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"ME NO MORE COME": PERSISTENCE AND QUITTING AMONG ADULT SPANISH-SPEAKING ENGLISH LEARNERS

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“ME NO MORE COME”: PERSISTENCE AND QUITTING AMONG ADULT SPANISH-SPEAKING ENGLISH LEARNERS

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사랑하는 효정, 윤, 건에게

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore what makes adult Spanish-speaking English learners (ELs) stay or drop out of English class in a non-profit English literacy center in a city in a southwestern state in the United States. Findings reveal that adult English learners' decisions towards staying or dropping out are complex, multifaceted, and dynamic. Superacion (Spanish word meaning self-improvement, self-actualization) was central to adult English learners' decisions in investing for English learning. ELs' multifaceted socio-cultural backgrounds, needs, and motivational factors are dynamic and fluid, consisting of both cognitive and affective aspects. When adult ELs dropped out, the data show that affective aspects play a strong role. When adult ELs stayed in the program, cognitive aspects played a strong role. The feelings of being cared about, learning something new, and having a good teacher that contributed to Superacion influenced ELs to stay. Teacher apathy and feeling oppressed influenced ELs to drop out.

Chapter 1: Introduction

"Me no more come." – Jose, ESL student

"Do you know how smart I am in Spanish? Of course, you don't." – Gloria, Modern Family

A Broken Car

It was 8 PM, the sky was pitch black. The church classroom where I taught English as a Second Language (ESL) to adults in Oklahoma City was empty as the students had all gone home. Mine was the lone car in the parking lot and my engine refused to start.

Suddenly I remembered a colleague's comments, "John, please be careful at where you teach. That area has one of the highest crime rates in the state." But I was stuck and alone in an empty parking lot. In the darkness, using my iPhone's flashlight, I looked at the class roster. There was a student named Domingo who always participated and seemed like a nice guy.

"Hola," Domingo answered.

"Hello Domingo, this is John Kim, your teacher," I said.

Domingo showed up at the parking lot 10 minutes later.

He opened the hood and looked at the engine.

"Any wrong sound?" Domingo asked.

"Phu-shu, phu-she, phu-shu, sounds when I stop my car," I replied.

"Hmm, it might be the gas pump, I'll call a friend."

Domingo had a short conversation in Spanish over the phone with his friend. Domingo's friend was a car mechanic, he said that he would tow my car from the parking lot to his shop to repair, then I could pick it up tomorrow.

I asked, "Would it be better to call my insurance company and have them tow my car? My insurance company can pay for the towing fee."

Domingo said, "Towing is free, he never charges for towing. He once towed my car for a long, long way for free. Besides, we are friends."

I thought about being in the "most dangerous area" and I did not really know Domingo all that well. I mean, he was a diligent student, but did I know him well enough to hand over the keys of my car?

On the other hand, he had dropped everything to come rescue his ESL teacher in the middle of the night.

"Okay, Domingo thank you very much, so we can pick up my car together tomorrow at your friend's repair shop?"

"Yes."

"Great, how much is the cost to repair?"

"Let's say 110 dollars."

"Check or cash?"

"Cash," Domingo laughed.

So we made a deal and Domingo gave me a ride back home, a "side trip" for him of probably 40 miles. In the car, we talked about that night's class material that was

about house layout with several vocabulary words such as *patio, yard, bedroom, bathroom, living room* and *den*.

To practice what we learned, I asked, "How many bedrooms do you have? Do you have a patio in your house?"

"No, teacher, 2 bedroom, and no patio, no yard, I live in a trailer."

The following morning, a friend drove me to the repair shop in downtown. The closer I got, the more uneasy I became. The repair shop was very close to a big homeless shelter area in a shabby part of downtown. The shops around the repair shop had broken windows and no signs. The car *repair-shop* also had no signs, no windows, but it was actually an abandoned gas station. My car was among five or six others scattered around the lot.

When my friend and I got out of the car, Domingo just popped up out of nowhere,

"Hi teacher."

We shook hands, and together looked at my car. My car's hood was covered with dusty fingerprints, hundreds of fingerprints everywhere.

"Spark plugs," Domingo said.

Domingo jumped in the car, and it started right away.

I gave him $110 in cash and thanked him profusely for rescuing me and fixing my car.

So, this is what I learned about Domingo. He lives in a trailer and his friend the mechanic works out of an abandoned gas station and accepts cash-only. Over the course

of only two days, I learned more about my adult ESL students than I had learned about them the previous two semesters.

I have taught English to adult ESL learners for three years. I teach from August to December and January to May and typically have about 20 students, all of whom speak Spanish as their first language (L1).

In fall 2016, I had a health problem which compelled me to take two months off. When I came back in March, only four students were left, and Domingo was one of them. I began this study because I wanted to understand why those 16 adult ESL learners stopped coming to class. I also wanted to know why four students stayed on.

My Story: Military, ESL, and the Korean War

My first memory in my life is from when I was three or four years old. I was playing with my older brother and his friends, jumping from a cement hill to the ground. We were just silly kids, laughing that we could jump from such a height to the ground.

My parents and my brother were my world. One day my father said, "Let's move to a modern apartment." We were all excited because we got to use an elevator. In South Korea, it is generally thought that living in an apartment building is a better housing condition than living in a house. My mother was from Pusan, a city down in the peninsula. My father was from Daejeon, in the middle of the country. After we moved to the apartment, my parents had another baby girl.

When I was 8 years old, right after finishing my 1st grade schooling, my father's business went bankrupt. "You stay with your aunt for a month, and I will pick you up later," my father said. My brother and I met my aunt, who we learned later was our real

mother, at her hair salon in another city. After a month, realizing that we were finally reunited with our real mother, we refused to go with our father. Life with my real mother was tough: no hot water, no elevator, and not much room.

My mother's family were from North Korea. They went down to the South when the Korean War broke in 1950. My mother was born during the war in a rural city in South Korea. With nine children, my grandparents decided to support only the first son for his college education in hopes that he could eventually care for his other eight brothers and sisters.

But life was not that simple. My uncle got married and moved to Seoul. Back in those days, moving to another city was like moving to another country. My uncle had no car and no phone. I remember that my mom's beauty salon had no refrigerator, so we put our dishes in a covered shelf. When my brother and I decided to stay, my mother was excited to buy appliances like a fridge, television, and washing machine.

I always thought of my mother's family as poor, but actually they "became" poor because of the war. Before the war, they had a house, money, and land. The government said the war would end in a few months, but many people living in the North including my mothers' siblings moved to the South to avoid bullets and cannons. Once they moved south, it was impossible to move back to the North and it has remained impossible for the past 70 years.

My father's family, on the contrary, became rich. My father's oldest brother had a huge, luxurious car. He owned big businesses and lived in a spacious apartment. His children went to a private school and played the violin and cello, which was very rare

for elementary school kids in 1980-1990s in South Korea. To make a long story short, it seems that the Korean War made my mom's family poor and my father's family rich.

After their move to the South, it seemed that my mom's family became really careful about their speaking accents. A North Korean accent would have given the impression that they were communists. Korean literature such as *Ode to My Father* (2014) show that, during and after the war, it was common for people to get arrested on charges that they were communists.

I have always liked language, whether Korean, Chinese, or English, and I served in the Korean Air Force for nine years as a weather forecaster. I went to a military high school: the Korea Air Force Aviation Science High School, run by the Korea Air Force. I had to serve for 7 years after graduation as a non-commissioned officer. I served two more years after I was promoted in my sixth year. During those nine years, I earned my undergraduate degree through evening courses after work. My military career and life were fine, but I felt unfulfilled because they had a strong glass ceiling for non-degree holders. I felt that I learned to be passive in decision making processes, because my rank (master sergeant) was not in the position to make decisions. One morning, I had a car accident on the way to work. Rather than report the accident to the police or to my insurance company, I called my boss. He just yelled at me to call the police. Being passive and looking to be told what to do seemed ingrained in me.

Although some people were strict, most people were friendly in the military. I had a good career in weather, and worked with the U.S. Forces as part of the job. The money and benefits were better than a normal company worker. However, I decided to quit my military career once I received a degree and took a job with a semiconductor

manufacturing/trading company. My job became coordinating import and export trades. The company had several manufacturing plants. In manufacturing, there are terms referring to different outcomes of products, such as "dummy batches, rejects, and goods." These terminologies seemed to influence employees' communications and had an effect on a person's upward mobility. Many of my co-workers were nice, but the work and life were not creative. I asked myself what I wanted to do and enjoy for the rest of my life. The answer was teaching language. I decided to go to the United States to learn how to teach English to speakers of other languages (TESOL). Before leaving, I enrolled in a college in Korea and earned a certificate for teaching Korean to other speakers.

After receiving my MA TESOL degree from Oklahoma City University, I taught at academic ESL centers, where many international students go to study English prior to entering US colleges. At the same time, I worked at a non-profit literacy center that sent out ESL teachers to high needs areas. The teaching sites include a manufacturing factory, a hotel, a local church, and an elementary school library. For one year, I taught ESL at a factory's cafeteria to refugees from Myanmar, Mexico, and Panama. I also taught adult Hispanic ESL students at a local elementary school and church. At a hotel, I taught a group of housekeeping staff who had moved to the USA from Latin America. As a teacher of academic ESL at University of Oklahoma, I taught students from all over the world, including China, Saudi Arabia, Korea, Burkina Faso, Congo, and Mexico. One student was a sister of an NBA basketball player for the Oklahoma City Thunder. These language teaching jobs were fun, rewarding, and creative. However, when it was time to ponder a dissertation topic, I wanted to work with immigrants, not

college prep students. Because I had family members marginalized by the post-Korean War socio-cultural structure in East Asia, I was interested in working with the adult English learners who are marginalized populations in the USA. The English learners with whom I worked were called "illegals", "border rats" (Macedo, 2000), and were "subject to deportation." With the Trump administration's radical immigration policy, the students' sense of security became shaky, just as my mother's family status in South Korea in the 1950s was shaky.

This study describes the untold, socio-culturally situated, journey to learn English in America.

Research Problem (Problem Statement)

Thousands of adults come to ESL classes with great hopes of mastering English. Many of them come in the evening after a long day of work, despite having families at home and untold chores to do. When an ESL student decides to leave, some administrators might think that the students "were just too busy" or that "they were not proficient enough to follow instructions" or that "they don't have a high school diploma." However, adult learners, especially immigrants, are, by nature, problem-solvers. Often, they work at several different jobs while living in a foreign country. They learn to adapt to the environment, and learn how to support their family, raise their children and get along in their communities. They build up their own networks and establish intimate relationships to solve problems.

In the United States, 16.9% of the labor force is foreign born. Most of these individuals speak a mother tongue other than English (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017). A fundamental challenge for immigrants living in the U.S. is overcoming the barriers of

limited English proficiency (Greenberg, Macias, Rhodes, & Chan, 2001). Learning English for immigrants, legal or otherwise, is paramount; a problem that must be solved to ensure survival. When an adult ESL student knocks on the door of a classroom, they are usually motivated and determined to succeed. Norton-Peirce (1995) called the learning of adult ESL students' a way of "investing in the future." Most would do whatever it takes, with regard to time, adjusting work schedule, and negotiating family responsibilities so that they can learn English. According to Investment Framework argued by Darvin and Norton (2015), taking ESL classes, *investing* for learning, and staying in or dropping out are all human actions related to the sociocultural and historically-situated, meaning/identity construction processes.

When I taught English as a second language at Center for English Literacy (pseudonym) in the fall 2016, on the first day only one student showed up. Enrollment increased gradually to 20 students by Thanksgiving. Most students were from Latin America, speaking Spanish as their mother tongue. My students worked as restaurant servers, factory workers, construction laborers, and hotel housekeeping staff. This study aims to explore why adult ESL students drop out, and why they stay.

This research explores three questions:

(1) Who are adult English Learners (ELs) who want to learn English at the Center for English Literacy (CEL)?

(2) Why do adult ELs at CEL invest in learning English?

(3) What makes adult ELs at CEL decide to stay or drop out?

In order to answer these questions with an authenticity, I thought it is necessary to delve into the students' lives, not only inside the classroom, but also outside the

classroom. Students, by nature, bring their learning interests from their home to school and vice versa (Barth, 1972; Dewey, 1903). Learning is an organic and dynamic activity, formed socio-culturally in complex ways, predicated upon the adult students' motivation, which is both complex and multifaceted (Norton-Peirce, 1995; Carnagarajah, 2006).

Significance of the Study

Adult ESL Students who come to ESL classes expend significant time, energy, and money. In 2016, the US Department of Labor reported that 51.9% of Hispanic immigrants' jobs were hard-labor, working mostly in construction, house-keeping, and manufacturing fields (U.S. Department of Labor, 2017).

One of the core reasons that adult ESL learners learn English is that they view English as enabling them to move from the margins where they live to the central circle of society (Norton-Peirce, 1995; Wang, 2006).

Han (2009) reported that an immigrant student quit coming to an adult ESL class, because the teaching method did not fit with expectations; the student sought to improve her speaking, but the instruction kept her silent, listening to other people speak English. The lack of connection between what the student wanted to learn, based on her life situation, and what was happening inside the classroom made her walk away.

When the connection between what a student wants to learn and what is offered in terms of instruction is not apparent, the students' learning motivation may decrease (Krapp, 1999; Hidi, Renninger, & Krapp, 1992). While retention is a hot topic for undergraduates in college and high school students (Jimerson, Anderson, & Whipple, 2002), it is also a central factor when working with adult ESL students.

Subjectivity Statement

Adult English learners (EL) drop out of their ESL classes for a reason. For the phenomenon of adult ELs' dropout, there might be multiple reasons, and one reason for an individual may not be the same reason for other individuals.

Because I am an international student studying in the U.S., an ESL teacher, and a son from a family that was marginalized by a harsh social structure, I am acutely aware that I may have biases (Crotty, 1998). I actively guarded against biases by bracketing and suspending my self-awareness with regard to interpreting the phenomenon (Creswell, 2012).

Absence of Mind vs. Physical Absence

Many adult students claim that "waste of time" is the number one reason they leave ESL classes (Auerbach, 1993; Han, 2009; Peirce, Harper, & Burnaby, 1993; Mernard-Warwick, 2005; Schalge and Soga, 2008). The feeling of "waste" comes, not only from the lack of cognitive gains, but also from the lack of caring from the instructor (Noddings, 2013). Adult learners look at the teacher's eyes, gestures, and attitude to discern what he/she might be thinking and feeling as do young children.

An adult ESL student is not bound by institutionalized settings, such as a K-12 classroom; thus, they are free to come and go as they please. When instruction seems irrelevant or when a student feels like the teacher does not care (Rose, 1990), there is nothing to prevent an adult English learner from leaving. If an adult ESL student experiences deep-level learning, experiences ah-ha moments, and enjoys learning, they will likely continue to show up for class (Noddings, 2013). If they find learning

oppressive, dull, or dehumanizing, they are more likely to drop out (Freire, 1996; Valentine, 1990).

Term Matters: ESL, EFL, ELL, and EL

There are several different terms that refer to learners of English language as an additional language other than their first language (L1) based on learning contexts. One relatively simple clarification between English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is whether or not a learner lives in the target language speaking country (Nayar, 1997). The former is called "second language" and the latter is "foreign language." For example, if a student from Mexico learns English and lives in the U.S. simultaneously, the setting is called ESL. In Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) field, ESL is widely used to refer to academic English learners who learn English for pursuing their higher education in an English-speaking country (Nayar, 1997). On the contrary, when a Mexican student living in Mexico learns English at a school in Mexico, this situation is called EFL.

Another term, English Language Learning (ELL), seems to be categorized under the concept of ESL, with the individual living in a country where a second language is used. In the U.S., ELL refers to K-12 students, whose L1 is other languages than English, and who have less proficiency in English. However, one issue on using the term ELL is that the term has a somewhat negative connotation that any students labeled as ELL is, "positioned in a category outside the category of mainstream language learners in the classroom" (English, 2009, cited in Lee & Lu, 2012). The fact that a student was categorized as ELL may give the impression that the student is at the

margins of society (Hastings & Jacob, 2016). Language is power and can be used as a means of keeping people at the margins of society (Freire, 1996).

This critique seems to lead a discussion of the necessity of having an alternative term for ELL. The new term, English Learners (ELs), was introduced by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) signed by the U.S. Department of Education in December 2015 (Alicandri, 2016). Since ESSA, many states in the U.S. have begun to use the term (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2017). However, several government agencies and public schools still use the term ELL (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d., Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2015).

For adult immigrated populations who learn English in the U.S. for non-academic purposes, English Learner (EL) seems appropriate and has "less baggage" than other terms. This study uses "English Learner (EL)" to refer to Spanish-speaking adult learners who learn English at a literacy center through evening classes.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Adult English Learners: Who Are They?

In 2016, 16.9% of the workforce (27 million) in the U.S. were immigrants (U.S. Department of Labor, 2017). The number of foreign-born workforce has increased from 23 million in 2006 to 27 million in 2016. Out of the 27 million foreign-born persons in the U.S., almost half were Hispanic and 25 percent were Asians. One of the most difficult barriers of the immigrated workforce is language (Valentine, 1990). According to the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (2015), adult ELs enrolled in adult English literacy classes numbered less than a million in 2011-2012. That means that over 20 million of ELs were not enrolled. Among the 0.7 students enrolled million nationwide, Hispanic learners accounted for 63%. In Oklahoma, Hispanic English Leaners accounted for 79% of adult language learners (Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, 2015). Many jobs available to ELs may involve risk of physical accidents, and their lack of English proficiency may keep them revolving around the margins of the job market (Hopkins, 2002; Navarez, 2015). Studies have shown that adult foreign-born workers' employability is related to English proficiency (Hyman, 2002; Mathews-Aydinli, 2008). In 2017, adult education basic grants were given to $595 million, only 0.5% of the education budget ($115,366 million) in the U.S. (Department of Education, 2017). Tucker (2006) reported that adult EL classes in the U.S. have long waiting lists of up to three years.

Adult EL Class Characteristics

The adult English Learners' learning environment is hard to characterize with precision. Unlike in K-12 schools, adult EL courses have a wider age range, from 16 to

90+, and students with a variety of educational backgrounds ranging from no education to Ph.Ds (Mathews-Aydinli, 2008).

The classroom venues for adult ELs tend to be diverse - a public library meeting room, a cafeteria, or a classroom in a local church (Han, 2009; Peirce, Harper, & Burnaby, 1993; Mernard-Warwick, 2005; Schalge & Soga, 2008). The adult students' learning motivation is generally high, regardless of their backgrounds or language proficiency because adult ELs must go to class in their "free" time (Bernat, 2004; Derwing, 2003; Hyman, 2002; Valentine, 1990). Despite their high motivation, poor learning outcomes are recurring problems (Bernat, 2004). The National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) reported that in recent years, Hispanic adults' English prose levels (written or spoken languages) have dramatically fallen (from 234 to 216, which is almost Below Basic) (NAAL, 2005).

Another consideration for the adult EL context is the teachers' unique characteristics. Most adult EL teachers are either volunteer or part-time; job security is relatively low and appropriately trained teachers are rare (Mathews-Aydinli, 2008). Consequently, dropout rates are issues not only for the students, but also for teachers.

Searching the keyword "ESL" yielded more than 15,000 hits in the EBSCOhost and ERIC combined databases. EFL yielded more than 10,000 hits, but "adult English learning" had about 300 hits (December 2017). Despite the boom in foreign workers over the past decades, adult ELs' enrollment in English classes has decreased over the last decade. Critical pedagogy theorists and social reconstruction ideologists such as Macedo (1994) and McLaren (1998) have pointed out that language is power, thus taking out the opportunities to learn and master language skills is politically structured

to sustain the power held by people with authority. Considering dropout rates, low English proficiency of adult ELs and the power of fluent English, more research on adult English learners is needed.

Why English: Adult ELs' Motivational Factors

Although adult ELs' enrollment has diminished over time, many adult ELs are highly motivated when they initially come to the classroom. What makes adult ELs want to learn English? In foreign language learning, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation have been studied, because many variables can foster or constrain students' learning (Dörnyei, 1998; Dörnyei, 2002; Gardner, 2007; Huang, 2008). Particularly, in ESL settings, Dörnyei (2002) describes motivation as "why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity [and] how hard they are going to pursue it" (p. 8). Curriculum and instruction must be in place that not only engages the students' learning, but also motivates. Students with high motivation often make their decisions strategically (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996), such as setting study plans, allotting more time and energy to study, or asking for help from peers or teachers (Flavell, 1979). It is worth noticing that "being motivated" or "demotivated" works as a trigger for either pursing studies with flaming desire or dropping out. Especially for adult immigrant ESL students who study in the U.S., being motivated plays a significant role as they usually attend class despite full-time work, busy schedules, and hectic family concerns (Han, 2009; Mathews-Aydinli, 2008; Norton-Peirce, 1995).

According to a federal project conducted in 1990 (N=323), ten motivational factors for learning English for adult immigrated learners were reported (Valentine, 1990):

(1) educational advancement

(2) self-improvement

(3) literacy development

(4) community and church involvement

(5) economic need (for the unemployed)

(6) family responsibilities (helping children's schoolwork, being a good parent)

(7) diversion (to meet other people)

(8) job advancement (for who already has jobs)

(9) launching into a new life

(10) urging of others (friends' or family's suggestion).

Valentine argued that eight motivational factors, excluding diversion and urging of others, relate to aspirations. Valentine also pointed out that "there is no single, typical ABE [adult basic education] student. Adult learners come from many walks of life, express a diversity of motivations, and display an array of life styles" (Valentine, 1990, p. 3). Valentine's fifth and eighth factors, i.e., economic needs and job advancement, were studied by Derwing (2003), Han (2009), and Hyman (2002). All three studies found high English proficiency relates to the adult leaners' job security and promotion. The sixth factor, helping their children's school work, was reported as a motivational factor by other ethnographic studies (Peirce, Harper, & Burnaby, 1993; Schalge & Soga, 2008). These three factors can be categorized as extrinsic motivational factors (Dörnyei, 1998, 2002). These studies also confirm that learning motivation or goals of their English learning is not only based on work-related concerns, but also on their real-

life based problems, such as helping children's school work and communicating with their children's teachers.

On the other hand, the other seven factors listed as (1), (2), (3), (4), (7), (9), (10) in Valentine's factors relate to intrinsic motivation. The first, second, fourth, and ninth factors, i.e., educational advancement, self-improvement, community and church involvement, and launching into new life, are related to self-actualization (Dewey, 1903) and building an identity as a citizen in a new world (Han, 2009; Noddings, 2013; Norton-Peirce, 1995). Also, the seventh factor, diversion, showed that adult basic classes including EL courses can serve as an enriching and recreational activity.

Studies of Adult English Learners

Research on adult ELs have found that adult EL motivational factors including *family*, *identity*, and *teacher*.

Family

Some ethnographic studies have found that *family needs and support* may play a significant role in adult ELs' successful learning (Buttaro, 2002, 2004; Carpenter, 2005; Gault, 2004; McVay, 2004). Buttaro (2002, 2004) in her case studies of Spanish-speaking female adult students (n=8) argued that adult ESL does not involve merely language learning, but also linguistic, educational, and cultural adjustments. Buttaro found that the students' learning outcomes and motivation are influenced by family needs, literacy levels in their L1, desire for a better job, identity, and teachers' relationship with them. Buttaro also noted that adult ESL curricular materials are often not relevant, and thus ineffective, because materials and lesson content seem to reflect middle-class values, culture, and financial status, not the lives of adult ELs. Buttaro

argued that the curriculum should instead focus on real-life contents such as economic or communication problems.

Carpenter (2005) found that adult ESL students' needs centered on their desire to speak and understand English for family needs and self-actualization, rather than reading and writing. In her study of ten Spanish-speaking adult ELs, Carpenter suggested that gaining knowledge in English language and skills are independent from the adult learners' ages, literacy in their L1, and their previous education history. This assertion contrasts with Buttaro who pointed out the possible correlations between students' previous education history and English learning outcomes. Carpenter asserted that the three factors (age, L1 literacy, previous education) rarely played a role in improving English skills and knowledge. Rather, Carpenter argued that the three factors negatively affect the students' confidence in learning a new language and using it outside the classroom. For example, a senior student with lowest education background achieved highest advancement in learning English skills (e.g., grammar), but his confidence outside the classroom was the lowest.

McVay's (2004) study with adult ELs in a community college in Kansas (n=24) also found a significant role played by family in adult EL students' learning. He found out five perceived barriers and five supports for adult ESL learners. The barriers include language/practice, advice/information, instructions, time/work, and financial aid. On the other hand, the five supports include teachers/staff, family, personal attributes, acceptance/attention, and friends/students. Family and Teachers/Staff were found as major supporting themes, although family issues were also reported as a challenge such as taking a child to school. Family acts as both support and barrier, but more weight was

made on support. Figure 1 shows the three themes of adult EL studies - family, identity, and teacher.

Theme	*Family*	*Identity*	*Teacher*
Studies	Peirce, Harper & Burnaby, 1993 Buttaro, 2002, 2004 Carpenter, 2005 Gault, 2004 McVay, 2004	Gordon, 2004 Norton-Peirce, 1995 Skilton-Sylvester, 2002	Ellis, 2004 Gault, 2004 Gilberston, 2000 Hird et al., 2000 Schalge & Soga, 2008

Figure 1. Three Thematic Motivational Factors for Adult English Learning

Identity

In addition to the family needs/support factor, establishing and negotiating one's *identity* was found as one significant factor for adult ELs' successful English learning (Gordon, 2004; Norton-Peirce, 1995; Skilton-Sylvester, 2002). Skilton-Sylvester (2002) found a correlation between Cambodian female students' sociocultural identities/roles and their decisions toward adult ESL class participation. Four Cambodian female adult ELs' identities played significant and complex roles in their decisions for English class participation, such as identities as wives, workers, mothers, and daughters/friends. Skilton-Sylvester's (2002) findings expanded Norton-Peirce's (1995) perspective on "investing" by adding cultural considerations over students' identities.

Gordon (2004) compared Laotian male and female students' identity building process over their English learning, and found that different gender groups seemed to undergo different identity negotiating experiences. Lao female students learning English redefined their gender identities by accessing more leadership and financial resources than they would have had when being in their home country. Lao male students, however, lost their traditional resources of power while living and learning in the U.S. Gordon called for adult ESL teachers' attention on these gender and culture-based needs and identity negotiation issues accordingly.

Teacher

The third theme of adult EL studies has been made on *teachers' role* over adult EL setting, but the teachers' role is closely related to who the learners are (Ellis, 2004; Gault, 2004; Gilbertson, 2000; Hird et al., 2000). Hird et al. (2000) investigated the most used teaching methods over both child and adult EL settings with 18 teachers in Australia. They found that teachers for children and adults have differences and similarities. Teachers for adult learners used more drilling, repetition, and rehearsal; whereas teachers for children used more practical and multimodal activities. The two teacher groups shared similarities too such as building supportive classroom environment, promoting positive minds, and giving feedback for both linguistic and non-linguistic conventions (e.g., being punctual on time, no bullying). Hird et el. found that one difference between the two settings is that adult learners need to pass a government-led certificate test for English proficiency, which probably led the teachers to focus more on accuracy, proficiency development, and being ready to pass the test. This context is unique compared to adult ESL literacy programs in the U.S., as in the

U.S., level test types vary from state to state, and institute to institute. The Center for English Literacy (CEL) in this study for example administers a level test individually, not through the government's support or requirement. The CEL uses a basic English literacy test developed by a private language lab. For teaching implications, Hird et al. (2000) pointed out the importance of reflecting the learners' real-life contexts, which is consistent with previous researchers' assertions (Gordon, 2004; Skilton-Sylvester, 2000).

Ellis (2004) in her study of adult ESL teachers in Australia (n=31) compared monolingual and multilingual teachers in terms of the effectiveness of their teaching. Her findings suggest that an ESL teacher's L2 learning experience might be a good resource to more effectively teach ESL classes, because the teachers have more metalinguistic awareness between L1 and L2 for syntax, semantics, and phonological concerns. Gault (2004) with 134 Hispanic immigrant students in California explored what makes good teaching and bad teaching in adult EL settings in terms of a "mismatch." The mismatch Gault (2004) found was between students' expectation and what teachers instruct in the classroom, which seemed to play a significant role in students' engagement and success. The mismatch existed between teachers' teaching methods and students' expected methods. The teacher in Gault's study used communicative teaching methods, but the students wanted to learn through grammar-translation methods. Lastly, the importance of teacher training was discussed in Gilbertson (2000) who found that one problem is the lack of professional training to ESL teachers and volunteers. In Gilbertson's study, all teachers were volunteers, less trained teaching methods and inappropriate evaluating were reported. The students

pointed out the lack of curriculum in the teaching site. Gilbertson argued that appropriate teacher training is essential in adult English learning classes, because untrained volunteer teachers might do more harm than good on the students such as causing the students remained unemployed or losing their jobs quickly due to their less-proficient English.

Literature shows that diverse research has been conducted for adult ELs that emphasized the importance of family support needs, identity concerns, and adult EL teachers' roles. The three themes emerged through this review confirm Mathews-Aydinli's (2008) findings that shared the three themes for studies for adult ELs in addition to another theme that focused on Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories-based instructions. Although the research reviewed in this current review discussed that students' dropout is an underlying problem to some extent (Gault, 2004; Skilton-Sylvester, 2002; Hird et al., 2000), fewer studies have been conducted for specifically exploring the adult learners' dropout phenomenon. However, adult ELs dropout is a recurring problem in the setting as Lado (1990) noted that, "often adult ESL programs take drop out as a given, and accommodate to it without fully understanding how they contribute to it" (Lado, 1990 cited in Gualt, 2004, p. 45). Next section will discuss the previous research findings for adult ELs' dropout.

The Problem: Adult EL Dropouts

What makes adult ELs drop out despite increasing number of ELs? The adult EL enrollment rate has decreased over the last decade (1.2 million to 0.7 million from 2003-2004 to 2011-2012). Although research has investigated adult EL characteristics (Buttaro, 2002, 2004; Carpenter, 2005; Ellis, 2004; Gault, 2004; Gordon, 2004; McVay,

2004; Skilton-Sylvester, 2002), the adult EL dropout phenomenon has gained less scholarly attention. The lack of English proficiency among the adult population can lead to unstable, fatalistic, and hopeless attitude towards English learning (Freire, 1996). Therefore, it is necessary to understand the reasons for dropping out to more effectively and meaningfully support the ELs.

Push, Pull, Falling Out

Nationwide studies have been conducted concerning high school student dropout factors (Balfanz & Fox, 2011; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005; Cairns, Cairns, & Neckerman, 1989; Doll, Eslami, &Walters, 2013; Eckland, 1972; Englund, Egeland, & Collins, 2008; Ensminger, Lamkin, & Jacobson, 1996; Griffin & Alexander, 1978; Powers & Wojtkiewicz, 2003; Rotermund, 2007). Among those, Doll, Eslami, and Walters (2013)'s comparative analysis over seven nationwide quantitative studies provides a framework for the causes of high school students' dropping out such as *Push, Pull* and *Falling Out* factors. First, *Push* refers to any pressure from inside the school that leads students to drop out, such as negative test results, attendance issues, and discipline policies (Jordan, Lara, & McPartland, 1994). *Pull* refers to distracting components inside a student that constrain the student from completing school, such as "financial worries, out-of-school employment, family needs, and even family changes" (Doll et al., 2013, p. 2). Lastly, Watt and Roessingh (1994) argued about the third factor of *Falling Out* that refers to a situation that a student dislikes schools and gains no academic interests due to the circumstances around the student. The key distinctions among *Push, Pull,* and *Falling Out* lie in the agency; with *Push*, the school is the agent, whereas for *Pull* a student is. However, *Falling Out*'s agent is neither the school nor a

student; the agent is "circumstances that exist neither the school nor the student can remediate, and as a result, the connection students have with school gradually diminishes" (Doll et al., 2013, p. 2). *Falling Out* is not an active decision, rather an involuntarily forced choice of leaving school. Watt and Roessingh (1994, 2001) found out that *Falling out* decisions are forced by many situational reasons such as educational budget cuts, the necessity of financially supporting family by part-time jobs, tiredness and lack of sleep due to the works, and fear of being punished for unfinished homework derived from their socially structured tiring life. Among *Push, Pull,* and *Falling Out* factors, Doll et al. (2013) found that *Pulling* was the most dominant cause, followed by *Push* and *Falling* Out. This framework will be adopted for adult English learners.

Previous Research Findings on Adult EL Dropout

Compared to federally-funded studies on high school dropout factors, adult EL students' dropout studies are scarcely conducted in larger scale research. This is probably due to the nature of the context: an adult EL class is not a compulsory education course. Telling others why they dropped out is not a pleasant topic, it is difficult to find the people who dropped out. Thus, Adult EL dropout causes tend to be under-researched and under-recorded (Norton-Peirce, 1995). However, a few scholars have addressed factors that contributed to adult students dropping out. Peirce, Harper, and Burnaby (1993) found dropout factors related to the situated-ness and socio-cultural aspects of students. Mernard-Warwick (2005) reported two Latina EL students' success and failure stories during their ESL class in California, and the dynamic socio-cultural reasons behind the scenes. Schalge and Soga (2008) researched adult ELs' dropout

causes at a non-profit literacy center in Minnesota including the mismatch between teachers' and students' expectations. These studies found:

(1) the dropouts occurred based on not only one but rather on many intertwined factors;

(2) the factors include outside classroom aspects in their social and economic status; and

(3) the students dropped out (due to these untold, multifaceted reasons) even though they had a strong desire to learn English.

Peirce, Harper, and Burnaby (1993) in their study conducted in Canadian Levis Strauss factories researched why some adult ESL learners drop out or refuse to go to the English classes that were offered within the factories (n=57). The majority of the factory workers were female. Approximately 10-20% of the immigrants took the ESL classes; others dropped out or did not participate at all. The two factories had different contexts and atmospheres: one had multilingual supervisors, whereas the other had Anglophone supervisors. The researchers found that the dropout factors were not separate, but interdependent. The factors ranged over multiple constraints such as: the communities' low support, students' anxiety about their work/income, peer workers' (native Canadians) resentments, lack of affiliations among other workers, and domestic pressures from their spouses. The workers were highly motivated to learn English, but their real-life environment in the factories put their minds more on the jean-making machines than the ESL desks. However, the researchers found that the students' learning needs were based on their real-life situations outside the factory. For example, one student reported that she wanted to learn how to appropriately write a letter to her

son's teacher; her ESL class in the factory didn't help her with this goal, thus caused her to drop out. Peirce, Harper, and Burnaby recounted that adult EL dropout is not only based on linguistic challenges, but also on social and economic status. This study seemed to work as a foundation for Norton-Peirce (1995) to establish her argument about *investing* for adult EL learners, as the students kept deciding between investing or not-investing (dropping out).

Mernard-Warwick (2005) found intergenerational factors and sociopolitical contexts with regards to two Latino students' ESL learning. Both students (Brenda, Serafina) had desire to learn English inspired by their parents' investment as intergenerational trajectories. However, their sociopolitical status made their learning resources, both internal and external (Wenger, 1998), more complicated. Brenda outpaced her English learning compared to other classmates because she wanted to master English for herself and her children's education. However, Brenda was an undocumented immigrant, which constrained her plan to go to college because she had no Social Security Number. In contrast, Serafina was a U.S. permanent resident (based on her refugee status) from Guatemala. Serafina's English proficiency was lower than Brenda's. Serafina faced more challenges in her job and parenting. Available jobs for Serafina were low wage with less English learning opportunity, like factory work. Serafina ended up dropping out of her ESL class because her full-time factory job didn't allow her time for ESL learning. Her son was sent back to Guatemala, because Serafina couldn't care for him and he started losing Spanish proficiency while learning English in the U.S. Mernard-Warwick (2005) pointed out that ESL teachers should be aware of the complex socio-historical backgrounds of adult EL learners, because individual

history is an important dimension of one's learning agency. Citing Susan Gass (2003), Mernard-Warwick (2005) argued that ESL teachers in practice should consider "what is in the head of learner" (p. 181), not only for the academic processing areas (e.g., grammar rules), but also their affective and socio-historical accounts. It includes "good and bad memories of previous schooling experiences, literacy strategies that have worked or not worked in the past, the messages that their parents gave them about education, anxiety about making a living, concern for their children, and ambition for a better life" (Gass, 2003, p. 181). Mernad-Warwick (2005) found the importance of considering adult ELs' socio-historical resources and constraints to better understand their persistence and dropping out.

Schalge and Soga's (2008) case study (n=16) of absenteeism in adult ESL students in Minnesota found several causes for students to drop out. The top reason for dropping out was anxiety and frustrations derived from the gaps between the class topics/instruction and students' expectations based on their lives. Teachers, however, seemed to attribute their students' absences to outside factors such as childcare availability. Problems included: excessive flexibility over curricula (because students keep coming and quitting over a semester causing teachers confused for curricula), students' confusion on subject matter, miscommunication between teachers and students regarding teaching contents, and teacher/student mismatches over instructional choices (preferences). As a solution, Schalge and Soga suggested additional curriculum structures and more communication among teachers, staff, and students, and to build a respectful learning environment. Schalge and Soga's findings revealed the untold contrasting viewpoints between teachers and students, which "mismatch" and its

causing impact for dropout is consistent with Gault (2004). However, a limitation is that Schalge and Soga did not research the participants' real life stories in depth, although they pointed out that understanding the students' real life situations is significant when designing and enacting ESL curricula.

The three studies (Mernard-Warwick, 2005; Peirce, Harper, and Burnaby, 1993; Schalge and Soga, 2008) that specifically conducted for adult ELs' dropout factors revealed the importance of bridging what's happening inside and outside the classroom, which was echoed in Auerbach (1993)'s work. Auerbach pointed out the importance of strengthening the ties between adult ESL classes and adult ELs' lived experiences. For example, she found that for discussing housing topics with her Haitian students with less English proficiency, having the students' lived experience of exploitative landlords was more powerful to lead the discussion than her expertise on communicative class pedagogy. Furthermore, Auerbach's argument emphasized that the English-only policy in ESL classes is related not to pedagogical choice, but rather political agenda. She asserted that it is about an implicit but pervasive power-relation mentality in the ESL profession. This notion of two sides of the same coin between what's happening in the classroom and students' outside lives is consistent with Anyon (1980), Apple (1978), and Macedo (1994, 2000) who have heralded the relevance of students' lives outside the classroom.

The causes for adult ELs' dropout can be categorized as *Falling Out*. Recalling that *falling out* is socio-cultural constraints that are beyond the students' controlling power, Mernard-Warwick's (2005)'s Brenda and Serafina and Peirce et al.'s (1993) Levi Strauss factories' workers *fell out* and thus dropped out because of social

constraints (no Social Security number for Brenda) and cultural pressures (peers' resentment of taking ESL classes for Levi Strauss workers). A secondary cause could be *Push* factors, i.e., failures occurring within the classes. For example, Schalge and Soga's (2008) findings of student confusion on teaching content and miscommunications between teachers and students are *Push* factors. However, for adult ELs, the shapes and tastes of *Push* are somewhat different than in the high school setting. While *Push* factors in high school are low scores or being punished for misbehavior, for adult ELs, the *Push* factors seemed to be the students' misunderstanding of teachers' instruction, accordingly feeling lost over content, and unmet needs between students' expectations and what was given in an EL class. The unsatisfactory gaps in the classroom seemed to push the adult learners out of their EL classes.

Pulling factors were reported as well. For instance, Serafina found no time for her EL classes because of her job at the factory (Mernard-Warwick, 2005). Also, because of their lessened productivity at work caused them to feel insecure, Levi Strauss workers seemed to be *pulled* from their ESL classes (Peirce et al., 1993). Although literature showed the probable linkages among the *Push, Pull,* and *Falling Out*, more in-depth exploration of their interdependency (Peirce et al., 1993) is needed to view and understand the rich, deep, and complex contextual essences of what makes adult ELs dropout, which is the focus of this study.

Positioning of this Dissertation

This dissertation explored dropout factors of adult ELs. However, it aims to go one step further by observing and interacting with students outside the classroom in

their daily lives. Understanding life outside the classroom is an important part of understanding sociocultural and affective aspects of English learning in the U.S. The next section will discuss the position of this notion (sociocultural and affective aspects of second language learning) over the continuum of the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) field.

Continuum and Gaps in SLA Studies/Theories

Cognitive vs. Affective Domain: Tilted Research Trend

Richard-Amato (1988), an L2 teaching methodology scholar, views L2 learning as complex. He argues that L2 learning is cognitively made, and affectively influenced (Richard-Amato, 1988), which is consistent with Krashen's (1982) notion of the importance of learners' affective filters. In brief, Krashen's (1982) affective filter argument focuses on the multifaceted affective domains of learning, such as anxiety, confidence, belief, and feelings. People process language input cognitively and affectively. For decades second language acquisition researchers have tried to gain a theoretical understanding of how people really learn L2 (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

In the 1960s to 1970s, behaviorism-based English teaching methods, such as grammar translation and audio-lingual, were popular (Brooks, 1975; Lado, 1964; Saville-Troike, 1973). By their nature, these behaviorism-based L2 teaching methods focused on memorization and mimicking of L2 target features. In the 1980s, researchers put an additional focus on language input and learners' affective aspects (e.g., anxiety). Krashen's (1982) monitor model and i+1 hypothesis are a well-known examples. Later Chomskian perspectives, such as the innatist view, were highlighted by scholars, which

led L2 researchers and teachers to view students from more organic viewpoints (Chomsky, 1980; Hauser, Chomsky, & Fitch, 2002).

DeKeyser (1998) and Schmidt (2001) argued that learners must pay attention to the target language features to master L2. The term, "Information processing" was introduced, emphasizing how to have students "process" the language input with in-class exercises or tasks, e.g., jigsaw activity (Anderson 1995; DeKeyser, 1998, VanPatten, 2004). This information processing scholars argued that language learning is "skill learning"; the process starts with declarative knowledge and through practice, it becomes procedural knowledge. For example, many scholars have studied how to teach vocabulary more efficiently through information processing (Brown & Perry, 1991; Cho & Krashen, 1994; Huckin & Coady, 1999; Jianzhong, 2003). ESL writing has also been studied by scholars in terms of how to teach L2 writing more effectively (Hamp-Lyons, 1991; Harklau, Losey, & Siegal, 1999; Sullivan & Pratt, 1996; Zhang, 1995). This view sees L2 learning as cognitive development. It was critiqued by scholars who saw language learning as more of an organic human meaning-making process (following a Vygotskian sociocultural perspective), through inter-personal interactions and intra-personal reflections (Celce-Murcia, 2008; Donato, 1994; Dunn & Lantolf, 1998; Long, 1983, 1996; Swain, 1995, 2005, 2009).

Since the 1990s, the sociocultural perspective of L2 learning, which critiques the behavioristic and input-processing perspectives of how languages are learned have become popular. Long's (1983, 1996) interaction hypothesis emphasizes the importance of interactions between human beings for cueing, sharing feedback, and pursuing further learning through interaction. Swain (2005) furthermore theorizes the "learning

by talking" notion through her *comprehensible output hypothesis*. Swain coined the word, *languaging* by pointing out the mediational function of speaking. To Swain (Swain, 1995, 2005, 2009; Swain, Kinnear, & Steinman, 2015), speaking is not just a verbalization of a thought, but a critical ongoing process to internalize the target language expanding Vygotsky's notions of internal speech (Vygotsky, 1978).

Empirical studies of the ESL profession have investigated a plethora of approaches to language learning including behavioristic, cognitive, and sociocultural. Although Krashen (1982) and Richard-Amato (1988) argue to the importance of affective aspects in L2 learning, studies focusing on affective domains are not evident in the scholarly literature.

Since the 1990s, a few scholars such as Peirce (1995) and Cummins (1994), have pointed out the importance of affective and organic factors in L2 learning such as identity, power-relations, and socio-political aspects inside and outside the classroom. Adult populations, marginalized by their social status (such as immigrants or refugees) may have affective aspects more susceptible to social and economical factors outside the classroom. Some L2 motivation researchers have reframed their research focus on the dynamic inter-relatedness between motivation and leaner identity (Dörnyei, 2005; Giddens, 1991; Lamb, 2004; Pavlenko, 2002).

