I examined the data in my first two steps of data collection and as I observed my target population at

Aprender events. As I compared all of the results, reflected on my observations, and literally failed at hosting a large written survey event, the next steps began to emerge.

As I began brainstorming on questions for personal interviews, I began to see a need to limit the number of participants so the data would not be overwhelming (Bogdan & Biklen as cited by Merriam, 2009). My observations of my target population at a soccer sign-up event were recorded and referred to when making final decisions about what approach to take in the personal interviews. I did not know what discoveries I might make but eventually made the choice to provide interviewees with several different scenarios for ESL classes that seemed to address the needs already expressed. In addition, questions in the interviews related to broad categories and themes that had surfaced in the first two phases of data collection.

Personal interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed into Word documents by a family friend. This researcher read through each transcript several times to extract responses and enter them into an Excel spreadsheet. Each question was input into a separate worksheet, worksheets were printed out and a summary of answers to each question was created. The collected data was continually sorted into sub-categories and merged. As recommended by Merriam (2009), a constant comparison method was used as each interview was compared with previous interviews.

The purpose of three phases of data collection was to seek saturation of data. It was recommended that the categories align with the research questions and that the themes were clearly distinguished from one another (Merriam, 2009). The constant comparison method was used to identify patterns in the data and assisted in the development of themes and categories, in relation to the goals of the study.

Verification of Data

Internal validity was achieved through the use of triangulation, which is simply achieving confirmation of results through either using multiple methods, researchers, data sources or theories (Merriam, 2009). This was achieved through collecting data from different perspectives, using three different methods, and also through the use of personal interviews, which provided multiple sources of data. The degree to which the results of data collection can be repeated is called reliability of data (Merriam, 2009). This study is reliable because it is likely that completing a similar study would result in similar results (Merriam, 2009). This study is also dependable because the results shown in the data collected are consistent (Merriam, 2009) not only between steps but among respondents.

The respondents in this study validated data I had collected in all three phrases of my data collection. Initially, the pre-survey group meeting confirmed data I had collected regarding common obstacles to attending ESL classes. The piloted written questionnaire also confirmed these obstacles as well as common goals for increasing English language proficiency. Prior to conducting personal interviews, analysis of data and observations was completed in conjunction with the design of personal interview questions, and decisions were made to focus the interview questions on limited scenarios, as recommended by Merriam (2009). In the third step of my data collection, member checks (Merriam, 2009) were utilized to verify results that had already been collected, and themes and categories that were surfacing.

Ethics

Because this study is originating from a relationship between the participants and my church, ethical considerations were paramount. The researcher had full intentions of

respecting the privacy of the participants and also was highly motivated to protect the participants from any unethical treatment or situations. As one of the goals of this study is to identify the needs of undocumented persons, strict codes of professionalism and privacy will be followed. All participants were given the option of receiving communication in either English or Spanish. The safeguards used in this study included:

1. Research questions, goals and objectives shared with informants
2. Consent forms (bilingual, translated and/or interpreted) signed for each data collection technique
3. A human subjects procedure facilitated by Hamline University completed and approved prior to any collection of data
4. Pseudonyms used for each participant to protect their anonymity
5. Transcription of all oral data collected by both Spanish and English speaking transcribers, done verbatim
6. Storage of all data collected in a locked file drawer, to be destroyed five years after collection

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the methodology of my research study. My process included three distinct steps. The first was to assemble a pre-survey group for an oral discussion of issues surrounding my research. Then, a written survey was created based on data collected in the pre-survey group and also using research from previous studies done prior to this project. Lastly, personal interviews were conducted with members of my church and members of the Latino community I wish to serve.

My goal in this research project was to examine a group of Latino adults from my city involved with a local church outreach program who have English language-learning needs. My intent was to use the methodology presented in this chapter to collect data that is valuable, verifiable and reliable. The methods I selected supported my goals. My church desires to create an ESL program targeted at the Latino population in my city and it is my hope that this study will inform all parties involved and will provide a foundation to build upon. At the completion of my study, I hoped to answer this question: What are the English language learning needs of Latino adults in my community that are not being met by existing ESL programs?

This chapter described the methodology that I used in my data collection process along with the justification of my mixed methods research design. Both the qualitative and quantitative steps in my data collection were outlined. I described the participants, the materials needed, and the location and setting for my study. Potential problems were presented and data analysis procedures were discussed. My method of ensuring that the data collected was reliable and valid was summarized and ethical considerations were examined.

Following in Chapter Four will be a summary of the data that I collected in this research study. Each of the three data collection processes will be discussed in detail. Themes and categories will be used to present my findings and a concise description of the major findings will be included.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

By completing this study and data collection, I intended to identify the unique English language learning needs of Latino adults in my city who are associated with a church outreach program. My project was designed to find the answer to this question: What are the English language learning needs of Latino adults in my community that are not being met by existing ESL programs?

In this chapter I will describe the data I obtained through my research process. My project consisted of three distinct steps of information gathering. The first set of data I captured came from a small group meeting of key individuals in the Latino community in my city. A written questionnaire was used to assemble quantitative information in step two of my process. Finally, personal interviews were conducted with advocates for the Latino community in my city. Detailed results will be illustrated and a summary of information from all three processes will also be included. In all information presented, names have been changed to allow participants and organizations to remain anonymous.

Pre-survey Group Meeting

The initial step in my research process was intended to provide an introduction to members of the Latino community that I had targeted to collect data from. The pre-survey group meeting provided a starting point in my understanding of the issues surrounding lack of English language proficiency for many Latino adults in my city.

Although Valeria was present for the meeting, it was the first time I had met any other Latino parents who were involved with my church's Aprender outreach program other than Camila. Seven Latino adults participated in the pre-survey group meeting. Six participants have lived in my city for more than 13 years with the exception of one who has lived in my city for nine months. Personal information on these participants was presented in Table 1 in Chapter 3. A written guide to the meeting was created in both Spanish and English and Valeria served as translator and interpreter. The meeting was held at my local church in a private meeting room and the entire session was audio recorded.

This first step provided two critical elements that influenced the design of the remaining steps in my data collection. First of all, my interaction with the participants allowed us to begin a personal relationship of openness and trust that has grown since our first meeting. Second, assumptions I had made, as well as information I had collected through extensive literature review were challenged. Several common themes emerged from this pre-survey group meeting that were then used in subsequent steps in my data collection, including the written questionnaire.

The most important discovery in the pre-survey group meeting was feedback provided related to motivation, attitudes and perceptions surrounding attending ESL classes. Participants reported several negative experiences they had in prior ESL classes and also suggested modifications that could be made to existing classes to increase the likelihood that they would attend class.

Table 2 provides detailed responses of participants when asked about their English language learning goals and obstacles to reaching those goals. Overall, the goals

reported in the pre-survey meeting were similar to goals reported in earlier studies highlighted in my literature review (Csepelyi, 2009; Jeria, 1999; Larotta, 2007; Lieshoff, 2007). These goals are better employment, the ability to assist their children with homework, classes that build on each other and better pronunciation. In addition, respondents reported a desire to speak the language of the country in which they live, and also a desire to incorporate better into their communities.

The obstacles of lack of transportation, scheduling and childcare were reported in the pre-survey group meeting, which is also similar to previous studies mentioned in this paper (Hayes, 1989; Vassei, 2011; Mathews-Aydinli, 2008; Larotta, 2007, Nangle, 2013). However, one respondent reported dissatisfaction with the inability of his teacher to speak Spanish in order to explain the lessons to him more clearly. Two respondents reported a desire for smaller class sizes and more availability of varying levels of instruction.

