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DECREASING THE SOCIAL GAP BETWEEN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS
AND NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH

by

Rachel Loayza

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

Hamline University

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Primary Advisor: Jennifer Carlson

Secondary Advisor: Feride Erku

Peer Reader: Alicia Juárez

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Importance of Inclusion

Standing at recess, I have had several concurring conversations with colleagues about the social gap we observe between the English Learners (ELs) and Native Speakers of English in our urban dual language immersion school. In the classroom the teachers all work hard to create heterogeneous classrooms where students are seated among other students who are of backgrounds different than their own. The students work together on group projects, complete science experiments, peer edit each other's writing and discuss topics willingly. These groups are changed throughout the year, but the heterogeneity of each group is maintained. Many times students are seen helping each other with the vocabulary or structure of one language or the other.

The same students leave the classroom to eat lunch and are observed grouping themselves with others of similar cultural, socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds. The EL students are eating together and the native English speakers are eating together, which is also observed as the students leave for recess where the EL students are seen playing together and the native English speakers are seen playing together. Soccer is one of the few activities that seem to draw them together, although this trend is mostly seen with the male students.

Tatum (1997), in her book *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* observes the same phenomenon enveloped by her years of experience living with, studying and teaching about racism. She states:

The impact of racism begins early. Even in our preschool years, we are exposed to misinformation about people different from ourselves. Many of us grew up in neighborhoods where we had limited opportunities to interact with people different from our own families. When I ask my college students, “How many of you grew up in neighborhoods where most of the people were from the same racial groups as your own?” almost every hand goes up. There is still a great deal of social segregation in our communities. Consequently, most of the early information we receive about “others”--people racially, religiously, or socioeconomically different from ourselves--does not come as the result of firsthand experience. The secondhand information we do receive has often been distorted, shaped by cultural stereotypes, and left incomplete (pp. 3-4).

Despite this predisposition, I believe our classrooms are ripe with opportunities to reverse the assumptions about people of other backgrounds that Tatum discusses above. Children in preschool and elementary school have already been predisposed in their communities to incorrect information and we as educators have the opportunity in our racially, culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms to begin the reversal of these beliefs, if we only were given the necessary tools and knowledge to do so.

Many English learners are feeling the segregation and isolation (Kilman, 2009; Carey, 1989; Adams, Brooks & Morita-Mullaney, 2010; Hruska, 2000; Schaffer & Skinner, 2009; Muntean, 2011), and it is important to combat this isolation so EL

students begin to have shared social experiences with other students, which benefits everyone. Two of the benefits of this increased interaction are that students from both groups begin to develop more cultural sensitivity and appreciation for differences. Also, EL students and English-speaking students are given the chance to develop their language skills in natural settings. Students of every background should feel they are an important part of the school community.

Due to such realities as immigration and international trade, we are living in an increasingly global world. According to the US Census, by the year 2050 fifty percent of our population is projected to be of diverse groups of people (as cited by Ramirez, Salinas & Epstein, 2016). Consequently, the US government, for both political and economic reasons, has increased its demand for multilingual citizens (Muntean, 2011). If school communities take advantage of the diverse communities they have, the students are likely to be more prepared to enter and work in this global economy as adults.

This same world of mingling cultures, races and languages is in great need of social justice, and our schools are good examples of this necessary change. Despite the growth in diversity, our schools have not eliminated the educational barriers and structural inequalities that our students of diverse backgrounds face, which have existed for years (Ramirez, Salinas & Epstein, 2016). However, as students build relationships with students of differing backgrounds, they have the opportunity to become aware of the social inequities that exist. And, if students are interacting, gaining awareness and growing their intercultural sensitivity at a young age, they will be more prepared as adults to be participating citizens ready to affect social justice and change.

There is an assortment of research available on the academic and social experiences of EL students; however, most of this research seems to be based on single settings with only a small designated group of participants (Degges-White & Phillips, 2014; Adams, Brooks, & Morita-Mullaney, 2010; Hruska, 2000; Schaffer & Skinner, 2009; Muntean, 2011). To the best of my knowledge, there is not a published or readily available Systematic Literature Review (SLR) that analyzes a wide range of these research situations in order to compile the data. According to Kish, an SLR is a “high-level overview of primary research on a focused question that identifies, selects, synthesizes, and appraises all high quality research evidence relevant to that question” (“Literature Review vs. Systematic Review,” 2013). The purpose is to connect practicing teachers to high quality evidence; thus, once the evidence is compiled, it becomes more applicable than the individual articles alone. The applicable information thus becomes useful to other educators and schools in providing guidance on how to increase the inclusion and integration of all students, regardless of racial, cultural, linguistic or socioeconomic background.

Based on the background information provided above and the gap found in research, I have decided to conduct a Systematic Literature Review (SLR), which will focus on the social isolation of EL students.

Guided Questions

These questions originated from my own observations as a teacher and noting the gap in socialization. Also, during my coursework I read some of the articles that will be used during the research portion of this capstone and developed a table based on what

patterns I began to notice in the articles. The guided research questions that are intended to be answered through this study are the following:

- How are EL students experiencing isolation in the school setting?
- What are the social experiences and interactions that our EL students and non-EL students share with each other?
- How can the cultural capital of EL students be increased?
- How can schools prioritize inclusion?
- What steps can teachers and schools take to encourage social interactions?

Purpose of Research

The purpose of this study is to investigate the lack of social interactions between EL students and non-EL students in classroom and school settings in order to find out whether teachers and administration can affect the frequency that students will seek out these intercultural social experiences. An SLR will be used to accumulate and analyze a wide range of studies. By reviewing these studies, other educators and administrators will be able to take advantage of the compiled data and walk away with ideas on how to encourage the integration of the EL students and non-EL students within their classroom, school or even district.

Summary

This introduction has highlighted the importance of including EL students in the school community. The benefit for everyone is the creation of a generation ready to enter into a global community and prepared to effect social change. The method chosen for this study is a systematic literature review in order to compile as much data from primary sources as possible to pass on high quality information to current educators.

Chapter Overviews

Chapter two, the Literature Review, will be a discussion of literature that builds a background for this study. These articles will demonstrate that EL students do feel isolation from the rest of the school community. They will also describe some of the social experiences EL students share with non-EL students; describe what cultural capital is and how it affects the student experience; what inclusion looks like; and steps some schools have taken to begin to include all students in their community.

Chapter three, Methodology, will describe an SLR and the reasoning behind completing this kind of study. The important steps in an SLR will be explained as well as a summary of how the steps will be implemented within this study. Chapter four, Results, will be an analysis of the data extracted from the study. Patterns will be presented and the implications of these patterns will be described. Chapter five, Conclusions, will be a discussion for educators and administrators highlighting what the results mean for the classroom and school community. Shortcomings will also be presented, such as limited databases for the search, the age parameters regarding participants and the fact that most of the studies took place only in the United States, excluding the insight that other countries may have to offer. Future research opportunities will be presented to fill in the gaps from these shortcomings.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the lack of social interactions between EL students and non-EL students in classroom and school settings in order to find out whether teachers and administration can affect the frequency that students will seek out these intercultural social experiences. This will be accomplished by gathering and analyzing a wide range of data from previous research through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR). Research in this general literature review chapter will be presented in five subsections: 1) isolation and alienation of EL students; 2) qualities of inclusion; 3) cultural capital; 4) social experiences shared between EL and non-EL students; and 5) solutions teachers, schools or districts are implementing or have implemented. Some overlapping themes between the subsections will occur. This is not all there is to the social gap that our EL students experience, but it is what this study will focus on. There are many more questions that may be asked, but it cannot all be covered in one SLR. The resulting guided questions are:

- How are EL students experiencing isolation in the school setting?
- What are the social experiences and interactions that our EL students and non-EL students share with each other?
- How can the cultural capital of EL students be increased?
- How can schools prioritize inclusion?

What steps can teachers and schools take to encourage social interactions?

Isolation and Alienation of EL Students

Many English learners may feel a sense of isolation in school. In fact, according to a study done by Hruska (2000), this feeling of isolation and segregation could affect the success of these students. This is not just a high school or adolescent phenomenon as Hruska's study takes place in a kindergarten classroom. Davidson points to the same observation (as cited in Schaffer & Skinner, 2000) when stating that students of all ages give meaning to the system of race in creating differences and power, promoting the social status or lack of status due to race, gender and class. As many EL students also are of different racial and ethnic backgrounds than the majority, this affects them.