Dörnyei (2005) argued that "ideal" self and "ought-to self" can be a strong motivational factors for L2 learning because mastering L2 proficiency can promote a student's ideal self. Giddens (1991) and Lamb (2004) put more attention on the external environment, in which the globalization phenomenon naturally motivates students to master English as World Language. Pavlenko (2004) with a post-structural perspective,

challenges the traditional notion of L2 learning motivation to broaden its concepts to wider contexts, by arguing that the 21st century has witnessed that more than half of the total population on the Earth are already members of *multiple* ethnic, social, and cultural communities. Hence, the researchers call for a paradigmatic shift for L2 motivation research. Norton-Peirce (1995)'s concept of investment addressed another facet of this re-conceptualization of L2 motivation and identity, because investing for L2 learning means investing in oneself. One critical assumption that Norton-Peirce (1995) offered was that the investing and self (or identity) concepts are socially constructed.

In 2012, the *Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* added a chapter called *Identity and Second Language Acquisition* (Norton, 2012). Nevertheless, more pages on the encyclopedia were devoted to studies predicated on cognitive and sociocultural theories. ESL mainstream studies mostly involve adults learning for academic purposes. Regarding learning English for non-academic purposes, fewer empirical studies have been conducted.

Investment: Ideology, Identity, and Capital

Expanding Norton's notions of investment of English learners (Norton-Peirce, 1995; Norton, 1997, 2012; Norton & McKinney, 2011; McKinney & Norton, 2008). Darvin and Norton (2015) developed a theoretical framework about L2 learner's Investment that consists of three specific constructs: Ideology, Identity, and Capital. Inspired by Bourdieu's (1977, 1984, 1991) post-structural approaches and Blommaert's (2010) sociolinguistic approach, Darvin and Norton developed post-structural framework to examine what comprises individual learner's investment in systemic

ways. In the framework, the concepts of Ideology, Identity, and Capital work together in an intertwined way, and sometimes support and contradict each other, in influencing one's decisions on investment in micro and macro levels of English learning.

First, *ideology* in this framework refers to "normative set of ideas" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 43). The meaning of this concept in this framework is that individuals consistently negotiating and positioning their spaces in the society, communication sites, and learning institutes based on the hegemony, power structure given by the ideology. For example, a student might feel that his or her English pronunciation is not good enough, or not legitimate, to talk to native English speakers. The hegemony and ideology in this example is that it privileged native English speakers' ways of using English language is the only "right" way, further "superior" way than the students' variant forms of pronunciation. Darvin and Norton (2015) view ideology or hegemony embedded in L2 learning context influences the students' decisions on investment. As ideology is a dominant way of thinking to determine inclusion and exclusion, this hegemony takes one component of students' investment dynamics.

Second, *identity* in this framework is "multiple, a site of struggle, and continually changing over time and space" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 45). Influenced by ideologies based on their own ideology (based on their backgrounds) and the new ideology in English speaking country, L2 learners' identity is by nature multiple, and keep moving back and forth moment by moment. At each moment, individuals either accord and refuse their power to speak. For example, a student who learns English as a second language might feel that his or her English speaking is not legitimate to join in a learning *site* because his or her English accent is not legitimate enough to participate

with other fluent English speakers. In this case, the student refuses his/her right to speak, thus learning, based on the hegemony mindset that they deserve to be excluded. On the other hand, when the person perceives that a situation is where he/she can speak up for his/her right to speak, the student accords the power to themselves and begin speaking and learning. For example, a student can ask a conversation interlocutor to slow down his or her speech to understand and communicate better. In this case, according to Darvin & Norton (2015), this student seems to put his/her identity in the central site of learning by positioning it inside the site. Learners' imagined identity also plays a role in one's investment such as imagining to become a successful English speaking business owner, which can be rephrased as perceived benefits of their investment.

Third, *capital* in this framework has three sub-constructs: economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital. Darvin and Norton adapted Bourdieu's (1987) notions of these three constructs, each stands for different characteristics of capitals, which all means *power*:

- *Economic capital* refers to wealth, property, and income,
- *Cultural capital* refers to knowledge, educational credentials, and appreciations,
- *Social capital* refers to connections to network of power (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 44).

What's more important about this capital notion is that the value of each are determined by ideology and one's negotiation based on the time and sites an individual encounters.

Darvin and Norton (2015) viewed that these three components towards one's investment are related each other, support and complement, and sometimes contradict based on the situated-ness of individual students. Figure 2 demonstrates Darvin and Norton's investment framework. Sharing parts between two concepts show the relations between them. For example, affordances/perceived benefits between identity and capital mean that capital can provide affordances to one's identity building efforts (e.g., enabling an Internet access to online learners). Perceived benefits are based on the learners' imagined identity and which in turn help the leaner seeks an adequate forms of capital. Between identity and ideology, positioning refers to an individual's position negotiations between inclusion and exclusion, in L2 learning example, towards English practice opportunities for example. The systemic patterns of control between ideology and capital refers to socially constructed environment to either support or constraints one's access to capital. For example, poor students seem to encounter systematic patterns of control of not-being able to access Internet connections, whereas affluent students can access the resources (Darvin & Norton, 2015). "Language as investment" provides a framework for exploring and analyzing what makes adult ELs invest or not invest in their English learning.

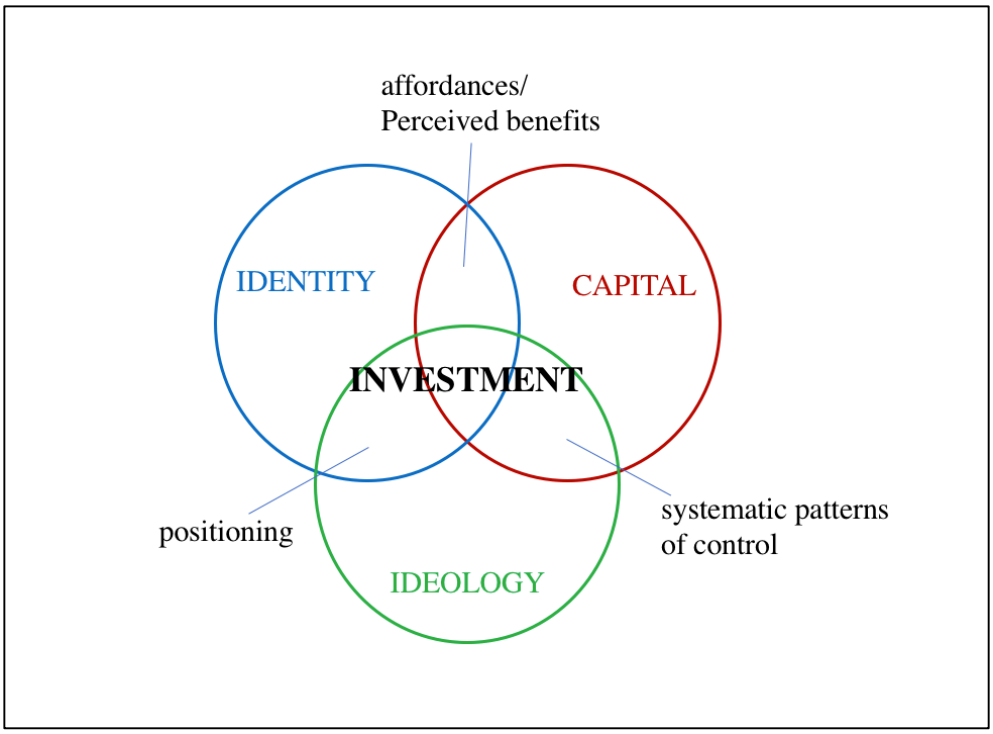


Figure 2. Investment framework - Author created diagram based upon the work of Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 42

Social Justice through English Language Teaching (ELT)

In addition to the recent rise of interest in the affective domain of learning English, the topic of social justice has emerged (Akbari, 2008; Hall, 2016; Hastings & Jacob, 2016). Social justice is socially-made conceptualizations, norms, and practices towards what is right and what is wrong across time. The specific definition and intricacies of social justice are ever-evolving, dynamic, and fluid, as reflected in the characteristics of its counterpart, social injustice, which has no end as it is culturally defined and perceived (Hall, 2016; McLaren, 2016). This section will address how the learning English field is related to social justice in terms of its linkage to affective aspects of L2 learning.

Social Justice: The Conceptualization

The notion of social "injustice" is a good starting point to consider what social justice refers to. Historically, it would be thought-provoking to note that the missionary teachers in the 19th century in the U.S. actively "helped" and taught Native American students under the notion of "social justice" at that time, in which they believed that "Indians would ultimately confront a fateful choice: civilization or extinction" (Adams, 1995, p. 6). The concept of social justice for the missionary teachers during this particular time period was to "civilize the Indians" from their "savage lifestyle" by educating them through boarding school systems; in other words, by isolating and excluding the Native American students from "uncivilized" life. In fact, this justification helped hide the brutal colonizing of Native Americans the term "civilizing." A French writer of the era, Jules Ferry, even argued that "the superior nations must civilize the inferior races" (Ennis, 1945, p. 326). Educators in the 21st century might argue that the 19th century missionary teachers' beliefs and actions were too radical because they subtracted the heritage and human rights to achieve their goals. However, it was the consensus in the 19th century that civilizing the "savage people" was a form of social justice. The belief of equating "civilization" and "social justice" was destructive for the people who took the "treatment." In retrospect, perhaps it was most harmful for the identities of students (Norton-Peirce, 1995; Peirce, 2000). "Taking out" individuals from his/her heritage culture is based on the rationale of an inferior-superior cultural dichotomy (racism or neo-colonialism), which is unjust (Patel, 2015). Being excluded from one's heritage can dehumanize and harm one's identity. For this reason, considerations about "humanity and identity" typically are at the center of

discussions of social justice (Carnagarajah, 2006; Hall, 2016; Nieto, 1994; Peirce, 2000).

Influences from Superficial Gaps on Deeper Mind

Scholars have found that aspects of "humanity and identity" can be influenced, either positively or negatively, by social justice issues:

- social/racial/gender/economic [resourceful] differences [gaps/biases], (Hall, 2016, p. 4)
- unequal power dynamics between social groups - oppressors vs. the oppressed (Freire, 1996, 1998),
- underlying and imposing mindsets through the holistic socially-made classes and structures (Bernstein, 1971; Macedo, 1994; Macedo & Bartolomé, 2014).

Being excluded from social resources, which include not only materialistic resources such as money, cars, houses, or food, but also literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills, harms the people who are implicitly and explicitly oppressed (Freire, 1996; Peirce, 2000). Particularly for adult ELs, learning English is a fundamental resource.

Another example of social injustice would be the racism-based notions, norms, and terminology in our society. Terminologies implicitly convey racism in our daily lives towards certain groups of people, although the concept of "race" is socially structured. For example, "border-rats" were used to refer to Mexican Americans living in the border (Macedo, 2000), sending a negative message and image of the "race" to the public.

The hierarchical mentality provided through the *terms*, *social norms*, and *unearned privileges* schematizes a binary conceptualization about *what is right or standard* and *what is not standard, thus wrong*. In ESL classrooms, the "standard English" implies that it is the only "legitimate" language to teach. Usually standard refers to White English speakers' English use, their pronunciation, ways of composing phrases, and idioms (CHANTRAINE, 2016). It is clear that the well-known "English-only policy" adopted by shared standards since 1980s is based on the binary mindset of English as *right*, whole variant forms of English are *wrong*. Yet, research has found that ESL students to use their L1 can bring positive effects to L2 learning (Auerbach, 1993; Storch, & Wigglesworth, 2003). However, ESL teachers do not allow students to use their L1 for the sake of improving their L2 learning more effectively (Storch, & Wigglesworth, 2003).

In the 21st century ESL classroom, antagonism towards L1 use and variant forms of English still linger. The term "nativism" in ESL refers to the biased racism in teaching. Nieto (1994) advocates for an awareness of nativism in language teaching. It is not uncommon to find ELL students sometimes are regarded as "less intelligent" students based on their lower English proficiency (Norton, 2012; Webster & Lu, 2012). This oversimplified categorization of immigrated students can be detrimental in many ways, including damaging a student's self-concept (Norton, 2000). Self-doubt can be social (Hall, 2016), racial (Macedo, 1994), economic (Freire, 1996, 1998), gender (Pinar, 1998), or racial-social (Macedo & Bartolomé, 2014).

That oppression in the mind level might make or force the oppressed to "think" in this way: "I can't do this, I am inferior to the rich/intelligent people in the power

group (social bias). I am born with this not-smart brain (racial bias). I can't finish my coursework, as I am not a native speaker of English (racial/social bias). I can't master science because I am a girl (gender bias). I can't go to college, but will go to a factory, as I am from a poor family (economic bias)." This type of *fatalism* (Freire, 1996) or *internalized oppression* (Fanon, 2008) is at the core of self-doubt. The fatalistic mindset is imposed, forced, and indoctrinated implicitly and explicitly as illustrated in the examples above, and it is reinforced through multifaceted ways in our society. In education, these fatalistic viewpoints can be reinforced through interactions between a teacher and students and between students and their peers. Research found that students even indirectly learn the "oppressing mindset" from the power dynamics illustrated through the power relations among school administrations and field teachers (Anyon, 1980; Bernstein, 1971).

Oppression (gaps, unequal access) for the materialistic/tangible/superficial resources as well as for one's mind is dynamically alive, subtly but closely intertwined with social injustice because it harms the students. A second language (L2) teacher would do well to have an awareness of these notions of social justice, injustice, and oppression, because "language" is in the center of both tangible and mind-level resources in human rights and identity (Carnagarajah, 2006).

In a 2009 speech, former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan emphasized the role of education in social justice by referring to teaching as "a daily fight for social justice":

> I believe that education is the civil rights issue of our generation. And if you care about promoting opportunity and reducing inequality, the classroom is the place to start. Great teaching is about so much more than education; it is a daily fight for social justice (Duncan, 2009).

The concept of social justice, by its nature, is dynamically interrelated with the notions and considerations of race, privilege, socioeconomic status (gaps), equity, diversity, culture, and identity (Coney, 2016). In teaching practices and especially for language teaching, social justice can incorporate concepts of empowering towards, co-ownership of, and questioning conceptions of socially-made paradigms, biases, and unequal power structures. This study used social justice lenses as a theoretical framework for exploring the lives of ELs, and their perceptions of English language learning.

Theoretical Frameworks

Three theoretical frameworks undergird this study: *Push, Pull, Falling Out* (Doll, Eslami, & Walters, 2013), second language learner identity and social justice (Freire, 1996; Norton-Peirce, 1995), and *Investment* framework (Darvin & Norton, 2015). Doll et al.'s (2013) framework suggests that *Push* factors occur from activities/events within schools, *Pull* factors occur outside of schools, and *Falling Out* factors that refer to constraints out of students' control such as socio-political aspects. The diverse aspects and practices that adult English learners encountered both inside and outside classroom, that affect their identity in terms of their English learning, were used to explore L2 learner identities (Freire, 1996; Norton-Peirce, 1995). Lastly, the *Investment* framework (Darvin & Norton, 2015) was employed to explore what makes the study participants invest for their English learning.

Situated Desire to Learn for Adult English Learners

Considering that the fundamental inquiry of this research is "*What makes adult ELs either persist or drop out?",* the situated-ness of adult ELs will play an important role (Lave & Wenger, 1991). The themes over diverse research of the adult learners' learning motivation seem to converge into four themes: *job, family, self-actualization,* and *being a community member in a new society* (Valentine, 1990; Wang, 2006; Vafai, 2016). However, the population for each study has shown different priority patterns. Valentine (1990) shows that *personal development* is the number one desire for ELs, whereas Wang (2006) and Vafai (2016) show that *job needs* were preeminent. The need of many ELs for academic purposes is to pass a standardized test, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), in order to pursue higher education in English-speaking countries (Hsieh, 2017). On contrary, ELs for community purposes have different needs based on the four themes aforementioned for their functional and transitional needs (Auerbach, 1993). Understanding the different situated-ness between ELs for academic and community purposes is important because that "situated-ness" foregrounds different goals and characteristics of adult ELs (Gee, 2012, 2014; Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Menard-Warwick (2005) expanded the adult ELs' situation by considering the larger socio-political issues surrounding students, closely related to the governmental policies towards immigrants in the U.S. For example, the 2016 president candidate Donald Trump's pledge to expel undocumented immigrants would have affected the immigrated adult students in a direct way. Thus, the situated-ness of students must be

explored with multiple lenses to shed light on the adult ELs' motivating factors for learning English.

The Goal of this Study

This dissertation focuses on students' identity-level meaning making as subjective and active participant in L2 learning. This study explores adult ESL students' needs for learning English. Second, it investigates hidden factors in order to examine possible factors that might impact adult students' desire for learning English. Third, this study explores the stories of English learning journeys and decision-making rationales. In other words, this study aims to explore what learning English means to ELs, and what made them persist or drop out of English class. The research questions are:

1. Who are adult English Learners (ELs) who want to learn English at the Center for English Literacy (CEL)?
2. Why do adult ELs at CEL invest in learning English?
3. What makes adult ELs at CEL decide to stay or drop out?

Chapter 3: Methodology

The research design chosen was case study, because case study is "a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple courses of information" (Creswell, 2012, p. 97). Because I wanted to explore adult English Learners (ELs) trying to learn English, case study seemed an appropriate methodology that would allow me to collect multiple kinds of data, analyze the data with plural lenses, and focus on the "case" or "bounded system." Compared to other methodologies, the strength of case study is that it "affords researchers opportunities to explore or describe a phenomenon in context using a variety of data sources" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 544). This affordance emphasizing the phenomenon's *context (or case, bounded system)* and *multiple data sources* best serves to answer research questions of this study, which cannot be separated from the unique and specific context of adult Hispanic English learners. The bounded system in this study has four components: (1) adults immigrated from Mexico to the U.S., especially to a Southwestern state, (2) adults who have a full-time job, (3) adult students who enrolled and studied at an evening English class at the Center for English Literacy (CEL) in Oklahoma City, and (4) learners who have either stayed in the class or dropped out.

Data Collection

Informed consent was acquired before launching the study, and was translated into Spanish. Data was collected using interviews, observations and photographs, student work examples, surveys, and field notes.

Interview Data

Adult EL Students

Interviewing assumes that "the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit" (Patton, 2002, p. 341). Among the three types of interviews (structured, semi-structured, and unstructured), I used semi-structured interviews to collect data, because it offered the flexibility of both pre-developed questions and spontaneous questions. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of adult ELs towards learning English. One core question is, "What makes you want to learn English?" The probing question for this core question could follow as, "(Probing question) Okay, you said _____ made you want to learn English. What makes you feel that way? Can you offer any examples?" Each interview took approximately one hour. All data was recorded and saved in a secured computer system. Interview data was transcribed for analysis. Detailed interview questions can be found in appendix A. The relationship between the research questions of this study and interview questions is described and included in appendix B.

Teachers at CEL

I initially recruited three adult EL teachers who worked at the CEL for interviews to illustrate rich contextual information over the specific English learning setting. I ended up interviewing one teacher only, because the other two teachers left. The interview with the teacher took approximately one hour, and was semi-structured. Detailed interview questions for teachers can be found in Appendix C.

Member-Checking Interview

Transcripts of interviews were shared with interviewees for member-checking purposes (Creswell, 2012). Feedback and corrections from the participants were reflected on the transcripts, and field-notes were maintained over the feedback processes. In addition to interviews with participants, participants' family members and friends were interviewed. Participants' family and friends who can fluently speak English were recruited for member-checking when appropriate. The member-checking interview protocols can be found in appendix D.

Observations

I observed the participants' daily lives by direct observation (Baxter & Jack, 2008) and took photographs to document participants' housing conditions and job environment, which allowed me to collect multiple data sources to see the context, and further enhance the data credibility of this study through data triangulations (Patton, 1990; Yin, 2003). Observing real life situations brought more *authenticity* about who the participants are and what makes them to make decisions in their ways. Gustavson (2007) and Venkatesh (2009) in their qualitative studies hung out with their participants to explore and describe the participants' real lives with authenticity. Exploring how youth learn on their own terms was Gustavson's target phenomenon, and gangs' lives was Venkatesh's. Their qualitative observations, hanging out with the participants, and conversations as real interviews brought more vivid richness to their data for understanding the target phenomena. Therefore, I employed observations to improve this study's authenticity. This observation data helped me answer the research questions regarding who the participants are and what makes them decide to learn English.

Student Work Examples

Student work examples were collected as a supplementary dataset for the data triangulation process (Yin, 2003). The student work examples include students' homework assignments, students' in-class notes, and communication memos between the students and their teachers. Other forms of artifacts that the participants made or created for their learning were subjects to collect.

Field Notes and Memoing

I kept field notes and kept memoing as researcher reflection tools (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Birks, Chapman, & Francis, 2008), as well as another data source for data triangulations. I kept field notes and memoing for situations including interview days, observation days, and over the data analysis processes. Maintaining field notes and memos contributed to establish the credibility of the data analysis, peer examination, and the consistency or dependability of findings of this study (Baxter & Jack, 2008). I shared my field notes and memos with researcher triangulation partners to reflect on the findings and interpretations of the data.

Survey for Demographic Information

A survey created for this study collected the students' demographic and sociocultural information as a supplementary dataset. The survey's constructs were determined by using meta-analysis based holistic constructs (White, 1982). Critiquing the relatively low correlation between traditional socioeconomic status (SES) including house income level and students' learning outcome, White (1982), through meta-analysis of 200 studies, expanded the traditional SES constructs to larger socio-cultural aspects by including home atmosphere, school resources, and miscellaneous aspects

(e.g., ethnicity). For categorizing income status, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' poverty guideline (2017) is employed. The survey items can be found in appendix E. I inductively analyzed the participant interview data, teacher interview data, member-checking interview data, field notes, student work examples, real-life photos, and SES survey data in the search for answers to the research questions. Figure 3, Research Design at a Glance, illustrates the data sources and analysis methods.

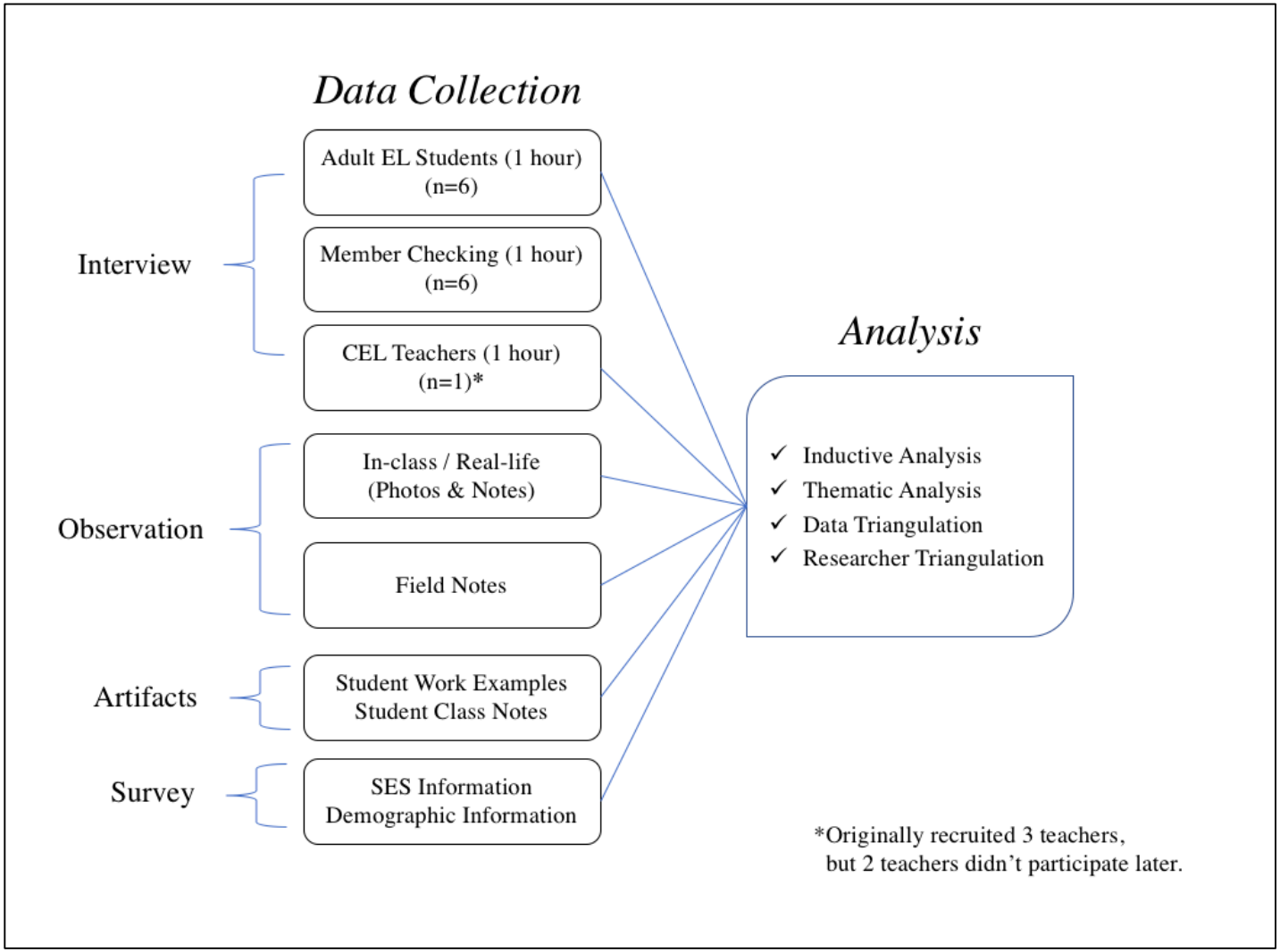


Figure 3. Research at a Glance

Center for English Literacy (CEL) in this Study

Center for English Literacy (CEL) is a nonprofit English-teaching institute located in an urban city in Southwestern U.S. The CEL was founded in 1987 to address adult illiteracy by helping adults improve basic literacy and math skills (CEL's audit report in 2015). The head office is located in the city's downtown, teachers work at satellite locations to teach adult ELs nighttime and daytime. As of 2017, 13 teachers worked as part time teachers, and 17 satellite classrooms were operating across the city. Classes usually had enrollment of 5-10 students, mostly refugees or immigrants. Student numbers fluctuate for many reasons, including family issues, time conflicts, and other factors. I have taught English to refugee and immigrant groups from Mexico, Myanmar, Vietnam, Panama, and Chile in CEL for four years. The teaching venues include a break room at a metal valve manufacturing factory, a library meeting room at an elementary school, and a room at a local church. The primary funding sources of CEL are funds from United Way and various grants, donations, and fundraising events.

Participant Characteristics

The participants in this study were adult Hispanic English learners, who enrolled in and studied at a non-profit community literacy institute in a city in the Southwestern U.S. The majority of students have day jobs in fields such as construction, house-keeping, and manufacturing. Their ages range from 20 to 50. They have resided in the U.S. in a range from less than 5 years to more than 20 years. All the participants are from Mexico and their first language is Spanish. I taught English to these students in the fall of 2016. The two-hour class met twice a week (Mondays and Wednesdays). The class used the Basic English Skill Test (BEST) developed by the Center for Applied

Linguistics (www.cal.org) as a pre- and post-test to evaluate students' progress. However, the BEST has only reading and writing components to assess – no speaking or listening. The total number of the participants for the study was six.

Sampling

This study employed criterion sampling under purposeful sampling strategy mainly, and combined with convenient sampling and snowball sampling by the nature of this study (Creswell, 2012). The criterion sampling's purpose is to sample "all cases that meet some criterion" (Creswell, 2012, p. 158) as well as is "useful for quality assurance" (Creswell, 2012, p. 158). The most significant reason to adapt criterion sampling in this study is that the current study design has a particular contextual criterion. The criterion is that the participants should experience the EL class at the literacy center in a bounded system where the participants are: (1) adult learners immigrated from Mexico to the U.S., (2) adult learners who are working full-time, (3) adult learners who are enrolled at the literacy center's evening EL class, and (4) adult learners who stayed in the class or dropped out. To answer the research questions of this study, it was desirable to find students who stayed in and dropped out of the EL class. The interview sample size pool was 20 based on the original class size. Using the class roster information, I recruited the participants who either stayed or dropped out of their EL class in Fall 2016. However, initially it is expected to recruit up to four participants, because 16 out of 20 students have dropped out when I came back to the class after my winter off due to a health reason. Here the convenient sampling strategy was employed by approaching the sample population with flexible and pragmatic strategy (Marshall,

1996), because I might not have been able to reach out to the all 16 students who dropped out. Some students even have not left contact information on the roster.

Additionally, after each interview, snowball sampling was employed to recruit more participants who are in the same context through previous participants' referrals. Snowball sampling will be a good approach for this particular context, because snowball sampling appropriately supports a study that explores a phenomenon that is "a relatively private matter, and thus requires the knowledge of insiders to locate people for study" (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981, p. 141). For example, studies for drug use and addiction often employ snowball sampling, because the target phenomenon is "at the fringes of deviant behavior" (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981, p. 160). One target phenomenon to explore is what makes the adult ELs drop out (deviant behavior) of their classes, which is a relatively private matter. Two out of six participants in this study were recruited by snowball sampling.

For teachers, criterion-sampling was adopted when recruiting. The criterion includes being a teacher at CEL in the past or present with Spanish-speaking adult students. Therefore, both criterion sampling and snowball sampling, with the notion of convenient sampling were adopted to this study by the context's unique characteristics of non-instituted-ness.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews were analyzed using inductive and thematic analysis (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Shank, 2002) and methods of comparing, contrasting, aggregating, and ordering (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) in order to capture the original meaning from the data. I bracketed my

subjectivity as much as I can to inductively analyze the data through the coding process. I first color-coded each participant's interview data by using different color paper for each participant. Then, I decontextualized the interview data by segmenting the data based on the research questions. Figure 4 shows the color-coding process. A constant contrast and comparison method was used for the process of coding and categorizing for thematic analysis. All coding processes were kept in a reflective journal for ease of audit. A first set of codes, with the transcripts, was shared with a third party and objective researcher-colleague, to increase the trustworthiness of the analysis. Once the research triangulation was completed, the preliminary findings were shared with the interviewees for member checking. Member checked feedback was reflected in the final analysis of the qualitative data. The qualitative data are displayed according to themes with supporting narratives (Creswell, 2012).

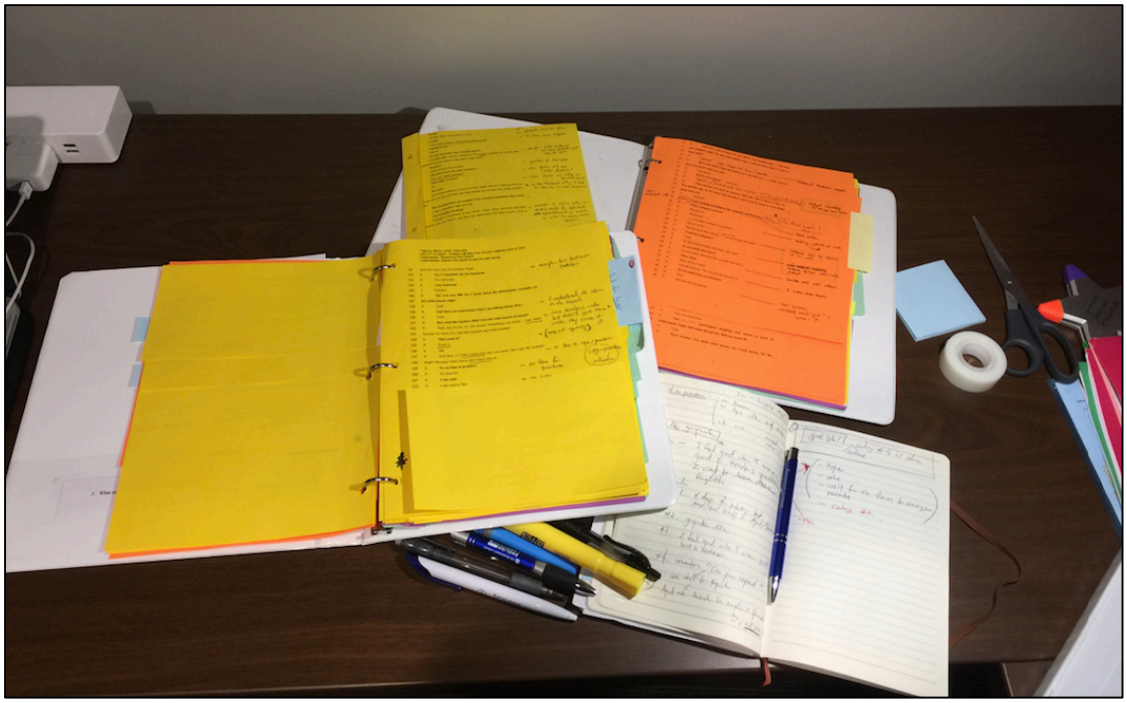


Figure 4. Color Coding Method I Used for Analysis

Trustworthiness

To enhance the credibility of trustworthiness (Creswell, 2012), I employed researcher triangulation strategies from coding to coherence meaning making by constantly discussing the transcripts, codes, and categories with two other researchers. These holistic analysis methods were implemented segment by segment to thoroughly delve into the meanings of each segment. Also, member checking (Creswell, 2012) with the participants was implemented to clarify the participants' answers in the interview data, demographic information, and any further considerations. To improve transferability, this study specifies the students' context with as much details as possible, such as the duration of their residence in the U.S., marital status, jobs, family backgrounds, and study styles. Also, pseudonyms were selected carefully to represent the participants' socio-cultural status. However, due to the small number of participants (n=6), transferability would be low, which is one of the limitations of this study. In terms of confirmability, this study created and archived a codebook for inductive analysis and theme-making processes, which could be used for a future audit trail as necessary. Throughout these processes, the triangulation researchers and I constantly compared and contrasted the important variables, metaphors, and themes across all segments to build a large map of the target phenomenon (Shank, 2002). In this theorizing phase, the theoretical frameworks of this study were used simultaneously with the probable best "fit" of categories (Morse, 1994) to examine the consistency between the emerged network and existing theories such as student drop out factors, adult ELs' motivational factors, and sociocultural affective aspects in the effort of illuminating a facet of the target phenomenon (Shank, 2002).

Ethical Issues

To comply with research standards, this study acquired the Institutional Review Board's (IRB) approval of a research university in a Southwestern state in the U.S., in which informed consent forms to the participants were included. To keep the confidentiality of the participants, pseudonyms were used, and all of the interview data and related documents were securely stored in both a locked cabinet and a password-protected computer.

Translation

Due to participants' potential struggles with the English language, translation of the informed consent form into Spanish was conducted by a professional Spanish/English speaker. Additionally, for the interview process, using Spanish words were encouraged when the participants are willing, therefore partial translation from Spanish to English was necessary. For those cases needing the translation of interview transcripts, back translation strategy from English to Spanish, Spanish to English, was adopted with professional Spanish/English translators. This translation and back-translation can contribute to the validity of the interview data as this study possesses the nature of cross-cultural research (Brislin, 1970; Sperber & Devellis, 1994).

Limitations

This study design includes several limitations. First, due to the small number of participants (n=6), transferability would be low. Second, because the participants' first language is one other than English, the accuracy of the data might be limited; translation and member-checking interviews were employed to back up the credibility limitation concern. Third, observing and photographing the participants' daily lives

depended on the participants' permission and circumstances, which in some cases constrained collecting such data. Lastly, the research setting is limited to one non-profit literacy center in Oklahoma City, which may lower the transferability of the findings and implications to other contexts such as K-12 schools and higher education institutes.

Chapter 4: Findings

The Participants' Backgrounds

Multiple datasets including semi-structured interviews, student house visits, student worksite visits, survey answers, and student class work examples are used to describe participants. The six participants are described below.

Mag's Story

"*I am a hard worker. My boss likes me because I make 50 drawers during my shift, while my night shift people make 40. I wanted to improve my English for a promotion opportunity, but dropped out because I felt it is a waste of time*."

Mag (pseudonym) is from Chihuahua, Mexico. She is 27 years old and a mother of two daughters and one son. Mag crossed the border with her two daughters four years ago, and her son was born in the United States with her new husband she met in Oklahoma. Her current husband, Mario (pseudonym) is 43 years old and has lived in the U.S. for 17 years. This is Mag's fourth year in the U.S. Mag is proud of her hard work at a furniture manufacturing company. Her husband called Mag "a nail gunner," because Mag uses a nail gun to assemble the wood drawers.

She came to the CEL's English class in September 2016, because her boss offered her a better job position – working inside; but this offer was conditional upon having better English proficiency. Mag's English proficiency was basic, but good enough to comprehend some everyday English. She was an active learner, always smiling and working well with her classmates although she looked tired. During break time, she smoked outside with a few classmates. Mag's English proficiency was the lowest among the 20 students in my class, but her classmates helped her in a supportive

manner. The drawing in Figure 5 shows Mag's illustration of herself on self-presentation day. When I came back to the class after my winter off for my health issue, Mag was one of three other students who showed up for the new class. When I interviewed her, she said she dropped out in March 2017, when another teacher, Amy (pseudonym), took over. Mag said, "I dropped out because the class of the previous class was waste of time. I learn nothing. The teacher didn't care about us."

In return for interviewing her, she invited me to her house in Oklahoma City. Her husband owns the house and they rent a room to a single Mexican man. As Mag's English proficiency is basic, her husband helped with the interview as a translator. Mario's English proficiency is higher than Mag, and he seemed to have no problem to communicate in English for daily life communications. Sometimes Mag directly answered interview questions. During the interview, Mag's husband unexpectedly dominated, Mario graduated high school in Mexico, came to the U.S. to financially support his mother 17 years ago, traveled across many states to build houses and buildings, worked as a custom painter for houses, and built the mansion of the magnate who owned Mathis Brothers Furniture in Oklahoma City. Mario hugged his and Mag's son constantly during the interview, but never called nor looked at the daughters at all. Their kitchen was under construction. Mario said they were remodeling the kitchen by using the drawers that Mag's company sells, and lumber and wood doors that Mario's current workplace use.

Mario supports Mag's English learning, and at the same time, somewhat oppresses Mag to not to actively learn English. For example, Mag said that she can accommodate her schedule to come to the English language class as long as the teacher

is good, on nights of Mondays and Wednesdays. However, Mario intervened by saying, "Mag needs to think again, because we go to a Bible study every Wednesday." They are Catholic, and the Bible study is held in Spanish. Mag said to me only, that she can accommodate her Wednesday night schedule. Also, a translator who helped me to transcribe the Spanish conversations between Mag and Mario in the interview pointed out that there is probably a gender-based tension between Mario and Mag, because the translator picked up several expressions in Mario's Spanish conversations to Mag, such as "Digale" (meaning "go, tell!") and "dile!" (meaning "tell him!") The translator, from Mexico, pointed out Mario may have been showing machismo to indicate he was the head of the household.

Mag is a documented immigrant with a working visa. She crossed the border for her daughters' futures, because Mag said it is hard to live in Mexico. Mario and Mag both argued that in Mexico, everything is unfair. If you have no money, you cannot proceed any with education regardless of how smart you are. Monetary compensation is not fair either; you cannot buy a car or a house although you work hard. They feel that the U.S. is fairer and gives them more opportunities. For example, McDonald's restaurant was mentioned more than 10 times during the interview. Mario said going to a McDonald's in Mexico is a luxurious activity for only rich people, whereas in the U.S., anyone can go. In the U.S., they have their own house and cars, and afford to go to a McDonald's anytime. Mag first came to my class in September 2016, and dropped out in March 2017.

Mario pushed her to say, "I am a hard worker." When Mag repeated the words, she seemed deflated. She seemed nervous and unmotivated to say words by Mario.

However, her desire to learn emerged naturally sometimes. When we said good-bye and walked to the door of their house, Mag stopped me at a wall with her family photos and proudly talked to me in English to introduce her family both in the U.S. and Mexico (see Figure 6). When discussing her family photos, Mag seemed poised and happy. "John, this is my family in Mexico, my mom, my cousins. This is my old daughter…" The sentence structure was complete and there was no fear of mistakes or wrong utterances. She asked me, "John when are you coming back to teach? When is your class starting again? I want to come again." Although she lost her job promotion opportunity to a colleague with better English proficiency, Mag's motivation to learn English still seems high.

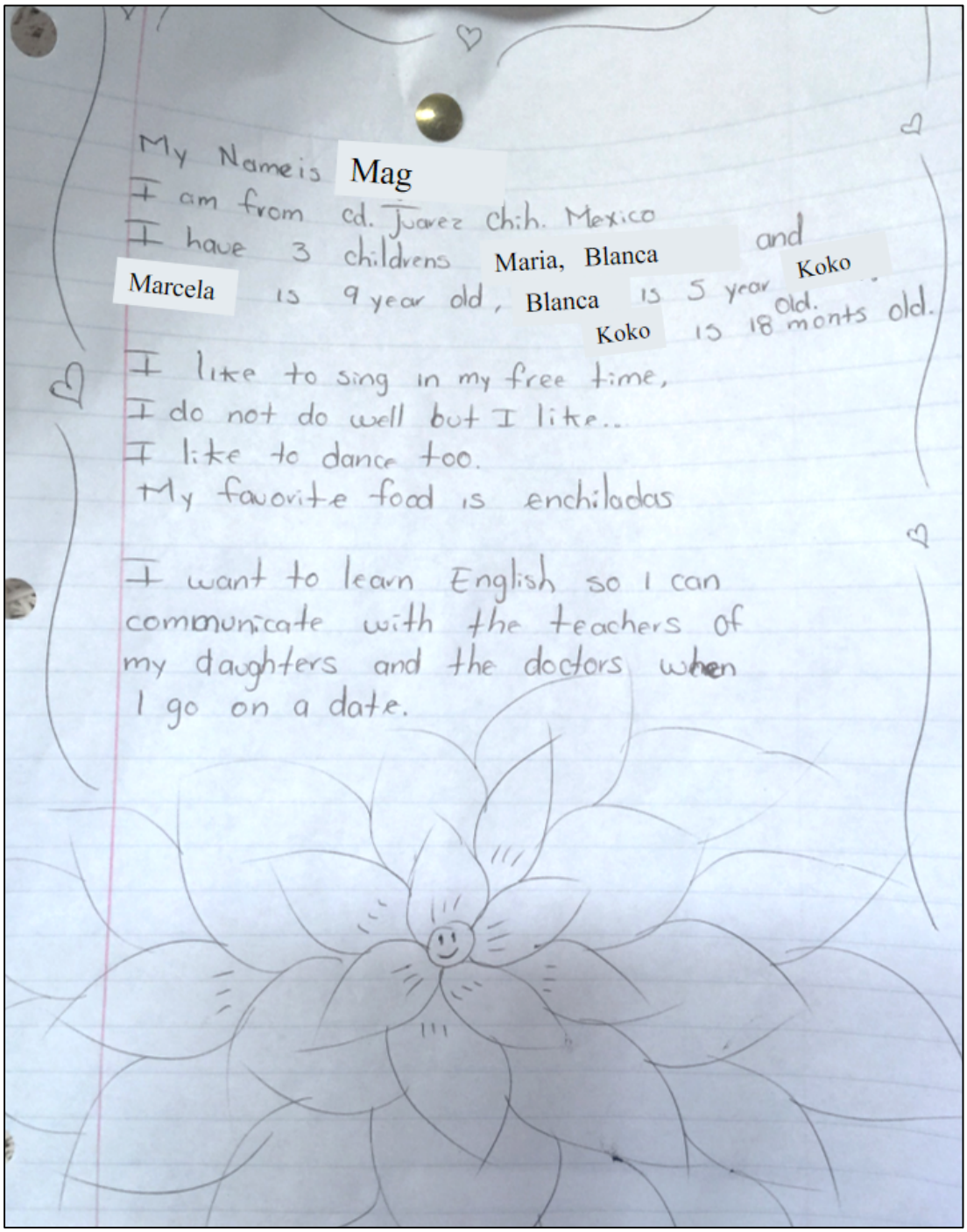


Figure 5. Mag's Self-portrait that She Drew on Presentation Day using English (*pseudonyms are used for Mag and her children's names.)