Table 2

Pre-survey Group Meeting Results - Goals and Obstacles

Respondent	Goals
Alfonso	To communicate; help children with homework
Laneli	Help children in school; get better job
Susanna	Support children in homework; understand people when they speak English; learn English because it's the primary language of the United States; to find a better job
Rosalita	Support children in homework; improve herself at work and as a person; incorporate into society better

Respondent	Obstacles
Alfonso	System isn't good for him; in past ESL classes the instructor did not speak Spanish and he couldn't understand her, so he didn't know what to do
Laneli	Lack of time
Susanna	Lack of time; does not have a car
Camila	Lack of transportation; scheduling issues; lack of childcare
Alejandro	Timing; sometimes in smaller groups he feels he is not learning enough, or it's not what he needed, or the class was too advanced
Rosalita	Lack of time; not being able to adjust her schedule around the offered class times; desires instruction in small groups where she can learn better and receive more attention and learn more

When asked about previous experiences with ESL classes, four out of five respondents had attended ESL classes in the past but had since stopped attending. Reasons given in the pre-survey group meeting for dissatisfaction with ESL classes previously attended are shown in Table 3. Respondents preferred that ESL teachers spoke Spanish in order to explain what was being taught, and wanted more levels of ESL classes to advance rather than having to leave the program because the next level was not available. Two respondents reported having multiple levels within one class and their frustration with having to repeat lessons when new students joined the class. Other studies referred to previously in my literature review also reported dissatisfaction in existing ESL classes (Sowa, 2001; Buttaro, 2002; Nangle, 2013). Three out of five respondents stated that their ESL teacher had been patient and one respondent stated that a high number of Spanish-speaking students in the class resulted in students speaking Spanish rather than English.

Table 3

Pre-survey Group Meeting Results - Past ESL Classes

Respondent	Past ESL classes
Alfonso	Attended ESL class a long time ago. Didn't like that he couldn't understand the words and the teacher would explain them in English, which he couldn't understand.
Laneli	Attended 2005 Workforce Center ESL class where the teacher was very patient. Disliked starting over after two-three months because a new person arrived to class.
Susanna	Has not attended any English classes in the United States; only learned English words and phrases while in home country.
Camila	Attended ESL classes in 2005. Liked that the teacher was patient but her group of partners in class didn't help because there were too many different levels of English. Didn't like that she wasn't ready to leave the program, but because there wasn't a next level class, she had to leave the program.
Rosalita	Attended ESL class in 2005 and liked the teacher because she was patient and let her take care of her children. She liked everything, except there were too many people in the class that spoke Spanish, so they spoke Spanish instead of speaking English.

When asked about their ideal ESL class, two respondents indicated starting at the beginning and building on a foundation as they advanced to higher levels of instruction. Two respondents indicated a desire for small class sizes, and two respondents requested assistance with correct pronunciation. In addition, one respondent suggested starting

with basics like colors and numbers. Evaluating what is already known and identifying speech problems were also offered as ideas for a perfect ESL class.

Initially I had hoped to identify skills that these individuals possessed and utilize them in some way to assist others in meeting their English language learning goals. Although this data was not used in subsequent steps, it is possible that this data may be instrumental in designing a community-based English learning program. Personal talents that this group reported were cooking, cleaning, social event planning, sports, public speaking, ability to build things, working with children and helping children with homework.

A portion of the pre-survey group meeting was focused on talents and resources these individuals possessed that could be shared with others so more people could increase English language proficiency. These resources were transportation, childcare, translating or interpreting and teaching Spanish.

Overall, the amount of data collected in this initial step in my research process was not substantial in quantity, but the quality of information collected became invaluable as I moved into subsequent steps in my data collection process. Additionally, the positive relationships that began at this meeting facilitated an atmosphere of trust and openness in the personal interviews. Receiving confirmation of common obstacles that Latino adults encounter when presented with ESL classes allowed me to focus on additional obstacles that my target population felt prevented them from attending class. Additionally, the data collected about past experiences with ESL classes provided insight into expectations and desires of my target population when asked about the ideal ESL class for them to attend.

Written Questionnaire

The original plan for my data collection included administering a written questionnaire to approximately 150 parents whose children participated in the Aprender church outreach program in the summer of 2015. This step in my methodology was altered because of two separate incidences, but the small amount of data collected continued in similar themes and categories to the data I collected in the pre-survey group meeting.

When volunteering at a soccer sign-up event, I observed many Latino adults arriving at my church with their children to ensure that their children could participate in sports during the summer. I began wondering why parents were able to find both the time and transportation for this sign-up event, but wondered if time and transportation resources were used to attend ESL classes. It appeared to this researcher that if an event is a high priority, that both time and transportation were not obstacles that could not be overcome. I surmised that perhaps Latino adults understood the benefit of their children participating in sports, and made the sign-up event a high priority. This influenced the design of my written questionnaire and my personal interview questions as I attempted to identify motivation and prioritization within Latino families and how that might affect the acquisition of English language skills.

The first draft of the written questionnaire was piloted with Camila, who provided constructive criticism on wording and on the types of questions included. Questions that Camila felt were too sensitive or would cause potential respondents to become uncomfortable were omitted. Camila and Valeria indicated that a large number of parents involved with the Aprender program are undocumented and most have minimal English

skills, so it was imperative that questions in a written format were direct and concise. Although demographic information regarding home country, marital status and length of time in my city and state would have been advantageous to collect, I was cautioned to consider the difficult position I would put respondents in by asking questions that may be perceived as justification for deportation. Since this demographic information was not required for my research, the written questionnaire was simplified and eventually completed by five Latino adults who attended an Aprender event at my local church. Of the five who submitted surveys, only four completed all of the questions. The written questionnaire and raw data collected from these questionnaires is show in Table 4.

Participants for the written survey were five Latino women with children, ranging in age from 27 to 62 and who reported their native language as Spanish. Three respondents had completed high school, one had completed grade nine and one had

Table 4

Written Questionnaire Results

		PARA1	PARA2	PARA3	PARA4	PARA5
1	Native language		Spanish	Spanish	Spanish	Spanish
2	How often do you speak Spanish?		most of the time	some of the time	most of the time	most of the time
3	How often do you speak English?		most of the time	some of the time	some of the time	some of the time
4	How many years (total) did you attend school in your native language?	9	6	high school	high school	12
5	How many years of college or technical school did you attend?					
6	Do you want to increase your ability to speak and understand English?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

7	(Top 5 goals)					
	To be able to help my children with their homework	X	X	X	X	X
	To better understand communication from my child's school or teacher	X	X	X	X	X
	To get a better job	X	X	X	X	X
	To be able to attend college or university					X
	To be able to achieve a GED			X		
	To be able to become a citizen					
	To better understand important documents		X		X	X
	To communicate better with my children or grandchildren	X	X			X
	To improve my pronunciation	X				X
	To be able to communicate better in daily life			X	X	X
	To learn to drive					X
	To be respected					X
	write goal not listed			to read and write better		
8	Are you currently attending ESL classes?	N	N	N	N	N
9	Have you attended ESL classes in the past?	N	Y	N	Y	Y
10	Where did you attend classes?		Le			local ESL class
11	How long did you attend classes?		2 years		2 years	2 years
12	Did the ESL class you attended help you speak English better?	N	Y			Y
13	How was the class size?		small		big	perfect
14	What level was the class you attended?		intermediate		beginner	advanced
15	How many days a week did your class meet? (Perfect ESL class)		3		4	4
16	What days would be convenient		M-T-W-Th	M-W-TH	M-T-W-TH-F	M-T-W-Th-F

		Evening	afternoon	afternoon	afternoon or night	morning or afternoon
17	What time would be convenient?					
18	how many days per week	3	4	3	3	4
19	Where would your class meet?	church	library	church	church	Community Center
20	How many students would be in your class?	8-10	8-10	8-10	2-4	15-20
21	(Obstacles to attending class)					
	I do not have transportation to ESL class					X
	The time of day that ESL class is offered is not convenient				X	X
	The day of the week that ESL class if offered is not convenient				X	
	I am not aware of ESL classes that I can attend					
	ESL class do not provide childcare for my children				X	
	My family responsibilities at home prevent me from attending class					
	I don't have any opportunities to practice my English outside of class					
	I do not want to learn English even though it may help me					
	I am afraid to try to use English because I might make a mistake			X		
	My children can translate for me so I do not need to learn English					
	The majority of people I interact with daily speak Spanish					
	I had a bad experience with ESL classes/teacher					
	The ESL classes I attended was not at the level I needed				X	
	The classes I have attended or want to attend are too big				X	

	When I attended ESL class in the past I did not get better at English			X	
22	Age	27-40	27-40	27-40	41-62
23	Gender	F	F	F	F
24	Do you have children?	Y	Y	Y	Y
25	My children participated in an Aprender program in the summer of 2015	Y	Y	Y	Y
26	How well do you speak English (E) and Spanish (S)?	E-not very well	S-very well; E-not very well	S-very well; E-not very well	
27	How well does your spouse speak English (E) and Spanish (S)?	E-not very well		S-very well; E-not very well	
28	How well does Child1 speak English (E) and Spanish (S)	E-very well	S-not very well; E-very well	S-very well; E-very well	E-very well
29	How well does Child2 speak English (E) and Spanish (S)	E-very well		S-not very well; E-not very well	S-not very well; E-very well
30	How well does Child3 speak English (E) and Spanish (S)				
31	How well does Child4 speak English (E) and Spanish (S)				
32	How well does Child5 speak English (E) and Spanish (S)				
33	How well does your brother speak English (E) and Spanish (S)				
34	How well does your sister 5 speak English (E) and Spanish (S)			S-very well; E-not very well	

completed grade six. All respondents indicated a desire to increase their English language proficiency. One respondent only completed half of the survey.

