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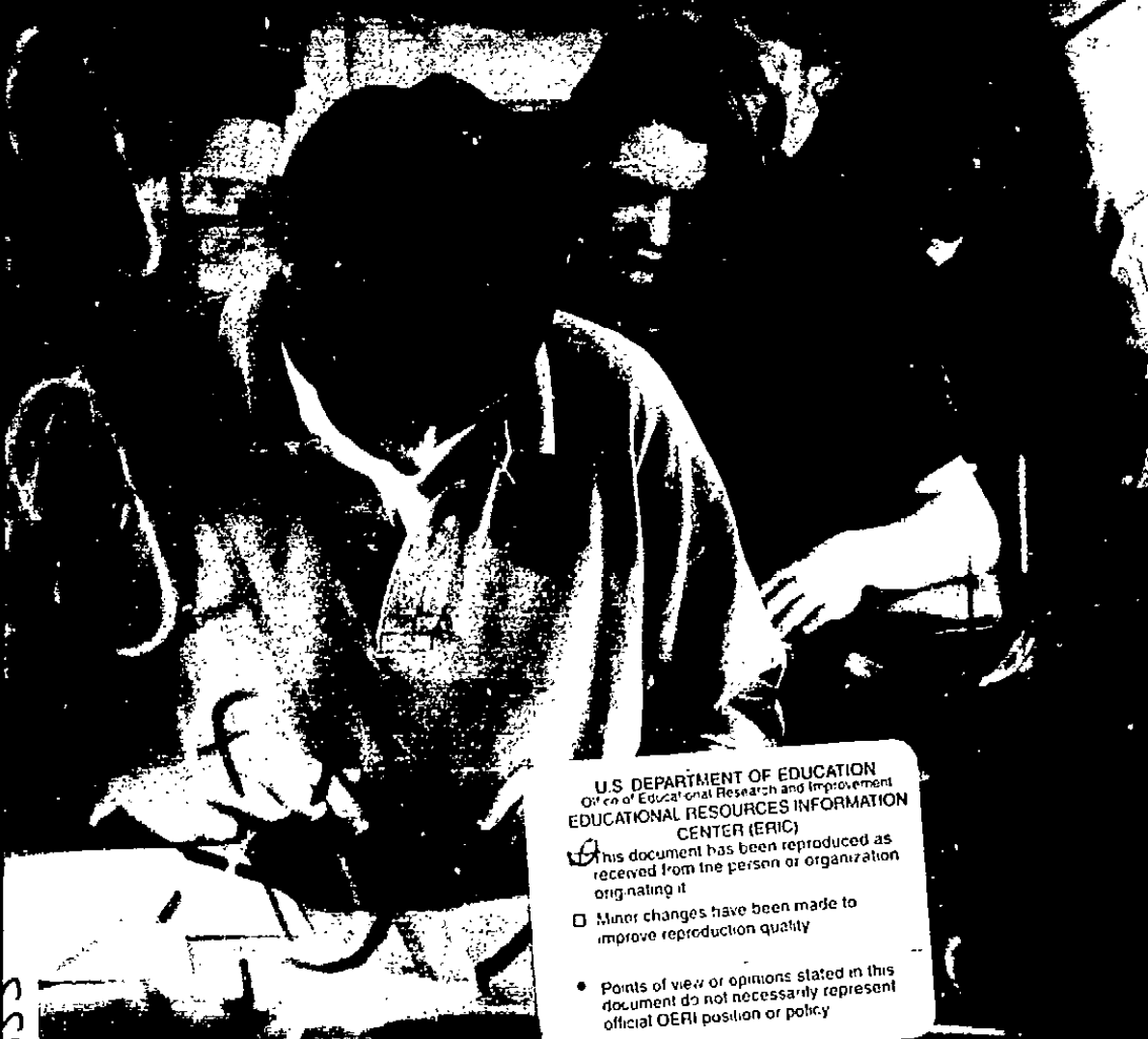IDENTIFIERS   Salvadoreans

ABSTRACT

         This book provides teachers and program administrators with
information and guidelines to develop effective school programs for immigrant
students with limited prior schooling. The limited information about these
students is summarized, with in-depth information about the lives,
backgrounds, aspirations, educational experiences, and needs of five such
students, aged 13-20 years, from Haiti, El Salvador, and Vietnam. Four
programs from three states are profiled, featuring the innovative structures
and instructional strategies designed to meet the needs of this population
and providing program contact information and lists of materials available
from each program. The critical features of effective secondary school
programs are summarized, and areas in which further research is needed are
discussed. (Contains 71 references.) (MSE)

Through the Golden Door

Educational Approaches for Immigrant Adolescents With Limited Schooling

by Betty J. Mace-Matluck, Rosalind Alexander-Kasparik,
and Robin M. Queen

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Through
the Golden Door

Educational Approaches for Immigrant Adolescents With Limited Schooling

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Rosalind Alexander-Kasparik
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Topics in Immigrant Education Series

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Into, Through, and Beyond Secondary School:
Critical Transitions for Immigrant Youths
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Professional Development for Teachers of Immigrant Youth
by Josué M. González & Linda Darling-Hammond
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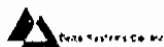Educational Approaches for Immigrant Adolescents With Limited
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Access and Engagement:
Program Design and Instructional Approaches for Immigrant
Students in Secondary School
by Aída Walqui
ISBN 1-887744-09-6

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After a hiatus of half a century, a wave of immigration is once again transforming the United States. With over a million immigrants, legal and illegal, entering the United States each year, the foreign born constitute the fastest-growing segment of our population, reaching 24.5 million in 1996, roughly 10% of the population, the highest proportion since World War II (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1997).

Even more striking than the scale of immigration is its makeup. Since the passage of the Immigration Act of 1965, which eliminated national origin quotas, Asia and Latin America have replaced Europe as the main sources of newcomers to the United States. The largest groups come from Mexico (accounting for 27.2% of the 1996 foreign-born population), China, Cuba, India, and Vietnam.

New immigrants to the United States come with diverse languages, cultures, and experiences, even within these larger groups. Asian immigrants, for example, include people from more than 13 countries in South, Southeast, and East Asia as well as the Pacific Islands. A single nationality can include several ethnic groups, each with a distinctive language and culture. A Laotian immigrant might be an ethnic Lao or a member of the Hmong, Mien, or Khmu ethnic minorities. An Asian Indian immigrant might be a Punjabi-speaking Sikh, a Bengali-speaking Hindu, or an Urdu-speaking Moslem.

While the great majority of Latin American immigrants share a common language, and to some extent a common culture, this group also displays a great diversity that is due to the various ancestries—European, African, and Native American—and nations represented. Recent Latin American immigrants have arrived chiefly from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras. Caribbeans, arriving in smaller numbers, come mostly from Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, and Cuba.

Today's immigrants also vary in their social and educational backgrounds and personal experiences. They come from the elite as well as the most disadvantaged sectors of their societies. Some left to escape

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poverty; others were fleeing war or political persecution; others were attracted by the hope for better educational and economic opportunities. Some came directly to the United States; others arrived after harrowing escapes followed by years in refugee camps.

Immigrant Students in America's Schools

While immigration has affected all aspects of American life, nowhere is the changing demography of the United States more keenly felt than in education. First- and second-generation immigrant children are the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. population under age 15 (Fix & Zimmerman, 1993). The 1990 U.S. Census counted 2.1 million foreign-born children in the United States. If children born in the United States to immigrant parents are included, the total is 5 million. By 2010, if current trends continue, 9 million school-age children will be immigrants or children of immigrants, representing 22% of the school-age population (Fix & Passel, 1994).

With over 90% of recent immigrants coming from non-English-speaking countries, schools are increasingly receiving students who do not speak English at home and who have little or no proficiency in English. There has been an increase of almost 1 million English learners in U.S. public schools (grades K-12) in the last 10 years, approximately 5.5% of the public school student population (Fleischman & Hopstock, 1993). It is difficult to determine the number who are considered limited English proficient (LEP, the term used by the federal government and most states) because states determine numbers of LEP students in different ways (Gándara, 1994). However, according to the 1993-94 Schools and Staffing Survey (National Center for Education Statistics, 1996b, 1997), over 2.1 million public school students in the United States are identified as LEP. They account for 5% of all public school students and 31% of all American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic students enrolled in public schools. The largest proportion of this population (over 79%) are native Spanish speakers (see Goldenberg, 1996). California has been particularly affected. The number of students classified as LEP in the state's public schools more

than tripled from nearly 400,000 in 1981 to nearly 1.3 million in 1995 (California Department of Education, 1995). These students were reported to speak one or more of 54 different primary languages.

Along with an increase in sheer numbers of immigrant students who are at various stages of learning English, schools are also faced with an increasing number of students needing extra academic instruction in addition to English as a second language (ESL) classes. Approximately 20% of all English language learners at the high school level and 12% at the middle school level have missed two or more years of schooling since the age of six; 27% in high school and 19% in middle school are assigned to grades at least two years lower than age/grade norms (Fleischman & Hopstock, 1993).

Because newcomers to this country tend to concentrate in certain areas, the responsibility for educating immigrant students is not evenly shared across the country. According to the 1993-94 Schools and Staffing Survey, 82% of the LEP students in K-12 public schools live in only five states—California, Texas, New York, Florida, and Illinois; more than 40% are in California. Dade County, Florida, is an example of a school system struggling to serve a sudden, relatively recent influx of immigrants. Approximately a quarter of the 330,000 students in Dade County, Florida, in Fall 1996 were born outside the United States (Schnaiberg, 1996), and the county adds an average of 1,322 foreign-born students a month to its rolls. At the same time, employment opportunities draw immigrants to smaller cities and even rural areas as well, creating new challenges for schools in those areas.

An increasingly diverse student population is entering U.S. schools at the same time as a record number of students in general (the *baby boom echo*, a term used by demographers referring to children of the original baby boomers) are entering school. In the fall of 1996, over 51 million children entered school, a new national record (U.S. Department of Education, 1996). The Department of Education predicts that numbers of students enrolled in school will not level off until 2006, when they reach 54.6 million, almost 3 million more than in 1996. The

greatest increase over the next decade will be in high school enroll-
ments, projected to increase by 15%. Thus, schools already struggling
with the influx of immigrant students are also facing the strains of high
overall enrollments.

Understanding the Immigrant Student Population

In this series, the term *immigrant* includes those students (including
refugees) born outside the United States, but not those born and raised
in non-English speaking homes within the United States. Within this
group, the focus is on English language learners who are in ESL or bi-
lingual classes, those who no longer have access to ESL or bilingual
services but are having trouble in academic classes taught in English,
and those who are literate in their native language as well as those who
are not. Because the series focuses on students for whom secondary
school is a reasonable placement, students' ages range from 9 to 21
years.

U.S.-born secondary school students enter school at age 5 or 6 and, if
they remain in school, follow a fairly predictable sequence of
coursework. Educators can, therefore, assume certain experiences and
knowledge among those students. However, no such assumptions can
be made about adolescent immigrant students' educational back-
grounds and readiness for secondary schooling in the United States.
Immigrant students arrive at all ages. They may have had an educa-
tional preparation superior to that provided by most U.S. schools, or
they may have had no previous educational experience at all. Thus,
different educational approaches are called for with these students—
for example, a 15-year-old who immigrated from Mexico at age 13
with a strong educational background, one who immigrated at age 13
with only two years of prior schooling, and one who immigrated at age
7 and entered school immediately.

Many additional factors can affect immigrant students' adjustment to
U.S. schooling and their success in the transition from adolescence to
adulthood. These include individual and family characteristics, the

similarities and differences between their native countries and cultures and the United States, their immigration experiences, and the contexts in which they live in the United States. (See Tamara Lucas's volume in this series, pages 18, 19, 114, and 115, for more extensive discussion.) Knowledge of these factors can form the foundation upon which educators build programs and approaches that will assist these students in making their way through school and on to postsecondary school or work.

Facing the Challenges

The demographic realities described above are cause for serious concern, and many educators believe that the education system in the United States is poorly prepared to meet the needs of its linguistically and culturally diverse student population. Gándara (1994) claims that English language learners were sidelined in the first wave of reform efforts during the 1980s, and a report by the Stanford Working Group (1993) calls the nation's school systems to task for failing to provide these students with equitable educational opportunities. Moss and Puma (1995) found that English language learners receive lower grades and are judged by their teachers to have lower academic abilities than native-born students, and they score below their native-English-speaking classmates on standardized tests of reading and math.

The challenges of educating immigrant students and English language learners are especially acute at the secondary school level. As Chips (1993) argues, immigrant students of secondary school age can face major difficulties in acquiring English and succeeding in school. If they are newcomers to the United States, they have much less time than elementary age students to learn English and master the academic content required to graduate from high school. They must pass tests that require English skills that they do not have. They must study subjects such as physical science, chemistry, economics, and geometry that require high levels of English academic language. Most secondary school texts and materials require a high level of English reading ability. Few schools provide native-language support for these classes, English-lan-

guage instruction tied to content, or content classes taught with adaptations of English appropriate for these students' levels of proficiency. Students learning English often find it difficult to be accepted in well-established groups of English-speaking students. Finally, students who hope to attend college or university after high school face even greater challenges, as they attempt to succeed in classes designated for college credit and to master the maze of requirements for college acceptance.

High dropout rates among language-minority secondary school students are just one indication that many schools are failing to meet the challenge. For example, Hispanic students are more likely than White students to leave school during their high school years (10% versus 4%; National Center for Education Statistics, 1996a). In 1994, the number of Hispanic students aged 16–24 who had not completed high school and were not enrolled was 30%, as compared to 8% for White students (Lockwood, 1996). Certain subgroups of Asian refugee populations also have high dropout rates; a study of dropout rates in California schools found that those schools with high concentrations of Southeast Asians had the highest dropout rates (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1992).

A number of factors underlie the failure of secondary schools to serve the needs of immigrant students. These include

- a school structure that does not facilitate smooth transitions from program to program, school to school, or school to college or work;
- an instructional program that fails to give English language learners access to academic concepts and skills;
- few program and curricular alternatives for students with limited prior schooling and low literacy skills; and
- a shortage of school personnel trained to meet the specific needs of these groups of students.

These factors characterize an educational system that has failed to keep up with its changing population, particularly at the secondary school

level. At the same time, relatively little research is available on effective approaches to educating students at this level (August & Hakuta, 1997).

Books in the Series

The four books in this series (Topics in Immigrant Education) address these issues, providing profiles of immigrant students from a variety of backgrounds, critical reviews of what we know from the research that is available, and descriptions of programs that show promise. This volume focuses specifically on immigrant students with limited schooling and low literacy skills. The other three focus on promoting students' transitions through and beyond school, instructional strategies that are effective with immigrant students learning English, and innovations in professional development for teachers of immigrant adolescents.

Through the Golden Door: Educational Approaches for Immigrant Adolescents With Limited Schooling, **by Betty Mace-Matluck, Rosalind Alexander-Kasparik, and Robin M. Queen**

A growing number of recent immigrant adolescents enter middle and high school speaking little or no English, with limited schooling, and with only basic literacy skills. These students may be three or more years below their age-appropriate grade level in their academic knowledge and skills. Many have also experienced the traumas of war, poverty, and painful separation and loss. In addition to attending school, many must work and carry out other family responsibilities. Finally, adolescence itself presents major challenges.

These students typically have difficulty in secondary school. The linguistic, academic, and social challenges they face are enormous, and many simply do not have time to fulfill high school graduation requirements before they reach the maximum age for high school attendance. At the same time, many of these students have had rich and intense life experiences on which they can build formal school knowledge and around which they can shape a successful life in the United States. They

have had to mature quickly to face physical, psychological, economic, and social hardships. Many are highly motivated to work hard and graduate from high school. It is critical that educators develop program structures and instructional strategies that build on these strengths at the same time that they address the challenges.

In this book, the third in this series, Betty Mace-Matluck, Rosalind-Alexander-Kasparik, and Robin Queen seek to provide teachers and program administrators with information and guidelines to develop effective school programs. They summarize the limited information available about these students and provide in-depth information about the lives, backgrounds, aspirations, educational experiences, and needs of five such students, aged 13 to 20, from Haiti, El Salvador, and Vietnam. They profile four programs (in Illinois, Texas, and Virginia) with innovative structures and instructional strategies designed to meet the needs of these students, and they provide program contact information and lists of the materials available from each program. Finally, they summarize the critical features of effective secondary school programs for these students and discuss areas in which further research is needed.

Into, Through, and Beyond Secondary School: Critical Transitions for Immigrant Youths, by Tamara Lucas

Immigrant adolescents who enter U.S. schools with limited proficiency in English must negotiate a series of critical transitions in order to progress through school. At the same time that they are dealing with the difficult developmental transitions from childhood to adolescence to adulthood, they also must make the transitions from their native country to the United States; from middle school to high school; from bilingual and ESL classes to content area classes; and from high school to postsecondary education or work. In this book, Lucas argues that in order for schools to help immigrant students make these transitions successfully, we must apply the best knowledge we have about teaching, learning, and schooling. We must reconceptualize our notions of learners and learning, teachers and teaching, and schools and schooling. Lucas discusses four specific principles that secondary school staff

can apply to facilitate these reconceptualizations and to promote students' transitions—cultivate organizational relationships; provide access to information; cultivate human relationships; and provide multiple and flexible pathways into, through, and beyond secondary school. She provides a set of questions that school staff can use to guide them in establishing effective practices within each principle, and she describes programs in which these principles have been implemented.

New Concepts for New Challenges: Professional Development for Teachers of Immigrant Youth, by Josué M. González and Linda Darling-Hammond (with Elsie Szecsy, Kavemuii Murangi, & David Jacobson)

Because of immigrant students' diverse backgrounds and needs, school staff need specialized preparation to work effectively with them. All teachers with immigrant students and English language learners in their classes need to know about second language development, cross-cultural issues, and methods to teach both language and academic content. However, most classroom teachers, counselors, and administrators receive no special training in these areas, and they have limited opportunities to update their knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis. In this book, González and Darling-Hammond describe the challenges to developing a teaching force that is competent to work with immigrant students and develop a framework for considering what teachers of immigrant youth need to understand about their students, what kinds of professional development experiences are likely to facilitate those understandings, and what kinds of teacher education programs and school settings are able to support their ongoing learning. They describe promising new structures and practices for professional development, focusing particularly on those that promote community, collegiality, and collaboration. Finally, they profile innovative approaches to preservice and inservice professional development in California, Maryland, Minnesota, and New York.

Access and Engagement: Program Design and Instructional Approaches for Immigrant Students in Secondary School, by Aída Walqui

In this book, Aída Walqui describes features of secondary schools in the United States that make it difficult for immigrant students to succeed. These include fragmented school days, fragmented instructional programs in which ESL and content area teachers work in separate departments and rarely interact, the complex system of courses and of graduation and college entrance requirements, the practice of placing students in grades according to their age, and the use of traditional methods of documenting student achievement. She profiles six immigrant high school students (from Brazil, El Salvador, Haiti, Mexico, Russia, and Vietnam) and the challenges they face in school; describes the philosophies, designs, and instructional approaches of four programs (in California, Iowa, and New York) attempting to address these challenges; and proposes 10 characteristics of schools and programs that can foster effective teaching and learning for immigrant youth.

Conclusion

New visions of learning, teaching, and schooling push us to break through the traditional boundaries of the classroom and the school to redefine who participates in teaching and learning, in what ways they participate, and where resources for teaching and learning reside. Immigrant students must be included in the population of *all* students whom school reform movements and new approaches to schooling are designed to serve. We can no longer develop programs that ignore the needs of these students and deprive them of the benefits of broad educational reforms. The education of immigrant students needs to sit squarely within the educational reform movement, so that those students of secondary school age have access to high-quality programs in school and postsecondary opportunities beyond school, and the opportunity to become productive members of our society.

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To do this, we need strong, responsive school programs and practices that provide opportunities for immigrant students to learn academic content while they are learning English, that smooth their transitions through and beyond school, and that are sensitive to the special needs of students with limited prior schooling and low literacy skills. Educators of these students need to understand the principles and practices of educational reform and participate in the design and implementation of new programs and approaches. Finally, all educators must develop culturally and linguistically responsive understandings and skills to facilitate the success of all of their students.

Series Acknowledgments

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Finally, we thank Joy Kreeft Peyton at the Center for Applied Linguistics for her commitment to this essential work and her input to our initial plans for the paper and our various drafts; Grace Burkart for editorial input; Sonia Kundert, production coordinator; Whitney Stewart, copy editor; and Lynn Fischer and Amy Fitch, production assistants.

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me:
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.
        —Emma Lazarus's poem on the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor

It isn't that the students are slow. Once you open that door and light shines in, it's incredible what they can accomplish within one year.
        —Diane Longfield, Bilingual Liaison, Elgin High School, November 15, 1994

On January 8, 1995, *The New York Times* reported on the situation of Haitian immigrants at Westbury High School, located in a suburb outside of New York City. Over the past few years, Westbury has wrestled with trying to accommodate the educational needs of as many as 100 newly arrived immigrant students per term. Besides speaking little or no English, many of these students arrive at the school lacking basic literacy skills and much of the academic knowledge expected of high school students. Their arrival is frustrating for teachers who are trained to teach specialized content courses in English-speaking classrooms and challenging for district administrators who do not know how best to serve them. Funding is increasingly limited, teachers who speak the students' native languages are difficult to find, and students require much more emotional and academic support than the school district has traditionally been equipped to provide.

Westbury is not unique in its struggle to tackle the complex task of providing appropriate instruction for immigrant adolescents who enter secondary schools with limited schooling. School districts all over the nation are not only facing an increase in the sheer number of immigrant students, but also an increasing number of students who need extra academic instruction in addition to basic English as a second language (ESL) instruction (Minicucci & Olsen, 1992). According to the 1990 census, the number of immigrant students enrolled in public schools has increased from 26.8% in 1983 to 31.5% in 1993 (Waggoner, 1993; 1994). Additionally, the number of students who do

not speak English at all increased by more than 50% between 1980 and 1990, with approximately 30% of those being children and adolescents of compulsory school age (Waggoner, 1993). Furthermore, as Fleischman and Hopstock (1993) point out, 20% of English language learners at the high school level and 12% in middle school have missed 2 or more years of schooling since the age of 6; additionally, 27% of English language learners in high school and 19% in middle school are assigned to grades at least 2 years below the grade appropriate for their age.

McDonnell and Hill (1993) note that 78% of the newly arrived immigrants locate in the largest cities in California, Texas, New York, Florida, and Illinois. However, most states are facing an increase in the number of immigrants arriving, particularly immigrants between the ages of 9 and 21. Unfortunately, school districts and teachers have few resources for learning how to educate these students in the best manner. Research has traditionally been focused on programs for elementary-age children; thus, the specific needs of adolescents are rarely addressed. Furthermore, research is limited concerning strategies to promote these students' success in high school and beyond, such as awarding high school credit for specialized courses so that students can graduate in a timely fashion, or offering vocational training in addition to an academic curriculum (Lucas, 1993; Minicucci & Olsen, 1992). As Faltis (1994) notes, there is "virtually no published research on bilingual middle or high school programs available prior to 1990" (p. 40). Programs designed for adults often do not provide good models, because those programs tend to stress survival and do not meet the academic needs of adolescents (Stein, Nelson, & Bernache, 1991).

This book is designed to serve as a resource for people concerned with immigrant adolescents who have received little or no schooling in their native country or in the United States. (See also Cloud, 1996, for an annotated bibliography of resources on these students' characteristics and needs, programs designed for them, and instructional materials.) In addition to providing general descriptions of this group of students and discussing the challenges they face, this volume details the lives of

five such students in order to demonstrate the need for both individualized and general approaches to addressing their needs. As very little research exists on these students, their families, and their pa. ːcular needs, the first questions addressed are, Who are these students, ar ł how are they different from other immigrant students? Next, four promising programs with innovative educational strate, ، es are profiled, and the features of effective programs for these students are summarized. The volume concludes with a discussion of areas in which further research is needed.

This study began with a series of interviews with immigrant adolescents with limited schooling, who were selected after telephone interviews with program directors. Generally, the interviewers spoke the students' native languages and worked as staff members in the students' schools. The interviewers were given a general guide for conducting the interviews (see the Appendix). All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed, and when necessary, translated. Seven students were interviewed, and five interviews were selected for inclusion in this book. These students are profiled in chapter 2. Selection was based on a number of factors including gender, native language, ethnicity, educational background, and type of school program in which the student was involved in the United States. A primary concern was to represent some of the student diversity found in our schools. The interviews selected for inclusion were with one Vietnamese, two Haitian, and two Salvadoran students. Two of the students are girls, and three are boys. All came from underdeveloped regions of their own countries and are now living in metropolitan areas of the United States.

Interviews were also conducted with the directors of 14 programs; 4 programs were selected for on-site visits. Program selection was guided by the desire to capture the diversity in approaches found across the country. The following programs are profiled in chapter 3.

• *Falls Church Transitional High School, Fairfax County Public Schools*, features a special afternoon and evening program strand. The county's English as a second language program is also well known for its FAST

(Focus on Achieving Standards in Teaching) Mathematics curriculum, designed to accelerate learning among high school-aged immigrant students.

• *Elgin High School*, in one of Chicago's outlying suburbs, has offered instruction in the first language to Asian and Hispanic newcomers for more than 15 years to enhance students' self-esteem as they work through native language and content ESL classes.

• *¡Español Aumentativo!*, a project of Spring Branch Independent School District in Houston, Texas, focuses on bilingual instructional delivery to students with limited schooling, some of whom are nonliterate, through ESL and functional Spanish classes with parental involvement and technology components.

• *The International Newcomer Academy* in Fort Worth, Texas, open since 1993, offers a transitional pull-out academy for immigrant adolescents who then move into Language Centers in district high schools and ultimately into mainstream high school courses.

In each program, we spent 2 days observing students, interviewing program directors and other staff members about the general philosophies behind the programs and about the relative success of strategies used, and reviewing materials developed by program staff. Each program description includes a list of contacts and materials available.

The educators in all of the programs described acknowledged that immigrant students with limited schooling pose tremendous challenges. At the same time, these educators are dedicated to helping immigrant students succeed and believe that, with appropriate support, they *can* succeed.

Despite the lack of formal evaluation data to support our determinations that these programs are successful, we determined, through on-site observations and interviews, that each program has developed ways to accelerate students' academic and workforce success so that

they can catch up and keep up academically, while helping to feed their families at the same time. Since many immigrant adolescents need to work while attending school, we investigated how the programs address these students' expressed need to "earn while they learn" and build their self-esteem in the process.

With the literature review, student interviews, and program descriptions complete, we describe in chapter 4 a program delivery model for effectively educating immigrant adolescents with limited schooling. We conclude this book with suggestions for future research to fill the gaps in our knowledge about this particularly challenged and promising population.

Student Profiles

Immigrant Adolescents With Limited Schooling

Although there is ample literature discussing bilingualism and bilingual education (Cummins, 1981; Hakuta, 1986; Paulston, 1980) and the effects of immigration on school systems in the United States (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1994; Waggoner, 1993), very little research deals specifically with the unique characteristics of and special challenges faced by immigrant adolescents with limited schooling. Furthermore, clear definitions of this group tend to be lacking, because these adolescents are also classified as newcomers, refugees, and limited English proficient (LEP). In order to serve these students effectively, however, program designers must distinguish this group of adolescents from other groups. Thus, in this section, we present definitions and a discussion of the specific needs of this group of students.

Definitions

Although immigrant adolescents with limited schooling share many characteristics with immigrant adolescents with age-appropriate levels of schooling, they also have several characteristics specific to their group. In this section, we begin by presenting broad definitions of the larger groups to which immigrant adolescents with limited schooling typically belong, and then we discuss issues specific to these students.

The Emergency Immigration Education Act of 1984 defined immigrant students as those who were born outside the United States and have attended school in the United States for fewer than 3 academic years. Lee and Kaplan (1994) use a definition based on societal conceptions of immigrants:

Today's immigrant student is typically thought of as non-White and proficient in a language other than English; usually Hispanic from Latin American countries; Asian, particularly from China and Southeast Asia; or, to some extent, Haitian. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, however, there has been a steady increase in immigration from former Soviet Bloc countries, and from countries where English is commonly spoken. Immigrant children who share physical characteristics with White American students, and immigrants who are English-speaking, do not fit the now familiar profile of immigrant students. (p. 5)

Students included in a study of adolescents can vary, depending on the age range used. The age range of the adolescents studied by Walsh (1991) was 9 to 21; the age range of those studied by Minicucci and Olsen (1992) was 13 to 18. The ages of the students we observed and interviewed ranged from 13 to 21.

Refugees, a group to which adolescents with limited schooling may also belong, "are people whose lives have been indelibly marked by painful separation and loss. Unlike immigrants who choose to leave their homelands, refugees are forced into exile by war, by oppression, and by fear" (Scheinfeld, 1993, p. i). The situation for adolescent refugees is especially poignant, because they have experienced traumatic events that may affect their general cognitive, social, and sometimes even physical development (Schlegal & Barry, 1991).

Immigrant students with interrupted schooling generally have had little or no formal education, have little or no literacy in their native language, and have limited academic content knowledge.

Characteristics

Typically, immigrant adolescents with limited schooling are from "rural, impoverished or war-devastated regions of the world" (Minicucci & Olsen, 1992, p. 4), and they have suffered trauma on their journey to the United States. Consider the case of the students we interviewed. Thuy, along with her mother and brother, had to leave her father behind in Vietnam. Joel and Carmen experienced firsthand the trauma of civil war in El Salvador, in addition to separation from their family. Once here, students are faced with any number of arduous situations that can add to the likelihood of difficulty in school. Because their limited academic content knowledge and English language proficiency prevent adolescent immigrants from participating fully in mainstream classes, they require remediation. Pressures from others to succeed in school can be overwhelming. Furthermore, many students are inappropriately placed in classrooms where they are older than most of the other students or, alternatively, in classes that are age appropriate but

not based on their level of knowledge and skills. Either placement can cause immigrant students severe self-esteem and motivation problems (Walsh, 1991).

Although the members of this group share many characteristics, they are ethnically and culturally diverse. Generalizations can be problematic. Even students who share similar ethnic backgrounds and amounts of past schooling may have had very different home lives and class backgrounds. Even finely tuned ethnic differences can be obscured when students from the same region or native language are grouped together. Students from the Caribbean Islands, for example, may have quite different linguistic and social backgrounds. Also, attitudes toward different groups of newly arrived immigrants vary among groups already living in the United States, even though the newly arrived groups may all speak Spanish and be considered Hispanic or Latino. For example, in New York City, immigrants from Puerto Rico, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic are perceived differently by different Spanish-speaking groups (Zentella, 1996).

One of the most important distinguishing factors seems to be between those students who have some native language literacy and some mastery of academic content and those who have no such skills. Immigrant students with some academic skills are often able to make up the years that they lost to poverty or political strife in 2 or 3 years of concentrated coursework in content areas that is adapted to meet their language needs. In contrast, immigrant students lacking rudimentary literacy skills in their native language are especially challenged in secondary school and may need many years of intensive work in order to graduate or make the transition to an appropriate program.

Although many immigrant students may lack formal schooling, they typically have had many experiences on which they can build formal school knowledge. They have had to mature quickly to weather the physical, psychological, economic, and social hardships of life in their native country and to bear the challenge of moving to a foreign country. Furthermore, most want to graduate from high school, and they

are willing and eager to try to accomplish the task. The responsibility of educators and researchers is to develop programs designed specifically to help them achieve this goal.

Needs

In this section, we outline three broad areas of need of immigrant adolescents with limited schooling. We start with a discussion of linguistic needs, focusing primarily on issues involved in the acquisition of English. Then we discuss schooling needs (including the need to develop academic English literacy and to make the transition into the labor force or into another educational program). Finally, we discuss socialization needs. Adolescence is a time of major transition for all students. Immigrant adolescents, like all adolescents, need parental and community support for healthy emotional and psychological growth.

Linguistic Needs

One of the most frustrating challenges for immigrant adolescents is learning to read, write, understand, and speak English. Difficulty with learning English can cause an older student to drop out of school. Thuy, the young woman from Vietnam whom we interviewed, said that she needed to learn to read and write English better in order to fill out job applications, but she recognized that she must also understand long, complicated academic texts in a relatively short period of time.

A variety of social and individual factors influence the acquisition of a second language in adolescence. Hakuta (1986) points out that although "older learners show more rapid initial gains in acquisition ... child second-language learners have the edge" (p. 139). Although he also notes that there is a great deal of intragroup variation, the onset of puberty may radically change the process of language acquisition (see also Dulay & Burt, 1972; Lenneberg, 1967). Summarizing the research on factors that influence second language acquisition, Dulay and Burt (1972) state the following:

The turning point in language acquisition ability seems to occur at about puberty. Children under ten who experience enough natural communication in the target language nearly always succeed in attaining native-like proficiency, while those over fifteen rarely do, although they often come very close. (p. 78)

Various explanations are offered for the differences between child and adult second language learning. Some researchers attribute the differences to developmental changes in the brain associated with puberty (Lenneberg, 1967); others point to maturational levels of the learner's cognitive system. Still others look to affective factors. Self-confident, secure people are typically more successful language learners, because they have the advantage of not fearing rejection as much as those learners with high anxiety levels. Confident learners are therefore more likely to experience success in the language classroom (Dulay & Burt, 1972). Students undergoing the developmental changes associated with puberty often feel anxious and are preoccupied with their appearance and behavior (Elkind, 1970). At the same time, some researchers point out that older language learners have life knowledge and learning strategies that can promote their language acquisition (Asher & Price, 1967; Snow & Hoefnagel-Hoehle, 1978; Swain & Lapkin, 1989).

Whatever one's stance on learners' age and language acquisition, any program developed for adolescents with limited schooling must address the fact that adolescents may have different social, cognitive, and emotional needs from young children or adults.

McGroarty (1988) discusses several factors that influence second language learning.

- level of proficiency in the first language (Cummins, 1979, 1981, 1984);
- types of exposure to the second language—linguistic input, including opportunities for "acquisition" vs. "learning" (Genesee, 1987; Krashen, 1982; Lambert, 1981);

- universal processes in the acquisition of grammatical structures (Krashen, 1978, 1982); and

- social and affective factors (Schumann, 1978, 1986).

An understanding of these factors is crucial for the development of successful programs for second language learners, including adolescents with limited schooling. For example, Jim Cummins (among others) has shown that the level of proficiency obtained in the first language has a direct relationship to the ease with which a learner learns a second language. He suggests that researchers must understand first language acquisition before they can understand second language acquisition (Cummins, 1979). The relationship between first and second language literacy exemplifies nicely the relationship between first and second language acquisition in general. For instance, one of the primary factors that we found to influence academic success among adolescents with limited schooling was prior literacy training.

Other researchers have shown that the nature of linguistic input is critical for successful second language acquisition. The foremost proponents of this view have been Krashen (1982) and Lambert (1981) and their colleagues. For them, naturally occurring linguistic input leads to more successful language acquisition than does the structured environment of the traditional language classroom where students are "taught" the rules of the second language rather than having opportunities to use it for communication. Thus, the distinction between acquisition and learning has been suggested as a critical difference in learner success. Furthermore, Krashen (1982) points to what he believes to be a natural, universal order of acquisition of grammatical aspects of a language as relevant to learner success. McGroarty (1988) points out that the search for universal mechanisms of second language acquisition may be more relevant for psycholinguistics than for teachers of English. However, teachers of English "should not be surprised by the systematic approximations of the target language that the students produce and, moreover, not strive to correct such errors if students are in a situation where acquisition can take place: as students acquire the language, such errors will be resolved" (p. 311).

Additional research (Schumann, 1978, 1986) has shown that nonlinguistic factors are also important for second language acquisition: the social status of second language learners in their own community and in the target community, the demographic characteristics of the group of second language learners (which include factors such as the size and cohesiveness of the group and the intended length of residence), and the general attitude of learners regarding integration into the target culture. Additionally, such factors as culture shock, "language shock" (which Schumann, 1986, defines as the fear of and frustration with making mistakes when speaking a foreign language), the motivation of the speaker to learn the second language, and finally, the level of self-confidence of the learner play a large role in determining success in second language learning.

In summary, three general areas influence second language learning: the level of first language proficiency, including schooling in the first language; the type of second language input available; and social and individual factors, including the factors unique to adolescents. As we discuss below, adolescents have particular needs and concerns that are generally not addressed by programs developed for adults or elementary school children. For example, the need to learn English as a second language may be particularly intense for adolescents, given the social dominance of English and the very immediate need for adolescents entering the workforce to have some competence in reading, writing, and speaking English. In light of the fact that most adolscents with limited schooling have a very short time in which to become proficient, programs must acknowledge their specific needs within the general areas outlined above.

Educators have developed several different program types to address the linguistic needs of their students and to "provide non-native speakers of English with the r. .essary skills to participate in school" (Clair, 1994, p. 1). McKay (1988) describes five types of language programs, four of which are designed for English language learners. Each has strengths and weaknesses. Table 1 outlines the basic characteristics of each type of program in McKay's typology.

Table 1. Types of Language Programs

Characteristic	Submersion	Pull-Out ESL
Administrative feasibility	Requires minimal administrative changes	Requires hiring special ESL staff and scheduling students
Pedagogical feasibility	Classroom teachers need to provide special help for language minority/limited-English-proficient students	Classroom teachers may need to help students catch up with their content subjects
Impact on language minority/ limited-English-proficient students	Students may feel alienated because of a lack of recognition of their language and culture	Students may fall behind in their regular classes and feel stigmatized by being in what is often called a remedial class
Assumptions about language learning	Students can acquire the language by using it as the medium of instruction	Formal instruction is beneficial to learning a language
	Initial learning need not take place in the native language	Initial learning need not take place in the native language
Social assumptions	Language-as-problem	Language-as-problem
	Acquiring English is the key to students' academic and social success	Acquiring English is the key to students' academic and social success
	Adheres to an assimilationist model	Adheres to an assimilationist model

Note. From *Language Diversity: Problem or Resource?* (pp. 342-343), by S.L. McKay & S.C. Wong (Eds.), 1988. New York: Newbury House. Copyright 1988 by Newbury House. Reprinted with permission.

Table 1. Types of Language Programs (continued)

Bilingual	Immersion	Two-Way Bilingual
Requires hiring teachers with bilingual education credentials	Requires hiring teachers who are bilingual	Requires hiring teachers who are bilingual
Must have sufficient number of students who share the same language background	Must have sufficient number of interested students	Must have a bilingual community and sufficient number of interested students
Classroom teachers need to decide how much emphasis to give each language	Classroom teachers need not worry about code switching	Classroom teachers of each language must work closely together to integrate the two groups
Students may gain self-esteem	Students can achieve the cognitive benefits of bilingualism	Students can achieve the cognitive benefits of bilingualism
Students can achieve the cognitive benefits of bilingualism		Students can be initially segregated by ethnic background
Students may be segregated by ethnic background		
Students can acquire the language by using it as the medium of instruction, but formal instruction is also beneficial	Students can acquire the language by using it as the medium of instruction	Formal instruction is beneficial to learning a language
Initial learning should take place in the native language	Initial learning need not take place in the native language	Initial learning should take place in the native language
Skills learned in one language transfer to another	Skills learned in one language transfer to another	Skills learned in one language transfer to another
Language-as-right and resource	Language-as-resource	Language-as-resource
Promotes a bilingual citizenry by preserving minority languages	Promotes a bilingual citizenry by promoting second language learning	Promotes a bilingual citizenry by preserving minority languages and teaching second languages
Some adhere to a pluralistic model, others to an assimilationist model	Adheres to a pluralistic model	Adheres to a pluralistic model

Submersion programs involve the placement of students with little or no English fluency in English-speaking classrooms for the entire school day. A primary characteristic of this type of program is the lack of any special curriculum designed to help students learn English. One of the strongest advantages of submersion programs is that they are extremely easy to implement. They require no additional funding or, at least hypothetically, no additional training for teachers. In practice, however, these programs tend to create new problems for teachers and students. Teachers, in particular, bear the burden of trying to help English language learners while providing instruction for native-English-speaking students. Students can suffer extreme stress and frustration as they try to survive with limited skills. Submersion programs also ignore two of the central characteristics of language learning: the relationship between first and second language proficiency, and the influence of social and affective factors on a learner's success.

The second type of program, **pull-out ESL**, involves placing English language learners in separate classrooms for part of the day to work on the development of English language skills. For the rest of the day, the learners work in English-only classrooms. Pull-out programs have the following advantages: Classroom teachers need not use classroom time to help students develop their English proficiency, but can concentrate on teaching content; immigrant students benefit from formal instruction in English, which is not offered in submersion programs, and from the supportive learning community of the pull-out English classes. These programs have the following disadvantages: They require additional teachers and funding, making them more difficult to implement than submersion programs. Also, immigrant students may fall behind in their content courses and may feel stigmatized by being treated as different.

Bilingual programs are the third type outlined by McKay (1988). Bilingual education actually encompasses a wide range of programs that tend to rely on content instruction in both the native and the target language. As McKay points out, "the great range of programs, which reflects a lack of a coherent philosophy underlying bilingual education,

makes it difficult to assess bilingual education as an educational alternative" (p. 347). However, bilingual education programs can be very advantageous to students. Students do not fall behind in their content courses, their native language proficiency is fostered, their self-esteem is improved, and they do not experience as much culture conflict as they do in all-English programs. Some of the disadvantages, however, include the potential difficulties of implementing bilingual education when students have many different language backgrounds and of finding certified bilingual teachers. Additionally, bilingual education may involve segregating students in language-specific classrooms or creating classes and a teaching staff that do not have the flexibility to change as the ethnic composition of the student body changes. (For instance, the influx of Haitian adolescents has raised problems for some bilingual programs designed for Spanish speakers.) Furthermore, the lack of clear language usage guidelines and teaching materials for bilingual teachers may create great variance in student proficiency.