Figure 6. Family Photo Wall - Mag stopped me here to present the photos and family to me using English.

Domingo's Story

"*I came to CEL to learn English to help my kids, and for more opportunities in my job. But I dropped out because I heard that the teacher said "quiet!" to my Spanish conversation and "stupid!" to my classmate. How can you come to class when a person calls you stupid*?"

Domingo (pseudonym), 33 years old, is from Mexico City, and has lived in the U.S. for 17 years. Married to Samantha (pseudonym), Domingo has three sons. Domingo came to the U.S. to support his family right after he graduated from middle school. He recalled that his father said this when Domingo was about to cross the border: "Domingo, listen son. Make your decision now between studying and supporting your family." "I'll support my family," he said. Like Mario, Domingo travelled to different states to work in construction fields, including Arkansas, Georgia, Texas, and California. He came back to Oklahoma after his first-year "trip." When he

had to go back to Mexico, his friend recommended he stay in the U.S., because the U.S. has more opportunities and there is good money for working. Domingo tried to check his friend's opinion by working at a petroleum company. What he did was to operate an oil valve, and he was paid $10 per hour. To him it was good money and an easy job. He decided to stay. Since then, Domingo has worked at a construction company as a laborer. He works with two Mexican colleagues to build houses, including roofing, plumbing, and interior works, under an American boss.

Before marriage, Domingo lived with a Mexican man with the same name, Domingo. In fact, at one time Samantha was the other Domingo's girlfriend. But her husband-to-be Domingo answered the phone once, and it was how they first met. The other Domingo was deported to Mexico. After marrying Samantha, Domingo had three sons; they are now 10 years old, 7 years old, and 5 years old. I have visited their house and church congregations more than 15 times, and they visited me at my school in Fall 2017.

Domingo lived in a trailer in Oklahoma City. I had no idea about living in a trailer. The trailer "village" was located right next to a railroad. You could hear how fast and loud a train can run every two hours. They don't need to pay rent, but do pay tax, about $200 per year. The light blue colored trailer building was quite old (see Figure 7). Domingo built a nice deck in front of the house, and there is a small front-yard where Domingo repairs his car under a tree. Domingo and I used to repair my car together. I was often amazed by his passion, concentration, and creativity.

We worked on my car three times in his front yard. He used and created new tools based on what he had in his toolbox. Usually, people use a car jack pump, jack-

stands made of steel, and neat sets of tools that include things like a shiny brake bar. However, Domingo used piles of 2 by 4 lumber as a "jack-stand," and used a long flat plier as a jack-up pump arm because the pump lost the bar. I saw many people throwing away a jack-up pump when they lost the pumping arm; but Domingo used the plier as a new arm (see Figure 8 for the jack without an arm and piles of wood). The first task we did together was to replace a front CV-axle of my car, because the boot was torn apart. A local car mechanic asked me to pay about $300, but Domingo said, "I can do it, don't waste your time and money." Again, I was not 100% sure about his skills, but recalling the incident where he helped get my car fixed in the middle of the night, I decided to let him give it a try. More importantly, Domingo's eyes were shining when he said "John, I can do it." Staying dirty was a catch-phrase for car mechanics. Domingo and I were covered with dirt and oil, and finally successfully replaced the old CV-axle with a new one. We paid about $70 for the part. During the task, there were many frustrating moments. Some bolts and nuts were extremely tight, so we could not get them out. When we tried to take the old CV-axle out, it refused. Each moment of struggle seemed like an ordeal. Honestly at several points, I felt like we should stop and tow my car to a professional mechanic shop. However, Domingo was very calm, relaxed, and even hummed songs. Whenever we had problems, he hummed songs, implicitly saying that "it is not a big deal, we can do this." I was impressed with his strong problem-solving skills, his physical capabilities, and his mind-level resilience. Since that day, my car has worked and run well. It's been seven months since we fixed it together. I asked him how he knew all of the repairing logistics. He said, "I tried lots of times. I made many mistakes, and I learn from them. For example, to get the CV-axle out, it took me three

hours the other day. I asked my friend, and he came to me and used a big flat driver, it just came out. I used hammer and other pliers. I also read books and YouTube videos to learn." I saw a strong potential for learning and mastering English from his real-life success stories in this car-repairing saga.

Domingo came to my class in August 2016. The number one reason for him to learn English was that he wanted to help his children reading English books. He wanted to be an active part of his children's education, life, and hopes. Domingo pointed out that he didn't feel good whenever his children came to him asking about an English textbook they studied at school. All he could say was, "I don't know, go to your mom." Domingo, of course, mentioned that his job needs are a reason to learn English, but helping his children is more important than his job. His children speak Spanish to him, but use English with their mother. Samantha was born in the U.S.

I visited his church for Spanish congregations on Sundays from June to September 2017. I played drums for their worship time, and taught Domingo how to play drums. Domingo was a fast learner. I drew musical notes for drumbeats, and he understood pretty much everything and practiced actively, even when I was not with him (see Figure 9 for the musical notes of drums). Domingo's youngest son was also interested in playing drums, so we bought two new pairs of drumsticks for Domingo and his son. On one occasion, Domingo came to me and translated what his Spanish pastor said in the sermon into English. It was very impressive that Domingo was not nervous, but instead was calm and motivated to translate the narrative (see figure 10 for the congregation I was in, and Domingo translated). The sermon was a metaphor on seeing the world like a water tank shown in the movie *Finding Nemo*. When the oxygen

providing machine stops, the water tank became dirty. The pastor's point was Christianity is like the oxygen machine. This impromptu translation was never planned, nor requested. Domingo's urgent motivation to help me, as a non-Spanish speaker, to understand the situation at the moment seemed to motivate and empower him. Domingo became a Christian, a Protestant, six years ago. Samantha was a Christian since she was born, but that is not the case for Domingo. He said he was bad by drinking everyday after work. One day he went to an emergency room, and the doctor said he had only two months to live due to a bad liver. All his family prayed for him to survive, and the prayer seemed to be answered. Since that experience, Domingo said he stopped drinking, and listens to the Bible to keep his spirit "happy and right".

Domingo was a passionate student in my class, always doing his homework. He was actually the only student who did homework in which I asked students to email a message to me. I wanted to integrate e-literacy skills into the curriculum. Out of 20 students, only Domingo did the homework. Domingo was never absent, and opened and closed the class door every night. When I came back from my two-month off, he was one of the students remaining. He stayed with class through two other instructors. Domingo dropped out while he was taking Amy's class when he heard that Amy said "quiet!" to Domingo's Spanish conversations with classmates. After Amy said "stupid!" to a classmate, Domingo decided to drop. He said, "How can you come to a person saying stupid to you?"

Domingo is an undocumented immigrant who has lived in Oklahoma City for 17 years. His wife and family worried about him, so they wanted him to do the immigration paperwork. For some reason, he just kept saying with a smile, "I'll do it

later. I like Mexican citizenship. I don't know any reason to do the paperwork." According to Samantha, however, Domingo's status is vulnerable to deportation. Samantha thinks that Domingo may worry about any potential deportation reasons that pop up when he does the paperwork.

Domingo currently works with an American boss, a contractor. Domingo and his crew are sub contractors, or laborers. Domingo said his boss is paid more than he is, though the boss sits all day in his truck and does nothing while Domingo and his crew sweat outside. Domingo's one dream is to establish his own building business and to own his construction firm. This is another reason that he wanted to improve his English.

Figure 7. Domingo's Trailer House – Domingo and I worked three times together repairing my car in his front yard under the tree.

Figure 8. The Broken Jack and Piles of Lumbers Used as Jack-Stands.

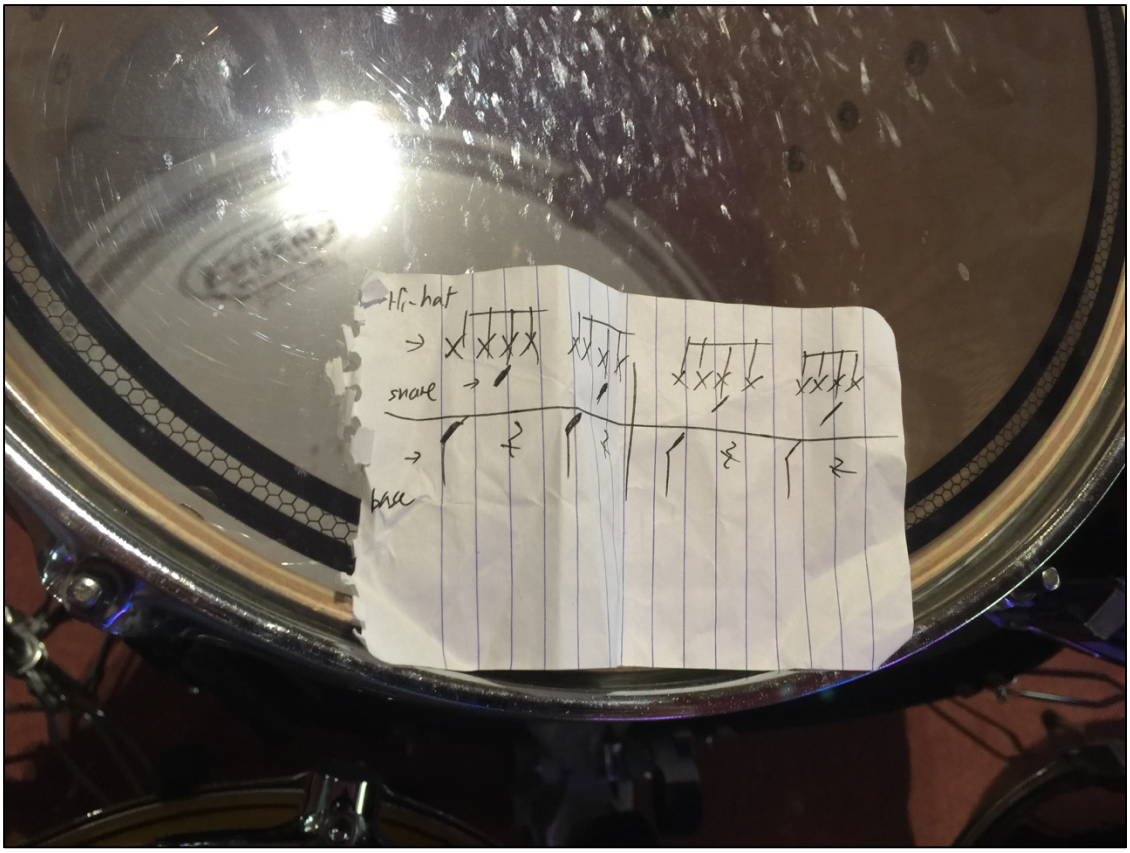


Figure 9. Musical Notes of Drum Beats I Drew and Used to Teach Domingo.

Figure 10. Spanish Congregation I Attended - Domingo Translated the Sermon.

Irma's Story

"I need English to protect my kids. My two kids translated in an emergency room 18 years ago when my ex-husband died due to cancer…it was so hard, so sad. I couldn't speak any English, couldn't protect my kids. I wanted to tell the doctors, "talk to me, don't touch my kids," but I couldn't. My 9 and 11 year-old daughters translated that their dad died due to cancer that night. I always want to learn English, but I dropped my English class, because the teacher didn't care for us, never prepared for the class. We did the same thing for 3 days. It was waste of time."

Irma (pseudonym) is from Mexico. She is 51 years old, and has lived in the U.S. for 27 years. She was born in Mexico and came to the U.S. with her husband to work. Irma's two daughters, Samantha and Eli (pseudonyms), were born in Texas. Irma has done many different physical jobs, including picking up grapes/berries, making medical equipment and bags in a factory, nursing elderly people, and making cardboard. Irma is proud of herself for working full-time in the U.S., and prefers factory work to other jobs saying, "I like factory working more than other jobs like housekeeping and restaurant. I worked at a factory for 16 years. It is easy and comfortable for me." She had difficult times at work due to lack of English proficiency. "No English, heavy work," Irma said. When she started her first factory job at the medical equipment factory, her boss asked her to carry a heavy box. To Irma the box was way too heavy to carry. She wanted to say that she couldn't do it, but she didn't know how to say it, so she just mumbled. Her boss pushed her to do it anyway. Irma ended up carrying the box, hurting her back. Avoiding work exploitation is one reason for Irma to learn English.

Recently, Irma is very proud of her English at work, because she is a translator between her boss and her colleagues. Irma's boss looks to Irma to communicate with other Mexican workers to give work orders. "I am so happy when my boss called me, I translate, and we both understand," Irma said. Her two colleagues, Marcella (pseudonym) and Ibby (pseudonym) asked Irma about her command of English. "Irma, English very good! Where did you learn?" "I have my good teacher John." Irma wanted to bring her two colleagues to John's class one day.

Irma's number one reason to learn English is to protect her children. 18 years ago, her ex-husband was sent to an emergency room. Irma spoke zero English. Her two

daughters, 9 and 11 years old, translated what was going on. Later that night, they translated that their father died. “It was so hard, so sad, John. I wanted to protect my kids, but I couldn’t, because I don’t know any English,” Irma said. Since that night, Irma’s motivation to learn English has never gone away. She took three ESL classes in a community college and an elementary school. Irma finished the courses. She recalls that, “I finished the schools, but I don’t remember anything.”

She came to my class in August 2016. Irma was an active student and never missed any classes. She always did her homework and contributed to group discussion. Irma was a lead student for the self-presentation activity in which students drew a picture of their portrait and write explanations of it (see Figure 11 for Irma’s drawing for presentation). Her English proficiency was higher than other classmates, probably because she has lived in the U.S. for 27 years. Irma translated my class content to classmates, including Mag and Domingo, enjoyed the homework I gave by approaching it meaningfully and projecting her life and stories into it. For example, when we studied a phrase, “even though,” the sentences Irma wrote for her homework were, “Even though I became a widow, I bought a house [a trailer like Domingo’s],” and “Even though I turned 51 yesterday, I feel like 25.” It was her life story. We reflected on her first sentence for her perseverance to live independently without her husband. And for the second sentence, we all happily laughed. I was surprised how witty and deep Irma’s approach was to English class (see figure 12 for Irma’s homework).

Although Irma has had a strong desire to learn English, she dropped out when the new sub teacher came in during my sick leave in November 2016. Irma thought the sub teacher didn’t care about the students at all because the teacher didn’t prepare for

the class and instead just said, “What do you want to learn today?” Irma had impression that the teacher just came in to sit with them. Irma recalled that one day the sub-teacher even went back home during the class time because he didn’t bring his journal. The teacher talked about movies, which made Irma more frustrated, because Irma said, “What movies? I have never seen any movies in this country.” The movie topic could be a good topic for pre-collegiate students who study English for their higher education, but not for these adult learners. “Derek didn’t prepare, just talked about movies, He taught the same thing – ABC alphabets for three days. Waste of time, so I quit,” Irma said. Irma dropped out after three months. That was November 2016.

In summer 2017, I interviewed Irma for this study, and visited her church. One day, Irma and Domingo came to me to talk about their new approach to English learning. “John, can you teach us at any time you are available? We don’t want other teachers, we want you to teach us.” We started a kind of “Sunday English school” at their church. Irma brought her two colleagues, Marcella and Ibby (pseudonyms) to the Sunday school. We had total of five students for the Sunday school: Irma, Domingo, Marcella, Ibby, and Chris (Chris is the sixth participant of this study). From August 2017 to October 2017, we met every Sunday, 3 pm to 5 pm, to study English. Reflecting on the students’ needs and wants, we practiced sentences, phrases, how to pronounce English sounds by using group work, presentations, and homework assignment sharing (see figure 13 for the activity the Sunday school class had). All the students seemed happy to come, and Marcella accounted that “I have never seen Ibby smiling and laughing like this. She enjoys this class. We work together for 10 years, it’s my first

time to see her happy." Like Irma's "even though" examples, it seemed that Ibby took the class to not only learn English, but to reflect on her life and grow through it.

When the weather became cold in November 2017 and the Thanksgiving break came, we momentarily stopped our Sunday school.

Irma is a documented immigrant. Irma and Samantha travelled to Mexico back and forth over Thanksgiving break to visit Irma's mother living in Mexico.

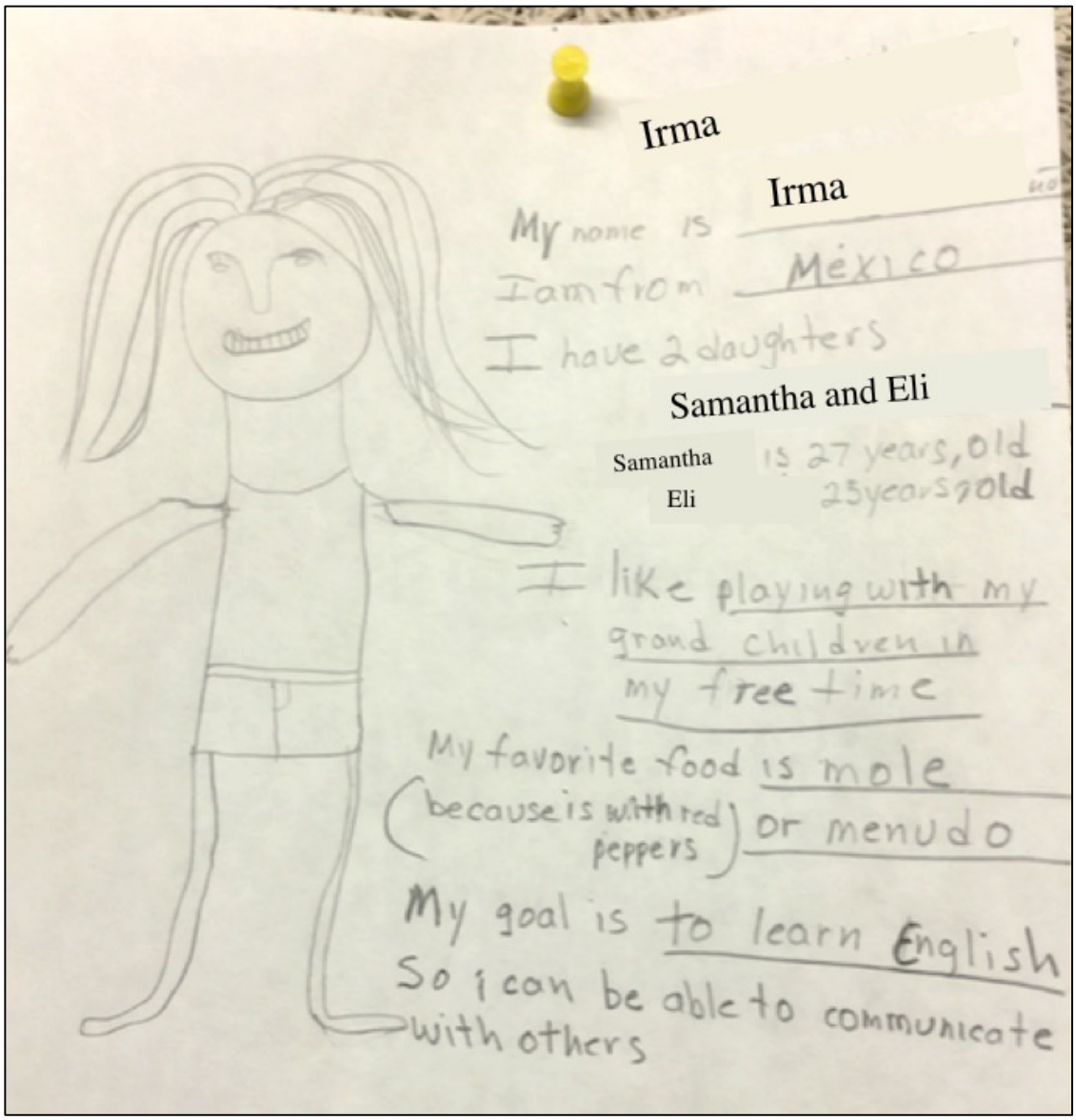


Figure 11. Irma's Self-portrait She Drew for Self-Presentation Activity - Irma was a lead and model student for this activity for peers (*psuedonyms are used for Irma's and her children's names.)

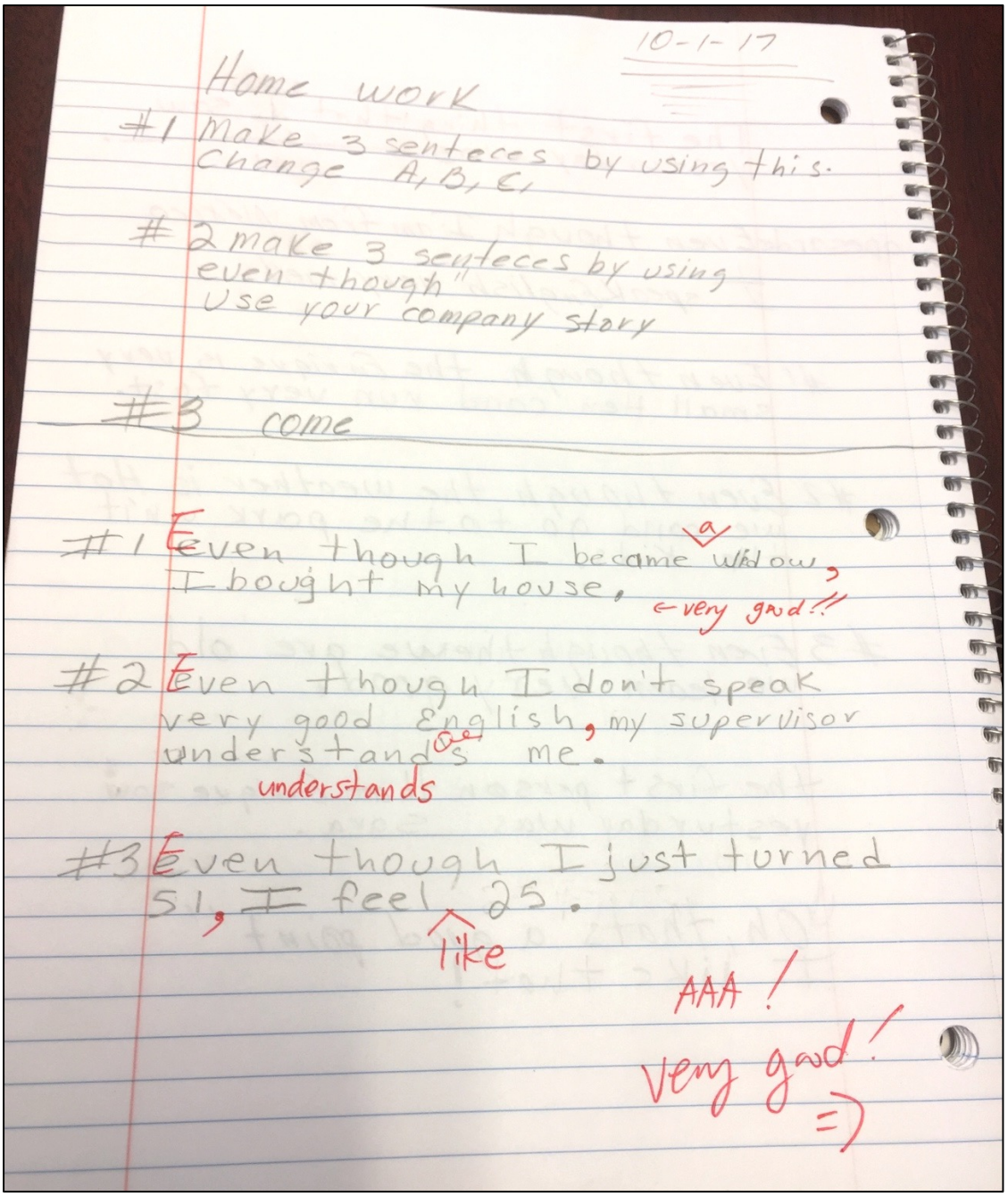


Figure 12. Irma's Homework for a Phrase "even though" - She reflected her life with deep and wit-full approaches

Figure 13. Sunday School Activity - Irma and Domingo suggested they study English with me regardless of CEL's schedule.

Eva's Story

"I came to the U.S. because my husband recommended, but I said no first. Upon his second suggestion after 5 years, we came together with my daughter. I wanted to go back to Mexico. My family lives there. But, my husband and daughter want to stay, so I stay. I wanted to learn English to communicate with people, and for everything, for my work, daughter, life; everything is English here. I always want to learn English, but I dropped because the class is no more interesting. The teacher didn't care for us. It is waste of time. I quit."

Eva (pseudonym) is 42 years old and has lived in the U.S. for 10 years. She came here with her husband and daughter. When her husband asked Eva to go to the U.S. 15 years ago, Eva said no. Upon her husband's second suggestion five years later,

they came together but planned to stay only one or two years and then go back. Eva's mother and sisters are living in Mexico, so Eva always wanted to go back to Mexico. Her daughter wanted strongly to stay in the U.S. for better education and more opportunities, so Eva decided to stay. Eva's husband works in construction. They bought a house in Oklahoma City. Her daughter was a senior high school student when Eva started her English class in 2016. Her daughter is a college student now majoring in accounting. In spring 2017, Eva was busy to prepare and celebrate her daughter's 15th birthday – Quinceañera in Spanish. Quinceañera is a big event to not only to the person who turned to 15 years, but for the whole family, and the community. Eva's mother and sisters in Mexico visited Oklahoma to celebrate Quinceañera together in April 2017 (see figure 14 for Eva's daughter's Quinceañera event photos).

Eva works at an American restaurant in Oklahoma City. This is her tenth year working in the restaurant as food preparation staff. Eva arrives at the restaurant at 5 AM every morning and prepares food by cutting vegetables like onions, lettuces, and carrots (see figure 15 for her workplace). She works at a kitchen with an Indian colleague. Out of eight colleagues, only two, including Eva, are Spanish speakers. Others are White English speakers. Eva's colleagues push her to speak English sometimes, but Eva said, "No, you learn Spanish." Eva said she wanted to speak English very well, but it is sometimes hard and forcing her to speak English made her feel anxious. However, she wanted to learn English for many other reasons such as her daughter's schoolwork, grocery shopping, and doctor's appointments.

Eva came to my class in August 2016. Her number one reason to learn English was that she wanted to communicate with others. She wants to talk to people at work,

her daughter's teachers, and people in stores. Actually, she dreamed of listening and speaking good enough English to communicate freely with other people. One day one customer asked, "How are you?" Eva knew that it would've been a good chance to talk and practice English with the person, so she wanted to say something like, "I'm good, what about you?" But she couldn't open her mouth and ended up saying, "I busy, I go." Her chef colleagues asked her what to eat for lunch. She couldn't say anything but omelet. This desire to communicate with other people, understand others and make others understand motivated her to come to adult English class.

Eva was a good student in my class: quiet but motivated. Eva brought her friend, Elsa (the fifth participant of this study), to my class. Eva and Elsa actively studied together by making presentation slides, sharing stories, and doing homework (see figure 16 for Eva's presentation drawing). When I came back from my sick leave, Eva was remaining with other three students. Eva said, "I knew you are coming back, so wait for you." However, Eva dropped out of her class in March 2017 when another teacher taught, even after seven months since she started my class. She said she dropped because the class that other teacher taught was no longer interesting and the teacher didn't prepare – they played games for three days, and eventually she learned nothing out of it. Feeling that it was a waste of time, Eva dropped out. For Eva, checking homework meant a lot. She said that teacher John checked her homework every class, but teacher Amy didn't usually give homework. Amy gave homework a few times, but she forgot the homework the next time. "Amy didn't check the homework. She didn't care. I did my homework, but the teacher forgot the homework. She no care," Eva said. Eva has a strong desire to learn English. Over the interview, she asked me "how to say

this in English?" many times. Also, she said, "John when are you coming back? I want to go back to your class."

Eva and Elsa had been friends for 10 years. They met at an elementary school because their daughters are at the same school. Elsa ended up working at Eva's restaurant as a waitress on the weekends. They work, share life stories, and study English together. Elsa's story follows in the next section. Eva is a documented immigrant.

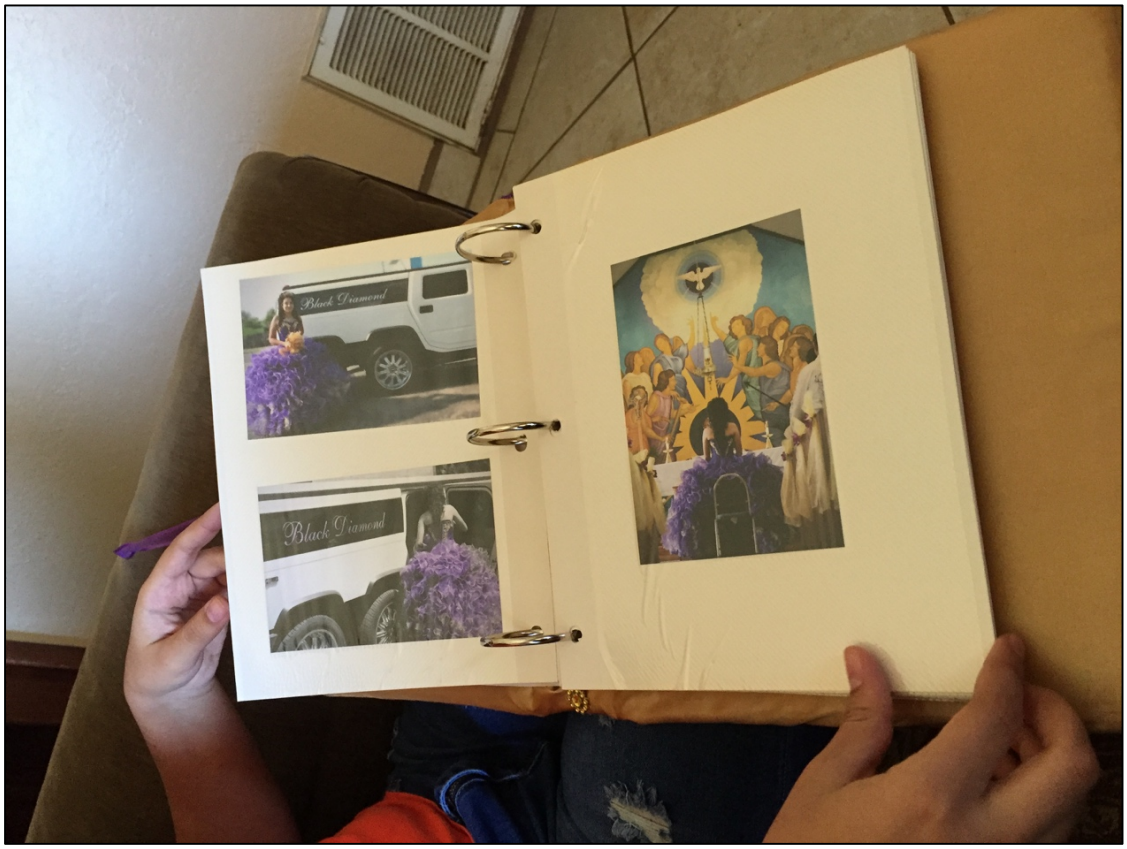


Figure 14. Eva's Daughter Explaining her Quinceañera Photos - Quinceañera was a major event for the community

Figure 15. Eva's Restaurant Kitchen - Eva has come here every day at 5 am to prepare foods for 10 years.

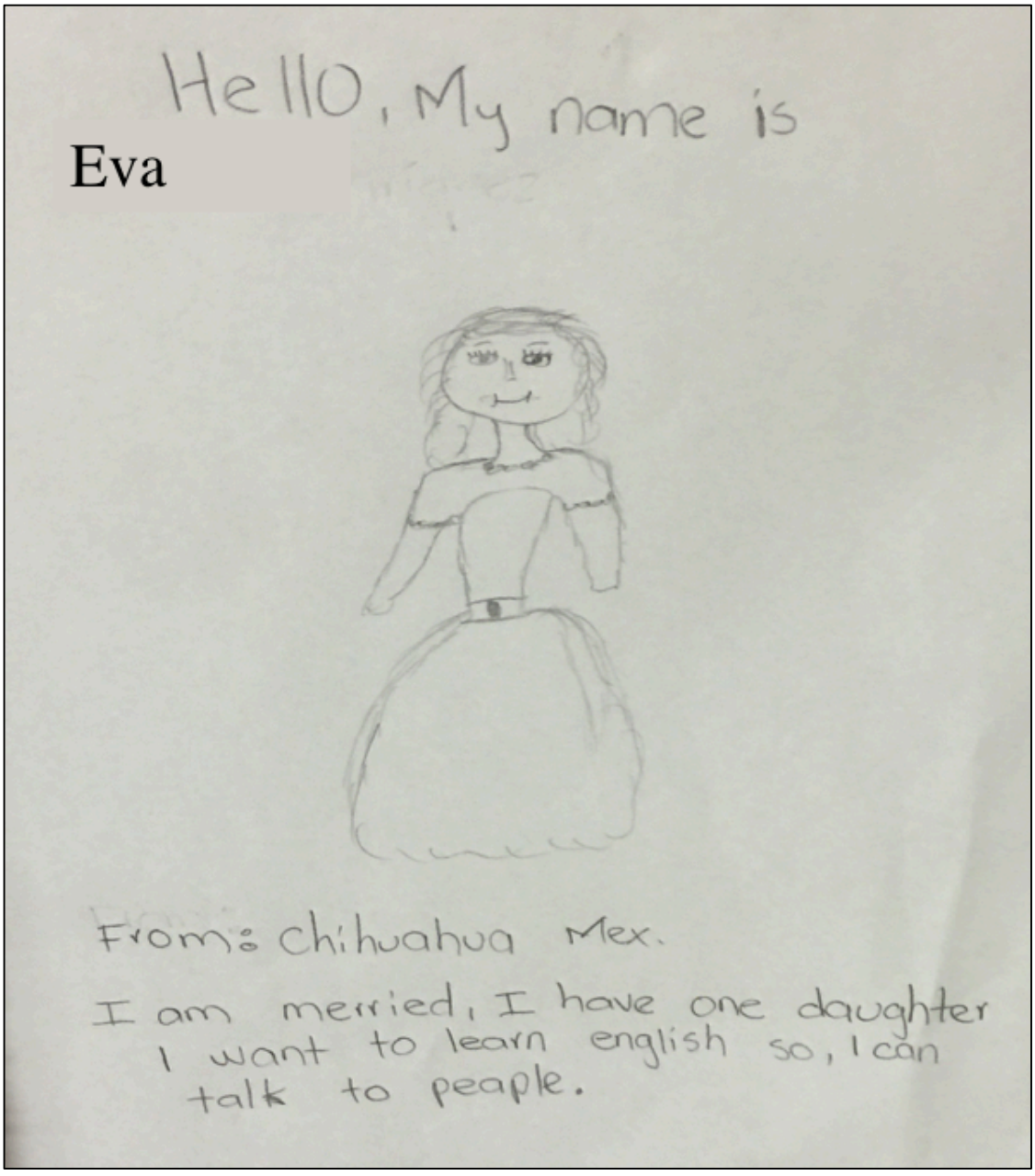


Figure 16. Eva's Presentation Drawing on Self-Presentation Day Using English (*pseudonym is used for Eva's name).

Elsa's Story

"I want to learn English to talk to other people like my colleagues at work. Especially, I want to talk to White guys in my dance club. Everyone is White, I need to speak English. I don't like when White people hate me because I don't speak English and I look different. I didn't choose my skin color, my eye color. I tell them learn Spanish, I don't care White people visiting Mexico speak no Spanish. Why me need to speak English only? But, I agree that I need to learn English because I'm living in America, even my kids prefer to speaking English. I came to John's class to learn, but dropped out when Amy taught. The class was different than John's class, no longer interesting. I also have to lose my weight for my daughter's Quinceañera. I dropped because one, the class is no interesting, and two I need time for my daughter's Quinceañera."

Elsa (pseudonym) is 41 years old and has lived in the U.S. for 17 years. She graduated high school in Mexico and came to the U.S. with her ex-husband. He worked in construction and travelled to many states for his work including Texas, Arkansas, Ohio, and Georgia. Elsa's two children, a son and a daughter, were born in the U.S. Elsa decided to come to the U.S. for more opportunities for both herself and her children. To Elsa, living in Mexico was not easy and not fair. In Mexico, if you have no money, you cannot go to school, no matter how smart you are. When Elsa was five years old, she lost her parents. Her uncle took care of Elsa and her younger sister and older brother. Elsa worked at her uncle's pharmacy. "In the U.S., not everyone can work at a pharmacy, but in Mexico anyone can. I studied by myself reading books and asking questions to my uncle. I was 10 when I worked at his pharmacy." When Elsa graduated

high school, she dreamed of going to college but could not because of financial issues. Elsa talked to her future husband about going to the U.S. someday for more opportunities. After travelling to several states, Elsa thought that she needed a house and more people she could contact for help; they decided to come to Oklahoma, where the cost of living is more affordable. Her husband bought a house with Elsa, but then they divorced. Currently, Elsa is a single mom supporting two children by working as a housekeeping service provider for private houses and a part-time waitress.

Elsa came to my class in September 2016. Eva introduced Elsa to my class. They have been friends for ten years, ever since they met at their daughters' elementary school. Eva was an active student too, always doing her homework carefully and creatively (see figure 17 for Elsa's drawing for a self-presentation day). Eva took adult ESL classes several times over the past ten years. She recalled that, "John, you are the best teacher ever." I asked why, and she said, "your class is interesting, teach very good."

When I came back from sick leave, Elsa did not linger in the class. Elsa took Derek's and Amy's classes, but eventually dropped out of Amy's class. She recalled that, "Derek was very boring, doing the same thing, I thought staying home is better than wasting time in Derek's class." Her final decision to drop occurred when she was in Amy's class. "Amy was a good teacher, better than Derek, but not interesting class. She needs to make her class more interesting and meaningful. I learn nothing from Amy's class." Amy played games some days and those games were fun but not good for learning, according to Elsa. At the same time Elsa began to think that Amy's class was a waste of time, her daughter's Quinceañera was in active preparation. Her daughter

pushed Elsa to lose weight. For Elsa, going to the gym was more meaningful than sitting in Amy's class learning nothing. "I dropped because one, I learn nothing from Amy's class, and I need to lose weight for my daughter's Quinceañera (see figure 18 for Elsa's daughter's Quinceañera)."

Elsa seems to value her heritage culture and language more than other participants. When Elsa and Eva first met, Elsa recalled "Eva's daughter was very good at speaking and writing both English and Spanish. My daughter and son understand Spanish, but are not good at writing." Elsa actively argues against White people who push her to speak English because she lives in the U.S. by saying, "No you learn Spanish, I don't care when White people visit Mexico and no speak Spanish." Elsa even said that she encountered some White racists who say that they are smarter than other people with different skin colors. She recounted, "My skin is not my choice, God made me this way. I want to have white skin and blue eyes, but this is me." Whenever Elsa has her children's friends visit her house, she said, "Speak Spanish in my house." Elsa does not want her children to lose the Spanish culture and language; it is their heritage. At the same time, she agrees that she needs to learn English because it means self-improvement in the U.S., opening more doors for herself and her family.

Elsa is an undocumented immigrant. Before the Trump administration, she said she was okay to renew her driver's license in New Mexico every three years. But after the Trump administration, the DMV office in New Mexico said "no" to her request to renew her driver's license. She drives everyday without a valid driver's license. One day a police officer pulled over her car and checked her ID. Fortunately, Elsa had her passport in her car, so the ID issue was kind of okay, but the problem was focused on

her driver's license. She showed the old driver's license to the police and said, "I'm just about to renew my driver's license." The police office asked Elsa about her status by asking "legal or illegal." Elsa said "illegal" and waited for a stormy reaction and after that – deportation. But for some reason, the police didn't talk about it anymore, and instead asked Elsa to call a friend with a valid driver's license to come and drive the car. Her friend came, and the police officer only watched the process. Elsa came home okay that night in October 2017. Elsa's immigration status is on the margin, but as a Catholic, she believes "God protects me."

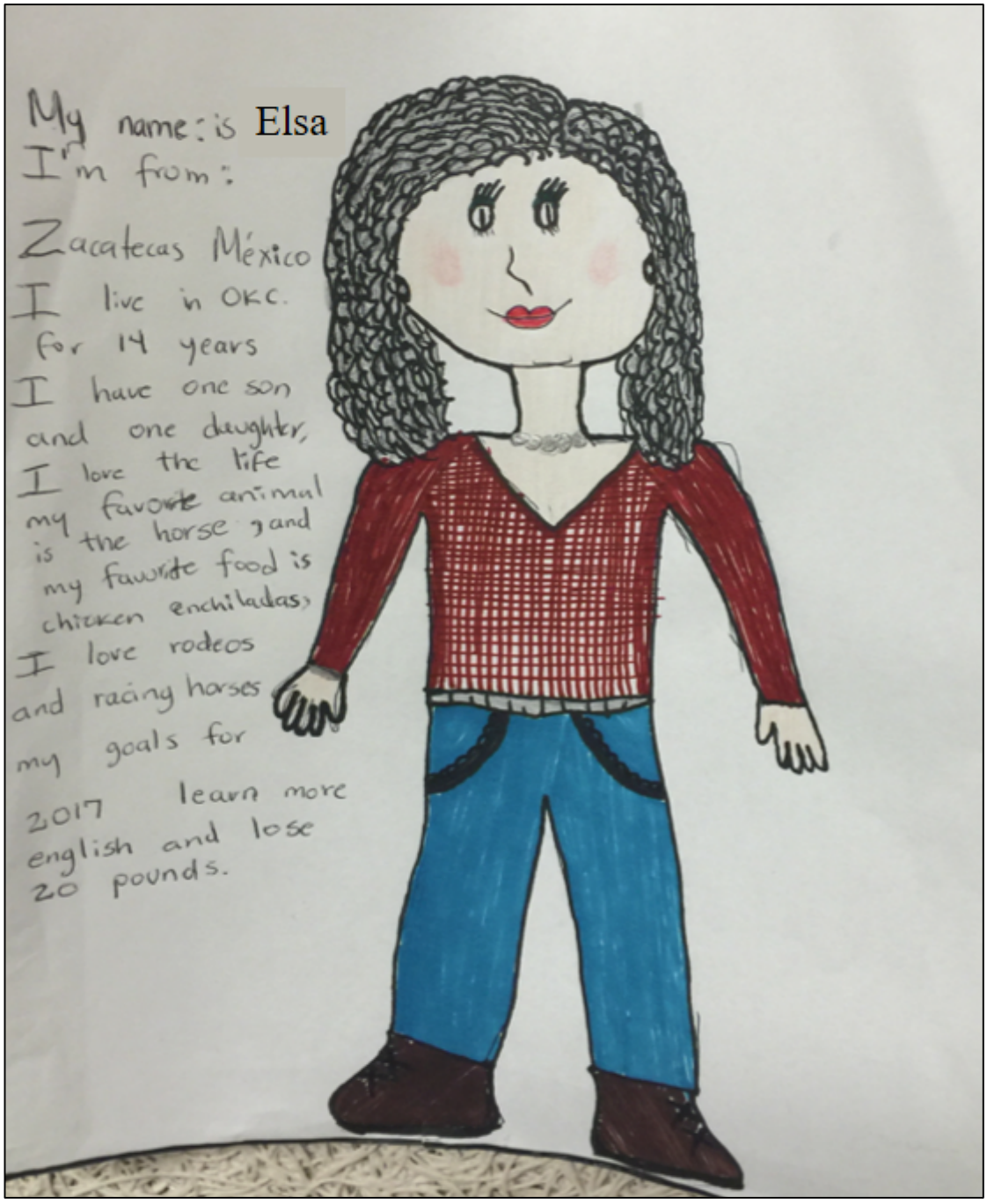


Figure 17. Elsa's Drawing for a Self-Presentation Day - Her work was the most carefully-drawn portrait among peers (*pseudonym is used for Elsa's name).