Respondents were asked to rank their top five reasons for wanting to increase their English language proficiency. Three goals were chosen by all five respondents, which were the ability to help children with homework, understand communications from school and get a better job. Other goals chosen were the ability to communicate with children and grandchildren, the ability to communicate better in daily life, to drive, to better understand important documents, to improve pronunciation and to be respected. When asked about obstacles to attending ESL class, respondents indicated transportation, childcare, and scheduling as problematic. In addition, one respondent indicated issues with the size and level of existing ESL classes and the perception that English proficiency did not increase when attending ESL classes in the past.

Written survey respondents were asked to consider an ideal ESL classes, and responses were similar in some areas but quite different in others. Three of five respondents indicated their preference to attend classes at church, one suggested a library and the other a community center. When considering class size, three respondents indicated a size of eight to ten students, one respondent indicated a size of two to four students, and the last respondent suggested a size of 15-20 students. The days of the week that work best for most respondents are weekdays, with four out of five respondents indicating a preference for morning or afternoon time slots. Sixty percent of respondents preferred meeting three times per week in their ideal class, while forty percent of respondents preferred to meet four times per week.

Although data collected in this step of my data collection progress was not significant the responses related to English language learning goals and obstacles closely aligned with the data captured at the pre-survey group meeting. Experiences with ESL

classes in the past seemed to be similar to what was reported in the pre-survey group meeting. Since even a small sampling of data appeared to confirm the data collected in the pre-survey group meeting, this project continued with the final step of data collection, which were the personal interviews.

Personal Interviews

The most significant data collected in this research study was gathered through the facilitation of personal, individual, face-to-face interviews between this researcher and key individuals and advocates for the Latino community in my city. Themes that were identified in the previous two phases of data collection were considered in the design of interview questions. A description of the participants is included followed by questions used in the interviews and a discussion of the results. This section concludes with a summary of major findings from this phase of data collection. Questions used in the personal interviews can be found in Appendix C.

Participants for this phase of data collection were chosen with the assistance of Valeria, a well-known advocate for the Latino community in my city and a co-founder of the Aprender outreach program through my local church. Men and women from the Latino community have formed a parent advisory board for the local school district to assist Latino parents in integration and better understanding of school-related functions, resources, programs and communications. The intent of this advisory board is to facilitate parental involvement in the education system, as well as to identify any needs that families have, and then try to find a way to assist with meeting those needs. Six participants for the personal interview phase of my data collection were chosen from this advisory board, and the seventh participant has been participating in Aprender programs

for years and is very involved with the summer outreach program. One male and six females were interviewed. All participants from the advisory board have school age children and all participants are from my city. Although interviews were conducted in English, every participant indicated opportunities for them to increase their English language proficiency. Table 1 in Chapter 3 contains personal data on the interviewees. English language proficiency self-ratings are included for interviewees who also participated in the pre-survey group meeting.

According to interview participants, the parent advisory board previously mentioned serves many Latino families in my city. Valeria estimated that approximately 90% of Latino families in my city are affected by the work of both the parent advisory board and Aprender outreach events. The parent advisory board works directly with about 20 families, helping parents understand how to check grades online or see what homework has been assigned to their school-age children. The interaction of board members with Latino families often connects these families to Aprender outreach events when the needs of these families can be met by existing programs. Estimates varied from respondents on the number of individuals assisted by Aprender, starting as low as 120 people up to 300 people. Activities of the advisory board as described by respondents can be found in Table 5.

When personal interview respondents were asked about limited English proficiency (LEP) of Latino adults and the impact it has on children, nearly all respondents indicated the inability of parents to be involved with homework. One respondent remembered completing her homework alone and also assisting younger

Table 5

Personal Interviews - Advisory Board Activities

Participant	Activities of board
Carmen	Provide food, created playground, Camp Aprender, determine the needs and see how they can help
Alejandro	Purpose of the board is only for the school. Valeria started it up to help parents get integrated: check grades, how to see what homework your kids have.
Rosalita	Help Latinos, communicate things about and from school, or communicate about Aprender events
Estela	Plan events for children, to help families, to inform families and help them become part of the community
Camila	Educate people on the differences between Mexican culture and American culture. Help them understand the importance of supporting their children in school, share resources with them, determine their needs and try to help meet them.
Valeria	Advocated for native Spanish class in the schools; make decisions about Aprender programs and advocate for Latino families. The people on the board volunteer for Aprender events. They surface needs they hear about in the community. They speak up for families who need money, or food, or are being evicted.

siblings with homework. She accompanied her parents on errands to assist with interpreting and translating and was asked to make all family appointments because her parents could not speak English. Several respondents spoke about how LEP renders parents virtually unable to evaluate the reading skills of their children, and children sometimes are asked to translate their homework into Spanish to get the assistance of their parents, and then translate the input of their parents back into Spanish in order to complete the homework. This can increase the homework completion time exponentially for a child with LEP parents.

Respondents also spoke about the reversal of roles within Latino families where the parents have LEP. Children must assist parents in navigating daily life and often serve as interpreters and translators. Parents depend on children to make appointments, help in emergency situations, assist siblings with homework and interpret at school conferences. Table 6 provides details of responses from interviewees when asked about the impact on children of parents with limited English language proficiency.

A question was posed to respondents regarding any obstacles that Latino adults would encounter if a class were offered to meet the needs of all family members. This researcher hypothetically suggested that adult ESL classes were offered at the same place and time that tutors were available for school-age children, and childcare was available for younger children. All respondents in the personal interviews reported that they felt adults would attend this type of class because it would be good for families to attend together. Children who receive tutoring get better grades at school because they do not get the support they need at home if their parents are LEP. Often children receive bad grades not due to lack of intelligence but simply because of lack of support and understanding of educational requirements. One respondent suggested that assisting parents in listening to their children read and being able to understand basic English would be a great help. Transportation might still be an issue for families, but overall response was positive to the proposed class setting.

Table 6

Personal Interviews - How Improving English for Latino Adults Impacts Children

Participant	Improved English impact on children
Daniela	Unable to help her children with homework; parents lose ability to be example for children; parents unable to correct grammar or politeness; children accompany parents as translators and interpreters on everyday errands.
Carmen	She completed her homework without parental involvement; Homework time exponentially increased due to translating between Spanish and English so parents could assist; Interpreter and translator for parents; accompanied parents on errands and made appointments; helped younger siblings with homework; if parents learned English, could support children rather than depend on them.
Alejandro	His English is proficient to assist his children with homework; increasing proficiency could lead to attending college; other parents cannot assist children with homework; parents do not understand resources available to them at school or in community; job demands prevent parents from helping children, and low English proficiency prevents better employment with less demands; both parents need to work due to low wages at jobs due to low English proficiency
Rosalita	Improve ability to interact at school and work; ability to assist children with homework; understand community resources; increased involvement in school functions and homework; increased English proficiency impacts children throughout their lives.
Estela	Parents only able to support children through grade 1; homework assumes parental involvement and limited English proficiency prevents parents from supporting children; homework assumes technology competence parents do not have; children asked to explain reading assignments in Spanish, which requires translating to parents - skills they do not necessarily have; parents believe children are reading well but can be incorrect because they do not understand English; creates division between parents and children; children begin to speak English to isolate parents.
Camila	It would help her children a lot. She could understand how some teachers work with homework. Not all Latino parents have equivalent English skills so children have to translate their homework into Spanish for their parents.
Valeria	Increased English proficiency allows parents to support children with homework; parents cannot effectively evaluate reading homework if they do not understand English; school district does not supply bilingual materials; simple homework cannot be completed.