Immersion programs are structurally similar to submersion programs in that students work in the foreign language classroom for the entire day. However, there are some important differences between immersion and submersion programs. Immersion programs in the United States are designed to teach foreign languages to native-English-speaking children who are generally from middle-class families. Important features of such programs are that participation is always voluntary, and the students' language—English—is socially prestigious. For native-English-speaking children, immersion programs usually have the following characteristics: the native language of the children is respected and used by administrative and teaching staff during the school day; the native language is used for content teaching; students are allowed to use their native language for an initial period among themselves and with teachers; emphasis is placed on communicative competence in the second language rather than solely on grammatical usage; and students, parents, and teachers desire to maintain native language development (Genesee, 1987).

These immersion program characteristics differ significantly from characteristics of programs developed to teach English as a second language to nonnative English speakers. In general, foreign language immersion programs have few disadvantages for students. The primary disadvantage for teachers tends to be the lack of appropriate materials in the target languages. Some English submersion programs have been striving to adopt many of the characteristics of immersion programs. For example, some submersion programs allow students to use their native language initially, even though teachers may respond in English. These programs, called "structured submersion," tend to use bilingual teachers and materials sequenced according to linguistic difficulty. Unfortunately, most of these programs suffer from the same problems as traditional submersion and bilingual education programs.

Finally, **two-way bilingual** programs involve placing native-English-speaking students in the classroom with native speakers of another language. Students learn through both languages, and teachers hope that both groups will become proficient in both languages. The distribution of languages for instruction differs from program to program, but the final goal is that both will be used for instruction more or less equally. In the United States, the majority of two-way bilingual programs involve native-English and native-Spanish speakers. However, some programs involve Korean, Cantonese, French, Navajo, Arabic, Japanese, Portuguese, and Russian speakers. Most of the two-way programs are in elementary schools (Christian, 1994). Teachers in two-way programs must be committed to developing students' proficiency in both languages, and they must collaborate with one another to ensure that adequate instruction occurs in both languages. For a two-way bilingual program to be successful, it should provide a minimum of 4 to 6 years of bilingual instruction, focus instruction on the same core academic content that students in other programs receive, include a balance of students from English language and another native language background who participate in instructional activities together, and involve home–school collaboration (Lindholm, 1990). To maintain a successful program, students must stay in the program for 4 to 6 years,

and parents and the local community must maintain support for the program.

McKay (1988) points out that programs that strive to maintain students' native languages rather than replacing them with English result in "fewer drop-outs, less grade retention, fewer drug problems, and improved academic performance" (p. 359). Her conclusions are reinforced by Collier (1992), whose longitudinal study of long-term language achievement found that in programs that supported students' native language development, students were more successful in learning English than in those that did not. McKay's conclusions are also supported by Ramírez, Yuen, and Ramey (1991), who showed that students in late-exit bilingual programs experienced a rate of growth in mathematics learning and in English language and literacy development that exceeded that of the general population.

Schooling Needs

In addition to needing to learn English, immigrant adolescents with limited schooling also have specific academic needs. Although the needs of high school immigrant students are often hard to anticipate because of the wide range of backgrounds and skills they bring to school (Acuna-Reyes, 1993), one clear need is to receive enough credits to graduate from high school. In order to earn these credits and graduate, students need to be taught with a curriculum appropriate for secondary school students, which integrates content learning with English learning, in classes that grant graduation and, if possible, college preparatory credits. Classes should be small enough for individualized instruction and heterogeneous in terms of student skill level, and teachers should be sensitive to intergroup differences (Brumfit, 1980; M.L. McCloskey, personal communication, July 6, 1994; Walsh, 1991; Wong-Fillmore [in Lockwood, 1994]). Finally, these students also typically need remedial instruction in several content areas, including mathematics and the natural and social sciences (K. Buchanan, personal communication, May 9, 1995).

In order to learn academic content at the secondary school level, students must attain a high level of English literacy as soon as possible. Else Hamayan (personal communication, July 6, 1994) states, "Students have to learn that writing is essential to survival in this society, that it's not just something done only for self-expression or for its own sake." Stein, Nelson, and Bernache (1991, p. 1) have developed the following basic principles for developing academic literacy skills of immigrant adolescents with limited schooling:

- Academic literacy includes not just the reading and writing of words, but the reading and understanding of numbers, lines, graphs, and charts.
- Since the entire alphabet need not be mastered before a beginning reader can read a word, literacy skills need not be taught in sequence.
- Because of adolescent students' experience levels, curriculum content can be used as a literacy teaching tool.
- Even though most immigrant adolescents with limited schooling have a lot of catching up to do, they can advance at break-neck speed if the work begins at a level they can understand.

Based on her experiences with the PASS (Preparation for American Secondary Schools) program for Southeast Asian refugees, Hamayan (1991) advocates the following five-fold instructional strategy for academic literacy development:

- Classrooms should provide literacy-rich environments in which every object is physically labeled, preferably by the students themselves, bilingually or trilingually if need be.
- Teachers should do only meaning-based activities that are based on the students' oral language.
- Literacy should emerge naturally and may begin with students silently mouthing the teacher's words as he or she reads aloud.
- Anxiety levels should be reduced so that students are self-motivated.
- Literacy instruction should be integrated with academic content that is meaningful to students.

Several researchers advocate similar holistic, thematic approaches to literacy development for immigrant adolescents with limited schooling (Franklin, Hogu, & Mankin, 1991; Walsh, 1991). Mikkelsen (1987) argues for letting students "write to learn," thereby allowing them to recognize what they know and what they still need to learn. In this process, teachers also become aware of the students' academic strengths and weaknesses.

Although basic schooling, particularly the development of literacy skills, is a central concern for immigrant adolescents with limited schooling, these students also have long-term educational needs that must be considered by program developers. As has been noted above, these students usually want to graduate from high school. After graduation, their next step is the transition into the workforce or into some form of higher education. All of the students profiled for this book expressed long-term goals that included professional degrees and university education. For instance, Joel, from El Salvador, wanted to study engineering, and his sister, Carmen, hoped to study linguistics. As we have discussed elsewhere in this book, these students have a relatively short length of time to complete their schooling and to make the transition into postsecondary education and work.

In order to prepare students for opportunities after high school, educators must address their academic, psychological, financial, legal, and health issues (Romo, 1993). High school programs must therefore include an adequate number of counselors, health care workers, and social service workers who have the appropriate background knowledge and expertise. These professionals may be on the school staff or available through community groups that work with the school.

Socialization Needs

Adolescence is a concept that might not apply to all cultures. People in this country say that adolescence is a very painful time. I'm not sure that people from third-world, war-torn countries allow themselves the luxury of responding to life situations in the same way adolescents native to this country, society, and culture respond. Sometimes we as educators make

assumptions about what needs to be done for these students that don't make sense. Some immigrant adolescents are already their families' chief breadwinners; in their countries, they were sent to work early in their lives. Now we write them a hall pass before they can go to the bathroom! (V. Jew, personal communication, September 2, 1994)

Adolescence is one of the most variable and poorly understood stages of human development. Although there may be significant differences in the ways in which different cultures conceptualize adolescence, actual research on such differences is very limited. One major study of adolescence from a cross-cultural perspective is available. Schlegal and Barry (1991) used extensive ethnographic reports from over 180 different cultures to examine cross-cultural differences in the experience of adolescence. They distinguished between biological, psychological, and social adolescence, acknowledging that the basic properties of biological and psychological adolescence are essentially universal. They gave the following definition of adolescence:

A ... definition of adolescence ... recognizes adolescence as a social stage intervening between nonreproductive childhood and reproductive adulthood in the passage through life. Adolescence can be seen as a period of social role learning and restructuring: not simply a period in which early learning is crystallized, but rather one in which unlearning and new learning take place. (p. 9)

In addition to this definition, Schlegal and Barry note an almost universal set of characteristics associated with adolescence. These include reliance on same-sex peer groups (particularly for boys), sexual and reproductive maturity and interest, gradually increasing responsibilities in the family and larger community, an increasing violation of cultural norms and conflict with parents and other adults, and increasing fixation with self-image and body image. The authors also note an almost universal difference between the ways that adolescent boys and adolescent girls are treated that corresponds to "universal distinctions between the sexes in social roles and cultural perception" (p. 12).

Schlegal and Barry argue that there are major differences among cultures in how social adolescence is played out. Whereas the beginning

of adolescence is universally marked by physical changes, which occur earlier in girls than in boys, the end of adolescence is culturally determined (Schlegal & Barry, 1991). Adolescence extends to about 16 years of age in some cultures and to 24 years or more in others. The demarcation of adolescence according to age obscures the fact that the primary determinant of the transition from adolescence to adulthood is the completion of certain "life stages" that are culturally rather than biologically determined. For example, most cultures use marriage as a mark of the end of adolescence; however, the normative age for marriage can be as young as 14. Due to this difference in the length of adolescence, cultures recognize very different sets of problems associated with this period between childhood and adulthood.

Although a detailed discussion of the differences in adolescence in various cultures is far beyond the scope of this book, there are some general differences that can be noted. The greatest difference appears to be between highly and less highly industrialized nations. In highly industrialized countries, adolescence is marked most dramatically by an extended period of schooling, whereas in less highly industrialized countries, adolescence is marked by the attainment of gainful employment. A certain degree of freedom in leisure-time activities and personal consumption accompanies extended schooling in highly industrialized nations. Furthermore, adolescence tends to extend longer in highly industrialized countries; adolescents, particularly boys, live in their parents' homes for longer periods of time and tend to marry later. For adolescents from less highly industrialized countries, adolescence appears to be marked by entry into the workforce and by the establishment of an independent home and family.

In addition to the differences noted above, there may be extreme differences in adult expectations for adolescent behavior. For instance, adolescents in highly industrialized countries experience such social and psychological problems as substance abuse, delinquency, eating disorders, aggressiveness, and petty criminality (Hurrelmann, 1994). In terms of the norms for girls' and boys' sexuality, cross-cultural differences may be significant. In many cultures, adolescent girls are ex-

pected to remain chaste, whereas boys are given some degree of freedom in the attainment of sexual experience. As a result, many adolescent girls are not allowed to participate in mixed-sex social activities and may have difficulty adjusting to norms of dress and personal grooming in the United States.

These differences in the cultural norms surrounding adolescence can have a significant impact on the teaching of adolescents with limited schooling. For instance, many students come from less industrialized areas, so they may want and be expected to contribute financially to the family. The burden of employment may influence the amount of time that they can attend school during the day (or night). In fact, work considerations are among the most important factors for adolescents trying to attend school.

Immigrant adolescents arriving at American high schools may face a number of troublesome situations. One is that teachers might not know exactly what to expect from them in terms of "normative" adolescent behavior. As Jew noted above, many of these students are already providing for their families and yet are forced to adhere to the restrictions designed for American adolescents. The implications of this incongruity are important, because some students, particularly older ones, can lose sight of why they are in school.

Another often overlooked challenge for immigrant students and their teachers lies in assumptions about classroom behavior. For many immigrant students, the experience of entering a high school in the United States involves confronting new behavioral expectations. For instance, they must sit at a desk and concentrate for long periods of time, hold a pencil or pen, raise their hand when they want to speak, ask permission to leave the classroom, and interact with a diverse group of students who may not share their linguistic or cultural background. Immigrant students may have to develop these skills, and older students may feel frustrated if teachers assume they have already mastered them.

Although these skills are often assumed and expected, very few behavioral models for older students exist. Nonetheless, our observations of many newly arrived students, as well as our discussions with program directors, revealed that behavioral models are crucial for student success. In addition to learning basic academic content and English, students must also learn how to behave in an appropriate manner for an American high school.

For students who have had some schooling in their native country, behavioral issues may be very confusing. These students must learn the differences between expectations at their previous school and those of their new school. These differences can include how to address the teacher (with "Ms." or "Mr.," first and last name, last name only, title and last name, or just "Teacher"), the relevance of eye contact, the need to complete homework in a given way and time frame, or the need to account for one's whereabouts during school hours.

An important facet of any successful program is the involvement of students' families. Family involvement can be particularly difficult with adolescent students, but it can be fostered by scheduling school activities at times and places that are convenient and comfortable for parents and other family members and by providing information for them about the situations their children are facing in school in accessible languages and formats.

Immigrant adolescents need to feel valued by their school and community. Many communities have pride-in-culture festivals at which immigrant students can use their rich life experiences to educate others about their countries and customs. Additionally, young immigrants can teach their native language to such social service providers as the police, fire fighters, and librarians. This tutoring can help bridge language and cultural gaps in the community. In Conroe, Texas, for example, native Spanish-speaking students tutor police personnel in Spanish (K. Smith, personal communication, January 27, 1994). Such activities help instill a sense of self-confidence, pride, and motivation

in students who might otherwise be frustrated at their slow academic advancement.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have outlined some of the ways in which adolescents with limited schooling are traditionally defined as well as some of the general characteristics that they share. Although there is considerable variation within this group in terms of age, level of previous schooling, and life experiences, there are also many similarities. In general, all immigrant adolescents with limited schooling are faced with the task of learning a new language; all must adapt to an educational system with an entirely new set of demands and expectations; and all must deal with the transitional stage of adolescence in which the cultural norms to which they are accustomed from their home country may conflict with those of their new, adopted land. Schools and programs must seek ways to address the linguistic and social needs of immigrant adolescents and to provide the academic training necessary to help students succeed. In the next chapter, we detail the experiences and hopes of several adolescent immigrants with limited schooling in order to show how the generalities discussed in this chapter play themselves out in the lives of individuals.

Students Speak for Themselves

Definitions, demographics, and group characteristics mean little if they are not connected to the lives of real human beings—with unique features, histories, expressions, and dreams for the future. To that end, we give here the personal stories of five adolescent immigrant students with limited schooling, from each of three ethnic groupings defined by Lee and Kaplan (1994) as typical in the United States at this time: Hispanic, Haitian, and Asian.

Hispanics

Hispanic first- and second-generation immigrants are by far the most populous group of immigrant students to have entered the United States in recent years (McArthur, 1993). In homes in the United States where a language other than English is spoken, Spanish is the most common. Spanish-speaking immigrants with limited schooling typically come from the rural areas of Mexico or the villages of Central and South America where their schooling has been interrupted by poverty, wars, rural isolation, or some combination of these.

In his sketch of Mexican immigrant children in American schools, Saragoza (1989) describes the difference between the firmly entrenched youth culture of the United States and the brief passage from childhood to adulthood in rural Mexico:

The trappings of American adolescence, so celebrated and entrenched in this country, [have] no parallel in Mexico, especially in rural areas. Adolescence in rural Mexico is a short span between childhood and the grinding responsibilities of adulthood. ... [The] youth culture [of the United States] is new to Mexico, largely restricted to urban, middle- and upper-class youth. The teenage culture has failed to penetrate deeply the daily life of rural, poor, young people. (p. 13)

Saragoza further contends that older children (ages 14-16) who emigrate from Mexico "tend to have a degree of immunity and resistance to the lures of American youth culture" (p. 14). That contention is supported by the work of Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi (1986), who have found that newly arrived immigrant adolescents belong to inner-city

school gangs less often than do their bilingual peers who were born in the United States or who have been here longer. Nonetheless, this picture may be changing. One needs only to take a cursory glance at the daily newspaper to realize that violence and gang activities have been on the rise in the United Sates during the past decade, and immigrant youth have not been immune to such activities. Two of the students interviewed below have had firsthand experience with local gangs in their communities.

Joel and Carmen

To Joel and Carmen, the support of their extended family in Central American made tolerable the wars and earthquakes that they lived through there. When Joel was four and Carmen five, their mother left them with their grandmother in El Salvador and came to Houston, Texas, to try to rebuild her life. Even when their father, a carpenter by trade, joined their mother in the United States, the family kept in touch by mail for 3 or 4 years while the parents worked to build a home for their children in the United States.

Carmen remembered when the military set fire to the neighborhood in El Salvador where she and her brothers lived with their grandmother. They were told to evacuate, because the neighborhood was under attack. "When we returned," she recalled during our interview with her, "we found some weapons in our home on the table. There was a fire, and people came to our house to get sand. We had to help extinguish the fire." Joel also remembered the dead bodies that became fairly commonplace, and they both remembered the time they could not go to school because of the earthquake. "Our grandparents feared the school would collapse, so they kept us home," Joel explained. "Once we missed school for a month. And once, because of problems with the guerrilla troops, I only went to school 3 days a week."

When Joel and Carmen did go to school, they attended for half a day, from 7:30 in the morning until 12:30 in the afternoon. They studied social science, natural science, math, reading, spelling, and handwrit-

ing with the same teacher, who was a strict disciplinarian. All students were required to speak formally to their classmates. If they misbehaved, parents were called in, and the students were not allowed back in school until the matter was settled. Teachers routinely visited parents at their homes to keep them abreast of their children's educational progress. "The teachers were really in control of everything," they explained.

When Carmen was 14 years old and Joel 13, they moved to the Spring Branch Independent School District in Houston, Texas, and entered the Español Aumentativo program (described in chapter 3). Carmen entered the eighth grade and Joel, the seventh. When we interviewed them, Carmen was in the 11th grade, and Joel was in the 10th. They claimed to like the methods of instruction in the United States, because no parts of the textbooks were skipped, as was the case in El Salvador. They also liked the fact that they knew what would be covered next, so they could prepare for the lessons well in advance. But most of all, they appreciated their "calm street," where they could "feel free to go out and play. Here you do not have people telling you not do stuff," observed Joel.

Still, Carmen wished the teachers would "pay attention to all the students, rather than just some." Both young adolescents understood that, with so many students in the school and in individual classes, they could not get the kind of personalized attention and help with their studies they needed and wanted. Nonetheless, they thought that teachers who could teach them how to study or help them with their studies could make life easier for them—two teenaged Central American immigrants trying to live, grow, and heal in Texas.

Carmen said she wanted to go to college after graduation and get a doctorate in linguistics. "I would like to learn more languages," she said, "I love languages." Joel said he wanted to study engineering in college after working for a while and visiting El Salvador.

Although Joel, Carmen, and their family have continued to struggle, survive, and sometimes even thrive in this country, there have been intergenerational conflicts. Joel and Carmen's parents, for example, did not allow them to work, but both teens felt peer pressure to make money. When their father—who did not own a pair of shoes until he was an adult—softened to their request but insisted that they would be required to contribute half of their earnings to the household, Joel and Carmen, like many of their American-born peers, rebelled. Although they both had begun school in the United States with good academic marks, and Joel showed particular promise in math, his marks began slipping when he was in ninth grade. After several family counseling sessions with the family–school liaison of Español Aumentativo, Joel revealed why his grades had gone down: He had been close to the grandmother he left behind in El Salvador, and he resented his parents for separating him from his *abuelita*. He began skipping class and talking to members of a Houston gang. At the time of the interview, his parents and the staff of Español Aumentativo were trying to disband the gang. His parents were considering enrolling Joel in a religious "boys ranch" until the rebellion passed and his characteristic optimism and good humor returned.

Creole-Speaking Haitians

I want Aristide to open the schools first. I want to learn something. (13-year-old Charles Ansy, a native of Port-Au-Prince, Haiti, as translated in Dean [1994])

Given its history of oppression and poverty, Haiti, like Mexico, can boast only a third-grade education for much of its adult citizenry. Half of Haiti's adults are nonliterate, 80% are unemployed, and adult education opportunities are rare. During the latest political upheaval in 1990, nearly two thirds of the nation's school-age children did not attend school. Only a fourth of the nation's schools are public; the rest are private. This imbalance comes from class and economic striations that predate by centuries the return of President Aristide in 1994. At that time, United Nations peace-keeping military personnel found that

many of the nation's rural judges were illiterate (National Public Radio, Weekend Edition Report, September 22, 1995).

Approximately 1 child in 10 attended public school under the military dictatorship that ousted Haiti's president in 1988. Rather than attend school, Haiti's poor children were often farmed out to wealthy families to work as unpaid servants (Dean, 1994). Because the island has always had an agrarian economy, with coffee as its largest exportable crop, deforestation, which is making the once tropically lush island a desert, continues to wreak havoc on Haiti's poor. Nearly a million people were fed by relief agencies in 1994, and the island will likely remain in a near-famine state until political stability is established (Civan, Vilsaint, & Morisset-Metellus, 1994).

With assistance from the United Nations, which involved a peace-keeping force that remained on the island for approximately 3½ years, Haiti's volatile political climate has settled somewhat, and the nation has begun a peace-building process. Elections have been held, and power was passed peacefully to Haiti's new leader, President René Preval, elected on February 7, 1996. Even though the international community continues to provide assistance through the United Nations Mission in Haiti, which has made substantial contributions to peace building (Kumar & Cousens, 1996), much remains to be done, particularly in the areas of internal security, human rights and justice, formation of political institutions, and economic development. Until much progress has been made in these areas, the hope of economic, political, and educational betterment in the United States will continue to attract Haitian immigrants. These hopes are typically communicated by word of mouth among relatives on visits home.

Although each immigrant's story is unique, the cultural realities for Creole-speaking Haitians in the United States are often similar. Their immigration stories frequently follow this scenario: Parents migrate in a process sometimes referred to as "chain migration," leaving children in Haiti with a primary caretaker or extended family member (Giles, 1990). Money is sent to the caretaker for years before sufficient funds

are available to have children join their parents in the United States. Many heads of households feel they will acquire wealth and move back to Haiti. However, the realities of contemporary immigrant life and opportunity in the United States almost immediately challenge this idealistic perspective. Thus, Narvaez and García (1992) observe that

the immigration experience for many … is often associated with wrenching emotional separation from this primary caretaker and reunion with parents often after years of separation and during the teen years. Frequently, both parents and child hardly know each other when this process of reuniting as a family takes place. Expectations are often very different and frequently conflict. (p.4)

Ironically, although many immigrants from Haiti and their parents speak Creole, or *ayisyen*—Haitian, as it has been most recently named in an effort to distinguish Haitian Creole from the plethora of other creole languages (Civan et al., 1994)—French remains the language of the educated elite on the island. French is neither understood nor used by most Haitians, but Haitians may pretend to be French-speaking when they are not, thereby exacerbating the challenges of social service workers (Giles, 1990). The reason for the pretension is that since colonial times, Haitians have equated fluency in French with upper-class status. This status is usually reserved for Mulattos rather than for Blacks. The latter are the descendants of the half million West African slaves brought to the island by the French to harvest coffee, sugar, cotton, and indigo. Although in 1978 Haitian Creole was declared the language of instruction through fourth grade, change in practice has been slow, and the status of French as the language of upward mobility and power has caused schools to oppose the change (Civan et al., 1994).

Although French is the official language of many Haitian Creole-speaking immigrants, their facility with French varies considerably, according to the years of formal schooling they have had. Although a kindergarten-through-12th-grade education is a universal goal throughout the Caribbean, the urban poor and those from isolated rural areas have had far less schooling than their age would imply.

In most Haitian schools, testing of students' academic learning in elementary school is rare. When undertaken, however, standardized formal testing at the middle and high school levels is rigorous, and Haitian students may tend to attach more importance to the grade on a test than to the academic material. Therefore, they may not be prepared for insistence in the United States on analysis and synthesis of course content or for the informal relationships often expected between teachers and students (Civan et al., 1994).

Johnnie

Author Edwidge Danticat came to the United States from Haiti at the age of 12. She had been raised for years by her aunt. Her autobiographical writings have won her a James Michener Fellowship at Brown University. In *Breath, Eyes, Memory* (1994), Danticat remembers

When my mother was home, she made me read out loud from the English composition textbooks. The first English words I read sounded like rocks falling in a stream. Then very slowly things began to take on some meaning. There were words that I heard often. Words that jump out of New York Creole conversations, like the last kernel in a cooling popcorn machine ....

There were other words that helped too, words that looked almost the same in French, but were pronounced differently in English: nationality, alien, race, enemy, date, present. These and other words gave me a context for the rest that I did not understand

Eventually, I began to hear myself that I read better. I answered swiftly when my mother asked me a question in English. (pp. 66-67)

Danticat's experience learning English mirrors that of Johnnie. He came to the United States when he was 13 years old but did not attend school for more than 2 years, because his father did not speak English. At the time of our interview with him, Johnnie was 20. He had attended high school in Prince George's County, Maryland, since he was 16, the age at which he entered the ninth grade. Johnnie was old enough to remember the coups that led to Jean Claude Duvalier's exile from Haiti. "People got killed every day in the streets," Johnnie recalled, "so our parents were afraid to let us go out. The school was

closed, sometimes for months. Every time we had a coup, school closed." The political violence in Haiti had caused Johnnie and his sister Michelle to miss parts of and even whole years of schooling. Nevertheless, Johnnie hoped to graduate from high school in 1995, after attending for 4 years.

The prospect of graduating from high school made Johnnie very happy, because violence was not the only thing that prevented him from attending school in Haiti. "Since the schools were private," he explained, "you sat out for a few days if you didn't pay. My father was in this country, so he was sending money to my mother to pay for my education, but sometimes he could not send enough." Both Johnnie and Michelle were born in Haiti's capital city of Port-Au-Prince, but all Johnnie remembered was that violence kept them inside all day. He insisted, "One thing about me, I don't scare." But his concern seeped out as he continued, "Nothing bothers me. I don't know, there's something wrong with me. Sometimes I care about my family when they're out in the street where people are getting killed. My Mom is still there in Haiti, and I have two brothers there too. Since I left, things have been bad there."

When we interviewed him, Johnnie lived with his stepmother and father, his sister Michelle, and three other siblings (many other siblings remained in Haiti). He insisted that he never felt alone, especially given the many other immigrants in his community. He remembered that most of his old neighbors in Haiti had attended public rather than private school. He could not say whether the public school or the private school was "better," but he could remember studying French and Spanish, as well as some English. He felt that the United States school system "is easier than Haiti, because in Haiti you have to study every day." He tempered his statements with gratitude for the "public" aspects of the school he attended in the United States. "In Haiti, when I didn't do my homework, the teacher beat me. And we paid a lot to go there."

Johnnie told us he hoped to become an electrical engineer, if he could get into a university within the next few years. He had a 2.6 grade-point

average, which was fairly impressive considering his educational level upon arrival. He worked at an electrical supply store after attending school from 7:30 to 11:45 each weekday morning. As a part of a school work–study program, he stocked and packed electrical items, and he liked his job immensely. He admonished other immigrant students who may enter American schools and, ultimately, American jobs, to "stay Haitian. Don't try to act like you're not, because if you do, you're gonna get messed up. I know people in Haiti who are 40 years old and still living with their mothers, because they have no jobs or anything else. I got family in Haiti, so I'm gonna try to stay Haitian, no matter what."

Samuel

A sixth-grade student in Prince George's County, Maryland, when we interviewed him, Samuel had been in school in the United States for less than a year. He arrived from the Haitian city of Sud in 1994, when he was 13 years old. He spoke no English and had never attended school before arriving in the United States. His brother Paul recalled that Samuel did not attend school because of an illness. Samuel spoke only Haitian Creole, not French, which his more formally educated siblings could speak.

Samuel started school by attending ESL classes for 2 periods each day. He and Paul loved to play soccer but rarely went outside, because they felt their new community was not safe. Samuel wanted to go into the field of mechanics, and Paul wanted to be a computer engineer.

Samuel's extremely low literacy, short attention span, lack of ability to work with school materials, poor fine-motor skills, and disruptive behavior resulted in his being assigned to his district's Alternative Instructional Method (A.I.M.) classes. The program is designed to help students develop the basic literacy skills needed for academic success. At the time of the interview, his teachers noted that Samuel had begun to write, to associate letters with sounds, and to work with numbers. His attention span had lengthened. He was not alone in his difficult quest

for literacy; his teachers estimated that roughly 15% of the ESL students in Prince George's County require literacy remediation.

Vietnamese

In 1987, Bob Suzuki, then Vice President for Academic Affairs at California State University, addressed a conference on multiculturalism in Los Angeles. He told participants what they had perhaps all heard from Census officials and demographic forecasters: By the year 2010, one third of the U.S. population would consist of linguistic and cultural minority persons, with minority students comprising the majority in over 50 major cities throughout the country. Further, Suzuki forecasted "a new emphasis on Asian culture." To make the most of this new emphasis and the growing minority contribution to the national demographic profile, Suzuki advocated multicultural education that would hold high expectations for student achievement, maintain respect for learning in school, use a culturally diverse curriculum and effective teaching methods, and promote parent involvement in schools.

But Suzuki's optimism is not consistent with the reality of thousands of Southeast Asian, Vietnamese, and Cambodian students who have immigrated mainly to California, Florida, Georgia, and Texas since the Vietnam War ended. Many of these students have suffered from the social stigma of mixed parentage—Vietnamese mothers and American fathers. These Amerasians often had no access to schools in their home countries, and even those who escaped this stigma were not schooled because of the lingering devastation of the war and the consequential economic ruin of Southeast Asia. Their mothers were often illiterate in their home languages. The students may have had plenty of exposure to print in the crowded cities in Vietnam, but this differed greatly from the formal literacy of school.

Thuy

One such student is Thuy Lee, a Vietnamese 15-year-old in the ninth grade. We interviewed her in October 1994 at her school in Atlanta,

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Georgia. Born on New Year's Eve in 1979, Thuy got her first job cutting rice in the Vietnamese fields alongside her mother when she was 10 years old. She clearly remembered that week. She also remembered her teachers in Vietnam as "bad" people who "hit you with the rulers they carried if you didn't read right." She also remembered that her "parents couldn't pay for me to go to school all the time anyway."

In 1991, when she was 12, Thuy, her mother, and her two brothers came to the United States by way of the Philippines. She had to leave her father behind. Before they left, her mother had borne an Amerasian son; Thuy felt his "American" look won the family its passage to the United States. She did not like the Philippines, where she first learned conversational English, and was frightened by teachers and classmates who prejudged her.

In Atlanta, Thuy attended an elementary school and began learning to read. Although she had been reading for 3 years when we interviewed her and still had trouble understanding much of the text in books she was given, she felt she was progressing in her mastery of English. She resented those who wanted her to "speak Vietnamese" when she could be practicing English—"getting better," as she put it. Thuy said she wanted to read better in order to fill out job applications. Reading would help her survive, because, as she put it, "You have to take care of yourself; not need anybody's help."

Thuy said that some day she wanted to go back and visit Vietnam, and she estimated the travel costs for the entire family would be $6,000. She was sure, because of their newly acquired English and schooling experience, that she and her two brothers could make money there and care for their aging mother. Until they could return, however, Thuy was working through her school days of 4 periods of ESL, 1 of math, and 1 of physical education. After school she did her homework and watched television while she helped her mother prepare dinners of rice, salad, and saucy entrees made with tomatoes and carrots.

While her 24-year-old brother remained the principal breadwinner in the family, her 18-year-old brother "hangs out with his friends" and often "doesn't come home." Thuy reported that she, her mother, and her brothers might have to move because of a family conflict. In an argument with their landlord, one brother was hit on the head with a beer bottle and cannot work for a while, because "his head hurts so bad!"

No matter how often her mother kept her out of school to translate English, or how many times they had to move, Thuy said she would continue school and the study of English. She said she wanted to "go working" with computers once she finished school, "in 3 more years" and maybe even study to "be a doctor or work in medicine."

Obviously, Thuy faced many obstacles. She had yet to take sheltered-content courses besides math, and she did not know what is required to become a doctor in this country. However, her optimism was typical of that of a number of students we interviewed. They were enrolled in a public high school and so did not have to pay to atttend. School had seemed completely out of reach in their native countries. Anything seemed possible. Thuy told us that no matter what happened, she wouldn't quit school. "How else can I make myself better?" she asked.

Conclusion

The most striking, shared characteristics of these five students are their resilience and optimism. Although they have all experienced trauma and turmoil, they have emerged believing that anything is possible and that their lives can improve in their new home. Despite poverty, interrupted schooling, and a tradition of limited schooling in their native countries, all five students hope to continue to study after high school. In the following chapters, we discuss the ways in which schools and programs have worked to adapt to the varying needs of these students.

Program Profiles

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Four Programs Serving Students With Limited Schooling

In May 1995, we selected four focal high school programs that serve adolescent immigrant students with limited prior schooling. We wanted to identify and understand the particular challenges faced by these students and by the educators who are committed to helping them succeed in school and in life. The following programs were selected:

- Falls Church Transitional High School, Falls Church, Virginia;
- Elgin High School Bilingual Program, Elgin, Illinois;
- ¡Español Aumentativo!, Houston, Texas; and
- International Newcomer Academy, Fort Worth, Texas.

After sending questionnaires to each of the site administrators, we spent hours in observation, interviews, and discussion. We focused on seven areas of interest and concern:

- community characteristics;
- program highlights and distinguishing features;
- characteristics of the students and teachers;
- student enrollment procedures;
- approaches to mainstreaming students;
- credit accumulation;
- professional development practices; and
- program contacts and materials available.

We hope that these program profiles help others attempting to set up or improve programs for immigrant students. Planners must keep in mind that the programs described are continually evolving as a result of changing national, state, and local realities. These descriptions represent a snapshot in time. The programs will have changed somewhat by the time this book is published.

Falls Church Transitional High School, Falls Church, Virginia

Falls Church High School in Falls Church, Virginia (Fairfax County Public Schools, FCPS), houses a program for immigrant students who are 17 years old or older and learning English, have limited literacy skills, and have limited or interrupted schooling. The program's goals are described in a publication by the National Coalition of Advocates for Students, *Delivering on the Promise: Positive Practices for Immigrant Students* (1994).

The primary goals of the ... program are: 1) to facilitate the acquisition of English and literacy skills so that students can fully participate in the general education program, 2) to provide instruction that satisfies the cultural as well as linguistic needs of students, and 3) to promote the contributions of different cultures and languages in our society. These goals are based on the philosophy that students can acquire a second language more readily if they have the opportunity to use it in a variety of situations—in the classroom, on the playground, and in the community. (p. 84)

Although most of the students in the program are from Central and South America, some come from Korea, Indochina, and other parts of Southeast Asia. Manicured lawns are visible from the windows of the school. In the spring, those lawns blush with azalea and dogwood blooms planted and tended outside the homes of recent immigrants. School officials explained that for many recently immigrated families, large-city suburbs like Falls Church (a 25-minute commute from Washington, DC) promise a desirable combination of low-cost housing and a safe distance from urban crime. Add to those advantages the appeal of Fairfax County's commitment to educating its resident citizenry, and the lawns of the recent immigrants begin to reflect more than pretty flowers and greener grass. They bear witness to the pride and determination of people intent on succeeding in their adopted home.

The Fairfax County Public School district annually serves more than 8,000 students learning English. In an operational model that is now

in place in six schools in the district, Falls Church High School operates as a day school from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. The transitional high school operates each day from 3:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Approximately 1,200 students attend Falls Church High School during the day. At night, 156 students are enrolled in the transitional program.

Program Highlights and Distinguishing Features

Since the first ESL program began in 1974, the Fairfax County Public Schools have steadily built a program structure customized to meet student needs on each school campus. The district covers 400 square miles, populated by students and their families who speak 100 different languages. The ESL program is funded primarily by the county, with some funding coming initially from the Commonwealth of Virginia and the U.S. Department of Education through discretionary and formula grants (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1994). The district spreads its ESL resources across 120 schools, in instructional programs that range from traditional daytime schools, to evening transitional schools for immigrant adolescents who must work to support their families, to alternative schools that allow them to continue their progress toward literacy and high school diplomas, to adult education programs for students over age 22.

Because of the district's linguistic and cultural diversity, FCPS administrators have chosen to provide sheltered content instruction in English rather than bilingual instruction. Program Administrator Mary Hall explains, "Although we know the value of first-language literacy development, we don't have the resources to provide services to all the students in each of their native languages, so our approach is an ESL approach."

In 1991, district administrators like Hall, Keith Buchanan, and a cadre of academic content department heads found it necessary to develop a literacy program aimed at meeting the needs of the growing number of recently arrived immigrants, many of whom could neither read nor write in their native language or in English. These beginning-level older

students (or literacy students, as they are called by FCPS educators) inspired the development of Concepts Courses in social studies, science, and FAST Math (Focus on Achieving Standards in Teaching Mathematics) courses (discussed below). These sheltered courses offer high school-level academic content that has been adapted for English language learners who are unfamiliar with the material. Students' English proficiency in the content areas is developed at the same time.

The Concepts Courses are only one part of this program, which has grown as the immigrant population has grown. Falls Church Transitional High School was established at Falls Church High School to serve literacy-level immigrant students not enrolled in regular day school. The immigrant population in Fairfax County has grown so much that the model has been replicated in five other schools. Most of the students work at one or more jobs before attending school in the late afternoon or evening to learn to read and write English as they also study math, social studies, and science. Students usually attend a transitional program for a year or two. After they successfully complete the transitional school courses, they take higher level credit courses offered at one of the county's three alternative high schools. Thus, an immigrant adolescent who arrives in Fairfax County with little or no schooling can attend a transitional school for 1 or 2 years, complete coursework in an alternative high school, and graduate in 5 or 6 years.

If by the age of 22 students still have not acquired the course credits and academic skills they need to graduate or to attend an alternative high school, they may continue in the district's Adult Education Program. At that point, they must begin paying for their schooling. In most cases, however, the district continues its support of dedicated students through scholarships, work–study, or indirect grants (where possible). As Betty Dovel, Falls Church Transitional High School founder, counselor, and coordinator, maintained, "If a student needs assistance to keep working toward graduation, we find it." Such supportive philosophies and practices dovetail nicely with the expressed goals of the FCPS ESL Literacy Program—to prepare students academically to participate

in regular high school content classes and to build on the rich diversity of cultural contributions that immigrants make to the United States.

One content-based course developed by FCPS for immigrant English learners is FAST Math, developed with Title VII funding. Using sheltered instructional strategies, the FAST Math curriculum develops English language skills and math concepts simultaneously for students who are learning English and whose math skills are evaluated as three or more grade levels below their age-appropriate grade level. The course covers essential math that students need to perform at grade level. It combines the local math curriculum with the national standards from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics in areas such as number concepts and theory, operations, problem solving, data analysis and statistics, and fractions. Most students complete the FAST Math program in 1 year or less and then make the transition to pre-algebra or algebra courses. Because FAST Math courses for credit must be taught by math-certified instructors, special training is provided for math teachers working with English language learners.

Students

When we visited the Falls Church Transitional High School, 96 students were enrolled. The staff consisted of six teachers, a Vietnamese community liaison and administrative support person, and a Spanish-language support person. The school staff have a strong commitment to meeting the needs of these students. Many of the students are refugees from Laos. Many are Vietnamese Amerasians who came to the United States under the Homecoming Act, which was designed to bring home the children of United States military personnel who served in Southeast Asia. A more recent group comprised the children of former political prisoners from South Vietnam. These youths had lived in prison camps for up to 15 years. Said Betty Dovel,

Near the end of the war in Vietnam, the South Vietnamese believed that having large families would help them to be victorious, since larger families meant more soldiers. Unfortunately, those large families that were patriotic to the South Vietnamese cause were incar-

cerated as whole units. These are the families that are coming to the United States as new immigrants in 1995. Their children are 17 to 20 years of age, and they have had very little schooling.

In the spring of 1995, the Salvadoran and Guatemalan immigrants outnumbered the Southeast Asians at Falls Church Transitional High School. These students spoke the Spanish of small, rural villages and had very little formal education. We were introduced to one teenager who had never held a pencil before coming to the school. A young South American immigrant who had just enrolled at the school, he sat with ramrod-straight spine in the preliteracy ESL class we visited. He told a classmate in Spanish that he made a modest living as a pasta chef in one of the capital's poshest restaurants, but he could not advance professionally if he did not learn to read.

The class broke midway through for dinner, provided for the 30 or so young adults who mingled on the front lawn of the high school. Soccer and volleyball circles formed spontaneously, despite the day's labors and the night's lessons. This was the chance for the students to gather and get to know one another in spite of the language barriers between Vietnamese, Spanish, and English.

Enrollment Procedures

For the day school, students report to the district's central registration office where they are given diagnostic oral and written tests to assess their knowledge of English and math and their level of schooling in their home country and the United States. Translation and counseling services are available. Central registration staff also arrange school bus transportation to and from the school.

Students who have heard about the program at the Falls Church Transitional High School may report there first and complete diagnostic language tests. The pasta chef from South America was one such entrant, as was an Amerasian student who entered the high school office directly from a day job. In the diagnostic test, the students produce

writing samples in their first language and in English, and then they demonstrate oral English skills by retelling a story read to them. School staff then consult with the students and their families. Most of these students choose to attend the transitional program. They may attend the regular day high school as well, if it is appropriate for their age and fits their schedule.

Since its inception, the FCPS ESL program has experimented with various service delivery models and structures. Originally, ESL classes and staff were centralized at specific campuses. Schools in one geographic area worked together to send several students with similar ESL needs to the same building or classroom at the same time. This cooperation often involved busing students out of their neighborhoods. Over time, program planners developed a more integrative approach. Adminstrator Mary Hall explained the program's development:

When we had fewer kids, we had one high school out of the six that offered ESL, and all the kids traveled to that site. It was very hard for those students to have any sense of school identity. While it has its benefits in some regard, centralization has the disadvantage that the school is not part of the student's home community. So we fought very hard to get our kids back into the school and district that they live in. If they live near Centreville High, that's where they should be going to school. That's why we provide an ESL program there, and we do the very best we can to give them their other courses. There are a lot of people who say, "Wouldn't it be better to go back to some kind of busing situation?" But right now we believe that would have more negatives than positives.

Centralizing the ESL program in one school facility also proved unfeasible for FCPS because of the dense population in the district. Now 22 of the 23 high schools in the district have an ESL program. Said Hall,

There is no way that we could have one high school that we could send them all to. They'd spend hours on the bus daily. In the mornings in Northern Virginia, there is so much traffic, that would only exacerbate the situation. Besides, I'm not sure we would be serving their best interests by putting them in one school. We provide guidance to the 22 high schools, but they implement their programs depending on the needs of their students. We can't mandate that they have exactly the same program of study, because their populations may not warrant

it. To say that you must have a FAST Mau- class, for example, when there are only one or two students who need it, would be a poor use of resources.

Credit Accumulation

Table 2 shows a typical course of study for a student with low literacy and limited or interrupted schooling who entered the FCPS ESL program in 1991. The course sequence is based on a 1991 proposal for students learning English. While many of the specifics continue to evolve to meet changing state requirements as well as shifting demographics within the schools, this chart demonstrates that students with limited prior schooling can meet state requirements and shows one strategy for facilitating a seamless transition from high school to adult education.

The goal of the course sequence is high school graduation (21-credit diploma). Numbers in parentheses indicate the minimum number of credits per subject area to graduate. ESL LA = Literacy A; ESL A = Beginning; ESL B$_1$ = Intermediate; ESL B$_2$ = Advanced.

The course sequence table is used more as a guide from which to develop a customized program for each student than as a rigid set of classes to be completed before graduation. State graduation requirements change over time, and schools adapt courses according to the number of ESL students they have.

"The basic point," noted Keith Buchanan, "is that literacy-level students, like all ESL students, can meet state requirements, but it takes them more than 4 years to graduate. We're proud of the seamless transitions they can make from regular high school to alternative high school or adult education." Students earn the 21 credits needed for graduation through a progressive course of study in English, math, science, history and government, social studies, physical education and health, and fine and practical arts. Credit for the Concept Courses can count toward one of the 3 graduation credits required in social studies and toward 1 of the 3 required in science. The set of graduation

Table 2. Possible Course Sequence for Regular Diploma for High School ESL Literacy Students

Subject	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Summer/ Adult Ed.	Year 4	Adult Education
ESL Electives' (5)	ESL LA/A (2) ESL Language Study (1)	ESL LA/A (2) ESL Literature Study (1)	ESL B. (2)			
English (4)				Transitional English 9 (1)	ESL B (1) *and* Transitional English 10 or English 10 (1)	English 11 (1) and/or English 12 (1)
Math' (2)	Individualized Math (1)	Applied Math (1)	Personal and Financial Math (1)		Foundations of Math (1)	Algebra 1 (1)
Science' (2)	Concepts I (5)	Concepts II (5)	Earth Science (1)		Biology or Applied Chemistry (1)	
Social Studies (3)	Concepts I (5)	Concepts II (5)	Virginia and U.S. History (1)		Virginia and U.S. Government (1)	
Health/ P.E. (2)	P.E. Activities (1)	P.E. Activities (5) Health (.5)				
Fine Arts/ Practical Arts (1)	This one-credit requirement can be fulfilled at any time by choosing from a range of course options					

An additional unit in either math or science or a two-year vocational sequence is required

Both of these courses carry the general math credit. One course beyond general math is required for graduation.

ESL LA, ESL A, or ESL B would satisfy one additional social studies or one foreign language credit required for the regular diploma

Note From *Literacy Program for English as a Second Language (ESL) Students*. 1995. Fairfax County (Virginia) Public Schools. Reprinted with permission

requirements is adapted to meet the needs of individual students, just as it is for all students in Fairfax schools. "Our concern when we looked at the large number of literacy-level students we had," recalled Hall, "was finding ways to provide courses that earned graduation credit, so the students would see value in staying in school and wouldn't drop out. We decided to give these students the support they need. We've had support from the administration, and we think it's making a difference."

FCPS administrators feel that the students in this program are making tremendous gains in their acquisition of English and in their learning of content knowledge. Even though the material covered might not be exactly on grade level, being able to understand it encourages students to remain in school and prepares them for success in future courses.

Clarifying the particulars of credit accumulation and academic mastery of curriculum content are important, given criticism from those who don't believe that high school students—regardless of their origins—should receive that high school diplomas if their academic preparation does not measure up to that of their mainstream peers. The framers of the FCPS program argue that tracking literacy-level students into vocational classes, as was common in the past, does not always work for immigrants learning English. Most vocational courses require substantial English literacy skills. If students do not have that literacy, they cannot read the manuals, they do not know how to operate computers, and they are not going to be successful in jobs that require the employee to read. Extremely small classes, which could speed student mastery of academic material and enable students to move on to advanced levels of learning within the years allotted for high school, would require resources that few school systems can afford. Programs for immigrant adolescents compete for limited dollars against a plethora of other education programs. The language and academic gains made by the students in this program show that it presents a viable option. Most students gain two grade-level equivalents for every year they are in the program, as measured by the Degrees of Reading Power and district tests.

In thinking about the academic preparation of these students, educators should keep in mind the social and economic realities students face. "I think these kids know how far they have to go," noted Hall. "Just getting them ready to learn is a real challenge for teachers. There is so much going on in their lives when they come to school. They come worried about what they're going to eat, and surviving that is rigorous enough." Students may take 10 years in the program to get a high school diploma, no matter what their entry level. As Hall also pointed out,

Language acquisition takes time, and there's just so much you can do to rush it. The growth rate of literacy is so phenomenal at the beginning that students and inexperienced educators may be fooled for a moment into thinking there's a magic formula. There are just so many factors involved: the motivation of the student, the support he or she has at home, and the availability of reading materials outside school. All of our ESL classes spend time with content-based materials, and we try to give the students many opportunities to read and use all the language development skills that we know of. but we still have to take into account that mastery takes time.

Professional Development

FCPS is committed to providing a nurturing learning environment for all students. To that end, a variety of inservice professional development activities expand teachers' awareness of the abilities and needs of immigrant students and develop teachers' abilities to adapt curricula, materials, and instructional strategies to these students' needs. One staff development approach requires ESL and content teachers to work together in teams (one ESL teacher with one content teacher). In collaboration, they plan and instruct their content classes, and together they evaluate their students. Teamed teachers share responsibility for a class, a plan that optimizes integration of language and content learning. They learn from one another about approaches that can be used in specific instructional situations. Content teachers take part in periodic inservice meetings, which provide additional information about the language and cultural backgrounds of the students, about the pro-

cesses of second language acquisition, and about adapting texts and commercially prepared materials for English language learners.

Another staff development program involves over 100 ESL and content-area teachers in the Professional Development Schools program, cosponsored by George Mason University and the school district. Teachers participate in year-long seminars that involve in-depth study and practice in the instruction of language minority students. Upon completion of the program, participants serve as mentor teachers for the preservice practicum of teachers in math, science, social studies, and ESL classes in high schools with the largest language minority populations. The mentor teachers take graduate level seminars on topics such as mentoring, second language acquisition, and working with second language learners in content courses. They benefit from the additional coursework and from opportunities to reflect on their own teaching. The school system benefits from the cadre of new teachers who have had teaching experiences with language minority students when they are hired.

All teachers working with ESL students—in ESL, sheltered, and mainstream classes—are encouraged to continue building students' reading and writing skills in all subject areas and at all levels of learning. "It isn't like we take them from ESL and bring them up to grade level and they're going to be fine," maintained FAST Math teacher Jim Hannon. "Language and literacy development go on long after they leave our program, and everyone needs to be involved."

Materials Available

Scheduling information, reports from the ESL Literacy Committee, and a description of the FCPS ESL mission statement are available from the district office at the address below.

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Elgin High School Bilingual Program, Elgin, Illinois

My cousin and I decided to come here, because we need money. Our bags were small, because we did not need a lot of clothes. The time to say good-bye to our family was nearer and nearer.... We had to leave our little village.

   My feeling was very painful.... It was part of my life. My father took us to the bus. .. At 8:30 p.m., we arrived to the city of Nogales, Arizona.... We bought tickets from Arizona to Houston, Texas. and from Texas to Chicago, Illinois. When we got to Chicago, our brothers were waiting for us. They were very happy when they saw us. then we came to Elgin, Illinois.

                           —from "My Trip to U.S.A." ESL III class, 1993

Elgin, a 100-year-old town situated in what is now a suburb of Chicago, is a small, blue-collar community whose industry includes meat packing, river boat tourism, a variety of businesses, and two major hospitals. The city's biggest employer is U46, the school district. Elgin used to be a major resettlement city for Southeast Asians and, after Chicago, has the largest bilingual program in the state. The YMCA and local community sponsored the first Lao families to come to Elgin. The new refugees sent for their families, so that by the early 1980s, the Elgin High School bilingual program was 90% Laotian. Since that time, however, Elgin has slowly lost much of this population, which has been replaced primarily by immigrants from Mexico.

The Mexican immigrant population can be traced back to the 1950s. Like the boy who reported on his journey to the United States in the excerpt above, the Mexican immigrants came from villages in central Mexico. After they settled in Elgin and were successful, other family members and townspeople joined them. At the time of our visit, the majority of Elgin's high school-aged immigrants came from Mexico with their parents, who were in search of jobs and low-priced housing. Of the 3,000 students at Elgin High School in 1995, 800 were Hispanic, and 400 were considered limited English proficient. Of those 400, 325 were recent immigrants from Mexico. "We have a smattering of students from other countries like Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic,

and Colombia," reported Diane Longfield, chair of the school's bilingual department, "but the vast majority are from Mexico, and some have had little or no schooling."

Program Highlights and Distinguishing Features

Elgin High School's history of offering bilingual educational services reflects a well-established pattern of commitment to meeting the needs of local residents. Its transitional bilingual program, supported by state and local funds, has been in place since 1971. In 1994, $13 million were cut from the U46 school district budget, but after a court case, $8 million were reinstated in 1996. This renewed funding has allowed smaller class sizes, some relief for administrators, and a chance to continue building the high school's impressive bilingual and ESL program.

Like many high schools across the nation, Elgin has seen an influx in recent years of immigrant adolescents who had little or interrupted schooling in their native countries. To meet the specific needs of these students, Longfield and her colleagues began piecing together a set of adapted and teacher-developed curricula, materials, and assessments. Based on the work of Collier (1992), Cummins (1989), and Krashen and Biber (1988), the program focuses on accelerated content learning through extensive use of the native language. Native language use and cultural pride are welcomed and encouraged. All content courses required for graduation are taught in Spanish. Those include the following: transitional math, pre-algebra, algebra, geometry, consumer math, biology, general science, chemistry, civics, U.S. and world history, world geography, introduction to law, health, career planning, Spanish reading, Spanish for Spanish speakers, economics, computer applications, and keyboarding. (Until 1995, courses were taught in Lao as well, but the number of Lao students has decreased to the point where this is no longer necessary.)

The Spanish language civics classes, for example, parallel the mainstream curriculum and base their activities on a publication of the Closeup Foundation, *Current Issue*. Published annually since 1975, this

book focuses on domestic policies and issues, foreign policy, and the current administration in the United States. (The standard edition is written at the 9th- to 11th-grade level; a new edition, adapted to a 6th-grade reading level, includes photographs, graphs, and charts to make the text comprehensible. This version is used with ESL students in middle and high schools and in adult education programs.)

Activities include doing community service (such as reading to young children at the local library or making a panel presentation to parents about what it is like to be in high school and how to prepare their children for high school) and taking a week-long trip to Washington, DC, to view government organizations in action.

While students take content courses in Spanish, they also take at least 2 periods per day of ESL courses. ESL I, ESL II, and ESL writing skills are essentially language arts courses. Students who are ready to take more advanced courses taught in English can take ESL freshman and sophomore English, the courses in Spanish listed above (but taken as ESL courses), ESL geology, ESL art, and such vocational classes as woods (carpentry), drafting, home economics, and recordkeeping.

Seeking to produce "educated citizens," the Elgin staff developed a format for the content ESL lessons that begins with a central theme and branches out to encompass a number of content areas. Curriculum writing teams develop lessons around such themes as human growth and development, immigration, or discrimination. The writers use a multidimensional learning web that can cover psychology, language arts, science, health, fine arts, and social studies, and pull from an extensive resource collection.

The ESL program uses materials from the Constitutional Rights Foundation that introduce students to the Bill of Rights and to their own rights and responsibilities enumerated in it. (*It's Yours: The Bill of Rights, Lessons on the Bill of Rights for Students Learning English*, originally published in 1991 and updated in 1993, has both student books and a teacher's guide.) The Foundation updates the materials regularly

and provides professional development workshops for teachers. To supplement the curriculum, professionals in the school and community (e.g., the school detective, lawyers, doctors, police) visit the school, share their experiences with the students, and talk about how concepts in the Bill of Rights apply to their professions and to the students' lives. Students and teachers can submit articles to the Foundation's newsletter; many of these have been published.

Students and Teachers

Elgin High School's staff try hard to guide students through the school's enormous maze. Students are assigned student mentors for their first few days of school to help them find their classes within the 5-minute intervals between periods. Diane Longfield reports,

The first few weeks are really an adjustment. The population of this building is often larger than the towns the students come from. They're nervous, they're scared, and it's incredibly stressful. They can't find their classes; they get lost; they don't know their address; they don't know their phone number; and it's very difficult just getting around physically. It doesn't mean they're not talented or that they don't have the ability. Sometimes I think a large, comprehensive high school might not be the best place for these students, at least at first.

According to the school staff, new immigrant students react in one of two ways: They either quietly try to become acclimated, or they lash out and challenge teachers out of sheer frustration. Many students cannot bear their frustration in the high school environment and drop out. When the bilingual program staff see students who are not adapting, they arrange a meeting of the student and a bilingual social worker or counselor. The counselor can then assess the student's life outside of school.

The immigrant students at Elgin High School frequently start working as soon as they arrive in the United States. Many work full-time shifts at the city's plants and service industries. For some, speaking English well means the difference between getting a good job and set-

tling for a low-paying one. Longfield reported that some local companies will not hire people whose English skills are not adequate.

Elgin's bilingual program employs 15 bilingual teachers to teach the native language and ESL classes. All teachers who teach ESL content courses have had training in ESL methodology or are ESL certified. They are also certified in their content area or are working toward that certification. In addition, the school employs a Spanish-speaking social worker, Spanish- and Lao-speaking counselors, a Spanish-speaking nurse assistant, and a Spanish-speaking home liaison who talks to parents about student attendance. (In the past, the school also had a Lao-speaking home liaison.) Bilingual secretaries and administrators address parent and community concerns. The school refers parents and students in need of legal help to Centro de Información, a legal services provider, and makes referrals to other outreach centers, including Catholic Charities. "Although I see schools being community service agencies as a wave of the future," explained Longfield, "at this point, we just don't have the personnel to act as liaisons between the social service agencies and the school. For now, we try to provide such services to immigrant students and their families on a personal, one-to-one basis."

Enrollment Procedures

Because students arrive at Elgin High School at all times during the year, the school has open enrollment year-round. The intake process can take up to an hour and a half. Students from Mexico are interviewed by a Spanish-speaking guidance counselor, who reviews students' educational backgrounds to determine proper classroom placement. The registration packet includes Spanish translations of such items as an emergency card, a Student Information Form (SIF), a bilingual screening form, a course selection sheet, a free-lunch form, school calendars, and health records for the doctor. Parents complete the SIF that asks for country of origin, length of time in the United States, address, previous schooling, and the need for services. One question that is appreciated by parents is, "Do you need bilingual ser-

vices?" "It's rare that a parent does not accept the services," explained Longfield.

Students are given a basic Spanish literacy test, an ESL test (both developed by the high school), and the Monroe Test of Math Achievement. If students cannot read well in Spanish, they are considered developmental or literacy students and are placed in native language classes and Developmental ESL. These classes are limited to 12 students. If students have just arrived and speak no English, they are not given the ESL test. They are automatically placed in ESL I.

Mainstreaming

Because the immigrant students at Elgin High School go to class in the same building as their native-born, English-speaking peers, the issue of mainstreaming is important. All students have physical education, study hall, and lunch together. However, whether an immigrant student attends class with native English speakers or stays in native language or ESL content classes is a decision that is taken very seriously and done with a great deal of monitoring. The ESL/bilingual staff develop a profile for each student that includes the student's number of years of education in the United States (a student who has had 3 years of bilingual or ESL education may be ready to be mainstreamed), willingness to take risks and learn English, grade-point average, self-esteem, and readiness to take classes conducted entirely in English without native language or ESL support. About 40 or 50 students are mainstreamed during each school year, and another 20 or so during the summer.

The teaching staff take pains to make parallel the course content in mainstream classes with that of the native language and ESL classes. When students are mainstreamed into classes taught only in English, the ESL staff prepare them and the mainstream teachers for the transition. The students visit the mainstream classes, and the mainstream teachers review the students' previous work. After students have made the transition, the ESL staff monitor their grades, attendance, and dis-

ciplinary record. Students can visit the bilingual liaison and ESL teachers at any time to discuss their progress and receive tutoring if they need it. Longfield explained, "If they're doing fine, wonderful. If not, we meet with the mainstream teachers and develop a plan of action."

Course Sequence

The state of Illinois specifies a mininum of 17 units required for graduation from secondary school (grades 9-12). The required course load includes 3 years of English, 2 years of math, 2 years of science, $3^{1}/_{2}$ years of physical education, 1 semester of health, and courses in civics, economics, and U.S. history. Local school district boards may set graduation requirements above the state-mandated minimum. In Elgin High School, 20 units, or 40 semester credits, are required for graduation. Credit toward graduation is granted for all ESL and content ESL classes and for all native-language core-content courses. The ESL program at Elgin is designed to proceed from the supplemental skills and remediation taught in Developmental ESL; to ESL I, which builds language skills; to ESL II, which focuses on reading and writing; to ESL III, which offers literature and composition; and finally to ESL freshman English and ESL sophomore English, both of which feed into mainstream English classes.

Typically, a student who is new to the United States, is learning English, and has limited schooling may begin with Developmental ESL, native language transitional math, native language reading, elective courses that offer hands-on learning, physical education, and study hall. In such elective courses as Woods I & II, students learn to build houses by the time they are seniors. Some of the homes across the parking lot from the school have been crafted by Elgin students. Such vocational classes are taught by mainstream teachers who like to work with immigrant students and who have taken some graduate-level ESL methodology courses. ESL home economics, ESL introduction to machine technology, and ESL introduction to metals all use demonstrations and hands-on activities, which are popular with the students.

In the second year of the program, a student may take ESL I, ESL language skills, Spanish pre-algebra, Spanish general science or biology, Spanish career planning, ESL home economics (in the vocational sequence), physical education, and study hall. The student will gradually take more advanced native language and ESL content classes (e.g., ESL freshman and sophomore English) and courses in the vocational sequence until he or she is ready to take mainstream content courses (social studies is the last mainstream course that students make the transition into). Students are not required to take mainstream courses to graduate. Some students, particularly those with limited schooling and low literacy in their native language, may take all 4 years of high school in native language and ESL classes. In the advanced ESL content classes, the textbooks used in the mainstream courses are used and adapted as needed.

Elgin's program has been quite successful. In 1995, 61 students from the bilingual/ESL program graduated, and more graduate and attend college each year. Because Illinois does not have an exit test for high school, students who do not complete the required courses to graduate from Elgin before they are 21 can take the General Educational Development (GED) examination whenever they are ready. If they graduate but still wish to improve their English language skills, they can attend Elgin Community College, which has an active outreach program for students pursuing academic degrees or improving their English. A dinner for Hispanic senior girls and their parents is held (because females in the area tend to have more difficulty continuing their education), scholarships are offered through a local professional organization, and money is raised for scholarships. In 1994, 75 graduates from the Elgin High School bilingual program were enrolled in the community college, and of that number, 44 pursued additional higher education. Longfield remembered a former student who began the Developmental ESL classes, excelled in her studies at the school, graduated, and opened her own tailoring shop. "For some kids, it's a matter of turning on the light," Longfield said.

Professional Development

The biggest challenge for Elgin is shared by bilingual programs across the country: recruiting certified bilingual educators. Recruitment trips to Puerto Rico and the Texas–Mexico border are common for Elgin district staff. To compete with Chicago for scarce secondary-certified bilingual teachers, Elgin emphasizes the school's relative safety, racial harmony, and innovative curricula and teaching strategies. Teachers are assigned mentors and are quickly enveloped by the close-knit care and nurturing that are hallmarks of the program. "I like to think that the teachers in our program are on the cusp of best practices in education," noted Longfield. "They always seem to be at the front of the train. When people were discovering cooperative learning, we had been doing it for quite a long time. Teachers are now discovering alternative assessments and portfolios, and we've been doing that from the early days of the program."

Teachers already certified in Spanish-speaking countries can take an 18-hour program of study in bilingual education or ESL through the Illinois Resource Center. If they have just arrived from Mexico, they must take an English test. Once they pass that test, they have 6 years to earn their bilingual credentials.

Native-English-speaking science and math teachers who would like to be certified in ESL but have not received a bilingual credential can take courses through Project Smart, a grant program that pays them to get this credential to teach English language learners. Also, the state of Illinois makes available grants for teachers to earn their bilingual or ESL teaching credential tuition free. According to state policy, all school improvement plans must include provisions for language minority students. Project Basic, through a grant from the Illinois State Board of Education that is implemented through the Illinois Resource Center, provides help for several schools, including Elgin, to write school improvement plans that include meeting the needs of English language learners. In addition, the staff of the bilingual program participate in all of the staff development opportunities available to other teachers in

the school and are active in the state affiliates of the National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE) and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

Teachers have common planning time each day to develop thematic curricula and lessons. In the 1995-96 school year, the teachers also met each month to redesign the native language/ESL curriculum and describe expected outcomes for each level of ESL. Teachers in the Elgin program credit the Illinois Resource Center for much of their professional development, growth, and success with immigrant students. However, native language and ESL classroom teachers usually claim that the key to success is patience, empathy, and hard work.

Materials Available

• Intake and Enrollment Materials Translated into Spanish

• Course Selection Sheet

• Course Concept Webs and Content Curriculum Frameworks

• *ESL/Bilingual 7–12 Handbook*—includes pre- and post-tests (Success Placement Test, a writing test, and an oral interview), curriculum, goals, and counselor intake

• List of English and Spanish Texts Used

Bill of Rights materials are available from:
Constitutional Rights Foundation
407 S Dearborn Ave Suite 1700
Chicago IL 60605
312-663-9057

Current Issue is available from:
Closeup Foundation
Publications Department
44 Canal Center Plaza
Alexandria VA 22314
800-765-3131

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Elgin High School Home Page
http://www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/Edu/Affiliates/Elgin/LIBF/ehflib.htm

¡Español Aumentativo!, Spring Branch Independent School District, Houston, Texas

Spring Branch Independent School District is dedicated to providing a quality education to meet the needs of a diverse student population in an environment of acceptance. All learners will be successfully prepared for their roles as responsible citizens in a global society. (Mission statement of the Spring Branch Independent School District)

Español Aumentativo is a program of the Spring Branch Independent School District, on the west side of Houston. Once farm land, Spring Branch is now a thriving suburban community growing rapidly beside Memorial, one of Houston's oldest post-World War II, upper-class neighborhoods. Spring Branch is home to many Hispanic immigrants who have come in search of the American dream. With the oil boom in Houston during the 1970s, the push for housing and other material goods increased, strip shopping malls became a common sight in Spring Branch, and the freeways widened to eight lanes. At the same time, low-cost apartment buildings were built, which many Hispanic and Asian immigrant families of limited means found affordable.

The community was interested in providing the best educational opportunities possible for the new families in the area, who were predominantly Hispanic like Joel and his sister Carmen (the Salvadoran teens interviewed in chapter 2) and their little brother Abel. The Spring Branch Español Aumentativo (ESPA) program was first conceived because of the district's growing Hispanic student population, which was 43% of the district's total population in 1995. In that year, 25% of the adolescents attending Spring Branch's Northbrook High School were recent immigrants, and 10% of the district's English language learner population had limited prior schooling.

Program Highlights and Distinguishing Features

ESPA is a supplementary transitional bilingual program. It was designed in 1991 to serve the 160 beginning literacy Hispanic adolescents who attended school in the Spring Branch School District, and it is implemented in the six schools with the highest concentrations of immigrant students (four middle schools and two high schools). The program is funded entirely with district funds (originally, it was funded with a combination of district funds and Title VII grants from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, OBEMLA).

The ESPA program has three major components: instructional intervention, parent involvement, and staff development. The instructional intervention component includes teacher-developed, tested, and evaluated curriculum guides and instructional materials in math, science, music, U.S. history, reading, and functional Spanish; modified instruction in content classes; and guidance for teachers in effective uses of resource teachers, bilingual aides, and technology. In the parent involvement component, a caseworker sets up regular meetings (in Spanish) with the students' families, refers needy families to assistance agencies in the community, and establishes a communications link between the school and home through home visits. The staff development component focuses on helping teachers learn to use instructional strategies that are effective with secondary school students who have limited schooling or are nonliterate. It includes release days for teachers to learn and work together, regular meetings, conferences and workshops, technology training, and for-credit courses offered by the state.

One feature of the instructional intervention component is a 1-year Functional Spanish class (with an optional 2 years for students who need extra help). This class was designed to teach reading and writing to Spanish-speaking immigrant students whose literacy skills in their native language are at a beginning level. Taught entirely in Spanish by caring, seasoned educators who help the students fill in the gaps be-

tween their past and current educational experiences, this Spanish language class focuses on reinforcing the native language skills that students already have, teaching basic academic concepts, and facilitating the acquisition of English.

"Functional Spanish gives students the opportunity to read and write in their native language while developing literacy in English," noted Julie Hodson, ESPA's codirector. "Teachers tell us that the students who have gone through Functional Spanish have a certain 'with-it-ness' about them that translates to better focus on school goals. Academically, then, they can succeed." The following vignette from our field notes gives a flavor of the classes.

Faye González's Functional Spanish class convenes. Today the lesson is understanding charts and graphs. Lively class participation ensues. González models everything for her Hispanic immigrant adolescents, who tested as "emergent literacy" students when they enrolled in the program. Ten students (half are male and half female) engage in counting aloud on a vertical axis as González silently touches each figure to encourage and reassure them. Her questions to the class are frequent and animated, and the students respond enthusiastically. The subject of the bar chart is the populations of cities in the United States and the percentage increase in population between 1940 and 1980. González draws bold lines from the population numbers to the bar tops. "How many in Texas?" she asks. "How many in New York?" The answers come quickly—some correct, others not, all students trying to learn, stretching to gain as much as possible from the lesson and this masterful teacher.

While they are in the Functional Spanish class, students in the program also receive English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction. If students have low literacy skills, the ESL classes focus initially on developing oral language and gradually move to reading and writing. When they are ready to make the transition into sheltered content classes, students no longer take Functional Spanish. They receive graduation credit for these classes and cover the same material that is covered in the mainstream content classes. Sheltered content teachers have been trained to develop students' abilities to read and write English, to modify instructional strategies and assessment procedures according to students' levels of English proficiency, and to teach to various learning styles with

cooperative learning activities and educational games. Bilingual aides work in these classrooms to help the students during class and to tutor them after school.

In the summer of 1995, a summer school program was set up for students with low literacy skills. The program is designed to strengthen students' reading and writing skills in English and Spanish, to give them opportunities to use instructional technology, and to provide them with more time in school so they can catch up with the other students and make the transition to all-English classes.

Professors at the University of Houston monitor and evaluate the program on an ongoing basis, and outcomes are reported for the fourth implementation year in the Program Evaluation Report (September 1995; see the list of program materials available at the end of this section). Program objectives and desired outcomes are consistently met and often exceeded, claimed ESPA's evaluator, Dr. Judith Walker de Felix of the University of Houston. Teachers are active in developing, testing, and evaluating instructional materials and curriculum guides, which are available on laser disc and CD-ROM and are used throughout the United States by districts with immigrant students. Student self-esteem and literacy levels have improved substantially. Most of the students who enroll in the Functional Spanish course successfully learn to read and write in Spanish and acquire basic language concepts that facilitate transfer to English. Students show a more trusting attitude toward the staff, demonstrate a sense of belonging at school, and attend classes regularly and on time. Many students who could not read or write at the beginning of the program were composing on the computer and writing in journals at the end of the 1994-95 school year, and in 1995, some students passed all or parts of the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). No students had passed in previous years.

The parent meetings have been very successful. In the first year of the project an average of 9 parents attended each meeting, but by the fourth year an average of 54 attended each meeting, and parent meetings are now held throughout the district. A parent guide, *Nuestros*

Hijos, Nuestro Orgullo (Our Children, Our Pride), is available for other districts, and a videotaped series of parent meetings, called *Padres Con Poder* (Parents With Power), was broadcast on a local cable television channel.

Even with these successes, program staff and evaluators have found that when students are placed in academically challenging classes, particularly at the high school level, they may drop out and fail if they do not have adequate support. Therefore, program staff have developed an enhancement project that focuses specifically on teaching overage, teenage Hispanic immigrant students who have been in Functional Spanish classes and are making the transition into core English and content area classes. Staff development is offered at the schools that have the highest number of these students. This development program increases teacher effectiveness in teaching core content area courses and in helping students meet graduation requirements. Bilingual instructional aides work with students individually or in small groups during classes. Program staff watch students make the transition into sheltered content classes and suggest instructional adjustments if necessary.

Students and Teachers

Ironically, the tremendous language and academic barriers faced by immigrant adolescents who come to the United States with limited prior schooling have not proven to be the most challenging issues for the educators and researchers working with Español Aumentativo. Cultural and behavioral issues are more challenging than gaps in academic learning. As Julie Hodson explained,

[Some] Spanish-speaking students come from an instructional environment that may be full of authority and threats. If you are tardy, you get sent home until you come back with your parent. At this school, we have a different philosophy. We say that a threat-free environment is good for learning, so we have a system for building in students' self-responsibility and self-monitoring. Older immigrant students sometimes misinterpret this and say, "Wow! These students have a lot of freedom." So they start testing the limits, and they get into trouble. Immigrant students (like all students) who have acted up three times end up in the CDC

(Campus Discipline Center) or suspended from the campus. Their heads are spinning, and they're saying, "What did I do? What happened? How did I get here?" They don't always get the connection between their behavior, the consequences, and what they were supposed to learn from it.

Caseworker Raquel Leal, who counsels students at six ESPA schools, noted that difficulties arise from communication barriers between students and teachers. For instance, many female teachers do not like to be called "Miss" in English. Yet, because *Señorita* is a term of respect in Spanish, students may not realize the difference between "Miss" in English and *Señorita* in Spanish. "They're translating their customs into our language, and there's sometimes a mismatch," Hodson explained. "What's interpreted as disrespectful in English is very respectful in Spanish."

To alleviate communication, cultural, and behavioral barriers, students and teachers must trust each other. Hodson recalled visiting a Functional Spanish class and noticing one young man performing poorly.

I talked with him, and his main concern was that his bike had been locked up for a week, and he couldn't get it out. He didn't know that he just had to go to the office and say, "I lost my bike key." So I helped him solve his problem, and all of a sudden I became his best buddy. The next day, I visited the class again, so to please me he wrote a page-long story about his sister, whereas before he had only written a few lines. Maybe my help made him feel that he could trust me, that I cared, and all of a sudden he opened up.

All of the Functional Spanish teachers are former foreign language (Spanish) teachers who have a particular interest in working with immigrant students and have demonstrated an ability to promote student motivation and achievement. District elementary school and language arts coordinators have worked with these teachers to help them develop strategies for teaching reading and writing to native Spanish speakers. In addition to teaching, the Functional Spanish teachers also serve a counseling role with the students, helping them become familiar with the school and its procedures, developing their course schedules, and encouraging them to get involved in extra curricular activi-

ties. The caseworker, Raquel Leal, also helps students with such non-academic problems as buying glasses or finding a doctor.

Enrollment Procedures

All incoming students whose home language is other than English (as reported on a home language survey) take the reading and writing portion of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the IDEA Oral Proficiency Test (IPT). Students old enough to be in secondary school also take the math portion of the ITBS. If students are classified as non-English speaking, they are interviewed and tested in Spanish. In the interview, they are asked how long they have been in the United States, what country they came from, how many years they have studied in their country, and what grade level they had reached in their country before emigrating. They are also assessed with the reading comprehension portion of the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education (SABE) and a writing sample in Spanish. Placement evaluators try to determine the students' level of academic/formal Spanish. Just because they come from a Spanish-speaking country does not mean that they can speak, read, or write academic Spanish.

Students are placed in Functional Spanish and in ESL classes if they score below 76 points on the SABE and if their Spanish writing samples are weak. If they score above 76 points on the SABE, and their writing samples indicate that they know how to write in Spanish, they are placed in ESL classes. Students are placed in grade levels according to age. Thus, a student who is 16 years old will be placed in ninth-grade classes, even if he or she has never been to school.

The Functional Spanish, ESL, sheltered content, and mainstream classrooms in the Spring Branch schools are located close to each other, and school administrators make sure that immigrant students feel they are part of the school. The students are encouraged to join all school clubs, including those clubs formed specifically for them. For example, a Functional Spanish teacher started a club called ALAS (Amigos Latinoamericanos de Spring Woods), in which bilingual students serve

as mentors to newly arrived Spanish-speaking students. The mentors explain school rules, procedures, and activities and introduce new students to school staff.

Credit Accumulation

Some of the schools with an Español Aumentativo program have implemented block scheduling with 90-minute classes. Rather than moving from one class and subject to the next every 50 minutes during the school day, students now have fewer and longer classes. Teachers have a 90-minute conference period each day, during which they can work together to plan interdisciplinary units. Block scheduling also assists immigrant students in securing credits toward graduation more rapidly. A typical student entering ESPA can earn 1 language arts credit for reading, 1 language arts credit for ESL, 1 credit for math, and 1 foreign language credit for Functional Spanish. Thus, 4 graduation credits, for a 4-period day per semester, can be accumulated. Students can thus earn 32 credits over a 4-year period, 11 more than the state requirement of 21 and 8 more than they would have earned in the former scheduling system. English language learners can follow a sequence of ESL courses (only 2 ESL credits count toward graduation) and still graduate in 4 years.

Although students can graduate from high school in 4 years, few students with low literacy progress so quickly. The state of Texas requires that ninth graders take math (pre-algebra or algebra), language arts (reading or writing), science (physical science or biology), and history or social studies. ESPA students who do not qualify to take those classes in the ninth grade have to continue going to school beyond the age of 18 to graduate. In Texas, they can stay in high school until they reach the age of 21; however, they still have to pass the TAAS, which every student in Texas must pass to graduate from high school. Students can go to summer school for additional preparation for the TAAS. Students over 21 can prepare at a local community college for the General Educational Development (GED) examination.

For students to receive content credit in sheltered math, science, history, or social studies courses, the course must be taught by a teacher certified in the content area. Thus, many ESL teachers are certified in content areas. Content teachers do not have to have ESL certification to teach students learning English, so ESPA staff concentrate on training content-area teachers to teach content classes using ESL strategies.

Professional Development

According to ESPA staff, in the Spring Branch school district, teachers of students with limited previous schooling and low literacy need to be versatile and understanding. Teachers must accurately perceive students' stengths, interests, and needs. "To work with these students, you have to be both a teacher and a counselor," said Leal. Hodson advised, "Despite the wealth of training classes and instructional interventions devised for their professional growth, teachers of these students tend to underestimate what the students are capable of and think they have to remediate everything. They also tend to misinterpret what motivates these students. Sometimes teachers give them very academic exercises when the students just want to learn to speak English well to get a better job. So the kids ignore the academic content and try to concentrate instead on learning vocabulary words and useful phrases."

As a result, an extensive staff development program has been devised for Functional Spanish, ESL, and content area teachers before, during, and after each school year This program includes teacher attendance at conferences and seminars, formal courses through the University of Houston and Houston Baptist University, ongoing teacher meetings, classroom visits by and feedback from colleagues in the district, weekly curriculum support groups in which teachers discuss educational theory and practice teaching strategies that are effective with students learning English, and training in uses of multimedia technology. Functional Spanish teachers have been trained to network their computers and to use CD-ROMs and laser discs. At one school, the Functional Spanish teacher worked with a team to train the entire teaching staff in the use of computer technology. A Functional Spanish teacher was

appointed to the district's technology committee. These professional development activities have produced better informed, more sensitive staff members who not only know and use more ESL teaching strategies than they had previously, but who also exhibit increased understanding of immigrant students and their families. Changes have been most noticeable among content area teachers who have participated in various types of staff development. One content teacher recommended to the district advisory team that more secondary teachers in the district needed training in working with immigrant students, and the superintendent assigned a central office administrator to provide staff development on ESL strategies to the entire district.

Materials Available

¡Español Aumentativo!: A Transitional Bilingual Education Program for Secondary Hispanic Preliterates. Program Evaluation Report. September, 1995.

Parent Training Guide: *Nuestros Hijos, Nuestro Orgullo*
   (draft in progress)

Curriculum guides for content area classes:
- ¡Español Aumentativo! Functional Spanish Curriculum and Resource Guide, 1994
- Curriculum Guide for Mathematics Teachers of ESL Students, 1992
- Curriculum Modification Strategies for Successful Learning, 1992
- Resource Guide for Senior High School Reading Improvement for Beginning ESL Students, 1992
- Science Alternative, Grades 6-8, 1992
- Readiness Course, 1996
- Secondary Textbook Adaptation for USA, The Unfolding Story of America, ESL History, 1992
- Alternative World Geography Studies—ESL, 1996

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International Newcomer Academy, Fort Worth, Texas

The International Newcomer Academy opened in 1993 in Fort Worth, Texas, a city some residents call "the Ellis Island of the Southwest." For 150 years, Fort Worth has been a stopping point for immigrants from Mexico. However, Mexican immigrants are not the only ones to make Fort Worth their home. The World Relief Association, headquartered in Fort Worth, has resettled Southeast Asian refugees for decades, and more recently has helped to settle Kurdish and Somalian families.

The International Newcomer Academy (INA) was originally established as an extension of a district-wide network of middle and high school-based Language Centers that since 1983 have been serving students in Fort Worth who are learning English. Because of marked increases in the past several years in the number of immigrants in two of the central city schools, including immigrants who have had limited schooling in their native countries, the district's then Director of Bilingual/ESL Programs, Ramón Magallanes, and his colleague, Genna Edmonds, Coordinator for ESL Secondary Programs, began to look for some way of helping these students who often floundered and eventually failed or dropped out of school despite Language Center support. Although the number of adolescent immigrant high school students with low literacy skills in the district has never exceeded 40 at any single high school, the number of high school-aged immigrant students who entered Fort Worth schools and were identified as "low schooled" was 80 in 1995 and is expected to double by 2001.

The notion of the Newcomer Academy was first considered when the Language Centers were being developed in 1983, before the Fort Worth district Bilingual/ESL Program became Texas' largest. Administrators originally discarded the notion because of concerns that English learners should not be isolated from native English speakers. Administrators also worried that, in a separate program, the English learners would not have equal access to learning experiences. However, when the Academy

was proposed again a decade later, bilingual educators and administrators in Fort Worth reviewed the overcrowded secondary schools and the lack of focused, personalized services that had begun to dilute the effectiveness of the Language Centers. They decided to create a Newcomer Academy, a separate school that would not only feed students into the ESL programs at the Language Centers, but would also provide the intensive language and content instruction that immigrant adolescents, including those with limited prior schooling, need. The International Newcomer Academy opened in 1993. As Magallanes explained,

One of our biggest frustrations was watching the number of kids who would come in contact with discipline management, bells, tests, and social systems that only our society knows about. We watched these kids drop out like flies, and we watched them being forced out, because they had violated codes and mores. We thought about designing intensive classes to meet the language and academic needs of these students and placing their classes in a separate wing in the high schools. We thought we might rewrite the regular curriculum or retrain the teachers. But we felt we had to find a way for kids to come in contact with some kind of buffer before they hit the larger program. That buffer must include patience, understanding, and sensitivity. INA is able to provide that, and the Language Centers can provide it within the physical and social context of the larger school.

Program Highlights and Distinguishing Features

The mission of INA is to provide a multicultural learning environment for second language learners that will do the following:

- create a supportive, challenging academic setting where students have opportunities to develop as responsible learners, effective problem solvers, and willing users of English;
- involve students in cooperative learning experiences to promote open communication, collaborative decision making, a spirit of community service, respect for individual differences, and pride in native culture;

- establish a place where students' physical and emotional well-being is ensured; and
- provide for broad-based input into the school's decision-making process by teachers, parents, students, and the community so that students will acquire a foundation of real-world experiences; achieve their educational goals; and become contributing, productive members of society.

The INA is a 1-semester to 2-year program for secondary school immigrant students who are new to this country, including those who have had limited schooling in their native countries and have low literacy skills. In 1995, the INA served 161 students. Ninety students were high school age, 82% were Hispanic, and all were English language learners. Students from India, Somalia, Haiti, Vietnam, Korea, Syria, and Sudan comprised the remaining 18%. Because these students are particularly challenged by their educational and social circumstances, they require patient teachers and a closely knit environment where innovative teachers understand and address students' needs.

For all students, the key goals of the program are to foster rapid language learning and acquisition of content knowledge; to build a strong knowledge base through an integrated, thematic approach to language and content learning; and to serve as a bridge to ESL and content classes at the Language Centers. Because all students at the INA are beginning English learners, all take 2 periods of ESL a day—an ESL class and an ESL lab—and an English reading class. In addition, they take algebra or geometry, world geography, an elective (art, music, or computer keyboarding), and an enrichment class. Native language support is usually not provided in their classes, but if a student is having a very hard time understanding, a tutor or aide will provide native language support in the class.

Students with low literacy also take ESL and ESL lab, world geography, and art or music, but instead of English reading, they have a native language literacy class in Spanish or Vietnamese. Instead of algebra or ge-

ometry, they take basic math. Bilingual tutors work with them in their math and native language literacy classes. When students need extra hours in a subject, their class periods can be extended. Though the curriculum is based primarily on the Texas State Essential Elements for ESL and the State's Reading Improvement Program (a series of courses offered in the state in Grades 6–12), INA also builds on the prior knowledge of its immigrant students. Language experience activities, tactile and visual learning opportunities, and cultural enrichment are central components of instruction.

The INA developers have put in place a comprehensive plan to join the community, the home, and the school. Through a program called Vital Link (a Fort Worth Independent School District program designed to acquaint students with real work experiences), seventh-grade students at INA serve for a week as unpaid observers and interns at local businesses. The program is designed primarily for student enrichment, but it also aims to acquaint students with the relevance of math in the real world.

While completing the INA's maximum 2-year program, students visit the Language Center at the high school to which they will transfer when they have reached an intermediate level of proficiency in English. When they are assigned to a high school, they visit the school to become familiar with the new facility, students, and teachers. Although the program was barely 2 years old when we visited, and no Academy students had graduated yet from high school, some students had settled into the Language Centers.

To assist in the transition from the Academy to the Language Centers, INA teachers use the Student Oral Language Observation Matrix (SOLOM), an informal observation instrument that helps them to observe, listen to, and describe each student in a variety of contexts. The observations are provided to the receiving school so that its teachers can understand the academic and development levels of the new students. Language Center teachers also work cooperatively with INA teachers to study the language level of each student and to discuss ways

to ensure that each student succeeds in the high school program. Students eventually progress from the Language Centers to mainstream classes in the receiving middle and high schools.

Suzanne Barton, INA's director (and instructor), told us. "It is unrealistic and inappropriate to expect an 18-year-old student who has never gone to school to graduate from a Fort Worth high school or academy within the usual 3 or 4 years. We need to offer these students something tangible that will improve their life options." INA and Language Center high school staff try to be flexible in their work with these students, who have pressures and responsibilities in addition to school work.

Ramón Magallanes recalled a student who persevered through the INA and the full high school program, only to encounter a scheduling conflict in her senior year. She worked at a job all night until 7:30 in the morning, the time when her required biology class convened. She went to the teacher to explain her dilemma. The teacher accommodated her with sets of take-home materials and weekly appointments. On the day of the final exam, she took the day off work and scored a 92.

Magallanes argued that the immigrant students who go through the program at the INA and the Language Centers are just as prepared for further education and for work as are many native English speakers.

People who try to quantify educational achievement often fail to understand what is meant by equal educational opportunity. The benefit of educational opportunity is not the regurgitation of facts, but rather equal access to a process that develops reasoning, the ability to apply knowledge, and the ability to resolve problems with whatever creative mechanisms you have. If immigrant youngsters who have gotten a diploma can do that, they are on an equal footing with any student who can merely recite that David Crockett died at the Alamo. If they can sit in a classroom and reason, and then get a diploma and participate in the world by making a living, they have earned their academic credentials.

Students report that the INA staff have helped them continue in school by helping them acquire necessary ground-level experience. There are already success stories. Barton recalled a Chinese student from Vietnam

who had never learned to read or write in any language before she entered the Academy's ESL/bilingual classes for Southeast Asian students. She progressed rapidly to mainstream classes and eventually won a Tandy Scholar's award (annual academic awards given to the top 2% of students in Grades 8–12 in each school in the district). Barton believes that this student came to the program with everything she needed to succeed: She had the ability to connect her life experiences with the academic instruction provided by the INA, a tremendous desire to learn and to achieve, and the ability to access knowledge to satisfy her own goals. All she needed was a chance and someone to help her make the connections between what she knew already and the academic content she needed to learn.

Asked to explain the key elements of an effective entry program for immigrant students with limited schooling, Magallanes maintained that

it's the teachers' sense of mission and dedication and the students' attitudes, the sense of school as a place where students all come to learn. But there's another key that cannot be undervalued: program flexibility. We want to find and then support instructional practices that work for these students—not hinder them.

Students and Teachers

Although for centuries immigrants have been drawn to Fort Worth from all over Mexico, recently most Mexican immigrants come from Chihuahua and Tamaulipas, and some come from as far south as Mexico City. Magallanes observed that students in Mexico tend to become self-sufficient at a younger age than do students in the United States.

The culture, which demands that kids contribute to family and self-support, and the availability of popular literacy in Mexico benefit the Latinos who immigrate to the United States. A student who attends *primaria* (elementary school) for 2 years in Mexico learns basic literacy skills. A 14-year-old has to support himself and his family. I think those pressures nurture the development of literacy skills in youngsters who may perceive basic math and

reading comprehension to be much more essential than do their peers in the United States. I attribute that to the economy, the culture, and the expectations held for younger people by the larger society in Latin countries.

Sharon Petty, a teacher at the Carter Riverside Language Center, said that the most challenging part of her job is keeping students long enough so that the knowledge and sense of determination passed on to them yields results. Petty told the following story of José, a young man from El Salvador:

He started with us in the ninth grade. He was wearing shades, which is a no-no in the building. It turned out that he had a glass eye that was awkward, and he looked cross-eyed. We got in touch with a nurse, and an agency was able to get him a new glass eye so that he would feel good about himself. It worked. He eventually took the TAAS (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills), which is really terribly unfair, because so few pass. We tell students what to expect, but they take it anyway in spite of us. José has taken the writing section of the TAAS five times. The last time was a few weeks ago. He asked yesterday if we had heard anything, because he wanted to get his mother to come over from El Salvador for his graduation. He had to know in time to make the necessary travel arrangements. I called and found out today that he finally passed. He'll be graduating this year.

The INA has 11 teachers with ESL endorsements and 1 bilingual certified teacher. All content teachers are certified in their content areas. There are two Spanish-speaking and one Vietnamese-speaking teaching assistants and one Spanish-speaking, one Vietnamese-speaking, and one Arabic-speaking tutor. Other staff members—an off-campus counselor, a part-time school nurse, a campus monitor, cafeteria workers, and custodians—speak Spanish.

As with most high schools in the United States that are committed to educating large numbers of immigrant students, Fort Worth actively recruits bilingual secondary school teachers from a number of places. Although finding and hiring a bilingual, certified secondary school teacher is a challenge, the INA has managed to find excellent noncertified teachers who are knowledgeable about the content they teach and has helped those teacher achieve certification in Texas.

Enrollment Procedures

All students in the Fort Worth school system enroll in school through the Student Placement Center (SPC). If students are middle or high school age, live in the school zones served by the INA, and are beginning English speakers, they attend the INA. If a student is middle or high school age and appears to have had only 5 or fewer years of education, SPC staff interview the family and review any available transcripts from schools in the native country to learn more about the educational experiences of the student. The SPC then does a literacy screening, asking the student to write a paragraph in the native language to determine his or her literacy level. Based on the results of this process, the SPC decides if the student is nonliterate or is undereducated for his or her age, then determines placement at the INA and a course of study.

Credit Accumulation

In the state of Texas, 21 credits are required for high school graduation. At the INA, students can earn up to 6 credits per year, some or all of which count toward graduation. Literate students take 2 periods of ESL (ESL and ESL lab) for 2 graduation credits; English reading (1 graduation credit); world geography or (occasionally) world history (1 graduation credit); algebra or geometry (1 graduation credit); and a computer keyboarding class (1 elective credit). Students with low literacy tend to earn only 5 credits a year, and they take an additional class when they are ready to earn the necessary 21 credits to graduate—ESL and ESL lab (2 credits); native language literacy (1 credit); basic math (for local but not state credit); world geography (1 credit); and art or music (1 credit).

INA staff do not push students with low literacy into earning graduation credits before the students are ready to do the necessary work, Edmonds explained.

We don't rush them to get the full 6 state credits per year, because one of the things we need to do is buy them a little time before they go to the Language Center. Some of them need extra time to become familiar not only with the language and the notion of academic study, but also with the cultural differences between their home and the school. These things are as important as credit accumulation. Students need time—at the beginning anyway—to catch up and adjust to an unfamiliar set of cultures, people, and places. Some learning can be accelerated, and as students accumulate more and more skills and begin to see successes, their attitudes about what they can do fuel their ability to graduate. We certainly don't want to close that option off.

After 1 or 2 years at INA (many students with low literacy stay for 2 years), students move on to a Language Center. In a Language Center, they might take ESL, ESL lab, English reading, sheltered world history, and sheltered algebra or geometry, depending on their academic and English proficiency level and on Language Center resources. Some Language Centers teach algebra in a 2-period block to provide more intensive instruction to students who need more time in math. This program requires extra staffing, and not all schools are capable of offering it. When it is possible, it allows students who begin at low levels to graduate in 4 years if they work hard, grasp everything quickly, and go to summer school.

Professional Development

Each teacher and teacher aide in the program is required by the district to receive 20 hours of professional development during the school year. The 20 hours must occur during the school day. In addition, teachers receive an ESL stipend if they attend 12 additional hours of professional development (6 hours must be directly related to improving services for English language learners), which might include attendance at such state conferences as the Middle School State Conference. Program staff also attend many professional development opportunities, provided by the district's Bilingual/ESL Department, and other inservice and workshop options.

INA staff work together to decide on which areas to focus professional development for each year. In 1995, one area of interest was alternative ways to assess English language learners. Teachers met in discussion groups to examine selected books and articles. Beginning in 1996, the centerpiece of the professional development program became the Dimensions of Learning model offered by Robert J. Marzano (1992) and others (Marzano et al., 1988), which focuses on lifelong learning and on strategies students need to learn. The model is based on a theory that learning involves the interaction of five types (or dimensions) of thinking, which characterize the way the mind works. These dimensions are as follows:

1. developing positive attitudes and perceptions about learning;
2. acquiring and integrating knowledge;
3. extending and refining knowledge;
4. using knowledge meaningfully; and
5. developing productive habits of mind.

Part of the model involves developing alternative assessments that are effective with English language learners. These include ways to assess students' learning strategies (Marzano, 1992).

Suzanne Barton meets with teachers regularly in an ongoing reflective inquiry group to help them develop ways to teach their students strategies for learning. Many of these strategies are designed for those students who come with limited schooling and low literacy skills. As do all students, students with low literacy need to know strategies to acquire the academic knowledge and skills necessary for later life. The teachers also plan to study peer mediation—to learn both how to handle conflict themselves and how to help their students handle it. In short, professional development at the INA is intensive, ongoing, and focused on the particular needs of English language learners, including those with low literacy.

Materials Available

- INA Mission Statement and Overview

- Rationale for the International Newcomer Academy Stand-Alone Facility

- Suggestions for Student Performance Indicators (in progress)

- Bulletin 100: Graduation Standards and Catalog of Courses and Materials, Grades 6-12. Department of Curriculum Production and Distribution, Fort Worth Independent School District, Fort Worth, Texas.

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Implications

Program Delivery Strategies

What these students require is a supportive, consistent, and integrative educational en vironment that addresses their specific linguistic, academic, social, and affective needs and that promotes positive achievement. (Walsh, 1991, pp. 7-8)

In previous chapters, we described the circumstances and needs of adolescent immigrants with limited prior schooling, focusing particularly on those of five such students. We profiled four programs that have developed course sequences, curricula, and instructional strategies to promote students' movement through secondary school to postsecondary education and work. In this chapter we discuss the essential features of effective programs for these students, based on previous research and the four programs profiled. Although little research has been done on the necessary components of secondary school programs for students with limited prior schooling, two studies that outline features of successful high school programs for nonnative English speakers provide some guidance.

Based on a study of six high schools in California and Arizona, Lucas, Henze, and Donato (1990) identified characteristics of schools that promote success among students whose first language is Spanish. These characteristics, which group into four general areas, can be extended to apply to programs serving immigrant students of all backgrounds. The characteristics are as follows:

• *Affective factors:* School staff are committed to the educational success of immigrant students, have high expectations for them, and publicly recognize their achievement. The students' native languages and cultures are valued throughout the school. Some of the staff have backgrounds similar to those of the students.

• *Instruction:* A wide variety of courses are offered, in the students' native languages and in English. Students are not trapped in low-level classes; advanced content courses are made available through instruction in the native language or through sheltered content instruction in English. Teachers are proficient in bilingual and ESL teaching strategies for secondary school students.

• *Comprehensive services:* Counselors speak the students' native languages and have the same or similar cultural backgrounds. Counselors are informed about post-secondary educational opportunities for immigrant students and can guide them to prepare for a college program. School staff are genuinely eager to get parents of immigrant students involved in their children's education.

• *Professional development:* School administrators provide leadership by becoming knowledgeable about research and practice in bilingual and ESL education at the secondary school level and by encouraging measures to strengthen curriculum and instruction. High priority is placed on professional development for all school staff; training is designed to help teachers and counselors serve immigrant students more effectively.

In a similar fashion, Walsh (1991) gives detailed recommendations for the design of effective programs for immigrant adolescents with limited prior schooling and low literacy, based on both research and first-hand experience with such students. Salient recommendations may be summarized as follows:

• *Structure and organization of program:* An ungraded course structure allows students to learn at their own pace and avoid the stigma of overage grade placements. Small classes (no more than 15 students) allow individualized attention from teachers. Literacy and content courses taught in students' native languages are thematically coordinated to encourage transfer of learning across content areas. Double-period ESL classes follow up on thematic content and skill development begun in native language courses. Bilingual and ESL teachers have common planning periods so they can coordinate their work across courses. Literacy-level students have equal access with mainstream students to physical education, art, and music. Well-defined exit criteria measure students' readiness for transfer to bilingual or mainstream classes.

• *Progress toward the high school diploma:* Individual learning plans, with goals set jointly by teacher and student, lead to either a regular or

an alternative high school diploma. Literacy and content courses are appropriately designed and taught to permit students to earn full credit towards diploma requirements. Alternative means of gaining credit are available (e.g., independent study, community-based projects, internships). An occupational, career-awareness component offers functional, hands-on experience through which students acquire job readiness skills. This experience also fosters students' linguistic and cognitive growth. Summer programs promote students' development in a less structured and more individualized environment than is possible during the school year.

• *Older students:* Flexible scheduling (e.g., varied day shifts and night classes) permits students to combine academic study and work or work-related experience—vocational education, job training, supervised work–study. Students age 18 or older can earn a high school diploma by completing at least 2 years in a high school-based program, then transferring to a General Educational Development (GED) program.

• *Comprehensive support services:* These services include regular, individual meetings with guidance and adjustment counselors who speak the students' native languages, group counseling, frequent meetings of counselors with teachers and parents, home–school liaisons, established links with community-based agencies, peer tutoring, and mentoring by sympathetic adults.

From these two studies and the four programs described in chapter 3, we have extracted the following set of features that must be considered in the design and implementation of any program for secondary school students with limited prior schooling:

• location and duration of the program;
• structure of the program;
• registration and placement procedures;
• criteria for transition to other programs;
• follow-up after transition to other programs;

- comprehensive services and family involvement; and
- staff background and professional development.

Location and Duration of the Program

A common strategy for accommodating adolescent immigrants with limited prior schooling is to place them in one of several specialized learning environments—in an all-day or half-day newcomer school or program, in one of several special wings of a mainstream school, in a separate school, in classes taught in the native language, or in classes in which content taught in English is adapted and sheltered. Programs vary in the types of specialized classes offered, the ways in which students are integrated with students from other language and cultural backgrounds and of other ages, and the length of time students attend special programs or classes before making the transition to mainstream classes.

Some controversy surrounds the question of the physical location of these programs. Friedlander (1991), in a discussion of newcomer programs, summarizes the opposing views. Setting up a program in a separate, self-contained site permits consolidation of staff and resources. The program can serve a large geographical area while also focusing on the special needs of the newcomer students, many of whom have received little, if any, formal education. Because all the students are immigrants, no one stands out as a foreigner.

Opponents of separate-site programs feel that separate sites deprive immigrant students of interaction with their English-speaking counterparts and limit their access to the kinds of courses and activities open to students in regular schools. Opponents also argue that transition from a separate-site school is harder than transition from a special program within a mainstream school. According to Friedlander, "Most newcomer programs set a one-year limit on participation in order to minimize the period of isolation from a mainstream program" (1991, p. 9).

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Ultimately, a balance must be struck between two goals: (1) providing a specialized learning environment that allows immigrant students to learn English and come up to grade level in content courses without slowing down other students; and (2) permitting immigrant students full access to core academic content and facilitating their social integration with mainstream peers. The location of the program must be determined by local needs and resources and by prior experiences of the program personnel. Two of the four focal programs described in chapter 3 have adopted variations on the strategy of providing separate facilities. The other two use strategies that allow a greater degree of integration with mainstream programs.

The International Newcomer Academy (INA) in Fort Worth, Texas, is housed separately from the district's Language Centers, which are located in mainstream secondary schools. All students at the INA are at a beginning level of English proficiency; some have limited literacy, and some have limited prior schooling. They may remain at the INA for 1 semester or up to 2 years until they reach an intermediate level of English proficiency. At that point they transfer to a neighborhood school, where they can continue to take specialized courses in a Language Center.

In Fairfax County, Virginia, transitional high schools are housed in regular school buildings, but the school day runs from 3:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. to accommodate the work schedules of the students. All the students in these schools are 17 years of age or older, and all have limited prior schooling and low literacy. Students usually remain in a transitional high school for 1 to 2 years before going on to an alternative high school in the district, where they can enroll in the higher level courses needed for high school graduation.

The INA in Fort Worth and the transitional high schools in Fairfax County, Virginia, were established as programs separated from regular school facilities only after advantages and disadvantages had been carefully weighed. After a decade of experience with programs in neighborhood secondary schools, educators established the INA to

provide focused, personalized instruction for newcomers and to act as a kind of buffer during the first stages of acculturation. In Fairfax County, the ESL program staff experimented with various models before settling on the current design. The six transitional high schools serve students who must work during regular school hours. However, for those who can attend them, daytime courses are available through the ESL program in every neighborhood secondary school.

At Elgin High School in Illinois, a program for Hispanic students with low literacy and limited prior schooling is housed in the same building as a transitional bilingual program and mainstream classes. Thus, as soon as their English language skills are strong, the students who entered with low literacy can take courses with students of various backgrounds. They can also complete high school in 4 years by taking ESL courses, content courses taught in Spanish, and sheltered content courses. In short, these students are not required to take a core mainstream course.

The Spring Branch Independent School District in Texas established a supplementary transitional bilingual program (Español Aumentativo) for Hispanics in six secondary schools with the highest concentration of immigrant students. This program is the most integrative of the four. In addition to ESL courses, the program features a 1- to 2-year Functional Spanish course especially for students with low literacy and limited schooling. Eventually, all of these students make the transition to mainstream classes.

Structure of the Program

The ultimate educational goal for all immigrant students, while they are still in school, is that they perform well in regular content and elective classes with their native-English-speaking peers. However, as Clair (1994) notes, the mainstream classroom places threefold demands on immigrant adolescents with limited schooling:

- The interactional nature of mainstream, all-English classrooms demands that students understand and use such conventions of classroom behavior as turn-taking and appropriate demonstration of knowledge.
- The instructional demands, which are relatively constant across subject areas, require students to grasp the nature of learning and classroom work.
- Cognitive demands require students to assimilate and apply concepts and frames of reference in a variety of subject areas. (p. 5)

Adolescent immigrants with limited schooling often lack these skills. To prepare themselves for academic success, these students need specially designed courses that focus specifically on literacy skills—in the native language or English—and study skills or learning strategies, native-language-medium content courses that permit accelerated learning, and sheltered content courses in English taught with instructional strategies that make the content more accessible for English language learners.

Students with low literacy need immediate help with their literacy skills. Many teachers and researchers advocate developing native-language literacy skills before second-language literacy skills. Walsh (1991) states, "since for newly arrived students, experiences and knowledge in the United States cultural context and the English language are limited, literacy is best learned and developed first in the native language" (p. 3). Bialystok and Cummins (1991) write, "There tends to be a strong relationship between literacy levels in first and second languages" (p. 227). Cummins (1991) states that generic reading skills already acquired in the first language may transfer to the second provided that the learner has reached critical thresholds in first language reading skills and second language proficiency. As a practical matter, however, when a program must serve students with low literacy from several language backgrounds, administrators may not be able to establish native-language literacy courses for all of them.

Many language researchers have argued that students' success in school is compromised if instruction in academic content is postponed until the student has mastered English (Collier, 1992; Cummins, 1981;

García, 1991). Collier (1995) stresses the importance of uninterrupted cognitive development.

Many studies have found that cognitive and academic development in the first language has an extremely important and positive effect on second language schooling .... Academic skills, literacy development, concept formation, subject knowledge, and learning strategies developed in the first language will transfer to the second language. (p. 6)

Where possible, therefore, effective instruction may involve academic content classes taught in the native languages of the students. If this is not feasible (due to lack of resources or the presence of a highly diverse student population), the alternative is to provide a range of sheltered content courses in English. Thomas and Collier (1995) have found that when first language instructional support cannot be provided for students entering U.S. schools at the secondary school level, programs meeting certain criteria may still be effective. Included among these is the teaching of the second language through academic content.

One educational practice that is seriously questioned by some program designers is that of routinely placing students with low literacy into a conventional vocational track. This may not be in the best interests of the students, because it postpones or precludes entirely the possibility of college or university study. Moreover, many vocational courses place heavy demands on the literacy skills of students and are therefore unsuitable for students with low literacy.

The programs described in chapter 3 feature courses that progress along a continuum from maximum support for students to greater independence and increasing integration into the mainstream. Of the four programs, Elgin High School in Illinois has the most extensive array of specialized courses. Three strands of courses are offered: Spanish-medium, sheltered, and mainstream. The rate of learning can be accelerated in the Spanish-medium courses to help students come up to grade level. For the most advanced sheltered courses, teachers adapt as necessary the textbooks used in mainstream courses that cover the same content. The three strands are parallel in content; this system al-

lows students to stay at grade level or transfer from one stream to another. In practice, some students with low literacy do not acquire enough academic English proficiency to make the transiti n to mainstream courses. They can still graduate from high school, however, by taking native language and sheltered content courses.

The literacy program in Fairfax County, Virginia, uses an ESL approach because of the various native language backgrounds of its students. To serve the growing number of students with low literacy, program planners developed Concepts Courses in social studies, science, and math. These are sheltered courses with high school-level academic content taught in English, some of which can be taken for graduation credit. Literacy-level students proceed in stages from ESL courses and Concepts Courses to mainstream courses, but they take more than 4 years to complete high school requirements. If necessary, students age 22 and older can complete high school through adult education courses.

The INA program strongly emphasizes orientation of newcomers to American school culture, while developing the academic skills they will need in mainstream courses. The INA uses an integrated, thematic approach to content learning and shows students how their life experiences can help them in their academic studies. The curriculum includes a one-year ESL course that meets for 2 periods daily, and content courses in world geography, basic math, and computer keyboarding. Students make the transition to a middle school or high school Language Center when they reach an intermediate level of English proficiency.

In the Spring Branch program, the year-long Functional Spanish course develops Spanish literacy skills and builds basic academic concepts. This is supplemented by ESL courses. Spring Branch has just begun a summer program to equip middle school graduates with the reading and writing skills needed for English-medium high school science classes in the following fall.

One of the Spring Branch high schools instituted block scheduling in 1995. In the revised timetable, students take four 90-minute courses rather than the traditional six courses offered daily in American high schools. This system benefits all students, especially those who lag behind their peers linguistically and academically, and it allows students to focus on fewer subjects at one time.

Registration and Placement Procedures

Writing about the identification and placement of newcomers, Friedlander (1991) emphasizes points that are crucial for immigrant adolescents with limited schooling:

A correct assessment of newcomer students' needs and of the program best suited to fill these needs is not only the first step, but possibly the most crucial one, in newcomer students' educational experiences in this country. (p. 8)

Data from registration procedures help to make up a student profile, providing an objective basis for the student's educational program. Early identification of immigrant adolescents with limited prior schooling is necessary so that students' needs may be served as effectively as possible. Identification entails assessment of both native language and English proficiency, and evaluation of prior schooling. Educators should inquire about the amount and kind of prior schooling the immigrant student has had in the home country and in the United States. The results of the inquiry can supplement transcript files. Evaluators must also know about the schooling of parents and siblings in order to determine what kinds of academic support the student can find at home.

The location of the intake center—whether at a central office or at neighborhood schools—is not a critical factor, as long as the center is conveniently located and adequately staffed with appropriate personnel. Interpreters should be readily available so that students and their families may be interviewed in their native language if necessary. In

programs where large numbers of students from a particular language group are served, registration materials should be translated into that language. Elgin High School, for example, has Spanish versions of all the materials in its registration packet.

Assessment of native language literacy is a crucial factor in the intake process, because prior schooling in the home country does not guarantee students' proficiency in academic language. Standardized tests may be used, if they are available in students' native languages. Español Aumentativo uses the reading comprehension portion of the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education (SABE) for assessing reading. This assessment is supplemented by a writing sample in Spanish. Elgin High School uses a district-developed basic Spanish literacy test, supplemented by an observation of how well the student can read the Spanish-language registration forms. Fairfax County requires a writing sample. The INA requires a writing sample for all students who have had 5 years or less of prior schooling.

If preliminary screening procedures show that a student has limited prior schooling and low literacy in the native language, and little or no experience with English, evaluators may not need to assess English proficiency. In those cases where testing of English proficiency is justified, evaluators should test listening comprehension and oral production, and ask for a writing sample from those students who can write in English.

Many programs incorporate in their intake procedures testing of mathematical knowledge and skills, but such testing is impossible if students cannot read the language of the test. At Elgin High School, if students have just arrived in the United States and speak no English, they are not given the math test (the Monroe Test of Math Achievement).

Transition to Other Programs and Follow-Up After Transition

Some programs for recent immigrants (both those with limited schooling and those with age-appropriate schooling) have come under scrutiny because of their haphazard exit policies (Collier, 1992; Romo, 1993). Students at newcomer schools in California, for example, may not enter mainstream classrooms for 8 weeks, 3 semesters, or ever, depending on test scores and teacher evaluations. When those students finally do transfer, they may not receive appropriate support or monitoring (L. Olsen, personal communication, October 1995). The four focal programs in this study all feature a well-defined progression from specialized to mainstream courses, with monitoring and support of transfer students. The majority of students move through the specialized courses in a timely fashion, but few students complete high school in the traditional 8 semesters.

In the Fairfax County literacy program, students can complete ESL and sheltered courses at a transitional high school within 1 or 2 years, then proceed to a partial or wholly mainstream program (at either a regular or alternative high school) to earn their high school diploma. This progression can be made within 5 or 6 years of initial registration. Students unable to finish high school by age 22 can fulfill state graduation requirements in adult education courses. Some students in adult education centers prepare for the General Educational Development (GED) examination, but the large majority choose to complete the coursework for the high school diploma. Program personnel promote the concept that all teachers need to be involved in literacy development. Teachers of all subjects—ESL, sheltered, and mainstream—at all curriculum levels are encouraged to continue building the reading and writing skills of students.

The INA program had been in operation for only 2 years at the time of the site visit conducted for this study. Although it is too soon to evaluate the success of students' transition from INA to the Language

Centers at neighborhood schools, INA and Language Center teachers have already developed a closely coordinated process. Field trips prior to the transfer help the students to become familiar with their new school. Detailed student profiles help the receiving schools understand the students' academic and developmental levels at the time of transfer. The INA and Language Center teachers discuss ways to ensure the students' continued success. Students take ESL and content courses at the Language Centers, then progress to mainstream courses in the same school.

In the first year of the Elgin High School program, students with limited prior schooling take Functional Spanish, ESL, and Spanish-medium content courses. In the second and third years, these students have a mix of ESL courses, Spanish-medium courses, and sheltered content courses. Usually, after 3 years of schooling in the United States, English language learners (but not all students with low literacy) are ready to take at least some of their courses in the mainstream strand.

At Elgin, students who are mainstreamed are closely monitored. A learning profile is developed for each student to help teachers determine student readiness for transfer. The students and the receiving teachers are briefed on what to expect, students visit the mainstream classes, and samples of the students' work are sent to the receiving teachers. After the students transfer, ESL staff monitor the students' performance and arrange for student counseling or tutoring when needed. If transferred students begin to have trouble, ESL staff and mainstream teachers meet and work out solutions.

In lieu of offering a strand of sheltered content courses for English language learners, Spring Branch offers mainstream classes taught by teachers who have been trained to use special instructional techniques for learners who are still developing their English proficiency, particularly their literacy skills. Students receive additional support from bilingual aides during class and in after-school tutoring.

Comprehensive Services and Family Involvement

Like most programs for immigrant students, those designed specifically for adolescents with limited prior schooling offer many services in addition to language and academic instruction. Schools must reach out to parents and establish regular channels of communication with them. Schools increasingly assume the role of coordinators of community services. To provide students with a variety of post-secondary opportunities, schools establish links with the business community and with other educational institutions.

Immigrant parents may have difficulty becoming involved in their children's education. Language barriers, lack of familiarity with American schools, and expectations regarding the appropriate roles of parents and school personnel that differ from expectations in this country can all inhibit parental involvement. Schools try in many ways to break down these barriers. As in many programs, Spring Branch and Elgin High School refer parents to community service agencies when necessary. In the Spring Branch program, a bilingual caseworker sets up meetings and makes home visits with students' families. The parents and schools have produced a bilingual program guide for parents, and a video series on parent meetings was shown on local cable television. Participation in parent meetings is steadily growing.

Students with limited schooling and low literacy often come from rural settings with small populations. The environment of their native village is often completely unlike the environment of their new urban American high school. INA set up a separate newcomer program to reduce immigrant student stress. Other schools address newcomer stress at the mainstream school. Even in large schools, bilingual staff help students adjust more easily. The program at Elgin High School employs many Spanish-speaking personnel—counselors, administrators, secretaries, a social worker, a home liaison, and a nurse and nurse assistant.

Programs devise formal and informal arrangements to encourage these adolescents to stay in school, complete their high school education (no matter how long it takes), and pursue additional education after high school. Students at the INA participate in Vital Link, a district program that acquaints students with the world of work and shows them the importance of a good education. In Fairfax County, program administrators try to help older students locate funding to defray tuition costs for adult education courses. In Illinois, the Elgin Community College has an active outreach program that targets older students in Elgin High School. Scholarships are available through a local professional organization and from other fundraising efforts.

Staff Background and Professional Development

Immigrant students must learn in a linguistically and culturally unfamiliar environment, constructing understanding without the background knowledge that their classmates employ to make assumptions and process new information. (Buchanan & Helman, 1993, p. 1)

Educators who work with immigrant adolescents must maintain high academic standards and have high expectations of their students, but at the same time they must teach with sensitivity and compassion. They must be knowledgeable about their students' language and cultural backgrounds, students' personal circumstances and strengths, and students' language, literacy, and academic needs. Both ESL and content teachers must be familiar with the basic concepts and theories underlying ESL instruction. Saragoza (1989) suggests that in schools with large immigrant populations, all personnel must participate in professional development activities to improve their work with these students. (See also the volume in this series by González and Darling-Hammond, which discusses professional development for teachers of immigrant youth.)

Schools must also try to hire teachers and classroom aides that share language and cultural backgrounds with the students, or staff with

cross-cultural experience and understanding. Alternative and accelerated certification procedures would aid in placing bilingual paraprofessionals in the classroom quickly and effectively (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1994). Mentoring programs can also be set up for teachers and students. Immigrant adults and students who have adjusted to U.S. life can inform teachers about the culture and language of the newcomer students (National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1994).

Examples of professional development activities drawn from the four focal programs of chapter 3 illustrate some of the current trends. Traditionally, professional development activities for teachers of immigrant students have been designed for teachers with ESL or bilingual certification. In recent years, however, teachers of mainstream content courses are included as well. When schools and districts offer sheltered content courses, they often staff these courses with content teachers who receive additional training that enables them to work effectively with English language learners. An added benefit is that if a sheltered math or science course, for example, is taught by a teacher certified in math or science, the course may carry graduation credit. In Fairfax County, instructors of the sheltered FAST Math courses are certified in math. In Elgin High School, all teachers of sheltered classes are certified in their content area or are working toward certification. In addition, all are also certified in ESL or have received supplementary professional development in ESL strategies of teaching.

Some programs take the extra step of training mainstream teachers to work more effectively with English language learners. In Español Aumentativo, students move from Functional Spanish and ESL courses to language-sensitive mainstream content courses, in which teachers adjust their instructional techniques to accommodate the needs of the nonnative English speakers in the class.

Professional development takes various forms. In Fairfax County, professional development has a dual focus: expanding teachers' awareness of the abilities and needs of immigrant students, and developing teach-

ers' ability to adapt curricula, materials, and strategies in order to meet those needs. These goals are met in part by collaborative planning and teaching that teams ESL teachers with content teachers, and by discipline-specific meetings in which teachers exchange ideas and strategies. Further help is available for content teachers in inservice meetings that deal with such topics as adapting texts and commercially prepared materials for English language learners. Elgin High School arranges shared planning time for teachers each day. Español Aumentativo also relies on nontraditional means of professional development: common planning periods to allow teachers to work together, regular meetings of the Functional Spanish teachers, class observations by colleagues from other schools who provide feedback, and weekly study groups in which teachers learn and practice strategies. At the INA, teachers form study groups and select topics for in-depth exploration and discussion.

Teachers also attend workshops and seminars outside the school, many of which are sponsored by the bilingual/ESL department of the local school district. Attendance at regional and national conferences of such organizations as the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) helps teachers to broaden their professional networks and remain knowledgeable about developments in the field.

Because few teachers are certified in a content area and in ESL or bilingual education, particularly at the secondary school level, program planners must encourage their teachers to obtain formal qualifications. At Elgin, special bonuses, tuition grants, and other incentives promote teacher participation in appropriate professional development activities, and content area teachers can obtain ESL or bilingual credentials.

Fairfax County's Professional Development Schools program, sponsored by the school district and George Mason University, trains ESL and content teachers to become mentors for incoming teachers in high schools with the largest language minority enrollments. At the INA, teachers benefit from a district policy that awards a stipend to those who participate in more than a minimum amount of professional

development devoted to improving services for English language learners.

Although a consensus is emerging about the necessary characteristics of professional development for educators serving language minority students (see the volume in this series by González and Darling-Hammond), each district and each school must find the best means of providing effective training, motivating staff participation, and reinforcing positive changes in teachers' attitudes and practice.

A Proposed Composite Model for Delivery of Services

Immigrant secondary school students who are learning English and have limited formal schooling need comprehensive services to accommodate a range of needs that include schooling, socialization, and language development. An effective program must be a composite that incorporates not only instructional intervention, but also parental and family involvement, support services, and professional development. Each of these four components should include features targeted specifically to the needs of students with limited prior schooling.

This composite model, developed as a guide for conceptualizing the delivery of services, is shown in Figure 1. The four major components function within a climate of cultural acceptance. The model incorporates programmatic suggestions offered in the literature and illustrated, at least in part, by the focal programs of chapter 3. The model represents an ideal, of course. Certainly, most programs cannot claim all of the suggested features. However, when programs for students with limited schooling are evaluated against such a model, educators will be better able to judge program effectiveness.

Figure 1. A Proposed Composite Model for Delivery of Services

Climate of Cultural Acceptance

Instructional
- intake assessment
- special programming
- use of first language
- special intervention & continuing education

Parental/Familial
- informing & involving parents about & in affairs of the school
- parent training

Intervention

Involvement

Staff
- training in second language acquisition theory
- training in ESL in conjunction with content
- alternative certification
- consortiums between districts
- cultural sensitivity training

Support
- academic & career counseling
- community college collaborations
- health/mental & physical services & counseling
- collaboration with social service agencies

Development

Services

Conclusion

The Challenge to Educators

In this book we have outlined the characteristics and needs of immigrant adolescents with limited prior schooling, including criteria for determining which immigrant students might be considered "low-schooled." Classification of a student as low-schooled varies across districts, because this classification is based on criteria established at the local level. Generally, these are students who (1) have had less than age-appropriate formal schooling in their home or adopted country (i.e., they are three or more grades behind their age-level peers), (2) demonstrate limited literacy and academic skills in their native language, and (3) have little or no proficiency in English. Additionally, a majority of these students are from rural or impoverished backgrounds and may have experienced the trauma of war.

Given the wide variation among the students themselves and the lack of uniformity in locally determined classification criteria, a precise profile of these students is problematic. The most important distinction that we observed is between those students who have had some formal education (and thus have some basic literacy skills) and those who have had no formal education. The latter students, often referred to as "nonliterate," "preliterate," or "literacy" students, present the greatest challenge to schools.

School districts often place students in age-appropriate grade levels, regardless of the students' educational histories and skill levels. As a result, secondary schools that receive immigrant adolescents with limited schooling face an array of new demands and must take the following actions:

- teach basic concepts and skills normally taught in the elementary grades;
- work effectively with students who have not been socialized into the culture of schooling in any country;

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- locate, adapt, or develop curricula and instructional materials that are age-appropriate and content-appropriate for a diverse group of students;

- connect students and families with appropriate health and human services;

- address the needs of students, many of whom must work at a paying job while attending school;

- create a climate of acceptance of diversity throughout the school;

- design program options that allow students to earn a high school diploma or to continue their education in post-high school institutions; and

- help teachers, counselors, and other school personnel who may not be accustomed to working with this student population.

In spite of a limited body of research and few successful program models on which to draw, schools in various parts of the United States are attempting to understand the needs of immigrant adolescents with limited prior schooling and to design programs to meet their needs. Four such programs are described in this book. From these programs and others, certain promising program strategies emerge: separate or partially separate programs for newcomer students; schedule alternatives; specialized content courses (including native language instruction, ESL instruction, and sheltered content instruction) that earn graduation credits; close monitoring of student progress; additional programs that provide postsecondary options; professional development activities for teachers and other school staff; and work with families, communities, and organizations outside the school. One of the most important features of a promising program is flexibility.

Given the research available, we believe that in the education of immigrant students with limited prior schooling, three major areas deserve greater attention: adolescents's ocialization and school behavior; promising programs, instructional cu. cula, and materials; and staff development and support.

Adolescence and School Behavior

Students of different socioeconomic or cultural backgrounds may not share the same experiences of adolescence. In order to develop educational programs for immigrant adolescents, educators must make a comparative analysis of adolescence across cultures, examining the biological, psychological, and cultural attributes of this crucial stage of life.

Related to the need for research on adolescence is the need for comprehensive work on cross-cultural models of school behavior. Although there are a number of anecdotes about different conceptions of school behavior in different cultures, there is little research on varying cultural conceptions of appropriate ways to behave in school.

Promising Programs, Instructional Curricula, and Materials

Research that further identifies promising practices, evaluates existing programs, and clearly defines problems associated with educating immigrant adolescents with limited schooling would be a valuable contribution to the current knowledge base. Although much of the available research has implications for serving these students effectively (Friedlander, 1991; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990; Minicucci & Olsen, 1992), few studies exist that focus specifically on these students and those who teach them. The practitioners we talked with expressed a desire for more research on effective practices, which would give them the necessary tools with which to continue their work. Additionally, they want some assurance that their approaches and strategies are the most appropriate for their students.

One of the primary challenges for program directors and staff involved in developing programs for immigrant students with limited schooling is the need to identify or create appropriate curricula and instructional materials. All of the programs profiled in this study had either developed curricula and materials on their own or had pieced them

together from many different sources. Most available materials were not designed for use with this population, so they often have to be adapted. Whereas we are not advocating standardization of teaching approaches and materials, we do see a distinct need for collection and development of curricula and materials designed specifically for the age and skill level of these students.

Staff Development and Support

There is also a tremendous need for highly specific professional development and support for teachers of students with limited schooling, because they can experience a great deal of frustration and "burnout." Regardless of how dedicated teachers are to providing challenging, high-quality instruction and to helping their students earn high school diplomas, inadequate preparation can diminish their effectiveness.

In addition to needing specialized learning opportunities, teachers also need support from administrators—not only moral support and encouragement, but also adequate staffing and funding of programs for these students. Teachers also need support from social service agencies and from the larger community to assist in meeting the noninstructional needs of the students and their families. Thus, there is an urgent need for research concerning the kinds of services and support that might help alleviate the frustrations and challenges that teachers face.

In spite of the many unknowns and the dearth of research to guide educators in meeting the enormous challenge of providing sensitive, effective education for immigrant adolescents with limited schooling, educators in the programs we observed drew upon what they already knew or could learn about effective educational practices. They adapted and supplemented this knowledge to create programs that were helping students progress toward their educational goals. The students themselves, while lacking adequate academic backgrounds, brought to school rich life experiences, the determination to succeed, and the motivation to rise to the challenge. With educators and students both contributing the best they have to offer, these programs and others like them are experiencing success and serving as a rich resource for schools and communities that face similar challenges.

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Guide for Student Interviews

_____ (first name only), some friends of mine are writing a book about how to help students such as you get a good education. They would like to include some information about the lives of real students. Would you tell us about yourself?

Where were you born? What was it like when you lived there? Tell me about your house there. Who lived with you?

(Try to get a graphic picture of the area [village, city neighborhood]; ask probing questions as necessary.)

Did you start school there? How many years did you go to school there? Tell me about your school there. What was it like? What did you study? Who was your teacher? What did you like about your school? Were there things that you didn't like? (If yes) Tell me about them.

What grade were you in when you left _____?

Where did you go when you left _____? Who went with you? Tell me about your life in _____. Did you go to school there? What school did you go to? What was school like? What did you study? Who was your teacher? What did you like about that school? Were there things that you didn't like? (If yes) Tell me about them.

What grade were you in when you left _____?

Where did you go when you left _____? Who went with you? Tell me about your life in _____. Did you go to school there? What school did you go to? What was school like? What did you study? Who was your teacher? What did you like about that school? Were there things that you didn't like? (If yes) Tell me about them.

(CONTINUE IN A SIMILAR MANNER UNTIL THE STUDENT HAS DESCRIBED HIS OR HER EDUCATIONAL HISTORY UP TO THE PRESENT TIME.)

You are now in _____ grade at _____ school. Tell me about your life here and about your school. First, tell me about your life here. Whom do you live with? How old are they? What do you like about where you live? What do you dislike about where you live?

Now tell me about your school here. Please describe a typical school day. You get up in the morning at _____ (how the student gets to school, what the student does first when gets to school, first period, etc., throughout the day, what the student does after school and until bedtime).

What do you do on weekends?

After you leave _____ school, what do you want to do (e.g., kind of job, career, other)? (Probe to see what the student ultimately aspires to do in adult life.)

Would you like to tell us anything else about your life?

What, in your opinion, would help you most to get a good education?

What can people do to help you in your new life here?

Thank you very much for telling us about your life and your schooling. (Add anything else that you feel is appropriate).

Index

Through the Golden Door

Educational Approaches for Immigrant Adolescents With Limited Schooling

by Betty J. Mace-Matluck, Rosalind Alexander-Kasparik, and Robin M. Queen

A growing number of recent immigrant students enter middle school and high school with little or no formal schooling and with low literacy skills. These students may be three or more years below their age-appropriate grade levels in their school-related knowledge and skills. As a result, they often have difficulty in secondary school and do not have time to fulfill high school graduation requirements before they reach the maximum age for high school attendance. This book provides guidelines for school administrators and teachers who have such students in their programs. The authors describe the backgrounds, educational experiences, and needs of five such students (from Haiti, El Salvador, and Vietnam), profile four programs designed to serve them (in Illinois, Texas, and Virginia), and identify the critical features of secondary school programs for these students. Program contacts and resources are provided.