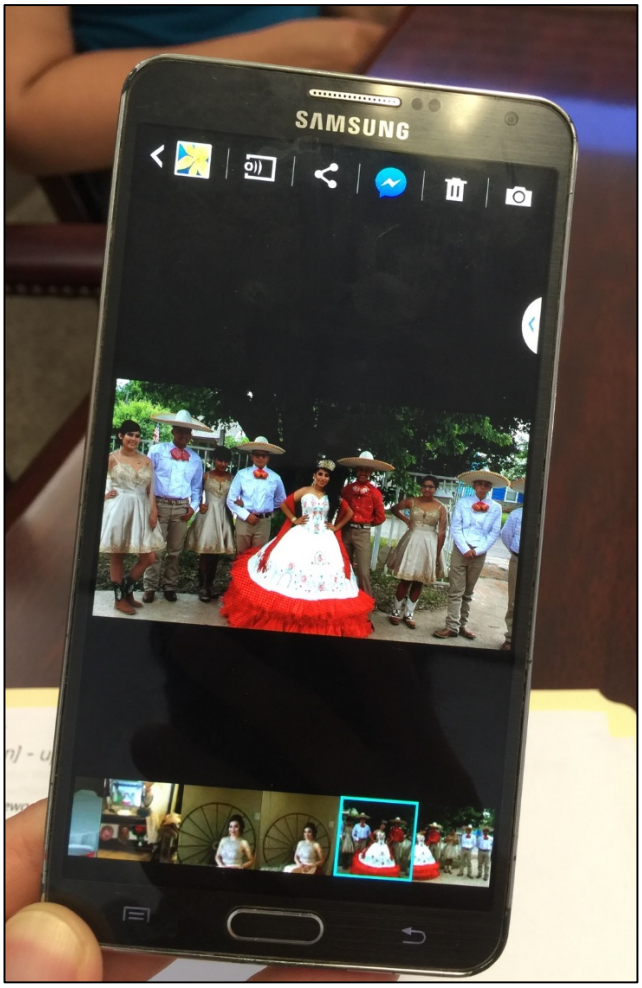


Figure 18. Elsa's Daughter's Quinceañera Photos - Elsa decided to go to the gym to lose weight for this event instead of sitting and learning nothing from Amy's class.

Chris' Story

"I came to the U.S. to support my family. I'm illegal. I paid $3,000 to cross the border, I climbed the fence, and walked one night to reach out a lodge in Texas, from there people gave me a ride to Tuscan, Arizona and Oklahoma City later. I paid $60 for my fake social. I came to the English class because of my probation for using fake social security card, but now I want to keep coming to the English class because I need more English."

Chris (pseudonym) is 25 years old and came to the U.S. five years ago to support his family still in Mexico. Chris crossed the border by paying $3,000 to a broker. He climbed up a big fence and walked 25 hours to reach to a lodge located in Texas. At the lodge, he met a group of Mexican people who gave him a ride to Tucson, Arizona. He ended up arriving in Oklahoma City. Chris's cousin is living in Oklahoma City and has his own construction business. Chris started working at his cousin's company by driving a delivery truck, driving big equipment, and transporting lumber. Chris makes up to $1,000 per week. He sends the majority of the money to his mother and sister living in Mexico. Chris has one older brother, who is married and living in the U.S. with documents. His sister also lives in the U.S, but is not documented yet. In Mexico, Chris' twin sister lives with their mother. In his family, single children send money to his mother for support. When he is married later, Chris said he might stop sending money to his mother.

Chris came to my class in September 2016. The first night, he came to me and said, "I am on probation. I need my teacher's signature to say that I am taking an English class. Can you give me a signature?" I reported it to my boss, who made a simple form that has his name, class date/time, and a space for my signature. Later during his interview, I learned that his probation is because he used a fake social security card. One day a police officer pulled his car over, and the officer found the fake social security card in Chris' wallet. "I should've not brought my fake social with me, my sister said that to me, I just forgot," Chris recalled. This incident caused him to stay overnight in an Oklahoma City jail. He paid $2,000 for a bail bond and was on probation for six months. He recalled that two to three years ago, the police were nice

and gentle, but after the Trump administration, they became tough. He has to pay $40 every month to the probation office and give them the English class attendance sheet. Although his first motivation to come to the class was a probation requirement, Chris was a fast learner and a bright and active student. He actively asked questions and worked well with other classmates in group work (see figure 19 for Chris's poster used in a presentation day). Chris remained when I returned after my sick leave. When Irma suggested the Sunday school idea, Chris came too, regardless of his probation requirement. He said, "Even after my probation is over, I want to keep coming. I need more English."

Chris' motivation to learn English was self-improvement at his work and family. At his work, he has to meet different English-speaking people every morning and must introduce himself and explain the work order for the day. He also needs to read measurements in English when he needs to buy lumber, and needs to talk to people in the stores. Chris took those challenges as opportunities to learn English. In addition, he is dating a Mexican-American person. She spoke zero Spanish. For Chris, his girlfriend is a good English teacher. Chris is planning to marry her and do paperwork for his immigration status. Chris asked his sister living in Mexico to come to the U.S, and she said she wanted to. Teaching her English is another motivation to Chris to come to the English class.

Chris, along with other five participants, never dropped out of English class. Of course, he needed the signature for his probation. However, during the interview he said, if no probation requirements were there, he would have dropped out of Derek's and Amy's classes. "If no probation, I would drop Derek's class, because Derek is so

boring, I learn nothing," he said. For Amy's class, "I feel 50:50, if no probation, I would maybe not coming to Amy's class either. Amy speaks too fast, I don't understand. It's waste of time." For him, like Irma, group work and dynamic activities are what he prefers to learn English. But Amy and Derek didn't give any group work, and Amy even didn't give a break. Chris kept coming for his probation. It seems that his body was there, but his mind was absent. When I interviewed him in summer 2017, he said he just wanted to keep coming even after his probation is over. The fact that he came to the Sunday schools we had by Irma's suggestion seems to support his point. Figure 20 is a poster that Chris and his classmates made together to present about Thanksgiving history.

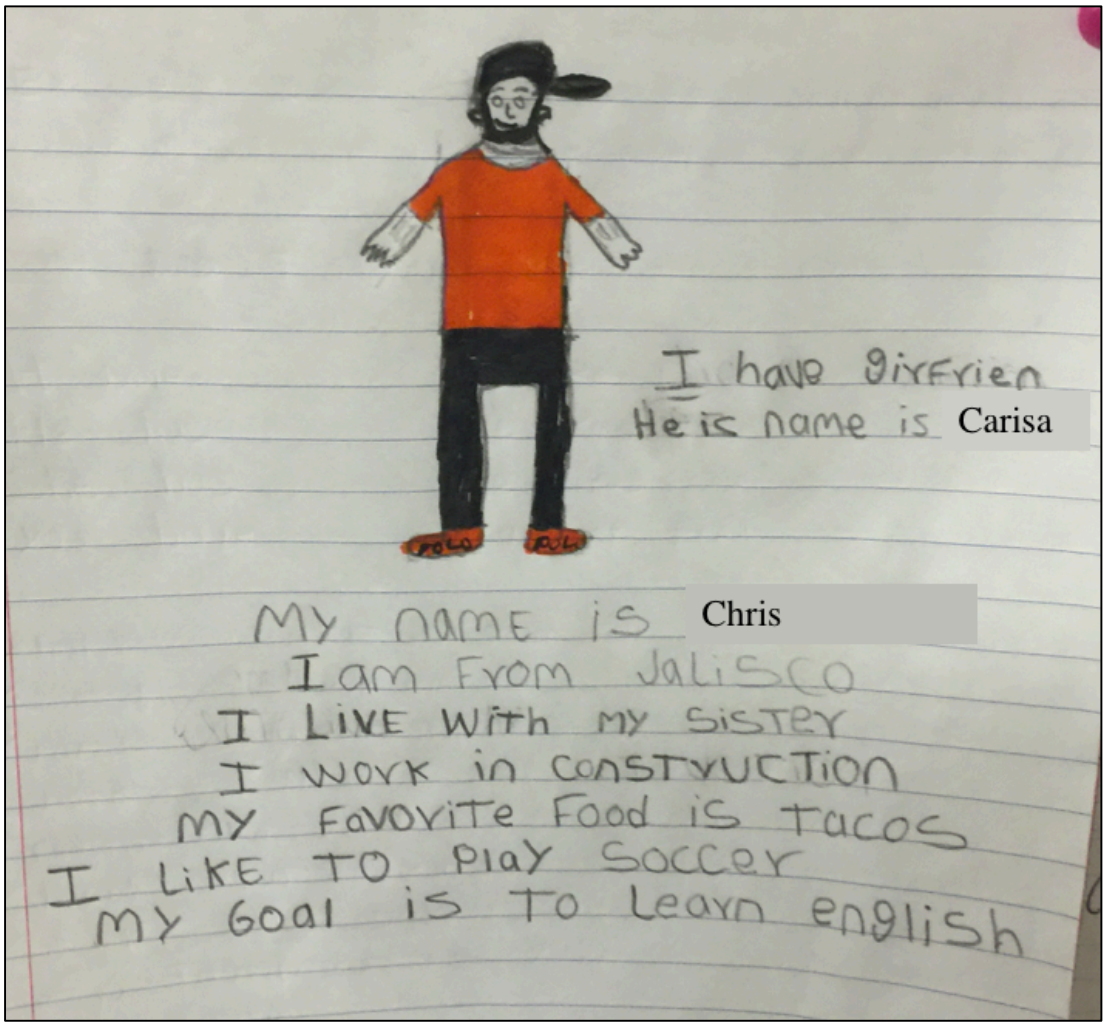


Figure 19. Chris' Drawing for His Presentation - Although his first motivation to come to the class was probation, he actively participated in the class (*pseudonyms are used for Chris' and his girlfriend's names).

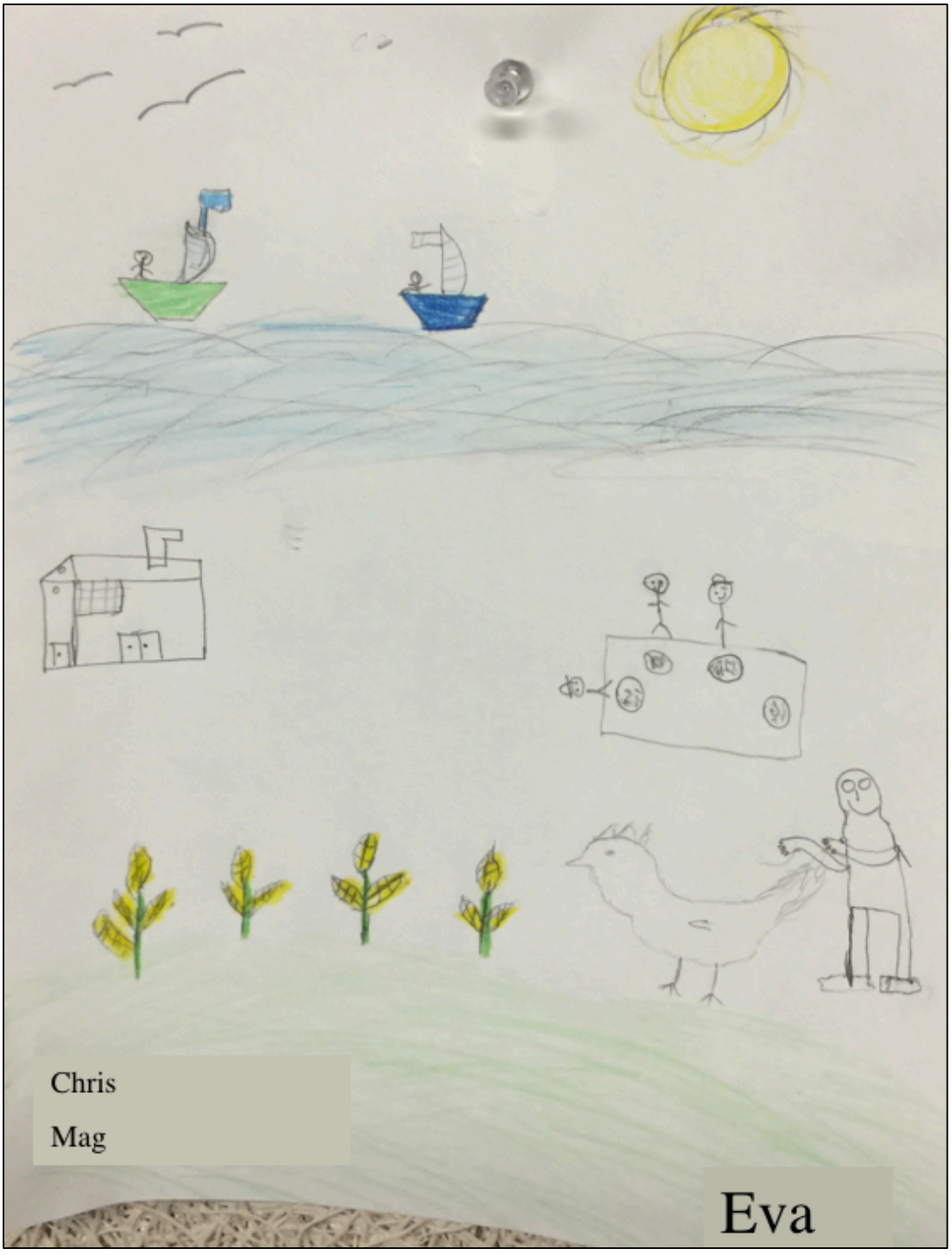


Figure 20. Poster that Chris and Peers Work Together to Present the Thanksgiving History - The pilgrimage and harvesting are illustrated (*pseudonyms are used for the students' names).

Figure 21 illustrates the participants' characteristics and backgrounds. Out of the six participants, three are undocumented immigrants. Five of them dropped out of their English classes. Four participants are female, and two are male students. The average duration of their time living in the United States is approximately 14 years.

Name (pseudonym)	Age	Gender	Years in the U.S.	Education (gradate)	Immigration Status	Job	Unique Backgrounds	English Proficiency	Stay/Drop
Mag	27	F	4	Middle School	Documented	Nail Gunner for Drawer	2 Daughters 1 Son with New Husband	Beginner	Drop
Irma	51	F	27	Middle School	Documented	Making Cardboard	Husband Passed Away 18 years ago	Intermediate-high	Drop
Domingo	32	M	17	Middle School	Un-documented	Construction	Car Repair Hobby – Professional-Like	Intermediate-high	Drop
Eva	42	F	10	Middle School	Documented	Food Preparation	Family living in Mexico	Intermediate	Drop
Elsa	41	F	17	High School	Un-documented	Housekeeping (Waitress part-time)	Dance Club Hobby	Intermediate-high	Drop
Chris	25	M	7	High School	Un-documented	Construction	Probation, Fake SSN	Intermediate	Stay

Figure 21. Participants' Characteristics and Backgrounds

Findings for the Research Questions through Inductive Analysis

The six participants' backgrounds are foundational to this case-study's findings. Upon the understanding, inductive and thematic analysis over the interview data, observational notes, survey responses, and student work examples were conducted. Total of 1,668 codes, and 35 categories emerged; the categories were thematically mapped out to answer the research questions (Shank, 2002). For example, codes such as "Send money to my mom always (Chris)," "I need to learn English for my kids (Irma)," "If I go for my GED, who support my family? (Domingo)" "Children is more important than my dream [go to college] (Elsa)," and "I came US for their daughters' life (Mag)" were categorized as "*Family Support Responsibilities*." The findings are thematically ordered and organized following the order of the research questions.

Research Question 1. Who are adult English Learners (ELs) who want to learn English at the Center for English Literacy (CEL)?

Theme 1

Family Support Responsibility

More Rewards &Opportunities in the U.S.

Living in the U.S. 13 Years+

The data revealed that the adult Spanish-speaking English Learners (ELs) who want to learn English at the Center for English Literacy have *family support responsibilities,* felt that there were *more rewards and opportunities in the U.S.* than in their home country, which seemed to have led them to *come and live in the U.S. for*

more than 13 years on average. For example, Domingo came to the U.S. to support his family rather than study for himself when he was 15 years old. He decided to stay in the U.S. after working at a petroleum company as a valve operator. His friends who came with Domingo decided to stay and recommended Domingo also stay. After his first work trial, Doming believed that working in the U.S. was easier than he thought. He was paid more than the minimum wage, so he decided to stay to support his family in Mexico:

> …And then they [Domingo's friends] don't go back [to Mexico], Yeah, they stayed. Well, I started working at a petroleum company. Yeah good money. Like, I think it's the minimum wage was $6.75, they pay me like I think 10 dollars per hour. In one week, I make like 700. You know, 700 is good money…700 is good money in that time. And I, because the minimum wage was 6.75 I'm thinking. 'Yeah…oh, it's good money, it's easy job, good money. Oh, okay, it's, it's good for me, good opportunity. Okay, I will stay'. You know, that's why I stay to support my family in Mexico (1108-1144 Lines).

Chris also decided to cross the border fence to support his family in Mexico five years ago. He also reported that he can make the same amount of money for working five days in Mexico, by working only one day in the U.S. He said that he worried about how to support his family in Mexico, which made him to come to the U.S. He believed he can make more money in the U.S. to support his family:

> Yeah… I have to worry, I have to send the money to my mom. In Mexico, I work 5 days to make money, right here I work only 1 day for the same money. Right here for 1 day I make $200, in Mexico, I have to work 5 days to make $200, but here 1 day (637-659 Lines).

This *family support responsibility* is not only for family in Mexico, but also for immediate family members living together in the U.S. Domingo dreamed of pursuing

his GED diploma, but he put that dream on the back burner because supporting his wife and three children is the most important priority at this moment:

> …Yeah, now we need to work and support my family…[GED is] Yeah, for future, you know (lines 730-735)…, because right now [if] I'm going to go to the school for my GED, who support my house? (lines 840-841).

This yielding of dreams due to family support responsibilities was also true with Elsa. Although Elsa always wanted to go to college, she put her dream as a second priority, because she wanted to support her children's education first:

> I, sometime when I was sleeping in my bed, wake up in the middle of the night, because all the time in my mind is I want to come back to school. I think, why my dreams, why no go to the college, I want to go the college. But I can't. Because I am married, I have my kids [to support]. (lines 2126-2129).

Family support responsibility for immediate family members in the U.S. not only made them yield their education opportunities, but also yield their mind/hopes/wishes to go back to Mexico. Eva always wanted to go back to Mexico, unlike the other five participants. Her husband said they can earn money for two to three years in the U.S., and then go back to Mexico. It was a condition that caused Eva said "yes" to his suggestion to go to the U.S. After three years, however, her husband and daughter requested to stay in the U.S., which seemed to give Eva the family support responsibility as a way of staying:

> Eva: Cause they, I think that my husband said, okay we need two-three years to work [in the U.S.], save our money, and come back [to Mexico].
> **I: And you agree.**
> Eva: Uh-huh.
> **I: Let's go [to the U.S.] and try and come back but you didn't come back [to Mexico] right?**
> Eva: No. He don't want to come back and Delma [pseudonym, Eva's daughter] no come back.
> …

Eva: Maybe only for me, everything and my family is in Mexico.
I: That's why you want to go [back to Mexico]
Eva: Uh-huh.
I: But Delma, Delma likes here better.
P: Yeah.
I: Your husband like more here, too. Do you know why maybe?
P: Maybe for, its more better to live here, more better and then I don't know.
He [Eva's husband] likes United States. He ask Delma, 'Delma, you want to come back to Mexico?", Delma said no. Okay, we stay here (lines 1644-1670).

More *rewards and opportunities in the U.S.* for adult Spanish-speaking English learners and their children were consistently reported throughout the all six participants' interview data. For Elsa, who had a hard time supporting her own education when she was younger, U.S. education is better and fairer, regardless of how rich a student's family is. Elsa said:

> In United State everything is fair, free [in public schools]…in Mexico no free school…In the United State, you lunch free in public schools…Yeah but in Mexico you need to pay for everything. Money for lunch for your kids or… For books, for uniform, for everything. No have moneys…No money, no education. In Mexico, if you are very smart but you don't have money to go to college… you no go to college. Or if a person has parents, cause his parents have money but if you are no good student, but the parents have money, you go to the college. But in United States is different (lines 2053-2078).

Mag also came to the U.S. for a better future for her daughters. In addition to these opportunities for a better life, immediate materialistic rewards were considered as a reward and opportunity. For example, in Mexico it is hard to own a car regardless of how hard you work, but in the U.S., as long as you work hard, then you can own a car. Mag and Mario said that eating out at a restaurant is a very hard thing to do in Mexico, but in the U.S., the prices are affordable. They said they can earn money as much as they work in the U.S. They pointed out going to a McDonald's restaurant as an

example. They initially decided to cross the border with their *family support responsibility*. Being able to buy a car and go to a McDonald's restaurant seems to work as a good evidence/proof/back-up symbolic reality for their initial and on-going decisions to come and stay in the U.S.:

> Yeah that's the reason I came here [helping Mario's family in Mexico] and when I came here, it's easier here at life… If you work hard, the dollar is good. You can have more things than in Mexico. Mexico you make a little money and weekly and it was expensive. **…**if you work all day in Mexico like if you were on a McDonalds you make a day…one hamburger is like how many is like $6.00 here [U.S.], 6 buy 2… Twelve like you spend like $100 for one hamburger [in Mexico]. So is very hard to get….(lines 400-421)…And, you can drive a car here, and here you work hard and maybe in six months you can buy a car. In Mexico no…no new, no old [cars]…So here is easier…yeah you can get your stuff in the U.S., but no in Mexico (lines 433-439)

For the adult ELs at CEL, their family support responsibility seemed to inspire them to come to the U.S. in the hope of more rewards and opportunities. These linkages between the two categories (responsibility and rewards) seemed to lead the participants to live in the U.S. more than 13 years on average. This finding about family support needs as a thematic driving force to adult ELs' decisions to coming to the U.S., investing for their learning, is consistent with previous research that found that supporting family needs is a reason for adult ELs' decisions to invest for English learning (Buttaro, 2002, 2004; Carpenter, 2005; Gault, 2004; McVay, 2004). A distinctive aspect between this study's finding and the others seems that this study explores the participants' deciding factors for broader phenomenon – what makes them to cross the border initially - that would eventually embrace their motivation to learn English.

Theme 2

Physical Labor

Full Time Work and Collaboration Pride

Language Barrier at Work, Family, and Community

Along with the dominant theme mentioned previously (family support responsibilities, more rewards & opportunities in the U.S., and living in the U.S. for 13+ years), data revealed that the adult Spanish-speaking ELs in CEL *do physical labor* for their work and at the same time they feel *pride for their full-time work and collaboration experiences* in the U.S.

While working in a totally different linguistic and cultural situation to support their family, they encountered *language barriers: not only at work, but also with their family*. All six participants and their spouses worked in a job that required physical labor, such as construction (Domingo, Chris), manufacturing (Irma, Mag), house-keeping (Elsa), and food-preparation (Eva). For example, Irma worked a few months in strawberry fields, but soon after, she started working at a factory. Irma's daughter Samantha reported that Irma and her ex-husband worked in fields first, but Irma said her first job was working at a factory. Irma said that she prefers working at a factory to other jobs. Samantha reported:

> …And they [Irma and her ex-husband] met in Mexico. They got married and then they came to the United States because of work. They used to work in the, in the strawberry fields, potato fields, like that, all the fields. Yeah, they went to North Carolina, Oklahoma and Texas and California. So, they went everywhere. And they worked in all type of fields. And my mom's sister was settled here in Oklahoma so we came and lived with them and that's why we stayed in Purcell….[Samantha: lines 409-414]

Irma didn't mentioned her work in the fields, but Irma started talking from her work experiences in a factory in Oklahoma City:

> …Yeah, when I came over USA, my first job was in, one factory when they do bags of respiration for hospital, and I was in that place for maybe 9 years in Oklahoma City. Then I work in the nursing home for maybe 3 years. I care people who are 60-70 years old for maybe 3 or 4 years. Then I worked in other factory where they do mattresses in Edmond, Oklahoma. Then I came to the other place, other factory, and they do bags for plants. I work in that place for 4 years. Then, I no more work for 1 year and a half. And now I work in other factory, I like the jobs only in factory. I no like other work in hotels or stores. I no like that job, only like the factories. Because when I was very young, in 16 years I work only in factories. [Irma: 362-386].

While working for physical labors, the participants seem to have a *pride in their full-time work* as they are hard workers, working for more than 10 years on average, and collaborating with colleagues well. For example, Mag feels proud of herself because she is a hard worker and makes more products than other colleagues, which made her boss happy:

> I am hard worker…My boss is happy for me. I make per day 50 [drawers]…I make**,** I put the reels for drawers. The night shift makes 40 boxes**,** they are more lazy [laugh]…(lines 39-69).

This feeling of pride is not only derived from high productivity, but also from a meaningful role that the participants do in their work. For example, Irma worked as an English "translator" between her colleagues and her boss for work orders and directions, which made her very proud of herself. Even her colleagues asked Irma where she learned English, which also seems to assure her pride:

> Yeah, mistake…[when my colleagues make mistakes, they]…only shake that cardboard and separate. So, when the supervisor, he calls me. "Irma tell her [Irma's colleague] this, Irma, can do this, yeah, can you do this?" And, I say "of course". And I feel better. He [her boss] understands me. He understand and I feel better. And the lady [colleagues] say, "where you learn English?". And I say

> "well, I have my teacher, my teacher is John and he is good teacher". "Oh really? I want to go". "Okay, wait, wait". (lines 654-668).

On average, the participants have had a full-time job in the United States for 11 years, which seems to give them the feeling of pride. Eva has worked for 10 years at her restaurant, Elsa for 10 years in house-keeping, Domingo for 17 years in construction, Irma for 16 years in manufacturing, and Chris for 7 years in construction. Their pride for working full-time and collaborating with their colleagues seemed to be derived from the fact that that they "support" their family and learning through it. Domingo recounted this relational feeling between family support and working-full time pride with a determined tone, saying, "Yeah, now. You know, now we need to work and now but support my family" (lines 730-731). Elsa recounted that she feels good and proud that she supports her two children with her house-keeping work, and for her part-time waitress job, she said that she learns a lot from her work:

> I learned more when I was working in the restaurant, I like it because sometimes prep, prepare, sometime help out. But my work is busy, cleaning the tables. And I like it, because I practice my English with the customers (lines 1072-1074).

Language Barrier at Work, Family and Community

At Work

While working full-time at physical labor, the participants felt pride through the support of their family and learning things from work. At the same time they *encountered language barriers at work and* ironically *with family* too. First, language barriers at work appeared in dynamic and ever-different forms for each participant, such as their *lack* in: reading construction maps (Domingo), how to talk to people in stores when buying lumber (Chris), understanding colleagues' and boss' directions (Eva and

Elsa), answering phone calls from bosses (Mag), and advocating for themselves by explaining opinions for unwilling/incapable works (Irma). Those barriers seemed to give them a certain degree of oppressed feelings and discriminatory treatment at their work. For example, Irma recalled that when she spoke very little English, her boss gave her an order to carry heavy boxes. The boxes were too heavy for Irma to carry, so she wanted to say no and the reasons not to carry them, but she couldn't argue more persuasive ways to her boss. So, she carried the boxes and hurt herself. Irma saw that her boss went to other people to carry the boxes too, but their English was good enough to say no, so they didn't carry the box. People with good English did "light" jobs, such as working on a computer or cutting paper. It seemed unfair to Irma, because they were paid the same, regardless of if they worked with heavy boxes or light paper:

> [if your English is not good]…more jobs are heavy. Because I think when we no speak English, they give the jobs more heavy. For example, in my other job, they told me to pick up heavy box, deep box. He said, go and pick it up Irma. And I say it's too heavy for me somebody can help. He said, no you can do it, you can do it for yourself. Yeah, [my English was] no good, not much. [so I carried the box]. But the other people speak good English, they say, no I don't want to, somebody can do that, not me. And the boss went for other people, and the other people can't say anything, but have to carry box. When other people speak English more better, they do something else. Like, go see that computer, go see that, the papers. Cut paper. We get paid same money. It's not fair. (lines 602-632).

Language barriers that Eva and Elsa encountered in their restaurant were based on both (1) English vs. Spanish barrier and (2) different accent-based barrier. First, Eva struggles with understanding work orders because in the past, she didn't understand the names of vegetables. Eva wanted to answer her boss' work order "Okay I can do that," but she couldn't. She just did the work:

> Sometime, maybe my boss, he says "Eva, you need to make [food] sometime." Uh, I said, "okay", and only make. I don't know how to [answer]…I no can answer. (lines 1023-1031)

Eva and Elsa recalled that their Iranian colleague's accent is different, so they couldn't understand:

> We don't understand, and because his [colleague] accent is different. Because he's from Iran. Yes, it's different. (lines 978-980)

Mag experiences language barriers when she picks up a phone call from her boss. Speaking over the phone gives another layer of language barrier to Mag:

> I just start to sometimes it was hard for me to speak English by phone. Something like my boss call me and, I think, 'oh I don't understand what he is say', I just say yes, yes [although I don't understand]. (lines 476-479)

In Family

Within family, language barriers have been built, especially with children for married participants and with a significant other for single participants. For example, Domingo's sons talk to their mother in English, but talked to Domingo in Spanish. Domingo sometimes doesn't understand the conversations between his children and his wife. Domingo's sons brought English books they read for schoolwork and asked Domingo questions, but in most cases Domingo didn't know how to read the book, so he led them to talk to Samantha, which made him feel bad, but also motivated him to learn more English:

> Well, right now, because my kids, when it's, how to read English. And the school send that [English books] to me. So, when reading written English, okay, you say simply like, "the cat is crying" [in the English books]. Then, my son asked me, "What did he say?" I said, "Oh, okay. the cat is crying." Or, the cat is mad? My son asked me, "What did he say?" Then I said, "I don't know,

> ask your mom." My kids wouldn't [study with me], I don't know how to read this book. (lines 853-864).

This language barrier with children was consistent with Eva and Elsa and their teen-aged children. Whenever their children's friends visited their houses, Eva and Elsa told them to speak Spanish, but the children still spoke English. Elsa recalled one day that her nephews came to her house and spoke English by arguing against Elsa's "policy" to speak Spanish in her house:

> And for me sometime I think 'oh, it's fine cause I want my kids learn, speak Spanish, don't forget Spanish, yes.' But, the friends of my daughter don't talk Spanish, No speak Spanish, [so I asked] "you don't want speak Spanish?"…And sometime the friends come into my home. I said "okay, in my home talk in Spanish. Everybody"…My daughter talks in Spanish and then my home, but the little kids [nephews], only talk in English. (lines 1226-1252).

The children's reason was that they live in America, so they want to speak English. And, the children said that they want to speak Spanish for their grandparents, not mother – Elsa:

> I said, you come into my home, I said you need to talk in Spanish in my home. The little kid [Elsa's nephew] said why, I live in America….He said why? I live in America….he said ah, I live in America, I said so, you come into my home, you talk in Spanish. He said okay, only to grandma I talk in Spanish. You are not grandma. (lines 1253-1270).

Elsa's primary reason to have her children speak Spanish was that Elsa wants to keep their heritage with them. Elsa, like other participants, likes to practice English at work with colleagues, but she wanted to talk to Spanish with her children:

> And I say it's good for me, because sometimes I talk to my kids, and I say speak English for me because I want to learn. But my kids, no I want to speak Spanish. (lines 1222-1224).

This conflict over viewpoints between heritage culture/language might work behind the scenes of the factor of a language barrier issues in family. There is a silent battle between "keeping heritage values" and the reasoning of "I want to speak English because I live in America" from her children. Ironically, Elsa dislikes the reason of "living in America" for speaking English, but she at the same time agrees with that justification because she admitted that she needs English to live in the U.S. More discussion about the reason of "living in America" will be addressed in research question 2. Elsa recounted:

> Because I live in America and more the people speak English and I have problems when I want to talk to somebody and English open many doors, like I said for work or everything (lines 1210-1212).

On the other hand, as a single person, Chris experienced this language barrier with his girlfriend. His girlfriend is a Spanish-American, but speaks zero Spanish. It is good for Chris to practice English with her, but at the same time misunderstanding and miscommunication sometimes seems to frustrate him:

> I got my girlfriend and my girlfriend she don't speak Spanish. (lines 349-350)…When my girlfriend tell me something sometimes I don't understand. Yeah….[then I said] Yeah, tell me one more time. (lines 728-731)

In the Community

Language barriers also occurred in their community, especially when they need to seek medical treatment for either themselves or their family members. As introduced in the previous section, Irma struggled with the harsh language barrier at the emergency room where she couldn't speak with the doctors, and had her two young daughters translate about their father's death. Elsa also recalled that her daughter once had a

stomachache, so they went to an emergency room. Elsa's English proficiency is fairly good and has no problem with daily communications. However, she recalled that she could not think of any English words that night because she was nervous and worried about her daughter. Those affective aspects seemed to rapidly build the language barrier that night, where she recalled that her daughter didn't want to help translate:

> And sometime when my kids don't want to help me [for translating, or they can't because they are sick], when I went, because I can't speak very good English, and when I was nervous, I saw my daughter. I usually can speak my English long time. But, the last time, when my daughter was sick, I went to emergency room and I was in front of the nurse. I hears, the nurse saying, "can I help you?", and I say, "yes" and I saw my daughter and I can't speak because my English was gone. And, I thought 'oh my gosh my English is gone because I was nervous'. (lines 1367-1376)

After the emergency room visit, Elsa and her daughter talked about why her daughter didn't help Elsa by translating between the doctors. This community-based language barrier seems subtly related to another layer of language-based barrier within Elsa's family, but at the same time gave Elsa desire to learn English:

> And after I talked to my daughter, I said you didn't help me. My daughter said "mom, he [a hospital staff] asked you if you want an emergency room and I say yes," and she say "ah, the emergency room is this way." And I say, "okay thank you." And after I laugh with my daughter and I took my daughter and I said, "you didn't help me." And sometimes I ask my son and my daughter "what is that one?" My daughter said, "I don't know, mom you help me. I don't know. You need to go to school where you learn English" and my daughter said, "you're mean mom." And, okay I go to my English class. Cause I want to learn, cause sometimes my kids don't help me. (1377-1388)

Mag also encountered language barriers in medical needs for her son in addition to her work. Please recall that Mag's reason to come to the EL class was that she needed more English to be a candidate for a job promotion – working inside. In addition to the work-based language barrier issues, Mag experienced language barriers at hospitals

when her son had an earache. When Mag's husband is able to come with her, they are okay with talking with the doctors. But in other cases, Mag struggled to communicate with the doctors. Translation service is available, but Mag wants to talk directly to the doctors:

> At appointment, the doctor, I don't understand…When I have appointments when I go to the doctor. I don't understand what they say. The doctors or you try to get some papers for the kids and you don't speak English, you feel like embarrassed. My kid has the tubes in his ears. The tubes in ears and the doctor speaks, you don't understand. They put the tube maybe last year, because my son has water in his ears. Doctors put something and now is okay. It was hard for me when I had some appointments. Some place my husband can go with me. Sometimes somebody speak Spanish in the clinic. But where hey make a test for the ear, they don't speak Spanish. (564-584)

Although Chris has no children, he indirectly experienced this medical-service based language barrier with his friend. Chris one day witnessed that his friend was injured while he played soccer. They went to an emergency room. Chris saw that his friend could not communicate with the doctors about his broken leg. Chris imagined that he could be in that situation, because he works at constructions and sometimes plays soccer. For Chris, imagination in his situated-ness seems to give him the sense of language barrier at hospitals:

I:	**You said, I want to learn English for Hospital, an example?**
Chris:	If I break my leg, yeah I have to pick a Spanish one then.
I:	**If? You break your leg before?**
Chris:	No. No. But I see other guys, my friend he broke his leg…
I:	**In the work?**
P:	And I go see at the hospital and the doctor he was say something to him and he don't know what he said.
I:	**What happened to him? He fell down or what?**
Chris:	No, I don't know.
I:	**Your friend. How, how, why, why break?**
Chris:	In the game of football, football game.
I:	**A football game?**
Chris:	Yes.

I: **Oh really he played a football game and broke…**
Chris: Yeah.
I: **So you imagined that, oh maybe when I break my leg I want to go to the hospital right?**
Chris: Yeah, I want learn English for communication with the doctor. (lines 736-756)

Theme 3

Desire to Learn English

Community Access

Christianity

The language barriers at work, family, and in the community seemed to trigger the participants to have strong *desire to learn English*, which led them to: searching for *community access* to learn English, asking, *family support for their English learning*, and establishing their own discursive *study strategies*. Along the way, *Christianity* seems to play a role for the community access category as a part of their identity/culture. Their *desire to learn* emerged dominantly and dynamically across the all six participants' interview data and observation field notes, which seems to be derived from the language barriers at work, family, and community. For example, Domingo's desire seems from the need to read work orders and to read English books for his children.

Desire to Learn English

The language barriers with many different reasons seem to give strong desire for the participants. All six participants said that they always want to learn English:

I always want to learn English (Mag: line 937).

I want to learn English better (Domingo: line 912).

I want to learn more English and perfection my English (Irma: Line 314).

Um, No….[to a question "have you felt that I don't want to learn English?"]…, *because all the time I need English* (Eva: lines 1997-1999)

I go to my English class. Cause I want to learn (Elsa: lines 1385-1386)

I never say that [I don't want to learn English], *I come, because I want to learn English* (Chris: line 961)

During the interviews, all participants asked me about an English expression for the idea they want to say by asking, "How do you say this in English?" For example, Irma asked me about the difference between "teach" and "learn", Domingo asked me to correct his pronunciation of a word "important [he pronounces it as /import/]. Eva asked me about the difference between "prep" and "prepare", Elsa asked me the difference between "lose" and "lost." Lastly, Chris asked me how to greet an American customer in the morning for his work. We talked about the expression, "I am here to concrete the pool," and Chris applied it by saying, "How about saying – I am the concrete guy, tell me where please."

Community Access

These desires to learn English seem to motivate them to pursue *community access* to learn English for their life needs. Their community access already existed, such as

accesses to churches, neighborhoods, and friends. The importance of dynamic community access emerged from their interview data. For example, for Irma and Domingo, their Spanish-speaking pastor recommended going to an adult English class at the church located in their community. Irma recalled that:

> Oh, because my pastor person say "Irma somebody come and learn English" and I said "really," and he say "yeah you want to come?" Yeah, yeah, I say "yeah and I can" (lines 771-773).

On the other hand, Mag, Chris, and Eva first came to the class by seeing the church sign saying that there is a free English class (see figure 22 for the sign):

Chris: I pass by here and I see the…
I: Sign.
Chris: Sign.
I: You live close to here?
Chris: Yeah I live close.
I: You live close.
Chris: Yes.
I: How many minutes does it take?
Chris: 3 or 4 minutes.

Elsa's case was a bit different, but her community access to friends (Eva) encouraged Elsa to come to the class. Elsa recounted that, "[I come]…Cause Eva told me the English class (line 738)." This community access was not only highlighted for English learning needs, but also for students' diverse life needs such as help for medical situations, housing, and even for crossing the border. For example, after living in different states, Elsa decided to come to Oklahoma because houses in Oklahoma were cheaper and there was nobody she could talk to in Georgia when she was there. She expected to meet more Spanish-speaking people in Oklahoma:

> But, in Georgia everything was more expensive than Oklahoma. He and I wanted to buy home and he said Georgia was more expensive than in Oklahoma City. When I was living in Georgia, I didn't have any family or

> friends, or people from Mexico. I am from Mexico, I don't talk to anybody from Georgia…any. I don't have anybody who can help me [in Georgia]. And sometimes he worked in Florida and North Carolina and South Carolina, I am myself with my two kids in Georgia. And he said no, let's move to Oklahoma where homes are more cheaper. More Spanish-speaking people. And I said, okay. And after he saved money and we buy, gosh, a home (lines 1518-1525).

Irma recounted that in life, there are many moments to ask help from others. Thus she said community access is important. It seems that learning English is important to her as a means of accessing communities:

> Yeah and that time what I see is important for me learn English. Me no English because you know the life got a lot of moments, importance. When we need to talk and understand, if we know English, we can ask, "oh man, can you help me, can you help me?" I looking for anybody. Yeah, it's why I need [English and community] (lines 446-449).

Lastly, the fact that Chris was able to cross the border by paying $3,000 to the brokers showed his community access to some degree too. He came to the U.S. with a couple of other men, but he walked 24-25 hours to reach a big house in Texas, where he met group of Mexican people. They gave him rides to the next spots. This seems another form of community access in this particular socio-political context:

> I pay another people [brokers] to bring me right here [the U.S.]. I gave them, the people bringing me right here $3000. (lines 272-276)…I pass right here the guys, the Mexican guys they were, right here in his car. When I was in the car I go to Phoenix, Arizona. And when I was in Phoenix, Arizona, some Mexican guys from right here, from Tulsa. They go over there, pick me up. And bring me to Oklahoma, yeah. (lines 1244-1257)

Figure 22. Church Sign for Free English Class - Students first came to their English classes because of seeing this sign, including Mag, Chris, and Eva.

Christianity

Christianity is another category that emerged in all six participants' data, which seems to be a part of the Spanish-speaking adult English learners' identity/culture. Irma is a pastor's granddaughter. Domingo became a Christian after he experienced his medical situation five years ago. Domingo, Samantha, and Irma recounted that their prayers were answered to cure Domingo from his liver disease. Mag is a Catholic and so are Eva and Elsa. Another point to recall is that the class venue was a local Protestant church. Given the nature of this context, the CEL sends their teachers to satellite locations to teach, including churches, elementary schools, and factory cafeterias. But in this particular case, Christianity seems to interplay for the community access category.

Theme 4

Family Support Me for English Learning

Discursive Study Strategies

For their English-learning journey, all six participants reported that their *family supported their English learning*, and they seemed to develop their own discursive *study strategies* towards how to effectively learn, practice, and master English language. For example, Domingo sometimes asked his wife Samantha English questions and she helped him. For Mag, her husband Mario supported her going to English classes at night by taking care of her children while she is away studying:

> Yeah I always tell her [Mag] go, go. Yeah I don't have a problem. I might take her and the kids here [English class]. I all the time I tell her you need to go, learn (lines 953-957).

For Elsa, her two children gave her a flyer one day that said there was an English class for adult learners:

> My son or my daughter, I don't remember when, bring the paper [class advertisement] and say "mom, the teacher put this paper and next week start English class for, ESL class for adults". Class was in the afternoon. And I say, "oh let me take, oh it's a 6 PM in the school, okay". And when I start my English class, my bad dreams disappear. (lines 2138-2141)

For Eva, she had a time conflict between her EL class and her babysitting responsibility for her friend. But Eva said that she can ask her daughter Delma to take care of the baby, and Eva can go to learn English. This is another form of family support for their English learning:

> Sometimes I can go, for my friend's babysitting, I can ask Delma [Eva's daughter], Delma, "Delma, you take care of this baby, I go to class". (lines 478-479)

For Chris, his girlfriend helped his English learning because she doesn't speak Spanish. Chris think it's good for him to practice English with his girlfriend. His girlfriend also helped him with his English test. Chris recounted:

> I got my girlfriend and my girlfriend she don't speak Spanish. She's there and mom is from Mexico but, she knows a little bit [Spanish]…So good for me to practice [English]. We met 4 for years, my girlfriend help, yeah, for my tests. (lines 349-366)

In addition, as a teacher, I recalled that their family members visited their English classes sometimes to support them. Samantha came to support Irma and Domingo, and she helped me as a translator. Eli (Samantha's sister) also came a few days to support Irma. Delma visited once to support Eva by translating as necessary. Family support for the participants' English learning seemed to be based on the previous findings, such as language barriers with family, desire to learn English, and community access.