Respondents were asked about potential obstacles to attending an ESL class for adults while their school-age children were offered tutoring assistance, and younger children were also cared for. Respondents felt that long work hours and lack of transportation could still become a barrier. Carmen shared the story presented at the beginning of this paper about a single-parent family and the demands on the head of household and her inability to see her children during the week. This story clearly illustrates the struggles that some Latino families have in simply meeting basic needs, which allows no margin for taking time to increase English language proficiency. Carmen estimated that 30% of Latino families in our community are single-parent families. She also reported that as children go through high school and see their parents struggling to make enough money to meet the needs of the family, that teenagers often secure part-time employment to contribute to the pool of money available to the family. As the teenager begins to see the positive impact that more available funds has on their families, the desire to complete their education begins to fade and sometimes leads to increasing work hours in lieu of staying in school. In some cases, children drop out of school because they are motivated by the additional money earned at their part-time job and their ability to help their parents by adding extra income.

The next two questions in the personal interviews relate to the work environment. Respondents were asked about the impact of LEP on their occupation and how their work situation would be different with increased English language proficiency. In nearly all interviews, respondents recounted stories of limitations, frustration and negative experiences they or others had because of limited English language skills. Daniela reported feeling discriminated against and treated poorly, sometimes being unfairly

accused of being a bad worker and then not having the English language skills to defend herself. She indicated that it can be three or four times more difficult to secure employment as an undocumented person. In many cases, Latino adults simply have to endure unfair, negative treatment because no other options exist for employment. Other respondents echoed similar sentiments and suggested that increasing English language skills in the areas of applying and interviewing for better positions would be important. One respondent shared a story of her father leaving his current job due to being treated irrationally, but then not being able to secure another job because of his limited English language skills. Even when a Latino adult is a hard worker, dependable and able to be promoted, they often lack the confidence in their English language skills to accept promotions. It can also be frustrating for bilingual speakers to be included in meetings with other Spanish speakers, but not have adequate English language skills to participate when the conversation switches from Spanish to English.

The next question in the personal interviews asked respondents to share potential topics for an ESL class focused on the work environment. Respondents suggested increasing vocabulary and teaching interviewing techniques as part of an ESL class focused on work topics. One respondent reported the frustration in encountering prejudice and stereotyping, and was also interested in learning how to politely ask for time off to attend special events or activities of her children. Another respondent suggested that English proficiency levels vary in the Latino community so it would be critical to offer different levels of ESL instruction, but ensure that the basics were covered. In some families a feeling of futility exists. It was reported that families give up, become comfortable where they are and continue to exist in their own cultural

environment and norms and do not desire to make changes or improve their situation. The energy required to learn English and acquire more occupational skills seems overwhelming and not every Latino adult wants to modify their situation.

For most Latino adults in my community, the possibility of attending college to increase both English language skills and educational competence is unreachable. When asked about college goals for Latino adults in my city, six of seven respondents reported that college is not a goal for most parents. In many cases, adults were not able to complete high school in their home country, and many also never completed their education past elementary or middle school. Some adults were required to work as children, which became more vital to their survival than going to school. Obtaining a GED (General Education Diploma) as a parent or middle-aged adult seems to be a daunting task. Instead, parents focus on providing for the needs of their children, ensuring that their children learn English and finish school so that the children will have more opportunities than the parents had. For their children, being fluent in English is paramount.

The next set of questions in the personal interviews relates to a hypothetical ESL class for adults combined with Spanish instruction for their children. When asked if parents would be interested in attending an ESL class while their children learned Spanish, 100% of respondents indicated that parents would be interested in attending. Because many parents did not complete their own education in Spanish, they are unable to teach Spanish reading and writing skills to their children. In our school district, the parent advisory board was able to create courses for students who are native Spanish speakers with the goal of increasing their Spanish language proficiency. Some children

in Latino families are encouraged to speak and listen to Spanish in the home, which helps the children to retain Spanish speaking and listening skills. In other homes, parents focus on increasing the English language proficiency of their children with the desire to acclimate their families to life in the United States as their priority. One respondent suggested that being bilingual is vital to future employment as the number of Spanish speakers in the United States continues to increase over time. Overall, respondents were excited at the prospect of having the opportunity to retain part of their native culture by providing a way for their children to become fluent in Spanish.

In my city, ESL classes are offered in both the morning and in the evening. Although our city has a public transportation system, many of the Latino families do not live in close proximity to a bus stop. For example, many families live in a mobile home park where the closest bus stop is a 15 minute walk and the total commute time is over one hour to reach ESL classes. To drive the same distance takes only 10 minutes. The next question in the personal interviews asked respondents to share reasons why Latino adults do not attend these classes. Scheduling, transportation and childcare were listed as common obstacles. In addition, perceptions about these classes were shared. One respondent had heard other Latino adults indicate a feeling of not being welcome at these classes and the inability to conform to a preconceived student standard. It was reported that it is difficult to determine which level of ESL class to attend and some respondents reported that others felt they did not learn anything when they attended existing ESL classes. Oftentimes the classes they attended were either too hard or too easy. Given the limited amount of discretionary time Latino adults have due to having multiple jobs and caring for the needs of their families, if ESL classes do not produce measurable results,

the adults discontinue going to them. Table 7 contains responses from the interviewees when asked why Latino adults do not attend existing ESL classes in the community.

Interviewees were asked to provide any additional English language learning needs that they felt Latino adults in our community had. Alejandro expressed a need for Latino families to become integrated into the community and to become leaders. Rosalita said that the most important goal for Latino adults is to improve their English, get a better

Table 7

Personal Interviews - Lack of Attendance at Existing ESL Classes

Participant	Reasons why Latino adults do not attend
Daniela	Working during morning classes. Transportation, childcare.
Carmen	Time management. Don't always have motivation to become better. Tired from a long day at work.
Alejandro	Has heard people say they don't learn much. Either it is too hard or too advanced for them. Also, transportation and timing of classes.
Rosalita	Scheduling. Classes are during the day and many adults work then.
Estela	Scheduling, maybe environment isn't warm. "you can come if you want to, if you don't, don't come". Also, if you feel like you don't "fit in the box", you just remove yourself.
Camila	Kids, work, time, childcare, transportation.
Valeria	Classes are at different levels, difficult to determine what level to enter, and adults prefer 1 on 1 instruction. They are afraid to answer questions because you look dumb as an adult.

job and support their children in school. Estela requested local college level classes for those adults wishing to attend post-secondary institutions. Daniela spoke about teaching Latino adults their rights and their resources in the community. She shared stories of Latino women being abused by their partners but not knowing how to report the abuse or find a safe place to stay. Without extended family in the area, many women are trapped and afraid. In addition, Daniela shared that Latinos are often all clustered into the same category and looked upon as a homogenous group, often being assigned negative characteristics. She expressed concern about the inability of Latino adults to obtain assistance in an emergency due to limited English language proficiency. Valeria reported that Latino adults simply need English language skills to navigate daily life.

Conclusion

In this process of data collection, unique needs and goals of Latino adults captured through the use of three distinct steps of data collection were presented and discussed. In this section, a summary of the major findings will be shared and an overview of Chapter Five will be offered.

Throughout the course of my data collection process, themes surfaced and categories developed, while the unique needs and goals of Latino adults in my community were investigated. Common barriers to increasing English language proficiency were confirmed and expounded on. Background on family dynamics, home life and educational competence were discovered and detailed. The impact of limited English language proficiency on children and work environment was shared in firsthand accounts. Data throughout the data collection process was consistent and reliable, and

this researcher was able to verify data directly through questions and conversations in personal, one-on-one interviews with Latino adults in my city.

Common barriers discovered in previous research studies were confirmed through my data collection process. These barriers are lack of transportation, childcare and time. However, in my research, cultural norms in Latino families and fear created by undocumented status were also reported as obstacles to attending existing ESL classes. In my project, I intended to identify the unique needs of my target population and obtain firsthand data from the potential ELs rather than assume I knew what their goals and needs were. The impact of LEP of Latino adults on their families is profound and far-reaching, as shown by the data I collected. A theme that surfaced and continued to be prevalent is the desire of Latino adults to enrich the opportunities for their children to succeed and have a better life than their parents. Because of limited educational competence in Spanish, and low English language proficiency, parents have a critical need to find a way to support the education of their children, but often do not have the time or resources to do this themselves. The presentation of an ESL class for Latino adults while their school-age children were tutored was received positively, as was the suggestion of offering ESL classes to Latino adults while their children were increasing their Spanish language fluency. In the topic of work environment, several opportunities exist to improve promotions and wages through increased English language proficiency. The desire for small classes and a variety of levels of ESL instruction was presented as well.