This sense of isolation may occur both within the classroom and outside the classroom, such as recess and lunch. Gillispie, Hill-Bonnet, & Lee (2008) provide an example of this from their study of kindergarteners in a dual-immersion setting in which students are required to speak the target language during designated class times. However, as students proceed to lunch or recess, the social choices they make are strongly influenced by their language of higher proficiency, thus native Spanish speakers generally played with native Spanish speakers and the same with native English speakers. Schaffer and Skinner (2000), in their study of diverse fourth-grade classrooms, find that despite school efforts, most students are observed socializing with students of similar linguistic and racial backgrounds during less structured times of the day, such as lunch and recess.

Additionally, elementary EL students have a lack of access to interaction with mainstream students outside the school setting, such as participating in clubs or play

dates (Kilman, 2009; Hruska, 2000). Hruska gives three possible reasons for this. First, there is little communication between native English speaking parents and parents who are native speakers of other languages. Second, some cultures, like the Latino cultures, value time with family over time with friends. Lastly, Hruska notes that native English speaking students do not seem to seek out relationships with speakers of other languages as much as the reverse. Muntean (2011) presents another example in her study of adolescents in an immersion program. In this study, students are allowed to choose their own seats in the majority of classrooms, and they consistently choose to sit by students of similar linguistic and racial backgrounds. Although this occurs within the physical boundaries of the classroom, these instances seem to be a social choice that the students make independently.

This isolating behavior is unfortunately reinforced by programs and decisions that are made by schools. Schaffer and Skinner summarize this finding as follows:

Schools can and do perpetuate inequalities based on race, gender, ability level, and class through tracking and labeling practices, racial disparities in enrollment in gifted and special education classrooms, biased disciplinary practices, and other aspects of programming and hidden curricula (2000, p. 278).

Similarly, in their work with administrators, Adams, Brooks and Morita-Mullaney (2010) have observed that in many cases EL students are seen as solely the EL teacher's responsibility. This lack of teamwork mentality is multiplied by the fact that the EL teacher may even be physically separated from the rest of the teaching team, such as in another wing of the building. Adams, Brooks and Morita-Mullaney go on to say that this alienation of the EL teacher may be passed on to the EL students, so they are also

alienated from the rest of the school community. Consequently, due to the gap in the relationship between administration and EL students and the lack of shared responsibility within staff, misunderstandings about the true needs and perspectives of EL students may occur frequently, resulting in issues such as programming that does not truly meet the needs of the students.

A common factor among more than one study is that pulling EL students out of their classrooms in order to receive service is a major cause of isolation (Hruska, 2000; Schaffer & Skinner, 2009; Muntean, 2010). A pull-out program is when EL students are taken out of their classrooms for small group instruction in a different setting creating a target group focused on English language instruction. This structure diminishes the time that students have to interact with each other, which makes it more difficult to build intercultural friendships and intercultural sensitivity. Unfortunately, the concern over the social gap rarely gets discussed among staff or with parents as friendships are seen as secondary to academics (Hruska, 2000).

Shared Social Experiences between EL Students and Non-EL Students

Social experiences are mostly controlled by the dominant language and culture (Hruska, 2000; Schaffer & Skinner, 2009; Muntean, 2011). Hruska (2000) observed that bilingual kindergarten students gained status among their peers when in adult-lead situations, but this was not reciprocated within the students' independent interactions. In fact, the Spanish-speaking students did not use Spanish to communicate with other students as it was not perceived as advantageous or necessary. Thus, these bilingual students in kindergarten already have experienced being different, either racially,

ethnically, socioeconomically and/or culturally, which affects the socially constructed meaning of bilingualism because reality is socially constructed (Muntean, 2010).

This ideology stems from the larger community, according to Hruska, who states that, “Dominant public discourse about the value of bilingualism, the resulting policies and programs, teacher and student ideologies, historical circumstances, and the status of individual languages, all contribute to the meaning that was constructed for bilingualism” (2000, p.19). Similarly, Degges-White and Phipps (2014) argue that due to the historical circumstances and experiences that some EL students come from, they may already have a heightened awareness of discrimination when interacting socially with others.

Bilingual students who share more social experiences, positive and negative, with native speakers of English are usually students who are more proficient in English (Muntean, 2010). Yet, according to Muntean’s findings, bilingual students who pursued multicultural relationships received pressure from their own peer group to remain insular and/or did not find that relationship reciprocated by the native English speakers. She goes on to explain that it may be uncomfortable for some students to be around students of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, so it may not be natural to cross those social boundaries. According to Gillispie, Hill-Bonnet and Lee (2008), students’ identities are shaped by the way they use their language interacting with other students, so it is more natural to want to remain in the language of the peer group.

Through her observations, Muntean (2010) shares some specific examples of the experiences the bilingual, EL students experience on a regular basis at school. The students segregate themselves on the bus just as they do in the classroom when given the option of choosing their own seat. Many of the Spanish-speaking students experience

bullying on the bus and in school from others due to such attributes as unique facial features and possible legal status. Some of the bullying even came from adults, such as the bus driver. One of the teachers described the following situation, “[The bus driver] calls them all kinds of names, and says that they shouldn’t be here. She calls them *wetbacks*, and says, ‘Why are you here, you Mexican?’ And she refuses to pick them up” (p. 249). In general, the bilingual students were nervous about going to administration to report this abuse due to their family’s legal status, afraid of other possible repercussions. Muntean discovered that much of the bullying originated from particular individuals and not the student body as a whole, but students usually generalized their experiences when asked to describe or discuss the racial tensions within the school. She also discovered that many of the social tensions were built on assumptions about other people’s backgrounds, such as all Latino students being Mexican or black students being loud and disrespectful. Each racial group blamed the other for the social tensions in the school community.

When the construction of a student’s identity is limited to a singular language, the language in which they are perceived to be more proficient, it limits the opportunities they have to interact in their second language or developing language (Gillispie, Hill-Bonnet & Lee, 2008). In turn, they are also limited by where they are socially allowed to interact in both languages at once, also called code-switching. This use of two languages each restricted to their own setting may also prevent students from learning to use code-switching to problem solve and to effectively or creatively communicate as bilingual speakers.

Carey (1989) shared her own experiences while spending a year in Spain. Given her lack of language proficiency and cultural knowledge she found it extremely challenging and intimidating to face social situations even though she was able to do what she needed to get through her daily life. When she compared herself with her EL students, she realized why they so often segregate themselves. She felt traumatized, even with her adult coping skills, and gave in to fear, which for her young students could only be multiplied many times over. One of the most isolating factors she faced was effective communication. Similar to her students, she was able to express herself in complex linguistic structures when using her heritage language of English, but struggled to even construct a simple sentence correctly in her target language of Spanish.

Cultural Capital

According to Pishghadam and Zabihi (2011), “Cultural capital refers to individuals’ access to different cultural goods such as, Internet, computers, pictures, paintings, books and dictionaries” (p. 51). Cole (2016) also defines it as “the accumulation of knowledge, behaviors and skills that one can tap into to demonstrate one’s cultural competence, and thus one’s social status or standing in society (What is Cultural Capital? Do I Have it? section, para. 2).” Muntean (2010) argues that this power is maintained by the majority who may not even realize it exists, but the minority sense it at all times. In the school setting, this cannot be ignored by teachers and administrators, especially since the majority of teachers are white, middle class women who own much of this cultural capital themselves.

In a year-long qualitative field study by Garrett and Segall (2013), five white, middle class recent graduates from a teacher education program were asked to watch

When the Levees Broke (2006), a film about the government's response to Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, specifically highlighting the racism involved. This set of teachers have what is called white privilege, societal privilege solely due to race, and this privilege allowed them to intentionally not recognize how racism played a role in the government's reaction to Katrina. They preferred to refer to other systemic issues at hand, such as class, socioeconomics and capitalism in order to diminish the role of race. Their race gave them the capital to actively ignore racism in order to remain comfortable, or as Garrett and Segall (2013) say, to keep their "self" stable. Teachers with this cultural capital often have the same reaction in the classroom, briefly mentioning it, but diminishing its importance by not critically addressing the issues at hand. Similarly, white, middle class students avoid explicitly discussing race in order to not appear rude, something minority students cannot do because of their lack of cultural capital related to their race (Schaffer & Skinner, 2009).

Many bilingual and EL students do not have the same cultural capital as their peers or even their teachers. Carey (1989) shares an interesting dichotomy in her observation that many of her students would be an object of envy with their current acquisitions in their home country, but they are invisible in their present communities, an example of a lack of cultural capital in their current place of residence. Hruska explains this well when she argues that identities are socially constructed and that "people implicate their relationships and identities to each other and position each other through language" (2000, p. 2). The language piece of cultural capital that many EL and bilingual students may lack as bilingualism and identity are shaped both through language and by whom in which the power lies, the dominant language and those than speak it natively.

Even among other bilingual speakers, the native Spanish speakers were observed speaking English, a sign of the status desired through the use of the dominant language.

Hruska (2000) points out that status is gained through friendships, which leads to increased interactions and the construction of a more positive self-concept. However, this dynamic and access to friendship is more dependent upon the openness of the ones with the most cultural capital, or the dominant culture. Students use race strategically to achieve a certain level of status and build a social network, in other words, to obtain social capital through associations with the “right” people, mostly homogenous racial groups (Schaffer & Skinner, 2009). This acceptance by others helps a student feel valued and increases their sense of acceptance, confidence and pride (Kilman, 2009).

Native English speakers in general naturally have more cultural capital, and not just due to speaking the language of power (Muntean, 2011), but in other aspects of their lives and schooling. According to the Cooperative Children’s Book Center (as cited in Perkins, 2009, p. 30), twenty percent of the country’s students are Latino, but only two percent of literature had Latino content. The debate about bilingualism and education is, in reality, held by the hands of those who have power and the negotiations of that power (Hruska, 2000), something obtained by them solely through their position and cultural capital. Those in power will be sure to make programs and policies work for themselves, whereas those who are non-Native speakers of English are challenged to participate in the negotiations due to their limited English proficiency and socioeconomic status, a lack of cultural capital. Their needs therefore may not be met by the same programs and policies. This power within the adults of the community trickles down to the students (Muntean, 2011), and as Hruska (2000) reminds us that students who are native English speakers

have less tolerance for ambiguity in the classroom than bilingual students, a reflection of the adult dynamic within the same community. Native English speakers are allowed to be this way as they have the cultural capital and the power.

Nonetheless, bilingual students do have some advantages over monolingual English speakers. For example, speakers of other languages in a bilingual setting usually learn English faster and to a higher proficiency level than native English speakers in the same setting working to learn a foreign language. This is due to the natural exposure to English outside of school and to the pressure society puts on them to learn English (Gillispie, Hill-Bonnett & Lee, 2008).

Qualities of Inclusion

Even though each of the schools or districts in the studies presented have their struggles, the majority strived for some kind of inclusion of their EL students. Muntean (2011) explains why this is important, “Immersion education holds the possibility of creating such a social reconstructionist, multicultural program, in that these programs often times bring together two socioeconomic groups that typically would not be in the same classroom setting” (p. 13). Although not all schools include an immersion setting, many have EL students and programs and by including all students in the school community, the same opportunity of reconstructing the students’ social concept of multiculturalism arises that Muntean describes above. Kilman (2009) complements Muntean’s quote when she points out that by including students of all backgrounds in the classroom, all are exposed to multiple ways of thinking, solving problems and living in the global world. The government itself, for political and economic reasons, is demanding more and more multilingual citizens (Muntean, 2011).

As stated earlier, if the ESL teacher is isolated, their students will be as well. ESL teachers need to be in close proximity to the team with whom they share students in order to make common planning time, team meetings and brief hallway connections more frequent (Adams, Brooks & Morita-Mullaney, 2010). This way EL students become a shared responsibility throughout the entire school. Administrators need to be the advocate for this kind of change: the implementation of complete collaboration from all staff to support EL students (Adams, Brooks & Morita Mullaney (2010).

In order to create inclusion, it is imperative to see EL students as the assets they are by building communities that encourage social and cultural integration (Adams, Brooks & Morita Mullaney, 2010) by incorporating more different cultures, especially those representing by the students, into culturally relevant pedagogy. Another way is by recognizing that a student's heritage language is an asset, not a problem, and can be used to encourage language and academic development (Muntean, 2011). Kilman (2009) even suggests that a dual-language program may be a solution, which is supported very well by Muntean's quote shared at the beginning of this subsection. Taking it yet one step further than curriculum and programs, Schaffer and Skinner (2009) encourage schools to create space for conversations around breaking down assumptions, beliefs and attitudes specifically related to diversity and power. Much talk about race, positive and negative, naturally occurred during less structured parts of the day, such as at recess and lunch. However, according to Schaffer and Skinner, these conversations must also be brought into the classroom intentionally by teachers in order to facilitate an understanding of diverse cultures and how power affects their classroom. Both staff and students need to

recognize cultural capital, power and racism in its many forms and how it affects the school community.

According to Muntean (2011), one final quality of an inclusive school is a foundation built upon positive relationships between students, teachers and parents. In the school where her study was conducted, there was a remarkable effort put into reaching out to Latino parents in order to support them in advocating for their children. This drew them into the community in a very meaningful way and situated them right beside other parents. Also, spending time getting to know each individual through these positive relationships helps to develop more intercultural sensitivity.

Successful Solutions

Much of the research on bilingual or ESL education brings to light that professional development plays a large role in creating more inclusive schools (Adams, Brooks & Morita-Mullaney, 2010; Garrett & Segall, 2013; Muntean, 2011). Teachers' strategies and perspectives are changed in order to change the school. Adams, Brooks and Morita-Mullaney (2010) gave an example of a school they observed in which each teacher had received training in ESL strategies. The professional development was carefully presented through the perspective of social justice and equity in order to be sure that the needs and perspectives of the EL students were brought to light. It is also important to step beyond just training teachers about the "other." Garrett and Segall (2013) recommend that teachers be challenged to see the "other" within themselves or it becomes too easy to dissociate oneself from what another is experiencing. Muntean (2011) felt that the professional development goals that teachers set during the year of her study were instrumental in the improvement that was seen. She also felt that they lacked

enough training in best practices for immersion. The teachers and students may have acquired more intercultural sensitivity if the teachers had received professional development training on the topic themselves. This is important because a large part of the problem of lack of inclusion appears to stem from teaching methods (Kilman, 2009).

Some of the research, which may or may not have mentioned professional development, at least pointed to the fact that change towards inclusion came from the teachers and administration within the school (Kilman, 2009; Perkins, 2009; Carey, 1989; Adams, Brooks & Morita-Mullaney, 2010; Hruska, 2000; Muntean, 2011). More than one of the same studies pointed to the importance of bilingual teachers (Kilman, 2009; Muntean, 2011). The presence of bilingual staff helps to both bridge the gap between cultural groups and increase the emphasis on the importance of language development. This alone, however, will not create an inclusive school. Muntean points to the importance of a conscientious effort needed to be made by the staff in order to foster intercultural sensitivity (ICS) amongst the student body (2011, p. 219). Teachers and staff cannot just assume students will learn this naturally given a multicultural setting. She emphasized the importance of curriculum designed to aid in the development of intercultural sensitivity and bilingualism.

Both Kilman (2009) and Perkins (2009) support this thought in describing the necessity for providing literature that represents diverse cultures and languages. After providing and reading some of this literature with students, it is vital to take steps to begin discussing the literature in critical ways, taking a look at all aspects such as race, culture, application to the real world and classroom, and other such topics. Fitts (as cited by Hruska, 2000, p. 42) even suggests providing students with the space to candidly

discuss issues around bilingualism and racism and creating projects that encourage students to code switch and elevate the status of other languages in the classroom.