Discursive Study Strategies

Along with their family support for their English learning, this study's participants seem to have their own *discursive study strategies*, that they use, hope to apply, and adapt in their lives. These include work, family, and community. For example, Domingo believes that "understanding the idea" behind the sounds and letters is more important to learn a second language. During the interview, he showed me the importance of ideas by teaching me a Spanish word, "rojo (red)." He first just spoke the sound without any other meaning association, and later he said "rojo" and pointed out a red chair in the room:

Domingo:	You know the peoples got an idea of what you're talking [about].
I:	**Idea. You kept saying idea. So, is idea important for you?**
Domingo:	Sure, because I speak Spanish, I talk some things in Spanish, and you do not have an idea what I am talking [about]. For example, …rojo [just spoke the word in the air]
I:	**I have no idea.**
Domingo:	What is rojo? This is the color [pointing out a red chair in the room]
I:	**Okay.**
Domingo:	Rojo is red, you know. Do you see it, the color. This, you have idea what I am talking about it, right?
I:	**Mhmm. Mhmm.**
Domingo:	This is what you're talking about.
I:	**Idea is important for you.**
Domingo:	Yeah, it [idea] is very important. (lines 93-105)

To Domingo, learning with more examples and practicing with those examples helps him better understand the ideas:

> Yeah, practice the example [is important]. How to make sentence, have an idea. Right, because when you put your sentence [through practice], do you have an idea, the other people got an idea how to make sentence. Right? For example. I remember the sentences and their apartments [a textbook topic was about apartment housing] and you write it [on the whiteboard]. They, the apartments, and then people write it same, copy you, do examples. Right. (lines 167-181)

The importance of practice was echoed in Mag's study strategy as well. Mag said she likes to repeat and practice to learn English:

> [I like] Repeat, repeat, repeat…I like how you teach because you make questions and they [classmates] answer by. If they don't speak, you'll repeat it again and so we practice. I like yeah practice. [lines 188-196]

Mag also watches a TV show with English subtitles to learn: "And I try to watch TV in English and I put the captions because I can, I can write down more. I understand more if I read or write down the speak" (lines 626-627). Likewise, Elsa likes to practice her English. But Elsa's practice strategy had a different color, she like to practice English with their White customers vising her restaurant as her study strategy:

> I like, because I practice my English with the customers. And they [customers] say "hi, how are you?, Uh-huh, I don't see you for long time, I think you don't work anymore here." And I say "yes, I was working, I work in the back, in the kitchen something." And I practice my English and I like talk to the people. I go to start talking more in the restaurant, because I see White people. More the customers is White people and talk English, English, English. I need practice my English. (lines 1075-1081).

Irma also reported that she intentionally wanted to work at a place where she can be pushed to speak and use English. She said if she is only around Spanish-speakers at work, there would be no improvement in her English:

> [In] My opinion I looking always for in that place. Somebody always speak Spanish, okay if they speak Spanish, I will speak Spanish. Then, if no, nobody speaks Spanish, I don't speak Spanish more, it's why I no learn English [when I am only with Spanish speakers at work] (lines 403-405).

It seems that all participants take their real-life situations as learning opportunities, whether it is their job or life-related events such as shopping at stores. For instance, Elsa said that she successfully communicated with an American shopper at

Walmart using English when she needed to buy grape juice for her daughter's Quinceañera. Elsa used paraphrasing, rewording strategies (Lightbown & Spada, 2013):

> I was, before the Quinceañera for my daughter, I can't find the welch juice. I ask some lady, "excuse me I need help" and they said "yes, yes ma'am." And I say um, "I don't know what I can find, bottle similar the cider, but cider is juice, the grape, it's no wine, I say" and she said "oh I know, say what do you want, come on" and "I, oh thank you so much." Yeah and I say, and I ask "what is that name, next time I know it." They say welch juice. (lines 1447-1456).

Eva sometimes asks a conversation partner to slow down his/her English speaking so Eva can understand, which seems to be a good communication/English learning strategy:

> Cause I oh, my English. Or sometimes, talk very fast and I say um, I'm sorry but I don't understand. Can you tell me more slow please, because my English is not good but I think you speak very fast for me. Can you speak more slowly for me? And then people tell okay, okay. (lines 1114-1119)

Eva and Elsa both agree that this "slowing down" strategy works for them when they speak with their children's teachers or doctors, and when they understand, they feel happy. However, they said they don't want to ask their colleagues or boss at work to slow down their speech. It seems that they don't want to give their work colleagues the wrong/negative impression. This point seems to illustrate that they use different strategies for different socio-political contexts, which seems consistent with Norton (2012)'s argument that emphasizes the inter-relations between language learning and power relations with interlocutors:

> I know, I say [could you slow down please?] maybe a lot in the store, maybe when I go to doctor. [saying] I don't know, my English no good. And they are okay. But for my work, I don't know, it's scary [to ask slow down]. (lines 1106-1107).

Lastly, for classroom activities, the participants reported that they prefer using more dynamic strategies to learn English than just sitting and writing, such as, group-work, standing up and discussing, and presenting with pictures/drawings. For example, Chris pointed out that he likes to share ideas with peers in group-work:

> I like work in group, like with my friends and doing something and stand up…And read to other people. (lines 1111-1114)

Irma also recounted that she prefers group-work, especially because the instructor can monitor students' English output and give feedback:

> When you make a little groups and you [instructor] come, does you walk around everybody and you hear how I pronounce my English and you see how other people pronounce their English and you say no, no, no like that you correcting everybody and we feel better because somebody is interest, interest, interest for my English (281-287).

Summary of Research Question 1 Findings

Participants' dynamic characteristics of *family support responsibility* seem to have led them to decide to come to the U.S. many years ago. Their feeling of gaining *more rewards and opportunities in the U.S.* seems to be with them before crossing the border and seems to be reinforced through their lives in the U.S., thus on average the participants have *lived in the U.S. for 13+ years*. To support their family both in the U.S. and Mexico, they all have been a *physical labor*. At the same time they *feel pride for their full-time work and collaboration* with other colleagues. Along the way, the participants encountered *language barriers in their work, with family, and in the community*, all of which seems to give them strong *desire to learn English*. Their desire led them to pursue *community access* to learn English, have their *family support their English learning*, and develop their own *discursive and dynamic study strategies*.

Christianity seems to work as a community access window in the big picture of who they are. Figure 23 illustrates the relationships of these findings.

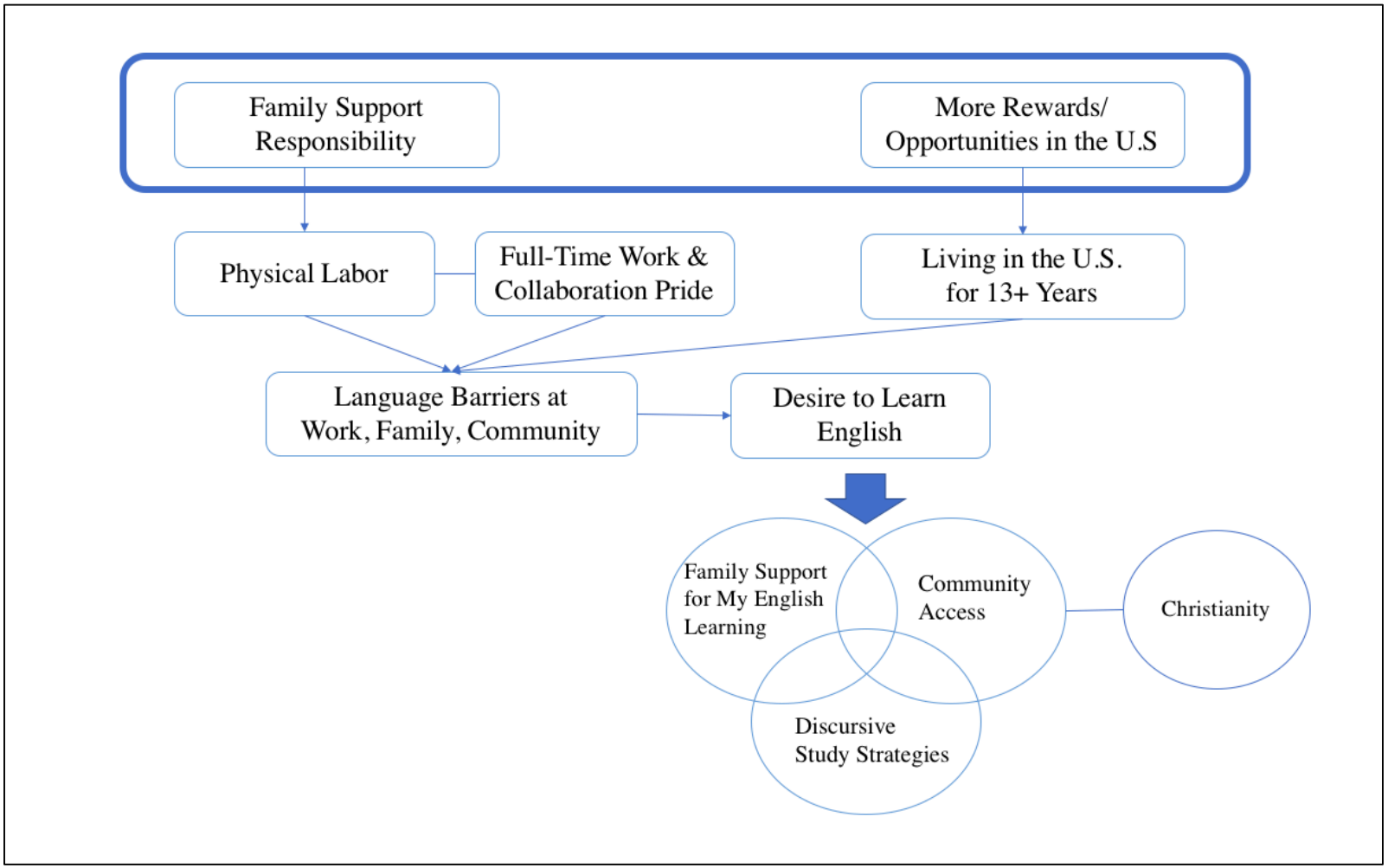


Figure 23. Map of Who Adult Spanish-speaking English Learners at CEL Are

In Figure 23, *family support responsibility* and *more rewards/oportunities in the U.S* is at the top to represent the participants' initial motivational factors for their decisions to cross the border. The think box binding the two illustrates the interelatedness of the two in the students' minds before and after crossing the border. The arrow connecting *family support reponsibility* with *physical labor* shows the probable causal relationship. In addition, the *full-time work & collaboration pride* category seems to emerge simultaneously when the participants did *physical labor*. Thus it is connected with a solid line without any directional arrows. The arrows from *physical labor* and *full-time work and collaboration pride* towards *language barriers at work, family, and community* illustrates that those two probably worked as a causing factor to build up the *language barriers at work, family, and community*. On the right side, another arrow starts from *more rewards/opportunities in the U.S*. to *living in the U.S. for 13+ years* by showing the probable causal relation. While living in the U.S. for such a long time, the participants recognized *langauge barriers at work, family, and community*. Thus the arrow connects the two. Here the very first two mind-level driving forces behind their decisions to go to the U.S. converge wih the "language barriers." Starting from the barriers, an arrow is connected to their *desire to learn English*, where three different but intertwined English learning systems/journeys/quests start from such as: *family support for my English learning*, *community access*, and *discursive study strategies*. *Christianity* seems to connect with the *community access* aspect in this holistic map of who the adult Spanish-speaking English learners are at CEL.

Discussion of Research Question 1 Findings

Through research question 1, this study explored who the adult English learners are in this particular context at the Center for Literacy in Oklahoma City. The lives of adult ELs at CEL are multifaceted, complex, and fluid based on their specific and ever-changing situatedness. Specifically, althought all participants share the dominant themes of *family support responsibilities, more rewards in the U.S.*, and *languag barriers at work, family and community*, the specific charactersitics of each catergory are diverse. For example, while one of Domingo's rewards for coming to the U.S. was monetary compensation, it seems that Elsa's and Eva's rewards in the U.S. were opportunities for eduation and jobs for their children. Likewise, the particpants' detailed components in their lives seem multi-faceted and dynamic. This finding seems consistent with the multi-faceted nature of langauge learning argued by Norton (2015) and DFG (2016).

Adult ELs' motivation to learn English seems high when they initially came to classes. Their *Desire to Learn English* seems based on the intertwined influences from six categories such as *Family Support Responsibility*, *More Rewards/Oportunities in the U.S.*, *Living in the U.S for 13+ Years*, *Language Barriers at Work, Family, and Community* while they work *Physical Labor* and possess *Full-Time Work & Collaboration Pride*. This finding is consistent with previous research's findings that argue adult ELs, in general, have high motivation to learn English (Bernat, 2004; Valentine, 1990; Hyman, 2002; Derwing, 2003). However, high motivation does not guarantee actual implementations all the time (Norton, 2012). Norton (1995, 2012) pointed out that actual investment of learning English can be implemented when

students take real action, and its constructs include ideology, identity, and capital. The fact that adult ELs in this case study dropped out, despite their high motivation, will be discussed along with Norton's investment framework in subsequent sections.

Lastly, it seems that family plays multiple roles in the adult ELs' English learning journey in initiating, supporting, and sometimes constraining/intimidating factors. First, it seems that their family helps the adult ELs initiate their English learning based on the language barriers they encountered at family. The frustrations include moments that they cannot read an English book for their children (Domingo), when a girlfriend doesn't know Spanish (Chris), and children who speak English at home (Eva, Elsa). Those moments seem to work as one of the initiating factors for the adult ELs' English learning. In addition to the contribution to initiating, their family also supports their English learning in multiple ways. For example, Mario - Mag's husband - helped Mag's English learning by taking care of their children while Mag studies. Elsa's children brought an ESL class flyer to Elsa, Eva's daughter was willing to support Eva's babysitting duty when Eva wants to go to her EL class. And, many family members physically visit their English classrooms and stay to support translating as necessary (Irma, Domingo, Eva). Nonetheless, there is a constraining aspect that family brings to the adult ELs' English learning journey. Their family sometimes required the learners to take care of family issues and events by taking out their investment on learning English such as taking care of children (Mag) and preparing for Quinceañera (Eva, Elsa). Having conflicts over their identity roles (an EL student vs. a parent) seems consistent with Gordon (2004), Norton-Peirce (1995), and Skilton-sylvester (2002) who found that adult ELs struggled with and experienced their identity role negotiation while

pursuing English learning. Also, there were intimidating aspects reported from family, such as when their children told them to not to translate but go ahead and learn English (Eva, Elsa), when her husband asked her to attend Bible study although she seems to want to go to her English class (Mag), and when his girlfriend said something too fast in English, thus he stayed silent and asked clarifications (Chris). This finding about the family's two different roles (support and challenge) is consistent with MacVay (2004) who pointed out that family can both support and challenge adult EL's learning, but more weight is on support. This study's finding would provide another layer to the specific characteristics of family as a challenge. While MacVay (2004) pointed out that picking up children from school can be a challenge, so can Quinceañera, Bible study requirements, and conversation with family. The challenges seem to be transferred as another motivating factor later (for example Chris wanted to communicate with his girlfriend better, and Domingo wanted to read the English book better to his children). Connections between family-based challenges and motivation are recursive.

Adult ELs' backgrounds are as complex as the nature of L2 learning while initial motivation to learn English is based on multiple background-based factors, family played multiple roles in the adult ELs' English learning journey. ESL stakeholders should be aware of multifaceted motivational factors when developing curriculum and instruction.

Research Question 2. Why do adult ELs at CEL invest in learning English?

Theme 5

Superacion

Job: Apply-Work-Promotion-Avoid Exploitation

Desire to Communicate

Along with the findings about who they are, the second research question delved into why the adult ELs at CEL invest in learning English. The data revealed that the adults do so mainly for their *Superacion* (a Spanish word meaning self-improvement or self-actualization), dynamic *Job Needs: Apply-Work-Promotion-Avoid Exploitation*, and because they have *Desire to Communicate* with other people on many occasions.

Superacion

The most dominant finding was that the adult ELs at CEL want to invest in learning English for their *Superacion*. This Spanish word can be translated as "self-improvement or self-actualization." The shapes and colors of each individual's Superacion were different, but this feeling was strongly shared among all six participants. For example, Mag reported that she wants to learn English mainly because she wants to be a better person:

> I don't know how to say English, Superacion**…**Like, I don't want to stay on this level. I need to learn English so I am gonna be on the next level. So I want to learn English so I become, better person. (lines 631-640).

This desire of becoming a better person was also echoed in Eva. To Eva, becoming a better person, for her Superacion, specifically seems to mean becoming a "fast" (fluent) speaker and listener of English language. When I asked Eva for her

number one reason why she wants to learn English, she pointed out these two concepts – becoming a better person and fast speaker:

> [My number one reason to learn English is] …Talking English, For, maybe for talking to other people. Me want to talk more fast, more fast Understand...(lines 957-964) I think if you speak more English, it's more better for you. Now you say, more better person. (lines 1279-1281).

As illustrated by Mag and Eva, the overarching notion of Superacion seems to be "becoming a better person," which was thematically shared among all six participants. However, the details of what Superacion in reality means are idiosyncratically different for each individual. For example, Domingo reported that, to him, Superacion means helping his children for their schoolwork, life, and hopes for the future through learning English. Recall that Domingo struggled when his children asked him to read English books. Domingo was not able to read them, so he sent his children to their mother:

> [Why] Learn English. Well, right now, because my kids, when it's, you know, how to read English. And the school send that [kid's reading assignment] to me then…So, when reading written English,…[my son asked me] "What did he [a character in the book] say?" [And I said] "I don't know, ask your mom." (lines 853-861)

This incident to Domingo seemed to mean much more than just the ability to read. Rather, it means the lack of Superacion. This is lack of Superacion is limited by, and can be achieved through, learning English. When I asked him about the meaning of English, Domingo recounted this Superacion aspect of being able to read English books and talking to his children using English. Beyond reading books, Domingo said that helping and giving advice to his children for their hope using English is the central part

of his Superacion. Domingo recounted that his desire to pass the GED test was also in the same vein to give hopes to his children:

I:	**What is English for you?**
Domingo:	I think we need to help my kids because my kids will need that opportunity. When my kid, we need to push, you know, more, more education. More school maybe. And the GED when they get. My kid is, to the push [for achievement/development]. You know, like, right now it's more, my hope to him is more important for me right now.
I:	**Have more opportunity.**
Domingo:	Yeah, [my kids] have more opportunity.
I:	**By English?**
Domingo:	Mhmm [Yes], Learning English.
	… …
I:	**And you don't feel good about that [when Domingo can't read the English books for his kids]. So you feel, okay, I want to learn English.**
Domingo:	I want to learn English better.
I:	**Because?**
Domingo:	Because I want to tell him [his son] what he [a character in the book] say.
I:	**So, you said that and that's my number one reason [to learn English], is that right?**
Domingo:	Yes.
I:	**Because before, for example, Superacion, for GED is for you, right, not for your children. Is that right? Maybe passing GED is good for you or good for your children?**
Domingo:	Well, right now, it's for my children's hope, to him.
I:	**Yeah, yeah, true. Eloy (pseudonym – Domingo's son), for example.**
Domingo:	Example, Eloy. And, and the school. Right, is why we need, is written English for me help him. (lines 882-935)

For Irma, Superacion meant protecting her children. Irma's hardship that she experienced the night that her husband passed away 16 years ago, when her two young daughters translated between the doctor and Irma, seemed to give Irma a strong goal of protecting her children by learning English. When I asked Irma what she would like to do if her English were perfect now, she recounted the importance of protecting her kids:

I: For now then, if your English is perfect, what do you want to do?

Irma: Well, now, I think, say okay I'm right here, my daughters can go over there, can I say my daughter go over there and put in the place of safety. And I ask but the doctor and I know I go ask with my daughters about their dad, but when the others, I think now is more better like you know because that was 2001. 16 years back. I think my English now is better than that time.

I: So, now, for still you said if your English is perfect now, then you want to still protect your daughters.

Irma: Protect my daughters. Uh-huh [Yes], because in that time I didn't have my brothers. Right now because now I have 3 brothers right here in Oklahoma. But in that 16 years ago, me was only by myself. Only myself and my two daughters. So.

I: But now you have 3 brothers here so it is good for you…or?

Irma: Yeah, it's good, more better for me.

I: Okay. Then, so still you want to protect your daughters and that is your Superacion

Irma: Yeah.

I: And for that you need English.

Irma: Yeah, Superacion for better life, [and] Protect my children. (lines 563-594)

For Elsa, Superacion seems to be continuing her education, specifically going to college in the U.S. However, Elsa has put her dream to go to college on the back burner, because she has had to support her two children by herself. Elsa's dream to go to college and the fact that she couldn't do so for years showed up to her as a nightmare whenever she slept. Elsa recalled that when she continued her education by attending a local ESL class, that nightmare disappeared. With this experience, Elsa always advises her daughter to "follow your dreams. If you don't follow your dreams, your dreams follow you":

> And my dreams, all the time was, I want to go to college. But I can't go. When I live in United States after marriage, I have bad dreams [nightmares]. I was in my dreams, [I was a student]. Oh my gosh, the test paper was white and the teacher say. Take your test and I was nervous cause no study for my test. Oh my gosh, it's [the test paper] in white, I don't have the answers. And I wake up. It's because I think all the time in my mind, I say I want to go to college. Oh my gosh, because in my dream. Now my daughter she's good. My daughter, she

has dreams and she say 'I want to study for lawyer mom.' For lawyer and I say, 'Okay. You follow your dreams. If you don't follow your dreams, your dreams follow you.' My dreams follow me. My bad dreams disappear after [I] start English class in United State. Because before I had bad dreams and wake up and I sad. I understand it's because other time I want to go to the college but I can't go (lines 2080-2092).

Although firstly came to the English language class for his probation requirement, he said that he wants to keep coming to learn English even after the probation ends. To Chris, Superacion seems to mean being capable of talking to other people at work (his boss and people at stores to buy materials for his work), and being able to understand and talk to his girlfriend:

Chris: Yeah 2 more months [to finish probation] and that's it.
I: That's good, good, good. So but you said, okay that [probation] was maybe starting but you want to still after probation finished, but you said you still want to come right?
Chris: Yeah I want to come.
I: So why do you want to learn English Chris?
Chris: Because in my work, I have to know [English] because I have to go to a store and get stuff for work. And the stores, it's like only English. And, I got my girlfriend and my girlfriend she don't speak Spanish. (lines 332-350)

To achieve his goals to be able to communicate for his work and with his girlfriend, Chris picked "education" as a synonym of Superacion as his number one reason for learning English. Chris related the education goal to an incident in the past when he remained quiet with his boss while communicating in English. Chris didn't want to stay silent. He wanted to communicate, which as another facet of his decision-making factors seems to lead him to put education as his top reason to learn English:

I: So education is number one [reason to learn English], can you tell me a little bit more about that?
Chris: Education.
I: Mm hmm.

Chris: I don't know. For when, for the other people because when she tried to talk to me.
I: Your girlfriend?
Chris: I stay quiet, no when other.
I: Other people in town, in the city.
Chris: In the city yeah. When I go to a job, the superintendent is, she don't know Spanish and when she tell me something [in English] I stay quite.
I: You don't want be quite,
Chris: No. But right now… yeah. Right now I know how [to communicate in English]. Yeah, more better. Education for talk to more. (lines 667-690)

Like Chris' case, it seems that another layer of the importance of Superacion appears when the participants felt embarrassed by staying quiet although they wanted to say something back to English speakers. For example, when a customer said "Hi" to Eva, though Eva felt that she could take that time to practice English and communicate, she ended up saying nothing and left the situation by saying "okay, bye, I busy." It seems that Eva didn't want to be silent, but rather wanted to talk and listen to communicate fluently in English. This incident seems to illustrate her Superacion was challenged, which led her to set up a new goal:

> The customers, yeah sometime go to friend and the customer [say] 'Hi how are you [to me].' I say, 'ah good.' Maybe somebody [can have] more, conversation. [But] I said 'uh, okay I busy. I go on.' (lines 1067-1070)… I no practice. The people ask me question [in English]. Sometime they talk to me, 'how are you?' [but I said] 'Okay, bye, I busy'. (lines 1093-1100)

This hesitation and giving up a real desire to communicate was also reported by Irma. Whereas Eva's signal for passing that conversation was "Okay, bye, I busy," Irma's signal is "never mind." Irma seems to have a strong desire to communicate with other people using English, but sometimes she ended up escaping the situation, which

made her feel badly about her Superacion. Irma recalled these "escaping" and "hurting her Superacion" moments when she tried to learn about products at a mall:

Irma:	Oh, maybe when I see good opportunities. When the people said, I have this for sale but this got, this and this problem. And I say 'what is problem about that thing?' And they say, 'it's a good, cheaper, but the problem is this and this.' And I say 'what's the problem? I don't, can't understand what is the problem.' And the person say, 'it's good opportunity for a little bit money.' But I [want to] understand the problem. It is why when I say, 'oh I need more English, because if I can understand that I can take that one back'. I understand, yeah I don't know what happened with that. So with that person when I go same appointment and I say I understand a little bit but not all of it. I understand a little bit but, I ask about this and I understand.
I:	**That makes sense.**
Irma:	Yeah and I can, you know, people, talk and talk and talk. No because I don't know how to say that, so I said "never mind."
I:	**You want to talk but maybe you don't know, so you don't,**
Irma:	Yeah, and I say "never mind, bye."
I:	**That doesn't look good… right.**
Irma:	No, that's not good.
I:	**Because you want to talk right?**
Irma:	Yeah, because I like to talk. (lines 736-756)

While the shapes and characteristics are different, the participants' number one reason to invest in English learning seems to be their Superacion, in other words, becoming a better person. This finding is consistent with Dewey's (1903) self-actualization notion that emphasized the importance of self-growing through education based on individual's discursive goals and needs. The adult ELs in CEL seem to have a strong desire of self-actualization in the U.S., where they have realized that English proficiency is desperately necessary to achieve goals like becoming a better person at work (Mag), being able to fast speak and listen (Eva), being able to help kids' English reading assignments and advising for the future (Domingo), protecting their children (Irma), continuing education by following dreams (Elsa), being able to talk to people in

stores and girlfriend (Chris), and being able to speak up and communicate with an English speaking boss (Chris), customers (Eva), and a salesperson at a mall (Irma).

Job: Apply-Work-Promotion-Avoid Exploitation

In addition to Superacion, data revealed that the participants seemed to want to invest in learning English for their diverse *Job* needs over *Applying, Working, Being Promoted,* and *Avoiding Exploitation*. This finding seems to add another facet of adult ELs' desire about job needs, because this study's finding gives richness of what job needs specifically refer to in an adult EL setting. In other words, job needs not only refer to being able to work, but also, that adult EL in this particular context view job needs with multiple and deeper perspectives. For example, Domingo said English writing and speaking is really important to him. When I asked what makes him think that way, Domingo recounted that he wants to learn how to write and speak English because he wanted to write applications for jobs and more opportunities:

Domingo:	Well, I never go to a school or speak English. But, you know, it's a good idea for me to speak more better English or communicate for the other people. And, we need to start how to write and read because I speak English but no, no idea how to write it, all the letters together. You know? Because it's really important, read and writing and speak.
I:	**Okay.**
Domingo:	Yeah.
I:	**So, you said you want to speak better. But also you want to write and read better, because reading and writing is important.**
Domingo:	Right.
I:	**So, but, in your life, so what, why do you think speaking is important, writing is important and,**
Domingo:	Because you have more opportunity and when you go in the office and really want paper on something. When you, put application in the companies. When you no writing, and have no idea how to write, we need help from somebody else. That's why, you know, we need dependent [who can help Domingo], somebody else, help you. And when you do writing or reading,

> you know how to make application or writing application. Yeah. (lines 446-464)

In addition to job applications, English seems needed for all participants to work at daily working sites and to perform their job duties. For Eva and Elsa, all customers to their restaurant are English speakers, so they need to learn English. As Elsa specifically works as a waitress, she feels this need directly:

> I go to start [practicing English] more in the restaurant, because I see White people, more the customers is White people and talk English, English, English. And I need practice my English. (lines 1079-1981)

For Chris' job needs, he seems to want to *work* better by communicating effectively with job-related people. For example, when he goes to a hardware store every morning to buy construction materials such as lumber, he needs English. When he visits a work site, it is usually an English-speaking customer's house. Chris feels that he wants to invest more in learning English:

> Because in my job, I have to know [English] because I have to go to a store and get stuff [lumber] for work and the stores it's like only English. (lines 338-339)… When I wake up my cousin [boss] told me 'you have to learn [English] somewhere' and the job is like this. When I go to house [of a client], I have to ask you [the client] 'what do you want [me] to do right here?' I go to different jobs when like today I go to a house for doing a pool, concrete. Yeah I have to ask something like, 'what do you need' and, yeah. I have to talk [English] (lines 895-912)

This work-performance-related English need is also echoed in Mag's case. Mag recounted that she needs English to work with colleagues because she is currently the only Mexican at work. In the past, some colleagues spoke Spanish, but now her colleagues only speak English. At the same time, Mag seems to take this situation as a good English practice opportunity:

> I just try to learn more because in my job I work a lot of times with the like, they speak English and Spanish very good. So sometimes is okay for me if I don't speak very good English because I have all the time translate. But now in my job I am the only Mexican so my boss she speak just English (lines 616-619).

After *application* and *working* for a certain time, *promotion* is what employees want, and the six participants are no exceptions. But for their promotion opportunity, it seems that they must possess a good English proficiency, which seems to lead them to invest to learn English. For examples, Mag reported that she was offered a better working position working inside in the office, as long as Mag has a good English proficiency:

> I have opportunity in my job. My boss, he want me work in the office. But he ask, I need clear English, because I and I tried, I wanted [the promotion], but that, that's the reason I start to learn English. Because my boss tell me, I can give you job here in the office, but you need to learn English (lines 324-347)

Domingo also recounted that he needs more English and a GED degree to be promoted to a better position – working inside. To him, working outside is hard, tiring, and heavy (see figure 24 for his working site). He wants to work inside. He knows that he needs more English and a GED for that, so he wanted to invest to learn English:

> Because, well, right now I'm working outside in the construction. Maybe with my GED, I work in a store or an office maybe. You know, like different. (lines 679-681)… Why? Because I think inside is more better. You know, like when the air is more like cold, [inside is] not hot, and you know, more relaxed. You know…[outside is] Hot. Sweat. Tired, and more heavy. (lines 690-703)

Figure 24. Domingo's Outside Workplace - He describes working outside as hard, sweaty, and tiring. Domingo wants to work inside, which made him invest to learn English.

In addition, for daily work tasks, Domingo needs English to read the map of work orders. He said that now understands all the vocabulary words on the map, words like kitchen, bedroom, and yard. However, in the past he didn't know these words at all, so his boss read them and pointed out the map and the locations of a house one by one to him:

> Well, because we now, I build the house and we understand the plan, the map. You know? It got letters and I don't know what he [the letters] say, the map and the plan. What is the labels, you know, like, how much is the, sometimes having numbers and sometimes having letters, and you know, like, I don't know what it says. What is the kitchen? Was there, the office? Yeah, my boss explained. Well, my boss is writing and then the flooring. [He said] 'the floor is right in, this is the office on the map. This is the kitchen. This is the bed.' Yeah. You stand there and know what he said right there. Sometimes. Right now, I understand the words kitchen, bed, but not before. (lines 647-679).

Lastly, investing to learn English to *Avoid Job Exploitation* was reported. The participants said that sometimes their bosses order them to do difficult things. For example, Irma recalled that her boss, when Irma's English was not proficient enough, asked Irma to carry a heavy box. Irma told the boss that she could not carry it, but there was not clear communication. Irma was forced to carry the heavy box, which was hard for her:

Irma:	More jobs. No, heavy.
I:	**Heavy?**
Irma:	Heavy.
I:	**Okay.**
Irma:	Because I think when we no speak English, they give the jobs more heavy.
I:	**Oh, really?**
Irma:	Yeah.
I:	**Ah, for example, give me example.**
Irma:	For example, um, in my other job, they told me to pick up heavy box, deep box.
I:	**Heavy.**
Irma:	Uh-huh [Yes] and he said, 'go and pick it up Irma', and I say [not clearly] 'it's too heavy for me somebody can help', [and he said] 'no you can do it, you can do it for yourself.'
I:	**And at the time you didn't speak English much.**
Irma:	Yeah, No. Not too much. (lines 602-617)

After carrying the heavy box, Irma saw a group of other people who could speak good English. They spoke up with their opinions about carrying the box. The other people then worked "lighter" work such as working on computers or paper cutting. To Irma this was not fair, because the workers are paid the same money regardless of whether they carry heavy boxes or cut paper. The only difference was how well you could speak your opinions in English. This incident seems to act as another driving force for Irma's decisions to invest in learning English:

Irma: [When Irma carries the heavy box] And the other people speak English, they say, 'No I don't want to, somebody can do that, not me.' And they [boss] go for other people, and the other people don't, can't say nothing have to do.

I: Just go pick up.

Irma: Irma.

I: But someone who can speak English –

Irma: Yeah and when the other people, speak English more better, they put do something else.

I: Like for example?

Irma: Like, go see that computer, go see that,

I: Paper.

Irma: The papers, yeah. Cut paper.

I: Easy job.

Irma: Yeah.

I: Same money?

Irma: Yeah, same money. It's not fair.

I: Yeah, it's not fair.

Irma: Yeah, not fair. (lines 617-634).

Mag's story about her offer for working inside, which was taken by someone else who spoke better English than Mag seems to be somewhat consistent with this finding – they need English for *avoiding work exploitation*. Mag's current job was working outside in a drawer assembly line, using the nail gun, with wood powers in the air, and many risks for harm. Mag wanted to go inside, just like Irma didn't want to carry the heavy box, but both were not equipped with enough English proficiency, so they remained in the same undesirable situations – using a nail gun for Mag, carrying the heavy box for Irma.

Job needs for adult EL populations have been investigated quantitatively by scholars (Valentine, 1990). Detailed, rich stories and narratives of job needs for this population have been conducted as well. Derwing (2003), Han (2009), and Hyman (2002) in their qualitative research reported job needs for being able to *work* at sites, the second sub category of this finding. However, few studies have explored the other

facets of job needs, such as being able to write *application* forms (Domingo), and *avoiding job exploitation* for heavy and risky work (Irma, Mag). This finding seems to fill the gap by letting adult ELs' untold voices be heard in rich and vigorous narratives.

Desire to Communicate

The data revealed that another strong factor for the participants' decision to invest in English learning is that they have *desire to communicate* with others. In fact, this seems to work as a means of supporting their aforementioned reasons, such as *Superacion* and *dynamic Job Needs*. For example, Mag said that she wants to *communicate* with people in stores, schools, and hospitals by improving her English. Although sometimes translation is available, Mag has a strong desire to talk to people directly:

> I would like to communicate with the people, the stores and they school, the doctor. At appointment, the doctor he not, I don't understand and, when I have appointments when I go to the doctor. I don't understand what they say. Yeah some is hard when you go to the stores or like doctors or you try to get some papers for the kids and you don't speak English, you feel like embarrassed (lines 563-569)… On the school day speak Spanish they have translators, but it is better for me if I can understand to the teacher [directly] (lines 683-684).

Domingo also reported that he wants to learn English to communicate with people at his work. Domingo recently seems to translate between his boss and colleagues by communicating between them using English and Spanish:

I:	**And communicate also means with your boss?**
Domingo :	Well, yeah, with my boss. With the other peoples working with him.
I:	**And in your company?**
Domingo:	And in the company.
I:	**Do you have any example of that?**
Domingo:	Example, when, my boss say. [My colleague] say, 'what did boss say?' You know, no idea. The boss talking to you. But I don't how you speak to other.
I:	**How you explain.**
Domingo:	How you explain with other, what he said was.

I: **So, when your boss told you something, you want to explain it to your-**

Domingo: To the other-

I: **Other person.**

Domingo: Yeah.

I: **Other workers.**

Domingo: Mhmm.

I: **But you said you didn't know how to do that. You remember an example?**

Domingo: Example. We'll say. And work in the garage. Boss say, 'the garage, working over there, to do, finish or something and like in the garage or in the kitchen.' I tell they [colleagues], I will say go and finish the kitchen. So. (lines 610-629)

And Domingo also pointed out that he wants to *communicate* with his neighbor:

> You know, like, talking with your neighbors. Not like with him. You need to see who is your neighbor. Is good person, bad person, you know, like, what he's doing. I think it's really important. (lines 758-762)

Another layer of *Desire to Communicate* was the needs occurring with their family members. Chris recounted that he wants to invest in learning English to communicate with his nephews who were born in the U.S.:

Chris: I always talk with my nephews in English.

I: **In Mexico?**

Chris: No right here.

I: **Your nephew?**

P: Yes, I have nephews right here. (lines 765-769)

Chris' sister who already lived in the U.S., the nephews' mother, has limited English proficiency. Chris wants to teach her English by taking English classes. He pointed out teaching his family English is his sixth reason that he wants to invest in learning English:

Chris: Six, family [sixth reason to learn English]. Because my family, she don't speak English.
I: Your sister?
Chris: No English.
I: Who?
Chris: My sister she don't know English. (lines 577-582)
… …
I: Family, you said you want to teach English to your…
Chris: My sister. (lines 762-764).

Chris' twin sister living in Mexico once said to Chris that she wants to come to the U.S. someday. Chris seems to want to teach his twin sister English too:

I: Ah good, good. Alright so okay, maybe you want to bring your sister here?
Chris: Sometime yeah. I bring her. I asked her.
I: Her. And she said what?
Chris: Yes, she said yes. (lines 772-776).

Desire to Communicate with medical doctors was thematically reported across all six participants: for medical issues with her son's ears (Mag), when his son hit a door and injured forehead (Domingo), when her husband passed away (Irma), when her sister had a stomachache (Elsa), when her daughter is sick (Eva), and when his friend was injured while playing football (Chris).

The data shows that the *Desire to Communicate* is used as a means of achieving *Superacion* and their *Job-Related Needs*. For example, Domingo's *Superacion* – being able to read and speak English for his children's education and future opportunities can be achieved through improving his communicating capabilities (*Desire to Communicate*), which in turn can be used to achieve his other goal to better communicate at his work (*Job: Work*). The detailed characteristics and colors of this finding of *Desire to Communicate* seems to be based on this study participants' unique

context, where they are physical laborers, full-time workers, and parents, who support both in Mexico and the U.S., and have a strong desire for *Superacion* for their own idiosyncratic situated-ness.

Theme 6

Hardship Experiences Due to Low English Proficiency

Different Priorities

English is Essential

More Opportunities

In addition to the three aspects above, all the participants seemed to have *Hardship Experiences Due to Low English Proficiency* in their life, which seem to give them the feeling that *English is Essential* to live in the U.S. At the same time, it seems that learning English means *More Opportunities* for themselves and their family. At the same time, all participants have *Different Priorities* for why they want to learn English. All of these seven aspects in a dynamic cluster seem to influence the participants to decide to invest in their English learning.

Hardships Due to Low English Proficiency

As reported in the research question 1 findings, the participants experienced language barriers in their life. Along with these language barriers, data revealed that the participants underwent hardships due to low English proficiency, which seems to be another factor that promotes their decisions to invest in English learning. Irma experienced hardship when her previous husband was sent to an emergency room. Irma couldn't do anything and had her daughters translate their father's death. Mag

experienced similar hardship of not understanding the doctors' explanations about her son's ear problems. For Elsa, Elsa's daughter was sick and unable to translate, which was another hardship. Domingo had similar hardship experiences when his son had a hernia. The doctor and nurse didn't explain verbally and just gave him papers to read:

> Domingo: Well, right now, but, for my kids, hernia,
> **I: For his body?**
> Domingo: Yeah. And when take to the doctor. Like what happened with the kid you know, when it was the paper. And sometimes got in trouble because I don't know what the paper say. How, what happened with it, with the
> paper. You know, a bunch of time asking what happened.
> **I: Yeah.**
> Domingo: And the doctor or the nurse only give me the paper. But I don't want see the paper [but to talk to understand]. (lines 469-477)

These hardships were reported multiple times, and the meaning of the hard experiences can vary with each individual. However, one thematic pattern emerged out of these hardship experiences is that it seems to work as a motivational factor for the adult ELs to keep investing to learn English:

> Yeah, I interest back to school, to learn English. I want, I want Superacion, better life, and protect my children (Irma: lines 589-593)

> We need to start, how to write and read because I speak English but no, no idea how write it…all the letters together. You know? Because it's really important, really important, read and writing and speak. (Domingo: lines 448-450)

> I always want to learn [English]. (Mag: line 937)

> I go to my English class. Cause I want to learn. (Elsa: lines 1086-1086)

> Cause I need to learn English, I mean. For everything. (Eva: lines 743-745)

> I never say that [I don't want to learn English], I come because I want to learn English (Chris: line 961)

These statements seem to show the probable connections between their hardship experiences and their desire to invest in English learning.

Different Priorities

All six participants reported that they have *diverse priorities* about what makes them to decide to invest in learning English. The top four overarching reasons reported include (1) Superacion, (2) Job, (3) Communicate, and (4) Hospital. Unique priorities were also reported, such as buying products at stores, living in the U.S., helping other people, and wanting to teach family members English.

One interesting phenomenon was that the half of the participants changed their rankings of the priorities after thinking about it for approximately 10 minutes. The question they were asked was "why do you want to learn English? Please make a list and prioritize based on the importance." During the interviews, I helped them brainstorm for ideas. Most participants told me and wrote down life-related needs first, such as job, hospital, and stores. But when I explained about a blank field where they can write down his/her own priority, the participants thought about it, wrote a word, and put the new word at the top of the list. The word was Superacion. For example, Mag at the beginning wrote down (1) job, (2) school (children), and (3) doctors. However, when she realized that there was room (blank spot) to write in her opinion, she put Superacion in that spot and put it at the top of the list. Her list became (1) Superacion, (2) job, (3) school (children), and (4) doctors (see figure 25 for Mag's list of priorities).

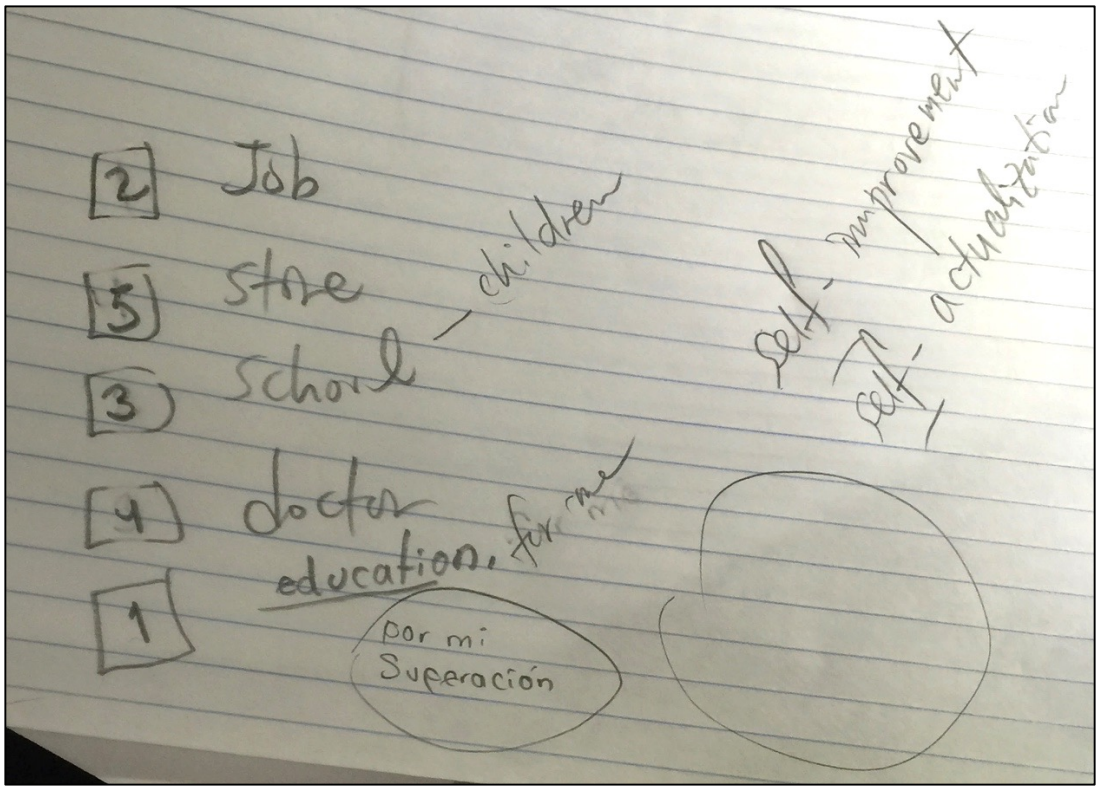


Figure 25. Priority List for Mag - She changed her choices by creatively writing "Superacion" on the bottom and changing the ranks to make Superacion #1.