In this chapter, I presented three steps in my data collection process, provided details about each step, discussed the participants, setting and location, and material

needed to conduct my research. My data collection process had three distinct steps and each step was discussed in detail and a summary of all data collected was included. In Chapter Five I will present a discussion of my findings, their implications and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

In this research study I intended to ascertain the unique English language learning needs of Latino adults in my community. My objective was to acquire data directly from the target population for my research to discover the reasons why these English learners were not attending ESL classes that are offered in my city. Several conclusions can be made based on the data collected and these conclusions will be highlighted in this chapter. Constraints to my research are presented following my conclusions and implications for teachers and program administrators are offered, as well as ideas for further research.

The question posed in this research study was: What are the English language learning needs of Latino adults in my community that are not being met by existing ESL programs? My study did not come from the perspective of identifying obstructions that Latino adults encounter when trying to attend ESL classes. Rather, my point of view was to directly ask potential ESL students to identify what they need in order to assure that they can reach their English language learning goals. Despite a change in methodology part way through my project, the caliber of data collected and the relationships I now have with advocates for the Latino community will be invaluable in the pursuit to create ESL classes for my target population that will truly meet their needs. The data collected in this research study answered the question posed and in addition provided insight into the lives, pursuits and struggles of Latino families in my city.

Major Findings

Several conclusions can be drawn from the data assembled in this project. First, my target population shares common barriers to attending ESL classes that have been reported by similar groups of Latino adults desiring to learn English. Second, the impact of limited English proficiency (LEP) was not only confirmed by my research but personal accounts were given to illustrate the negative effects. Thirdly, participants in personal interviews responded positively to suggestions of ESL programs that encompass the needs of all family members simultaneously. Finally, new insight was gained on cultural differences and the reality of life as an undocumented person.

Obstacles or Barriers

In previous studies, one of the most common barriers to Latino adults attending ESL class is transportation (Hayes, 1989; Mathews-Aydinli, 2008; Vassei, 2011). Given the rural setting of my city, public transportation is limited and many Latino families do not live close to bus stops that will take them to ESL classes. Without documentation, many adults are unable to obtain a driver's license, so transportation remains a major obstacle, and one that will have to be considered when designing classes for this population.

In addition to transportation issues, lack of childcare has been reported in prior research as an obstacle to attending ESL classes (Hayes, 1989; Mathews-Aydinli, 2008; Vassei, 2011). In my project, participants indicated that childcare was an issue preventing them from going to ESL class. ESL classes in my city do not provide childcare and these costs prohibit potential students from attending class. Based on observations of my interactions with Valeria and Camila, and conversations with personal

interview respondents, perceptions about familial roles and family priorities appear to differ from what is commonly thought in my community. For instance, it is not common for Latino parents to leave their children at home in the evening after being away from them all day at work, despite children being of an age where many adults in our community would consider them capable of self-care.

Scheduling and family responsibilities are issues that have been identified in prior studies (Hayes, 1989; Larotta, 2007; Nangle, 2013) and the participants in my study echoed these problems. In all three phases of data collection, respondents indicated long work hours, multiple jobs and responsibilities at home as obstacles to attending ESL class. Because many of the Latino families in my city are considered low-income, providing for the daily living needs of family members is paramount and attending ESL classes becomes secondary until these essential needs are met. Also, expectations of who provides care for children can vary among Latino families. Daniela indicated in her interview that it is common for women to be expected to stay at home in the evenings to care for children. It is not always possible for women to ask their partners to assume those responsibilities in order for the women to attend ESL classes at night.

Another major finding in this project is that my target population reported feelings about prior ESL classes that previous research studies identified as areas for improvement. One perception that has been reported is dissatisfaction with the levels of English language instruction offered in local ESL programs (Sowa, 2001; Buttarro, 2002; Nangle, 2013). In previous studies, students have expressed a desire for a variety of levels of ESL classes that fit their individual needs and goals.

In my research, respondents in the pre-survey group meeting expressed similar dissatisfaction with ESL classes they had attended in the past and also desired a greater selection in the levels of ESL classes offered. In addition, respondents in my study reported that when a new student joined an existing class, that lessons were often repeated, which frustrated existing students. Respondents in my research also expressed an inadequate increase in their English language proficiency and a strong desire for instructors to be bilingual in order to explain lessons in both Spanish and English.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

The inability to speak, read, write and listen well in English can negatively impact Latino families in several ways, and these negative impacts were voiced in the responses of participants in all three phases of my data collection process. Studies done in the past have identified issues with employability (Csepelyi, 2009; Jeria, 1999; Larotta, 2007; Downing et al, 2012; Lieshoff, 2007) and also with the inability to support the education of children (Manton, 1998; Bean et al., 2015; Lieshoff, 2007; Corona, 2012).

In the first phase of my data collection, the written questionnaire, respondents all indicated that they would be better able to support their children while doing homework if they spoke better English. Participants in the questionnaire also confirmed their goals of attaining higher wages by increasing English language proficiency. In the pre-survey group meeting, respondents indicated a goal of better employment with higher wages and associated higher English language proficiency with achieving that goal.

Interviewees in the third phase of my data collection spoke of how children cannot rely on LEP parents to assist with homework, and in addition, children often serve as language brokers (Corona, 2012). This is a common occurrence in my city as reported

by several interview participants. Respondents in my research acknowledged the positive impact they could have on their children by becoming more proficient in English and also spoke about how acquiring English language skills impacts integration into both the school environment and the community as a whole.

ESL Program Design

Despite the aforementioned obstacles, participants in this research project offered positive feedback to hypothetical situations that seek to meet the needs of all family members at one time. Latino adults that participated in this study expressed motivation to learn English coupled with frustration in trying to meet their English language learning goals. When a scenario was presented to them that offered positive, enriching activities for all family members at one time in one location, response was favorable. In the personal interviews step of data collection, respondents were asked to consider an ESL program designed for all family members to attend, at one time, in one place. Because of the positive response Aprender had at events where children were welcome to attend, it would appear that any ESL program offered to the Latino community would be most successful if children could accompany parents.

Another program idea was presented to interviewees that would also give parents the opportunity to attend classes at the same time and location as their children. A setting was described where parents would learn English while children learned Spanish. The possibility of teaching Spanish to their children was received well, and respondents reported that other Latino adults in my city would be interested in not only having their children become more fluent in Spanish, but also in increasing their English language skills simultaneously.

Although program ideas that involved all family members received a favorable response, participants in this study also indicated a need for more English related to their work environment. Situations were shared that at a minimum caused frustration, and at the maximum stifled motivation, ability to become promoted and limited family earning potential. Interview participants positively viewed the possibility of an ESL class that specifically focused on interview skills and language used in the work environment. Participants indicated a desire for assistance with understanding how to use English to negotiate, resolve conflicts and become empowered at their jobs.

New Insight

An unexpected outcome from this research project was an increased understanding and curiosity about Mexican culture. As I moved through the phases of data collection, I found that communication was more effective and efficient when done in person. If I needed to speak to a member of the advisory board, it was advantageous to simply arrive at an Aprender event, speak to him or her in person, and get the information I needed. The unintended reward of having to find someone in person provided me with more opportunities to interact with the Latino community, including many of the primary advocates for this group of families, several of whom became participants in the personal interviews.

After reading the book *Foreign to Familiar* (Lanier, 2000), I began to look for differences between my culture, which Lanier would say is a cold-climate culture, and Mexican culture, which Lanier would describe as a warm-climate culture. The impact of cultural norms on integration into a community is an area of research not included in this project but clearly an area that could impact the design of a new ESL program.

Prior to the onset of my project, I was also unaware that many of the Latino adults in my community are undocumented. As I read through literature about challenges immigrant families face, specifically unauthorized immigrants (Bean et al., 2015), it became clear that my target population may also be experiencing similar struggles, which could easily impact not only their ability to attend ESL classes, but also impacted their desire to participate in my research. As mentioned in my discussion of results, when not one individual came to my church for an advertised written survey event, it became evident that my methods needed to change. Fortunately, this led to personally interviewing seven Latino adults with intimate, firsthand knowledge and experience that was vital to my research.

Limitations

One of my concerns at the onset of this project was to respect privacy and not damage the positive relationship that existed between my church and Latino families in my city. The relationship between the Latino adults in my study and my local church remains positive and an expectation still exists for my church to offer a solution to these families as soon as possible.

Although the intent of this study to capture a large amount of quantitative data was not realized, the resulting seven personal interviews provided honest, unique and critical dialogue between the researcher and the target population that might have been difficult to capture in a written questionnaire. The impressions about the needs of other Latino adults in my community that were shared may not be accurate, as the data received by this researcher was given by a limited number of representatives. However, given that the majority of respondents in the personal interview phase of data collection

are all advocates for Latino families in my community, it is highly likely that their responses are accurate and reliable. The consistency of feedback between respondents also indicates that the data is dependable.

The initial design of my study was to collect data in three distinct steps, but that methodology had to be altered. Communication with my primary contact was sometimes an obstacle, and notification of Aprender events was not always shared with me. Perceptions about the unique needs of Latino adults in my community were drawn from a few individuals, and my preference would have been to seek data directly from a larger pool of respondents. It was also difficult to determine an accurate number of potential ESL students due to the lack of documentation and uncomfortable feelings toward interacting with individuals outside of the Latino community.

Respondents in my study stated that the majority of Latino adults in my city are from Mexico, and many remain undocumented. Since I do not speak Spanish, a significant barrier existed for me to speak directly to most of my target population. The fear described by Bean et al. (2015) and also by some of the participants in my data collection was another barrier between this researcher and the target population.

Implications

The premise behind this project came from my curiosity about why Latino adults in my city were not attending existing ESL classes. In many cases, researchers have tried to pinpoint the reasons for absenteeism in ESL classes (Vassei, 2011; Han-Carlsson, 2014; Hayes, 1989; McVay, 2004; Nangle, 2013). The intent of this project was to obtain authentic needs directly from the group of potential ESL students that comprised my target population. It was also the intent of this researcher to focus on potential ESL

students rather than existing ESL students. From the data collected in this study, evidence suggests that current ESL offerings in my city are not meeting the needs of Latino adults. Advocates for Latino families in my city provided open, honest assessments of their prior experiences in ESL classes and also articulated what they wanted in future ESL classes.

Needs Analysis

My goal in speaking directly to Latino adults in my city was to avoid making assumptions about the needs of my target population, and to create a launching pad for the design of an ESL program that will address the needs expressed by participants in this study.

A needs analysis was conducted to dig deeper, to develop relationships with potential students to isolate perceptions, attitudes and feelings about why they were not going to classes. My project opened the door to let these individuals speak freely about the situations that Latino families faced in my city, for them to share the struggles and dreams of people who risked so much so that their children could achieve better lives. As I began to see the participants in my study and subsequently other Latino families as people simply born in a less desirable environment than I was, it began to open my eyes to the plethora of needs that they have, including the desperate desire many have to learn English, and the impact on their lives without the ability to become proficient in the primary language of the country they live in.

As evidenced by the popularity of the Aprender outreach program and the variety of needs this program meets in my community, it is of utmost importance to consider the relationship between the needs of daily life and English language learning needs. As

noted by Buttaro (2002), immigrant families have a multitude of issues that impact the ability of adults to spend time, money and energy on increasing their English language proficiency. The Aprender program hosts a monthly food giveaway, provides summer camp opportunities to low-income families, created a soccer program for Latinas to positively impact their health, sponsors a school backpack distribution, bike and toy giveaways, and partners with local organizations to provide support and resources to families on a variety of topics that positively impact them. When daily living needs are met, especially in a culture that places so much significance on family and community, parents can then perhaps turn their attention to the future and towards a better life obtained through increased English language proficiency and integration into the community.

Respondents in all three phases of data collection indicated motivation to increase English language proficiency, and personal interview data implied that an alternative design that encompassed the needs of all family members would be successful. Parents desire to learn English, want their children to receive the help they need with homework and also want their children to increase fluency in Spanish. Combining the goals that parents have for themselves alongside the goals they have for their children appears to be a feasible option that may meet with a positive response in my community.

Cultural Differences

Another insight that was a result of this study was an increased understanding of the culture my target population originated from. Having been raised in the state I now reside in, certain values, societal norms and views of familial roles are generally accepted and expected. This worldview of mine was challenged during my project, and I began to

notice differences between my expectations and behaviors and those of my target population.

I believe that cultural norms impact our actions and beliefs. It is still unclear to me what all of the differences are between the cultural norms in my state and the cultural norms of individuals who grew up in Mexico. As respondents indicated in my research, most of the Latino families in my city originate from Mexican heritage. As two cultures collide, adjustments will need to be made, and understanding the gap is critical to those wanting to acclimate. As Lanier (2000) suggests, significant differences exist between warm- and cold-climate cultures. If her assumptions and observations are accurate, then it seems logical and prudent to incorporate cross-cultural training into an ESL program targeted at any potential students who originate from a culture different from the one in my state.

In casual conversations with Camila, we have discovered miniscule and major differences in how we view the world, parenting, work, education and many other topics. It would seem beneficial to educate newcomers on the cultural norms they will encounter in their new area of residence in addition to providing them with English language skills that will assist them with integration into their communities.

Church-based ESL Programs

Research studies done with church-based ESL programs indicates increases in trust between students and instructors (Chao, 2013; Jiang, 2012) and in my observations many Latino families in my city already exhibit a level of trust in interacting with my local church. It is my hope that our church can model ESL classes on previously

successful programs that target similar populations and perhaps reach Latino adults who may not be as apt to attend other ESL classes.

The relationship of trust between my local church and my target population provided access to open and honest feedback on the unique English language learning needs of Latino adults in my community. In addition, because my church is seen as a place of safety and a resource for meeting any type of need, I was able to grow in my personal relationship with advocates for Latino families in my city and can continue working with this population to assist them in meeting their English language learning goals.

The book *Parents Without Papers* (Bean et al., 2015) is an invaluable resource into the authentic struggles that undocumented persons have in the United States, and the implications to the generations that follow them. With such a large portion of Latino adults in my city classified as undocumented, it is critical for my church to continue to build a trusting relationship that provides a safe place for these families to get their needs met. It is logical to assume that if parents cannot feed their family, that learning English becomes secondary. If parents come to the United States to provide a better life for their children, this becomes the highest priority, and the needs of the parents fall by the wayside.

Many churches see outreach as an opportunity to be the hands and feet of Christ to those in need, and it is my hope that our church can continue to foster a positive relationship with the Latino community and assist them further by providing an ESL program that will be attainable, practical and successful. As evidenced by other studies done with church-based ESL programs (Jiang, 2012; Chao, 2013), relationships created

within an environment of trust and mutual respect can provide critical integration into society. In interviews with recognized advocates for the Latino community in my city, respondents indicated a priority that must be placed on societal integration and this should be considered when designing an ESL program sponsored by my church.

Further Research and Recommendations

In much of the research I located, absenteeism was focused on as a major reason that Latino adults do not acquire the English language. My focus in this project was to become intimately acquainted with real stories of people in my community who desire to learn English. I did not want to settle for common reasons that have already been reported, but wanted to seek to understand familial needs, cultural norms, attitudes and perceptions. My target population was, and still is, a group of Latino families who are not part of an existing ESL program and who encounter challenges every day because of their lack of English language skills. In this section I will propose several ideas of what could be done next, as well as proposals for the types of ESL programs that I feel would be successful in meeting the needs of the population I studied. Lastly, I will present questions that still remain, and aspects that I would still like to know more about.

Areas to explore

Multicultural liaisons already exist in my school district and this could be an area of opportunity. These individuals have firsthand knowledge of the needs of Latino families. If these liaisons were partnered with a church member, families in need could begin to develop relationships outside of the Latino community. Bridges need to be built between all cultures and ethnicities in my city and this could be the first step in starting to lay the foundation for more connections. Other churches have already shown interest in

helping to provide for the needs of Latino families in my city, and it is my recommendation that all churches who have a desire to be involved partner together to share resources and volunteers, using the multicultural liaisons as a primary point of contact through the Aprender outreach program that already exists.

An area of research that is recommended is to identify all of the needs of Latino families in my community, including the challenges faced by not having legal status and how that impacts Latino adults and their ability to acquire English language skills. Undocumented persons can experience isolation from the rest of their community due to discrimination and anti-immigration attitudes, and the lack of legal papers can affect their access to resources available to those with legal status. A fear of deportation permeates the lives of those who are undocumented and can prevent them from seeking help in the areas of health care, mental health, involvement in the community, and participation in school functions (Lieshoff, 2007). The focus of research should be on direct inquiry of potential students, to determine what basic needs are and what values and priorities these families have. What can be done to accelerate the integration of these families into our community? What resources already exist that can be earmarked for Latino families? How can we connect volunteers who wish to give their time to help these families become more integrated?

In addition to English language skills, many Latino adults in my city are reported to have a need to increase their literacy in the Spanish language. If parents need to increase literacy in Spanish prior to acquiring English language skills, program administrators can consider bilingual literacy instruction, as Rivera did in her ESL program (Rivera, 1999) and as both teachers did who participated in a study done by

Sowa (2001). Two teachers in her study have advanced degrees and one was using Spanish to teach a beginner's level ESL class, which appeared to help students learn more efficiently. Would it be possible to utilize bilingual persons in my city, or perhaps Spanish instructors in the area to assist in the creation of a Spanish literacy program? Would high school or college students within a reasonable distance of my city be able to either teach basic Spanish literacy skills or serve as a teacher's aide? Could a Spanish school for both children and adults be offered on the weekends, similar to other language schools?

Assumptions made about what to teach may not apply to all groups of potential students, and needs analysis is the best method to accurately assess the most viable ESL program design. Is it possible that Latino adults previously surveyed simply gave safe, expected answers to why they do not attend ESL classes? Is it possible that additional needs exist and are not being reported or addressed? Continual evaluations of both expressed needs and implied needs may be beneficial in the successful design of an ESL program to meet the needs of my target population.

ESL Program Suggestions

Based on the positive response I received in the personal interviews to proposed family-oriented ESL programs, I would recommend exploring a way to provide classes in a facility that can accommodate all family members at one time. As adults are attending ESL class, their school-age children can receive tutoring while younger children are in supervised childcare. If a community-based program can be implemented that encouraged the entire family to invest in bettering themselves, this may be a way to begin to meet the English language learning needs of Latino adults. They can be assured that

their children are not home alone, or struggling with homework, but are learning at the same time as the parents.

My study suggests that a single class time will not work for everyone and scheduling classes may require trial and error. If a program is designed to meet the needs of all family members, it is recommended to offer family classes on Saturdays to begin with and evaluate the success after three months. In the church-based programs studied by Chao (2013), simply offering the opportunity to converse in English with no academic pressure was a great first step in forming relationships and establishing trust. Lieshoff (2007) also recommends cross-cultural relationships, which has been the result of the Aprender outreach program sponsored by my local church. Different levels of English should eventually be offered, but the true needs of Latino adults in my city cannot be determined until barriers are eliminated and trust is established, which will take time.

In order to design a truly community-involved ESL program, I would recommend continually involving English-speaking Latino adults who can assist in teaching. This shows leadership, provides good role models and demonstrates a commitment to sharing knowledge and skills. Initially, co-teachers could partner together to instruct students, with one teacher a native English speaker and one teacher a native Spanish speaker. In one such program, Latino adults were partnered with a mentor who showed them how to teach, and these adults became interns who in turn taught literacy to members of their own community who spoke the same language. (Auerbach, Arnaud, Chandler & Zambrano, 2013).

In any scenario, it would be advantageous to include cross-cultural lessons. Camila and I have discussed the possibility of sharing our cultural differences with both

church members and Latino adults with the goal to provide perspective and understanding. We both feel that prejudices come from a lack of recognizing that differences are not bad or good; they just need to be communicated and understood. As we have learned about each other's culture, we continue to identify topics for a cross-cultural training class.

Further Research

Members of a parent advisory board for the Latino community have the role of identifying needs and finding resources for Latino families in my city. These individuals are not only advocates, but they are a direct link between my church and the many families who need assistance in my city. What can be done to open communication between all Latino adults and church members? How can we assist families with undocumented members to safely and confidently integrate into society while increasing their English language proficiency? What community resources are available that are not currently being utilized? What other churches, organizations and businesses in my city desire to be involved at a greater level?

In addition to these questions related to Latino families in my city, other ethnic groups also desire to increase English language proficiency. Further research could be conducted to determine how many other adults desire to attend ESL classes, and what their specific needs are. Are existing ESL programs meeting their needs? Do they have alternative ways to acquire English language skills? Would it be beneficial to consolidate existing ESL programs in my area in an effort to try to meet the needs of all potential English learners?

It is recommended by this researcher that program administrators consider the background of potential ESL students in their communities, and become connected to leaders in diverse groups in their area. Needs analysis can be done with a small group of individuals and adjusted as the number of students increases. Churches are encouraged to identify families who are in need and create solutions that help to eliminate obstacles to community integration. Finally, differences in cultural norms can be significant and anyone wishing to help those who do not share the same culture should become educated on what values are shared, what values are different, and where diverse groups can integrate and work together to improve the quality of life for all in the community.

Appendix A

PRE-SURVEY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE - LEADER

- *Greet participants and invite into meeting room*
- *Make introductions*

Welcome:

- Let's begin. My name is Ellen Keesling. I am a student at Hamline University and I am pursuing a graduate degree in English as a second language. My research project, or thesis, is to analyze the English language learning needs of Latino adults in our city. The group of adults I will be speaking to are parents who have had children in the Aprender program sponsored by my church.
 - Valeria and Camila have agreed to translate for me today. Valeria has asked you to attend this meeting so i can better understand what your needs are.
- The information that you share with me today will be used to create a written questionnaire. This questionnaire will be distributed to all parents involved in the Aprender program at a special event in January. The data collected during my research project will be analyzed and a recommendation will be given to my church so they can consider offering ESL classes sometime after the completion of my project. It is my hope to begin classes by fall of 2016, at the latest.
- All information collected today will be coded and confidential. No information that will identify you will be reported. For example, when Camila shares information with me, I might use a code like F001 to identify any of her responses.
- Federal law requires that you sign a consent form before I can use anything that you share with me. I will distribute these forms now.
 - *Distribute/collect consent forms*
 - *Have Valeria/Camila translate or read Spanish version*
- I will be audio recording our meeting so that I can go back and listen to what was said. The purpose of recording is so that I am accurate in my reporting. The only people who will have access to this recording are a translator, who will also be required to sign a confidentiality form, and me.
- You can decline to answer a question or decide to leave at any time. Your participation in my research is 100% voluntary.
- The bathroom is down the hall on the right.
- Please help yourself to food and beverages.
- it is important that we respect each other. I am nervous about offending you in some way because I do not understand your culture very well. I would very much like to better understand your culture. Please tell me if I do or say something that is offensive or confusing. Also, it is very important that I get the opinions of each of you. It is ok if you disagree. The input of everyone is valuable to me. Please only one person talking at a time, and please silence your cell phone. Do you have any questions?

SECTION 1:

- Let's get to know each other. This will not be recorded; it is only so I can meet you and learn about your family and life here in our city. I will be taking notes as you speak so I can remember you. ☺
- Please take time now to answer the questions on the Personal Information sheet. Then we will discuss it together. I will collect these sheets at the end of this meeting and assign codes to each of you to protect your identity. (*hand out forms/pens. Hand directly – do not toss at them*)
- Use the Personal Information Sheet to tell me about yourself. I will go first.
- I am Ellen, and I am married to Jim. We have two children. Amelia is 22 and Adam is 19. I do not have other family in our city. I have lived in our city since 2001. I attend my church and I do not attend ESL classes because my native language is English. ☺ My current level of English is 5 – Advanced.
- Who wants to go next?
- Thank you all so much for telling me about yourself. We will now start collecting data to help me create a good questionnaire. With good data hopefully we can create good ESL classes. ☺

SECTION 2:

I am going to start audio recording now so I can listen to what you are saying and go back later to listen again.

QUESTION 1: I want to know about your goals for learning English. Can you please tell me why you want to increase your English language skills? You can say things like “to get a better job”, or “to understand communication from my child’s school”. I am going to say your name before you speak so when I listen to the recording I will know what you said.

(call on first person, hand mike, repeat for each participant)

QUESTION 2: I want to know the reasons why you have not been able to achieve these goals. I want you to tell me what obstacles or barriers keep you from learning English or attending classes. You can say things like “I don’t have a car or I don’t drive” or “I don’t have anyone to care for my children” or “the times and days that classes are offered are not convenient for me”.

(call on first person, hand mike, repeat for each participant)

QUESTION 3: I want to know about any experiences you have had with ESL classes? Please tell me if you have ever attended a class, when it was and where it was. Then, tell me what you liked and what you did not like about the class you attended.

(call on first person, hand mike, repeat for each participant)

QUESTION 4: Please describe what a “perfect” ESL class would look like. You can say things like “a private tutor” or “a class where I get to practice speaking”.

(call on first person, hand mike, repeat for each participant)

QUESTION 5: What things are you good at? You can say things like “I’m friendly”, “I’m a great cook”, “I love taking care of children” or “I am good at speaking in front of people”.

(call on first person, hand mike, repeat for each participant)

QUESTION 6: Would you be willing to do to help other Latinos learn English? If yes, what would you be willing to do? You can say things like “I could provide childcare” or “I could help teach Spanish or English”.

QUESTION 7: What other things would you like me to know?

(call on first person, hand mike, repeat for each participant)

This will end the recorded portion of this meeting.

Conclusion

1. Thank you very much for taking the time to help me with my research. I appreciate it so much!
2. My goal is to host a special event in January and invite all of the parents from Aprender. Please tell your friends and family about this event. It will be helpful to have many people attend so I can get a large amount of data to support my research. I will be serving refreshments at this event and translators will be available to help.

PERSONAL INFORMATION SHEET: Pre-Survey Group Meeting

Name _____

How long have you lived in our city? _____

Tell me about your family.

Do you have a spouse? _____

Do you have children? _____

How many and what are their ages? _____

Do you have other family in our city? _____

Where do you work? _____

Do you currently attend a church? _____

If yes, what is the name? _____

What is your native language? _____

What level of education did you achieve in your native language?

Do you currently attend ESL classes? _____

If yes, where? _____

How would you describe your current level of English? Choose a number between 1 and 5.

1. No English proficiency
2. A few words or phrases (Beginner)
3. Short sentences/phrases with multiple errors (Basic)
4. Full sentences with a few errors (Intermediate)
5. I speak English very well (Advanced)

Appendix B

WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRE

The goal of this questionnaire is to identify the English language learning goals of Latino adults in our city, and also identify obstacles to achieving those goals. All information is confidential.

Section A: English Language Learning Goals

1. Native language (circle one): Spanish English
2. How often do you speak Spanish (circle one): MOST of the time SOME of the time RARELY
3. How often do you speak English (circle one): MOST of the time SOME of the time RARELY
4. How many years (total) did you attend school in your native language? _____
 Primary (years) _____ Secondary (years) _____
5. How many years of college or technical school did you attend? _____
6. Do you want increase your ability to speak and understand English (circle one): Yes No

If you answered "Yes", please continue. If you answered "No", please skip to Section C: About Me.

7. Please choose your TOP 5 statements below. Place an "X" beside the TOP 5 reasons you want to learn English.

I want to be able to better understand and speak English because I want:

- _____ To help my children with their homework
- _____ To better understand communication from my child's school or teacher
- _____ To get a better job
- _____ To be able to attend college or university
- _____ To be able to achieve a GED
- _____ To be able to become a citizen
- _____ To better understand important documents
- _____ To communicate better with my children or grandchildren
- _____ To improve my pronunciation
- _____ To be able to communicate better in daily life
- _____ To learn to drive
- _____ To be respected

If you have a goal that is not listed, please write it here:

Section B: Barriers to Achieving English Language Learning Goals

For questions in this section, please circle your answer.

8. Are you currently attending ESL classes? YES NO
9. Have you attended ESL classes in the past? YES NO
10. Where did you attend classes? _____
11. How long did you attend classes (how many months or years)? _____
12. Did the ESL class you attended help you to speak English better? YES NO
13. How was the class size? PERFECT TOO BIG TOO SMALL
14. What level was the class you attended? BEGINNER INTERMEDIATE ADVANCED
15. How many days a week did your class meet? 1 2 3 4 5

For the next 5 questions, please describe the **perfect ESL** class for you.

16. What day would the class meet? SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT SUN
17. What time would the class meet? Morning Afternoon Evening
18. How many times per week would your class meet? 1 2 3 4 5
19. Where would your class meet? Community room My home Church Other location
20. How many students would be in your class? 2-4 8-10 15-20 30 or more

21. In the following statements, put an "X" beside each reason that makes it difficult for you to attend ESL classes. If the statement is not a reason why you do not attend ESL class, leave the space blank.

- ___ I do not have transportation to ESL class
- ___ The time of day that ESL class is offered is not convenient
- ___ The day of the week that ESL class is offered is not convenient
- ___ I am not aware of ESL classes that I can attend
- ___ ESL classes do not provide childcare for my children
- ___ My family responsibilities at home prevent me from attending class
- ___ I don't have any opportunities to practice my English outside of class
- ___ I do not want to learn English even though it may help me
- ___ I am afraid to try to use English because I might make a mistake
- ___ My children can translate for me so I do not need to learn English very well
- ___ The majority of people I interact with daily speak Spanish
- ___ I had a bad experience with ESL classes/teacher
- ___ The ESL classes I attended was not at the level I needed
- ___ The classes I have attended or want to attend are too big
- ___ When I attended ESL class in the past I did not get better at English

22. Age: (please check one)

18 - 26

27 - 40

41 - 62

62 or above

23. Gender you most identify with:

Female

Male

24. Do you have children? (circle one) YES NO

25. My children participated in an Aprender program in the summer of 2015.

(circle one) YES NO

26. How well do you speak English (E) and Spanish (S)?

27. How well does your spouse speak English (E) and Spanish (S)?

28. How well does Child1 speak English (E) and Spanish (S)?

29. How well does Child2 speak English (E) and Spanish (S)?

30. How well does Child3 speak English (E) and Spanish (S)?

31. How well does Child4 speak English (E) and Spanish (S)?

32. How well does Child5 speak English (E) and Spanish (S)?

33. How well does your brother speak English (E) and Spanish (S)?

34. How well does your sister speak English (E) and Spanish (S)?

Appendix C

PERSONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

This interview is intended to identify your English language learning needs. It will be audio recorded for future reference. Some of the questions will ask for your personal opinion. For other questions, I will ask you to consider other adults in the Latino community.

1. Please state your name.
2. Are you a member of the Aprender Parent Advisory Board?
3. Approximately how many Latino families in our city does the advisory board represent?
4. What do members of the advisory board do?
5. My project is to identify the English language learning needs of Latino parents in our community. I have learned some of the reasons Latino parents want to improve their English. One of the reasons given was to help their children. How would improving your English help your children?
6. If a class were offered where children had tutors for their classes at the same time that parents received ESL instruction, do you think parents would attend?
7. What might prevent them from attending a class like this?
8. Another reason parents might want to learn English is to improve their job situation. How would improving your English help you in your current job, or in obtaining a better job?
9. Can you give me some examples of how a lack of English language skills has impacted you or other Latinos in your job situations?
10. If an ESL class was offered that specifically focused on English used in the workplace, what are some topics we could talk about in this class?
11. Another reason parents might want to learn English is to attend college. Do you think most Latinos have this goal?
12. How many Latino parents in our community would need to finish high school before they could prepare for college?
13. Some Latino parents might be concerned that their children will not be fluent in Spanish. If an ESL class was offered to parents, while at the same time a Spanish class was offered to their children, do you think parents would attend?
14. ESL classes are available in our city. What are some reasons why Latinos don't attend these classes?
15. Are there any other English language learning needs you believe adults in the Latino community have?

Demographics

Gender (circle one): M F

Age range (circle one):

18-30

31-45

46 or older

Years lived in our city: _____

Number of school-age children: _____

Thank you!

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