ABSTRACT

Characteristics and Contexts Surrounding Successful Learners in Heterogeneous
Language Proficiency Classrooms

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Second language learners in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms
simultaneously balance acquiring language and content in formal educational settings.
While research into the settings and instruction schools and teachers can employ to
increase acquisition has led to new practices in schools and classrooms, second language
learners and the contexts they experience are often overlooked as factors to their success.
Utilizing the Developmental Assets and Academic Engagement and Performance
frameworks, this study identified the characteristics and contexts surrounding successful
second language learners. While unable to provide conclusive results, the study also
provided answers to help students at the school site access more Developmental Assets
and potentially higher achievement.

Keywords: *contexts, second language learners, successful*

Characteristics and Contexts Surrounding Successful Learners in Heterogeneous
Language Proficiency Classrooms

by

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A Thesis

Approved by the Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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Larry J. Browning, Ed.D, Chairperson

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Baylor University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of

Master of Arts

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Classrooms across the United States of America are becoming more culturally

diverse (Banks, 2003). In particular, second language learners, or SLLs, are becoming

more common in school settings (Misco & Castañeda, 2009). While it has been the case

in the past to put SLL students into homogeneous groupings, extensive research has

shown the benefits of placing SLL students into heterogeneous language proficiency

classrooms (Banks, 2003; Choi, 2013; Obenchain & Callahan, 2015; Omidvar &

Sukumar, 2013; Ramirez, Salinas, & Epstein, 2016). Additionally, the growing number

of SLLs means teachers traditionally in "general education" settings must be ready to

serve SLLs in addition to native speakers in their content courses. While research has

traditionally focused on instructional strategies and school adjustments that lead to higher

achievement amongst SLLs, an often-overlooked aspect of the SLL's educational

experience has been the SLLs themselves.

The term "second language learner" is utilized in this study for the purpose of

fulfilling an assets-based approach when looking at students who enter or are in the

formal education system with English as their second language (Campos, 2013). In some

cases, SLLs will have knowledge in more than one language besides English when

entering the formal education system. Too often, SLLs are referred to in theory and

practice as "Limited English Proficient" or "non-native speaker," suggesting the student

in question operates as a hindrance in school settings because they lack English

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proficiency. However, this deficit mindset is damaging and unfair to SLLs and other students who are not English proficient (Campos, 2013). Instead, the term "second language learner" acknowledges the student as a culturally and linguistically rich individual who is able to bring their expertise and experiences into the classroom to provide increased learning opportunities for themselves and their peers.

In order to utilize a consistent measure when analyzing the language proficiency in this study, the Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) was used to identify SLLs (Texas Education Agency, 2016). When entering the formal education system in Texas, SLLs are assessed on the following language domains: listening, speaking, reading, writing. Based on the assessment achievement, SLLs are placed into the following for each language domain: beginning, intermediate, advanced, and advanced high (Texas Education Agency, 2016). An important distinction in this rating system is the focus solely on communication skills; the rating does not reflect their content-area knowledge. SLLs are given assessments at regular intervals that are meant to determine their progress towards becoming proficient in English (Texas Education Agency, 2016).

To determine academic success, a framework developed by Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova (2008) was utilized, referred to in this study as the Academic Engagement and Performance framework. Their longitudinal study utilized grade point average (GPA) among all SLLs academic coursework, including core content-area classes under the disciplines of English, mathematics, science, and social studies (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). Based on four different levels of success, the researchers categorized students as "low achievers," "declining

achievers," "improving achievers," or "high achievers" (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008).

The researchers also utilized a secondary tool, the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities before, during, and at the end of the study (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008, p. 51). This test was utilized to provide a more consistent measure of success among the study population, which was spread over different geographic regions in the United States of America (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). While the SLLs in Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova (2008) were a representative sample from across the United States of America, the participants in this proposed study will all come from the same school setting, meaning GPA will be sufficient as a consistent measure of success for determining which SLLs are considered highly successful.

There is an important distinction between language acquisition, mentioned in relation to an SLL and their proficiency in the language domains, and content acquisition, in which an SLL acquires content knowledge and skills separate from their language skills. Input Hypothesis, part of the larger second language acquisition theory of Stephen Krashen (1988) suggests that SLLs acquire language in a way mirroring the subconscious, natural progression they utilized to acquire their first language. This subconscious acquisition, in which they learn the rules and structures of language through modeling and practice, is more important than language knowledge, as acquisition leads to more lasting, permanent effects on language skills (Krashen, 1988).

However, other second language acquisition theories have built on this research. Krashen (1988) is considered a "no interface" hypothesis, as learning and the acquisition

of language are two separate functions (Gass, Behney, & Plonski, 2013). Weak interface hypotheses observe an unconscious connection between learning and language acquisition, noting that native speakers may have to explicitly think of their own language use at times when cognitive or linguistic demands are high (Gass, Behney, & Plonski, 2013). Strong interface hypotheses note explicitly teaching language structures yield higher and quicker comprehension of the language (Gass, Behney, & Plonski, 2013). All second language acquisition hypotheses seek to discover and have found some link between language learners and the way they acquire language.

SLLs entering the formal education system in the United States can initially seem to grow quickly in their language skills, as it may only take them six months to two years to acquire basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) (Cummins, 1979). SLLs, therefore, can become conversationally fluent and be able to navigate their classroom environments. However, it can take up to seven years for an SLL to acquire cognitive academic language proficiency, or CALP (Cummins, 1979). Students of all language proficiencies are tested at grade-level CALP in their content areas, but are not challenged at that level frequently in their content area classes (Cummins, 1979). While SLLs "get by" using primarily their BICS in content areas classes, SLLs are ultimately missing out on the content knowledge they need to continue to thrive in the formal education system of the United States. Therefore, while working to bridge the gap in language proficiency is important among SLLs, working to acquire grade-level content knowledge and skills ensures SLLs do not fall years behind native speakers in their content area coursework. Additionally, SLLs who are not full members of the dominant culture of the United

States are at a disadvantage when the content is taught from the U.S.-centered perspective (Yosso, 2005).

The prevalence of the dominant culture's influence on curriculum in school settings is evident across the United States (Yosso, 2005). The perspective of Communities of Color (Yosso, 2005) tends to be absent from the curriculum in schools. The dominant culture, referred in this study as a U.S. perspective, comes from the viewpoint of White, middle-class males (Yosso, 2005). Very few SLLs tend to fall into the dominant culture, and those who do encounter linguistic difficulties that lead them to be perceived differently from their phenotypical counterparts.

This study focused on Spanish-speaking SLLs for a variety of reasons. First, Spanish-speaking SLLs are the most common in the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Another reason for the focus on Spanish-speaking SLLs is their marginalized position in the United States (Yosso, 2005). Latino populations tend to be portrayed negatively in the history of the U.S, causing discrimination to occur at societal and individual level (Campos, 2013). Additionally, the term "Latino" will be used instead of "Hispanic" in all cases of Mesoamerican heritage except when citing the U.S. Census Bureau or school demographic data, which both choose the term "Hispanic" in reference to the European conquest of the Americas, specifically Spanish conquest of Mesoamerica. "Latino" denotes a tie to the cultural capital of Spanish-speaking SLLs with Mesoamerican heritage, who have worked to create an identity away from European oppressors who have traditionally defined their identity in history (Campos, 2013). Therefore, if a Spanish-speaking SLL in this study is identified as having Mesoamerican heritage, the term Latino will be used.

Increasingly, as school districts and schools deal with increases in SLL populations across the United States, heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms have become more prevalent. *Heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms* are classrooms where students from various language proficiencies are present and interacting with each other for content and language acquisition purposes. This differs from *heterogeneous groupings*, in which students are purposefully grouped together based on ability or language proficiency levels (Cruz & Thornton, 2009). While heterogeneous groupings often occur in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms, this study will be focusing on highly successful SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms to highlight the realities of a classroom setting becoming more common in the United States.

In order to gain a full understanding of the highly successful SLLs in this study, the characteristics and contexts of these students were examined utilizing the Developmental Assets framework (Lerner & Benson, 2003) in addition to utilizing pieces of the Academic Engagement and Performance framework (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). The Developmental Assets framework identifies and measures assets in a student's contexts, such as community and school, which lead to success in varying ways, including academic success (Lerner & Benson, 2003). When applied, the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) of a student can predict success based on the contexts of their community and lived experiences. "Contexts can be changed" (Benson, 2007, p. 39), which means the contexts of a student who is deemed not successful in academics or another facet can be altered to make that student more likely to be successful. However, in addition to contexts, there are characteristics in students'

lives that are unable to be changed (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008).

Examples of characteristics specific to SLLs may be their parents' formal education in

the United States or how long their family has been in the United States (Suárez-Orozco,

Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008, p. 8). In combining these two frameworks, a full

portrait, unique to the experiences of SLLs, can be created for highly successful SLLs in

heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms.

There are important distinctions between profiles, a result of quantitative

measures (Benson, 2007), and portraits, a result including both quantitative and

qualitative data in an encompassing view on an individual or context (Lawrence-

Lightfoot, 1983). While the Developmental Assets framework utilizes exclusively

quantitative measures to produce the DAPs for the individuals utilizing the framework,

the Academic Engagement and Performance framework and the results of the study in

Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova (2008) mirrors the work of Sara Lawrence-

Lightfoot (1983), blending quantitative data and reports with the holistic observations

collected over multiple observations. Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova

(2008) utilize the term "portraits" to describe the example students detailed in each

success level of the Academic Engagement and Performance framework. Lawrence-

Lightfoot originally utilized the term "portraiture" because it allowed "freedom from the

traditions and constraints of disciplined research methods (1983, p. 13)." Creating

portraits as opposed to profiles of the SLLs in this study allowed the study to truly tell the

story of the highly successful SLLs, giving specific information to back up the

quantitative data points provided by the Developmental Assets framework.

Purpose of Study

This study focuses on SLLs and the characteristics and contexts that lead to their success in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms. SLLs experience high levels of success in both their language and content acquisition. This success is often attributed in large parts or entirely to the schools and teachers SLLs work with. While these are often contributing factors to the student's success, they are only one context in the individual student's environment (Benson, 2007). Therefore, it is appropriate to look at the entire scope of SLL's multiple experiences and contexts when determining what has led to their success.

This study utilized a student-centered perspective through the Developmental Assets framework. In looking at the contexts identified in multiple studies as reliably predicting success in adolescents (Scales, 2011), the framework provided a quantitative backbone to the portraits of the SLLs in this study. Additionally, the Developmental Assets provided a clear set of data points by which to create in-depth portraits for each of the SLLs participating in the study. Finally, the use of the Developmental Assets framework revealed patterns specific to SLLs as additional or distinct predictors of success in comparison with native speakers utilizing the same framework.

The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

1. What are the characteristics and contexts surrounding highly successful SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms?

2. How do the characteristics and contexts surrounding highly successful SLL students compare with those of their low, declining, and improving achieving peers?

3. How do the characteristics and contexts surrounding SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms differ from native speakers?

Glossary of Terms

Academic Engagement and Performance framework: The framework developed in Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova (2008), defining "success" and "high achieving" through the quantitative measures stipulated in the study. The result of this framework are portraits of individual students, taking into account their quantitative measures, such as grades, and their qualitative data, such as interviews and observations of the individuals (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008).

Acquisition: The natural progression of skills and knowledge occurring in learning environments (Krashen, 1988). The acquisition of language and content among SLLs occurs separately (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2010).

Asset: A factor in the contexts surrounding an individual's lived experiences (Lerner & Benson, 2003). These assets are categorized in two subcategories with four groups each: external assets (support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time), and internal assets (commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity) (Scales, 2011).

Characteristics: A part of an individual's lived experiences or background that cannot be changed (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008).

Contexts: A collection of assets pertaining to a specific part of an individual's lived experiences (Scales, 2011). The fives "contexts" of the Developmental Assets framework are community, family, personal, school, and social (Scales, 2011). The contexts of an individual can be changed by the individual or individuals in that context, leading to a simultaneous change in the individual and the context surrounding the individual (Benson, 2007, p. 39-40).

Developmental Assets framework: "A theoretical construct identifying a wide range of environmental and interpersonal strengths known to enhance educational and health outcomes for children and adolescents" (Benson, 2007, p. 33).

Developmental Assets Profile: The result of the implementation of the Developmental Assets framework (Scales, 2011). The survey leading to these results uses prompts regarding eight categories of assets: support, empowerment, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity (Scales, 2011).

Heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms: Classrooms and class settings in which students from various language proficiencies are present (Cruz & Thornton, 2009). This differentiates from heterogeneous groupings, in which students from various language proficiencies are placed purposefully together, as heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms can occur for a variety of reasons outside of the benefit of the students in these classrooms.

Highly successful: A student who has achieved and maintained a 3.5 GPA or higher throughout period in which data is collected (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). While utilized originally in the Academic Engagement and Performance framework to represent all academic disciplines, this study will focus this term solely as it pertains to the grades of students in their social studies classes.

Language proficiency levels: A student's language ability in reading, writing, listening, and speaking English (Texas Education Agency, 2016). This measurement is determined utilizing TELPAS, and the language levels are beginning, intermediate, advanced, and high advanced (Texas Education Agency, 2016).

Portraits: A result of a study in which the researcher compiles both quantitative and qualitative data in order to create a "whole" picture of the individual or phenomenon (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983).

Profiles: A result of a study in which the researcher utilizes quantitative data solely in order to create an objective perspective of the individual or phenomenon being studied (Scales, 2011).

Second language learners (SLLs): Also known as English language learners (ELLs), English learners (ELs), or Limited English proficient (LEP), a student who has a different first or native language from English (Campos, 2013). The term "second language learners" is based on the idea that students learning English as a second language bring lived experiences and culture to the classroom which their native speaking counterparts do not, making SLLs valuable in the learning environment.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

There has been a major shift in the linguistic demographics of students across the United States with many classrooms containing both SLLs and native speakers in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms. There has been a significant body of research on SLLs and the difficulties they encounter in the U.S. school system. Various adjustments, both to the school setting and the classroom setting, have been researched and proven effective in helping SLLs become more active, participatory members of the school setting. Additionally, there is a body of research that highlights teaching strategies for both content and language acquisition. While research has shaped how schools and teachers prepare for and teach SLLs, little research has been conducted to identify how SLLs can prepare themselves for success in the classroom. The Developmental Assets framework has been utilized for general education populations in the United States of America in addition to being utilized in multiple cultures and countries internationally.

Second Language Learners

The United States of America is a country of immigrants, deriving its culture from the many ethnicities and backgrounds making up the complexion of its people. In 2013, over forty million people in the United States were considered "non-native," or people born outside of the United States of America (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). Although non-native people account for about one-eighth of the population, a fuller picture of our diversity and continued immigration story is seen through the non-white population

encompassed in the total population. 116 million people, or more than one-third of the population, are considered non-white, of which 53 million are deemed Hispanic, or people whose origin comes from a Spanish-speaking Caribbean, Central American, or South American country, regardless of race (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). The Hispanic, or Latino, population is also anticipated to increase by more than double in the year 2060, to a total of 119 million people (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). During that same time, the non-Latino population will only increase by about 35 million, indicating a 13% increase. According to this data, the Latino population in the United States will increase four times quicker than all non-Latino populations over the next forty-five years.

There is also a significant minority, about 20% of the total population over the age of 5, who speak a language other than English at home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Of the 60 million people reporting a language other than English at home, 37 million speak Spanish or a dialect. Coupling the projected increase in the Latino population along with the amount of non-English speaking homes will manifest a similar, if not more extreme, increase of SLLs in the school systems of the United States. (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Although most prominent in Western and Southern states, SLLs are found in schools throughout the country (Misco & Castaneda, 2009). Schools are already experiencing an increase in SLLs similar to that seen in the country as a whole, with a 68% increase in SLL population from the 1994/1995 school year to the 2004/2005 school year. Over that same time frame, the non-SLL population has increased by about 6.8% (Misco & Castaneda, 2009). Even before the most recent increase in the SLL population in schools, research in the field has already prompted changes to the way SLL students are taught.

Jim Cummins (1979) discussed many key elements that differentiate between SLLs and their counterparts in education. Much like their native-speaking peers, a SLL must focus on acquiring content, a task that may be easy in their native language, or L1 (Cummins, 1979). However, SLLs have the added obstacle of trying to acquire academic fluency in the new language, referred to as L2, at the same time. This concurrent language and content acquisition is further muddled by the inexact nature of assessing acquisition of their second language and the content material. According to Cummins (1979), SLLs develop two types of language proficiency – basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). BICS is usually developed within two years and as early as six months, and is highlighted by a student seeming socially fluent in the L2. However, just because a student can maintain friendships and take care of their own personal needs in their L2 does not mean they have developed academic fluency in their L2. Rather, a SLL may take seven years to develop CALP.

During those seven years, SLLs are at increased risk to miss important content presented in their classes because of their limited L2 proficiency (Cummins, 1979). These gaps in their content knowledge are often revealed further along in educational settings, as foundational pieces of knowledge, developed at earlier ages, are unable to be reconciled when material becomes more difficult and builds off that prior knowledge. For example, a SLL in high school may be asked to find factors in a mathematical expression, such as x^2+3x-6. However, if the SLL was not academically proficient during the time they were first taught multiplication, they will likely encounter difficulties in this

problem, and other advance mathematics, without a firm grasp on the foundational

knowledge. To counter this, educators must find ways to incorporate essential language

skills, such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening, with the content standards still

required of SLLs (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2010). While incorporating these goals

explicitly involves adjusting the school environment specifically with SLLs in mind,

there is significant research in the process of creating an environment in which SLLs are

welcome and able to thrive academically.

School Environment Adjustments for Second Language Learners

With the goal of incorporating and educating SLLs in both content and language,

educational settings have shifted focus into creating culturally relevant and caring

classroom climates (Choi, 2013). No longer is it the norm to educate SLLs and other

special populations exclusively in pull-out or resource programs (Coady, Harper, & de

Jong, 2016). Educators are expected to accommodate a diverse set of learners in their

classrooms, and SLLs are no exception. Through easing SLLs into the school

environment through acculturation, fostering an environment where risks are accepted

and welcome, and providing school wide activities for SLLs to participate, researchers

are finding exemplar ways to adjust schooling environments to be inclusive of SLLs.

One experience specific to SLLs is acculturation, the time period in which a SLL

is first transitioning to their school setting. While this is most prominent with newcomer

populations, it is also important for long-term SLLs to experience a level of acculturation

when encountering a new educational setting (Szpara & Ahmad, 2007). Even a change to

a new class or school provides opportunities for discontinuity for SLLs, who may have

different expectations in their home culture or from previous educational experiences. By

providing explicit social and cultural support for these students, SLLs feel more at ease

and able to handle the task of acquiring both content and language concurrently.

Providing opportunities for acculturation allows SLLs to initially join in their new

learning community, but continuing to foster an environment in which risks can be taken

and students are cared for leads to increased language and content acquisition (Choi,

2013). Allowing SLLs to contribute to their new environment in meaningful ways, such

as participating in classroom activities or helping to set classrooms norms, builds a sense

of community in which SLLs know they can fully invest in their education. Some SLLs

have found success in schools where school-wide activities aimed at showing SLLs their

opportunity to be an important member of their community, such as a bilingual history

fair, are regularly conducted (McCullough & Fry, 2013). Creating an educational

community where SLLs are not marginalized or seen as an inconvenience leads to more

opportunities for SLLs to be included in the learning community (Campos, 2013).