This "changing" phenomenon also occurred with Domingo and Irma. Throughout the interviews, they seemed to think about the list and change their list by putting the Superacion aspect at the top. Domingo first put job as his number one priority. Then, he changed the order by putting "hope for kids as his Superacion" as his new priority. Likewise, Irma put job as her number one reason at first, but changed it to "protecting my kids as Superacion" as her top priority. The other three participants, Eva, Elsa, and Chris, first put Superacion for their number one reason. Figure 26 illustrates each participant's different priorities for why they want to invest to learn English.

Priority	Mag	Domingo	Irma	Eva	Elsa	Chris
#1	**Superacion** (better person)	**Superacion** (hope for kids)	**Superacion** (protecting kids)	**Superacion** (fast speaking and listen)	**Superacion** (self-education, college)	**Superacion** (self-education)
#2	**Job** (promotion)	**Communicate** (boss, colleagues)	**Job**	**Work**	**School** (teacher-parent conference)	**Job** (buying materials)
#3	**School** (kids)	**Hospital** (kids' hernia)	**Hospital** (kids and me)	**School** (kids)	**Communicate**	**Girlfriend**
#4	**Doctor** (kid's ear tube)	**GED** (self-education)	**Helping other People**	**Living in America**	**Doctor**	**Hospital**
#5			School	Doctor	Living in America	Communicate
#6			Shopping		Work	Teach family English
#7					Store	
#8					Open more doors in the U.S.	

Figure 26. Individual Different Priorities for Why They Want to Learn English Research at a Glance

Each individual has different priorities for why they want to invest to learn English. It seems that their unique backgrounds may have impacted this decision. It is worth noticing that this priority is not static, but dynamically changing its shapes and tastes according to life situations. For example, For Eva, when her daughter Delma was young, helping Delma would be the first reason to learn English, as reflected in the phrase of "School (children)" in Eva's column in Table 3. However, Eva recounted that now Delma is grown up, so this time might be Eva's turn to pursue her own Superacion by putting it as number 1 and putting school (children) to number 3:

> Okay, maybe, in the long time [ago], Delma is little maybe my priority was Delma [school]. Maybe now she is big [grown up], she go to college. Okay [it] is my time. (lines 2157-2158)

Domingo also said that giving hope to children by learning English, a unique form of Superacion to Domingo, takes first priority at this time. Although Domingo seems to have a desire to improve his English for his work and his own development (GED), he said that giving hope to his children by learning English is more important than anything else at this moment:

> For the child, I think this one [hope for kids] is really important. Yeah. Because, you know, I'm a dad and a supporter now. Because a child, this is more important… (lines 821-826)…My kid is, like, right now it's more, my hope to him [kids] is more important for me right now [than my work and my GED]. (lines 888-889)

Several deviant cases were reported as well. Irma's 3rd priority was "helping people" which was unique and not reported by others. In addition, Eva's 8th reason was "opening more doors in the U.S." by learning English, which can be rephrased as "more

opportunities." Lastly, Chris reported that he wants to learn English to teach his family, and for his two sisters – one in the U.S., another in Mexico.

English is Essential

Another thematic finding was that to the participants, learning *English is Essential* for their lives in the U.S. This finding seems based on their immediate life needs such as grocery shopping, purchasing clothes, and feeling comfortable in everything they do in an English-speaking country. For example, Chris reported that English is very important to him because he cannot live without English for his basic life needs, like food or shoes. To him, English is a support:

Chris:	English is like support, like support.
I:	**Support yeah.**
Chris:	Because if you don't know English,
I:	**You don't know English,**
Chris:	You
I:	**You don't understand, uh huh.**
Chris:	If you don't know English, I live right here [the U.S.]. I can't live like right here. I can't, because as English is necessary because when I go to a store and for example food.
I:	**For example food…**
Chris:	Food or shoes, or. (lines 1134-1144)

Mag also pointed out English is necessary by saying, "It [English] is necessary" (line 560). What Mag meant by necessary was more about her need to communicate with people like store workers, doctors, and teachers. Mag said:

> I would like to communicate with the people. And the stores and the school, the doctor. At appointment, the doctor he not, I don't understand (lines 563-565)

For Eva, English seems essential because she said everything outside her house is English. Eva pointed out that within her house, English is not needed, but outside, she

needs it for everything. This seems to work as a motivational factor for her decision for investment in English:

> **I:** **[You said] English for Eva, and you say everything-**
> Eva: Same. Yeah. For everything.
> **I:** **What do you mean by everything?**
> Eva: I mean everything. For the, okay, maybe in my home, inside home, I don't need English. Outside I need English. (lines 1725-1731)

Eva further emphasized the importance of English for outside house issues, by saying that she needs English for "all problems in the world":

> Yeah, cause I need to talk to teachers, the conference. Doctor appointments. Hospital. And then, and, all the problems in the world (lines 765-771)

Elsa seems to expand Eva's thought by saying English is needed for living in the U.S. Elsa seems to not necessarily agree with the idea of "you have to speak English because you live in the U.S" as her White co-workers claimed. Elsa heard this comment when she talked with Eva using Spanish at work. It seems that her White colleague didn't understand Elsa and Eva's Spanish conversations, so the colleague asked them to speak English with the rationale "you speak English because you live in the U.S." However, Elsa seems to critique this "forceful" way of pushing her to learn English:

> And then other people say they live in America. Yeah, people don't like speak Spanish. Some people said, 'no. you [speak] English cause you live in America'. And I say 'I no.' But for me it's more easy speak Spanish. More easy and more fast, speak Spanish. I want speak English, but I can't. I can't because Eva and I were in the restaurant and the White guy, because Eva and I talk too much but more easy and more fast speak in Spanish. He was working in the kitchen, he didn't like it. He said 'you speak English because you live in America,' [I said] 'No, you need to speak Spanish. English and I said no you need to learn Spanish. No, cause I live in America. I don't care. I speak Spanish, Eva with you.' (lines 773-788)

Elsa's rationale for saying "no" to "you speak English because you live in America" seemed to be based on her thought that she doesn't care if any White people cannot speak Spanish when they visit Mexico:

> Yes, he's White guy. And he said, 'no you live in America, you need to speak English. Talk English.' And I say 'no you need to learn Spanish for us', and I said 'no, because I live in America. I don't care when you people, when you White people go to Mexico, to Mexico, no speak Spanish'… I say [in Spanish] 'yes. where learn, across the water?' He said 'no,' I say 'Ah.' White people go to speak Spanish in Mexico and speak English, Spanish or whatever. (lines 801-808).

Ironically, Elsa simultaneously to some degree agrees with the statement because she realized the necessity of speaking English in her daily life:

> And I need English for living in the United State. (lines 1734-1736)… Because I live in America and more people speak English. And I have problems when I want to talk to somebody. (lines 1210-1212)

It seems that to the participants, English is essential for their daily lives and basic needs such as shopping for daily commodities, working with colleagues, and everything they need to deal with outside their houses.

More Opportunities

Lastly, one recurring category for why the participants want to invest in English learning was for *More Opportunities* in their life. More opportunities could mean more money (Chris), chances of promotion (Irma), better job conditions (Domingo, Mag), or more open doors in the U.S. (Elsa and Eva). For example, Irma recounted that she wanted more opportunities through learning English and feels comfortable in what she's doing and for potential promotion opportunities:

> Oh, I want to learn more English and perfection my English, because I want more opportunities, better opportunities. Because I feel more comfortable, more happy when with everybody. Because when I start one job, I see the difference when they come back. When somebody came and talk English I think, I think and I see better opportunities and better job. Better opportunities. (lines 314-318)

For Elsa, learning English means opening more doors, not only for herself, but also for her children. It seems to work as another motivational factor for her to invest for English learning:

> English open many doors. Like I said for work or everything [education]…Opportunities and everything. And because some people don't like speak Spanish and I want speak very good English but I can't. I want [English] (lines 1211-1215)

Chris recounted that if he spoke better English, he would make more money, "[I want to learn English]…For more money and, opportunity yeah." (lines 697-699)

This category, *More Opportunities*, was reported for the research question 1 answers as their initial motivational factor to decide to come to the U.S. from Mexico. It seems that this factor continuously keeps working in their on-going decision criteria, based on their daily life experiences. In other words, the adult ELs at CEL seem to have kept seeing the link between better-English skills and better opportunities in the forms of either monetary compensation, job promotions, or educational opportunities. It seems that the concept of "*More Opportunities*" has been active with their decision-making processes since 13 or more years ago when they initially decided to come to the U.S.

Mapping Out Research Question 2 Findings

To thematically map out the findings of research question 2, I found that probable patterns and themes over the seven categories: *Superacion, Job: Apply-Work-Promotion-Avoid Exploitation, Desire to Communicate, Hardships Due to Low English Proficiency, Different Priorities, English is Essential,* and *More Opportunities*. It seems that the seven categories all dynamically and intertwined-ly influence the adult ELs' decisions to invest for English learning.

First, it seems that the concept of *Superacion* embraces other factors in terms of what leads the participants' decisions, such as *Job: Apply-Work-Promotion-Avoid Exploitation, Desire to Communicate,* and *More Opportunities*. This is because the data showed the shape and colors of *Superacion*, i.e., becoming a better person, is different for different individuals. Perhaps more importantly the definition changes based on the time and situations that the participants encountered. For example, for Mag, moving forward to the next level at her job and with communication skills means Superacion; for Eva, being able to quickly speak and listen is a facet of her Superacion. For Chris, being able to communicate with store workers for his job and with his boss is an aspect of his Superacion. These examples show the probable link between *Superacion* and *Job* categories. In addition, for Irma, her top Superacion aspect is to protect her children by being able to communicate in English. Irma's second Superacion aspect was to be able to actively communicate with other speakers of English and not saying "never mind," which seems more towards her individual development. Likewise, Eva's one Superacion aspect was not to remain silent. She doesn't want to say, "Okay, I busy, bye," but rather, she wants to "fast" talk and listen. These examples show the probable

relation between *Superacion* and *Desire to Communicate*. Lastly, Domingo's one aspect of Superacion is to be able to read English books for his children. This is more towards giving hope for his children and himself for better opportunities. For Elsa, going to college is an aspect of Superacion, which can converge with the concept of *More Opportunities*. This last example shows the probable link between *Superacion* and *More opportunities*.

In addition to these four categories' intertwined relations, the other three categories also seem to dynamically relate to each other (*Hardship Due to Low English Proficiency, English is Essential, Different Priorities*). For example, Irma's hardship experience about remaining silent on the day her husband passed away seems to influence her to think that learning English is essential in the U.S., which in turn seems to affect the priority of her English learning.

Furthermore, the three categories seem to be related to the aforementioned four categories towards their final decision to invest to learn English. For example, the *hardship experiences* for participants, e.g., Mag's experiences of being silent at a doctor's appointment for the water in her son's ears, seems to lead Mag to *Desire to Communicate* with doctors. This feeling of *Desire to Communicate* also seems to relate with Mag's *Job* needs and feeling about *More Opportunities* through learning English (recall that Mag was offered a job promotion to work inside, as long as her English is good enough). This *More Opportunities* feeling seems to influence her list of *Different Priorities* at that time, as Mag put "job" as her second priority for why she wants to learn English following her number one reason - Superacion.

Characteristics of Investment Factors: Alive and Dynamically Moving

All in all, these seven categories (*Superacion, Job: Apply-Work-Promotion-Avoid Exploitation, Desire to Communicate, Hardships Due to Low English Proficiency, Different Priorities, English is Essential,* and *More Opportunities)* for what makes adult ELs at CEL invest for their English learning seem to dynamically work together for their final decisions. Although I found that there probably are different weights on each categories, the more important finding seems to be that these categories are not static, but are rather alive and dynamically moving based on times and situations that the individuals encounter. For example, Eva said supporting Delma was her top priority before and was equal to her Superacion at that time. However, Eva points out that now, this time, is maybe for her own development. She infers that she put her own self-improvement as her top priority, as a current form of her Superacion, by putting Delma as the second priority – because Delma is grown up and a college student now. This finding seems consistent with previous research that points the importance of situated-ness of individual students in their learning (Gee, 2012, 2014; Lave & Wenger, 1991). It seem worthwhile to note that the causing factors for adult ELs' investment for English learning is strongly and complicated connected to their situated-ness, which is diverse and ever-changing in time.

Figure 27 illustrates these probable thematic links over the research question 2 findings. The big dotted-lined square with the title of Superacion embraces three sub-squares such as, *Job: Apply-Work-Promotion-Avoid Exploitation, Desire to Communicate, More Opportunities*. The bidirectional arrows among them show the intertwined relations among the three. On the bottom of the diagram are three categories

interacting with each other as other facets of what makes the participants to invest for learning English, such as *Hardship Due to Low English Proficiency, English is Essential,* and *Different Priorities*. The bidirectional arrows among them show the probable inter-relations among them, and the dotted box surrounding those three categories show the probable cluster of these three categories compared to the above three categories under Superacion. The arrows across the two dotted-lined clusters on the top and bottom show the dynamic and subtle relations among all seven categories. On the right side of the whole diagram, the two arrows converging to the terminal decision shape titled with "Invest to Learn English" show the probable causal relations between the seven categories as a complex and holistic factor of their final decision of investing.

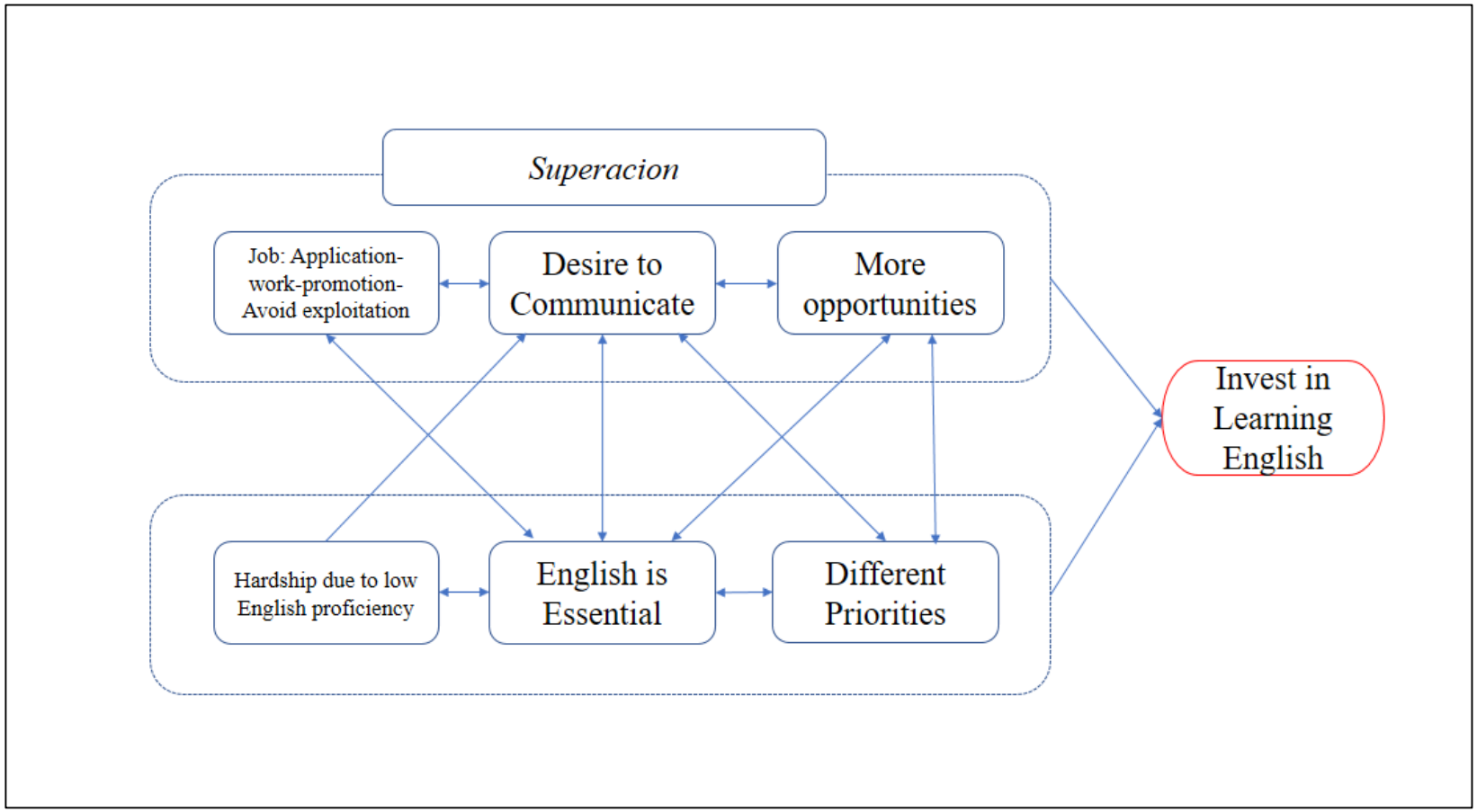


Figure 27. Map of Research Question 2 Finings: What makes adult ELs at CEL invest in learning English? – The seven categories seem related to each other in an intertwined way, which seems to dynamically influence the adult ELs' decisions to invest for English learning.

Beyond Research Question (RQ) 2: Holistic Mapping between RQ1 and RQ2

While thematically mapping the findings to answer the second research question, I found that the diverse aspects of research question 1 answers seem to foreground the research question 2 answers. Thus, it would be foundational to recount the foregrounding aspects: the linkages connected over the three categories in research question 1 answers – *Living in the U.S. for 13+ Years*, *Language Barriers at Work, Family, and Community*, and *Desire to Learn English*. Specifically, the category "Desire to Learn English" can represent all the former three categories in research question 1 findings. This "Desire to Learn English" reported in research question 1 findings seems to be expanded through the research question 2 findings. As we can enlarge a smartphone app icon in our phone screen to a bigger activation mode when we touch it, it seems that the "Desire to Learn English" category reported in RQ1 can be expanded to the seven categories of research question 2 findings. Figure 28 illustrates this probable inter-twined relationship between research question 1 findings and research question 2 findings.

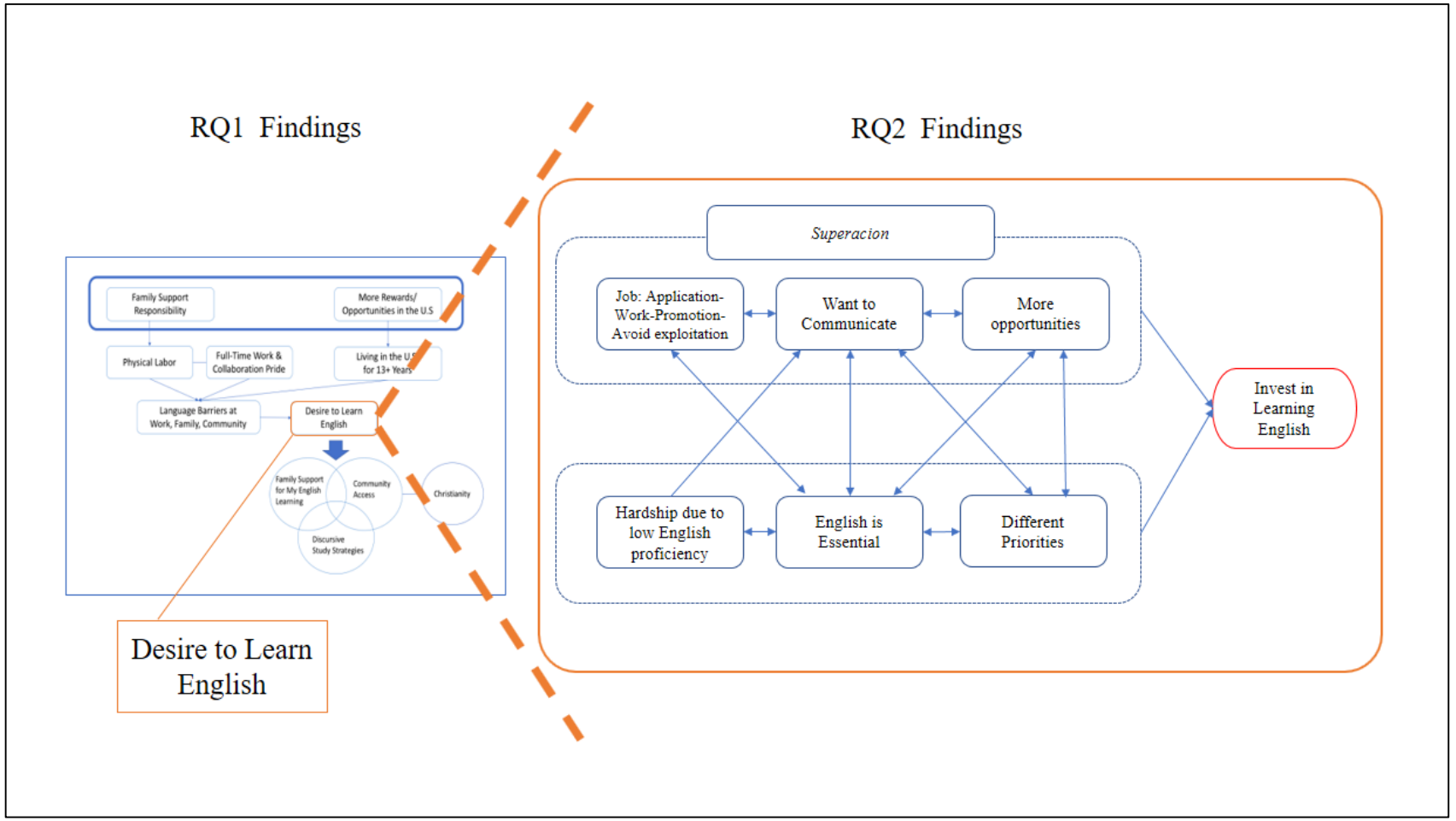


Figure 28. A probable intertwined relationship between research question 1 findings and research questions 2 findings – it seems that the category "desire to learn English" seems to foreground the research question2 findings, and then is expanded by the RQ2 findings.

Discussion of Research Question 2 Findings

The seven reasons for investment that adult ELs pointed out seem to be consistent with Darvin and Norton (2015)'s notions of capital in their investment framework such as, economic capital, cultural capital, and social capital. Darvin and Norton (2015) in their investment framework view that L2 learners invest based on the intertwined influence from their diverse needs, positioning rationale, and decisions based on their ideology, identity, and capital. Specifically for capital, they used Bourdieu's (1987) view to specify it to three notions: economic capital (wealth, property, income), cultural capital (knowledge, educational credentials), and social capital (connections to networks of power). In this study's case, the participants' reasons to invest English seems to be consistent with these three components of capital. For example, the participants reported economic capital to gain through learning English, such as food or shoes (Chris), cars and houses (Mag, Elsa, Irma), and money (Domingo, Chris). As a form of cultural capital, the participants' educational development needs were reported by all participants. Lastly, for social capital, learning English to ask for helps seems consistent with that notion, such as seeking help for medical situations (Irma, Mag, Domingo, Elsa, Eva, Chris) and wanting to communicate with colleagues and customers (Eva, Elsa).

In addition, *Desire to Communicate* category seems to be consistent with Darvin and Norton's (2015) identity notion, which emphasized that individual learners consistently negotiate and position their spaces with other conversation interlocutors within evolving power structures. For example, Irma, Chris, and Domingo's examples of staying silent when English speaking situations overwhelmed them seems to share

this identity struggle and refusing power notion. What they did seems to refuse their power to speak out because they feel that their English is not legitimate enough to be included in the communication situation. However, it is worthwhile to note that all participants' identity in the communication site and their positioning is ever-evolving and changing in order to speak up their rights sometimes, such as, asking their colleagues to learn Spanish to communicate with them (Eva, Elsa), asking clarification to his girlfriend (Chris), and asking clarification to her boss by saying "excuse me, I don't understand, could you please tell me one more time?" (Irma). For EL educators, understanding this identity-negotiation based on the power structure and hegemony aspects (where students might feel that they are not legitimate to join in the fast-speaking and fluent English speaking context) is important, because EL learners by nature keep negotiating their identities and positions to assess whether or not they can be included or excluded. Connecting to the capital notion, when refusing or being excluded, their potential capital for economic, social, and cultural gains through English seems disappear. It seems that although the learners in this case study had high motivation to invest initially, at the same time, they keep assessing, questioning, and navigating their identity, right to speak, and whether or not taking this class is beneficial for their capital building.

Through research question 2, I found that what makes adult ELs to invest in learning English are based on their Superacion desire as well as real-life-based hardships, needs, and priorities, which all are mixed together influence their decision for investment. Although it was the case that all six participants decided to invest, it turned out that five of them dropped out physically at a point of their English learning

journey at CEL. Chris kept remained physically in his EL classes, but more narratives about his mind-level absence was reported throughout RQ3 findings. The research question 3 explores what makes the adult ELs at CEL to either stay or drop out of their English class.

Research Question 3. What makes adult ELs at CEL decide to stay or drop out?

What Makes Adult ELs Drop Out?

To explore the probable links/networks between what makes and adult EL stay or drop out, it seems more effective to address what make them drop first. Dropping out is the main problem to solve through this study. As a context, it is essential to note that there were three teachers in this study's case, teacher John, teacher Amy, and teacher Derek. Figure 29 below illustrates when each individual dropped out. "Stay" means that the participants stayed with the teachers written on the far-left column. "**Drop**" means that the participants drop out while taking the classes with the teachers. Elsa in the middle has both Stay and **Drop**, which means that Elsa took one class with the teacher and after that she dropped. This section will address diverse drop-out factors and the holistic and thematic map among the factors to explore what makes them drop out.

	Mag	Eva	Elsa	Irma	Domingo	Chris
Teacher John Class	Stay	Stay	Stay	Stay	Stay	Stay
Teacher Derek Class	Stay	Stay	Stay /**Drop**	**Drop**	Stay	Stay
Teacher Amy Class	**Drop**	**Drop**	**Drop**	**Drop**	**Drop**	Stay

Figure 29. When the Participants Drop Out

Dropout Factors

First, ten categories were reported as dropout factors such as: *Learn Nothing, Teacher Apathy, Feeling Oppressed, Waste of Time, Just Talk, Talk, Talk, No Prep, Boring, Unrelated Topics, Didn't Meet Expectations,* and *Different Perspectives and Reactions*. Out of these ten categories, four themes were emerged thematically. Below will address what make them decide to drop out theme by theme.

Theme 7

Learn Nothing – Teacher Apathy – Feeling Oppressed – Waste of Time

Learning Nothing

Waste of Time

The data revealed that adult ELs at CEL seem to drop out because they *learn nothing*, had *teacher apathy*, and *feeling oppressed*, which all simultaneously and eventually seemed to make them feel that the class was *waste of time*. For example,

Mag in Amy's class seemed to feel that she learned nothing from the teacher. Mag seemed to feel that the teacher just talked to other classmates, regardless of whether Mag understood the class topic at that moment. This incident also simultaneously seemed to give Mag the feelings of not cared and oppressed:

Mag:	With Amy, she just speak with people [who] understand [English better], she just speak. Amy she just speak. She just speak with the people like they speak more English.
I:	**Like your husband [who speaks better English]**
Mag:	Yeah, like and like her, she [Amy] don't worry about me. So teacher just what, what thing you say.
I:	**So for example, Amy just talk to.**
Mag:	Yeah it like, we just talk about, you just tried to teach me because I understand a little bit more and she understands so she don't teach nothing to me. (lines 760-769)

This type of incident with feelings of learning nothing, and feeling that the teacher talked to other students who speak better English only, seemed to eventually make Mag think that the class is *waste of time*:

> I feel like learn nothing. I feel I don't care [not being cared about]. No like I don't learn nothing, I don't learn nothing. Oh is like, she [teacher] is wasted time [lines 221-226]

This *learning nothing* feeling is shared with Irma while she took Derek's class, which seems to trigger Irma to drop out. Irma recalled that in one night, she felt that Derek was not prepared for the class, thus she learned nothing, which eventually seems to let Irma decided to think "me no more come":

Irma:	Yeah. No more [come].
I:	**Okay and can you tell me why? What makes you say, okay I don't want to come?**
Irma:	That one, that reason because he no same, no chose same like you.
I:	**For example?**

Irma: For example, no make that little groups. Don't bring nothing prepared and he asks about movies. Things about no mean nothing. And, what else, when I see in my notes [using my classes], my journal. When I see nothing [in my notes; Irma checked her notes for Derek's classes, there is no notes left], it mean there is none.

I: In Derek's class?

Irma: Uh-huh. I say no, no come more.

I: You learned nothing.

Irma: Uh-huh. (lines 177-190)

Irma also recounted that this connected feelings between *learning nothing - don't want to come anymore* were shared with other classmates over a break time. She recalled that one night, Eva, Mag and Irma talked and shared this feeling starting from learning nothing to waste of time:

> When we are in the break time and when we go home outside, Eva, she said, she said 'oh maybe I don't come back, no came more because the teacher, I no like it' And I say 'why', she [Eva] said 'because the teacher is not learn like John.' 'When John is coming?' and I say, well pastor say 'two weeks'. [teacher John would come back to teach after his sick-leave] Two weeks that John not here. Oh, okay, maybe 'we back when John back' I say,' yeah I think me too.' And she [Eva] said, 'yeah because he's, I, no learn nothing. It's only waste time.' Eva and Mag, too. Yeah, because she [Mag] want learn English but she want English. Yeah, they want, Eva and Mag, she want to learn English. (lines 191-212)

Domingo also reported this feeling of *learning nothing* in his own term, learning no "information." To Domingo, "(correct) information" to correct his English knowledge or learning new "information" seemed to mean learning something new. Domingo said that he comes to English class to learn new information, although he was tired, because the new information is good for his mind, not for his body. He recounted that he didn't learn any "information" in Amy's class:

Domingo: Now, what's great. Okay, oh okay, I got it, the new *information*, you know, it's not great all the time, you know? It's why I come,

	you know like when it's time for something new or speak correct, right?
I:	**So, even though you are tired you come because you learn new information correct-**
Domingo:	New information, correct information.
I:	**For your mind. Right?**
Domingo:	Mhmm.
I:	**Not, not for your body, right?**
Domingo:	Not for body. Yeah.
I:	**For your mind.**
Domingo:	Yeah.
I:	**Okay, okay. For, yeah, this is just an example, for Amy's class, your body's tired but you just come.**
Domingo:	Not very information.
I:	**No information.**
P:	No information. (lines 1550-1566).

For Chris, although he wanted to ask teachers to explain and repeat what they said when he didn't understand, it seems that the teachers didn't explain again. These incidents seemed to make Chris feel that he didn't understand thus *learn nothing* with embarrassed feeling:

I:	**What about Derek's class you understand everything for that?**
Chris:	No. Because it was like, I get embarrassed with him and I don't know.
I:	**You said he speak too fast or,**
Chris:	Yeah, too fast.
I:	**Ah so you don't understand right?**
Chris:	And he [Derek] not repeat,
I:	**And he didn't repeat it just keep saying…**
Chris:	Yeah. And then Derek he was like, him right there, [staying] quiet. (lines 461-469).

It seems that Derek has been quiet, without further explanations, which seemed to make Chris feel that it is boring and he didn't learn out of it. The concept of "boring" will be discussed in following themes separately. However, it seems worth addressing

the boring-ness here briefly, because, to Eva and Elsa, Amy's class was not boring, but it seems that they learn nothing from Amy's class:

Eva:	She's [Amy] funny, funny but no learning.
I:	**Okay.**
Elsa:	But no learning,
Eva:	For the class, no learning, no, laugh too much.
I:	**No learning?**
Elsa:	Not too much.
I:	**Okay.**
Elsa:	Is fun, is funny.
I:	**But you don't learn?**
Eva:	She is good, but no more learning (lines 534-544).

Teacher Apathy (Feeling Not Cared About)

It seems that the feeling of *learn nothing* simultaneously triggered two categories such as *feeling not cared about (Teacher Apathy)* and *feeling oppressed*, which all three categories seemed to eventually lead the participants to decide to drop out. For example, Chris reported that Amy didn't care whether Chris understood the learning content, giving him no further explanation, which led him to think that the teacher didn't care him:

Chris:	If it, I don't understand when Amy, like she don't like care. And you…
I:	**Care more**
Chris:	Yeah. Like when,
I:	**But Amy didn't... explain…**
Chris:	No Explain. (lines 1057-1062)

Irma also had the feeling of not being cared about by her teachers. Irma recounted that other teachers seemed to have no interests or don't care about helping Irma improve her English:

> And my other teachers, I think he can or they show, or learn, no very good interest [in us]. No, no like it good. Well, if I think they say, well if she or he

learn, it's okay, if no learn, [the teacher looks saying] "I don't care." Yeah, maybe don't care if we learn or not. (lines 884-888)

However, feeling not being cared about when they don't understand, the participants wanted to catch up by using alterative approach, using their L1 – Spanish. For example, because Chris felt learning nothing, no understanding, he wanted to talk to his classmates (Domingo) using Spanish to catch up the class topics. "Because if I don't understand something I ask my friend in Spanish and she [Chris' friend] tell me [in Spanish]…(lines 456-467)." This help seeking for better understanding using Spanish was shared with Mag too. Mag also asked Domingo sometimes to comprehend what teachers said using Spanish. But teacher Amy said "quiet" to their Spanish use, which seemed to oppress the participants:

Domingo: With Mag. We're talking one time and because you know, Mag is, say, 'no, no what?' You remember. Then, because have no idea, Mag said, 'what do you say? No understand nothing. No.' [I said] 'Right now I think I understand a little bit.' But when Mag understand nothing. No. And one time, I was speaking with Mag [by translating into Spanish] and the teacher, Amy, said quiet.
I: To Amy?
Domingo: No, Amy to me.
I: Amy to you?
Domingo: [Amy said to me] No talking, quiet. (lines 1294-1302)

Eva and Elsa recounted that her teachers seemed to not care them as well, because they said they can see the teachers' attitude. Although Eva and Elsa asked about their mistakes and how to correct them, all they heard was "it's not important," which seemed to give them the feeling of not being cared about:

I: What about mistakes, you make mistakes right in class? So, I think mistake is good but with the other teacher say anything about your mistake?
Eva: Uh-huh. They said it's not important.

I: **It's not important? Really.**
Elsa: They said for me. I don't know that many people.
I: **Can you remember an example you ask a question and they say it's not important?**
Eva: No,
Elsa: No, no say this word but you can see the attitude. (lines 1952-1960).

For Domingo, the feeling of not being cared and oppressed/ignored feeling recurred through many incidents in addition to when he heard "quiet" when he translated to his classmates. It seems that Doming felt that he was not being cared about, when his teachers didn't give him enough time to "copy (write down)" the words and sentences teacher wrote on the table. He recounted that giving no time and just erasing is wrong, because it seems that taking out their leering opportunities, simultaneously feeling not cared and ignored:

Domingo: Yeah, but it's [copying whiteboard writing to notebooks] no, no, not simple. Something, you know, copy faster because it's when, it's, start this example and when finished-
I: **They erase it?**
Domingo: Erase it.
I: **Ah.**
Domingo: And then, I, I had a hard time but, you know, like copy the example. Right? Because I don't know, don't have time or.
I: **So, no time to practice?**
Domingo: No time for copy and practice.
I: **They just write and-**
Domingo: Yeah.
I: **I see…**
Domingo: And [teachers said] go, and go.
I: **Okay. What do, what do you think about that? How do you feel about it?**
Domingo: I think it's wrong. (lines 192-211)

Feeling Oppressed

Along with the feeling of being not cared, *feeling oppressed* was emerged too as a dropout factor. It seems that feeling oppressed seems to be derived from both learn

nothing and feeling being not cared about. For Domingo, he felt strongly oppressed when he heard teacher Amy told Chris "stupid" for one night for Chris' question. In fact, that night was Domingo's last class. Domingo recounted that he cannot go to a teacher who calls a student "stupid," so he made his final decision to drop out that night:

Domingo:	And then Chris said right there, calling… stupid.
I:	**What? Amy said to-**
Domingo:	To Chris.
I:	**To Chris? You are stupid?**
Domingo:	You are stupid.
I:	**Why?**
Domingo:	I don't know. I don't know what he's asking, but "Oh, no, you stupid."
I:	**Ah. …but isn't that joking?**
Domingo:	No, not joking.
I:	**It was serious?**
Domingo:	Yeah, serious.
I:	**Ah.**
Domingo:	And then, so the other peoples, you know, like how you go to somebody else calling you stupid. Supposed to be, because I have to speak to other persons.
	…
Domingo:	Yeah. Then, I don't come here no more. (lines 1335-1383)

For Chris, he seemed to feel oppressed when his teachers didn't allow him to use Spanish. Chris understood and agreed with the policy of using English only, because it was an English class. However, when he didn't understand he wanted to use Spanish for a moment, but Derek didn't allow it, which seemed to oppress him:

Chris:	No Spanish because I come in an English class but sometimes when I don't understand, I have to ask my friends [in Spanish]
I:	**You talk to your friends, right?**
Chris:	My friends in Spanish.
I:	**So you can talk to understand right?**
Chris:	Yeah.
I:	**That was feeling good right. But Derek said no?**
Chris:	Yeah.

I: **So you don't maybe feel good about that.**
Chris: No. (lines 428-437)

Other than not-being-allowed to use L1 in their classes, witnessing teachers only keep talking to a certain group of students who speak better English seemed to oppress the participants. For example, Irma recalled that Derek only kept talking, although Irma didn't understand. Irma assumed that he thinks that Irma's English is good enough like other students that Derek talked to:

> Uh, no, I think Derek is, only he want talk like, like me no really English. He think maybe I know a lot of English like, talk and talk and talk. And he know if me pronounce good or not good, he only talk and talk and talk. Maybe he, he have another student learn more of me [who speaks English better than Irma], I guess is why he talk and talk and talk. (lines 260-266)

As reported earlier in this section, Mag recounted this feeling of oppressed when her teachers only talk to other students who speak better English. Interestingly, this oppressed feeling based on being in the similar situation – teachers ignoring them but talking to other students who speak better English - was reported by Eva and Elsa as well. Eva and Elsa experienced this type of oppression in the classes they took in the past. In their cases in the past, other students even somewhat showed off their better English than Eva and Elsa. But, Eva and Elsa for Derek and Amy's classes didn't report that they saw the teachers talked to students who speak better English than them:

Elsa: Okay, in the long time [in the past], I go all the class English and then, I don't like for them maybe too much people. And the one person maybe say 'oh, I have question'
Eva: Yes,
Elsa: [the other student said] 'Oh, I am more better than you and you.'
Elsa: [the other student said] 'I know more English than you.'
Eva: It's too much people. And then maybe, maybe me, I said okay I no talk, I no question,
I: **Then you don't want to go, right.**

Elsa: Uh-huh, I no come back. (lines 1751-1759)

Going forward with Elsa and Eva's past cases, for the students who showed off, the teachers seemed to only talk to the students giving Elsa and Eva no opportunities to talk or participate. This feeling of ignored and oppressed from both peers and teachers seemed to let Elsa and Eva decide to drop:

Elsa: …some, some lady [who speaks better English] ask one question, the teacher go with her and no explain for everybody the question. No, go with her and explain personal and all the time is the same, in same class. Only, I say and I talk to the lady 'oh, and I say, I don't want anymore because all the time, same.'
I: So, they don't teach everyone but only one student.
Elsa: No, you, question with her. No explain this question for everybody learn.
With her [the student], it's personal, teacher for her, I feel,
I: No more.
Eva: Waste my time. And I say 'no, I don't want to come back next week' and she [Elsa] said, no me too—no come back no more. Sometimes cause the teacher. (lines 2174-2186)

One interesting thing is that this is what happened to Eva and Elsa in the past, not for this study's current case. They have never reported this type of feeling oppressed/ignored due to being neglected by peers and teachers this time, but Irma, Mag, Chris have reported. It seems that probably Eva and Elsa this time were in the "conversation partner groups" who were regarded speaking better English than Mag, Irma and other classmates. It seems that Eva and Elsa unintentionally took a role of oppressing group in the situation where Mag and Irma thought the teacher only talks to my classmates with better English than us. It would be worth recalling Mag's statement again, " With Amy she just speak with a people [who]understand [English better], she just speak…Amy she just speak…She just speak with the people like they speak more

English (lines 760-763)." Portraying the situation, when Amy talked to people who understand English better only, the people seemed to include Eva and Elsa this time, but not Mag, Irma, Chris, and others. Reflecting Eva and Elsa's English proficiency when I taught and interviewed them, Eva and Elsa's proficiency seems higher than other classmates.

All in all, the feeling of *learn nothing*, *being not cared about (teacher apathy)*, and *feeling oppressed* seemed to play a pivotal role to cause the participants to feel that the class is *waste of time*, thus decided to drop out. Under the four dominant categories, six detailed intricacies were reported that seem to contribute each dominant factors. Next section will address the sub six categories regarding what makes them drop out.

Theme 8

Just Talk, Talk, Talk - No Prep - Boring

The data revealed that the participants seemed to feel that the teachers *just, talk, talk, talk*, which seems to make them feel that the teachers had *no preparation* for the classes, thus they feel that the class is *boring*. These theme in turn seems to contribute the theme 7 findings – *learning nothing, feeling not cared about (teacher apathy),* and *feeling oppressed*. For example, Irma recalled that Derek came to the class and asked "what the students want to learn", and suddenly suggested talking about movies. This incident made Irma felt that this teacher is not prepared:

> Um, two weeks, yeah for two weeks and he say that, 'tell me what do you want to learn?' I say, everybody say, 'I don't know' because we can't communicate with him and everybody only…(lines 85-87)… And he talking only about, the movies, what the, you see this movie. [Derek said] 'Do you see other movie, do you see um, what you think?' and I never see movies, in English, no English. No movie, no English movies but so I can't talk about that (lines 143-146).

In general, talking about movies might be a good topic for English learners, but it seems not a good, useful, or shared topic with Irma. To Irma, this incident seems to give her the impression that Derek didn't prepare for this class, although Irma as a student prepared for the class. Irma thought this – teacher with no preparation - is probably why other classmates drop out:

Irma:	Is why I think everybody no come anymore because he no, no bring like you. He don't bring nothing.
I:	**He bring nothing?**
Irma:	No, he bring like this and put right here but no got the program. No, nothing.
I:	**Okay, so he didn't prepare.**
Irma:	Uh-huh, no nothing.
I:	**So, you did prepare, right? –**
Irma:	Yeah.
I:	**So, you, in your opinion, you think maybe he, no preparation? No prep?**
Irma:	No, no prepare, no.
I:	**Just come.**
Irma:	Only come. (lines 98-111)

Even Irma recalled that one night Derek didn't bring his journal to the class, so went back to his home to grab, which seems to reinforce Irma's mind about no preparation. All Irma remembers about what Derek did without his preparation was only talk, talk, talk:

Irma:	And one day he say, 'oh man, I don't bring my journal, let me go.' And He go and he come back and 'oh no, sorry, sorry, I don't bring.'
I:	**Okay and then what you do, you didn't do anything?**
Irma:	Only talk, talk, talk. [lines 136-139]

This linkage among *no prep-just talk, talk, talk-boring* was shared with other participants too. Domingo recounted that he didn't understand what the teachers were talking about because the teacher just talk, talk, and talk:

> Because, well, I think they, Amy, the teacher, does not have an idea or time for explanation and only talk, talk and talk so fast. That people is not understand what you're talking about. Right, and they, understand nothing that I'm leaving. [lines 119-121]

Mag recalled that teacher Amy just talk to people with good English, "She just speak with the people like they speak more English (line 763)." Chris also recounted that teacher Amy spoke too fast, and just talk, without interactions when his classmate Eva asked a question:

Chris:	And I remember when Eva told her Amy, she speak fast.
I:	**So Amy speaks so fast.**
Chris:	So fast yeah.
I:	**And Amy said nothing. She didn't care…**
Chris:	No. (lines 1072-1078)

Eva reported that it seems that the teachers only come without preparation. According to Eva, the teachers just came in and say okay and remained silent. Then other classmates just talk in Spanish:

> The other teaches only, only come in and they say 'okay', one maybe only 2-3 English teaching, and the most time, people [classmates] talk everything, yeah, in Spanish. Only in Spanish. And the teacher only listen and they no understand. Yeah. (lines 305-313)

Here it should be worthwhile to note that at a certain point the participants started talking in Spanish, because the class was boring, waste of time. Speaking in Spanish with classmates seems to make the time not waste, but more meaningful to

them. Basically, it seems that the participants didn't want to waste their time by listening to teachers who keep talking, no preparation, thus boring:

> When you tell, no, when the class is no interesting or no learn, you don't care. You prefer, when the class is boring, I prefer to talk to Eva [using Spanish]. 'How are you today, what are—and week and all.' (lines 640-642)

When I visited a Spanish congregation where Irma, Domingo went, Irma's husband Fernando (pseudonym) came to me telling why people drop. Fernando kept saying to me, "the teacher just talk, talk, talk, no patience." English teachers may believe that talking in the target language is an authentic input, encouraging, and positively challenging students to learn. However, the data in this case study seems to show that just talk, talk, talk without communicating, caring, and careful preparation would decrease students' motivation and oppress them, thus cause them to drop out.