Hruska (2000) gives an example of a classroom where the teacher created an environment in her own classroom where bilingualism and bilingual students were valued and affirmed in front of other students. However, despite these efforts, the inclusion did not appear to extend beyond the classroom. The local sociopolitical environment has a greater impact on the community as a whole. It is important for the principal and administration to support bilingualism in the eyes of the district and community, fighting for teachers and staff that fit the needs of the whole school community (Muntean, 2011). Strong parent and community support and commitment will begin to make a larger effect on these necessary changes (Gillispie, Hill-Bonnet & Lee, 2008).

Gap in the research

The research summarized above represents a portion of the research available on the social and academic experience of ESL students. However, the majority of the research represents only the setting, classroom or district, in which it took place, which is difficult to generalize for the education field as a whole. Additionally, there is little research that only takes a look at the social experience of EL students. For this reason, an SLR, described in chapter three, will be used to draw on a wide range of available research that includes the social experience of EL students. This data will be analyzed and, due to the varied sources, be more generalizable for the education field as a whole.

Research Questions

The findings discussed above have led to the following questions, which will be examined within this study.

- How are EL students experiencing isolation in the school setting?
- What are the social experiences and interactions that our EL students and non-EL students share with each other?
- How can the cultural capital of EL students be increased?
- How can schools prioritize inclusion?
- What steps can teachers and schools take to encourage social interactions?

Summary

The research summarized in this chapter suggests that EL and bilingual students, and sometimes their ESL teachers, do experience isolation within their school structures and communities. Although some of this alienation may be due to circumstances outside the teachers' and students' control, some may be the result of their own insular behavior. Most of the social experiences of EL students are limited to their own heritage language and cultural group, although those with higher English proficiency do have an increased amount of shared social experiences with native speakers of English. Yet, these experiences include both positive and negative interactions with peers as well as adults. Cultural capital plays a role in whether students are included, isolated or some of both. Schools need to be available to open conversations about race and background, all built upon positive relationships between students, teachers and parents. These inclusive schools have improved through the use of certain strategies.

The next chapter will discuss the methods used to implement the SLR, which will access more specific research with the goal of addressing the gap discussed earlier in this section. Specifically, to investigate the lack of social interactions between EL students and non-EL students in classroom and school settings in order to find out whether teacher

discussions or lessons affect if students will seek out these intercultural social experiences.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the lack of social interactions between EL students and non-EL students in classroom and school settings in order to find out whether teachers and administration can affect the frequency that students will seek out these intercultural social experiences. A systematic literature review (SLR) was used to answer the following research questions:

- How are EL students experiencing isolation in the school setting?
- What are the social experiences and interactions that our EL students and non-EL students share with each other?
- How can the cultural capital of EL students be increased?
- How can schools prioritize inclusion?
- What steps can teachers and schools take to encourage social interactions?

This chapter was dedicated to describing the methodology of an SLR. It includes the definition, reason for using an SLR, and the steps or stages used in the process.

Definition

Kysh (2013) defines a systematic literature review as a “high-level overview of primary research on a focused question that identifies, selects, synthesizes and appraises all high quality research evidence relevant to that question (Systematic Review section, para. 1).” It differs from the above literature review in that an ordinary literature review

is more informal and subjective in its manner of collecting and interpreting studies. An SLR is an objective, focused, secondary form of research which uses a wide range primary sources as its data, or in a way, its participants.

Rationale

According to Kysh an SLR is a “high-level overview of primary research on a focused question that identifies, selects, synthesizes, and appraises all high quality research evidence relevant to that question” (p. 1, 2013). Existing evidence concerning the research question is analyzed and summarized to demonstrate evidence and limitations, identify gaps in research, or provide a framework for new research (Sheuly, 2013).

The reason this method was chosen for the current study was threefold. First, while searching for articles, it became clear that there was an abundance of research available regarding the social and academic experience of EL students yet there was very little research dedicated only to the social experience of EL students. Second, an SLR is very useful in analyzing a wide range of research with varied settings and participants to find common themes. Third, to the best of my knowledge, an SLR did not already exist with the same focus. Therefore, a gap was recognized.

A systematic literature review is very useful in analyzing a wide range of research that included many settings and groups of students attempting to only extract the data regarding the social experience of EL students. As all the available data is synthesized the results may be more applicable to the education field as a whole. Lastly, the district in which a similar focus, but active research, was intended to take place now has very strict limitations regarding research that requires participant permission, which has made

it nearly impossible to do active research within the district at all. Therefore, the study needed to take on a form in which permission from participants was not necessary.

Important Steps in a Systematic Literature Review

An SLR has three main steps: planning, implementing and reporting the review (Sheuly, 2013). Sheuly goes on to explain that within the planning stage, after identifying the need and reviewing databases to see if there is already an SLR available on the topic, as discussed above, the researcher provides the following protocols to reduce researcher bias:

- Background information
- Research question identification
- List the databases from which the research will be found
- List inclusion and exclusion criteria
- Determine quality assessment for research studies
- Plan data extraction technique for the analysis of the data extracted from the research
- Determine timetable for the SLR stages
- Protocol is reviewed by experts (Sheuly, 2013)

Background information and research questions

As recommended by the protocol, the background information was already reported in chapter two, the literature review. The research questions were both listed in the literature review and in the introduction of this chapter. The implementation and reporting steps follow and are described in depth further in the chapter.

Databases

The databases from which research was found for this paper are listed below.

These databases were chosen because they were some of the suggested databases for ESL research by a university library and the results were sufficient for the purpose of this research.

- Communication and Mass Media Complete
- Education Full Text (EBSCO)
- Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)
- Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA)

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The following keywords were chosen based on common or important words that related to the purpose of this research and appeared frequently in articles that were analyzed for the literature review. The keywords and inclusion and exclusion criteria are listed below:

Keywords. The following words were used to search for research in each of the above listed databases. These words were determined because they appeared in one or more of the articles that were used in the writing of chapter two. Each word or phrase will be cross-searched with “English language learners.”

- social experience
- social interactions
- social integration
- cultural capital
- inclusion
- alienation

- isolation
- intercultural sensitivity
- friendship
- inclusive practices
- socialization
- social status

Each article was reviewed and if it was not on topic, it was excluded from the data. Articles were also excluded if they were not written in English, not available online, if they were not primary sources, and if they were not peer reviewed. The participants represented needed to include or be working with preschool or elementary aged students. The rest of the articles that passed were then assessed for quality and used in data extraction.

Quality Assessment

The quality assessment is used to determine the validity of the potential studies to be included (Sheuly, 2013). These primary sources were assessed based on their structure criteria. The introduction and literature review, methods, results and conclusion were each assessed in the following manner:

- Did the introduction and literature review provide at least an overview of the social experience of ESL students?
- Were the methods used to implement the research clearly described?
- Were the research results clearly defined and useful in answering the research questions?
- Were both positive and negative findings reported in the conclusion?

- Were the limitations clearly and honestly described?

Data Extraction Technique

For this stage of the study, a spreadsheet was created to collect and analyze data. Basic data was recorded about each article including the title, author, year, participant grade level, ESL program model, languages represented, and keywords (if given). The rest of the data collected fell within two major categories: barriers EL students face and efforts made by school, district, teachers or community. With “student barriers”, the following subheadings are examples of what was recorded in the spreadsheet for each study, marking an X in the box if observed as a barrier in the study (see Appendix A):

- pull-out model
- class size
- EL students not feeling part of the community
- instruction not connected to curriculum
- staff or community resistance
- lack of tracking student progress
- little or no native language instruction
- lack of contact with native English speakers
- negative teacher attitudes
- negative student attitudes
- disparity in access to resources
- materials not appropriate in some way
- lack of teacher training.

For “efforts”, the following subheadings are examples of what was recorded in the spreadsheet for each study, also marking an x in the box if observed as an effort made by the school, district, teacher or community within the study:

- principal leadership in bringing about change
- principal has knowledge about needs of EL students
- bilingual staff
- inclusive ESL program model
- heterogeneous classrooms
- shared responsibility among staff for all students
- professional development provided about EL students
- open staff discussions
- some clustering of EL students
- parent and community support
- community building within curriculum
- dual certification of teachers
- home language instruction
- integration of diverse languages and cultures in curriculum
- tracking of student progress
- inclusion of all staff in the community.

There was one last area of data that was recorded: whether there was an increase in overall inclusion or integration reported within the setting of the study.

Implementation

As many articles as possible were extracted from the given databases using the keywords listed above. Each article was analyzed, some excluded based on the criteria, and recorded using the spreadsheet. The results were synthesized looking for patterns, both positive and negative, within the data extracted from all the articles.

Reporting

The results found within the spreadsheet were then organized and written out in the fourth and fifth chapter of this paper in a way that educators will be able to access the information. Chapter four is an explanation of the results and chapter five is a discussion about the conclusions. The intent was for teachers, administrators and schools to access data from a wide range of high quality articles that have been analyzed. This data will be helpful in providing schools, teachers and administrators with implementable ideas to increase the integration of EL students in the social community of the school and beyond.

Summary

Within this methods chapter, the definition and reason for using an SLR in this project was briefly explained. Each step of the SLR was also explained in detail, including lists of specific databases, keywords and inclusion and exclusion criteria that were used in the implementation of the research. The chapter ended with a brief explanation of how the results were reported and conclusions presented in chapter four and five. This next chapter, as already stated, is a description and explanation of the results of this study, which aims to investigate the lack of social interactions between EL students and non-EL students in classroom and school settings in order to find out whether teacher discussions or lessons affect if students will seek out these intercultural social experiences.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the lack of social interactions between English Learner (EL) students and non-EL students in classroom and school settings in order to find out whether teachers and administration can affect the frequency that students will seek out these intercultural social experiences. In this chapter, there are two major sections: first, the process that was followed to complete the research, and second, the results found in the data collected after reading the articles for the SLR will be described.

As stated in chapter two, students prefer to spend time with others like themselves. Schaffer and Skinner (2000), in their study of diverse fourth-grade classrooms, find that despite school efforts, most students are observed socializing with students of similar linguistic and racial backgrounds during less structured times of the day, such as lunch and recess. This is natural and acceptable at times, yet it is also important to intentionally bring cultures and races together. Schools are excellent places to model and begin shaping this habit in young citizens who in the future will be in charge of the businesses, schools and governments.

In order to determine if administration, teachers or school communities can make a difference in bringing different cultures and races together, an SLR was used to attempt to answer the following questions:

- How are EL students experiencing isolation in the school setting?
- What are the social experiences and interactions that our EL students and non-EL students share with each other?
- How can the cultural capital of EL students be increased?
- How can schools prioritize inclusion?
- What steps can teachers and schools take to encourage social interactions?

Research process

The systematic gathering of articles began by searching for twelve keywords, listed below, which were all cross-referenced with “English language learners.”

1. social experience
2. social interactions
3. social integration
4. cultural capital
5. inclusion
6. alienation
7. isolation
8. intercultural sensitivity
9. friendship
10. socialization
11. social status

12. inclusive practices

Fifty articles were originally downloaded and saved for a closer review and alignment with the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Of the fifty original downloaded articles, twenty-eight were excluded for the following reasons:

- lack of proper research structure, such as a literature review, methods, etc.
- not related to English language learners
- social issues not addressed
- participants were not working with or themselves elementary or preschool aged children.

Twenty-two articles remained that passed the inclusion and exclusion criteria listed above in Chapter Three, Methods, because they were on topic; included participants who were working with or were themselves preschool or elementary aged students; written in English; available online; were primary sources; and were peer reviewed. The dates of the articles ranged from 2004 to 2016, and the types of studies were ethnographic, qualitative, quantitative, descriptive analysis, and quasi-experimental, but most were mixed. The studies were located all over the United States and two in international locations: Ontario, Canada and Ireland. Urban, suburban and rural locations were all represented. Spanish was the most common minority language represented in the studies, but many others also emerged, such as Korean, Creole, French and Somali. The ages of the participants ranged from preschool through 6th grade or were adults that worked with students in these grade levels. The ELL programs represented in the studies included pull-out, inclusion or mainstream, and bilingual.

Each of the twenty-two articles was carefully read, analyzed and recorded on an Excel spreadsheet, which is shown in Appendix A. For each article, the following details were recorded: title, authors, year of the study, location of the study, type of study, number of participants, ELL program model and languages represented. Two broad categories were created on the spreadsheet: *promoting inclusion* and *barriers to inclusion*. Subcategories were created within the two broader categories based on what the studies described as barriers to inclusion or supporting inclusion. As new subcategories emerged in the results of the studies, they were added to the spreadsheet, and as subcategories were reiterated in the articles, they were marked with an X in the spreadsheet under the established subcategory.

The five most frequent subcategories under *promoting inclusion* were

1. heterogeneous classrooms
2. professional development around ELLs for all staff
3. parent and/or community support
4. positive teacher attitude and relationship with students
5. differentiated teaching

The strongest of the six was heterogeneous classrooms that were mixed by race and language, which occurred in twenty of the twenty-two articles. The other four subcategories occurred in at least nine of the articles, which is over one third of the twenty-two articles. Inclusive subcategories that occurred in less than nine articles will be excluded from the discussion in this paper.

The five most frequent subcategories belonging to *barriers to inclusion* that emerged from the articles were:

1. pull-out programs
2. little to no native language instruction or initiative towards bilingualism
3. lack of teachers trained to work with EL students
4. ELLs seen as having a deficit rather than an asset based approach
5. high poverty or overburdening with EL students.

The pull-out program was the barrier that appeared most frequently, occurring in eight of the twenty-two articles. The other subcategories occurred in six of the twenty-two articles. Unlike the broad theme of promoting inclusion, such a large representation of a particular subcategory did not emerge. *Barrier* subcategories that occurred in less than eight of the articles were excluded from the final study.

Three final categories were recorded on the excel spreadsheet: increased overall inclusion of ELL students, increased intercultural sensitivity, and increased academic success. Eight of the articles listed no increase in inclusion, intercultural sensitivity or academic success, which meant there was not much improvement on including the ELL students in the school community. Three articles were listed as hopefully or somewhat in one or more of the three categories, meaning that the schools were making an effort to include ELL students, but there were no definite results yet because they were just beginning to attempt to build bridges between the cultures. Seventeen of the articles reported positive results in one or more of the three categories.

Farruggio's (2009) *Heritage Agency in a Transnational California Community: Latino Parents and Bilingual Education* reported increased academic success but not an increase in overall inclusion. What was interesting and unique about it is that the lack of inclusion was actually due to the anti-assimilation sentiment in the Latino parent part of

the community, which is a theme that did not emerge in a single other article. This was the only article that had a *yes* and a *no* in the final three categories. The remaining were only inconsistent in the sense that they may have reported a *yes* in one or two categories and did not report results for the others. The same is true with the negative responses.

The reason the sum of the numbers for the last three categories is more than the twenty-two articles is because some of the articles studied more than one school setting. I chose to list each setting separately on the spreadsheet because I felt that it would be a more accurate analysis.

Results

Promoting Inclusion

The results make it clear that heterogeneous classrooms are the strongest factor in making sure the EL students are included in the school community. This, however, does not create inclusion for all students on its own (DaSilva Iddings, 2005; Lee & Hawkins, 2015). For example, a school in the Southwest United States intentionally had heterogeneous classrooms yet the results of the study indicated that there was no increase in inclusion of EL students (DaSilva Iddings, 2005). In this study the EL students were placed in the mainstream classrooms, but pulled to the side by the ESL teacher for their own small group reading lessons, which focused more on specific English language instruction rather than the deeper themes and discussions on literature that the rest of the class received. The result of this type of instruction was a parallel community; students who interacted with others like them alongside students of other races and cultures, but they did not cross cultural boundaries in their interaction.

Similarly, Lee and Hawkins (2015) observed five rural communities in Wisconsin where there was a new influx of EL students. The students were placed in heterogeneous classrooms, but the staff perceived the minority language students as needing to assimilate and learn English rather than as people who bring new assets to the community. Lee and Hawkins (2015) state, “While ESL/bilingual staff expressed inclusive attitudes towards immigrant ELs, they also held deficit perspectives about immigrant ELs’ cultural and linguistic backgrounds, which led them to support assimilative practices” (p. 50). Therefore, some of their language, values and cultures were not accepted and they were not brought into the larger community of the school. There are other common themes that emerged in this SLR which are discussed in the following paragraphs and can support heterogeneous classrooms in increasing inclusion in schools that have EL students.

Professional development focused on the needs and assets of EL students for all staff was another common factor between several articles. Not only does this training provide all staff with new skills and knowledge about teaching EL students, but it also generates a change in attitude, helping teachers and staff to see all students and staff as assets in the school. For instance, a principal in the urban Midwest in the study *Leading inclusive ELL: Social justice leadership for English Language Learners* by Theoharis and O’Toole (2011) stated that:

...the outcomes of this [professional development] were largely attitudinal. Paired with the other professional development initiatives of collaboration, literacy, differentiation, and math, it became evident that the staff was now inclined to think about students and instruction differently. The new model of instruction and

professional development involved and valued all teachers—specialists and general education teachers—as they sought to educate all learners together (Theoharis & O'Toole, 2011, p. 671).

A third common theme among the articles is parent and/or community support that builds a foundation of social readiness in students. Shin (2014), Ryu (2004) and Hawkins (2005) each give examples in their studies of how parental support at home changed the outcome for their children at school. In the study done by Ryu, the Kindergarten student participants are bilingual and high-achieving. The parents of these children are involved with the children's studies at home and regularly contact the child's teacher for conferences or when concerns arise, which encourages the teacher to more frequently observe and consider that child's social and academic needs. Shin (2014) gave the example of a classroom that uses blogs to publish the students' writing giving the students a live audience to write for. The parents regularly comment on their child's blog and on other students' blogs to encourage them to continue working on their writing skills. Written dialogue can be less threatening and encourage inclusion as it gives students more thought time before responding to others' writing or comments.

Hawkins (2005) also gave an example of parental support in his study of a language minority student who had been exposed to several social experiences prior to school because his parents had placed him in a preschool program and encouraged his participation in extracurricular activities. When he finally entered Kindergarten, he was already prepared to build social relationships with his peers. In all three of these examples, the studies reported increased inclusion for the participants in the study.

Positive teacher attitudes and relationships with students was the second most frequently occurring factor, represented in twelve of the twenty-two articles. De Jong (2010) shared this quote by a fourth-grade bilingual teacher who taught in the Northeastern United States, “Both of us were excited about integrating our children. This rubbed off onto the children” (p. 33). She explained that the students began to work together and play together more often because they had great teacher role models who planned collaboratively and enjoyed working together.

Theoharis and O’Toole (2011) claimed that the success that they achieved in including the cultures and home language of their EL population was due to the positive collaborative efforts by their staff and teachers. In both cases, the teachers and administrators wanted the changes to happen and were a positive force in its implementation.

The final common theme discussed in this study that emerged from the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was differentiated teaching, which is described as a best practice for all students. Differentiated teaching is when individual students’ needs are taken into account and the teaching is adjusted to meet those needs. However, an interesting element that appeared in the studies presented by Xu, Gelfer, Sileo, Filler & Perkins (2008), Shin (2014) and Hawkins (2005) was differentiation through peers. Students in these studies were given the scaffolds necessary by the teacher to tutor each other at an equal level, whether they were EL students or not. Everyone was given an equal academic status by the teacher and this appeared to also influence their social status as each study reported increased inclusion as well as academic success. Xu, Gelfer, Sileo, Filler & Perkins (2008) stated, “Regardless of the culturally and linguistically

different backgrounds of the participating children, every child in the study showed a significant increase in all seven positive social interaction behaviors” (p. 627).

Although having heterogeneous classrooms was the strongest factor that emerged in creating an inclusive school, it is clear in the research that other factors need to support heterogeneous classrooms. English learners must feel positive energy from their teachers and peers, demonstrating the desire to include them in the community. Having trained teachers who are ready to advocate for them and work to meet their needs is hopefully a precursor to the attitude and initiative spreading to the rest of the teachers and staff. Students of all backgrounds need to be seen through the assets that they bring to their community because their languages and cultures have a lot to offer to schools.

Barriers to Inclusion

Barriers to inclusion in the ESL setting are obstacles that prevent the inclusion of EL students in the larger classroom or school community. Each setting in this research still had at least one barrier to work through, even if they demonstrated an overall increase in inclusion. Some schools were able to increase inclusion despite barriers or lower some of their barriers while other schools were unable to or refused to do so.

With eight articles mentioning pull-out programs as a negative impact on EL student inclusion, there was almost an even split between those that still reported increased inclusion and no increased inclusion. For example, Theoharis and O’Toole (2011) described two schools in an urban Midwest setting that originally provided services through a pull-out program. However, after restructuring the school due to changing needs, it was turned to an inclusive program. After the restructure they reported much success in increasing the inclusion of their EL students. “This vision drove the

collaboratively planned and delivered inclusive services that, in the end, provided for EL achievement—both advancing and improving social and academic achievement” (Theoharis & O’Toole, 2011, p. 680). In contrast, Kim (2016) provided an example of a classroom in a suburb in the southern United States that continued a pull-out program and still reported an increase in inclusion. However, the teacher in this classroom was intentional about making space for the EL students to participate legitimately in classroom activities and community, such as presentations and discussion. Kim stated that, “attaining legitimacy for practice is important for learning, this presentation practice appears to have provided important opportunities for ELs to participate in practices and move toward fuller participation” (p. 9).

A second barrier found in this research was little or no language instruction, which also supports bilingualism. All but one of the articles that mentioned this factor reported not seeing an increase in inclusion. In fact, many reported schools or classrooms that treated EL students as people who had a deficit rather than as assets to the community. One study in particular was focused on a location in the US Northwest where there was a student who spoke Korean and English (Han, 2010). He was the only EL student in the classroom of a school that was very affluent. Students were held to very high expectations in this school, which is why the mother of this student chose the school. However, the teacher made very little effort to include the student, his language or his culture. The student made very little progress socially or academically.

The lack of teachers trained to work with EL students was another common barrier to EL student inclusion. Many of the articles that mentioned this theme also mentioned the previous, little to no native language instruction. Lee and Hawkins (2015)

explained that in the five rural communities they studied in Wisconsin there was a lack of trained teachers due to a sudden influx in EL students. Because of the lack of training and advocacy, the strengths of the immigrant communities and the value of their languages and cultures were overlooked. The ESL teacher stated, “She interpreted her students’ cultural and religious differences as deficiencies that needed to be overcome” (Lee & Hawkins, 2015, p. 50). The expectation was that the students would assimilate rather than bring new assets to the school community.

In several of the articles the EL students were not seen as assets to their school communities. They were seen with deficits needing help to catch up with the other students. According to Lee and Hawkins (2015) this deficit perspective of immigrant cultures and communities leads to assimilative practices where students are expected to leave their home cultures and languages behind rather than recognizing the value they can bring to the school community. Han (2010) also describes an example of an EL student who was treated as if he had lower social status first by the teacher and then by the other students in the classroom. The teacher did not value what the student could add to the classroom. In fact, the teacher even began to make incorrect assumptions about the student, that he had a learning disability or language problems.

A struggle that continues to grow across the United States with increasing numbers of immigrants is high poverty rate or overburdening of EL students in certain districts or schools, which affects both academic and social outcomes. Hanson et al. (2011) studied a community with a high poverty rate and a large EL student population. These two variables were included as predictors for lower academic and social success in preschool students. They describe the results by stating, “Children’s performance on

measures of academic achievement in mathematics and letter knowledge was associated with the neighborhood economic hardship indicator” (Hanson et al., 2011, p. 97). In the same article, the authors explain further saying, “...children from neighborhoods characterized by less English speaking scored lower on measures of social participation” (p. 98). Vasquez Heilig and Jellison Holme (2013) described the segregation that still exists in schools in Texas, specifically regarding students of Latino/a backgrounds. The results in this situation are likely to be increased isolation and lower test scores. When students live in high poverty situations and in linguistic isolation and attend schools that are also isolated by race, ethnicity, language or economic level, their lack of resources intensifies.

Pull-out programs for EL students emerged as the biggest obstacle to including EL students in the larger school community. However, this alone does not bring about the isolation of EL students. Most of the settings studied in the research used for this study had more than one barrier to overcome. Other important barriers that emerged in the research were little to no native language instruction, lack of teachers trained to work with EL students, ELs being seen as deficits rather than assets, and high poverty or overburdening with EL students. These barriers cannot be overcome in a short amount of time, but it is important to examine which can be the first step in beginning the process of inclusion.

Guided Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the lack of social interactions between English Learner (EL) students and non-EL students in classroom and school settings in order to find out whether teachers and administration can affect the frequency

that students will seek out these intercultural social experiences. In order to determine if administration, teachers or school communities can make a difference in bringing different cultures and races together, an SLR was used to attempt to answer the following questions:

- How are EL students experiencing isolation in the school setting?
- What are the social experiences and interactions that our EL students and non-EL students share with each other?
- How can the cultural capital of EL students be increased?
- How can schools prioritize inclusion?
- What steps can teachers and schools take to encourage social interactions?

These questions were answered in the results above, but will be discussed specifically in this section. English learners experience isolation in the school setting when they participate in a pull-out model ESL program because they are not able to remain with their peers throughout the entire day and therefore lack some core instruction. Isolation also occurs when schools are overburdened with EL students because they are not able to interact with English speaking peers as much as possible. Hanson et al. (2011) and Vasquez Heilig and Jellison Holme (2013) both described situations where families of minority languages were isolation in communities and schools that had very few English-speaking neighbors.

The social experiences that students shared in these studies were mostly in heterogeneous classrooms where students were sitting side by side with students of other languages and cultures than themselves. This, however, still takes some intentionality by

the teacher. In the study by Han (2010), the student was excluded from the classroom community by the teacher and the other students followed the teacher's example.

In this research, cultural capital did not emerge as a very important factor. Even though the phrase was used in the keyword search, it obtained very few results, and those articles did not speak specifically about cultural capital. Therefore, it is assumed from this research that there are other factors that promote inclusion more than increasing cultural capital.

Schools are an important part of prioritizing inclusion. Since pull-out programs was the first barrier that emerged in this study, schools can eliminate pull-out programs so EL students are able to participate in all core content and interact with their English speaking peers as much as possible. Additionally, heterogeneous classrooms emerged as the first factor to increase inclusion. Schools can pair the elimination of pull-out programs with assuring that the classrooms are heterogeneous in culture, race and language.

Teachers can also support inclusion by seeking out professional development opportunities focused on EL students and sharing these opportunities with other staff and administration. English learners need advocates on their side who have been trained in teaching students of other linguistic backgrounds. The teachers and administrators set an example for the school by maintaining a positive attitude and recognizing all cultures and languages as assets that make the school a better community.

Summary

In this results chapter, the research process and results were presented in depth. The research process described which steps had been taken in order to complete the research, such as articles that were included and excluded. The results were explained in

order to show the patterns and themes that emerged through the SLR. These common themes were then juxtaposed with the research questions to discuss how the research is applicable to current teachers and administration. The next chapter will review the research questions and discuss the implications and limitations of this SLR study as well as suggestions for possible future research.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the gap in social interactions between English Learner (EL) students and non-EL students in classroom and school settings in order to find out whether teachers and administration can affect the frequency that students will seek out these intercultural social experiences. In order to determine if administration, teachers or school communities can make a difference in bringing different cultures and races together, an SLR was used to attempt to answer the following questions:

- How are EL students experiencing isolation in the school setting?
- What are the social experiences and interactions that our EL students and non-EL students share with each other?
- How can the cultural capital of EL students be increased?
- How can schools prioritize inclusion?
- What steps can teachers and schools take to encourage social interactions?

The type of isolation that EL students experience that emerged in this research was through participation in an ESL pull-out program because students were often removed from their homeroom setting and brought to a separate classroom to receive their English language instruction, missing out on core curriculum and interaction time with their English-speaking peers. High poverty and overburdening of EL students could also be interpreted as isolation because there would be fewer English-speaking students

with whom they could interact, which often happened in tandem with neighborhoods isolated by race, language or economic status.

The selected articles did not differentiate between classroom interactions and outside social interactions; however, the shared social experiences that did emerge were through heterogeneous classrooms where students sat side by side with students of other races and cultures. Peer tutoring was described by three articles and is a strategy that uses intentional and scaffolded interaction between students. This method did increase social interactions within the classroom, but this was not a theme that appeared frequently enough to be discussed in the results of chapter four. In future research it may be worthwhile to look for more information regarding peer tutoring due to the reported positive results in all three articles.

Despite searching for the keyword “cultural capital,” it was not a theme that frequently came to light in the articles. Only three articles actually listed it as one of the keywords and it was not discussed in other articles as an important part of increasing interaction between EL students and native English speakers. Therefore, according to this SLR, it is not one of the most important pieces of the puzzle when encouraging the social inclusion of EL students.

The results of this SLR indicate that schools can prioritize inclusion in a few different ways. First they can prioritize heterogeneous classrooms so students of different backgrounds are physically side by side with each other. They can also eliminate pull-out programs to make sure EL students and English speaking students get as much time as possible to interact with each other. Lastly, the cultures and skills that

EL students bring to the school community can be seen as assets to be built upon rather than ignoring their backgrounds and focusing only on assimilation.

Schools and teachers can boost this process by seeking out professional development opportunities for all staff regarding advocacy for EL students and the differentiated teaching of EL students. Having enough trained teachers to work with and advocate for the needs of EL students would help schools recognize the changes that need to be made to prioritize inclusion of all students. This aligned with positive teacher attitudes towards all students and backgrounds can make a big difference in increasing the inclusion of EL students.

Limitations and Future Research

The biggest limitation to this study was that much of the research did not differentiate between social interactions outside the classroom and interactions within the classroom. Future active research focusing on social interactions outside the classroom would be well worth the time. As stated in the literature review, we are living in an increasingly global world. Students need to be prepared to participate in such a world and to initiate changes that make it a better place rather than just living in status quo. Teachers and schools have the wonderful opportunity to encourage this kind of inclusive learning and to be examples of what it means to socially and professionally interact with others of different backgrounds in meaningful ways.

A second limitation was that articles were only obtained from databases accessible through a university library. Future research including articles from other resources would be beneficial.

This SLR was limited to studies focused on preschool and elementary EL students. Research regarding middle or high school students to confirm the above results in chapter four or find different results would be an interesting and beneficial study. The results of that study could possibly influence the way elementary schools work with their EL and English-speaking students as well.

Although there were two articles from schools in international locations, the study mostly focused on schools and participants within the United States. Many other countries also work with immigrant families and may have new insights into how to increase social interactions between students of different languages and backgrounds. It would be advantageous to take a look at programs across the globe and how they seek to increase the inclusion of language minority students.

Reflection

It was surprising to me that having heterogeneous classrooms was identified as the most important factor in including EL students in our school communities. I had expected professional development to be more important since teachers can be so influential to their students and classroom culture. In my own teaching experience, I have noticed the deficit of teachers trained to work with EL students and would like to see more opportunities for this kind of training suggested for all teachers.

On the other hand, I was not surprised to see that pull-out programs are the largest contributing barrier to inclusion, according to this research. From my own experience as an ESL teacher in a pull-out program, I saw the evidence with my own students because they felt awkward being pulled out of the classroom and communicated their discontent with missing activities in their classrooms. At times I was even asked by the classroom

teacher to “catch them up” on what they were missing during that class time. It would have been so much better for everyone if the EL students had been included in the classroom the entire time with a teacher or teachers trained to work with them in that setting, interacting all day with English speaking peers.

I hope to incorporate this research in my own teaching by advocating for the social needs of EL students. I will work towards heterogeneous classrooms while encouraging more teachers, like myself, to become trained in working with and advocate for students of language minorities. Lastly, I will maintain a positive attitude toward my students and set an example for other staff and students around me.

In a nine-month long study, current scholarly articles were read and analyzed in a systematic literature review to investigate the lack of social interactions between English Learner (EL) students and non-EL students in classroom and school settings in order to find out whether teachers and administration can affect the frequency that students will seek out these intercultural social experiences. The questions were:

- How are EL students experiencing isolation in the school setting?
- What are the social experiences and interactions that our EL students and non-EL students share with each other?
- How can the cultural capital of EL students be increased?
- How can schools prioritize inclusion?
- What steps can teachers and schools take to encourage social interactions?

Teachers and administration can affect the social interactions of EL students and their peers. This can be done through creating heterogeneous classrooms; maintaining positive attitudes towards all students; seeking out training in ESL instruction; parent and

community support; and differentiated teaching in order to meet all students' needs.

Although it may be a daunting list of changes for some schools, it can be attained one step at a time, and according to this research, schools can still increase inclusion with some existing barriers. It is a constant process of intentional changes and learning, but it is important to take the steps necessary because it is life changing for the students involved. Just like the story of the little boy on a beach full of hundreds of stranded starfish. He was trying to save them by throwing them back one by one and an older gentleman told him it was an impossible task. The man said he would never make a difference. The boy responded saying that it had made a difference to that one as he threw it back in the water. Our students are in a sense our starfish. We can and need to work to make a difference even if for one of them.

APPENDIX A

Systematic Literature Review article analysis

References are listed beginning on page 54.

	promoting inclusion				increased overall interaction or inclusion	increased intercultural sensitivity	increased academic success
	heterogeneous/racially integrated classrooms	professional development around ELLs for all staff	parent/community support	positive teacher attitude and positive relationships with students	differentiated teaching taking individual needs into account		
x					no	no	no
					yes, but not necessarily at recess and lunch		
x		x		x	Yes, for almost all in the classroom and for some at recess and lunch	yes	yes
x		x	x	x	Yes, in classroom, even parents on PTO	yes	yes
x		x	x	x	yes, in classroom	yes	yes
					no	no	no
x		x			hopefully	hopefully	hopefully
					no	no	no
x		x		x	x		x
x					x		
					no		no
x		x	x	x	yes	yes	
x				x	no	no	no
x				x	yes		yes
x				x	yes		yes
					somewhat	somewhat	yes
x		x	x	x	hopefully	hopefully	hopefully
x		x	x	x	yes		yes
x					only outside of school		no
x			sister		in school		yes
		x	x		anti-assimilation, and heritage preservation		yes
x		no money			no	no	no
x					yes, during group work no, during group work		yes very little
x					no	no	no
x				x	yes, in the classrooms		

Title	Authors	Year	Location of study	Type of study	Student grade level	number of participants	ESL program model	languages spoken	pull-out	little to no native language instruction or promotion of bilingualism	lack of teachers trained to work with EL students	EL student barriers	always being "helped", not asset based approach with ELL	high poverty or overburdened with ELL
Integrating Home and School Identities of Recent-Immigrant Hispanic English Language Learners Through Classroom Practices	DaSilva Idings and Katz	2007	suburban Wisconsin	microethnographic discourse analysis	2nd grade	3 of 17	mostly pull-out model	Spanish, English	x	x	x	x	x	
Immigrant Acculturation in Suburban Schools Serving the New Latino Diaspora	Lowerhaupt	2016	suburban Wisconsin	quantitative and qualitative comparative analysis of statewide survey		384 schools, principals and teachers surveyed		Spanish, English	x	x	x	x	x	
Integrated Bilingual Education: An Alternative Approach	de Jong	2010	Northeastern United States	qualitative study	K-5	district wide	Late exit bilingual program	Spanish, Portuguese and English						
Leading Inclusive ELL: Social Justice Leadership for English Language Learners	Theoharis and O'Toole	2011	Bay Creek, urban school in Midwest	case study, over 6 years, 10 years in each school	K-2		began as pull-out and changed to inclusive	Spanish, Hmong and English	before restructure	before restructure	before restructure	before restructure	before restructure	
Nearly 50 Years: Post-Jim Crow, Persisting and Changing Experiences of Mexican American, Latino, and ELL Students in Texas	Vazquez Heilig and Jefferson Holme	2013	non-charter public schools in Texas	descriptive analysis	K-5		changed to inclusive and most often clustered in segregated schools	Spanish, Hmong and English	before restructure	before restructure	before restructure	before restructure	before restructure	
Promising or Potentially Harmful? Suburban School Responses to Racial Change: Promising responses among all schools	Ayscue	2016	across the nation	interviews and cross-case analysis	all levels	19 schools, 94 administrators, teachers and staff		Spanish and English	x	x	x	x	x	
Promising or Potentially Harmful? Suburban School Responses to Racial Change: Promising responses among all schools (above article)														
Responding to the challenges of inclusion in Irish schools	Day and Purty	2015	Ireland	Qualitative analysis of questionnaires given to school staff and students, 3 post-narrative summary of interviews and documents	3 primary and 3 post-primary schools	4 classrooms, 2 experimental and 2 comparison (75)		Spanish and English	x	x	x	x	x	
Examining the effects of adapted peer tutoring on social and language skills of young English language learners	Xu	2015	USA (urban, suburban and rural California, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland and West Virginia)	Quali-experimental group comparison design	preschool									
Neighborhood Community Risk Influences on Preschool Children's Development and School Readiness	Hanson, Miller, Diamond, Odum, Lieber, Bulera, Horn, Palmer, and Fleming	2011	USA (urban, suburban and rural California, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland and West Virginia)	pretest, post-test	preschool	1006		various languages, the languages of Spanish and Creole	x	x	x	x	x	
A Snapshot of Teacher Perceptions on Full Inclusion in an International Urban Community: Miami-Dade County, Florida	Watnick and Sacks	2006	Miami-Dade, FL	questionnaire	all levels	15 surveys from teachers and administrators	inclusive eliminated bilingual program due to test results, mainstreamed	Spanish and Creole	x	x	x	x	x	
Linguistic Access and Participation: English Language Learners in an English-Dominant Community of Learners	DaSilva Idings, Xu, Geller, Sileo, Filler and Perkins	2005	Southwest USA	Qualitative	2nd grade			Spanish and English	x	x	x	x	x	
Effects of peer tutoring on young children's social interactions	Xu, Geller and Perkins	2008	urban Southwest city	Qualitative and quantitative	early primary	14	mainstream	Spanish and English, at least English, at least	x	x	x	x	x	
Using Peer Tutoring to Increase Social Interactions in Early Schooling	Xu, Geller and Perkins	2005	urban Southwest city	Qualitative and quantitative	2nd grade	14	mainstream	Spanish and English, at least English, at least	x	x	x	x	x	
The Social Adjustment of Three Young, High-Achieving, African American English Bilingual Students in Kindergarten	Ryu	2004	Cambridge, Massachusetts	Qualitative	K	3	bilingual transitional/maintenance	Korean and English	x	x	x	x	x	
A Case Study of an Early Childhood Teacher's Perspective on Working with English Language Learners	Lee, Butler and Tippins	2007	south	qualitative case study	1st grade teacher	1		Spanish and English	x	x	x	x	x	
Unpackaging the Academic Literacy Development in a US urban school: a case study of a second-grade English language learner	Shin	2014	Northeast USA	ethnographic case study	2nd grade	20, but one main observation (Jose)		Spanish and English	x	x	x	x	x	
Becoming a Student: Identity Work and Academic Literacies in Early Schooling	Hawkins	2005	Lakeview	ethnographic case study	K	2		Spanish and Korean	x	x	x	x	x	
Antón														
Heritage agency in a transnational California community: Latinoparents and bilingual education	Farruggio	2009	California	Quantitative and qualitative, interview		58 parents	bilingual mostly push-in to save money, classrooms, etc., pull-out for very low students	Spanish and English						
Policy, Context and Schooling: The Education of English Learners in Rural New Destinations	Lee and Hawkins	2015	5 rural communities in Wisconsin	mixed method		9 school districts		various, but mainly Spanish, English and English	x	x	x	x	x	
Friendships and Group Work in Linguistically Diverse Mathematics Classrooms: Opportunities to Learn for English Language Learners	Takeuchi	2016	Ontario, Canada (urban setting)	ethnographic, participant observation	4th grade	2 mathematics classes, focusing on 4 students		various						
English Language Learner Status In A Predominantly European-American School	Han	2010	US Northwest suburb in the	Qualitative	6th in an elementary school	1		Korean and English	x	x	x	x	x	
Talking to learn: The hidden curriculum of a fifth-grade science class	Kim	2016	southern US	qualitative descriptive case study	5th	16, 6 EL	pull-out	Spanish and English	x	x	x	x	x	

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