Utilizing the culture and background of a SLL provides an opportunity for more

culturally relevant learning by providing SLLs access to unique educational opportunities

for themselves and their classmates (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Some teachers may feel

burdened by the responsibilities of having SLLs in their classroom. However, viewing

SLLs through an assets-based approach opens up chances for these students to share parts

of their home cultures with the class and make connections to the material being taught

(Campos, 2013). For newcomer and immigrant students, they may have personal

experiences or family histories that fall outside of the bounds of the material being taught

in the classroom (Hilburn, 2015; Fránquiz & Salinas, 2013). Offering opportunities for

SLLs willing to share these experiences with their classmates provides rich opportunity

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for agency, or ownership, in the classroom among SLLs, as the curriculum in the classroom is shaped by their experiences. Furthermore, helping SLLs identify their own perspectives and use their personal narratives to connect to the social studies curriculum can increase student motivation and a sense of belonging in educational contexts (Fránquiz & Salinas, 2013).

Educators with SLLs have an important need to focus their curricula on both literacy and content concurrently, as SLLs juggle these two educational priorities simultaneously. Delivering content while explicitly supporting language skills has been shown to be effective among SLLs and other students (Wanzek, Swanson, Vaughn, Roberts, & Fall, 2016). Another specific program born from this need is Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol, or SIOP (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2010). Through providing content instruction in a sheltered, or specific environment in which language proficiency and literacy skills are explicitly taught, SIOP has shown increase in acquisition among SLLs in both their content and language skills. These increases in acquisition can be seen across all learning subjects, including social studies, a discipline which has historically provided difficulties for SLLs (O'Brien, 2012).

Second Language Learners in Social Studies Classrooms

Educators and curriculum developers in all subjects must focus on increasing literacy and content acquisition concurrently among SLLs. Among the challenges facing SLLs in their core course classrooms, English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies, are the high frequency of content specific terms, the conceptual nature of curricula, and the primarily U.S.-centered curriculum utilized by many school systems.

Difficulties Specific to Second Language Learners

All core disciplines have a high frequency of terms and proper nouns that are specific to their content area (Cruz, Nutta, O'Brien, Feyton, & Giovani, 2003). These terms tend to be specific to only one area of the discipline, and may only be immediately present for a short duration of the school year. The terms or proper nouns found in the four core content areas may sound like, or in some cases, be incredibly similar to other terms and proper nouns brought forth in curricula. As an example, the term "power" may be used in reference to a ruler's reign over a land or time period, while it may also be tied to a discussion of electricity, either in reference to Thomas Edison's invention of the light bulb or in a more general sense of energy production. In both of these cases, a SLL, already working with a limited lexicon in their second language, may become easily confused when the term is used (Cruz, Nutta, O'Brien, Feyton, & Giovani, 2003).

Another source of confusion among students across the four core disciplines is the increased focus on thematic or conceptual curricula (Kibler, Walqui, & Bunch, 2015). As a shift towards Common Core and other educational practices move away from traditional knowledge and focuses on shared themes and concepts, SLLs are at an increased disadvantage as they are forced to create definitions with very little concrete evidence to support their knowledge (Kibler, Walqui, & Bunch, 2015; O'Brien, 2012).

As teacher education programs work to effectively prepare their preservice and in-service teachers for diverse populations, a noticeable shift has not moved away from oral instruction, especially in social studies (O'Brien, 2012; Turkan & Buzick, 2016). The reliance on oral instruction is another obstacle for SLLs, as listening is only one part of their language acquisition (Cummins, 1979). It is possible to include items like graphic

organizers, realia, or other visual stimuli to the classroom, decreasing the linguistic load for SLLs when implemented (Cruz & Thornton, 2009). Despite the research and strategies available to avoid it, oral instruction remains the primary form of delivery among social studies educators (O'Brien, 2012). Educators in other disciplines also tend to fall back on oral instruction, creating a void in effective practices for educators with SLL populations in their classrooms (Janzen, 2008).

While the world has become more globalized (An, 2009), curriculum in the United States continues to remain heavily focused on a hegemonic view of the past including mostly perspectives from a wealthy, White, and male dominated perspective (Choi, Lim, & An, 2011). The hegemonic nature of U.S. curriculum marginalizes many minority groups, including SLLs (Jiménez-Castellanos, & García, 2017; McLaren, 2002). While policy has begun to change across the country to address multicultural populations, a change in perspective in mandatory curriculum, such as standards, has not (Jiménez-Castellanos, & García, 2017). In the case of immigrant SLLs, the divide between perspectives found prominently in U.S. curriculum and textbooks may differ vastly from their home cultures (Chio, Lim, & An, 2011). While many students in a history class discussing World War I may simply understand the division and boundaries of Middle Eastern countries at the end of the war as a simple result of some treaties, a SLL from Syria or Pakistan may have personal or family history where this division has caused deep tension in the region. Even the term, Middle East, is an artificial construct created by people non-native to the region. The prevalence of terms and content like those illustrated above cause SLLs to struggle (Choi, Lim, & An, 2011).

Difference in Perspective for Second Language Learners

Many SLLs are instructed in a perspective that furthers their status as foreign in the classroom, rather than being allowed inclusive and multicultural interactions in their classes (An, 2009; DiCerbo, Anstrom, Baker, & Rivera, 2014). Additionally, SLLs are forced to reconcile differences between their own culture or beliefs and the U.S.-centered perspective they learn in schools, especially their social studies classes (Herrera, 2015). Cultural differences are especially apparent in immigrant SLLs, as they may have deeper ties to their home culture and the perspective of events or concepts taught in their home culture. Immigrant students have unique understandings of concepts found in social studies based on their prior experiences, so when they are taught about events or concepts from a singular, hegemonic perspective this may students to feel they have to ignore or repress their own culture or background (Hilburn, 2015). A SLL who emigrated from Venezuela, for instance, may have familial ties and personal history to socialism, often taught in U.S. schools as an inferior economic system to capitalism. The Venezuelan student, therefore, may have to reconcile any positive views of socialism they or their family have with the views of capitalism taught in their social studies class. This is especially prevalent with newcomer SLLs, who enter the education system in the United States of America after already receiving formal education in their previous country (Ramirez, Salinas, & Epstein, 2016). Because of their formal education in another country or culture, they are more likely to encounter feelings of estrangement between the perspective they were previously taught and the perspective taken in the U.S. (Herrera, 2015).

Ability to Use Cultural Background

Both immigrant SLLs and those with no personal immigration history have to reconcile feelings between their home and new cultures, but the experiences they have are valuable in their educational setting (Banks, 2003). The use of multicultural perspectives in the classroom allows educators to facilitate, rather than force, students from diverse cultural backgrounds to reach their own conclusions and view core content from their own perspective. This allows students from all cultures and backgrounds to experience affirmation through the construction of their own, relevant perspectives (Banks, 2003). In the case of SLLs, this is especially important as they wrestle with agency and ownership of their education. In the social studies, educators can facilitate explicit opportunities for SLLs to interact with each other, as well as their native speaking classmates, through structured discussions and creating a collaborative learning environment with high expectations for all students (Choi, 2013, p. 17). These opportunities are available in the other core disciplines, as well (DiCerbo et al., 2014; Janzen, 2008).

Interactions between native language students and SLLs benefits both populations of students. SLLs experience structured opportunities to interact with students who are more proficient in the new language for SLLs, building confidence and skill among SLLs in listening and speaking (Choi, 2013). These opportunities can also be structured to include writing and reading, allowing SLLs to share their writing with native speaking classmates while also reading examples from those native speakers. For native speakers, they are able to listen to and see the social studies content from the perspective of the SLL, providing an opportunity to interact with the social studies content from a

multicultural rather than a monocultural perspective (Omidvar & Sukumar, 2013). The use of global perspectives in core content classrooms, such as social studies, allows for better content connections for both second language and native speakers, leading to greater content acquisition (Omidvar & Sukumar, 2013). SLLs, like their native speaking counterparts, experience similar benefits when interacting specifically in civic education (Ramirez, Salinas, & Epstein, 2016).

Civic Engagement Among Second Language Learners

Utilizing Critical Multicultural Civic Education (CMCE), educators are able to "increase not only students' awareness of, and participation in, the political aspects of democracy, but also students' abilities to create and live in an ethnically diverse and just community." (Ramirez, Salinas, & Epstein, 2016, p. 1). Through regular and explicit interactions, second language learners and native speakers have the opportunity to learn from each other, and ultimately, are able to practice interactions with ethnically diverse groups they might not otherwise encounter outside of the school setting. In setting expectations for multicultural civic education, educators are also setting up their SLLs and native speakers to involve themselves in deeper civic conversations (Obenchain & Callahan, 2015). These deep conversations allow for SLLs and native speakers to discuss their differences in a structured manner while also bringing to light many of their similarities. Although SLLs and their native speaking peers may encounter civic education from different perspectives initially, the discourse stemming from civic interaction allows both groups to gain greater understanding of the other's perspective, and ultimately, a greater respect for each other (Obenchain & Callahan, 2015).

The benefits of having SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms

are numerous, including the ability to use the cultural backgrounds of SLLs to their

advantage (Banks, 2003; Omidvar & Sukumar, 2013), as well as using the cultural

backgrounds of SLLs to the advantage of native speakers in the classroom (Choi, 2013;

Obenchain & Callahan, 2015; Ramirez, Salinas, & Epstein, 2016). SLLs are able to make

clearer connections with content when it is presented or viewed through their own

perspective, while native speakers benefit through the enrichment of the content by

adding a new perspective to their own. However, educators need to pull from the wealth

of research focused on the specific methods used to best promote acquisition among

SLLs in order to take advantage of their multicultural classroom.

Strategies for Teaching Second Language Learners

SLLs require support in not only their content acquisition, but their language

acquisition, as well (Cummins, 1979). Supporting both language and content acquisition

simultaneously can be difficult. Language acquisition in ELA and social studies is

difficult because of the reliance on oral instruction (Kibler, Walqui, & Bunch, 2015;

O'Brien, 2012) and the high frequency of content-specific terms in the disciplines (Cruz,

Nutta, O'Brien, Feyten, & Govani, 2003). Content acquisition is also difficult for SLLs

because of the U.S.-centered perspective the core disciplines are taught with in the United

States of America (An, 2009), feelings of estrangement for a SLL from their home

culture (Herrera, 2015), and immigrant SLLs who may have to reconcile differences

between knowledge they have learned in previous formal education and what they are

taught in the perspective of the United States of America (Ramirez, Salinas, & Epstein,

2016). However, extensive research has identified ways which educators can prepare and

lead SLLs to better achievement in both language and content-related outcomes. Table 2.1 presents a summary of instructional models utilized to increase language and or content acquisition, while Table 2.2 focuses on instructional strategies utilized to increase either type of acquisition.

Language Acquisition Strategies

The acquisition of literacy skills is difficult for SLLs, especially in ELA and social studies (Cruz, Nutta, O'Brien, Feyten, & Govani, 2003; Kibler, Walqui, & Bunch, 2015; O'Brien, 2012). When planning instruction for SLLs, educators need to create opportunities for SLLs to practice speaking and listening (Krashen, 1988). Allowing SLLs to have structured and explicit opportunities to practice literacy skills facilitates their progress toward academic proficiency in their second language (Cummins, 1979). This is true in all core disciplines, and the instructional models addressed in Table 2.1 are cross-curricular for that reason.

As all content areas increase their reliance on reading comprehension practices, educators must look to make the oral and reading aspects of their curriculum more accessible (Cho & Reich, 2008; Vaughn et al., 2017). Increasing interactions between SLLs and their native-speaking counterparts thereby creating opportunities for conversation with a "linguistic expert" regarding the content will increase the academic language proficiency of SLLs (Cho & Reich, 2008). Finally, educators need to make themselves more culturally and linguistically aware of their SLLs (Cho & Reich, 2008). In order to increase the academic language proficiency of their SLLs and involve these students in academic discourse, educators need to be aware of the linguistic needs of their SLLs in addition to being culturally aware of the backgrounds and stories of their SLLs.

Table 2.1

Instructional Models for Second Language Learners

Instructional Model	Type of Acquisition	Description	Citations
Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)	Language Acquisition	SLLs progress from conversational fluency (BICS) to academic fluency (CALP) as they acquire second language	Cummins, 1979
Second Language Acquisition Theory	Language Acquisition	Acquisition of a new language is a natural, predictable process, and new input is added in natural increments for continual acquisition of the second language	Krashen, 1988; Long, 1996
Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA)	Content Acquisition	Introduce second language learners to explicit metacognitive strategies to increase their own monitoring of content acquisition	Chamot, 1995
Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)	Language and Content Acquisition	Sheltered instruction, in which SLLs are in content area classes or groups with other SLLs, and explicit content and language goals leads to greater acquisition in both	Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2010
Promoting Adolescent Comprehension of Text (PACT)	Language and Content Acquisition	Increase reading comprehension for SLLs as a means to increase content acquisition	Wanzek, et al., 2016
GeoLiteracy	Language and Content Acquisition	Use of language acquisition goals explicitly while teaching geography content	Hinde, Osborn Popp, Jimenez-Silva, & Dorn, 2011

Table 2.2

Instructional Strategies for Second Language Learners in Core Content Areas

Instructional Strategy	Type of Acquisition	Description	Citations
Second Language Learners Interacting with Native Speakers	Language Acquisition	Explicit, structured opportunities in which SLLs and native speakers speak, write, and read together	Cho & Reich, 2008; Kibler, Walqui, & Bunch, 2014; Vaughn et al., 2016
Tutoring Academic Vocabulary	Language Acquisition	Program to focus on acquisition of content-specific and on increasing SLL interactions with content-specific text	Colombo & Fontaine, 2007; DiCerbo et al., 2014
Student Choice of Language	Language Acquisition	Allowing SLLs to respond in either first or second language allows for specific, intermittent feedback on second language literacy skills	Fránquiz & Salinas, 2011b
Thematic Unit Design	Content Acquisition	Utilizing NCSS themes in classes with SLLs as opposed to chronological design	Cruz & Thornton, 2008
Primary Source Documents in Inquiry-based Instruction	Content Acquisition	Use of primary source documents to teach content to SLLs in inquiry-based instruction	Fránquiz & Salinas, 2011b; Fránquiz & Salinas, 2013
Connections with Prior Knowledge and Experiences	Content Acquisition	SLLs utilizing their experiences and prior knowledge in structured activities, leading to connections with content	Czop Assaf, 2014; Weisman & Hansen, 2007
Multiple Modalities	Content Acquisition	Creating explicit opportunities for SLLs to access content through multiple means, such as visually, listening, reading, and kinesthetically	Cruz & Thornton, 2009; Kibler, Walqui, & Bunch, 2014; Szpara & Ahmad, 2007

(continued)

Instructional Strategy	Type of Acquisition	Description	Citations
Graphic Organizers	Content Acquisition	Utilizing graphic organizers in activities and instruction of SLLs to support conceptual nature of content	Cruz & Thornton, 2009; Janzen, 2008; Weisman & Hansen, 2007
Historical Narratives	Content Acquisition	SLLs write historical narratives from their perspective to connect with narrative of content	Salinas, Fránquiz & Rodriguez, 2016
Critical Geography	Content Acquisition	Integration of human geography into geography curriculum for SLLs to increase connections	Salinas, 2006
Reverse Chronology	Content Acquisition	Course design focusing on connections to present-day to facilitate deeper connections for SLLs	Misco & Castañeda, 2009
Use of Visuals	Language and Content Acquisition	Utilizing visuals and concrete examples, such as realia, to enhance literacy skills and content acquisition of SLLs	Cruz & Thornton, 2008; Cruz & Thornton, 2012; Wanzek et al., 2016
Reducing Cognitive Load	Language and Content Acquisition	Educators reduce cognitive load of content-based texts without losing content to facilitate specific language and content acquisition	Szpara & Ahmad, 2007; Wanzek et al., 2016

Another explicit structure to provide language support for SLLs is tutoring in the academic vocabulary used in the subject (Colombo & Fontaine, 2007). While there is some focus on content-specific vocabulary, the tutoring protocol described in Colombo & Fontaine (2007) focused on increasing "meaningful" interactions with content-specific text among SLLs. Examples of "meaningful" interactions included SLLs increasing their

frequency of asking content-specific questions when reading social studies text, making connections to themselves or with other social studies content, summarizing text, and predicting outcomes (Colombo & Fontaine, 2007). These same meaningful interactions are available through providing similar content-specific vocabulary instruction in the other content areas to increase Academic English across all disciplines (DiCerbo et al., 2014).

Utilizing a tutoring program also lowers the affective filter of SLLs, leading to more risk-taking and participation in academic discourse (Krashen, 1988). Utilizing visuals to support text and discussions also lowers the affective filter of SLLs, leading to connections with the text that would otherwise be missed without the aid of the visuals (Cruz & Thornton, 2012).

A final way to ensure SLLs feel comfortable participating in their social studies classrooms specifically is to allow students to answer in the language they prefer (Fránquiz & Salinas, 2011a). Primarily, it contributes to a comfortable, safe environment for SLLs where risks are accepted and appreciated by the community of learners (Choi, 2013). Secondly, it fosters a natural transition towards academic literacy in the social studies, as SLLs can push their linguistic limits in their second language at their own pace. Finally, it allows for intermittent, specific feedback to be delivered by the teacher to support the SLL, as the SLL can focus on one aspect of their linguistic development at a time rather than having to extend their language further and incorrectly through forced use of their second language (Fránquiz & Salinas, 2011a).

Other instructional programs utilizing the principles above, have been developed with the intent of advancing literacy strategies while teaching SLLs. Echevarria, Vogt, &

Short (2010) discuss the systemic inclusion of literacy strategies and language development goals into the curriculum of SIOP. Through sheltered instruction and groupings, SLLs interact with one another in a supportive environment with strategies specific to learners in need of linguistic support (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2010; Salinas, Fránquiz, &, Reidel 2008). Promoting Adolescent Comprehension of Text (PACT) focuses on a systematic introduction of academic vocabulary, guided application of those words, and collaboration amongst peers for literacy comprehension (Wanzek et al., 2016, p. 430).

Programs like PACT and GeoLiteracy (Hinde, Osborn Popp, Jimenez-Silva, & Dorn, 2011) increase both language proficiency and content acquisition through their explicit focus on both as goals of SLLs. These programs reduce the cognitive load on SLLs without reducing the content presented in the social studies classroom and other disciplines (DiCerbo et al., 2014; Szpara & Ahmad, 2007). In reducing the cognitive load through linguistic supports such as sentence frames, educators allow their SLLs to focus on content while intermittently developing their language proficiency through specific activities and instruction. Additionally, through utilizing multiple methods to teach both literacy and content in their social studies classrooms, educators allow their SLLs to experience acquisition in a variety of ways (Szpara & Ahmad, 2007), as opposed to being given the information exclusively through oral instruction. Educators are able to access multiple, research-based strategies to avoid delivering content-specific knowledge through oral instruction primarily (Janzen, 2008).

Content Acquisition Strategies

In order to overcome the difficulties SLLs experience when acquiring content (An, 2009; Herrera, 2015; Ramirez, Salinas, & Epstein, 2016; Turkan, & Buzick, 2016), educators have a vast array of strategies available to implement in their classrooms. Research suggests that educators can help SLLs increase their content acquisition when they adopt a flexible, thematic-based curriculum, give SLLs adequate time to learn social studies content, accommodate a variety of learning styles, link social studies content to prior knowledge and assessments used in class, and utilize cooperative learning strategies (Cruz & Thornton, 2009, p. 50). Additionally, the same adoption of varied and research-based methods in other content areas allows for students to access the conceptual and thematic curricula being developed in all core disciplines (Wanzek et al., 2016).

Programs like Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach, or CALLA (Chamot, 1995), emphasize explicit learning strategies to assist SLLs in their content acquisition while also providing language acquisition goals and support. In the case of CALLA, a focus on metacognitive strategies proven to increase SLL content acquisition is made explicit by the educators delivering the curriculum (Chamot, 1995). Through the use of metacognitive strategies, SLLs are able to take control of their own content acquisition to ensure they are making connections with content as it is presented (Chamot, 1995). Furthermore, SLLs can ensure there are no gaps in their understanding of content knowledge as they progress through the curriculum. CALLA has been especially effective in math and science (Janzen, 2008), but can be transferred to any content area.

In addition to accessing prior knowledge through themes and the use of concrete examples to represent concepts in their core curriculum, educators are able to access themes through SLLs drawing on their own experiences (Czop Assaf, 2014). Through their participation and connections, SLLs make the content knowledge they need for end-of-the-year or in-class assessments more relevant and accessible to themselves. In the case of the instructional strategies in Cruz & Thornton (2008) and Czop Assaf (2014), a change in content area does not make these strategies any less effective (Kibler, Walqui, & Bunch, 2014). While being found in ELA as well, the increased reliance on conceptual and thematic instruction in math and science allows for visuals and realia, long a practice in both, to be reimagined for SLL populations (Janzen, 2008; Wanzek et al., 2016).

In line with state and national social studies assessments asking for students to access analytical skills while incorporating primary documents (Cruz & Thornton, 2008), educators working with SLLs need to provide opportunities for students to interact directly with primary source material (Fránquiz & Salinas, 2011b; Fránquiz & Salinas, 2013). In adding primary sources to their curriculum, educators can design their course around the skills and concepts their SLLs will need for summative assessment (Misco & Castañeda, 2009). SLLs benefit in making connections to the content through the inquiry-based learning presented with primary source material (Fránquiz & Salinas, 2013).

While having SLLs access primary source material increases their content acquisition, providing instructional techniques that address more than one way for students to access material is vital to creating more lasting content acquisition (Szpara & Ahmad, 2007; Cruz & Thornton, 2009). Utilizing aides, such as graphic organizers,

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sentence starters, and other "scaffolds" will increase content acquisition among SLLs while the skills and learning activities are still being mastered (Weisman, & Hansen, 2007). Using explicit strategies and investing time to ensure they are implemented properly for SLLs leads to increased scores on social studies-based vocabulary and comprehension assessments (Vaughn et al., 2009).

SLLs are able to access social studies content in a variety of ways. However, SLLs are also able to access content in ways native speakers are unable (Salinas, Fránquiz, & Rodriguez, 2016). When newcomer or immigrant SLLs share their experiences, the concepts and themes surrounding human geography and interaction become even more relevant to SLLs and their peers (Salinas, 2006). SLLs can make connections and increase content acquisition through linking their experiences to these themes.

The research on the various ways in which educators are able to help their SLLs achieve in both their language and content acquisition is well documented. Through varying instructional techniques to serve both language and content acquisition, educators working with SLLs are able to increase their students' achievements in both types of acquisition. This is especially important in heterogeneous language proficiency classroom settings, where SLLs of various language proficiencies and native speakers must work and learn together.

Heterogeneous Language Proficiency Classrooms

Heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms are becoming more common across the United States of America, making them the ideal setting for a study on successful SLLs in the social studies. One reason for heterogeneous language proficiency

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classrooms are becoming more common is the increase in SLLs in education, as the

population of SLLs in education rose 68% between the 1994/1995 school year and

the 2004/2005 school year (Misco & Castañeda, 2009). This increase means schools

across the United States of America make adjustments in their organization to

compensate for SLLs in their classrooms. However, the rapid rise in the SLL population

in schools and districts across the country caused circumstances detrimental to SLLs to

permeate in classrooms, ranging from ill-prepared teachers to a lack of resources (Cruz &

Thornton, 2009). Another reason for the increase in heterogeneous language proficiency

classrooms is the proven benefit these settings provide for both SLLs and native speakers

(Banks, 2003; Choi, 2013; Omidvar & Sukumar, 2013; Ramirez, Salinas, & Epstein,

2016; Obenchain & Callahan, 2015).

The increase in SLLs in education has created pressure on school districts serving

this special population (Misco & Castañeda, 2009). Like other special populations,

resources are needed to serve the needs of SLLs, ranging from instructional assistants to

books and other materials, which cost school districts money (Cruz & Thornton, 2009).

Additionally, devoting entire classrooms to special populations is costly, as that requires

facilities and full-time teachers dedicated to serving a relatively small proportion of the

school's student population. Even if a school district believes there is enough of a need

for to create a classroom just for SLLs or class sections devoted to SLLs, finding teachers

who are trained to serve the needs of SLLs can be difficult (O'Brien, 2011).

There has been a systemic lack of training among pre-service teaching programs

in the United States of America related to SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency

classrooms (O'Brien, 2011). This lack of training spreads to school districts, where

teachers are ill-prepared to work with SLLs when grouped in classes with native speakers (Plough & Garcia, 2015). However, both the colleges and universities housing teacher preparation programs and school districts have worked to begin to meet the needs of SLLs. Teacher preparation programs are placing an emphasis on SLLs as a part of their curriculum, with many pre-service teachers now having explicit interactions with SLLs as a part of their pre-service programs (Garcia, 2014). School districts are focusing professional development for their teachers on working with SLLs (Plough & Garcia, 2015). Additionally, school districts are leaning on teachers with expertise in working with SLLs and language teachers to use the human resources they already have in their district to work with teachers unfamiliar or uncomfortable with the prospect of working with SLLs effectively (Schleppegrell & de Oliveira, 2006).

While much is being done to prepare teachers for working with SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms, there are also proven benefits to both SLLs and native speakers in heterogeneous groupings (Banks, 2003; Campos, 2013; Choi, 2013; Omidvar & Sukumar, 2013; Ramirez, Salinas, & Epstein, 2016; Obenchain & Callahan, 2015). SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms bring multicultural perspectives to classroom settings that are beneficial to their own learning as well as native speakers (Banks, 2003; Choi, 2013; Ramirez, Salinas, & Epstein, 2016). Explicit heterogeneous groupings in classrooms also provides both SLLs and native speakers to benefit socially and in both language and content acquisition through global connections being made as a part of academic discourse (Campos, 2013; Omidvar & Sukumar, 2013). Additionally, using the strategies or sheltered instructional techniques

proven to increase achievement among SLLs with native speakers has similar, beneficial effects (Cruz & Thornton, 2009; Salinas, Fránquiz, &, Reidel 2008).

While there are repeated examples of SLLs achieving success in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms, including social studies content classrooms, the studies have focused on the settings and instructional methods school districts and their teachers can use to increase language and content acquisition among SLLs. Subsequently, changes are being made in schools across the United States of America to make environments in classrooms and on campuses which SLLs are able to increase both language and content acquisition, leading to knowledge and academic success. However, little research has been done focusing on the SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency social studies classroom settings who are "high achieving," leaving an incomplete picture of the successes being discussed in research (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). This study has the potential to begin a discussion on SLLs experiencing the benefits of schools and educators working to help SLLs, but importantly, to turn the discussion towards SLLs and the communities and cultures that lead to their success.

Highly Successful Students

Studies focusing on students experiencing various levels and measures of success in multiple fields have led to the Developmental Assets framework (Lerner & Benson, 2003). The framework roots itself in Positive Youth Development (PYD), which has three central assumptions; individuals are involved in their own development, individuals and their contexts affect each other, and development occurs and changes over time (Lerner & Benson, 2003). The first assumption, simply, involves individuals as active members of their own development. The second assumption suggests that the

development of the individual and their contexts occurs simultaneously and in an ongoing, dynamic way. Finally, the third assumption focuses on the individual and the contexts as changing over time, meaning any change in one party is likely to incite change in the other (Lerner & Benson, 2003).

The Developmental Assets framework has been refined from the consolidation of research in multiple fields of study, including education (Benson, 2007). Figure 1 shows the assets in the Developmental Assets framework, as well as their category and definition (from Benson, 2006). Since its creation in 1990, the Developmental Assets framework has been applied to over 3 million students in grades 4-12 (Scales, 2011). A benefit to the developmental asset framework is the creation of a developmental assets profile (DAP) for its participants (Scales, 2011). DAPs inquire participants in a vast array of areas of their lives to create an in-depth profile, covering eight categories: *support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies*, and *positive identity* (Scales, 2011). These eight categories are found in five separate contexts in an individual's life and lived experiences: *community, family, personal, school,* and *social* (Scales, 2011).

The external asset of *support* focuses on the amount of outside influence the participant has from adults in their family and community (Benson, 2007). Examples of this are parents who push their children who push students to do well in school or community members who act as mentors or supervisors to participant activities. Another external asset, *empowerment*, focuses on participant efficacy on their ability to enact change or be a viable member of the community (Benson, 2007). *Boundaries and expectations* is the third category of external assets, which shows people and places

within a students' contexts where they are held accountable (Benson, 2007). Most commonly, participants find this at school and in their homes, but it is possible to find it in their community or social contexts, such as friends who play a role in the participant's decisions. The last external asset is *constructive use of time*, which measures the way participants use time outside of structured or requisite activities (Benson, 2007).

The internal asset of *commitment to learning* focuses on student achievement and motivation in their educational setting. (Benson, 2007). Examples of this include participants being motivated to learn or caring about their school. *Positive values* measures the internal assets of a participant related to personal and social responsibilities (Benson, 2007). The internal asset of *social competencies* focuses on participant ability to maintain relationships and care for others (Benson, 2007). This may include the ability to care for others in their family or community as well as a participant's ability to seek nonviolent resolution to problems. Finally, the internal asset of *positive identity* focuses on participant self-esteem and their view of their own potential (Benson, 2007).

The five contexts of the Developmental Assets are identified to encompass all facets of an individual's life (Scales, 2011). *Community* refers to the entire living community where a participant lives, and may include community resources, such as a recreation center or store, or neighborhood resources, such as a neighbor who provides advice or guidance (Scales, 2011). *Family* is broadly defined to include family the participant feels is relevant to their life (Scales, 2011). Some participants may include larger familial networks, such as extended cousins, while others may choose to focus on their nuclear family setting. The *personal* context refers to the participant themselves, and includes many of the participant's beliefs about themselves (Scales, 2011). *School* refers

to the educational setting the participant experiences, but most often refers to traditional educational settings, such as the K-12 school the participant attends (Scales, 2011). The *social* context focuses on the relationships the participant carries out or makes a priority (Scales, 2011). While there is possible overlap between *social* and *family*, *social* refers more specifically to the relationships the participant encounters outside of their family setting, such as classmates at school.

Through the analysis of the responses given to the items on the DAP, predictions can be made regarding the level of success attained by the participant in current or future endeavors, including whether a student is experiencing success in their school or if the participant will graduate from high school (Benson, 2007). Through analysis of the results, it is also possible to evaluate the assets of a participant in multiple contexts, such as their community or school, creating a diagnostic report of sorts for individuals in those contexts. This can lead to developing or undertaking a plan of action in order to strengthen a students' asset that leads to thriving indicators or eliminate an asset that leads to high-risk behavior patterns (Benson, 2007).

Utilizing this framework with SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency social studies classrooms has multiple benefits. For one, it is an internationally validated survey, which has been used in various cultural settings with similar rates of validity as its application in the United States (Scales, 2011). SLLs come from multiple cultural backgrounds, meaning the survey used to create in-depth profiles should be applicable and proven in multicultural settings. Additionally, utilizing the Developmental Assets framework allows for the creation of an in-depth profile about an individual and the contexts that make up their external assets, such as their community and school (Benson,

2007). In line with the assumption of PYD that individuals and their contexts are connected, this framework will allow the researcher to see which individual contexts have led to success for individuals as well as how those individuals have contributed to their contexts. However, despite the benefits of utilizing the Developmental Assets framework with SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms, the developmental asset framework has been applied in mostly general population settings.

Contexts of Second Language Learners

The contexts in which SLL interact are similar to those of native speakers, especially in school settings with heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms. However, the community and home experiences of SLLs tend to be different from native speakers (Valdés, 1996; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). Examining these contexts further provides a glimpse into the ways SLLs vary from native speakers.

The home experiences of SLLs are often divergent from the school culture they experience, especially in the case of immigrant families (Valdés, 1996). In Valdés (1996), ten immigrant families were profiled as they navigated the education system with their SLLs. Many difficulties arose for these families, stemming from a range of disadvantages occurring specific to non-native speaking immigrant families: unfamiliarity with school procedures and policies, language barrier, and discomfort in the new community (Valdés, 1996). While parents want the best for their SLLs, trust between parents and schools is easily broken, leading immigrant families feeling like and admonishing schools for not taking care of their SLLs (Valdés, 1996). Ultimately, the familial and cultural values were so disconnected from the values found in their schools, that the immigrant youth

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Table 2.1   The Framework of Developmental Assets: External Assets

Category	Asset	Definition
Support	1. Family support	Family life provides high levels of love and support
	2. Positive family communication	Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents
	3. Other adult relationships	Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults
	4. Caring neighborhood	Young person experiences caring neighbors
	5. Caring school climate	School provides a caring, encouraging environment
	6. Parent involvement in schooling	Parent(s) is actively involved in helping young person succeed in school
Empowerment	7. Community values youth	Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth
	8. Youth as resources	Young people are given useful roles in the community
	9. Service to others	Young person serves in the community 1 hour or more per week
	10. Safety	Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood
Boundaries and expectations	11. Family boundaries	Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts
	12. School boundaries	School provides clear rules and consequences
	13. Neighborhood boundaries	Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior
	14. Adult role models	Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior
	15. Positive peer influence	Young person's best friends model responsible behavior
	16. High expectations	Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well
Constructive use of time	17. Creative activities	Young person spends 3 or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts
	18. Youth programs	Young person spends 3 or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community
	19. Religious community	Young person spends 1 or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution
	20. Time at home	Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" 2 or fewer nights per week

Note: From Benson (2006).

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Note: From Benson (2006).

Figure 1. Developmental Assets framework – List of assets and their definitions (from Benson, 2006)

became disheartened by not having the support necessary to succeed in schools and eventually stopped participating in their school context (Valdés, 1996).

Many SLLs who find themselves with ample support from their family are located in areas where the school and community contexts are not ideal for academic success (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). SLLs often find themselves in low socioeconomic school districts where resources for SLLs are scarce. These students are generally placed in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms, relying on teachers, classmates, and their own internal assets to achieve academic success, such as grades and test scores (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). While Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova's (2008) work represents a broad, longitudinal study, in-depth portraits were utilized to tell the stories of immigrant youth found while collecting data over a five-year period. This data could assist in identifying the contexts which made some immigrant SLLs become "high achievers" while others were categorized as "low achievers" or "declining achievers" (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008).

The Academic Engagement and Performance framework (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008) and the Developmental Assets framework (Lerner & Benson, 2003) will be used simultaneously to complement each other and address the research questions:

1. What are the characteristics and contexts surrounding highly successful SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms?

2. How do the characteristics and contexts surrounding highly successful SLL students compare with those of their low, declining, and improving achieving peers?

3. How do the characteristics and contexts surrounding SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms differ from native speakers?

While providing data on the context surrounding their participants, the Academic Engagement and Performance framework is not intended as a diagnostic tool for SLLs or other students in similar circumstances (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). This is where utilizing the Developmental Assets framework with SLLs will provide benefit. By utilizing the Developmental Assets framework with SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency settings, and specifically in social studies content classrooms, SLLs and the contexts which lead to their success can be examined through the creation of an in-depth profile, and lead to discussions on how SLLs are able to achieve success despite the challenges facing them in the school context (O'Brien, 2012). Furthermore, in examining highly successful SLLs through the Developmental Assets framework, patterns found within the DAP can be examined to identify any ways in which developmental assets pertain specifically to SLLs. Finally, by collecting additional data in the form of interviews and observations, deeper connections to contexts can be established. Finally, potential patterns that fall outside the bounds of the Developmental Assets framework, pertaining to SLLs, may be identified and added to the discussion of how to best serve SLLs in our education system.

Conclusion

As the linguistic demographics of the United States change, so do the linguistic demographics in its schools. More SLLs are present in classrooms, leading to schools and teachers adjusting instruction and settings to increase language and content acquisition.

However, while the success of SLLs is often attributed to the schools and teachers they encounter, research suggests the contexts in which they live influence their levels of success in school. The Developmental Assets framework suggests there are predictable assets in each context of an adolescent's lived experiences which lead to success in school or health-related outcomes. The Academic Engagement and Performance framework suggests immigrant SLLs are greatly affected by their communities, families, and school contexts. This study will combine these two frameworks to fill a gap in the literature in which quantitative and qualitative data are both used to help explain the success of SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency social studies classrooms.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

This study utilized two separate frameworks, the Developmental Assets framework and the Academic Engagement and Performance framework, to create portraits of the participants of the study. The participants completed a survey to create their Developmental Assets Profile (DAP), the result of the Developmental Assets framework. Through interviews with the participants, the researcher worked to explain and provide specific information to explain the success of SLLs in addition to the quantitative measure provided through the DAP. The result were portraits of the individual participants which were also viewed in comparison to the other participants.

Theoretical Framework

The Developmental Assets framework provides the primary theoretical framework for this study (Lerner & Benson, 2003). The Academic Engagement and Performance framework was utilized simultaneously to identify ways in which the Developmental Assets framework does not address SLLs directly (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). Both frameworks share common characteristics that complement one other.

Both frameworks focus on the learner as a member of a larger set of contexts. The Developmental Assets Framework focuses on the assets individuals in a community have based on various components of their surroundings (Lerner & Benson, 2003). The individual and the contexts act on each other, creating a dynamic relationship in which a

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change in one is certain to affect the other (Lerner & Benson, 2007). Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova (2008) focused on immigrant SLLs achievement levels and created categories of success. They then provide in-depth portraits of SLLs in each of the levels of success. The contexts of the learner were deemed to be vital in the ultimate successes and failures of the SLLs profiled (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). See Table 3.1 for a comparison of the two frameworks utilized in the study.

Table 3.1

Comparison of Developmental Assets framework and Academic Engagement and Academic Performance framework

Framework	Developmental Assets	Academic Engagement and Performance
Authors	Benson & Lerner (2003)	Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova (2008)
Description	Predictable set of assets in five contexts of adolescents which lead to adolescents experiencing success in various school or health-related outcomes	Factors leading to immigrant SLLs achieving varying levels of success in schools
Purpose in this Study	Identifying contexts and assets in those contexts leading to success among adolescents in school outcomes	Definitions of success/achievement; portraits of immigrant SLLs specifically
Type of Data Collected	Quantitative	Quantitative and Qualitative
Result of Framework	Developmental Assets Profile (DAP)	Portrait of Individuals

In order to determine what success is and which students in the participant pool achieved high levels of success in their heterogeneous language proficiency core classrooms, or the four core courses found throughout all grade levels (language arts, math, science, and social studies), the Academic Engagement and Performance

framework was utilized to define the levels of success (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008, p. 35) – see Table 3.2. "Declining achievers" were defined as students who experience significant decrease (lowering by an average of 20%) in grades in their core classes over the course of the qualification period, or from sixth grade to present. "Improving achievers" were defined as students who experience significant increase in grades in their core classes over the course of the qualification period. "Low achievers" were defined as students who average lower than 80% in their core classes over the course of the qualification period. "High achievers" were defined as students who average 80% or higher in their core classes over the course of the qualification period.

Table 3.2

Levels of Success/Achievement (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008, p. 35)

Level of Success/ Achievement	Criteria in Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008	Criteria in this Study
Declining Achievers	Students who experience a 20% decrease in their GPA over the course of the study	Students who experience a 20% decrease in their GPA in core courses from sixth grade to present
Low Achievers	Students who achieve a 2.0 GPA or lower over the course of the study	Students who average lower than 80% in their core courses from sixth grade to present
Improving Achievers	Students who experience a 20% increase in their GPA over the course of the study	Students who experience a 20% increase in their GPA in core courses from sixth grade to present
High Achievers	Students who achieve a 3.5 GPA or higher over the course of the study	Students who average 80% or higher in their core courses from sixth grade to present

The Developmental Assets framework was utilized in the study to create a quantitative profile of the participants' contexts. Results of self-reported responses to the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) provided the researcher with data suggesting why

highly successful SLLs experience their success in core classwork. Interviews with the participants acted as qualitative data points to verify or question the self-reported responses. The data collected throughout this study was utilized to create a participant profile utilizing the combined frameworks of Developmental Assets (Lerner & Benson, 2003) and Academic Engagement and Performance (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008) that encompassed both the contexts and characteristics of SLLs and their native speaking peers. The combined framework resulted in portraiture of participants, allowing for quantitative measures to be explained and clarified through interviews (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1983). At the end of the study, the DAPs of the participants were compared in order to see if DAPs act as predictors of success, as they do in general population settings (Scales, 2011). Furthermore, any patterns seen in the DAPs or interviews of the participants in areas specific to SLLs and their cultural experiences were noted.

Research Design

This study sought to address a widely observed characteristic of school settings; one where heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms are present for most or all of the core classes, and sheltered instruction is minimal or non-existent on campuses. As such, conducting a case study made most sense, as it is research which occurs within a commonplace context or setting (Creswell, 2013). When considering case study designs, an instrumental case study was enacted, as the researcher wanted to utilize the cases to provide insight rather than simply describing the cases (Grandy, 2010). The research focused on the population at the school site, a sixth through eighth grade middle school in Central Texas. The school site was chosen out of convenience to the researcher, as he is

an educator on the site. This created the potential for researcher bias, as he was familiar with many of the students who became participants prior to the study (Creswell, 2013). However, the site was chosen to allow for a more thorough portraiture process after the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) survey was conducted, and the researcher's position as an educator on the site allowed for additional convenience to the participants.

The cases for the study are each of the individual participants from the middle school site. Together, they were bound through their shared experience as students in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms at the middle school. Through the use of the Academic Engagement and Performance framework, the cases were also split through two population characteristics (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). The first subcase was based on language proficiency, as participants were identified and analyzed as "native speakers" or "second language learners." The second subcase was based on academic achievement (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). Students were placed in achievement tiers based on cumulative grade data from completed semesters at their middle school. These two groupings were created specifically to allow for cross-case analysis to address the research questions (Grandy, 2010).

While the original intent of the researcher was to utilize cases as examples of the whole, as seen in the Academic Engagement and Performance framework (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008), the sample size derived from the school population did not allow for generalization, and a comparative model was adopted prior to the study being approved. The 46 participants who took the survey represented a quarter of the grade six through eight enrollment at the middle school at the time of the

study. Educational research literature suggests acquiring a sample as large as possible, especially when the sample is between 100-200, as the school site was at the time of the study (Mills & Gay, 2012). Therefore, the target population became all students in the school setting rather than just SLLs, as seen in Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova (2008). While the data collected for the study represented mixed methods, the study utilized case study procedures to observe the target population as a bounded case as well as individual cases (Creswell, 2013).

Utilizing the theoretical framework above, the researcher sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics and contexts surrounding highly successful SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms?

2. How do the characteristics and contexts surrounding highly successful SLL students compare with those of their low, declining, and improving achieving peers?

3. How do the characteristics and contexts surrounding SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms differ from native speakers?

To utilize these frameworks and address the research questions, access to a secondary school site was vital, leading the researcher to the middle school where the study was conducted.

Participants and Contexts

The sample consisted of forty-eight students at the middle school, ranging from grades sixth through eighth. The sample was assembled out of convenience to the

researcher (Creswell, 2013). However, the school also provided an ideal setting for one part of the research design. The school site provides monolingual instruction for its students, meaning there are few, if any, opportunities provided for SLL participants to learn in their native language. All learners work primarily in heterogenous language proficiency classrooms, while some SLLs receive supplementary services within this setting, such as an instructional aide in ELA to focus on language output.

All students at the middle school were introduced to the study during "morning meeting." During morning meeting, a scripted introduction was distributed to ensure all students heard the same introduction. An additional announcement was made in their content-area class (history for sixth and seventh, and STEM for eighth) to remind them of the morning's announcement and to distribute consent forms (see Appendix B). All students were encouraged to speak to the researcher if they had any questions. The sample was also self-selective, as students were not required to take the survey for credit in any class. Therefore, of the 193 students available, only 48 students became participants.

Data Collection

Fieldwork required for the study consisted of two phases: survey and post-survey. The survey phase began for students once they returned parent consent forms. After returning parent consent forms, all participants were given a website link to access the survey online during provided class time (see Appendix A). When students logged onto the survey, a digital assent form was provided (see Appendix C), and students were given an opportunity to skip all or some of the survey. Once they decided to continue, their responses were recorded and kept on an online database.

Immediately after completing the survey the researcher requested student data from the superintendent of the school district. The request included the following data:

- Grades in core classes (semester grades, including semester in which study took place)

- Demographic information (such as grade level, ethnicity, sex, and language spoken at home)

In the post-survey phase, students were placed in achievement tiers based on their achievement data (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). Then, students were randomly selected from each tier in a stratified sampling method (Creswell, 2013). An additional step was derived to ensure an SLL and a native speaking student was identified for interview at each level, ensuring a quota was reached for portraiture to encompass experiences of students at various achievement tier (Creswell, 2013). In the cases where only one SLL was present in an achievement tier, the participant was chosen with no random sampling. Then, the researcher conducted semi-structured, formal interviews with seven students targeted for interviews based on the answers provided in the survey (see Appendix D). The questions corresponded directly to their responses on the DAP survey and were asked specifically to explain how assets were accessed or not accessed by that student. For instance, while the survey asked if the participants receive support from adults other than their parents, who those adults are was clarified through the interview process. See Table 3.3 for an outline of data collection during the study.

Data Analysis

While a constant comparative analysis was employed, there were defined times in which certain data was collected, and therefore, analyzed (Mills & Gay, 2012). The first

Table 3.3

Data Collection during the Two Phases of the Study

Phase of Study	Survey	Post-Survey
Data Collected	1. Developmental Assets Profile (DAP)	1. Achievement and demographic information 2. Clarifying and explanatory information to clarify or support DAP Survey
Instruments/ Procedures Utilized	1. DAP Survey	1. Data request with district yielded achievement and demographic information 2. Semi-structured interviews

round of data analysis occurred after the survey phase, as participants' DAP survey scores were analyzed. Participant responses on the DAP survey were based on a Likert scale, in which they could answer "Not at All or Rarely," "Somewhat or Sometimes," "Very or Often," or "Extremely or Almost Always.' Numeric values were assigned to each in accordance with scoring for the DAP survey (Search Institute, 2016) (see Table 3.5). Each of the fifty-eight items on the Developmental Assets Profile survey are aligned with one or more assets. Anywhere between four and six assets make up each of the asset categories. Each category has ten items which correspond with various assets within, and the sum of the coded score of the entire category gives a score out of thirty, referred to as the "asset category score." Individuals who score between 0-14 in a given category are seen as "Challenged" in that category; a score of 15-20 represents "Vulnerable;" 21-25 represents "Adequate;" 26-30 represents "Thriving." See Table 3.4 for a summary of the codes for the responses on the DAP survey.

The score for each category was analyzed individually. Additionally, an overall score was calculated taking the average of all four internal category scores, referred to as

Table 3.4

Values for Developmental Asset Framework Questionnaire Responses

Not at All or Rarely	Somewhat or Sometimes	Very or Often	Extremely or Almost Always
0	1	2	3

the "internal assets mean score," and adding it to the average of all four external category

scores, referred to as the "external assets mean score." When calculating for a total DAP

score, a score of 0-29 represented "Challenged," a score of 30-40 represented

"Vulnerable," a score of 41-50 represented "Adequate," and a score of 51-60 represented

"Thriving."

The second round of data analysis occurred as student achievement and

demographic data became available to the researcher. The researcher compared data for

all students as individuals before separating the group into various populations for

comparison. Participants were compared based on achievement tiers and language

proficiency (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). When analyzing

individual cases within the study, asset category scores were utilized, in addition to the

internal and external assets mean scores. When cross-case analysis occurred, mean scores

were used primarily to search for patterns within the cases.

The third round of data analysis occurred as semi-structured interviews for the

target populations were completed. Once again, participant answers in the interviews

were compared with self-reported responses to DAP survey, as well as being compared to

other cases. Additionally, responses were coded in the case of emerging patterns between

interviewed participants (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2013). Patterns were observed in

relation to the framework of Developmental Assets and the Academic Engagement and

Performance framework (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008), as well as a constant search for any potential emerging patterns or themes. See Table 3.5 for a summary of the data analysis done during the study.

At the conclusion of the data analysis, descriptive data was created to discuss the various analysis groups as well as individual portraits to tell the narratives of participants found at each achievement level.

Table 3.5

Data Analysis during the Two Phases of the Study

Data Analyzed	Phase of Study	Analysis Procedures
Developmental Assets Profile (DAP)	Survey	1. Numeric values assigned for Likert scale responses 2. Values for asset categories defined and identified within data set 3. Mean, median, and standard deviation for entire population calculated for each asset category
Demographic Data	Post-survey	1. Two subpopulations created: SLL and native speaking 2. Calculations for same asset categories as whole population carried out for each subpopulation
Achievement Data	Post-survey	1. Achievement data calculated to give a semester grade point average (GPA) for each semester in a participant's data 2. Patterns for each participant analyzed and placed in tier based on Academic Engagement and Performance framework (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008) 3. Subpopulation data organized to reflect achievement tiers
Interviews	Post-survey	1. Recorded interviews transcribed 2. Patterns in participant DAP survey responses compared with responses in interview questions 3. Patterns among achievement tiers in the same language proficiency subpopulation identified 4. Patterns for participants among each subpopulation compared

Conclusion

The theoretical framework around this study focused on combining the Developmental Assets framework (Lerner & Benson, 2003) and the Academic Engagement and Performance framework (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008) to create portraits of all participants in their heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms. Through the application of the Developmental Assets framework, the researcher collected a DAP for each participant, laying a quantitative backbone for portraiture. The use of the Academic Engagement and Performance framework clarified, explained, and provided specific information on each participant to tell a more complete story of each individual through interviews (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). The portraits of the participants explained and discussed the characteristics and contexts of highly successful students in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

The study was introduced at a Central Texas middle school. The study utilized the

Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) survey to examine the characteristics and context

which led to student success among all participants, including high achieving SLL

participants. After collecting the quantitative results of the DAP survey, and analyzing

the results based on participant achievement tier and language proficiency, interview data

was collected and analyzed to investigate the patterns found among the study population.

This chapter will first discuss the population and the various subcases of the

study. Then, the chapter will discuss quantitative results of the DAP survey. Included in

this section is a review of the Developmental Assets categories, and what they measure

for each participant. Accompanying the descriptive data will be numerous tables,

provided to make the quantitative numbers being described easier to visualize.

Descriptive data will be discussed as it pertained to analysis for the research questions.

The descriptive data for each Developmental Asset category will be outlined. Qualitative

data from the interviews will also be examined. Finally, the results from the study will be

discussed in relation to the three research questions.

Participants

The study was introduced on the campus when 193 students were enrolled in

grades six through eight. Of the 193, 48 students returned affirmative parent consent

forms, and were entered into the study. Of the 48 students who were considered

"participants," 46 took the DAP survey. Achievement data was available for 44 of the 48 possible participants, as some of the sixth grade participants had not been at the school for an entire semester.

Of the 48 participants, 10 were in sixth grade, 24 were in seventh grade, and 14 were in eighth grade. The researcher teaches in a seventh-grade classroom on the site, which likely explains why a larger proportion of students in that grade level returned parental consent forms. They were more familiar with the researcher, and likely were more motivated to return forms to him, even without any academic incentive. Students in other grade levels may be familiar with the researcher, but he has never acted in a formal educator role with them, and therefore, were likely more detached from a desire to participate in the study.

Of the 48 participants, 11 were identified as African American by demographic data provided by district personnel. 21 participants were identified as Hispanic, 14 as White, and two as Other by the same data set. See Table 4.1 for the demographics of participants, and how the sample's demographics compare with the campus.

Of the 48 participants, 43 were classified as "native speakers" (NS) and five were classified as "second language learners" (SLL) after consulting with district personnel with access to Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System (TELPAS) and district on-boarding data. The on-boarding process at the district includes an assessment of a student's language proficiency in English if their home language is identified as non-English. Further assessment is available if it appears a student may be having linguistic difficulties, as some families do not fully divulge their home language for fear of legal or social repercussions associated with actual or perceived immigrant status (Goździak,

Table 4.1

Participant Demographic Information Compared to Campus (percentages rounded to nearest tenth; total percentage may not equal 100.0)

Demographic	Participants (n=48)	%	Campus (n=193)	%
African American	11	22.9	75	38.8
Hispanic	21	43.6	58	30.0
White	14	29.2	50	25.9
Other	2	4.2	10	5.2
English Language Learner	5	10.4	7	3.6

2014). Four of the SLL participants' home language is Spanish, and the fifth's home language is Ron, a language primarily spoken in Nigeria.

Academic Engagement and Performance

Of the 48 participants, 20 were identified as "high achievers," based on achievement data provided by the school district being applied to criteria adapted from the Academic Engagement and Performance framework (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). Three were identified as "improving achievers," three were identified as "declining achievers," and 18 were identified as "low achievers." Additionally, four participants were missing achievement data. After analyzing the data provided by the district, it is unsurprising to find so few "improving" or "declining" achievers. The data provided a maximum of five data points – a student's cumulative performance in the first and second semesters of sixth grade, first and second semester of seventh grade, and first semester of eighth grade. Most participants (33 of the 44 for

whom achievement data was available) had three or less data points, making a discernable shift in core course GPA over the course of the data set less likely.

Of the 43 NS participants, 18 were identified as "high achievers," two were identified as "improving achievers," three were identified as "declining achievers," and 17 were identified as "low achievers." Three NS participants' achievement data was missing or incomplete at the time of the study. Of the five SLL participants, two were identified as "high achievers," one was identified as an "improving achiever," and 1 was identified as a "low achiever." No SLL participants were identified as a "declining achiever", and one SLL participant's achievement data was missing or incomplete at the time of the study. Table 4.2 shows the achievement tier data for participants by grade level. Table 4.3 shows achievement tier data for NS participants. Table 4.4 shows achievement tier data for SLL participants.

Table 4.2

Participant Achievement Tiers (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008)

Achievement Tier	Sixth Grade	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade	Total
High	5	7	8	20
Improving	0	0	3	3
Declining	0	2	1	3
Low	1	15	2	18
Missing	4	0	0	4

Developmental Assets Profile Survey

DAP Survey scores were collected through Qualtrics, an online-based survey program. The results were exported into a Microsoft Excel worksheet. Score information was coded, and scores for each Developmental Asset category, as well as the DAP Total

Table 4.3

NS Participant Achievement Tiers (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008)

Achievement Tier	Sixth Grade	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade	Total
High	5	5	8	18
Improving	0	0	2	2
Declining	0	2	1	3
Low	1	14	2	17
Missing	3	0	0	3

Table 4.4

*SLL Participant Achievement Tiers (*Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008)

Achievement Tier	Sixth Grade	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade	Total
High	0	2	0	2
Improving	0	0	1	1
Declining	0	0	0	0
Low	0	1	0	1
Missing	1	0	0	1

was coded, and scores for each Developmental Asset category, as well as the DAP Total Score, were calculated. The categories conveyed through the data are either internal (commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity) or external (support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time).

The internal categories include things a student would have for themselves that leads to their success. For instance, the asset category "commitment to learning" measures an individual's determination and motivation to succeed in school. The asset category "positive values" measures an individual's beliefs between right and wrong, focusing on concepts such as responsibility and honesty. The asset category "social competencies" measures an individual's abilities to show empathy towards others and function effectively in society. Finally, the asset category "positive identity" measures an individual's goals and direction in their life.

The external asset categories include things that influence individuals towards success. The asset category "support" measures the effect of family and adult role models on an individual. The asset category "empowerment" measure an individual's perception of their worth and value to a community or family. The asset category "boundaries and expectations" measures the structures surrounding an individual, such as emotional support from family or rules in school. The last asset category, "constructive use of time," measures an individual's time management outside their commitments to school.

The data from the DAP survey was imported into SPSS to ensure descriptive statistics were accurately calculated and to further analyze the data. In completing various analyses, it was determined the only place where an observed relationship would be

significant with a significance of 0.05 or lower was between the participant pools' DAP scores for the internal and external assets (see Table 4.5). In other words, the only generalizable pattern was that a participant's score on their internal asset categories was predictive of their score in external asset categories, and vice versa. All other observed relationships, such as those between achievement level and internal or external assets and language proficiency and internal or external assets, provided a high-risk of the pattern being there by chance due to the low sample size.

While the sample sizes were small and unable to be used for generalizability, patterns were found within the data when comparing on various factors and were explored further. Specifically, the research questions called for the following comparisons to be made:

- DAP scores of high achieving SLL participants

- DAP scores of SLL participants among the achievement tiers

- DAP scores of SLL participants against DAP scores of NS participants

When analyzing the data, six participants were excluded from the data set at various points. Four of the 6th grade participants did not have achievement data while two other participants (a 7th grade and 8th grade participant) did not take the DAP survey. These six participants were excluded from the analysis when looking at achievement tiers. For language proficiency analysis, only two participants were excluded, as they did not take the DAP survey. One NS participant had been classified as a "low achiever" while another NS participant was classified as a "declining achiever." Both students were absent for extended periods when DAP survey data was collected,

Table 4.5

Tests for Correlation and Reliability among Participant Pools

Factor	Statistic	Language	Achievement	Internal DA	External DA
Language	Pearson Correlation	1	.097	-.221	-.120
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.530	.141	.427
	N	48	44	46	46
Achievement	Pearson Correlation	.097	1	.106	.085
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.530		.503	.592
	N	44	44	42	42
Internal DA	Pearson Correlation	-.221	.106	1	.872**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.141	.503		.000
	N	46	42	46	46
External DA	Pearson Correlation	-.120	.085	.872**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.427	.592	.000	
	N	46	42	46	46

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

and efforts to provide an alternative opportunity for either participant to take the survey failed. The sample sizes for analysis are outlined in Tables 4.6 and 4.7.

DAP Scores and Achievement Tiers

When broken down by achievement tier, improving achievers scored the highest mean score in almost all asset categories. For all internal asset categories, improving achievers held the highest mean score while they held the highest score for the external

Table 4.6

Sample Sizes for Analysis of DAP Scores and Achievement Tiers

Sample Size for DAP Scores and Achievement Tiers Analysis	
High NS	18
Improving NS	2
Declining NS	2
Low NS	16
High SLL	2
Improving SLL	1
Declining SLL	0
Low SLL	1

Table 4.7

Sample Sizes for Analysis of DAP Scores and Language Proficiency

Sample Size for DAP Scores and Language Proficiency Analysis	
Native Speaker	41
Second Language Learner	5

asset categories of "empowerment" and "boundaries and expectations." High achievers held the highest mean score for the external asset categories of "support" and "constructive use of time." By contrast, declining achievers scored the lowest mean scores in seven of the eight categories. The only category in which another achievement

tier scored lower, "positive values," was scored lowest by high achievers - declining achievers and low achievers tied for the second highest total in that category.

When analyzing an individual's DAP score, the coded results of ten questions connected to a given asset category yield a score (out of 30) and scoring a 21 or higher confirms the individual has "attained" the asset category. After applying this criteria to the mean score of each achievement tier, improving achievers attained all eight categories of assets. High achievers attained six of the eight categories, including all four of the internal assets. The only asset category in which high achievers' mean scores firmly assert they have not attained as a group was "empowerment." For "boundaries and expectations," their mean score was 0.05 away from being considered attained. Declining achievers only attained two asset categories: the external asset of "support" and the internal asset of "positive values." Low achievers attained five of the asset categories, and much like their high achiever peers, were very close to attaining "boundaries and expectations," as their mean score was only 0.12 away from having attained the asset. The asset categories attained by each achievement tier is outlined in Table 4.8.

High achieving participants had a mean score of 21.775 on internal developmental assets. By comparison, improving achievers' mean score was 24.33, declining achievers' mean score was 18.5, and low achievers' mean was score 20.9412. For external developmental assets, high achievers' mean score was 21.55. By comparison, improving achievers' mean score was 23.0833, declining achievers' mean score was 19, and low achievers' mean score was 20.9706. The boxplots below show a visual representation of each achievement tier subcase's range, median, and first and third quartile; Figure 2 represents internal assets, and Figure 3 represents external assets.

Table 4.8

Asset Categories Attained by Achievement Tier

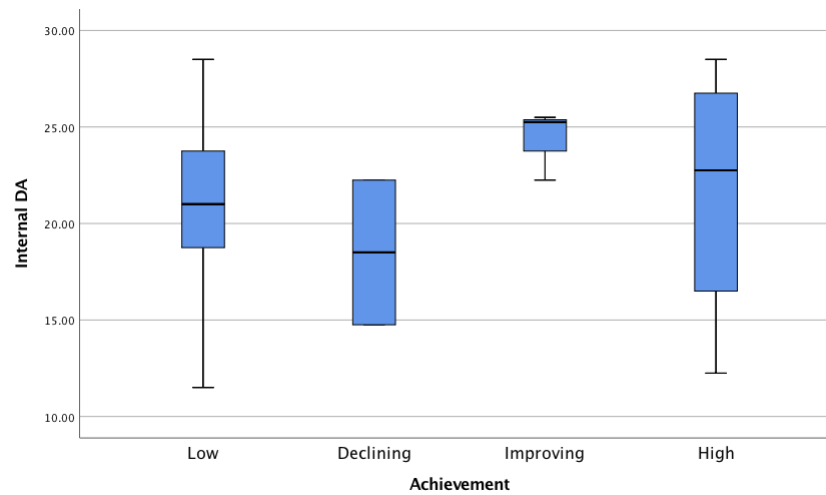| Achievement Tier	Commitment to Learning	Positive Values	Social Competencies	Positive Identity	Support	Empowerment	Boundaries and Expectations	Constructive Use of Time
High Achievers	X	X	X	X	X			X
Improving Achievers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Declining Achievers		X			X			
Low Achievers		X	X	X	X			X

Figure 2: Boxplot of Internal DAP Scores by Achievement Tiers (chart produced by SPSS)
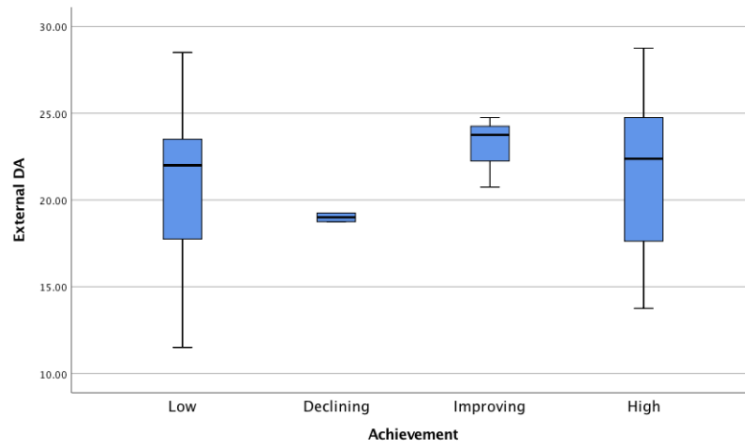
Figure 3: Boxplot of External DAP Scores by Achievement Tiers (chart produced by SPSS)

While the DAP scores for internal and external categories are useful as a cumulative metric, it was important to see how participants in each achievement tier accessed each Developmental Asset category individually.

Internal Assets. For the internal asset of "commitment to learning," high achievers and improving achievers scored appreciably higher than their declining achiever and low achiever peers. High achievers' mean score for this category was 23.2, improving achievers' mean score was 25.33, declining achievers' mean score was 16, and low achievers' mean score was 18.59. For the internal asset of "positive values," improving achievers scored better than participants in the three other achievement tiers. High achievers' mean score for this category was 21.2, improving achievers' mean score was 25.33, and the mean score for both declining achievers and low achievers was 22. For the internal asset of "social competencies," improving achievers scored higher than high achievers and low achievers, and declining achievers scored much lower. High achievers' mean score for this category was 21.65, improving achievers' mean score was 24,

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declining achievers' mean score was 18.5, and low achievers' mean score was 21.35. For the internal asset of "positive identity," improving achievers once again scored higher than high achievers and low achievers, and declining achievers again scored much lower. High achievers' mean score for this category was 21.05, improving achievers' mean score was 22.67, declining achievers' mean score was 17.5, and low achievers' mean score was 21.82. Table 4.9 shows a comparison of each achievement tier's mean scores for their internal asset categories.

Table 4.9

Internal Assets by Category and Achievement Tier

Internal DA Category	High Achievers	Improving Achievers	Declining Achievers	Low Achievers
Commitment to Learning	23.2	25.33	16	18.59
Positive Values	21.2	25.33	22	22
Social Competencies	21.65	24	18.5	21.35
Positive Identity	21.05	22.67	17.5	21.82

External Assets. For the external asset of "support," all four achievement tiers' mean scores were similar. High achievers' mean score for this category was 23.2, improving achievers' mean score was 22.67, declining achievers' mean score was 22, and low achievers' mean score was 22.76. For the external asset of "empowerment," improving achievers scored much higher than their peers in the other three achievement

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tiers. For this category, high achievers' mean score was 18.95, improving achievers'

mean score was 23, declining achievers' mean score was 16, and low achievers' mean

score was 19.24. For the external asset of "boundaries and expectations," improving

achievers again scored more than their peers. High achievers' mean score for this

category was 20.95, improving achievers' mean score was 24.33, declining achievers'

mean score was 20, and low achievers' mean score was 20.88. For the final external

category, "constructive use of time," high achievers and improving achievers again

scored highest, while declining achievers were below their peers in the other three tiers.

High achievers' mean score was 23.1, improving achievers mean score was 22.33,

declining achievers' mean score was 18, and low achievers' mean score was 21. Table

4.10 shows a comparison of each achievement tier's mean score for the external asset

categories.

DAP Scores and Language Proficiency

While not ideal due to the high discrepancy in SLL and NS participants, an

analysis was done comparing the DAP survey scores for the 41 NS participants to the

five SLL participants. As mentioned previously, these results are not conclusive or

present statistical reliability. However, for the purpose of the case study, the quantitative

figures were compared for further discussion.

When broken down by language proficiency, NS participants tended to score

higher in all asset categories, in both the internal and external spectrums. Overall, NS

participants' mean score for all external asset categories was 21.4474 compared to their

SLL peers, who scored 19.9375. Similarly, NS participants' mean scores for all internal

Table 4.10

External Assets by Category and Achievement Tier

External DA Category	High Achievers	Improving Achievers	Declining Achievers	Low Achievers
Support	23.2	22.67	22	22.76
Empowerment	18.95	23	16	19.24
Boundaries and Expectations	20.95	24.33	20	20.88
Constructive Use of Time	23.1	22.33	18	21

asset categories was 21.7697 compared to 18.5625 by their SLL peers. The only asset category in which SLL participants' mean score was higher than their NS peers was "boundaries and expectations." Otherwise, NS participants' mean scores were higher for both internal and external asset categories. The boxplots below show a visual representation of each language proficiency subcase's range, median, and first and third quartile; Figure 4 represents internal assets, and Figure 5 represents external assets.

The only asset category NS participants did not attain was "empowerment." While SLL participants only attained one asset category, "boundaries and expectations," their mean scores in three other categories, "positive values," "support," and "constructive use of time," were within 0.8 of attaining each asset. The asset categories attained by each language proficiency subcase is shown in Table 4.11.
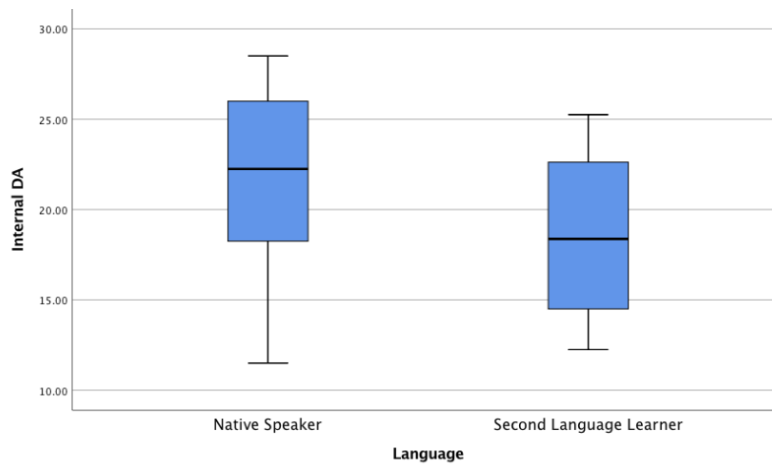
Figure 4: Boxplot of External DAP scores by Language Proficiency (chart produced by SPSS)
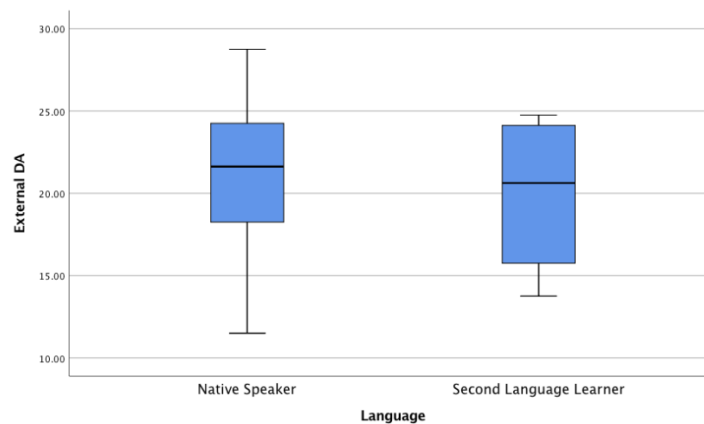
Figure 5: Boxplot of External DAP scores by Language Proficiency (chart produced by SPSS)

Internal Assets. In all internal asset categories, NS participants' mean scores were higher than the mean scores of their SLL participant peers. For the internal asset of "commitment to learning," NS participants' mean score was 21.41 while SLL participants' mean score was 18.6. For the internal asset of "positive values," NS participants' mean score was 22.05 while SLL participants' mean score was 20.2. For the internal asset of "social competencies," NS participants' mean score was 22.1 while SLL

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Table 4.11

Asset Categories Attained by Language Proficiency

Language Proficiency	Commitment to Learning	Positive Values	Social Competencies	Positive Identity	Support	Empowerment	Boundaries and Expectations	Constructive Use of Time
Native Speakers	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
Second Language Learners							X	

participants' mean score was 18.2. For the internal asset of "positive identity," NS participants' mean score was 21.85 while SLL participants' mean score was 17.4. Table 4.12 allows for a comparison of each language proficiency subcase's mean scores for internal asset categories.

External Assets. NS participants' mean scores for three of the external asset categories were higher than their SLL participant peers. In the category where SLL participants' mean score was higher, NS participants' mean score still suggest the asset was attained, and their mean score was only 0.33 away from their SLL participant peers. For the external asset of "support," NS participants' mean score was 23.1 while SLL participants' mean score was 20.8. For the external asset of "empowerment," NS participants' mean score was 19.73 while SLL participants' mean score was 17. For the external asset of "boundaries and expectations," NS participants' mean score was 21.27 while SLL participants' mean score was 21.6. For the external asset of "constructive use

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Table 4.12

Internal Assets by Category and Language Proficiency

Internal DA Category	NS Participants	SLL Participants
Commitment to Learning	21.41	18.6
Positive Values	22.05	20.2
Social Competencies	22.1	18.2
Positive Identity	21.85	17.4

of time," NS participants' mean score was 22.05 while SLL participants' mean score was 21.6. Table 4.13 allows for a comparison of each language proficiency subcase's mean scores for external asset categories.

Table 4.13

External Assets by Category and Language Proficiency

External DA Category	NS Participants	SLL Participants
Support	23.1	20.8
Empowerment	19.73	17
Boundaries and Expectations	21.27	21.6
Constructive Use of Time	22.05	20.6

Interviews

The seven interviews included in the study were assembled after achievement data for the participants was made available. As mentioned above, 44 participants had

achievement data available, and after being separated into achievement tiers, a random number generator was used to randomly select participants for the interviews. The random number generator was used on the entire sample size, as each participant had been assigned a random number during data collection. Numbers were generated until a first selection, as well as second and third alternate, when available, was selected for each achievement tier, ensuring an NS and SLL participant was interviewed for each. The original goal, to interview a NS and SLL participant in each achievement tier, was not possible, as no SLL participant was identified as a "declining achiever." However, all four tiers had NS participants, and the "high achiever," "improving achiever," and "low achiever" tiers had SLL participants.

Emmett, a seventh grade, African American, NS participant, was selected from the "high achiever" participant pool. His external assets score was 24.25, and his internal assets score was 26.75. Emmett acknowledged his family's role in his success, and spoke glowingly when his father, mother, or grandparents were brought up. Although only in seventh grade, he also reached out and organized his own reenactments of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous, "I Have a Dream" speech. Additionally, he was involved in sports and band activities through his school, and helped his church's media ministry on Sundays. Emmett also discussed his desired path towards becoming a politician, with a goal to help economically disadvantaged people. To this end, he outlined a plan where he will attend a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) before attending law school.

Alyssa, an eighth grade, African American, NS participant, was selected from the "improving achiever" participant pool. Her external assets score was 20.75, and her

internal assets score was 25.5. Alyssa credited her mother for inspiring her, as well as a tight-knit network of extended family who live near. She felt her neighborhood is unsafe, but also mentioned feeling there was nothing she could do to alleviate the situation. Outside of her mother, she credited her aunts, uncles, and teachers as adults who keep high expectations for her in and outside of school. Additionally, she mentioned the impact of her brother's bad decision-making when he was her age as a blueprint for what she tried to avoid as a young person. While she discussed the importance of school in achieving her goals, she did not have a clear goal for what she wants to do or be when she is an adult.

Jon, a seventh grade, White, NS participant, was selected from the "declining achiever" participant pool. His external assets score was 18.75, and his internal assets score was 14.75. Jon mentioned both of his parents pushing him to be successful in school in addition to having neighbors who show genuine interest in his life. While he discussed how he helps others in his neighborhood, he did not feel empowered to make change in his community. Jon mentioned playing sports for the school, and that participation serving as his main motivation to do well in school. On the subject of school, Jon felt overworked and like he did not receive resources through the school to help make him successful. Jon mentioned being culturally aware and accepting of others, as well as the ability to stay away from bad influences within his friend group. He also clearly mapped out his goal to gain a degree in mechanical engineering in his future.

Maria, a seventh grade, Hispanic, NS participant, was selected from the "low achiever" pool, but she was only contacted after the first NS participant in this achievement tier selected refused to be interviewed for the study. Her external assets

score was 11.5, and her internal assets score was 11.5. Maria is appreciative of the support she receives from her mother and other adults, but discussed at length the disingenuous nature of their advice regarding her school work and future. She described herself as "self-driven," and was confident she is usually doing the "right thing." Maria also mentioned being friendly with most members of her school community, and follows the rules put forth by society even when she doesn't agree. Maria's future plan was detailed, outlining a future in which she is a mortician in a city with a high death-rate to ensure she has a steady stream of business, but admitted the day-to-day routine of going to school felt overwhelming and hopeless at times.

Kali, a seventh grade, African, SLL participant, was selected from the "high achiever" participant pool. Her external assets score was 23.5, and her internal assets score was 20. Kali was a recent immigrant from Nigeria, and she mentioned her gratitude for being in the United States within the same answers when she said she missed "home." According to Kali, her story was mostly shaped by God and His will, and she mentioned at various points trying to follow God's plan. Kali also discussed her network of support, including family members and members of the community who reached out to help her and her family. Kali was well-versed in academic language but did not mention working hard in school specifically. Kali claimed she does not make friends easily or have many but discussed the close connections she has made with students at school as well as the ties she keeps with her friends in Nigeria. While she did not mention a specific plan, she trusted her faith would guide her in the direction she was meant to go.

Carina, an eighth grade, Hispanic, SLL participant, was selected as the lone "improving achiever" participant who was identified as SLL. Her external assets score

was 24.75, and her internal assets score was 25.25. Carina credited much of her academic success to her school and the structure provided to help students. Besides her teachers, Carina only mentioned her mother as a caring adult, and specifically noted how unsafe she felt her neighborhood was. The neighborhood, however, inspired Carina to pursue a career in law enforcement in an effort to help her community. Because of the safety concerns in her neighborhood, she mentioned spending most of her time at home in her room, where she claimed to spend time communicating with other teens through social media and working on her homework.

Javier, a seventh grade, Hispanic, SLL participant, was selected as the lone "low achiever" participant who was identified as SLL. His external assets score was 17.75, and his internal assets score was 16.75. Javier detailed a home and neighborhood situation in which he mostly stays inside to avoid being hassled by law enforcement or drug dealers. While he discussed at length his desire to play sports through school and recreation leagues, he was often confined to playing video games in his room at home. Javier mentioned connecting with only one of his teachers, but could see clearly where doing well in school would help his future goals. Those future goals, as outlined by Javier, included playing professional soccer after attending a nationally recognized university. He spoke of his desire for his mother and his school to not pressure him into completing various steps of his education, as he said he felt motivated to play sports, which would lead him to academic success.

Results

The DAP survey acted to provide quantitative insight on how participants in various designations, whether by achievement tier or language proficiency, access the

Developmental Assets in their community. Additionally, seven interviews with participants in the study provided detailed explanations and clarification of the data provided through the survey. Through the combined analysis of the DAP surveys and interview data, the three research questions which guided the study were addressed. However, due to the small sample size, it is not possible to conclusively answer each research question. Still, the quantitative and qualitative data provided a road map for the researcher to guide further inquiry.

RQ1: What are the characteristics and contexts surrounding highly successful SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms?

The first research question was examined through a collection of DAP survey results for the two high achieving SLL participants as well as interview data for one of the high achieving SLL participants, Kali.

Support from adults. Both high achieving SLL participants scored higher on their external asset categories than their internal categories, suggesting the structures provided by outside influences have helped provide the tools necessary for success in school. When asked on the survey, "I have teachers who urge me to develop and achieve," and, "I have a family that gives me love and support," both participants answered, "extremely or almost always," showing that they receive support from caring adults. However, both participants responded, "not at all or rarely" when prompted about whether their neighbors care about them or look out for them. Kali, when asked, noted the adults in her life through church and her family, but did not mention having caring neighbors.

According to the DAP survey, neither high achieving SLL attained the asset of "empowerment". However, similar to the findings under the asset category of "support",

both participants felt more empowered in their home environments compared to their neighborhood or their school. During her interview, Kali mentioned feeling like she is listened to at home and school, but that her neighborhood is not a safe place or where she could change "anything big".

System of structure. While only one of the two high achieving SLL participants attained the asset categories of "boundaries and expectations" and "constructive use of time," both reported finding boundaries and expectations "extremely or almost always" in having adult role models and teachers who push them to "develop and achieve". Kali specifically credits church and her faith for providing structure during the transition from her home in Nigeria to settling in Texas with her family. Additionally, much of her free time outside of school is reportedly at church, whether she is practicing in the choir, attending knitting classes, or utilizing an event organized by the youth ministry. While not interviewed, the other high achieving SLL also responded, "extremely or almost always" when asked about her participation in sports, club, and creative activities outside of school.

For the internal asset categories, it is less clear through the DAP survey results as to what has led to success for the two high achieving SLL participants. While both reported enjoying reading outside of the required amount through school, one high achieving participant scored the maximum point value for "commitment to learning" while the other only attained 40% of the possible point value in that category, far below the 70% threshold required to "attain" an asset category. Kali, who attained the highest possible score also did not reference school specifically when she discussed being taught to work hard by her parents. However, in the interview, her understanding and literacy in

education-specific terms, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) being described as something she will have to prepare for in the future.

Personally responsible citizens. Both high achieving SLL participants did report empathy for others, including those who are culturally different from themselves, and staying away from things that are harmful to their health, such as tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. During her interview, Kali mentioned her parents pushing her to help people in her community, a trait she clearly has taken to heart based on her, "extremely or almost always" responses on the DAP survey to questions asking, "I am encouraged to help others," and, "I think it is important to help other people."

Neither participant reported being particularly good at making or keeping meaningful friendships through their DAP survey responses. However, Kali did report during her interview that she kept close connections with her friends in Nigeria as well as her closest friends in Texas. She also reported the value of empathy at various points during the interview, contradicting her less affirmative responses on the survey.

Finally, both scored as "challenged" in the asset category of "positive identity", indicating both participants do not have a clear direction or feel they are in control of their future. This, however, was proven false in the case of Kali, who claimed during her interview that God provides her purpose in life. While she does not know what that specific purpose is, which may have led to her response on the DAP survey, she says she is, "…not in control; God has the control."

Through an examination of the DAP survey of both participants, as well as the transcripts of the interview with Kali, there are clear patterns that emerge in telling of the characteristics and contexts surrounding these high achieving SLL participants. Both high

achieving SLL participants reported having families who are supportive, with Kali saying in her interview, "They are the best of me and they are my life." Both also thrive in situations with high structure, according to their results, with Kali describing her school as having high expectations.

Both high achieving SLLs did lack in the asset categories of "empowerment," "social competencies," and "positive identity," but further examination within the categories and with Kali during the interview revealed that these assets were present in their relationships with their family, but not necessarily their communities. In the case of Kali, her repeated references to her faith and God show she cedes some control, a small part of each of the three asset categories. This belief and trust in God's will, at least in part, translated to her scoring lower on the survey, although it does not seem to prevent her from attaining these assets when discussed more thoroughly. Through these characteristics and contexts, both SLL participants are able to be highly successful SLL in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms.

RQ2: How do the characteristics and contexts surrounding highly successful SLL students compare with those of their low, declining, and improving achieving peers?

The second research question was examined through the collection of DAP survey results from all five SLL participants as well as interview data for Kali, Carina, and Javier. Differences and similarities between all SLL participants were noted.

In the cases of all but one SLL participant, SLL participants scored higher on their external assets than their internal assets. Carina, the improving achiever SLL participant, scored slightly higher on her internal assets (25.25) than her external assets (24.75), both of which were the highest scores among the SLL participants.

External assets. According to the DAP survey results regarding "support," all SLL participants indicated they often or almost always had parental support to help them succeed as well as a caring school environment. Additionally, all five SLL participants responded "extremely or almost always" when asked about teachers and parents providing support and caring about their progress in school. Despite differences in achievement tiers, all SLL participants felt well supported by their home environments and school, although responses in the interviews show a difference in attitude towards that support. While the high and improving achiever participants, Kali and Carina, appreciated and praised the support they receive from their school site and families, Javier, the low achiever SLL, claimed to only feel supported by one of his teachers during his interview, and wished his mother would not push him as much in school.

Only one SLL participant, Carina, attained the asset category of "empowerment," according to DAP survey results. For the four other SLL participants, responses on the survey show SLL participants rarely or only sometimes feel they are able to make a difference in their community or that their actions or resources were valuable to their communities. For Carina, she had the specific goal of working as a law enforcement officer in her future, according to her interview. Additionally, she felt valued in her family as she helped to take care of her special-needs brother and took more responsibility in her house. Javier also discussed taking care of his little brother in his interview, but did not feel he made a substantial difference in his neighborhood, one where he felt unsafe at times. None of the three interviewed SLL participants mentioned feeling like they were able to make big changes at their school.

For the asset category of "boundaries and expectations," DAP survey results showed almost all SLL participants acknowledged the presence of high expectations and rules at their school. To the DAP survey question, all participants responded often or almost always when asked about their school giving clear rules. However, only one SLL participant, whose achievement data was unavailable, claimed to receive any supervision or guidance from their neighbors, as the other four SLL participants responded "rarely or not at all" when asked about neighbors who "watch out for me" on the survey. This aligns with two of the participants outlining in their interviews that their neighborhoods were not safe, with Kali focusing solely on her church community when asked about life outside of school.

For the asset category of "constructive use of time," the DAP survey results show all but one SLL participant responded "extremely or almost always" to questions doing activities outside of school time, and all responded "very or often" or "extremely or almost always" to their parents knowing their whereabouts. "Constructive use of time" is seen through interview responses when participants discussed participation in sports teams and involvement in church activities. Kali only mentioned activities organized through her church, while Carina and Javier mentioned sports as well as interacting with other young people online through social media or video games.

Internal assets. When considering the asset category "commitment to learning," the only place SLL participants agreed was that their school cared about and encouraged kids. Otherwise, no clear patterns emerged based on success level and whether a student cared about school or even enjoyed learning. Based on survey results, completing homework was not a priority for any SLL participants except Kali. The other high

achieving SLL participant claimed she did her homework often during the survey, but also indicated she does not care about school or enjoy learning, two traits which seem most predictive for academic success. Additionally, the high achieving SLL participants did not agree on whether they had desire to achieve the high levels of success they were experiencing.

All five SLL participants indicated they stay away from dangerous or harmful things, which showed a clear pattern in the asset category "positive values." Outside of that, however, there were few patterns within "positive values." Regardless of achievement tier, SLL participants claimed to take little responsibility for their actions. Achievement tiers did not act as a predictor of survey responses about helping others or taking responsibility for their actions. Each of the three interviewed SLL participants did discuss a desire to help others during their interviews, but their vision of who they could help focused solely on individuals they knew or interacted with already, such as family members.

The asset category of "social competencies" also provided little clarity towards any patterns within the SLL participant pool. Regardless of achievement tier, participants reported only sometimes or often resisted bad influences, and almost all reported rarely or only sometimes planning ahead and making good choices. Carina, the only SLL participant who attained the asset, was the only SLL participant to almost always resolve conflict without anyone getting hurt. Through her interview, Carina mentioned wanting to make her neighborhood less violent, where she had witnessed drive-by shootings and other dangerous activities.

Among SLL participants, the asset category "positive identity" did not seem to be predictive of academic achievement, as both high achieving SLL participants were deemed "challenged" according to the survey results. This was the same distinction the low achieving SLL received for this category, while the improving achiever SLL was deemed as "thriving" in this area. Specifically, both high achievers and the low achiever in the SLL population responded as rarely or sometimes feeling in control of their lives and future. As discussed previously, Kali found much of her purpose from her faith. Javier, who responded to often feeling confident about his future despite not feeling he had control, had a clear plan outlined for going to college and playing soccer professionally.

RQ3: How do the characteristics and contexts surrounding SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms differ from native speakers?

When the DAP survey results for the bounded case of SLL participants was compared to their NS peers' scores, clear patterns emerged throughout the entire population. For NS participants, it also appeared there was less discrepancy between their external and internal asset scores than the SLL participants, although as mentioned previously, data suggesting this may be unreliable due to the small sample size for SLL participants. Other patterns emerged through the analysis of each asset category along with NS participant DAP survey results and interview data.

NS participants had more Developmental Assets than SLL participants. As mentioned previously, NS participants attained higher mean scores for all asset categories except for "boundaries and expectations." 32 of 41 NS participants attained the asset category "support," according to DAP survey results. When asked about having parents

who help them succeed, all 41 NS participants noted their parents almost always or often tried to help them succeed, something that was not seen among the five SLL participants. Each NS participant interviewed discussed their parents' role as supporters in school and other activities. Additional familial support was noted by nearly all interviewed participants. This familial support included aunts, uncles, and grandparents as those who also helped them succeed.

The asset category "empowerment" provided the first potential pattern among the entire population, as both NS and SLL participants struggled in this external asset. Regardless of their achievement tier, NS participants generally felt they only sometimes were able to help solve social issues or make a difference in their community. NS participants across all achievement tiers also tended to respond sometimes or rarely to feeling appreciated or valued for their actions. Similar to SLL participants, however, Emmett, the high achieving NS participant interviewed, expressed feeling valued within his family. Similarly, Alyssa and Maria each felt they were recognized by their parents for their positive actions.

While SLL participants fared better than NS participants in "boundaries and expectations," their DAP results were similar, suggesting NS participants also had strong structures in their lives at the time of the study. 34 of the 41 NS participants claimed to have an adult role model outside of their parents, while 33 of 41 claimed to have teachers who helped them develop or achieve. During their interview, each of the NS participants discussed how adults in their lives held them accountable to high standards and expectations. Jon, however, reported inconsistent accountability on the parts of his parents, as he claimed both of his parents tended to relax their rules and expectations

when they were broken or not met. Jon said specifically, "They are willing to have a conversation about it, so if I mess up, they just talk to me about why they expect more from me." By contrast, Maria and Emmett each discussed how they had gotten in trouble in the past when they did not achieve their parents' expectations for grades.

For the external asset category of "constructive use of time," 32 of 41 NS participants claimed they were often or almost always encouraged to try things that might be good for them. Additionally, like their SLL peers, nearly all NS participants (36 of 41) indicated their parents almost always or often knew their whereabouts. During their interviews, the NS participants focused on their extracurricular activities when they discussed how they use time outside of school, as opposed to SLL participants who tended to discuss homework and staying in their room. Emmett discussed his work with ministry through his church while Alyssa, Jon, and Maria each described enjoying or being encouraged to try activities provided by the school outside of the core curriculum, such as sports or band. Jon and Maria each mentioned their parents trusted how they spent their time outside of school, as opposed to Emmett who mentioned specifically how he was often in close proximity to family for his various activities outside of school time.

NS participants as a whole attained all four internal asset categories in contrast to their SLL peers, who failed to attain any of the four asset categories as a group. Across all achievement tiers, NS participants tended to believe their school cared about them and their success, while 31 of 41 NS participants claimed they were very or extremely active in learning new things. Emmett associated doing well in school as necessary for getting scholarships. "It all starts now while you're in seventh grade," he said as he expressed his motivation for doing well in school. Similarly, Alyssa noted a direct correlation between

her achievement in school during middle school and her future goals. Jon and Maria each mentioned feeling overwhelmed by the amount of work their school required of them and were not motivated to learn for the sake of it, according to their interview data. Maria mentioned feeling like education was a required step towards her eventual goals.

The internal asset category, "positive values," was attained by 27 of 41 NS participants according to DAP survey results. Nearly all NS participants (40 of 41) reported often or almost always accepting people who are different from them, while 39 of the 41 NS participants responded they are very of extremely encouraged to help others. Additionally, many responses in the interviews with NS participants concurred with the DAP survey results, which suggested most NS participants believe they are doing the right thing. Maria stated she believed she did the right thing, even when not supervised by her mother or other adults. Jon also believed he avoided the bad influences present within his friend group.

The internal asset category "social competencies" presented a large discrepancy in DAP survey results between NS and SLL participants. The mean score for the 41 NS participants was 22.1, while the five SLL participants' mean score was 18.2. While the DAP survey results showed 26 of 41 NS participants attained "social competencies," only one SLL participant attained the category. 35 of the 41 NS participants claimed they were often or almost always able to make friendships easily and they had developed respect for other people. Interview data confirmed the NS participants generally felt comfortable within their society's rules, as Emmett discussed the network of adults he had access to with help for his goals. Alyssa was thoughtful and reflective when she discussed how her brother's mistakes in school and in their neighborhood shaped her decisions. Jon said, "I

am completely fine with anybody no matter who they are." Maria also mentioned being friends with nearly every member of her grade level.

While "social competencies" marked a large difference between NS and SLL participants, the internal asset of "positive identity" presented the largest discrepancy among any asset category. The mean score for the 41 NS participants was 21.85, while the mean score for the five SLL participants was 17.4. When asked about their feelings towards their future, 35 of 41 NS participants responded they were very or extremely optimistic while only two of five SLL participants responded similarly. Through the interview data, it is clear that each NS participant, regardless of their achievement tier, had a clear plan towards their future. For example, Emmett discussed at length his plans for college, which included attended an HBCU and law school in his quest to become a politician. Jon also planned on attending a university to pursue a degree in mechanical engineering, and he also indicated his desire to go to a school known for its academics, not its "party scene." Maria planned to become a mortician, and discussed why she had decided against other career options.

Summary

This chapter discussed the results of the study. First, the procedures leading to the population for the study were described. Then, the DAP survey results were outlined and descriptive data was explained. Additionally, the various subcases which made up the cross-case analysis was considered in the descriptive data. The interviewed participants were introduced, and their relevant responses in relation with the research questions were discussed. Through the results and analysis of the data, findings were made for each research question.

Highly successful SLL participants in the study shared multiple characteristics and contexts, providing a description of what factors may lead to their success. Specifically, they received support from adults within and outside of their families, were in highly structured environments with high expectations in and outside of school, and were personally responsible citizens. When compared to other SLL participants in the study, it was found SLL participants tended to have higher levels of external assets than internal assets. Additionally, the DAP survey results did not act as predictors of success among the SLL participants. Finally, a comparison of the subcases of NS participants and SLL participants occurred, in which it was found NS participants tended to have higher levels of access to the Developmental Assets than their SLL peers. Further discussion and implications from these results will occur in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion and Implications

There is an extensive body research focused on the instructional strategies and school-wide structures which lead SLLs towards successful academic outcomes. However, a smaller portion of research has focused on the factors outside of instruction which lead to school success among SLL populations in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms. This study sought to address that specific question by assessing the characteristics and contexts surrounding SLL in a Central Texas middle school. Through the use of the Developmental Assets framework (Lerner & Benson, 2003) in conjunction with the Academic Engagement and Performance framework (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008), participants in the study took a survey to assess their access to Developmental Assets. Then, based on their academic achievement designation and language proficiency (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008), survey results were analyzed utilizing cross-case analysis. Interview data illuminated the survey responses and provided explanation and clarity to the results.

Summary of the Study

The researcher chose to utilize a case study design. The researcher wanted to provide insight as to what makes students successful in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms. Specifically, in viewing the students in a "real-life" educational setting as opposed to one enhanced by treatment, the researcher wanted to show an example of what the educational experience is for students in heterogeneous language

proficiency classrooms (Creswell, 2013). As previously discussed, heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms are an increasingly common reality as the population of second language learners (SLL) rises across the country (Misco & Castaneda, 2009). Another reason for the case study design was the ability to focus on a specific group – in this case, SLL – and how educational settings were effective or ineffective. Finally, case study is a useful research design when the goal of the research is to attain multiple perspectives on an issue or topic (Creswell, 2013). In that regard, the study was designed to learn about the individual participants, and how each of them interacted with the idea of and attained various levels of success.

The study was conducted at a Central Texas middle school, and involved 48 participants in grades six through eight. After the study was introduced to the students during grade-level meetings, any student who returned a parental consent form was considered a participant in the study. After returning a parental consent form, participants took the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) survey online during allotted time in the school day. The 58-question survey prompted students to be self-reflective of their home, community, school, and personal beliefs (Benson, 2007). The DAP survey has been used in different educational and cultural settings across the country and nation since its initial development by the Search Institute in 1990 (Scales, 2011). Of the 48 participants in the study, 46 took the survey, and had their results analyzed in relation to the research questions.

The researcher then placed participants in achievement tiers based on their success in their core coursework while attending the middle school. 42 students had achievement data, which was provided by the school district, and students were placed in

the "high," "improving," "declining," or "low" achievement tiers, which acted as subcases within the larger context of the middle school. The same district-provided achievement data also denoted demographic information about each participant, allowing the researcher to also separate participants into bounded cases based on their language proficiency. In total, five participants were identified as SLL.

Finally, interviews were conducted with a participant found in each achievement tier and each language proficiency. Because no SLL participant was identified as a "declining achiever," seven total participants were interviewed. Their interview questions were shaped by their individual DAP survey results, as the interviews provided specific details to the responses of the participants. Through the collection of interview data, the Developmental Assets available to the students at the middle school, such as community organizations, school structure, and neighborhood safety, were explained.

Through the analysis of the DAP survey results and the interview data, the researcher was able to provide a detailed description of the participants of the study and address the three research questions. While sample sizes did not allow for the results to be conclusive or generalizable, they are the beginning of a conversation which can move forward to investigate if the patterns and themes which emerged in this study are truly present at the school site.

Summary of Research Question Results

Utilizing the research design described above, the following research questions were examined throughout the course of the study:

1. What are the characteristics and contexts surrounding highly successful SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms?

2. How do the characteristics and contexts surrounding highly successful SLL students compare with those of their low, declining, and improving achieving peers?

3. How do the characteristics and contexts surrounding SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms differ from native speakers?

RQ1: What are the characteristics and contexts surrounding highly successful SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms?

In examining the first research question, the DAP survey results of two participants were investigated. The two participants were the only participants in the study to be identified as both SLL and high achieving, based on the dual frameworks. Furthermore, one of the high achieving SLL participants, Kali, was interviewed, providing additional detail to answer the research question. Despite differences in the DAP survey results between each participant, patterns surrounding the characteristics and contexts surrounding highly successful SLL in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms emerged.

Support from adults. Both participants noted receiving love and support from their parents. Teachers and school staff also provided support, as SLL participants reported feeling their teachers wanted them to succeed and the school cared for their students. While these adults did not empower the SLL to believe they could make substantial change in their community, they did provide an opportunity for concerns to be heard and for the opinion of the SLL to be valued within their home and community. Through family discussions and the expectations set by adults in their lives, SLL students felt safe and secure, both physically and emotionally. For Kali, her family was incredibly

important, as she said, "They are the best of me and they are my life." She also surrounded herself with adults through school and church who acted as role models and cultural guides as she navigated her education in the United States.

Systems of structure. In addition to attending a school with clear rules, both participants were also immersed in high structure activities outside of their core coursework. Whether through band, sports, after-school programs, or church, high achieving SLL participants kept their mind and body engaged outside of the required coursework of their school site. These activities also often provided access to the adult role models and authority figures who provided additional support and guidance to the participants. Kali's involvement in creative outlets – choir and knitting classes – as well as church-specific activities – youth ministry – provided opportunities for her to remain engaged while giving her access to a network of caring adults, such as her "adopted grandmothers."

Personally responsible citizens. While they did not feel empowered to be agents of change, high achieving SLL participants noted the importance of accepting others and tried to do the right thing whenever possible (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). They tried to be honest whenever possible, and noted the need to help others when possible. Although she could not discuss it in specifics, Kali discussed at length her desire to fulfill God's plan by helping others. She did not feel in control of her own path, and did not know how she would help others, but she was adamant that she had been fortunate in her life journey, and looked forward to the opportunity to give back in the future.

Highly successful SLL participants did have to be committed to learning or have the desire to learn for the sake of it, in order to be academically successful. Additionally,

highly successful SLL did not need a large network of friends or neighbors to be successful. These participants also did not need to take a stand for things they believed in or enact change within their community. For highly successful SLL to be successful at the middle school where the study was conducted, they needed support from adults, structure in and outside of school, and to know they were trying to be the best they could be for themselves and their communities.

RQ2: How do the characteristics and contexts surrounding highly successful SLL students compare with those of their low, declining, and improving achieving peers?

To examine the second research question, the DAP survey results for each SLL participant, regardless of their achievement tier, was analyzed. After looking at each participant as an individual case, their achievement tier was considered and their results compared with the result of high achieving SLL participants, which were outlined in the findings for the first research question. Additionally, interview data for three SLL participants was utilized to help explain or clarify patterns seen within the DAP survey results. After considering achievement tier designations for the SLL participants, highly successful SLL students did not appear to have any clear distinctions compared with their SLL peer in other achievement tiers.

When first examining the DAP survey results for the SLL participants, two patterns become clear: SLL participants tended to fare better in their external asset categories than their internal asset categories, and the DAP survey does not predict success among SLL participants. As seen in Table 5.1, these two patterns emerged through preliminary analysis of the DAP survey results for SLL participants.

Table 5.1

SLL Participant DAP Survey Results

SLL Participant Achievement Tier	Support	Empowerment	Boundaries and Expectations	Constructive Use of Time	External Assets Mean Score	Commitment to Learning	Positive Values	Social Competencies	Positive Identity	Internal Assets Mean Score	Total DAP Survey Score
High Achieving (1)	24	19	25	26	23.5	30	21	15	14	20	43.5
High Achieving (2)	14	12	14	15	13.75	12	16	13	8	12.25	26
Improving	23	23	26	27	24.75	24	26	25	26	25.25	50
Low	20	13	17	21	17.75	19	16	18	14	16.75	34.5
Missing	23	18	26	14	20.25	8	22	20	25	18.75	39

External assets versus internal assets. Except for the improving achiever, Carina, each SLL participant scored better on their external asset categories than their internal asset categories by an average of 1.875. This suggests SLL participants experienced environmental and relational supports in their day-to-day contexts, but did not possess an equal level of skills, competencies, and commitment to those external assets (Benson, 2007). A similar pattern was seen when only analyzing high achieving SLL participants. However, since there were only two high achieving SLL participants, the pattern did not emerge as significant.

The interview data confirmed the finding that SLL participants had more external assets than internal assets. Each SLL participant who was interviewed expressed their external assets during the interview. Kali discussed at great length her family's involvement in her life as well as the community members she interacted with through church. Carina and Kali each discussed the ways her school provided support and high expectations, and Carina expressed her belief that her school did more than other schools to ensure student success. Javier expressed his mother providing an example for him to follow while his uncle provided guidance and made Javier feel valued through their discussions.

When analyzing SLL participant interview data for questions related to internal asset categories, there are less examples presented in the data. Kali provided the most information, but when she described each internal asset, she deferred back to an external support which provided it. She mentioned being committed to learning, but when she discussed that skill, she felt her parents and other supportive adults deserved more credit for helping her than she did for her desire to succeed. For her positive values, Kali felt she could improve on her ability to do the right thing, tell the truth, or take responsibility by following the guidance of her family members. When she explained her positive identity, she deferred all control to her belief that God had a plan and goals for her, and she was simply "following His plan."

Similarly, Carina, who scored slightly higher in the internal asset categories than her external asset categories on her DAP survey, credited many of her internal assets to external factors. While she claimed to be in charge of her own educational path, she also credited her mother and brother as the biggest motivation to succeed at school. She also

credited adults around her for discussing her plan with her, and helping her to develop a plan to become a law enforcement officer in the future.

Javier did respond differently than Kali and Carina in regards to his internal assets, but there were also issues present in his responses. For instance, when he discussed his goals for his future, he outlined a detailed plan to attend a specific university and play on their soccer team. However, the university he wanted to attend did not have a soccer team. While this may have been a simple mistake in his proposed plan for himself, it did show a lack of having informed conversations with people familiar with the processes of selecting and preparing for college, meaning his internal assets may have been lacking more than his self-reported DAP responses suggested.

DAP survey did not predict success among SLL participants. The disparity between the two high achieving SLL participants' DAP survey results highlighted the second pattern: the DAP survey did not predict success among this population of SLL participants. The pattern was made apparent through a deeper analysis of both DAP survey results and achievement data for SLL participants. When the DAP survey results were compared, the improving achiever SLL, Carina, had the highest DAP score. Kali, one of the high achieving SLL participants, scored the second-highest, but was considerably lower than Carina's total. Javier, the low achieving SLL, scored the second-lowest total. However, the lowest DAP survey total came from the second highest achieving SLL. Her survey results suggested she attained just over half as many Developmental Assets as Carina. When considering the four SLL participants who had achievement data, one would have to consider the order, as achievement tiers are based on an ordinal but non-proportional scale (Mills & Gay, 2012; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-

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Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). Therefore, if the Developmental Assets framework is predictive of success (Benson, 2007; Lerner & Benson, 2003; Scales, 2011), one would have assumed the two high achieving SLL participants would have scored the highest, followed by the improving achiever SLL, and finally, the low achieving SLL would have received the lowest score.

Simply sorting the participants' achievement tiers from "high" to "low" was not the best way to compare the achievement tiers and DAP survey results. The achievement tiers were identified through the use of quantitative figures which were available to the researcher. However, if the actual figures which determined the achievement tiers were utilized, similar disorder and unpredictability was present. The achievement data for each SLL participant is seen on Table 5.2, where the GPA, calculated on a 4-point scale, for core coursework is noted. With the specific achievement data, a predictive measure would have suggested the high achieving SLL participant who was not interviewed would score highest, as she achieved a 4.0 in all three semesters of data. Kali would have received the second-highest total, followed by Carina. Finally, Javier would have scored lowest. Under either condition, the DAP survey results did not act in a predictive manner with the SLL participants. The achievement data provided by the school district is seen in Table 5.2, with the cumulative GPA for each participants' core coursework provided.

However, the interview data acted to explain and clarify the quantitative figures from the DAP survey throughout the study. The interview data confirmed the finding that SLL participants had more external assets than internal assets. Participants who believed their parents and school cared about their success were among the more successful participants. Through interview data, there was a clear distinction between Kali and

Table 5.2

SLL Participant Achievement Data

Participant	6th grade – 1st semester	6th grade – 2nd semester	7th grade – 1st semester	7th grade – 2nd semester	8th grade – 1st semester	Cum GPA
High Achiever (2)	4.0	4.0	4.0	-	-	4.0
Kali	3.0	2.75	3.25	-	-	3.0
Carina	2.5	2.5	2.75	2.0	3.0	2.55
Javier	-	-	1.0	-	-	1.0

Carina, who were achieving at high levels during the study, and Javier, who was achieving at a low level, when it came to their perception of their external assets. Javier felt pressured and did not agree with his school's path for academic success while Carina spoke glowingly of how her school was superior to others in the area for their support. Javier also felt pressure from his mother, who he said pushed him unnecessarily to take advantage of the school's support and opportunities. Kali, on the other hand, had a strong network of support from her family and community members when it came to navigating the United States education system.

Internal assets were less predictive, as SLL participants at all achievement levels scored lower in those asset categories. At various points, there seemed to be disconnect between the survey responses and interview data. Carina claimed on the survey she had a hard time making friends, but during the interview, discussed how she is friends with most of her grade level. Additionally, having set goals and feeling in control of their future, two major points in "positive identity," did not provide clear patterns towards

success, as Javier and Carina each had plans, but are designated on different achievement tiers. Similarly, Kali and the other high achieving SLL did not claim to have direction in their life on the survey, but each were more successful academically than Javier and Carina. While the interview data did provide some clarity to why some SLL participants were identified as high achievers, the DAP survey results were not a predictive measure of success.

RQ3: How do the characteristics and contexts surrounding SLLs in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms differ from native speakers?

To examine the third research question, DAP survey results for native speaker (NS) participants was analyzed, first as a whole population and then in their achievement tiers. The analysis was then compared to the SLL participants as a whole and in their achievement tiers. Through both the DAP survey results and the interview data, some patterns were seen between NS participants and their SLL peers. NS participants tended to score higher on DAP asset categories than SLL peers. Additionally, a large discrepancy was noted among the internal asset categories, especially "social competencies" and "positive identity."

NS participants had more Developmental Assets than SLL participants. Analysis from Chapter Four already outlined this pattern. NS participants as a group had higher mean scores than their SLL participant peers in all but one asset category, "boundaries and expectations." This showed NS participants were surrounded by contexts more likely to lead to academic success than their SLL counterparts.

While there is more likelihood of academic success for individuals with access to a higher number of Developmental Assets (Benson, 2007; Scales, 2011), there was little

correlation between the DAP survey results and achievement tier designations. When DAP results were calculated and analyzed for NS participants, high achieving NS participants averaged 44.278 for their total DAP score, while low achieving NS participants averaged 42.375. Among this population, a low achieving participant with a cumulative GPA of 2.33 scored the second highest total DAP among all 46 participants, with a score of 56 out of a possible 60. On the other hand, a high achieving participant with a cumulative GPA of 4.0 scored the third lowest Total DAP among all 46 participants, with a score of 29. While these are extremes on either side of the range, looking at similar DAP scores within the range show little pattern for academic achievement.

When all 46 participants' total DAP scores were analyzed and ranked in order from highest to lowest, 10 high achiever participants had attained total DAP scores in the top half of the dataset while 10 high achiever participants were in the bottom half of the dataset. Eight low achiever participants were in the top half of the dataset while 10 low achiever participants were in the bottom half of the dataset. All three improving achiever participants were in the top half of the dataset while both declining achiever participants were in the bottom half of the dataset. The sequence shown in Table 5.3 shows the middle segment of the dataset, surrounding the median Total DAP of 43.75. As seen in table, there are three high achiever participants, four low achiever participants, and one improving achiever participant. Two participants in this segment of the dataset were missing achievement data. While this table does not represent statistical significance, it is emblematic of the analysis as a whole. Participants from each achievement tier are spread throughout the entire range of Total DAP scores.

Table 5.3

Sequence of Total DAP with Achievement Tier

Participant Total DAP	Participant Achievement Tier
46	Improving
45	Low
44	Missing
44	High
43.75	Low
43.75	Low
43.5	High
43	High
42.75	Missing
41.75	Low

Based on the DAP survey, there did not appear to be any culture-based differences in the responses of SLL participants compared to their NS participants. However, this is more a function of the questions in the DAP survey being universal, and not allowing for specific inquiry to cultural differences than no differences being present. For example, Kali's story as a newcomer SLL presented various characteristics and contexts not seen in any NS participant interviews. Many similarities were noticed between the two language proficiency subcases, such as the high amount of support from family for all participants. However, subtle differences, such as NS participants being

more likely to mention adults outside of their family as supportive or the lack of SLL participants with positive views on their future and their own actions, show there is further investigation needed in how SLL and NS participants access their Developmental Assets.

Other Findings

One final pattern, not relevant to the research questions, was discovered through analysis of the DAP survey data. Participants across all achievement tiers and both language proficiencies tended to score lowest in the asset category of "empowerment." When looking at all participants in the study, 25 of 46 participants scored lowest on "empowerment" when compared with the four external asset categories, and 14 of 46 scored lowest on "empowerment" compared to all eight asset categories, internal or external.

Additionally, it does not appear to be isolated with any achievement tier. Seven high achiever participants, six low achiever participants, and one improving achiever participants were identified as having the largest deficits in "empowerment." This suggests there could be a school-wide benefit to addressing this asset category explicitly.

Implications and Recommendations

The only statistically significant data derived from the analysis was the predictive nature of external and internal assets on each other. If a participant in the study scored high on their external assets, they were likely to score high on their internal assets, and vice versa. However, despite much of the analysis being deemed statistically insignificant, many patterns and themes emerged from the data collected which could

inform educators at the school site and areas with similar demographics. Additionally, these patterns and themes could provide a starting point for further investigation. Implications of the study, such as the effect of having a network of supportive adults and high structure environments, ways to increase internal assets and empowerment for all students, and the DAP survey as a predictive tool within this study, are all discussed below. The implications below are derived specifically from this sample and school environment, meaning they may only be relevant to the school site which hosted the study. However, these implications may be viewed as a starting pointing for other school sites and researchers looking for ways to ensure each student, regardless of their language proficiency and achievement level, are given access to assets proven to help them succeed.

Networks of Supportive Adults

Contrary to the findings in other DAP studies focused on positive youth development (Benson, 2007), the Central Texas community outlined in this study had a high level of support, as participants widely reported receiving support from familial relationships as well as community members, such as teachers. This is seen most easily when examining the two high achieving participants interviewed for the study.

A clear pattern in participant's data was the recognition of support from adults in their lives, regardless from where this was received. This support should act as a predictor of success (Benson, 2007), and in the cases of Kali, Emmett, and Carina, they appeared to directly benefit the network of support provided by adults in their lives. For other participants interviewed, there was distrust in the advice they received from the school or the adults in their lives. Javier outlined how he felt the plan he had for himself

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was a better path for success than those proposed by his mother and the school. Maria felt supported by many adults in her life, including her mother and aunts. However, she expressed similar sentiments regarding the advice she received from some of these adults, calling it "Sesame Street"-like advice. In both cases, despite having access to supportive adults, there was not a belief in the established processes their network of support advocated for.

The school site, community, and families should continue to provide a network of support for all students but trying to instill more buy-in from the students who have not traditionally been successful (Scales, 2011). While there is no one way to achieve this goal, enacting a mentorship program at the school to target low achieving students have been shown to lead to positive youth development in other communities, and may provide a solution at this school site (Benson, 2003).

High Structure Environments

Many of the participants scored well in the "boundaries and expectations" asset category, suggesting SLL and NS participants each recognized the ways in which rules and expectations in their lives were positive. The school site employed a highly structured, research-based behavior management program, and it appeared this led to success for the participants of the study. Interviewed participants, such as Carina, referenced how they wanted to change some of the rules, such as the need for uniforms. However, when asked, they believed their school was a positive part of their upbringing. Jon and Javier each referenced how other schools offered more sports, which enticed them, but they saw the structure provided by the school site as something they would not find elsewhere.

The school site, families, and community should continue to provide high structure for their youth in order to encourage success (Benson, 2007; Scales, 2011). Specifically, it appeared accountability was the most important factor in that category. By holding students accountable, the school site, families, and communities involved will be able to enact more effective structure, leading to more successful outcomes for their youth.

Increasing Internal Assets and Empowerment

In many areas where the DAP survey has been used, there has been a variance between external and internal asset attainment (Scales, 2011). In communities where the Developmental Asset framework has been utilized, there is often a call for "asset-building" after finding deficits among their population (Benson, 2007; Scales, 2011). While asset-building may take various shapes to address the specific needs of the population, utilizing a positive youth development perspective has addressed this concern in other communities (Lerner & Benson, 2003). The school site that hosted the study reported higher external assets than internal assets. Additionally, there were generally low scores, relative to the participant, on the external asset category of "empowerment."

One potential remedy, which may be adopted by the school site and community to help develop internal assets, is explicitly teaching the philosophy that youth actions are meaningful (Lerner & Benson, 2003). While this also touches on the concept of "empowerment," areas that have directly taught this philosophy have helped build the internal assets of their youth. This philosophy encourages youth to adopt "positive values," as they see direct correlation between their beliefs, actions, and their effect on

their community. It also helps with "positive identity," as it builds self-esteem and efficacy that actions can lead to positive change.

As mentioned, implementing a positive youth development curriculum may increase "empowerment," as well. However, a more explicit social studies curriculum provided to students could address the issue of "empowerment" more directly. By incorporating Critical Multicultural Civic Education (CMCE), the school site could provide benefits to both SLL and NS students at the site (Salinas, Rodriguez, & Epstein, 2016). Through this curriculum, educators at the site could make students aware of the structures of society, and through critical conversations and analysis of those structures, students from the diverse backgrounds that made up the school site would be able to build confidence in their ability to enact change (Salinas, Rodriguez, & Epstein, 2016). Additionally, the discourse between SLL and NS participants would allow for more cultural diffusion of differences in their experiences that may not be apparent without learning more about one another (Obenchain & Callahan, 2015). Additionally, this curriculum could help build the assets of the youth who encounter it in their social studies classroom, taking those lessons with them to their families and community.

SLL Participants and Access to Developmental Assets

Building on the implication above, there appeared to be a lack of asset building among the SLL population at the middle school. The DAP survey scores are based on the perception of the respondent, not an absolute measure (Benson, 2007; Lerner & Benson, 2003; Scales, 2011). Therefore, it is not always accurate to compare absolute DAP scores. Additionally, youth in Communities of Color have a separate experience than their peers in Power Cultures, even when they share many community spaces (Yosso,

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2005). However, the DAP survey has been used in linguistically diverse communities (Scales, 2011), meaning these findings are worth investigation.

While the recommended actions above, in which the school site enacts specific curriculum to promote asset-building (Lerner & Benson, 2003) or CMCE (Salinas, Rodriguez, & Epstein, 2016), would help SLL populations specifically, it may be unrealistic to focus these resources specifically on a small population within the school. However, enacting these curriculum in addition to research-based strategies for teaching SLL in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms may allow for higher retention of those assets and the curricula's intended purpose. Whether through an elective class or their social studies curriculum, implementing CMCE at the school site could help build up the SLL population's assets.

Developmental Assets as a Predictor of Success

The final implication from this study is the result that the DAP survey did not act as a predictor of success. While it has been widely utilized and been shown to predict successful outcomes in other communities (Benson, 2007; Lerner & Benson, 2003; Scales, 2011), it did not appear to act in that way at this school site. This result may have been affected by the lack of reliability within the population and results. With such a small sample, especially of SLL participants, it was not possible to make the findings generalizable.

Therefore, it is not possible based on the results of this study to conclude the Developmental Assets are not effective predictors of success. However, should the school site decide to replicate this study, ensuring the sample size is as high as possible would make the research design better and the results more conclusive. It would also be

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beneficial to the design of the study to include additional questions, specific to the community. Precedent for this is seen in school districts which have implemented PYD curriculum in association with the results of DAP surveys being analyzed, and have added local, specific "assets" to their own frameworks.

Additionally, it is possible the Academic Engagement and Performance framework (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008) utilized in this study was not the best match for the Developmental Asset framework. The Developmental Assets framework has been used to predict various education and health-related outcomes for youth, such as graduation rates (Benson, 2007). However, looking at grade level achievement data, such as cumulative grades, may be too specific for analysis with the Developmental Assets.

Limitations

While the research study has been completed, there are plenty of limitations and recommendations if a similar study is to be conducted in the future. Most of the considerations below focus on data collection, as the researcher failed at multiple points to gather data that would have addressed the research questions further. Considerations for how to make the study more robust are also included.

Researcher bias was a potential limitation throughout the study. Because the researcher was familiar with the participants and their school environment, the data analysis could have been potentially skewed. Although names were removed from data throughout the analysis, it may have still affected the findings. Additionally, having the researcher as an educator on the site may have affected the responses of participants on their DAP survey as well as the interview. While participants were reminded of the

anonymous nature of their responses on the DAP survey and the use of aliases in the interview data to ensure privacy for the participants, there may have still been pressure on the participants to provide answers they believed to be correct.

When the survey was distributed, there was no indication of which participants may be SLL, which meant every participant took the survey in English. In a future research design, a data request could be made for all participants to identify any potential SLL participants, and offer the survey in their home languages. This would ensure the survey is comprehensible to all participants and add a protection against results being skewed from a lack of understanding from participants.

During the post-survey phase of the study, interviews were conducted with a randomly selected participant from each language proficiency in each achievement tier. The design called for a comparative approach, and in order to complete the comparative analysis, participants from various subgroups was required. However, one major oversight came in only interviewing one highly successful SLL participant. While only interviewing one provided equitable representation in regards to comparison, two of the three research questions specifically call for understanding further about highly successful SLL participants. Therefore, in gathering additional data specific to this subgroup of the sample would have provided further insight. This is especially true because the two highly successful SLL participants in the sample had drastically different quantitative results. Not requesting and conducting an interview with that participant was an avoidable error.

Furthermore, the interview protocol was created based on the Developmental Assets framework (Search Institute, 2016). This protocol was not modified greatly

between NS participants and SLL participants as a means of providing more equitable data points for analysis. However, this was inappropriate, as it did not allow for cultural or linguistic differences experienced by SLL participants to be gleaned in the interviews. For instance, the additional educational support specific to SLL participants or their beliefs in the role of language in their life could not be examined or considered. Future research should include considerations for the differences in the target populations or subcases.

An additional place where more data could have been collected was in the form of parent or family interviews (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2003). While the study provided powerful insight of learners through the eyes of learners, there was little protection against respondents embellishing or providing misinformation intentionally or unintentionally. Respondents may provide information in study in order to give responses they believe are "correct" or aligned with their perceived direction of the study (Creswell, 2013). By interviewing parents and families, information provided by the students could have been verified or confirmed. Additionally, a new and often underrepresented perspective could have filled the portraits, allowing for richer data collection and analysis (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2003). One argument against the inclusion of parents or family interviews was the idea these stakeholders would be subject to the same forces that affected their participants' responses. However, upon further reflection, including more interviews in the data collection would have provided for an unrepresented perspective on the case study to be analyzed.

Finally, the study was the researcher's first foray into educational research on a school site, and realties and obstacles of conducting research on a school site were

revealed. Most notably, the researcher or district personnel having responsibilities outside of the research study delayed or limited data collection at various points. This included a request for TELPAS data on SLL participants. These other responsibilities were often overlooked in the research design, and despite the support found within the district administration, the research design was created with an overly ambitious time period in mind. One way to avoid this would have to be more thoughtful of the specific site in the timing of the study.

Concluding Remarks

At its essence, the purpose of the research was to find the characteristics and contexts that help make SLL successful in heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms. Through an examination of the Developmental Assets framework (Lerner & Benson, 2003) in conjunction with the Academic Engagement and Performance framework (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008), the study was able to help identify some of the reasons highly successful SLL participants experienced academic success. Additionally, patterns among the SLL population and the entire sample provided a road map for the researcher and the school site to highlight places the student body of the middle school thrives while addressing deficits in their contexts and characteristics.

A relevant pattern found in the analysis was the importance of supportive adults and high structure environments for students at the middle school. The school site and community where the middle school was situated was encouraged to enact mentorship programs and continue to hold students accountable to high expectations. An additional discovery was the difference in asset attainment between SLL and NS participants, as NS

participants generally held more assets than their SLL peers. Another pattern revealed showed most participants had more external assets than internal assets. Finally, the asset category of "empowerment" was identified as an area many participants lacked. In the case of these patterns, enacting asset-building curriculum, such as positive youth development curriculum (Lerner & Benson, 2003) or CMCE (Salinas, Rodriguez, & Epstein, 2016) was suggested. Unrelated to the research questions, it was also identified that the DAP survey did not act as a predictor of success. Utilizing a different measure for success or recruiting a larger sample would allow for this to be tested in the future.

As education continues to evolve in the 21st century and beyond, heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms with SLL populations will be the reality for teachers across the United States (Misco & Castañeda, 2009). While teachers in regions with traditionally high immigrant and SLL populations have already adjusted policy and teacher education to serve their diverse student populations (Jiménez-Castellanos & García, 2017), it is important for research to continue to focus on the characteristics and contexts which allow SLL populations to thrive in their classrooms. Teachers have an opportunity to reach the SLL students present in their classrooms through research-based instructional models and strategies, and in turn, SLL populations have much to offer to the heterogeneous language proficiency classrooms they are found in through academic discourse and their valuable perspectives. By finding ways for SLL populations to be successful in their academic ventures, educators are providing an opportunity for their communities to flourish and develop.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) Survey

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

By filling in the information below and on subsequent pages, you agree to participate in the research study. Participating allows the researcher access to your school records, including demographic information and grade information. Remember, your information will be paired with your responses to this survey, and be assigned a random code number, making the information anonymous.

If you wish to participate, please fill in the information below, and continue the survey. If you wish to withdraw from the survey, you may close your browser - no information will be collected.

What is your first name?

What is your last name?

Survey Powered By Qualtrics

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(Page 1)

This survey will only take about 10-15 minutes.

Below is a list of positive things that you might have in *yourself, your family, friends, neighborhood, school, and community*. For each item that describes you **now or within the past three months,** check if the item is true:
Not At All or Rarely - Somewhat or Sometimes - Very or Often - Extremely or Almost Always

If you do not want to answer an item, leave it blank. But please try to answer all items as best you can.

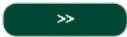|	Not At All or Rarely	Somewhat or Sometimes	Very or Often	Extremely or Almost Always
I stand up for what I believe in.	○	○	○	○
I feel in control of my life and future.	○	○	○	○
I feel good about myself.	○	○	○	○
I avoid things that are dangerous or unhealthy.	○	○	○	○
I enjoy reading or being read to.	○	○	○	○
I build friendships with other people.	○	○	○	○
I care about school.	○	○	○	○
I do my homework.	○	○	○	○
I stay away from tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.	○	○	○	○
I enjoy learning.	○	○	○	○

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Below is a list of positive things that you might have in *yourself, your family, friends, neighborhood, school, and community*. For each item that describes you **now or within the past three months,** check if the item is true:
Not At All or Rarely - Somewhat or Sometimes - Very or Often - Extremely or Almost Always

If you do not want to answer an item, leave it blank. But please try to answer all items as best you can.

	Not At All or Rarely	Somewhat or Sometimes	Very or Often	Extremely or Almost Always
I express my feelings in proper ways.	○	○	○	○
I feel good about my future.	○	○	○	○
I seek advice from my parents.	○	○	○	○
I deal with frustration in positive ways.	○	○	○	○
I overcome challenges in positive ways.	○	○	○	○
I think it is important to help other people.	○	○	○	○
I feel safe and secure at home.	○	○	○	○
I plan ahead and make good choices.	○	○	○	○
I resist bad influences.	○	○	○	○
I resolve conflicts without anyone getting hurt.	○	○	○	○

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Below is a list of positive things that you might have in *yourself, your family, friends, neighborhood, school, and community.* For each item that describes you **now or within the past three months,** check if the item is true:
Not At All or Rarely - Somewhat or Sometimes - Very or Often - Extremely or Almost Always

If you do not want to answer an item, leave it blank. But please try to answer all items as best you can.

	Not At All or Rarely	Somewhat or Sometimes	Very or Often	Extremely or Almost Always
I feel valued and appreciated for what I do.	○	○	○	○
I take responsibility for what I do.	○	○	○	○
I tell the truth even when it is not easy.	○	○	○	○
I accept people who are different from me.	○	○	○	○
I feel safe at school.	○	○	○	○
I am actively engaged in learning new things.	○	○	○	○
I am developing a sense of purpose in my life.	○	○	○	○
I am encouraged to try things that might be good for me.	○	○	○	○
I am included in family tasks and discussions.	○	○	○	○
I am helping make my community a better place.	○	○	○	○

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Below is a list of positive things that you might have in *yourself, your family, friends, neighborhood, school, and community*. For each item that describes you **now or within the past three months,** check if the item is true:
Not At All or Rarely - Somewhat or Sometimes - Very or Often - Extremely or Almost Always

If you do not want to answer an item, leave it blank. But please try to answer all items as best you can.

	Not At All or Rarely	Somewhat or Sometimes	Very or Often	Extremely or Almost Always
I am involved in a religious group or activity.	○	○	○	○
I am developing good health habits.	○	○	○	○
I am encouraged to help others.	○	○	○	○
I am involved in a sport, club, or other group.	○	○	○	○
I am trying to help solve social problems.	○	○	○	○
I am given useful roles and responsibilities.	○	○	○	○
I am developing respect for other people.	○	○	○	○
I am eager to do well in school and other activities.	○	○	○	○
I am sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.	○	○	○	○
I am involved in creative things such as music, theater, or art.	○	○	○	○

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Below is a list of positive things that you might have in *yourself, your family, friends, neighborhood, school, and community.* For each item that describes you **now or within the past three months,** check if the item is true:
Not At All or Rarely - Somewhat or Sometimes - Very or Often - Extremely or Almost Always

If you do not want to answer an item, leave it blank. But please try to answer all items as best you can.

	Not At All or Rarely	Somewhat or Sometimes	Very or Often	Extremely or Almost Always
I am serving others in my community.	○	○	○	○
I am spending quality time at home with my parent(s).	○	○	○	○
I have friends who set good examples for me.	○	○	○	○
I have a school that gives students clear rules.	○	○	○	○
I have adults who are good role models for me.	○	○	○	○
I have a safe neighborhood.	○	○	○	○
I have parent(s) who try to help me succeed.	○	○	○	○
I have good neighbors who care about me.	○	○	○	○
I have a school that cares about kids and encourages them.	○	○	○	○
I have teachers who urge me to develop and achieve.	○	○	○	○

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Below is a list of positive things that you might have in *yourself, your family, friends, neighborhood, school, and community*. For each item that describes you **now or within the past three months,** check if the item is true:
Not At All or Rarely - Somewhat or Sometimes - Very or Often - Extremely or Almost Always

If you do not want to answer an item, leave it blank. But please try to answer all items as best you can.

	Not At All or Rarely	Somewhat or Sometimes	Very or Often	Extremely or Almost Always
I have support from adults other than my parents.	○	○	○	○
I have a family that provides me with clear rules.	○	○	○	○
I have parent(s) who urge me to do well in school.	○	○	○	○
I have a family that gives me love and support.	○	○	○	○
I have neighbors who help watch out for me.	○	○	○	○
I have parent(s) who are good at talking with me about things.	○	○	○	○
I have a school that enforces rules fairly.	○	○	○	○
I have a family that knows where I am and what I am doing.	○	○	○	○

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BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

Thank you for completing the survey. Once again, the responses you gave will remain confidential and anonymous. If you are randomly selected for the study, your information will appear under an alias, meaning no one will be able to match the information to you except for you and the researcher.

If you have any questions or would like a copy of the consent form you agreed to at the beginning of the survey, e-mail the researcher at cameron_dexter_torti@baylor.edu.

Once again, thank you very much.

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BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.
Your response has been recorded.

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APPENDIX B

Parent Consent Form

Baylor University
School of Education, Department of Curriculum & Instruction

Parent/Guardian Consent Form for Research

PROTOCOL TITLE:	Characteristics and Contexts of Highly Successful Learners in Heterogeneous Language Proficiency Classrooms
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:	Cameron Dexter Torti
SUPPORTED BY:	Baylor University

Purpose of the research: The purpose of this study is to see how students in the Waco, TX, community interact with various parts of their community. Your student is a student at Rapoport Academy Public Schools in Waco, TX, which has led to them being invited to participate in the study.

Study activities: If you allow your child to be in the study:
- They will complete an online survey (10-15 minutes)
- They may be randomly selected and asked to participate in a short interview with the principal investigator about their experiences at school and in their community – this interview may be recorded, but you may choose for them not to participate or have the interview recorded

We will also want to interview you as a part of the study, but you may choose to not be interviewed. Your child will still be able to participate in the study.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. By agreeing to have your child participate in this study, you agree to have the following education records conveyed to the researcher:
- Your student's demographic information, including race/ethnicity, languages spoken, and parent information, such as education level and languages spoken by parents
- Your student's semester grades in coursework at Rapoport Academy Public Schools and other secondary education settings
- Your student's STAAR, or equivalent standardized test scores for all subjects

Risks and Benefits: To the best of our knowledge, there are no risks to your child for taking part in this study. If at any part of the study you feel uncomfortable, or wish to have your child not participate in a certain part (i.e. online survey or interview), you are free to stop their participation in the study.

As part of this research, you will not be told about some of the study details. If you were told these details at the beginning of the study, it could change the research results. If you decide to be part of the study, you will be given an explanation of what information was withheld from you at the end of your study participation.

You may or may not benefit from taking part in this study. Possible benefits include learning more about your child and the things that help make them a successful student. Others may benefit in the future from the information that is learned in this study.

Confidentiality: A risk of taking part in this study is the possibility of a loss of confidentiality. Loss of confidentiality includes having your child's personal information shared with someone who is not on the

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study team and was not supposed to see or know about your child's information. The researcher plans to protect your child's confidentiality.

Confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. Your child's participation in this online survey involves risks similar to a person's everyday use of the Internet, which could include illegal interception of the data by another party. **If you are concerned about their data security, your child may take the online survey in a printed format.**

We will keep the records of this study confidential by keeping the information secured on a password-protected online database. We will make every effort to keep your child's records confidential. However, there are times when federal or state law requires the disclosure of your child's records. Authorized staff of Baylor University may review the study records for purposes such as quality control or safety.

If, during your participation in this study, we have reasonable cause to believe that child abuse is occurring, this will be reported to authorities as required by law. The researcher will make every reasonable effort to protect the confidentiality of your research information. However, it might be possible that a civil or criminal court will demand the release of identifiable research information.

Compensation: Your child will not be paid for taking part in this study.

Questions or concerns about this research study: You can call us with any concerns or questions about the research. Our telephone numbers are listed below:
- **Cameron Dexter Torti – 805-807-6721 – cameron_dexter_torti@baylor.edu**
- **Brooke Blevins, Ph.D. – 254-710-4581 – brooke_blevins@baylor.edu**

If you want to speak with someone not directly involved in this research study, you may contact the Baylor University IRB through the Office of the Vice Provost for Research at 254-710-1438. You can talk to them about:
- Your rights as a research subject
- Your concerns about the research
- A complaint about the research

Taking part in this study is your choice. You are free not to take part or to stop your child's participation at any time for any reason. No matter what you decide, there will be no penalty or loss of benefit to which your child is entitled. If you decide to withdraw from this study, the information that your child has already provided will be kept confidential. Information already collected cannot be deleted.

Statement of Consent: If you want your child to be in the study, write their name and sign below.

_____   _____
Student Name   Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

_____   _____
Signature of Parent/Guardian   Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent: I have explained the research to the subject and answered all his/her questions. I will give a copy of the signed consent form to the subject and his/her parent/guardian.

_____   _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent   Date

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APPENDIX C

Student Consent Form

BAYLOR
UNIVERSITY

Baylor University
Curriculum & Instruction

Consent Form for Research

PROTOCOL TITLE: Characteristics and Conditions Surrounding Successful
Learners in Heterogeneous Language Proficiency
Classrooms

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Cameron Dexter Torti

SUPPORTED BY: Baylor University

Purpose of the research: The purpose of this study is to look at the way students in your
community interact with various parts of their community. We are asking you to take part in
this study because you are a student at Rapoport Academy Public Schools.

Study activities: If you choose to be in the study:
- You will complete an online questionnaire about external and internal resources you
  encounter in your day-to-day life.
- Your responses will be matched to your school data, including your demographics and
  grades, and your responses will be assigned a code number to ensure anonymity.
- You may be randomly selected to participate in an interview – you will have the
  opportunity to accept or decline the invitation at that time.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a
Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. By agreeing to participate in
this study, you agree to have the following education records conveyed to the researcher:
- Your demographic information, including race/ethnicity, languages spoken, and parent
  information, such as education level and languages spoken by parents
- Your semester grades in coursework at Rapoport Academy Public Schools and other
  secondary education settings
- Your STAAR, or equivalent standardized test scores for all subjects

Risks, Benefits, and Compensation:
To the best of our knowledge, there are no risks to you for taking part in this study. However, if
you feel emotional or upset when answering some of the questions, you do not have to answer
any questions that make you feel uncomfortable.

There are no benefits to you from taking part in this research. Your grade in class will not be
affected by your decision to participate or not participate. You will not be paid for participating
in the study.

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Confidentiality:
A risk of taking part in this study is the possibility of a loss of confidentiality. Loss of confidentiality includes having your personal information shared with someone who is not on the study team and was not supposed to see or know about your information. The researcher plans to protect your confidentiality.

Confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. Your participation in this online survey involves risks similar to a person's everyday use of the Internet, which could include illegal interception of the data by another party. If you are concerned about your data security, you should not participate in this research.

We will keep the records of this study confidential on a password-protected online database. We will make every effort to keep your records confidential. However, there are times when federal or state law requires the disclosure of your records.

Authorized staff of Baylor University may review the study records for purposes such as quality control or safety.

If, during your participation in this study, we have reasonable cause to believe that child abuse is occurring, this will be reported to authorities as required by law. The researcher will make every reasonable effort to protect the confidentiality of your research information. However, it might be possible that a civil or criminal court will demand the release of identifiable research information.

Questions or concerns about this research study
You can call us with any concerns or questions about the research. Our telephone numbers are listed below:
- Cameron Dexter Torti (Principal Investigator) – 805-807-6721; cameron_dexter_torti@baylor.edu (M-F 9-5pm)
- Brooke Blevins (Faculty Advisor) – 254-710-4581; brooke_blevins@baylor.edu (M-F 9-5 pm)

If you want to speak with someone not directly involved in this research study, you may contact the Baylor University IRB through the Office of the Vice Provost for Research at 254-710-1438. You can talk to them about:
- Your rights as a research subject
- Your concerns about the research
- A complaint about the research

Taking part in this study is your choice. You are free not to take part or to stop at any time for any reason. No matter what you decide, there will be no penalty or loss of benefit to which you are entitled. If you decide to withdraw from this study, the information that you have already provided will be kept confidential. Information already collected about you cannot be deleted.

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If you choose to participate, remember, you may change your mind at any time, including during or after you complete the questionnaire.

By continuing the questionnaire, you give consent to participate in the study.

If you wish to not participate at this time, please close your browser. No data will be collected.

Survey Powered By Qualtrics

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APPENDIX D

Semi-structured Student Interview Protocol

Thank you so much for your time. Before we get started, I want to make sure you are comfortable with me recording your voice for this interview. This will help me in two ways; I will be able to focus on listening to your answers during the interview instead of writing down everything you say, and I will be able to go back to listen to your answers later. Are you comfortable with me recording this interview? (If student agrees, recording begins with the student's code for research data purposes as well as their affirmation – if the student does not agree, no recording is made) Also, as a reminder, you do not have to answer any questions you don't want to, and you can request we stop the recording or the interview at any time.

Question 1: Before we get to my questions, do you have any questions for me?

Question 2: Based on your survey results, it appears you receive support from your family and other adults in your life. What does that look like? (Follow-up questions based on response)

Question 3: Do you feel like you are able to make a difference in your community or school setting? (Follow-up questions based on response)

Question 4: Tell me about what you do after school – what do you like to do? Do you hang out with friends? What is a typical evening like for you? (Follow-up questions based on response)

Question 5: What do you do outside of school time when you have free time? What are some of the activities that fill your days outside of school hours? (Follow-up questions based on response)

Question 6: Please remember that, although I am a teacher here, your response to the next set of questions or any information you provide has no effect on me. Additionally, your name will not be published or paired with this response. How do you feel about school? (Follow-up questions based on response)

Question 7: Who are some of the other adults you interact with at school and away from school? How have they affected you?

Question 8: We only have a few more questions. How would you describe your view on your future? Do you have specific plans or a direction you are trying to go? (Follow-up questions based on response)

Question 9: Before we stop the interview, did you have any additional comments or questions for me?

Thank you so much for your time. This concludes the interview.

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