No Preparation - Boring

In addition to the report that Irma made for the day Derek didn't bring anything but asked students "what do you want to learn?" – no preparation, other participants acknowledged that teachers didn't prepare for the class, but did the same thing for several days. For example, Eva and Elsa recalled that Derek taught the same ABC alphabet class for three days:

Eva:	Yeah, maybe they, in the Monday, maybe put two, three sentences, and the Wednesday, the same class, no different.
I:	**Oh, really.**
Eva:	Yeah.
I:	**For example, do you remember an example—same sentence?**
Elsa:	Yeah, for a simple and then he has, for the letters who said okay, what is letters, A, next? B-
I:	**Yeah, the sound.**
Elsa:	Yeah. Maybe Monday and Wednesday and next Monday, same. (lines 343-351)

And the same ABC classes for other days seemed to make Eva and Elsa feel bored with Derek's class:

Eva:	Yeah.
I:	**Oh, okay. Is that [the same ABC class for more days] what Derek did, Derek or Amy, maybe?**
Eva:	Derek is more boring. (lines 353-355)

Chris also recalled the days Derek did the same teaching with ABC letters. For Chris, it was also boring:

Chris:	Yeah ABC always.
I:	**Always ABC. Oh really.**
Chris:	That's it.
I:	**How do you feel about that it's good or not good?**
Chris:	It's good but it was like boring. (lines 120-124)

Eva and Elsa recalled that Amy's class was not boring because Amy used several game activities, "Game is more better [not boring] her class, I think, is more better" (line 361). However, Mag took the game days boring and not good for her learning, because it seems that Amy did the same games for several days although according to Mag the students seemed not to understand about the games:

Mag:	Amy, we play a lot of games
Mag:	Wow. She [Amy] say you Mafia, you sheriff, you wake up! They more people, you know, mafia wake up!
Mag:	I really don't understand it. Amy just want to know who want to eliminate the one.
I:	**Okay so you have no idea for the rule, right. The rule,**
Mag:	I think it was like this is okay but, not good for study.
I:	**How many games?**
Mag:	The mafia three times. (lines 155-166).

For Eva and Elsa, the fact that a teacher didn't give a homework assignment, or didn't check it, or forgetting about the homework means that the teacher is not prepared.

Elsa recalled that although she did her homework, Amy forgot and didn't check the homework:

> Then Amy maybe has homework but no check homework., Uh-huh no check. She forget. She no ask, no ask you bring in your homework or sometime they say yes, okay she no check. [lines 652-658]

For Domingo, teachers seemed to not prepared but just talk when he saw that teachers just stand in the class and say somethings to students to do. For example, he recalled that Amy didn't give any materials nor examples, but just say "make sentences" and waiting silent:

I: **What about the other teachers?**
Domingo: Only say "make sentence."
I: **They didn't write it [on whiteboard]?**
Domingo: No. (lines 168-171)

And for the Mafia game, Doming seemed to be remained silent. It seems that the Mafia game was boring to Domingo:

Domingo: Yeah, the Mafia games, but only serious, no talking. Only quiet.
I: **Quiet, oh really?**
Domingo: Yeah.
I: **You were silent.**
Domingo: Yeah. (lines 311-315)

To wrap up the theme 8, it seems that the participants witnessed that teachers just talk, talk, talk with no preparation for the class, which seems to make them feel the class is boring. These three findings are closely related back to the theme 7 findings, the relations in a holistic picture will be discussed at the end of this section with a diagram.

Theme 9

Unrelated Topics

Didn't Meet Expectations

The participants also seemed to perceive that the *class topics are unrelated* to them, and the *class activities didn't meet their expectations*. First Irma's reactions to movie topic supported this finding as Irma said, "I never see movies, in English, no English. No movie, no English movies but so I can't talk about that" (lines 144-146). Mag, Eva and Elsa also recounted that the class was not interesting. For example, Elsa said she will no more come because "No more interest the class." (line 459). Doming also seemed to be frustrated when he didn't understand the topics that teachers talked about, "…that peoples is not understand what you're [teacher's] talking about [topics]. Right, and they, understand [nothing] that I'm leaving"(lines 120-121).

In addition, it seems that the students' expectations for learning methods and study strategies were not met. For example, Irma and Chris like group work with peers, but their teachers rarely did group work in the classes:

> Yeah, yeah, no, and that teacher don't make groups like you, no. Only write and write, yeah. Sit down. Never say wake up. (Irma: lines 930-931)

> I like work in group, like with my friends and doing something and stand up, and read to other people (Chris: lines 1111-1114)…I like working in group…And everyone [other teachers] don't do that. (Chris: lines 543-545)

For Domingo and Mag, they expected to practice their English by repeating speeches and copying teachers' writings on the whiteboard. But the teachers seemed not to give the opportunities to them:

> I like Repeat, repeat, repeat. Practice, I like how you teach because you make a questions and they [students] answer by, if they don't speak you'll repeat it again and so practice. (Mag: lines 188-192)

> I had a hard time but, you know, like copy the example. Right? Because I don't know, don't have time or. No time for-Copy and no like Practice. (Domingo: lines 197-204).

This finding about Didn't Meet Expectations is consistent with Gault (2004) and Han (2009) that found that "mismatch" between students' expectations and instructional practices work as a dropout factor.

Theme 10

Different Perspectives and Reactions

As a last dropping out factor, *different perspectives and reactions* to teachers' behaviors and input was emerged throughout the data. Some students took the input more oppressive than others, which led them to drop out. However, other students seemed not to take the same behaviors and input serious, which seems not influence their decisions for either drop out or stay. For example, the incident of hearing "stupid" seemed to be interpreted in different ways among the participants. As reported earlier, which was a critical moment for Domingo to decide to drop out, because Domingo thought he cannot go to a teacher who calls him stupid. It seems that it was serious to Domingo. However, Eva and Elsa told different interpretations. According to Eva and Elsa, the situation when Amy said "stupid" to Chris, was understandable. Eva and Elsa recounted that Chris made a stupid question to Amy, asking about her boyfriend. To Eva and Elsa, it was derived from Chris' inappropriate question, thus Amy saying

"stupid" was not a serious problem to Eva and Elsa. After that incident regarding "a statement of 'stupid'" Eva and Elsa recalled that a man came to Amy's class and stayed:

Elsa: Stupid? Oh, because Chris sometime say,
I: You remember that?
Elsa: No, I remember um, is it because Chris all the time stupid question.
I: Oh, really.
Eva: Oh, yeah.
Elsa: Sometime he [Chris] have stupid question for Amy, because you know Amy is young. [He asked about] Boyfriend or?
I: Oh, so Christian asks if you have a boyfriend maybe?
Eva: And then later coming one guy and every time he sit here-
I: Sit here?
Eva: Yeah, and the he's and the Amy sometimes play, maybe that Chris one question.
I: Okay Chris ask a question, he say 'you have a boyfriend [to Amy]'?
Elsa: Uh-huh.
I: But Amy said 'no you're stupid', is that right?
Elsa: It's because sometimes that guy you know, she's nice. Amy is nice and she's young, and smile and just happy. When the guy sometimes no look the teacher serious or something. I say ah, and sometimes I know hear the guys have stupid question for Amy. For example, [guys] say 'oh, you have a boyfriend?' Oh, wow sometime I remember Amy say, 'no I have a boyfriend.' Maybe not with, she say 'no I have a boyfriend' because the guy sometimes kind of stupid question for her.
I: So, then because this kind of situation that Amy said you're stupid?
Elsa: I don't remember and I understand her because the guys sometimes it's stupid question for her. Yeah, she said this, I understand her, yes, I don't remember but if she said, I understand her cause the guys (lines 2205-2234).

When I asked Chris about this incident Chris seemed not want to talk more about it, but saying it was a joke:

I: I heard that one day, maybe true of not. Amy said to you stupid?
Chris: Yeah.
I: Is that right?
Chris: It is true.
I: Is it true or no?
Chris: Yeah it is true.
I: Really, what happened?
Chris: I don't know.

I: **So what happened, do you remember what happened?**
Chris: It was like, say a lot of,
I: **She speak a lot?**
Chris: Yeah. Better. It was like kidding with me…
I: **Kidding?**
Chris: Like playing with me.
I: **Oh yeah, playing. Okay. Kidding, not serious.**
Chris: No. (lines 489-505)

The word "stupid" spoken out of a teacher's mouth seemed to work differently for different individuals, making a student drop (Domingo), making students to sympathize (Eva, Elsa). What happened in the real situation seems that Chris asked an inappropriate question, because two other students witnessed that, and after that night, a man (assuming Amy's boyfriend or male friend) came to Amy's class. The fact that the man came to the class was also interpreted differently, I recall that Fernando, Irma, and other students when I visit their church told me that there is a America guy coming to Amy's class and kept talking English to the teacher. To them, it seems that Amy seemed to not teach them but bring an American man and talk using their class time. But listening to Eva and Elsa's narratives, it seems that there are reasons behind the scenes, but different people interpreted differently. Thus teachers should be careful about using an extreme word (e.g., stupid) for any circumstances, because of this potential misunderstandings and results accordingly.

In addition, the participants seem to interpret the speech speed of their English teachers differently. As for Amy's English speed, Domingo, Chris interpreted it as fast:

> Amy, the teacher, does not have an idea or time for ex, explications and only talk, talk and talk so fast (Domingo: lines 119-120)

> And I remember when Eva told her Amy, she speak fast…So fast yeah. (Chris: lines 1072-1074)

But, for Eva and Elsa, Amy's talking speed was okay:

I:	**So, I was wondering did your teacher, like Derek or Amy say something too fast to you, sometimes?**
Eva:	Who?
I:	**Amy or Derek, did they speak too fast?**
Eva:	No, no.
Elsa:	No, no.
I:	**It's okay. Teachers were okay. Amy not talking too fast?**
Eva, Ela:	No. (lines 1121-1130)

For Derek's speed of English speech was regarded as slow, thus boring for Eva, Elsa, Irma, and Chris, but okay for Mag and Domingo:

I:	**Derek was slow?**
Eva:	Very slow.
I:	**Very slow.**
Elsa:	For Eva, yeah. (lines 2248-2251)

Irma even reported that she learned nothing from Derek, but Mag and Domingo defended Derek by saying they learned something:

> Derek don't bring nothing prepared and he asks about movies, things that mean nothing. And when I see in my notes, my journal. When I see nothing, it mean there is nothing. (lines 184-186).

Unlike Irma, Mag and Domingo recounted that they learn something from Derek, by saying that, "The sounds of the letters, yeah I think. I learned a little bit from Derek." (lines 806-808). Doming even recalled the specifics of what he learned from Derek, the consonants and vowels:

> Yeah, talking only a specific, how, talking. But, you know. I remember Derek like showed letters and sounds and showed letters, you know, the… for

> example, the… **y**eah, the vocabulary for the ABC. consonants. Yeah, consonants. And, you know, when…show letters-Yeah, and long letters and sounds. The vowel? Yeah, exactly. Yeah, it was good. You know. (lines 347-368)

Theme 10 seems to show the different perspectives and reactions from students to the same teachers' instructions and input would play a significant role in their decisions over staying or dropping out.

Mapping Out What Makes Drop Out

It seems that the six categories of (1) *unrelated topics*, (2) *no prep*, (3) *boring*, (4) *just talk, talk, talk*, (5) *didn't meet expectations*, and (6) *different reactions* dynamically contribute to the dominant three categories of (7) *learn nothing*, (8) *no caring (teacher apathy)*, and (9) *feeling oppressed*. The intertwined relations among these nine categories seemed to converge to the feeling of (10) *waste of time*, which seems to critically lead the participants to drop out by saying "me no more come."

The figure 30 illustrates the probable network among drop out factors thematically emerged in this study findings. The three thick ovals with *learn nothing*, *no caring (teacher apathy)*, and *feeling oppressed* means that the three categories are dominant findings. The arrows connecting from learn nothing and no caring to waste of time show the probable causal relation. The six not-thick ovals mean that *unrelated topics*, *no understanding*, *just talk, talk, talk*, *didn't meet expectations*, *no prep*, *boring*, and *different reactions* work as sub-categories supporting the three dominant findings. The arrows draw from the seven un-thick ovals to the three thick ovals shows the probable causal relations. For example, *unrelated topics* seems to make the participants

learn nothing, *feel not cared about (teacher apathy)*, and *boring*. Likewise, the arrows among the sub-categories and dominant ovals show the probable map of how these findings contribute to the participants' final decisions of dropping out.

On the bottom of the figure 30, I illustrate how the categories would converge to either cognitive and affective aspects in the participants' decisions to drop out. It seems that the affective aspects outnumbers the cognitive aspects when the participants decide to drop out in the ratio of 8:5. Specifically explaining, It seems that the four categories in the middle of the figure – *unrelated topics*, *just talk, talk, talk*, *didn't meet expectation*, and *different perspectives & reactions* can be counted for both cognitive and affective aspects because all four aspects simultaneously seemed to contribute to *learn nothing* (cognitive) and *no caring (teacher apathy)*, *feeling oppressed* (affective aspects). Thus, the frequency count for each aspects start from 4, then for cognitive side 1 is added by the *learn nothing* aspect, which made the total of 5. On the other hand, starting from 4 following the same logic, other 4 are added such as *no caring*, *no prep*, *boring*, and *feeling oppressed*, which makes the total of 8. Therefore, it seems that affective aspects seemed to play more critical roles in the participants' decisions to drop out. This finding seems to be consistent with Richard-Amato (1998) arguing that L2 learning occurs through both cognitive and affective aspects within one's individual's mind. Further, for this particular case, it is probable to argue that that affective aspects seem to work more significantly for dropping out decisions, which would be a meaningful finding for ESL stake holders.

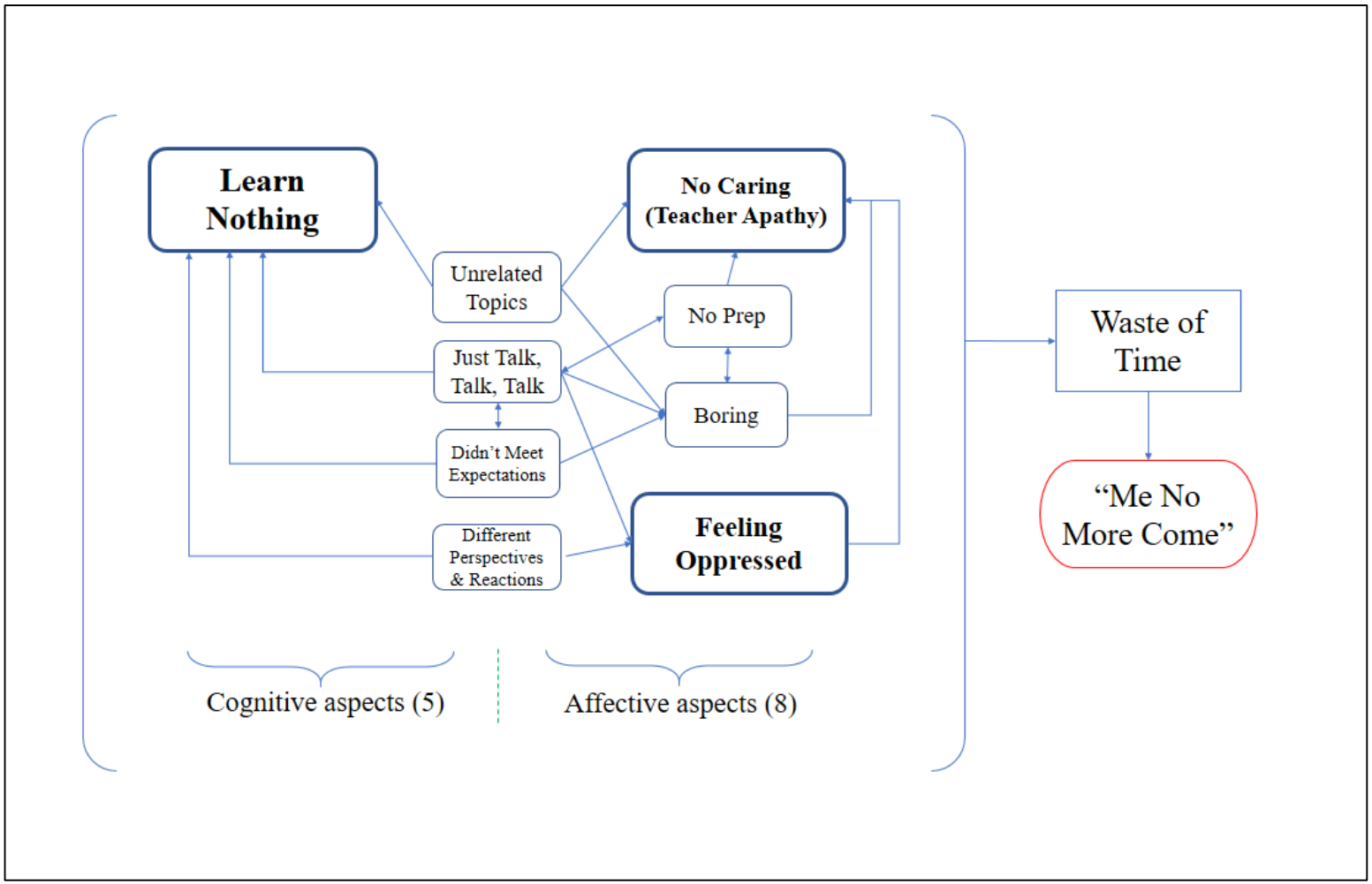


Figure 30. Map of What Makes the Participants Drop Out

What Makes Adult ELs Stay

Seven categories were reported regarding what makes adult ELs decide to stay such as: *Good Teacher/Class, Learn Something New, Good/Caring Feelings*, *Good Corrective Feedback/Homework Checking, Interesting Life-related class/Topics, Ease of Comprehension,* and *Dynamic Activities*. Among the seven categories, three themes are thematically emerged. What makes them stay is addressed below theme by theme.

Theme 11

Good Teacher/Class – Learn Something New – Good/Caring Feelings

The data revealed that the participants seem to want to stay in their EL classes, when they have feelings of Superacion (self-improvement, self-actualization) through having a *Good Teacher/Class*, which notions were supported by their feelings of *learn something new* and *good/caring feelings*.

Good Teacher/Class Matters

Irma recounted that teacher John is a good teacher, who can help Irma for her English improvement. In detail, Irma felt not good about the fact that her English is not good enough yet although she has lived in the U.S. for about 27 years. To Irma, teacher John is a good teacher to help her Superacion, so with the teacher she wants to stay:

> I say, oh my gosh 27 years and no correct English. But I remember about I say, oh John, John is a good teacher and I need John back and learn and English. (lines 246-248)

When I asked what makes you think that teacher John is a *good teacher*, Irma pointed out that John has a passion. What Irma mean by having a passion seems that she feels that teacher John *cares* the students compared to other teachers:

Irma:	Has passion, yeah. John has passion.
I:	**And then for example, in another way, so in comparison, you think Derek has no passion, is that right?**
Irma:	No, I think Derek is, only he want talk like, like me no really English. He think maybe, I know a lot of English like, talk and talk and talk and he know if me pronounce good or not good. He only talk and talk and talk.
I:	**Ah.**
P:	Maybe he, he have another student learn more of me, I guess is why he talk and talk and talk. No like you, because like you know how many English I know. You [teacher John] know how many English Domingo have. And you know Eva and everybody for one and one and one. You know how many English we got and you know how many help we need. It's why I like it to do with John, because the other people maybe no very interest. No got a lot interest how many English, how much English I have. Yeah and when I start English, my English class with you, I feel Superacion, I feel very, really comfortable. Very comfortable and because I say oh, John say this is not pronounced like that, okay, let me do better. And it's why I like you John. It's why. (lines 257-274)

Lastly, Irma reported that she can feel that teacher when John gives corrective feedback, John is interested in helping people, by loving his job. This feeling seems to make Irma think that teacher John is a good teacher:

Irma:	Uh-huh and you correcting everybody and we feel better because somebody is interested in my English. Somebody, you have this he know how, okay let me help you. You want everybody help, you like, you like, you love your job, you like your job when you show other people.
I:	**So you can feel that?**
Irma:	Yeah, I feel like that. I feel-
I:	**-and helping people cause of that.**
Irma:	Yeah, I feel when, when you teach English, I can feel does you want help me and Domingo, and Mag and everybody. (lines 286-294)

For Domingo, teacher Derek and teacher John were both good teachers. For Derek, Domingo thought he's quiet but good teacher because Domingo learned something new from him such as consonants and vowels as reported earlier:

> Yeah, he's [Derek] good. Good, good teacher. Yeah. Little quiet. Not talking too much. Good teacher. (lines 326-330).

For teacher John, Domingo seems to think that John is a good teacher because he explains good, helping Domingo understand better. Domingo recalled that at a break time, he talked to other classmates about this feeling:

> Mhmm. Well, because it's a, "Oh, this is good teacher. Explain very good. It's very idea what you're talking." (lines 1596-1597).

For Eva and Mag, having *a good teacher* seems to make them be willing to accommodate their time conflicts. At the very beginning of their interviews, they said being busy is the reason for dropping out, but after a while, they said they can accommodate their schedule if they have a good teacher:

> If you [teacher John] start to teach English up again I can try to go (Mag: line 893)

> Some time I can go, for my friend, ask Delma [Eva's daughter], Delma, Delma you take care of this baby, I go to class. (lines 478-479)

For Elsa, teacher John was a good teacher, because Elsa can understand what he taught, and he gave homework, used many examples, and he tell everything:

> Elsa: Your [teacher John] class is good. You know that they, you no need to change nothing, you are good teacher. You're very good teacher. After you left, everybody left. You make homework, you're good teacher.
>
> **I: Okay, I am good teacher, why?**

Elsa: I understand you-
Elsa: You have good examples, you have good examples.
I: Good examples, okay. Examples good.
Elsa: You talk, you talk everything. (lines 1846-1874)

For Chris, teacher John is a good teacher because John instructed with group work activities. And, Chris said he was happy and felt like a family in John's class, which seems to make Chris to feel that John is a good teacher:

> You're a good teacher because you… that 2 hours, work in group…(line 535)
>
> Your class is like family and happy, always happy right here…(lines 393-394)
>
> Well you [teacher John] is number 1 [teacher], you. Amy 2 and Derek…(line 1097)

All six participants reported that a good teacher/class matters. Whether or not the teacher or class is good for their Superacion would be a critical factor for them to decide between staying or dropping out. Specifically, when they felt that they learned something new, it seems that they felt it worth staying. Also, they seem to continuously evaluate/share/monitor the characteristics of the feelings in a classroom whether the teacher is caring students' Superacion or not.

Learn Something New

The participants reported that they *learn something new*, which makes them feel that their teacher is a good teacher, thus want to stay. For example, Irma she felt learned something new when the learned how to make a question in English by saying "excuse

me, I have a question." Irma thought it is very important to make a question, which in turn seems to motivate her to learn more English:

Irma: Yeah.
I: So how do you think about that, I know now how to ask a question, so is it important or is it good?
Irma: Oh, it's really important.
I: Okay, tell me about that. How do you feel about that?
Irma: I feel more comfortable, and more safety and more respect. I feel better when I say 'excuse me', because I understand excuse me is a really good word. Really good word. Really good.
I: You learned that from there, right?
Irma: Yeah, I learned.
I: So, and that makes you feel oh I want to learn more English or maybe-
Irma: Yeah, no, no, when I understand that word is important, I want more, and learn more English. (lines 853-866).

Mag also recounted that she learned something new like making a question for daily conversations, such as, "[I learned] How would you do today, your class" (line 186). Domingo felt that he learned something new about how to say past and future tense. To Domingo learning about English future tense seems very meaningful, because he recounted that he changes his vision based on that learning:

Domingo: When you come over here, that's, you know. Because, example, right now, I use the, before, no? Before, yesterday is before, right? And all the time before and no future. No, right now I'm talking about future. You know, I change my vision of things, change my mind, and focus on something future.
I: For future.
Domingo: Yeah.
I: Oh. For example, I think, maybe.
Domingo: For example, I use, use the one, I don't know. All the time before, I did it before, I did these before. Before. Right now, I change my vision-
I: Your vision.
Domingo: Future.
I: For future. For, for example, I will?
Domingo: "I will", this one.
I: You change your mind from the class?

Domingo: Yeah. Simple, I give it to the book before and I don't know how, how to speak in future. You know? Before, I don't know how to speak in the future. But now sometimes my vision, the future, you know? Reach-

I: Oh, okay.

Domingo: My mind and know because everything is better in the future. But the past is past, you know? It's nothing, the time [in the past]. (lines 1183-1206)

Lastly, Elsa said she would come and stay in her English class if she learns at least one word a day. Although other people might think learning one word is nothing, Elsa recounted that she can learn many words in one year if she can learn one word per day:

Elsa: I want to go to learn, if me learn one word, in the class it's good for me.

I: There you go, right.

Elsa: In the next class, maybe learn too much but if learn one word it's good for me. One word, if me learn one word every day I say many words learn-

I: Yeah, yeah one year right.

Elsa: In one year. But many people think different, other people may think learn nothing [if they learn only 1 word a day], [they may think] It's boring. And I say okay, but me go to English class. (lines 1773-1781)

Good/Caring Feelings

In addition to the feeling of learning something new, the participants reported that they value the good/caring feelings from teachers, which makes them to stay. For example, Mag reported that she feels better with teacher John than other teachers, because she learns, "I feel better with you, like I learned." (line 754). For Domingo, having a good feeling between teachers and him seems important. Domingo kept saying that he had "no feeling" (line 263) with other teachers:

I: What do you mean, feeling?

Domingo: Feeling, no, no, no, no.

I: To me or?

Domingo: No, Amy.
I: For Amy.
Domingo: Amy. No feeling with him. With she.
I: With her?
Domingo: With her. Mhmm.
I: So, no feeling?
Domingo: No feeling. No like, only-
I: Just talking.
Domingo: -talking and.
….
I: So, there's no feeling.
Domingo: No feeling.
I: The feeling, but to me, you're feeling?
Domingo: Sure. You're like a nice person, you know. Like, you said, 'take your time' and it's more relaxed. You know like because the people get nervous when they start something new. For, you know, and then when somebody tell you 'hurry up,' you're like more nervous for, you know. (lines 246-268)

I asked Doming more about what he meant by having feeling. He said having feeling means having a good/nice/caring feeling that he can have with his friends. That kind of nice feeling was absent with Amy, as Amy said "hurry up" for Domingo when he copied writings to his notebook:

I: So what do you mean by feeling?
Domingo: Well, I think feeling, feeling is nice.
I: Okay, nice feeling. Good.
Domingo: Nice feeling, you know, like when, with my person or you, you know, my friends.
I: Person to person.
Domingo: Person, is friends. You know, like more-
I: Kind of nice.
Domingo: Nice and good, good guy with other people.
I: Okay, good.
Domingo: Yeah, when somebody say, "that guy is good, have a good feeling."
I: Okay, yeah. He's a good person. Good, good guy.
Domingo: Yes. Good person. Good friend. You know, like relaxed, happy. And you know, smile, you know like, "Hey, how are you?" you know? Talking with other. Yeah.
I: Okay. But Amy has no that kind of feeling?
Domingo: No. (lines 286-303).

Lastly, Eva, Elsa, and Chris felt welcomed in teacher John's class, so that they want to stay. For example, When I gave Elsa 0-10 scale to describe how she felt welcomed, she pointed out 11 for teacher John, 7 for Amy, and 4 for Derek.

I: **So, for example, we have 0, 10, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, so what come, for example in my class you feel 10 welcome?**
Eva: 10.
Eva: 10.
I: **And what about—**
Elsa: 11.
I: **What about Amy's class?**
Elsa: Amy, I think it's 7.
I: **7?**
Elsa: Yeah.
I: **For Derek?**
Elsa: 4 (lines 1977-1989)

To sum up, *learning something new*, and *feeling good and caring* seemed to trigger them to feel that this is a *good teacher/class* for their Superacion so that they wanted to stay.

Theme 12

Good Corrective Feedback/Homework Checking – Interesting Life-related Class/Topics – Ease of Comprehension

In addition, the students wanted to stay when they received *a good corrective feedback/homework checking*, when they have *interesting life-related class/topics*, which both support their *comprehension* towards the class contents. These theme 12

findings in turn seemed to support the theme 11 findings – *learning something new*, *good/caring feeling*, and *good teacher/class*.

Good Corrective Feedback/Homework Checking

First, all participants seem to value the corrective feedback and homework checking provided by teachers. For example, Irma recounted that teacher John showed them how to pronounce English sounds by showing his tongue correct her English, which seems new and effective to her compared to other teachers in the past:

> For example, you [teacher John] show how to pronounce correctly and you show do that. You show me and everybody how to move tongue that time. Other teachers don't do that, no. I have [teachers] in the past. I have two or three teachers in the USA but they no show me [their tongues to teach pronunciation] like you John. (lines 219-224)

Specifically, Irma recalled that when teacher John walked around while they were doing a group discussion, John listened to her English and correct from there. Irma seems to think that corrective feedback is important to her English learning:

> When you [teacher John] make a little groups and you come, you walk around everybody. You hear how I pronounce my English and you see how other people pronounce their English and you say no, no, no like that, and you correcting everybody. And we feel better because somebody is interested in Superacion for my English. Somebody, you have this. He know how, okay let me help and you want everybody help. (lines 280-288)

Domingo also recounted this importance of corrective feedback in class for his learning. Domingo said when he talks by himself, he doesn't know whether or not his English is correct. But English teachers' corrective feedback helped him, so he changed, and learned:

> When [I] talk, this is not correct, and you [teacher] talk, this is correct. And, the way sometimes no speak English because oh, I don't say this correctly. Yeah, it's, I think it's not correct, you know? When you come over here in the class,

> ‘oh, okay, say that this is correct. You know? I changed my English because talking more better, more correct. (lines 1178-1185)

As in class feedback can occur through interactions between teachers and students, asking a question from a student to a teacher seems important. Mag said nobody asked a question in Amy’s class, which may imply that there is lack of receiving feedback form teachers in class: “Nobody raise their hand for making question, everybody. (lines 200-201)”

Eva and Elsa recounted that checking homework is important, because they learn from teacher’s feedback through checking the homework. Elsa reported that teacher John checks her homework either on Monday or Wednesday, which seems good for her learning because she can received feedback:

> So, you say on Monday ‘okay this is the homework of today.’ I think, ‘Homework okay.’ Then on Wednesday you check. You say ‘okay you come you check, okay this is no good, this is good’, everything (lines 649-652)

Eva also recounted that teacher’s active homework checking matters. Eva took her homework to home and take care of it, thus checking by the teacher seems meaningful for her learning:

Eva: Mmm, you [check] homework for everybody.
I: Homework.
Eva: And you check the homework.
I: So, you think homework is good, is important-
Eva: Yeah.
I: Check important, check homework-
Eva: Yeah, I have homework, okay yeah check this in my home, I know how much, I take,
I: I know, right.
Eva: And then Monday, and then Monday I put in the table, maybe on Wednesday, [I think] ‘oh, class,’
I: Yeah, yeah.
Eva: I no check nothing.

I: But it still okay, I will check your homework right?
Eva: Yeah, you check the homework. (lines 1880-1894)

Corrective feedback either in class or through checking homework seems play a significant role for leading the participants to decide to stay and keep learning.

Interesting Life-related Class/Topics

Along with receiving corrective feedback, having *interesting life-related topics in class* seems regarded important for the participants for their decisions to stay. For example, Irma reported that she can learn English more effectively by using her life-related topics, daily conversations. She critiqued using not-related topics, such as movies, "No, only the movies, they never see the movie, so I can't say about the movie I never see. But my story, I can speak." (lines 726-727). Further, Irma specifically mentioned the topics related to her life, that she can actively talk in English and learn through it:

Irma: Yeah, I like it. When you start [talking] about my day, [by saying] "how was your day, what did you do this morning, and what you do this afternoon?" What do you next, when you start the story about my passion, I learn more. Yeah.
I: Can you remember anything maybe example, do you remember example maybe, what did you do today?
Irma: Yeah, when you say what, how was your morning today, I say well this morning I went to the store, okay this afternoon I go to the shopping uh, tonight I go to my daughter house.
I: And then you learn more.
Irma: Yeah, I learn more. More when we, when we study about my life.
I: That's true but other teachers maybe-
Irma: No, the other teacher don't make nothing about my life story. My life or the other life or the other stories. No I don't think so.
I: The movie maybe.
Irma: No, only the movies. I never see the movie, so I can't say about the movies. I never see. But my story, I can speak. Yeah, I can speak about my story, about the story about my grandchildren. I can do that, but not the other things. (lines 712-730)

This daily-life conversation based learning topic was shared by Mag's report too. Mag recounted that when she learned a daily conversation English expression, "[I learned] How would you do today, your class" (line 186). Also, we used in one night president Trump's policy for immigration when we practice two verbs – agree and disagree. Mag recalled that discussion as that topic seemed to related to her life.

I: **Right, "agree". You remember that word, like "yeah I agree with you". You remember that, I use the example President?**
Mag: Yeah. Donald Trump (lines 735-737)

Interesting class seems matter to the participants' decisions to whether stay or drop out. For example, Elsa recounted that once the class is not interesting to her she would stay home. On the other hand, when the class is interesting, she would come and stay in the class:

> Sometimes because I saw the teacher is no good [class is not interesting], I said no. I lose my time, I prefer staying in my home and relax or watch TV or stay here. Sometimes I am tired or something or I need to make things or go to the store or something. Sometimes I say, no, cause my time right here, I say no I prefer to stay in my home. [But] When the class is interesting, I say no, I learn English (lines 765-770)

When I asked Eva and Elsa about whether or not they want to come to the English class again, regardless of who teaches, they said they will not for other teachers but teacher John. I asked why, and they said the class is more interesting:

I: **So if you have class now and you want to come?**
Eva: Yes.
I: **Um, no matter teacher John teach, or Amy teach or Derek teach, it's okay?**
Elsa: No, the reason I drop out is, because the class is different and Amy and person. When you're here, everybody goes listen and pay attention because your class was very good. I think Eva and I take class years before, but when I took to Eva say, 'he's [teacher John] a more better

teacher than all the years taking English class.' When all the teachers come everybody laugh, talk-

Eva: Play.

Elsa: Uh-huh, in your class everybody listen and pay attention, because your class is interesting. It's, I liked it. (lines 281-291)

What Eva and Elsa meant by interesting seems to have two meanings – the class/topics are related to their life/needs and they learn something new out it, inferring from other students' data. Although Eva and Elsa didn't mention specifically what they meant by "interesting," other four students' meaning towards interesting seemed to converge to these two concepts.

Likewise, Domingo recounted that interesting class to his life is important. For example, he recalled that learning vocabulary words about housing construction items (table, lamp, bedrooms…etc) was very meaningful to him, he learned a lot from it:

Domingo: And sometimes then my boss… wants to bed. And I remember when you,

I: Bedroom.

Domingo: Yeah, the paper, you know, like, table, lamp, and all this stuff. [I came to think] 'Oh, okay, it's this.' But before I had no idea.

I: So, you want to know that.

Domingo: Yeah.

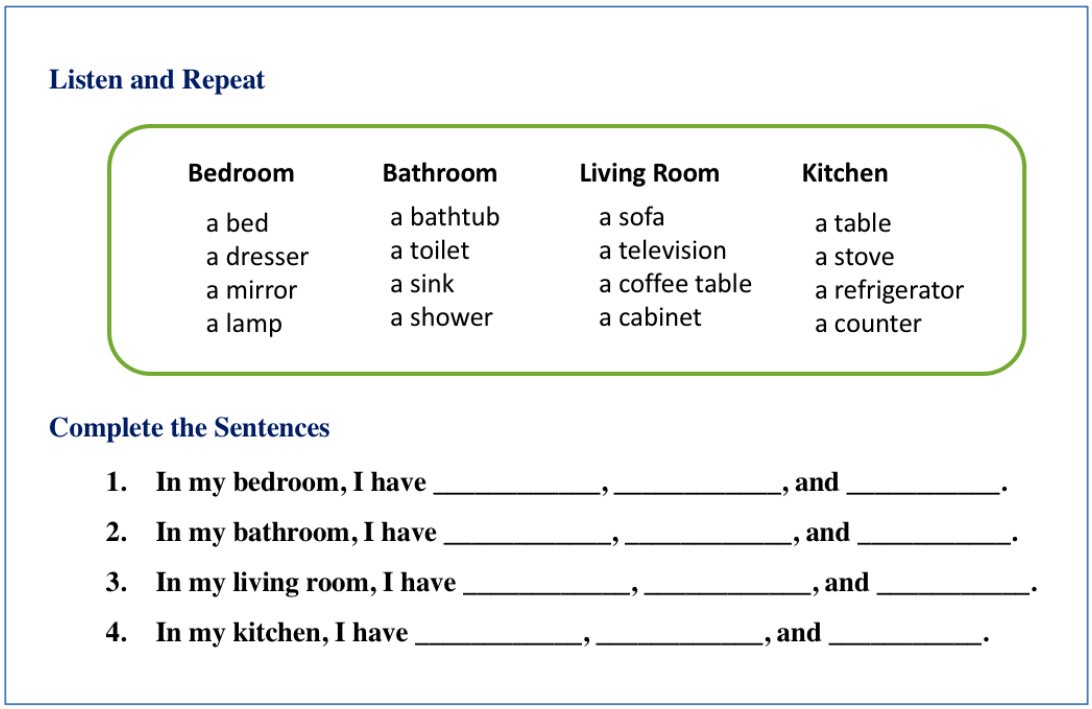
I: That's good, good for you, right?

Domingo: Yeah, this is good for me. (lines 583-591)

Honestly, teaching about the housing vocabulary terms was coincidently designed because I believe that the terms are useful for the students' daily life (see figure 31 for the textbook we used for learning housing terms). But I didn't expect that learning about the terms is beneficial for Domingo's work. Likewise, Chris brought up and connected his life-related topic to his English learning, which seems important to him to learn English. For example, Chris during the interview asked about how to describe his

work as a concrete builder. Once I gave him an example sentence such as "I'm here to…." Chris applied and make four different sentences:

I: **That's good practice**
Chris: Good practice see. I going to learn to talk more better and,
I: **Yeah, you can say 'hi mister, I'm here, I'm here to make the pool.'**
Chris: Yeah.
I: **I'm here to… I'm here to is good. You can say that. Can you say that?**
Chris: What?
I: **I'm here.**
Chris: I'm here to do a concrete.
I: **Yeah. Yeah, that's good.**
Chris: I'm… I'm the concrete guy…
I: **Good.**
Chris: And I come and do the concrete.
I: **That's good.**
Chris: Can you tell me… can you tell me where you want to pour the concrete? (lines 919-934)



Listen and Repeat

Bedroom	Bathroom	Living Room	Kitchen
a bed	a bathtub	a sofa	a table
a dresser	a toilet	a television	a stove
a mirror	a sink	a coffee table	a refrigerator
a lamp	a shower	a cabinet	a counter

Complete the Sentences

1. **In my bedroom, I have _____, _____, and _____.**
2. **In my bathroom, I have _____, _____, and _____.**
3. **In my living room, I have _____, _____, and _____.**
4. **In my kitchen, I have _____, _____, and _____.**

Figure 31. The Textbook We Used to Learn About Housing Vocabulary – Author Created. This class seemed meaningful to Domingo's life because he learned the terms useful for his construction work.

Interesting and life-related topics/class seems important to the participants when they decided to stay or drop out, because the connections between their class time and their life/work seem to support their decision to invest. As Elsa reported, once the time invested in their English class is not worthwhile, the participants seemed to take out their investment (time/energy) immediately by dropping out. Rather, if there is the connection alive, it seems that they want to stay.

Theme 13

Dynamic Activities – Interesting Class/Topics

Lastly, it seems that the participants have desire of having *dynamic activities* for their learning (a group work, presentations, learning with music, and practicing sounds using their tongue), when which is met it seems that they want to stay because the dynamic activities help them *comprehend*, thus the class is *interesting*. For example, Irma reported that she likes to have a group work because she can share ideas and practice with peers:

> Yeah, I like it [group work]. Because we trade, ask. And I hear the other people how you say, and how me say, and how say the teacher. [I learned] 'Oh, okay, it's not right.' And we can practice. (lines 125-127)

Chris also likes a group work and making presentations while he stands up: "When it was like… and the class, I like in group I had to stand up…" (line 477). For Mag, a dynamic activity would be explicit verbal practices of sentences between the teacher and students, and among students too.

> Mag: [I like verbal] Repeat, repeat, repeat.
> **I: Practice.**
> Mag: Practice.
> Mag: I like how you [teacher John] teach because you make a question and they answer by, if they don't speak, you'll repeat it again and so practice.
> **I: Practice.**
> Mag: I like how you teach. Yeah practice [sentences with teacher and peers]. (lines 188-196)

Domingo also pointed out that he like to practice. To him copying teachers' writings on whiteboard seems a good practice:

> You write a sentence for us and then the peoples copy the sentence and make same. Yeah, practice the example. (lines 164-167).

The value of practice seems to go with not only with writing, but also for how to make sounds. Eva pointed out that teacher John taught for her pronunciation by showing tongue, and it seems that she feels it useful for her learning. Eva recounted that she learned how to pronounce "-pare" with a word "prepare": "Yeah and then you help, and then you help for the pronunciation…now with this word. I said prep [before], no it's prepare." (lines 1943-1944). Likewise, Irma said that practicing pronunciation with showing tongue is a good activity, she pointed out this notion when we talked about her preferences over group work. Irma seems to recall that we practiced the sound differences between "th" and "d", and voiced (g) and un-voiced consonants (k):

I:	**Then group work, listen and um-**
Irma:	And show how to move the tongue.
I:	**Show how move the tongue. [for sounds of "th" and "d"]**
Irma:	And how, how the pronounce, how you feel in the—
I:	**In your neck.**
Irma:	Uh-huh.
I:	**Throat. [for voiced/unvoiced consonants]**
Irma:	Yeah I like it (lines 705-712).

It seems that the participants want to have dynamic activities for their English learning, because it seems more effective than just sitting and listening. It seems that two reasons might work behind: (1) they come to the class when physically tired, and (2) they had different learning backgrounds. For example, when the class is boring without dynamic activities, thus no learning, Elsa said she would stop and go home taking a rest. Chris also said that he is tired, so he wants to actively learn by having a group work or standing up and presenting ideas. Active interactions between teacher and students, and among students, seem to work as a dynamic activity too as Mag

recounted. Including dynamic activities seem to work as another vehicle for supporting the adult ELs' decisions to stay.

Mapping Out What Makes Adult ELs Stay

It seems that the seven categories work together in an intertwined way to influence participants' decision to stay in EL classes. First, the feelings of *learning something new*, and *good/caring feelings* seems to make the participants to think that the *teacher/class is good* helping their *Superacion*. Thus they want to stay. The other five categories (*feedback/homework checking, ease of comprehension, dynamic activities, and interesting life-related topics/class*) seem to support the first two dominant categories (*learn something new, good/caring feelings*).

What's distinct compared to what makes them drop out seems that in this domain- decision to stay, it seems that cognitive aspects play more roles than affective domains. Although all the aspects share both cognitive and affective characteristics to some degree, it seems that each one has more weight on one domain over the other. For example, *corrective feedback/homework* checking can have cognitive aspect because which helps students' learning, reflection, and correction for their English use. At the same time, it includes affective aspects too because having *feedback/homework checking* seems to give students feeling of *being cared*, and respected. However, I would put more weight on cognitive side for this particular aspect, because the participants' dominant narratives were focusing on the "corrective-ness" based on having the feedback. In this rationale, it seems that more weights on cognitive aspects could be found with the four categories: *learn something new, feedback/homework checking, ease of comprehension,* and *dynamic activities*. On the other hand, affective

aspects can be found with: *good/caring feelings,* and *interesting life-related topics/class*. The categories of *good teacher/class* seems like a comprehensive result based on both cognitive and affective considerations.

The figure 32 illustrates this probable map among seven categories. The thick squares with *Learn Something New, Good/Caring Feelings,* and *Good Teacher/Class* mean that these are the three dominant categories, working altogether towards making the participants feel that this class is helping their *Superacion*, thus want to stay. Under *learn something new* and *good/caring feelings*, four un-thick-lines squares display the sub-categories such as *feedback/homework checking, ease of comprehension, dynamic activities,* and *interesting topics/class*. The arrows from *feedback/homework checking* to *learn something new*, *good/caring feelings*, and *ease of comprehension* show the probable causal relations among those three categories. The arrows from *dynamic activities, interesting topics/class* to *ease of comprehension* show the probable causal relation. On the bottom left, four squares on the left side counted as cognitive aspects, and two categories are counted as affective aspects.

On the bottom of the figure 32, I illustrate how the categories would converge to either cognitive and affective aspects in the participants' decisions to stay. Contrary to the dropout factors, it seems that the cognitive aspects outnumbers the affective aspects when the participants decide to stay in the ratio of 4:2. Specifically explaining, *Learn Something New*, *Feedback/Homework Checking*, *Ease of Comprehension*, and *Dynamic Activities* seem to contribute to the learners' cognitive perceptional aspects in their learning, whereas *Good/Caring Feelings* and *Interesting Topics/Class* seem to contribute to the learners' affective aspects in learning. Eventually all five categories

co-influence the learners' feeling of *Good Teacher/Class* that helps their *Superacion*, thus stay. As this illustration depicts, it seems that adult ELs in CEL make their decisions to stay in their class based on these complex and interrelating cognitive and affective aspects.

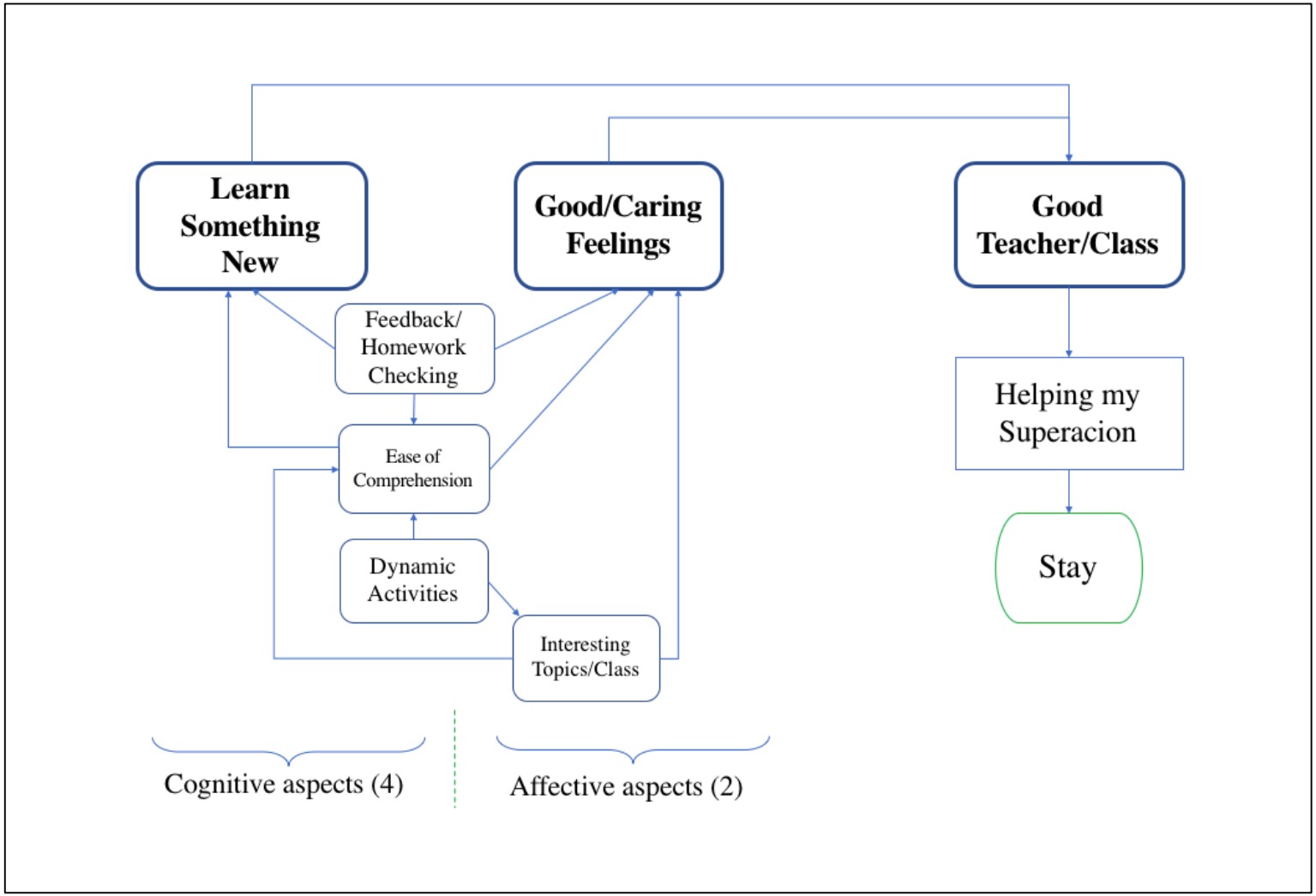


Figure 32. Map of What Makes Adult ELs at CEL to Decide to Stay

Discussion of Research Question 3 Findings

Continuum of Cognitive to Affective Domains in L2 Learning

Adult ELs at CEL seem to make their decisions to whether to stay or drop out based on diverse, complex, and interrelated factors, which are on the continuum of cognitive and affective aspects that influence one's English learning. This finding is consistent with second language acquisition scholars who advocated that learning L2 is influenced by the wide variety of components in one's learning such as behavioristic, cognitive, psychological and affective aspects (Lightbown & Spada, 2013; Richard-Amato, 1998). Although both cognitive and affective aspects work together to lead the participants' decisions, this dissertation found that it seems that there would be a probable distinctive weight between the two when they decide to drop and stay.

Push: Major Cause for Adult ELs' Dropout

For drop out decisions, it seems that affective aspects play more roles in their decisions such as *feeling not cared about (Teacher Apathy)*, *boring*, and *feeling oppressed*. Along with cognitive aspects such as *learn nothing*, *unrelated topics*, these affective aspects seemed to make the participants to think that taking the class is waste of time thus drop out. Revisiting this inductive data with the Doll et al.'s (2013) framework of *Push*, *Pull*, and *Fall Out*, it seems that the majority of dropout factors for adult ELs at CEL can be categorized in *Push*. *Push* factors refer to any pressures occurred inside the classroom that "push" out students from the class. It seems that all ten categories of dropping out factors emerged in this study are what happened inside

the classroom such as, *Learn Nothin*g, *No Caring*, *Feeling Oppressed*, *Unrelated Topics*, *Just Talk-Talk-Talk*, *Didn't Meet Expectations*, *Different Perspectives and Reactions*, *No Prep*, and *Boring*. This finding is consistent with Doll et al. (2013). The ten categories seem to confirm the *Push* aspects of why students drop out. However, one distinctive feature that this study found is that for adult ELs, *Push* factors play more important roles than the other two factors, *Pull* and *Fall Out*. Doll et al. (2013) found that for high school students' dropout, *Pull* factors were the major causes such as having a job or getting married. As Gee (2012, 2014) and Wenger (1991) recounted, it seems that adult ELs' unique situated-ness foregrounds this finding that *Push* factors played a major role in this particular context. In fact, *Pull* factors such as taking a babysitting duty at the same time of the class hours (Eva), and losing weight for daughters' Quinceañera preparation (Elsa) were less often cited. Eva told me during the interview after about 30 minutes later that she can accommodate the babysitting duty to her family member so that she can go to the class, as long as the teacher/class is good for her Superacion. This shows that *Pull* factors might be at work in the adult ELs' decision processes, but the adult ELs at CEL seem to be capable of minimizing *Pull* factors to continue their investment. Doll et al. (2013)'s findings about *Push* factors included low grades, attendance issues, and discipline problems. To Doll et al.'s list, affective and emotional domains such as *feeling not cared about (teacher apathy)* can be added.

Superacion: Major Factor for Staying

For staying decisions, the seven categories seem to support participants' decision about whether "this teacher/class is good helping my Superacion." Like dropout factors, the seven categories share cognitive and affective domains too. Cognitive aspects played a stronger role in decisions such as *learn something new*, receiving *corrective feedback/homework checking*, and *ease of comprehension*. Along with affective aspects such as *good/caring feelings*, both cognitive and affective aspects seem to lead the participants to perceive the *teacher/class is good* for their *Superacion*.

Viewing Superacion with Investment Framework

This finding seems consistent with Darvin & Norton's (2015) investment framework. The three categories of *learn something new*, receiving *corrective feedback/homework checking*, and *ease of comprehension* can be viewed as gaining cultural capital (knowledge and educational credentials), through which the participants would think that they can further gain economic capital (promotion) and social capital later (network with other people in power). For example, Domingo called something that he learns in the class an "information," which seems to show the probable link between the knowledge he learns in the class and the value of the knowledge as a capital. This capital can give Domingo affordances to enable him to position himself with right to speak, thus he would positively negotiate his identity through the capital (for example, Domingo can confidently translate between his boss and his colleagues at work). In turn, with macro level, this link between earning capital and negotiating identity would help Domingo to transform his ideology by according power to him for

better positioning and overcoming the systemic patterns of control (losing chances of conversations, practices, thus chances of gaining capital). Superacion, dominantly reported in this study, seems to mean the dynamic links made among capital, identity, and ideology because when needs based on those are met, it seems that the students feel that this class is good for their Superacion.

Research Question 3 explored what made adult ELs either stay or drop out of English classes. The data showed that both cognitive and affective aspects work together in complex ways to influence decisions. Specifically, for drop out factors, affective aspects played a stronger role. In contrast, for staying factors, cognitive aspects seem to play a stronger role. Dropout factors can be categorized as *Push* factors (Doll et al., 2013), but the colors and shapes of *Push* factors in this case are different than *Push* factors reported among high school students. Viewing staying factors within an Investment framework (Darvin & Norton, 2015), the recursive links among capital, identity, and ideology were based on the extent to which participants learned something new in the class. When they decided that this teacher/class is beneficial for their Superacion, in other words for their capital gain, identity building, and ideology transformation, they want to stay. Implications and discussions of this study's findings will be further addressed in chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Implications

Discussion

Adult ELs: Proactive Problem Solvers

The adult Spanish-speaking ELs at CEL are problem solvers. The data revealed that all six participants proactively solved many problems in their lives with creativity and persistence. For example, Domingo's extensive knowledge and experiences of car repairing showed that he improvised using non-standard tools, such as lumber instead of a jack-stand. Domingo seemed to never stop moving. I often wondered at how his persistent efforts spent on his cars played at his English learning. Irma evolved into playing a translator role at the factory between workers and her boss. Eva and Elsa solved their language-barrier problems in their work by continuously attending local EL classes as much as they could. Mag also tried to solve her problems with English, which had been highlighted by the disastrous tip to hospital, by attending local EL classes. Chris kept solving his daily language-barrier problems at work by talking to his girlfriend in English and attending local EL classes. Irma, Domingo, and Chris' proactive problem-solving approaches led to a separate Sunday English class. This persistent problem-solving skill is consistent with the notion of *intelligence in life* that scholars have found in adult workers' intellectual and creative behaviors while performing their jobs (Carraher, 1986; Carraher, Carraher, & Schliemann, 1989; Resnick, 1987; Rose, 2001, 2005). Adult ELs showed persistence and verve, even under less than ideal conditions. When I look back the challenges they faced, it seems miraculous that they had any energy left to English classes. English language teachers

for refugee and immigrant groups should not underestimate the motivation and problem-solving skills of their students. The task is to help adult ELs to apply their problem-solving skills (very active in their lives) to learn English.

Resilience in Adult ELs against Oppression

The data revealed that the adult ELs in CEL seem to possess high resilience over their journey to a new world, language, and culture. They came to the U.S. and have lived here for 13+ years average, despite the language barriers at work, family, and community, and the numerous risks of being deported. Their family support responsibilities, feeling of more rewards in the U.S., seem to keep motivating them to invest living in the U.S. for better future for their family and themselves. Along the way, many hardships occurred such as losing her spouse (Irma), having children ill (Domingo, Mag, Eva, Elsa), being silent and oppressed by fast English speaking American colleagues and bosses (Mag, Eva, Elsa, Domingo, Chris, Irma) and so on. However, these hardships seem to play in the end a positive role for them to pursue their English learning. Although it is hard to connect this resilience with previous literature, I found their natural desire to speak up against oppression (Freire, 1976, 1996, 1998) in this particular case. One reason behind all of these phenomena such as, crossing the borders, continuing hard labor work for a better future, and to keep knocking doors on ESL classrooms, could be that they don't want to remain under oppression for materialistic, mind-level, and ideological pressures. For example, Mag, Domingo, and Chris reported that they can earn a fair amount of money based on their working hours in the U.S., but that is not the case in Mexico. Eva and Elsa recounted

that regardless of how smart you are you can't continue education in Mexico because everything is expensive and economic capital is not shared. Only a few people are privileged. The research question 1 findings seem to illustrate their strong resilience against the social oppression along their risk-taking and on-going journey day to day.

Superacion is Central

Adult ELs at CEL's major factor for their investment for English learning (Norton, 2012, 2015) is their desire to Superacion, in other words becoming a better person, self-improvement, and self-actualization. This finding is consistent with Dewey (1903) who pointed out that the purpose of education is self-actualization of each individual based on one's discursive and idiosyncratic needs and goals. The Superacion's colors and shapes are different among all six participants, and more importantly, it keeps evolving over time and based on where they are. It seems that English language stakeholders, teachers, administrators, and fund raisers might think that adult ELs need to learn English for their daily functions such as grocery shopping and work. Those immediate needs were reported. However, all the participants reported that becoming a better person is their top reason to invest. In addition, each individual's Superacion was different, such as: being able to advise children's future in English (Domingo), protecting children using English (Irma), becoming a better person (Mag), becoming a fast English listener and speaker (Eva), becoming a college student (Elsa), and becoming a better person at work (Chris). It is worthwhile to note that adult ELs are eager to improve themselves through learning English language, thus their motivation is generally high (Bernat, 2004; Derwing, 2003; Hyman, 2002; Valentine, 1990). This

phenomenon was observed in this dissertation as well. However, it seems plausible to differentiate mind-level motivation and actual investment, because high motivation does not guarantee actual learning all the time (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Gearing & Peter, 2018; Norton, 2012). Eventually 19 out of 20 students dropped out in this dissertation's context (Chris only remains for his probation requirement). This phenomenon seems to support the distinction between motivation and investment notions. Further, in this case whether the teacher/class is helping their Superacion seems a critical criterion for investment. This dissertation reveals that Superacion would play a pivotal role in adult ELs' investment and the details of this concept will be addressed in the next section.

Investment for Superacion: Criteria for Stay or Dropout

The adult ELs' investment in their English learning is based their decisions about whether this teacher/class is helping their Superacion. Using Darvin and Norton's (2015) investment framework, I found that the Superacion notion can be broken down to three specific constructs: capital, identity, and ideology. As discussed briefly after research question 3 findings, the participants seem to set Superacion up front when they evaluate a teacher/class in terms of staying or dropping out. Specifically, it seems that they ask these questions, "Does this teacher/class help me gain economic capital (income, promotion), cultural capital (knowledge, educational credential), and social capital (network with people in power)? Does this teacher/class help me to better position in English-speaking conversation sites? Does this teacher/class respect my ideological background and help me to stand up with equal access to main-stream ideology?" Under the term Superacion, it seems that the students simultaneously and in

complex ways evaluate their teacher and class. When these expectations are met, it seems that they want to stay or vice versa. For example, the dominant theme of what makes them stay was that they *learn something new*, with *having good/caring feeling*, which eventually makes them to feel that this is a *good teacher/class helping my Superacion*, thus stay. *Learn Something New* can refer to gaining cultural capital (knowledge) that can help them to gain economic and social capital. *Good/Caring feelings* seem to support their identity negotiation and ideological positioning. When these needs are met, they would think that this is a good teacher/class, so they want to stay. It would worthwhile to adapt this investment framework when assessing teacher's instruction practices, developing students' satisfactory surveys, and evaluating EL programs' impact. On the other hand, when these constructs are missing, it seems that the classes and teachers without these aspects *push* the students out of the class (Doll et al., 2013).

Push: Major Factor for Dropout

Out of Doll et al.'s (2013) three constructs of student drop out, *Push*, *Pull*, and *Fall Out,* it seems that adult ELs at CEL were pushed out by their teachers and in-class instructions. For example, *learn nothing*, *no caring*, *feeling oppressed* are the incidents all happened inside the classroom based on the teacher's practices, interactions, and instructional methods. Compared to *Push* factors for high school students reported by Doll et al. (2013), the colors and shapes of *Push* factors for adult ELs are different. One reason would be the different situated-ness (Gee, 2012, 2014; Wenger, 1998). While low grades, attendance issues, and discipline problems are *Push* factors for high school

students; students' feeling of learning nothing, no caring, and oppressed from their teachers/classes are *Push* factors for this particular context. *Pull* factors such as babysitting duty during class time (Eva), and weight loss needs for her daughter's Quinceañera (Elsa) were reported as well. But those reasons seem superficial, because Eva recounted that she can accommodate that *Pull* factor by asking her family members to take care of the babysitting duty and she can go to English class. The other four participants did not report any *Pull* factors. *Pull* factors might play a role in their decisions in times, but *Push* factors seem to play a bigger role in their drop-out decisions in this particular case.

Interplay between Cognitive and Affective Aspects for Stay/Dropout

The data revealed that both cognitive and affective aspects influence the students' decisions for staying or dropping out. This finding is consistent with other SLA scholars who pointed out the complex nature of SLA methods (Lightbown & Spada, 2013; Richard-Amato, 1998; Shvidko, Evans, & Hartshorn, 2015;). One contribution of this dissertation's finding would be that the data showed somewhat different patterns over staying and dropping out factors. For staying factors, it seems that cognitive aspects (such as learn something new, receiving corrective feedback) play more of a role than affective aspects as depicted in figure 32. On contrary, for dropping out factors, affective aspects (such as no caring, feeling oppressed) seem to play a bigger role than cognitive factors (see figure 30). The point is that both cognitive and affective aspects are importantly playing roles together in students' decision making.

The data shows that it seems affective aspects would be more crucial in pushing out students and eventually causing them to stop their investment.

Caring Matters

One unexpected finding was the students' emphasis on "caring." All six participants reported that they left the class because they thought that the teacher didn't care about them. For example, Irma saw that teacher Derek didn't prepare for the class and thus did not care about the students. Mag, Eva, Elsa, Chris, and Domingo all felt that teachers Amy and Derek didn't care whether or not they learned, understood, or followed the instruction contents. What they saw was that their teachers just talked, talked, talked. Even Elsa pointed out that the teacher said, "it is not important" to Elsa's questions, but Elsa said "but I see the teacher's attitude (for not caring about me)." This importance of caring is consistent with Noddings' (2013) argument about the importance of teachers' caring. Teachers' role is not just transmitting pieces of knowledge, but rather to care for students as human beings in order to facilitate their learning, and empower students, thus this society. Interestingly, the adult students in this study seem to know the value of caring by nature, and they use this concept as a criterion for their decisions for staying or dropping out. Considering each class has its own *culture* (Bruner, 1996), *teacher apathy* seemed to influence students' perceptions of class quality. Caring seems as important as content knowledge.

Silent Battles in Educational Ideologies

Another finding that happened behind the scene was the silent battle among different educational ideologies between teachers and students. It seems that students' dominant educational ideology is learner-centered ideology (Schiro, 2013), which emphasized self-actualization as the purpose of education. Under learner-centered (LC) ideology, any topics or contents that individual student is interested in are important, because LC ideology values each individual's idiosyncratic learning interests and topics – and thus the student's growth. All six participants reported that they learn better with their life-related topics. For example, Irma recounted that she can learn better for the topics of daily lives, her grandchildren, and jobs. Domingo also recounted that he learned a lot, and made connections between his class and his life when he learned about vocabulary words and expressions for housing.

However, teachers Derek and Amy's ideologies seemed too close to scholar academic (SA) ideology (Schiro, 2013). Derek taught academic pieces of English phonics such as consonants and vowels. He brought up a "life-related" topic of movies, but it didn't seem to match this particular socio-cultural context of the students. As Irma said, she has never watched a movie in the U.S. Teacher Amy seems to use many game activities learned through professional development sessions. For example, Mafia game would be good for students' listening skill development, but the context was not authentic for the students' real-life situations. Thus, the practices via the games seem far from the students' real life interest, which would cause the instructional method remained within the boundary of scholar academic ideology – defined and approved by

scholar groups (professional development seminar participants), not shared by real students.

A muted conflict rages between social efficiency (SE) ideology (Schiro, 2013) and social reconstruction (SR) ideology (Schiro, 2013). Superacion, becoming a better person, can be interpreted as transforming students' real lives. For example, Eva wanted to become a fast English speaker and listener, Domingo wanted to build his own construction business by improving his English. Both examples entail reconstructing Eva and Domingo's social positioning. To make it happen, learners already knew that they needed to learn "correct" English, which could be achieved through epistemologically deep interactions, feedback, and practices. However, when teachers Derek and Amy taught peripheral information only, such as grammar and how to pronounce letters, students interpreted their actions to mean that they did not care. Learners could not see the value of such peripheral fluff for their Superacion (transforming towards social reconstruction in their lives). Perceived lack of caring caused them to quit. This finding is consistent with Tickle (2000), who argued that there are two types of teachers: (1) technicians who protect and reproduce the social status quo and (2) reflective teachers who are agents for social transformation. The consequences of ideologies - social reproduction and social reconstruction - can be profound.

Needed Paradigm Shift: Ecological Approach in SLA

As shown in throughout the data, it seems that the learners desire to have more organic and ecological approaches to their L2 learning by nature. For decades, SLA

scholars have studied how to teach content knowledge more effectively such as how to teach phonics, how to teach speech skills, how to teach writing skills and so on (Larsen-Freeman, 1997; Lightbown & Spada, 2013; Swain, 2005). However, those rigorous approaches would be useless if we don't have our students in the classroom. This dissertation data shows that affective aspects in L2 learning are as important as how to teach the content knowledge, which seems to call for scholars and teachers' attention to more ecological and comprehensive approach to SLA, ranging from socio-political concerns, psychological aspects, cultural considerations, learner identity, investment, and social responsibility of English teaching. In the same vein, it would be a paradigm-shift that SLA scholars have come up with an ecological approach to SLA by integrating the diverse and dynamic nature of L2 learning called, transdisciplinary framework (Costa & Norton, 2017; DFG, 2016). Douglas Fir Group, consisting of renowned SLA scholars such as Merrill Swain, Bonny Norton, Diane Larsen-Freeman, has developed the multifaceted nature of language learning and teaching in 2016 depicted in figure 33. In this framework, the nature of L2 learning is multifaceted, multi-layered, and consistently evolving over time ranging from the macro level of ideological structures (belief systems, culture values), mesolevel of sociocultural institutions and communities (social identities, families, place of work), and micro level of social activities (individual engaging with semiotic resources). Investment framework adapted in this dissertation is located in the mesolevel layer of social identities. This shows that the "interplay-ability" that one's investment decision may have across the multiple layers over one's L2 learning. One point is that L2 educators and stakeholders should shift their paradigm from only thinking about how to teach

content knowledge (semiotic recourses in this model) to broader approaches to address students' ideological structures and social identities in instruction. In practice, teachers and stakeholders should question whether their instructions and curricular support theses multi-layers in plausible ways to support the students' complex nature of L2 learning.

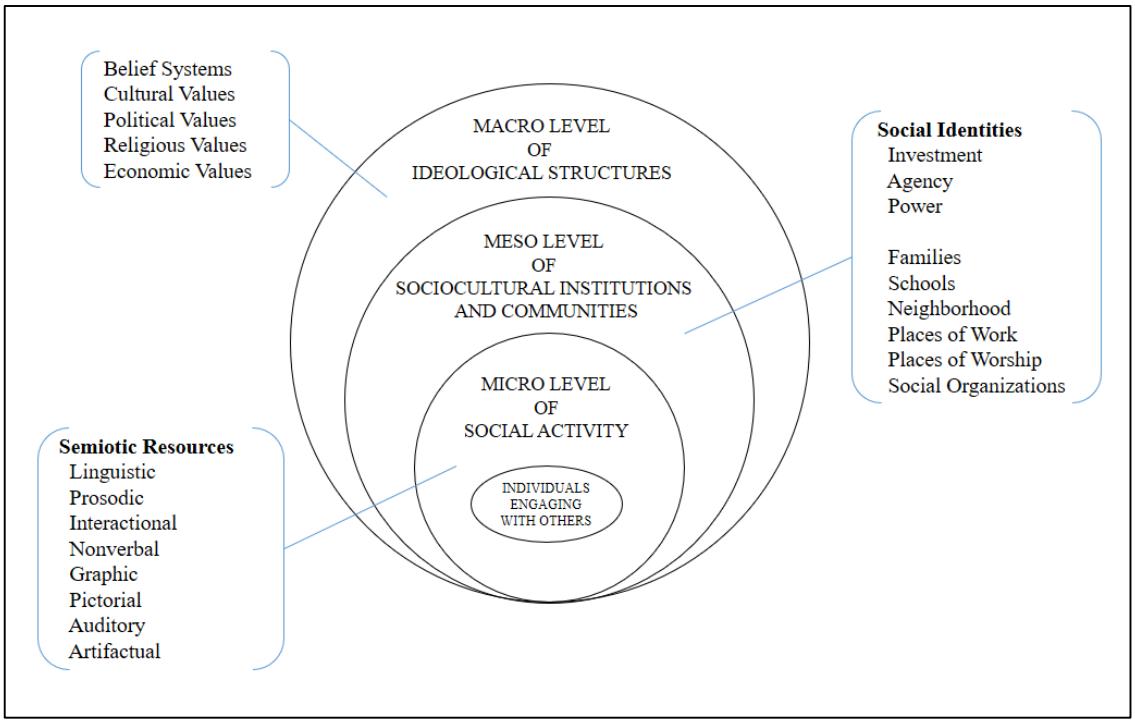


Figure 33. The Multifaceted Nature of Language Learning and Teaching - Author created diagram based upon the work of DFG, 2016, p. 25

Implications for Practice

Reflecting on the findings of this study, I have found four implications for ESL stakeholders: (1) the needs for teacher training/professional development reform, (2) visiting and listening to students, (3) reforming the community EL institution context, and (4) suggesting to use a set of questionnaire to help teacher's reflections.

(1) Reform Teacher Training/Professional Development

The data show that affective aspects such as caring, oppression, and ideological mismatch play a role in L2 students' decisions on investment. However, this topic has been rarely discussed or taught in regular teacher training programs such as MA TESOL programs, or in professional development agendas. For example, the University of Oklahoma's MA TESOL program consists of nine classes that focus on how to teach content knowledge in SLA, such as: Second Language Acquisition Theory for ESL, ESL Methods, Phonetics for ESL, Structure of the English Language, General Linguistics for ESL, ESL Curriculum, Internship in TESOL, Understanding Cultures for ESL, Teaching ESL Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking, and ESL Testing and Assessment. By the same token, the CEL's annual professional development seminar primarily teaches how to teach phonics, vocabulary lists, and game activities. It is understandable that teachers want to learn about new and rigorous teaching methods, but at the same time, discussing the EL learners' socio-cultural contexts, identity building processes, investment priorities, and social responsibilities through English teaching should be also included in teacher training curricula. By doing so, we should be able to keep our students in our classroom, to help their Superacion and thus improve our society as a whole.

(2) Visit and Listen: Teacher as an Ethnographer

Noddings (2013) argues that teachers, regardless of subject, should be ethnographer. The message was that teachers as a human-to-human interacting agent of

one's education and growing, must carefully listen to their students' voices to authentically support their learning. EL teachers particularly are more required to be ethnographers in this sense, because EL students by nature encounter, experience, and struggle with different cultural norms, identity struggles, and ideology conflicts based on their multiple roles (Gunn, 2003; Norton, 1997). One simple response from teachers and admins towards adult EL students' dropout is saying that "they are busy." However, this dissertation showed that the students are active agents making decisions for themselves. In other words, their dropout is not their situational problem, but rather their active decision because they want to invest their time and energy into something more meaningful for their Superacion. For example, Elsa kept saying that she would stay home and watch TV and relax, rather than sitting and listening to her teacher's talk, because staying home was more rewarding than going to an EL class that does not care about Elsa's Superacion. Whether a class is helping students' Superacion would not be clearly measurable, but all students in this study recounted that they appreciated this approach of visiting and listening to them for their needs/expectation over their English learning. They also appreciated being invited to collaboratively build the curriculum. Perhaps it seems that adult EL students are struggling based on the hidden curriculum, which has rarely reflected their input, both cognitively and socio-culturally. Schiro's (2013) point about hidden curriculum and listening to students' sociocultural factors seems to support this need to visit, listen, and reflect upon students' lives into our curriculum by revealing and reforming the hidden curriculum: "...education is a social process, that the hidden curriculum has enormous influence on learners, and that all knowledge carries with it social value...they [teachers] must attend to the social,

political, and moral values of the children they teach" (p. 196). EL teachers should visit and listen, and eventually becoming ethnographers to not only help their students' Superacion, but also their own Superacion.

(3) Reform Case Context for All

Throughout this study, it might be thought that the two teachers, Derek and Amy, must have done something wrong to make students drop out. However, this study shows that this phenomenon seems beyond the teachers' "faults." Instead, it seems based on the context's bounded nature by itself. Recall that CEL is a non-profit organization, which has limited funds to support teachers. Teacher Love (pseudonym, a teacher interviewed for this study) acknowledged that CEL teachers are also struggling in this context. The teachers are not full-time employees. They are assigned only two or four hours to teach per week. They have to drive to the satellite locations at night. The "classrooms" are factory cafeterias, local library meeting rooms, or local church meeting rooms. Internet access is rare. Sometimes, whiteboard and markers are not provided. Students come and go every class without any reason, and teachers are not supported for further investigation of what makes the students drop out. I actually recruited three teachers to interview for this study, but two disappeared. It seems that teachers are indeed also struggling in this context, which seems to cause teachers to become teaching technicians making less connections to students' real lives. As a teacher at CEL, I recall that we gave a completion certificate to students with cookies at the end of each semester. This seemed a ceremony for students and teachers, but real life connections to students' and teachers' lives were weak. Some teachers even rushed

to sign the certificates just for the sake of being not yelled by the administration staff. Reform for all seems necessary. Hiring teachers for full-time, possessing a permanent building for instruction – not satellite locations, supporting teachers' further research for building rapport by visiting and listening to students, and building stronger connections to students' real lives are all possible reforms.

Best Practice Example: Literacy-based University in Florida

For such reform, a best practice example would be a community-based university located in Florida - Literacy-based University (pseudonym). The LBU started from a local community ESL class. To connect the students' lives and school curricula, LBU began to offer college credit hours when the immigrant students completed their ESL courses. Teachers are hired full-time, they have their own building for class. Supported by a local church community, LBU has been accredited by the State of Florida. LBU "graduates" can use their credit hours to continue their education in local community colleges for vocational purposes such as becoming a baker. The credit earned at LBU can be used for continuing education towards a 4-year university too. These outcomes (credit hours) out of their EL class seem more practical and inspiring than just giving a completion certificate with cookies. The connections that LBU made between adult ELs' lives and their investment for English learning seem to make a synergy to help the learners' Superacion in diverse ways, thus the school, teachers, and students seem to keep growing. LBU could provide an example to local EL class administrators and teachers to reform their curricula to "connect" more between the students' lives and in-class practices. Not all students may want to go to local colleges, but informing and giving them affordances of more possibilities for continuing

education (cultural capital) may empower the students to reach out to more opportunities and diverse forms of Superacion. The details of Superacion and investment are evolving in time, based on where learners are and the affordances they have. Allowing them more affordances and opening more doors to adult ELs would empower their thoughts and also thus, their lives.

(4) Suggested Questionnaires for Teachers' Reflections

In everyday practice, this study shows that EL teachers should check whether their instructions improve students' and their Superacion. Based on the findings of this study, I would like to suggest a list of questionnaires that EL teachers can use for reflecting on their instruction.

Professional Development Checklist for EL Teachers' Reflections:

- Do I care for my students?
- Do my instructions help my students improve their Superacion?
- Do I give them homework and check it with corrective feedback?
- Do my instructions help my students' capital gaining, identity building, and transforming ideology?
- Is my instruction worth for students to invest their time and energy? How do I know?
- Is there any support I need from administration to help my students' Superacion?
- Does my instruction improve my Superacion?
- Did I prepare for this class?
- Is my class boring? If so, what makes it boring to my students?
- Do I just talk, talk, talk?

- Is my instruction meeting my students' expectations?
- Is any student feeling oppressed in my class?
- Is my class topic related to my students' life?
- Do I have dynamic activities, such as group work and presentations?
- Am I a good teacher for my students' Superacion?

Based on Dewey (1903) and Schiro (2013), the authentic learner-centered instruction helps self-growing not only for the students, but also for teachers. The data in this dissertation showed that teachers' role in retaining adult EL students seems very significant; thus, I would urge that teachers and administrators support these reflective teachers' roles in adult EL classes.

Suggestions for Further Research

Studies regarding language learners' persistence and quitting have primarily focused on within-class interventions. It is important for SLA researchers to continue to explore what makes language learners stay or drop out, as it is a significant part of the ecological nature of L2 learning and teaching. Future studies of adult ELs might consider the following.

First, recruiting more adult Hispanic English learners to explore what makes adult ELs decide to stay or drop out of EL class would be useful. More participants' perceptions could better inform research about this particular population. Conducting case-studies in different states such as California, New York, and Florida may lead to different results.

Second, investigating the qualifications and strategies of teachers and administration staff could help improve the quality of instruction. Reaching out to teachers and administration staff would enable researchers to more vividly describe the problems of teaching adult ELs.

Third, a longitudinal and mixed-methods-based research could help validate, affirm, or reject the 13 themes found in this study. The four priorities for investing in English learning (Superacion, Job, Communicate, Hospital) could be used to help construct a survey of adult ELs' motivational factors to assess these factors in a larger sample size.

Fourth, it could be useful to conduct case studies in different language learning contexts in different countries, such as Filipino immigrants learning Korean language in Korea, Syrian refugees learning German language in Germany, and Mexican immigrants learning Japanese in Japan. Although globalization is a fact of life in the 21st century, language barriers are still problems. Extending this study's approach to other languages and countries would help us consider language learning in a more holistic way.

Fifth, studying persistence and dropout phenomena in different school settings, such as K-12 EL and pre-collegiate academic ESL, would help identify ideological and identity gaps.

Through these extended research suggestions, it is hoped that scholars and practitioners could develop more plausible ways of encouraging and supporting students to decide to keep investing in language learning. We need to recognize and utilize the

ecological, in-depth, and rigorous L2 teaching approaches that have been proven effective.

Conclusion

L2 learning is a human-to-human interaction. It is complex, intertwined, many things are connected, interacting, supporting and sometimes contradicting each other. It seems that affective domain has been neglected in mainstream ESL research compared to other cognitive aspects. This study would like to shed light on the importance of affective aspects, because it seems that when we don't care about adult EL students, it is likely to push our students out from their learning opportunities and self-improvement, self-actualization opportunities. 27 million immigrant workers in the U.S. work every corner of the streets in our neighborhood seeking help for their English learning for their Superacion. We educators are not just knowledge transmitters. We are those who will empower our students, help them raise themselves, and help them transform their minds. The unheard voices and muted battles between Superacion and "me no more come" are telling us to decide whether to listen to and reveal problems, and solve them, or shut our ears and eyes and just do the peripheral instructing without caring about the ecological nature of the human-to-human interactions. Students seem to already know the differences between just talking and real teaching. Education, especially language education is about empowering. Between giving them power or pushing them out, the choice is ours.

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

*(*After the participant reads and signs the consent form.)*

Thank you for your time and willingness to participate. As you know, I am interested in studying why Hispanic adult ESL students study English. This interview will take about 1 hour. If you do not understand any questions, just say so and I will reword them. You can also decide not to answer any of the questions. Do you have any questions before we start?

Interview Questions

Inside Classroom Factors

1. Tell me about your last ESL class. Did it make you want to learn English?

2. (Probing question) Okay, you said _____ made you want to (or don't want to) learn English. What specific aspects made you feel that way? Can you give me any examples?

3. What do you think about the textbook? Does it help? Is it good or bad? Can you give me any examples?

4. What do you think about the BEST? What is good about it? What is bad?

5. Do you ask questions in ESL class? What do you find most challenging about learning English?

6. What is most fun about ESL class? What makes you learn the most?

7. Do you ever make mistakes? What do you do when you make a mistake? Does a mistake make you want to learn more or do you shut down? How does the teacher respond?

8. Is the ESL class a good place to learn? How could it be improved?

9. Do you ever have homework in class? Is it useful or a waste of time?

10. What would make your English class better?

Outside Classroom Factors

11. Let's say that you are suddenly fluent in English. You can speak, read, and write. You understand everything and can speak English without an accent. Would your life be any different? How would it be different?

Family

12. Let's talk about your family. Do members of your family speak English? Tell me about them in terms of their English proficiency. Please give me examples.

13. Does your family support you learning English? Or, do they do not support you very much? Any examples?

Job

14. To what extent do you use English in your job? How would being fluent in English help with your job? Do your coworkers speak English? How well do they speak?

Education

15. Tell me about your educational background. Where did you go to elementary/secondary school? What are your thoughts about college?

16. What do you think college life is like? If someone said that they would pay for you to go to college, would you go?

Community

17. Are you a citizen of the U.S.? Do you want to become a citizen of the U.S.? What is good about America? What could be better?

ESL Dropout/Staying Experiences

18. Tell me about your experience with ESL Classes, good and bad.

19. What would make you come to class every night, no matter what? What would make you want to drop out?

20. Any other comments about any things that make you feel that you want to (or don't want to) learn English in your life?

Closing

Now we are done, do you have any questions you'd like to ask me about this research project? If you want to contact me later, here is my contact information. Also, I may need to contact you later for additional questions or clarification. May I also have your follow-up contact information? I will send you an email of this interview transcript within two weeks. It will be really appreciated if you can check the accuracy of the transcript later. Thank you very much for your participation.

Appendix B

Relation Table between Research Questions (RQ) & Interview Questions (IQ)

RQ	IQ1	IQ2	IQ3	IQ4	IQ5	IQ6	IQ7	IQ8
1. Who are adult English learners (ELs) who want to learn English at the Center for English Literacy (CEL)?						**X**	**X**	**X**
2. Why do adult ELs at CEL invest in learning English?	**X**	**X**				**X**		**X**
3. What makes adult ELs at CEL decide to stay or drop out?	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**

RQ	IQ9	IQ10	IQ11	IQ12	IQ13	IQ14	IQ15	IQ16
1. Who are adult English learners (ELs) who want to learn English at the Center for English Literacy (CEL)?	**X**		**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
2. Why do adult ELs at CEL invest in learning English?	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
3. What makes adult ELs at CEL decide to stay or drop out?	**X**	**X**			**X**			**X**

RQ	IQ17	IQ18	IQ19	IQ20
1. Who are adult English learners (ELs) who want to learn English at the Center for English Literacy (CEL)?	**X**	**X**		
2. Why do adult ELs at CEL invest in learning English?	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
3. What makes adult ELs at CEL decide to stay or drop out?	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**

Appendix C

Interview Protocol for Teachers

1. When did you teach at CEL?
2. How did you know about CEL first?
3. What do you feel about CEL?
4. Please describe the student populations you taught (e.g., ethnicity, gender, job, family).
5. How well did your instruction work? What made your teaching successful?
6. Do you remember any impressive students who are successful in learning English? What do you think that makes he/she is successful in learning?
7. When was your worst teaching day? What made that class hard?
8. Do you remember any struggling students in your class? What made them struggle?
9. What are strengths of CEL?
10. What needs to be improved in CEL?
11. Did you have any students who dropped out your class? What made them quit?
12. Did you have any students who keep coming? What made them stay?
13. (for whom left CEL) Why did you leave CEL?
14. (for whom left CEL) Would you like to work at CEL again? Why or why not?
15. If you were at the leadership of CEL, what would you do to improve CEL? Why?
16. In your opinion, who are the adult English learners? Why do they want to learn English? What made them to quit learning? What made them persistent in learning?
17. Any comments or stories to share before conclude please?

Appendix D

Member-checking Interview Protocol for Family and Friends

Thank you for your time and willingness to participate. As you know, I am interested in studying why Hispanic adult ESL students study English. This interview is for your family (or friend) _____ for his/her opinions about learning English. This interview will take about 1 hour. If you do not understand any questions, just say so and I will reword them. You can also decide not to answer any of the questions. Do you have any questions before we start?

1. Could you tell me how you know _____ (the participant)?
2. In your opinion, why does _____ want to learn English? Can you offer any examples?
3. _____ said that _____ is his/her number one reason to learn English. What do you think about that opinion?
4. Do you have any examples to support or deny _____'s opinions?
5. In _____ daily life, what do you think that he/she needs to learn English?
6. What do you think that makes _____ to stay (or drop out) of his/her ESL class? Can you offer an example?
7. Do you think _____ family/friends support his/her English learning? Do you have any examples?
8. Any other comments or thoughts for _____'s life regarding his/her motivation for learning English?

(Interviewer may ask any clarification questions about the participants' interview data.)

Appendix E

Survey for Socioeconomic Status (SES) and Demographic Information

Traditional SES

1. What is your income per year?

    a. Lower than $25,000

    b. $25,000 ~ $35,000

    c. $35,000 ~ $45,000

    d. More than $45,000

2. Where do you work (job)?

    a. Construction (or Demolition)

    b. House-keeping

    c. Manufacturing Factory

    d. Warehouse Inventory

    e. Others ( )

3. What is your marital status?

    a. Married and living together with spouse

    b. Married but living separately with spouse

    c. Living with a spouse but un-married

    d. Single

    e. Other (please specify) _____

4. How many children do you have? What grades? _____
5. Do you own a house or rent? _____
6. If you rent, how much is the monthly rent?
   _____
7. Are you receiving SNAP benefits (food stamp)? Yes_____
   No_____
8. How often do you travel each year?
   _____

Family Atmosphere

	Not true of me 1						Very true of me 7
In my house, my family supports my study.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In my family, we make our decisions democratically.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In my family, we use standard Spanish.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In my family, we use standard English.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
We go to church on Sundays.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In my family, we have reading materials in Spanish.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In my family, we have reading materials in English.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My family is stable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In my family, parents encourage children academically.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My family does cultural activities together.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My family has good conversations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Demographic Information

Name:
Age:
Gender:
Home country (circle one): Mexico Chile Peru
Panama
Others ( )

Duration of living in the U.S.?

a. Less than 1 year

b. 1 – 3 years

c. 3 – 5 years

d. 5 – 10 years

e. 10 – 20 years

f. More than 20 years

Education: Middle School High School
College
Graduate School Other ( )

Home Address:
Telephone number:
Email: