

Capstone EFL Portfolio

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Abstract

This portfolio serves as a reflection of my two-year graduate study at Peabody College English Language Learners (ELL) program. Meanwhile, it also demonstrates my professional knowledge and abilities of becoming a qualified English teacher for second language learners.

The portfolio consists of three parts: 1) philosophy of teaching, 2) eight domains of TESOL standards and 3) reflections for future teaching career. In the first part, I demonstrated theoretical frameworks concerning teaching English as a second language. The theories unfold in a logical order by presenting personal understanding from the level of individual learners, curriculum, and instructional methods and practices, which highlights the value of multiculturalism and constructivism. In the second part, I provided corresponding artifacts showing my understanding for the eight domains of the TESOL standards, including planning, instructing, assessing, identity and context, language proficiency, learning, content, and commitment and professionalism. In the last part, I present the view of myself as being an English teacher, envision some possible challenges and bring up ways to cope with the future challenges.

Table of Contents

Philosophy of Teaching	4
Students and Their Backgrounds.....	4
The Curriculum	6
How Students' English Learning is Best Served.....	7
Partnerships and Advocacy	10
TESOL Domains and Standards.....	11
Domain 1: Planning.....	11
Domain 2: Instructing	13
Domain 3: Assessing	15
Domain 4: Identity and Context.....	18
Domain 5: Language Proficiency.....	20
Domain 6: Learning	21
Domain 7: Content	23
Domain 8: Commitment and Professionalism	26
Application to Practice	28
How I View Myself as a Teacher.....	28
What Challenges I might Face.	29
How to Cope with Future Challenges	30
References	31
Appendix	34
Appendix A. Lesson Plan for Practicum Observation	34
Appendix C. Final Analysis Project.....	35
Appendix D. Community Literacy Project Report	68
Appendix E. Instructional Activities	75
Appendix F. Final Project.....	76
Appendix G. School Investigation Report	81

Philosophy of Teaching

My past years of educational experience from primary school to undergraduate study have depicted the process of teaching as a one-way transmission of knowledge from teachers to students. However, after my two-year study at Vanderbilt Peabody College, my view of teachers and teaching drastically changed. I now regard teaching, especially second language teaching, as a dynamic process that is intertwined by multiple facets of students and teachers, learning and instruction.

Students and Their Backgrounds

Students that are referred to as English language learners (ELL) are those whose native language is not English (de Jong, 2011). Research has shown that due to the linguistic background of ELLs, they tend to face notable challenges at language development. For instance, not speaking English at home would directly impact their chances of receiving language input and generating language output (Hoff, 2013). Especially, when it comes to book reading, which has a significant impact on children's metalinguistic skills and vocabulary and grammatical knowledge intake, parents in ELL families tend to have limited English language proficiency and therefore are not able to read English books to their children (Dickinson et al., 2012). In addition, many ELLs have immigration experiences which may lead to culture shock, which will influence their attitudes towards school and their learning experiences. As a result, ELL students are faced with greater risks for lacking of readiness for school.

However, the challenges that ELL students tend to face is malleable through effective instructions. Within the classroom setting, diversity and multiculturalism can create values for teaching and students' learning. According to Lam and Warriner (2012), the language and literacy development of a student are greatly influenced by normative values coming from different nation-states, regional culture and local politics within his nation. Personally, the prerequisite of a good

second language teacher is to value the culture of the minority groups. Only by doing so can students feel welcomed and comfortable within their learning environment.

Furthermore, different cultural values of students should not only be respected, but also be used to facilitate students' learning the language, since the unique sociocultural backgrounds of different students provide them with various types of literacies that can be beneficial to their study. Out-of-school literacies especially serve as unconscious tools of learning, despite being neglected by educators (Stewart, 2014). There are assorted categories of out-of-school literacies, such as church and religion, finance and banking, auto repair, beauty, medicine and health, grocery, restaurants, immigration, and transportation (Jiménez, Smith & Teague, 2009). Students can gain knowledge related to the above categories from the job of their parents, the community environment they grow in and any daily interactions that involve these subjects. Such background knowledge can further turn to their strengths in their study. For instance, knowledge in finance and banking might make them more sensitive to numbers and thus do well in math; knowledge in auto repair might develop their procedural and mechanical senses so that they are able to provide clearer descriptions when it comes to language expression. Therefore, it is truly important for teachers to discover and make use of ELL students' community literacies and background knowledge.

The Curriculum

Curriculum is referred to as a set of learning goals articulated across grades that outline the intended subject content and process goals at particular points in time throughout the school program (Reys et al., 2003). Under different educational systems, curriculum may have different meaning for teachers. For instance, within the Chinese educational system, textbooks are the symbol of curriculum. For second language teachers in Chinese public schools, the textbook usually defines the grammar and vocabularies to teach for each lesson. In comparison, ELL teachers in public schools in the United States teach according to school-administered curriculum

called “Scope and Sequence”, which contains a list of goals for students’ language abilities and text materials for reference. Having experienced the English language classes within both the Chinese and the American public-school settings has developed my deeper understanding about the relationship between ELL teachers and the curriculum setting. In both China and America, teachers are, to some extent, confined within a fixed curriculum considering their teaching objectives. However, their level of autonomy may vary. “Autonomy” refers to the educational decisions exercised by teachers over planning and teaching within the classroom (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005). Personally, ELL teachers in the United States have more flexibility on deciding their way of teaching and objectives for each class compared to English teachers in Chinese public schools, because the content and objectives for their teaching is defined in units instead of for each lesson.

In this case, it is important for ELL teachers to be able to adapt their lesson plan and methods into the curriculum so that students can march towards their learning goals and gain the best learning experience in the meantime. One way of achieving this is going through the procedure of backward design, which starts from the specification of learning outcomes and uses these as the basis for developing instructional processes and input (Richards, 2013). If students’ learning objectives were like the blueprint of a mansion, the process of backward design would be deciding the construction order, construction materials, and the paint to use in order to complete the mansion exactly as the blueprint shows. When ELL teachers are designing their instructional activities in an outcome-oriented direction, they would form a clear view of where each activity is leading students and how former activities prepare students with knowledge and skills for later ones. Therefore, even if ELL teachers have generally limited autonomy in the curriculum design, backward design provides them with an effective way to adapt their teaching into the existing curriculum.

How Students’ English Learning is Best Served

In addition to developing a holistic view about English language learners and their backgrounds and gaining insights on the importance of adapting their teaching into the curriculum, the teaching methods of ELL teachers become the determinant of students' English learning experience and outcomes. Only by understanding how students' English learning is best served can an ELL teacher provide effective instruction to promote students' second language acquisition. Throughout my two-year master study, a big idea that has been mentioned repeatedly in terms of the theory of second language teaching is "constructivism". As one of the most prominent theorists known for his constructivist views, Jean Piaget looks deeply into how humans make meaning in relation to their interactions with the surrounding environment (Piaget, 1971). When I first learned about this theory, I was so impressed that I decided to place it as the overarching theoretical structure for my later English teaching techniques. Indeed, there lies a close connection between outer environmental factors and the processing of information within learners' inner cognition. When learners are interacting with people or other environmental factors that surround them, they get contingent feedback from the environment, and that is how they evaluate and improve their own behavior. Therefore, creating a classroom environment where students have opportunities to interact with their teachers and their peers would greatly foster students' English learning.

Under the overarching idea of constructivism, there are specific practices that ELL teachers can implement during their instructions. What comes first is the significance of promoting students' motivation to learn. Active learners attribute their failure to remediable causes such as insufficient effort or inappropriate strategies, while passive learners attribute their failure to the lack of ability (Alexander, 2006). Such difference greatly impacts students' learning motivation so that it should arouse teachers' attention. Therefore, for second language teachers, it is important to have students understand the goal of their learning a language, which is to communicate rather than to do well in exams. What's more, giving students more control over their own study helps to

increase students' motivation because students' autonomy is directly linked with their inner motivation (Wentzel & Brophy, 2014), which is their willingness to learn out of their internal nature.

Apart from student motivation, students' engagement in class is one of the core issues especially for second language classrooms. For one reason, knowledge is contextualized (Blumenfeld et al., 1991), which means that its meaning and value is embedded within specific contexts. For second language learners, the use of diverse language expressions and their interpretations are also embedded within the context of the language. They need to interact with texts to figure out the beauty of literature or communicate with people to apply their language use. For instance, task-based language teaching creates an environment where students can be fully engaged from throughout the task. Activities like pair discussion and group project also generate meaningful chances for students to interact. Only through the process of participating and interacting are students able to construct knowledge by using cognitive tools, multiple sources of information and other individuals as resources (Resnick, 1987). Therefore, it is highly essential for English teachers to construct classroom activities in a productive way so that students can gain access to multiple opportunities to interact with each other.

Last but not least, a major difference between teaching a second language class and other subjects is the dichotomous goals including the content objective and the language objective. Simply speaking, content objective defines what students will be able to express while language objective refers to how they are going to express it (Echevarria et al., 2016). The combination of content objectives and language objectives, to some extent, reflects the unity of English language learners' higher-order thinking and language skills, because they need to make sense of the meaning and figure out the grammatical and vocabulary rules to convert their understanding to

literal words and utterances. That's the point when they are not only learning a second language, but also developing round thinking skills.

The Assessments

Assessment is an ongoing process that encompasses a wide range of methodological techniques (Brown, 2010), which composes one of the core elements in the process of second language teaching. It can not only examine students' learning outcome but also exert implications on students' later instructions. Within the classroom setting, formative evaluation is more commonly used compared to summative evaluation due to its maneuverability and authenticity. Based on the result of the assessment, ELL teachers can see where the students are doing well and the areas that they need further improve. However, the reliability of the result of the assessment is highly dependent on how the assessment is designed. Authentic assessment enables ELL teachers to know about students' current learning closer to the truth. For instance, utterances generated under a more relaxed condition are more likely to reflect the student's real English skill. In contrast, traditional standardized tests that exert much pressure on students tend not to be able to reflect students' true level. Therefore, assessments that are more customized for students' need and taken within a low-stake authentic context are more likely to better evaluate students' learning condition. Moreover, conducting reading or speaking assessment in a one-to-one situation or within small groups can also increase the authenticity of the assessment since it allows the teacher to spend more attention with each learner.

Partnerships and Advocacy

There is no doubt that students' academic achievement is more than the business of the teachers. As the Principle of Structural Integration states, a school's various component should connect, relate and interact with each other to reflect the equal status among those involved (de Jong, 2011). However, it should go even beyond that to the joint effort from parents, teachers,

schools and the communities. As a future English teacher, my goal of teaching contains three core parts: students' ultimate English proficiency, the development of students' round personal skills and the establishment of students' correct cognition to the world and multiculturalism. This goal derives from my personal educational experiences that for all these years of learning, including English, I feel that I was learning for the mere knowledge for most of the time instead of developing skills to apply the knowledge. Therefore, I have established my belief in teaching that knowledge is not only about "what" but more importantly about "how". I believe that such a value is likely to gain acknowledgement among the parents and my future colleagues, at least in China, since it is a common problem for Chinese students to succeed in test scores but fail in real-life problems.

TESOL Domains and Standards

Domain 1: Planning

Standard 1: Teachers plan instruction to promote learning and meet learner goals, and modify plans to assure learner engagement and achievement.

Planning the lesson before standing on stage for a teacher is like having a pen in hand before writing for a writer. If learning is the ultimate goal, planning is the starting point of achieving that goal. To me, drafting the lesson plan is the most helpful step for a teacher to optimize students' learning experience because it directly relates to the teacher's instructions and students' activities in class. Throughout my graduate study, much of our courses' focus is on how to plan a lesson. I have really learned a lot about how to set appropriate learning goals and structure the lesson according to these goals.

The artifact that I chose for this domain is the lesson plan that I wrote for my second practicum observation (Appendix A). My practicum placement in my third semester was 4th grade ELL class in J. E. Moss elementary school. After my first lesson, I realized some problems and tried to make some improvements on this lesson plan. Specifically, I planned a debate activity to promote students' communication and engagement in class.

The Learners and Learning. Before designing this lesson plan, I talked to the teacher about the feasibility of the activity. On the one hand, since the students are 4th grade EL learners with high English language proficiency, I decided that debate would be a good way for them to fully express themselves. On the other hand, through my observation, I found that they lacked higher-order thinking skills. Participating in a debate can train their logic and critical thinking. Therefore, the teacher agreed that having a debate in class is highly applicable and it turned out that the debate was a success.

The Learning Environment. With this lesson plan, I intended to create a learning environment that aroused students' high level of motivation and engagement. The ways of interactions designed in this lesson plan were developed step by step. During the "Building Background" session, students discussed in pairs. During the pre-task, students discussed in groups. And during the debate, students came together as a whole class, raising questions, presenting their arguments and debating with each other. Each step encourages high engagement and each latter step requires a deeper level of interaction compared to the former one.

The Curriculum. This lesson plan intends to facilitate the students in their unit culminating task, which echoes with the idea of backward design in my philosophy of teaching. When I was thinking about the skills that they need for their culminating task, I figured that they should include argumentation and reasoning. That's when I decided to lead them to do a debate. Taking the form of an oral debate, the lesson emphasized students' ability to give supporting details for their opinion, which was the exact skill they need for opinion writing. This is reflected in the pair discussion session and the debate part of the lesson plan. Meanwhile, during the debate, students were also pushed to make judgements on others' opinion and reasons, which is highly relevant to their exam question where students will be asked to make judgement on the author's perspective.

The Assessment. The lesson plan doesn't show ways to assess the students' performance. It only included a review session that has students write down their reflection for the activity. In reality, I didn't have enough time to do even the review session. Even if it is a debate, assessment is also necessary for teachers to get a clearer view of students' performance. For instance, doing a peer review may be helpful for students to assess each other. Besides, while students are debating, I can mark down the times and length of each student's statement and make notes on where they need further improvement.

Domain 2: Instructing

Standard 2: Teachers create supportive environments that engage all learners in purposeful learning and promote respectful classroom interactions.

Students' level of engagement in learning is usually directly related to their learning outcome. How to promote students' engagement in class is the question that I had in mind before starting my graduate study. From the course *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*, I learned that learning should be purposeful. With techniques like narrow reading and backward design, learning takes place consciously and efficiently when students know where they are heading. In the course *Methods and Materials for ELL Education*, I gained deep insights on the types of scaffolding and how classroom interactions serve as the core of effective scaffolding. With purpose and chances for interactions, students can optimize engagement in class.

To further demonstrate my understanding about this standard, I have chosen the video that I recorded for my first practicum observation as the artifact (attached separately as "Xueqi Li Appendix B-Recorded Video of Teaching"). The video lasts approximately one hour and shows how I taught them a structure of opinion writing.

The Learners and Learning. The lesson was designed to teach the class about opinion writing. According to the previous observation, students in this class were very active. Each time the teacher asked a question, there were many show of hands. Therefore, while I was standing in front of them, I regarded them as learners with innate motivation to learn. And I also tried to incorporate as many opportunities as possible to inspire the students' potential to learn, including warm-up questions and small group work.

Meanwhile, one of the big ideas that I have learned from the course *Methods and Materials for ELL Education* is leveraging students' prior knowledge. Students come to class not as an empty

sheet but with plentiful funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 2006). Therefore, the warm-up activity during which I asked students about their travel preference is reflected in my philosophy of teaching as connecting students' funds of knowledge with their classroom experience.

The Learning Environment. While teaching the lesson, I put a lot of focus on creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment for the students. By “supportive”, I mean to provide efficient scaffolding throughout the lesson. This can be reflected when I purposefully repeated and extended students' answers in order to show acknowledgement and increase their comprehensible input. What's more, when I asked them to analyze the structure of the example paragraph, it facilitated the transition between their knowledge input and output, and students got the chance to deepen their understanding of the knowledge before applying it, too. By “inclusive”, I mean that any ideas in the class will be welcomed and that students have multiple ways to express their ideas. Throughout the lesson, students were seen raising their hands (during the warm-up activity), discussing with their peers (during the pre-task scaffolding) or writing their ideas down (during the student activity). Meanwhile, the materials used in this lesson also aimed at creating a highly contextualized environment for the students and incorporated multiple kinds of participant structures so as to provide different levels of support for different groups of students (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005).

The Curriculum. This lesson is highly aligned with the standards and goals listed in *4th Grade Quarter 2 Scope and Sequence*. Firstly, the focus of the lesson was writing, which is what the students would have in their culminating tasks for the unit. Through this lesson, I intended to provide the students with some insights and inspiration in order to prepare them for the exam. Secondly, one of the goals stated in the curriculum is to explain how reasons and evidence support the ideas in the texts. The “OREO” structure can help them to figure out a clearer structure of the text and grasp the relationship between the main idea and the supporting details more effectively.

Thirdly, the lesson intended to establish a close connection between the content objective and the language objective. The learning outcome for each task can serve as the building block for the next (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005) so that students can approach to expressing the content in the right way.

Assessment. The assessment process was not shown in the video, it was originally designed as an after-class process. I didn't give enough thought on the assessment for the activity. As a result, after I collected their work at the end of class, I felt a bit confused. I should have taken the sheets home, gone through them and found out where the students needed more instruction so that for our next class, they will have a chance to review their work.

Domain 3: Assessing

Standard 3: Teachers recognize the importance of and are able to gather and interpret information about learning and performance to promote the continuous intellectual and linguistic development of each learner. Teachers use knowledge of student performance to make decisions about planning and instruction “on the spot” and for the future. Teachers involve learners in determining what will be assessed and provide constructive feedback to learners, based on assessments of their learning.

Assessing is the important step for teachers to examine students' learning outcome and prepare further instructions based on the result of the assessment. What's more, assessing can also take place before the learning period for teachers to get to know students' knowledge base and English language proficiency (Brown, 2010). In all, assessment aims at providing more effective instructions for students to benefit their learning.

The artifact that I have chosen for this domain is the case study that I did in the course

Language Assessment of English Language Learners (ELLs) (Appendix C). In this case study, I assessed both my participant's learning environment at the broad level and different domains of my participant's content and language knowledge at the individual level. This case study has provided me with valuable experience of the significance of assessments and how different types of assessments link together to build thorough implications for the learner's learning process.

The Learner and Learning. The first part of the case study is the participant's cultural and linguistic background, which gives detailed analysis on how cultural elements may influence the participant's learning process. I did two sets of assessments for this part. The acculturation survey was created under the inspiration of Herrera et al. (2013), and I tried to design an authentic assessment based on my philosophy of teaching. Questions on this survey include the participant's impression of her past cultural and educational experience, which was conducted in a one-on-one form and in a low-stake way. The result of this survey gave me insights about my participant's funds of knowledge and her motivation towards the content subjects. More importantly, the survey helped me understand how my participant was adapting into her current living and studying environment and this has important implications on the instructional suggestions. The result of the survey questions, especially the drawings, reflects the process of me having contingent conversations and giving constructive feedback to my participant, so that she would be able to present her thoughts in a clearer way. Apart from the acculturation survey, I also did an observational protocol which is to record my participant's performance in and out of class according to a rubric. This helped me understand her inclination of communication with peers and it can further imply her grouping suggestions.

The Learning Environment. The third part of this case study is about analyzing the extent to which the school has met the state and federal requirements. The services and the learning environment that the school provides critically determines the level of achievement of ELLs in the

school. Based on my analysis, the school has met the state and federal requirements in the ELL placement procedure and the standardized language assessments. Within the classroom level, specific assessments on ELLs' listening and speaking skills are still lacking. Correspondingly, I have suggested a list of assessments including listening test and short answer questions at the end of the analysis paper.

The Curriculum. In the fourth part of the paper, I analyzed how my participant applies language in the content area, including reading and writing. According to their curriculum standard, students' reading level is tested through the running record assessment and it was the same assessment that I used. The writing sample that I collected is from their culminating task at the end of the unit, assessing whether students have achieved the curriculum goal. After the assessments, I concluded that my participant could adapt her language into the reading comprehension better than into writing.

The Assessment. Taking appropriate assessments and thinking about their implications on students' future instructions are both reflected in this case study. The second part of the paper shows how I assessed my participant's English language proficiency using the Student Oral Language Observational Matrix (SOLOM). Based on the interview oral sample that I collected, I analyzed her comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar and decided to place her at level 4 according to the rubric. In the last part of the paper, a detailed assessment plan is given based on the participant's performance in former assessments, with emphasis on the purpose for each suggested assessment and special focus on the areas that the participant needs improvements the most, which shows my ability of using the results of the assessments to make decisions about planning and instructions in the future.

Domain 4: Identity and Context

Standard 4: Teachers understand the importance of who learners are and how their communities, heritages and goals shape learning and expectations of learning. Teachers recognize the importance how context contributes to identity formation and therefore influences learning. Teachers use this knowledge of identity and settings in planning, instructing, and assessing.

Community literacy is an idea that struck me first after I began my study here at Vanderbilt. It is a concept that I had never thought of before yet was essential to teaching English as a foreign language. For second language learners, the environment they are living in plays a significant role in shaping their second language acquisition, including their ethnicity, cultural value, social economic status and so on (Hoff, 2006). Accompanied by the differences in their cultural background are the different community literacies for second language learners, referring to the knowledge and skills that they have gained in the out-of-school context. These out-of-school literacies can be incorporated in their language learning process and facilitate their language acquisition. Therefore, it is important for teachers to know ELLs' cultural background and take advantage of their out-of-school literacies.

The artifact for this domain is the *Community Literacy Project Report* (Appendix D) that I wrote for the course *Foundations for ELL Education*. The report came after our trip to local communities, including Casa Azafrán and some international supermarkets. The aim of the trip is to provide us some general ideas about local Hispanic communities and the report gives an analysis of what I found and how to leverage students' potential community literacies.

The Learning Environment. The overarching structure of the paper is to provide a deep investigation on the learning environment of ELLs in the local Hispanic community, combining on-the-spot observation and later online research. The first part of the paper talked about the historical presence of the local Hispanic group. It is important to know for teachers because

children's literacy development is largely linked to their former experience related to migration (Lam & Warriner, 2012). Therefore, the report that dig into the features of the Hispanic group by looking into their historical background intended to gain ELL teachers insights about how to create a more culture-friendly atmosphere for their students, which correspond with the idea of multiculturalism in my philosophy of teaching. The second part of the paper looked from the perspective of economic background of the local Hispanic group, which is more focused on individual families. Information like parents' jobs can help teachers to develop students' potential out-of-school literacies and promote their learning motivation, which shows my understanding of leveraging students' out-of-school literacies stated in my philosophy of teaching. The third part of the paper explored the daily environment of the local Hispanic group. This part aimed at developing the resources for local ELLs that teachers can take advantage of during their teaching process.

The Learners and Learning. Followed by a detailed analysis of the cultural and economic background of the local Hispanic group, one of the other major purposes of the paper is to provide implications for teachers based on the information. As mentioned earlier, for English language learners from different cultural groups, they possess with them different types of funds of knowledge that can be valuable resources for their language acquisition. Therefore, I discussed how to leverage what I know about their background to how I would teach based on that. Several ways are proposed in the paper, including showing respect and consideration to their culture, talking about some culture-related topics in class to arouse their motivation, make connections between what they know from their parents' jobs and what they learn, referring to the resources from their community centers and so on. This shows that I value the out-of-school literacies of ELL and try to make good use of them to benefit students' learning.

Domain 5: Language Proficiency

Standard 5: Teachers demonstrate proficiency in social, business/workplace and academic English. Proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing means that a teacher is functionally equivalent to a native speaker with some higher education.

There is no doubt that an English teacher should master the English language proficient enough to teach language learners. As a non-native English speaker, language barrier is one of the biggest and prioritized challenges that I should overcome in terms of being a good English teacher. Since my undergraduate study, I have never stopped training myself to master higher English language proficiency so as to realize my dream. Pursuing a master's degree in the United States has provided me with an excellent opportunity to greatly improve my English language skills, in both academic and non-academic areas.

In terms of academic language proficiency, my grades from undergraduate until now can demonstrate my qualification. I have achieved a total GPA of 3.7 out of 4.0 for my undergraduate degree. For my current graduate study, I achieved a full GPA up till now. My grades can speak for my ability in conducting academic topics and writing academic papers. What's more, my GRE score can also show my knowledge base in academic vocabulary and writing.

As for non-academic language proficiency, the best proof is that I am able to communicate fluently and easily with native speakers here in the United States. Besides, the TOEFL scores that I got also proves my abilities in listening, reading, speaking and writing.

Domain 6: Learning

Standard 6: Teachers draw on their knowledge of language and adult language learning to understand the processes by which learners acquire a new language in and out of classroom

settings. They use this knowledge to support adult language learning.

It is always important for language teachers to apply theories into practice. I have learned tons of theories regarding second language acquisition and it is hard to combine all of them into the teaching. In this case, drawing on some specific language theories may be more helpful to design instructions and support students' learning. For instance, during my course *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*, I have learned the idea of Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA), which stresses on the interpretive, interpersonal and presentational modes of communication. The three sub-domains are aligned within a single theme or content area, reflecting the manner in which students naturally acquire and use language in and out of the classroom (Adair-Hauck et al., 2015). In the instructional activity that I planned for 2nd grade ELL learners (Appendix E), I designed the first activity following the IPA mode, which shows my effort of connecting the theory with practice.

The Learner and Learning. The IPA prototype is a multi-task assessment which is framed within a single thematic context (Adair-Hauck et al., 2015). It looks at learners' language learning from three domains: the interpretive skills, the interpersonal skills and the presentational skills. The three sets of skills correlate with each other and build the learners' overall language ability all together. I regard this theory as very helpful especially under the Chinese-teaching context, since our past English learning experience in China laid too much focus on our interpretive skills and neglected our interpersonal skills. Such counterbalance has led to the shortcoming of many Chinese students in English oral speaking and communication skills. The artifact shows my first try of the IPA model and it is also something that I will incorporate in my future teaching.

The Learning Environment. By creating the assessment based on the IPA model, I am advocating for a learning environment that is standard and open to individual ideas. By "standard",

I mean students should be fully aware of what they are expected and that they are developing their particular types of skills during different phase of their study. Although language skills are inter-related, it is still important for students to focus on certain specific types of skills so that they can have a clearer vision of how to improve. For instance, the first two parts of the assessment focus on interpretive skills. So, when students are doing the first two parts, they should focus more on how to comprehend in a good way instead of put down whatever they think.

The Curriculum. As far as I'm concerned, the IPA model can fit well into different types of curriculum. Since it is focused on ways of assessing rather than the content of assessing, it would be easy for teachers to fill in the content (i.e. target vocabulary, target sentence structures, etc.) within the frame of the model. However, it is important for teachers to apply the proper level of difficulty while designing this assessment.

The Assessment. Like mentioned above, the activity itself is an assessment and it measures students interpretive, interpersonal and presentational skills of a certain content area. The assessment that I designed is divided into four parts. The first two parts aim at testing students' level of comprehension to the target vocabulary. In the first part, students should match pictures with the meaning and the second part is to summarize the main idea. The third part of the assessment is an interaction process during which students should tell the teacher their guess for the meaning of the words based on the context, which focuses on interpersonal skills. And the last part is presentational-skills assessing during which students should show their understanding towards the target vocabulary. Since the activity is designed to 2nd grade ELL, its level of difficulty is very low. It can be further adjusted according to students' English language proficiency. For instance, for adult learners, I would raise the level of difficulty for the interpretive tasks since the cognitive ability for adults is more mature. As for the interpersonal and presentational tasks, I would set them with lower-stake tasks due to adults' less tendency to express themselves compared

to young children.

Domain 7: Content

Standard 7: Teachers understand that language learning is most likely to occur when learners are trying to use the language for genuine communicative purposes. Teachers understand that the content of the language course is the language that learners need in order to listen, to talk about, to read and write about a subject matter or content area. Teachers design their lessons to help learners acquire the language they need to successfully communicate in the subject or content areas they want/need to learn about.

Language is a tool of communication. However, it is not always the case when language is taught in school. Based on my personal experience, a major goal of our English learning before college is to pass the exams. During this process, the nature of the language is oftentimes being neglected. As mentioned in my philosophy of teaching, interaction plays a very helpful role during one's language acquisition and providing learners with authentic context for communication is one of the teacher's priority concern. Language teachers should be very clear with their goal of teaching. However diverse it can be, it should always bare its nature of using language as a communicative tool. In the school setting, it means that learners need the language to communicate the subject content. In the daily life context, it means that learners can express their thought and ideas.

The artifact that I used for this domain is the project that I did for the course *Design of Learning Environment with a Focus on Play*. It was a very inspiring course for me because it provided me with insights about the ways to look at language learning in a different perspective—how learners acquire language under authentic context and through effective communication.

Based on what we learned, my team has designed this game that can be implemented within the classroom setting. Basically, it is a talking game that involves many interactions among participants. The detailed rules of the game are shown in Appendix F.

The Learner and Learning. One of the most important goals of this project is to increase students' intrinsic motivation in learning English and speaking English. Intrinsic motivation refers to the performance of an activity for its inherent satisfaction rather than for some separate consequences (Wentzel & Brophy, 2014). In terms of this game, its form and setting can create a sense of freshness to students and it encourages players to resolve the ambiguity and obtain more information. Throughout the whole game, there are multiple laps designed for players to express their ideas and infer what has happened when they were closing their eyes, which demonstrate my application of promoting learners' engagement stated in my philosophy of teaching. Scaffolding is provided through a sheet that contains some of the useful language structures for argumentation. Therefore, students are consciously applying their language to exchange ideas through the interaction with others.

The Learning Environment. Referring back to the theory of constructivism, the individual mind is always a part of a social and cultural milieu (Alexander, 2006). In terms of this game, it creates a shared cultural value among the teenagers, simply because it is played by the teenagers and the setting is familiar to them. Therefore, when students are playing, they are also potentially adopting a schema of talking and behaving. They make judgments based on the schema and modify their way of expressing and way of behaving accordingly. However, they still form their own unique way of thinking and behaving. After all, every student constructs knowledge in a different way. In sum, the project has good demonstration of implementing social constructivism based on my philosophy of teaching.

The Curriculum. As far as I'm concerned, there are chances that this game can be adapted into

the curriculum of English teaching in China. In traditional Chinese classroom settings, teachers are lecturing for 90% of the time or even more. Students have few opportunities to express themselves. For this game, the core is to talk. Students are fully immersed in an English talking system, which everyone is given a fair chance to talk and express themselves at the end of each round.

Meanwhile, the game is especially appropriate for teaching argumentations, direct and indirect speech, opinion writing and so forth, because it highly involves logical thinking.

The Assessment. The project that we designed doesn't include an assessment part for teachers, but I have thought about ways how language teachers can leverage students' performance in the game to facilitate their teaching. For instance, teachers can record the process of the game, have students review their part and do self-assessment based on their performance. This helps students to reflect about the areas that they did well and the areas that requires further improvement. Besides, teachers can also record down the diversity of sentence structures used in each student's speech and see whether the student is using the target vocabulary and grammar in a correct way.

Domain 8: Commitment and Professionalism

Standard 8: Teachers continue to grow in their understanding of the relationship of second language teaching and learning to the community of English language teaching professionals, the broader teaching community, and communities at large, and use these understandings to inform and change themselves and these communities.

Classrooms are never the only place for learning a language. Language is acquired through the learner's interaction with the environment every second and everywhere. Therefore, it requires that language teachers should not only scaffold students' learning within the classroom setting, but also facilitate students in their learning outside of the classroom. In order to achieve that, it is

important for teachers to build connections with students' local community. As someone from a foreign culture myself who want to know the language learning environment here, I learned a lot from the school investigation experience in the first semester's *Foundations for ELL Education* course. I went to Haywood Elementary School for a one-day observation, during which I got to know the school environment and the classroom settings. The artifact for this domain is the report paper that I wrote based on the investigation (Appendix G).

The Learner and Learning. As my focus for the investigation is on the ELL group, I paid specially attention to the diversity of the cultural background of the students. As it is shown on the school website, the percentage of the ELL population is 59%, which is very high. Within the classroom setting, various home languages appear. This challenges the teachers' perspective on multilingualism and cultural diversity. The classroom atmosphere that the teacher creates directly reflects his/her attitude of treating different culture. As mentioned in the paper, in one of the classrooms that I observed, students were not allowed to speak their home language at all. They should be speaking only English. This may cause students feeling uncomfortable and that their culture isn't respected enough. It may also affect their communication in some way. Therefore, I have brought up a suggestion at the end of the paper to inform teachers of the Culture Responsive Pedagogy so that they can better incorporate students' home culture into their teaching.

The Learning Environment. In terms of the learning environment, I have established a deeper understanding of building classroom environment in the real scenario. I observed how teachers assign work to students and how students are doing their work carefully. What amazed me was how the teachers could balance between giving students' own control of what they did and keep them regulated at the same time. For me, it seems a very hard thing to do. Then I realized it is due to the classroom atmosphere that had been formed since the beginning. I also talked to some of the teachers and learned that it is important for students to understand what they are expected to do

and how they should do that. With this baseline set, students can leverage their different knowledge and skills and have more control on their learning.

The Curriculum. Before starting the investigation, I bore some questions in mind about the curriculum design here in the U.S. public schools. I was mostly curious about how it is different from China. I got some of the answers while observing a geography class for the 3rd grade. Due to the ELL population in the class, the teacher taught in a way that combined both language instructions and subject-related concepts. As far as I'm concerned, this is a reflection of how their curriculum is designed. Instead of dividing all the subjects very clearly like in China, their subjects are more inter-related with one another. In this case, it creates a better environment for ELLs to apply their language in the content areas.

The Assessment. When I asked one of the teachers how the ELLs were assessed, she showed me the WIDA assessment book. It was somehow different from the exams that I had in China. Comparatively, the assessment includes stronger connection between students' content knowledge and language skills. According the principles brought up by Brown (2010), the WIDA assessment gives clear directions for scoring and evaluation in its technical report and it also has a set of uniform rubrics for scoring and evaluation. The rubric clearly defined what students are able to do at different levels in different domains, throughout discourse dimension, sentence dimension and word/phrase dimension. In this way, students' performances are sub-divided into different assessable components, which increases the reliability of the assessment.

Application to Practice

Two years of graduate study here at Vanderbilt University has equipped me with the power to head toward my dream of becoming an English teacher. With my philosophy of teaching as the theoretical frame and all the competency that I have developed according to the TESOL standard, I will look ahead into my career path and talk about my vision for the future in this section.

How I View Myself as a Teacher.

For the future, I view myself as a teacher who values my students' culture and family background and is able to leverage their background. Within the Chinese teaching context, it is less likely that students would have as diverse cultural background as it is in the U.S. However, difference in their family environment and community environment would still exist. Especially, the class is likely to embed different dialects. As a language teacher, I will show respect to students' hometown and try to incorporate contents that are related to their hometown so as to arouse their interest. I would also communicate with their parents to know about their family background and develop their funds of knowledge while teaching.

For the future, I view myself as a teacher who can create authentic context and sufficient opportunities for my students to make interactions. There is a common stereotype for Chinese English classrooms that teachers lay too much focus on grammar and vocabulary. And I want to break this stereotype by truly equipping students with motivation and ability to communicate so that when they step out of the classroom they will have the confidence to speak out their thoughts in English.

For the future, I view myself less of a "teacher" but more of a "facilitator". In my class, students have their own control of their learning. For instance, they can choose the books that they read, the style that they present a certain task, the topic for their projects, etc. I won't determine everything for my students. Instead, I will give them a general direction to follow and have them

explore everything on the track. During the process, I will provide them with necessary resource and scaffolding. In this way, they will gain more subjective initiative and learn not only the knowledge itself but also the process of acquiring the knowledge.

What Challenges I might Face.

Of course, the blueprint that I built for myself is not going to be easy. There are some challenges that I anticipate.

Firstly, the public-school system in China doesn't give teachers much autonomy to teach in their own way. There is a fixed syllabus to follow and teachers usually teach according to the syllabus. However, the syllabus is highly examination-oriented. That is to say, teachers teach to the exam, instead of the true application of English. This has confined the flexibility of teachers' teaching style and content.

Secondly, different from American classrooms, the size of Chinese classrooms is usually twice as big, with 50 or 60 students within one classroom. This could be a big challenge for me to manage the whole class well. Especially, for group activities and whole-class activities, it requires higher skills for classroom management. Therefore, I should be more fully prepared to handle a class in a bigger scale.

Thirdly, with more number of students within one classroom, students' English language proficiency varies to a larger extent, so are their learning habits. Dealing with students with very different language proficiency and different learning needs could really be a challenge for me. There will be many things to consider and to balance, for instance, how to make students at both higher levels and lower levels learn something based on a similar content, etc.

How to Cope with Future Challenges

In order to cope with future challenges, I have consolidated my determination to keep learning and improving my knowledge range and personal skills for being an English teacher. For

the first challenge, I will start collecting authentic texts and materials from now on so as to extend my future teaching beyond textbooks. In this way, I can make full use of my autonomy in classroom instructions. For the second challenge, I intend to develop more into the field of classroom management and learn about practical ways to keep classroom activities and learning environments in a well-organized way. For the third challenge, I will read more research papers and keep in touch with the prestigious professors at Vanderbilt about ways to deal with differentiation. In my future class, I will group my students in a scientific way that they can not only have chance to learn from each other but also receive the proper level of academic instructions. I firmly believe that with my strong faith and unremitting effort, I will become a qualified English teacher in the future.

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Appendix

Appendix A. Lesson Plan for Practicum Observation

<p>Topic: Whether the colonists and the native Americans should share the land?</p>	<p>Class: J.E. Moss Elementary School 4th grade</p>	<p>Date: 11/09/2017</p>
<p>Content Objectives: SWBAT form their opinions on whether the colonists and the native Americans should share land.</p>	<p>Language Objectives: - SWBAT use argumentation strategies within a debate. - SWBAT express opinion and reasons in a logical way. - SWBAT critically think about others' arguments.</p>	
<p>Key Sentence Structures: - We should admit that... - I'm (not) convinced by what someone said about... - Could you elaborate more on...?</p>	<p>Materials: - Group assigning sheet - White board and marker - A "talking stick" - A copy of sentence structures - Exit tickets</p>	
<p>Higher-Order Questions: What is the relationship between the European colonists and the native Americans?</p>		
<p>Time: 14min -3min -3min -2min -6min</p>	<p>Activities Building Background (1) Introduce the task for today; introduce what is a debate like; bring up the debate topic. (2) Students recall the stories that they've learned related to each side of the topic. - <i>The Diary of Catharine Carey Logan</i> (Model) - The story of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson - <i>The Sign of the Beaver</i> - Other (3) Assign pairs; give instructions on the pair discussion. (4) Pair discussion.</p>	

<p>18min</p> <p>-3min</p> <p>-10min</p> <p>-5min</p> <p>25min</p> <p>-5min</p> <p>-20min</p>	<p>Pre-task Scaffolding</p> <p>(1) Have students sit by two large groups, pick out a group leader for each group.</p> <p>(2) Students discuss what they've talked about in pairs and come up with 3 questions for the other side.</p> <p>(3) Teacher explains the rules and shows some sentence structures that are helpful in the debate.</p> <p>Student Activities</p> <p>(1) The leaders of each group start by stating their opinion and bring up the questions they have prepared.</p> <p>(2) Free debate: students in each side take turns to express his/her opinions and give reasons.</p> <p>(3) Teacher should be regulating the debate process, assessing students' participation and managing time control.</p> <p>Review and Assessment</p> <p>(1) Students write their exit ticket on what they feel about the activity and what have they learned.</p>
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Appendix C. Final Analysis Project

Part 1—Participant’s Cultural and Linguistic Background

My participant is a 4th grade ELL students at J. E. Moss Elementary School (due to personal privacy I will use the alias “Bara” instead). Bara was born in the Nashville, Tennessee in 2007. However, both her parents and grandparents are from Mexico. She was first enrolled in Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) in July 2015 at McGavock Elementary School and transferred to J. E. Moss Elementary School in August 2017. Her W-APT score when first enrolled in MNPS is Level 1 in terms of speaking, writing, reading and

listening, which shows that she had very limited English language proficiency (ELP) upon her first enrollment in school in the United States.

According to the Home Language Survey documented in her file, she is living with her grandparents and her native language is Spanish. At home, she speaks Spanish for most of the time. But it also indicates that she writes in English for 50% of time. Besides, she has been to school in Mexico for a while, but there were no interruptions in her overall schooling experience.

Acculturation Survey. To further understand Bara's cultural and linguistic background, I conducted an acculturation survey inspired by Herrera et al. (2013). The survey consists of a paper sheet with some educational-background related questions (see Appendix A) and an informal conversation while she is taking the survey. I included many drawing options in the survey sheet, aiming at arousing her interest as well as facilitating her to express her real feeling (Alexander, 2006). Meanwhile, by talking to her occasionally and asking her to elaborate on her drawings, I can also gather the oral language sample for her ELP assessment.

The result of the survey turned out to be very interesting to me because it seems that Bara is not that familiar with Mexican culture as I expected. For the first question which asked her to draw one or two things that were typical for Mexico, she hesitated for a while before starting her drawing. I was assuming that she might draw a taco or some traditional Mexican artifacts. It turned out that the building structure in her final drawing came from a picture somewhere she had seen and the retailer who is selling balloons is something existed in her memory about the streets in Mexico. As I see it, Bara is not establishing her identity as a complete Mexican either a complete American. It is somewhere in between. Such mixture of

social identity would greatly influence her attitude as an English learner and the social interactions that she does (Peirce, 1995).

During conversation, Bara showed that she went to Mexico at 1 year old and stayed there for 6 years, during which she went to school from kindergarten to third grade. This is very important information to consider when it comes to her former educational background. The divergence in different school systems is one of the main factors that influence her level of acculturation here in the United States (Herrera et al., 2013). The second question of the survey is about her impression towards her school experience in Mexico. She explained her drawing by saying that the school was surrounded by walls and electrical fences and different areas in the school were distinctly separated. When it came to the differences between schools in Mexico and schools here in the United States, the major differences that came up in her mind is the freedom of students and the way of teaching. She said that students here in the United States had more freedom to go out while schools in Mexico had walls and fences that prevented students from going out. In terms of the way of teaching, the classes she had in Mexico are in a more rigid form where students sat in rows and usually had little opportunity for pair or group discussion. Meanwhile, the type of classes that she has is more diverse in the United States. For instance, in Mexico she didn't have music class or P.E. class. In general, she didn't enjoy the school in Mexico very much. By contrast, the school here in the United States felt more interesting to her. Such divergence in her schooling experience serves as a strong catalyst for her in a way that she is more likely to form a more positive and optimistic attitude towards her current life. But meanwhile, her former education in Mexico is not as high-qualified as the elementary education in the United States. Together with language barrier, she was lagging

behind many of her peers when she enrolled in MNPS in the year 2015. That's also the reason why she said that she went back for one grade level when she went to school here.

Question 3 to Question 9 on the survey sheet are about her current study experience. When asked about what she was good at in school, she drew her desk with a book on it indicating that she was good at reading. And what I was both glad and surprised to see is that she couldn't think of anything that was hard for her in school. Although later in Question 9 she did circle that she was worried about social studies, I was still glad that on the one hand, the class was having their social studies individual project presented on that day. On the other hand, this indicates that she is generally feeling good about her current school experience that challenges are not on top of her mind. Except for social studies, she is feeling "happy" about language arts and "very happy" about math and reading. Generally, she is feeling "happy" about learning in her current school, which I was very glad to see because this can promote her motivation in learning.

Observational Protocol. Besides doing an acculturation survey, I also assessed Bara's level of acculturation according to the Level of Acculturation Observation Rubric (Herrera et al., 2013). By observing the physical indicators (Herrera et al., 2013) during her school time, I can get to know her acculturative stress or shock from another perspective.

According to my observation, Bara's level of affect is usually above medium with occasional rise and fall. On the particular day of my observation, they were preparing for the social studies individual project. It was kind of a challenge for them, which I thought might be one of the reasons that dragged her mood down a little bit. Other times when she is not having a very high mood may be when they have been lectured for a long time or when she is having dispute with her classmates. It's understandable that children's concentration cannot last for

that long compared to adults. It also shows that she cares about her relationship with her classmates. Usually, when I came to class in the morning she would greet me with smile and a little bit of shyness. And when she feels like she is confident about the questions that the teacher gives them, she would not hide her excitement, which shows that she has the desire to learn. Generally, though a bit of shy, Bara has a well-developed emotional status which set a good foundation for her academic achievement.

In Bara's class, almost all the students are at around WIDA Level 4, which means that they can deal with daily conversations pretty well already. So, language barrier doesn't become a major reason that influences their interaction with each other. I gave her a 3 because she doesn't interact with her classmates in a high frequency. Sometimes when her classmates came talk to her, she would respond to them and had a small conversation with them. But she seldom starts a conversation. For around 40% to 50% of the time after class she is staying alone, which I think is greatly due to her personality that she is kind of shy. Besides, her daily interaction with her peers also depends on her mood. It is apparent that she became more active when she was in a high mood and much more silent when she was worried or thinking about something else. In terms of the topic she talked with her peers of a similar culture, oftentimes it is not culturally specific. They talked about their dressing, some of the things that they found interesting within the classroom for most of the time and sometimes their study work, too. Therefore, I would say Bara does not show a very strong cultural empathy with her classmates who have a Mexican background.

In terms of her interaction with peers of a different culture, I think is relatively lower than her level of interaction with peers of a similar culture. I noticed that she seems to have a close relationship with the girl sitting next to her, who has a Mexican background, too. For

around 40% to 50% of her interaction after class, she was talking to her. Such familiarity might serve as a reason why she seldom talks to peers with a different background than her because she is not familiar with them. A noticeable example would be when a new student from Arab joined their class, she never talked to her once during my observation. However, she did show interest in Chinese cultural when I told her that I was from China. Once she asked me about the food in China, specifically, whether there was sushi in China. Another time when they were doing their research on the animal that they like and the girl next to her chose panda, she showed great interest and asked several questions on the appearance of the panda when I went by. Generally, I think her language ability enables her to communicate effectively with her peers even of a different culture. She also has the interest to know about a different culture except for she would not speak it out sometimes.

When it comes to her performance in learning activities, I rated her a high score because I think she is actively engaged in the learning process. During group learning when they are at their centers, she can always keep their task in mind and keep following the reading. Once, a boy in her group got distracted and began to talk about something that is irrelevant to their learning. She decisively pointed out that they should be working on the question. During lecturing time, she is able to listen to the teacher and other classmates carefully. When they are asked to copy the notes down, she can keep up pretty well, even if she is sitting at the back being far away from the screen. Although occasionally she might be distracted, the class was indeed long sometimes. Referring back to the acculturation survey, I think her active participation and engagement in learning activities is largely due to her positive attitude towards learning at her current school. Being confident in many of the subjects that they are learning is lies a solid basis for her motivation and engagement in all kinds of learning activities.

Based on the acculturation survey and the observational protocol, I have identified Bara's level of acculturation at the "Humor" stage in the U-Curve Hypothesis (Herrera et al., 2013), demonstrating that she is no longer feeling disheartened or overwhelmed by the American culture. Instead, she has a sense of sociocultural cognition that recognizes cultural diversity.

Born in the United States with half of the years living in Mexico and other half living in the United States up till now, Bara does not show a strong sense of belonging regarding the Mexican culture. But this does not mean that she doesn't recognize her Mexican family background. She realizes that there's a part of her that inherits the Mexican culture, but she is adapting very well in her current schooling experience. That's what I think one of her biggest advantages in terms of her acculturation process.

In terms of the classroom and school environment, I think J. E. Moss Elementary School is providing a supportive environment for EL learners like Bara. The school embraces a high population of EL learners and provides special training program for ELLs. A detailed analysis of the school environment will be conducted in the third part of this project. As for classroom environment, the classroom norm is set to be both free and disciplinary. When students are having time within their centers, they have the freedom to choose the place where they want to be and some level of freedom to choose what task they want to accomplish. During lecture time, they also have the freedom to choose whether to sit on the carpet or stay in their chair. This can make a difference because it gives students a sense of control in their own way of study, which can further lead to higher concentration and learning efficiency (Pintrich, 2000). However, sometimes it also occurs that students lack self-control and get very loud without doing things that they are supposed to do. This seems quite a dilemma for me that how to

balance freedom and discipline within the classroom setting. But generally, I think the school and classroom environment is supportive for EL learners.

Part 2—Participant’s Stage of ELP

WIDA Assessment. By looking into Bara’s files and accessing the MNPS Power School system under the help of the teacher, I got her scores in the WIDA Access Placement Test (W- APT) upon her entry in the MNPS and the scores she had for the WIDA ACCESS test in two consecutive academic years.

Bara completed her W-APT proficiency test upon her enrollment in MNPS in the second grade. The scoring sheet shows that she is graded as Level 1 in all the four domains of language proficiency, including speaking, writing, listening and reading. For the speaking test, it shows that she couldn’t provide responses for 2 out of 7 total questions and for the rest of the 5 questions, it is graded as “Not Administered”, which I suppose means that she is either providing no responses or giving the response in an intelligible way. A total number of 0 answers that meet or exceed the level expectation made her a Level 1 in English speaking. According to the WIDA standard, Level 1 English speakers can name objects, people and pictures, and answer WH- questions (ACCESS score reports, 2011). In Bara’s case, there was even less what she was able to do. The test doesn’t show whether she understood the questions or not. It is possible that she could barely speak English.

There’s little information about her performance in the W-APT writing test. All that I got was a “Writing PL Score” of 1, which shows that she is able to label objects, pictures, and diagrams, and illustrate a response to a prompt (ACCESS score reports, 2011).

As for the listening test, it shows on her scoring sheet that she scored 0 for all the four questions in Part A. Part B, Part C and Part D were all skipped because they were further beyond her ability. As a result, she was rated as Level 1. However, based on the scoring sheet, I don't think she was able to even understand one-step oral directions, and state pictures, words, or phrases (ACCESS score reports, 2011). Level 1 is just the minimum proficiency level score available. It doesn't mean that she could meet the criteria at that time.

Similarly, her writing was also scored Level 1 with no correct answers to any of the questions in Part A. Therefore, I can conclude that upon her entry to MNPS in second grade, she was definitely at the "Entering" stage according to the WIDA standard, without showing any fundamental knowledge to English literacy.

Despite a low starting point for her English language learning at MNPS, Bara's WIDA ACCESS scores in 2016 and 2017 have shown significant progress in her ELP development. One year after her enrollment, she achieved an overall raw score of 3.2 and a scale score of 295. She scored 3.9 for comprehension, 3.9 for listening, 3 for literacy, 3.6 for oral, 3.8 for reading, 3.1 for speaking and 2.7 for writing. It was astonishing to me that she could improve so rapidly. One of the reasons is definitely due to the EL services that the school has provide, which give EL learners a supportive and effective environment for their English language development. Besides, compared to English as a foreign language learners, who learn within their home language context, ELLs under a native learning environment are receiving more authentic input (Knutson, 2003) and have more opportunities to apply English to daily settings. This is especially crucial for language learners at the beginning stage of their language learning, because it can set a solid foundation for their later language development.

Two years after Bara entered MNPS, she achieved a total raw score of 3.9 and a scale score of 338 in the WIDA ACCESS test. She had 5.4 for comprehension, 6 for listening, 3.5 for literacy, 4.9 for oral, 3.2 for reading, 3.3 for speaking and 3.6 for writing. Compared to her scores in 2016, she had improved in all areas except for reading. The areas which had seen noticeable development are comprehension, listening, oral and writing. The comprehension score is a summation of a combination of 70% of the reading score and 30% of the listening score (ACCESS score reports, 2011). Rated at the “Bridging” level, Bara can make good interpretation for what she sees and what she hears in English. In terms of the listening score, she is already at the highest level of reaching, which means that she can almost perform as a native English speaker. The oral score is also a combination of 50% of the listening score and 50% of the speaking score. Thus, it also shows Bara’s development in English as a round skill. As for writing, she has reached the “Emerging” level to the “Developing” level, where she is able to use simple and expanded sentence structures, some general and specific language related to content area and provide generally comprehensible writing (ACCESS score reports, 2011). For literacy and speaking, there’s slight improvement in her scores throughout one year. Literacy score is composed of 50% of the reading score and 50% of the writing score. And a Level 3 for speaking shows her ability to use simple and expanded oral sentences, to provide knowledge of related content and generate generally comprehensible and fluent utterances (ACCESS score reports, 2011). As for reading, Bara had a regress of 0.6 regarding her score. But her score was still fluctuating within the “Developing” level. According to the WIDA principle, Level 3 readers are able to generate related ideas specific to related content areas and understand compound and some complex grammatical constructions and words and expressions that with common collocations and idioms across content areas.

Validity and Reliability. According to the annual technical report in 2013-2014, several steps are taken to ensure the reliability and consistency of the test. First, all test takers are provided comparable opportunities to demonstrate their ELP. Second, all items and tasks are scored consistently for all test takers and they work appropriately together to measure each test taker's ELP. Besides, the same scale scores obtained by test takers in different years retain the same meaning. And the assessment measures the ELP of test takers in a fair and unbiased manner. According to the principles brought up by Brown (2010), the assessment gives clear directions for scoring and evaluation in its technical report and it also has a set of uniform rubrics for scoring and evaluation. The rubric clearly defined what students are able to do at different levels in different domains, throughout discourse dimension, sentence dimension and word/phrase dimension. In this way, students' performances are sub-divided into different assessable components, which increases the reliability of the assessment. Statistically, the reliability of the WIDA assessment is identified as Cronbach's alpha, with an overall reliability of .930, which is very high. The reliability for the listening component is .645. The reliability for the reading component is .770. The reliability for the speaking component is .904 and the reliability for the writing component is .920. It is stated that Cronbach's alpha may be low if some items are measuring something other than what the majority of the items are measuring (Annual technical report, 2015). It also gives the reason why the Cronbach's alpha is lower in the listening test. Due to a shorter test period, the listening test has a lower heterogeneity within the group of students tested, which can affect its reliability coefficient (Annual technical report, 2015). In terms of validity, the annual report has provided evidence that supports the appropriateness and adequacy of the interpretations and decisions made about test takers on the basis of their performance on a test

(Annual technical report, 2015). One of the theoretical framework of the assessment is the Assessment Use Argument (AUA), which consists of several steps that connect test design and administration to intended and actual score interpretation and consequences. The AUA shows a backward process starting from the expected consequences. Starting from consequence, there are decisions, interpretations, assessment records, assessment performance, design and plan. This is a scientifically organized procedure to ensure that the test can measure exactly what it proposes to measure and that it involves performance that samples the test's criterion (Brown, 2010). Meanwhile, the test offers useful and meaningful information about test takers' ability because all the four domain of language proficiency are tested within different contexts, which reflects test takers' round English skills. Little statistical information was found in its annual report regarding the validity of the test. But since it is adopted within a nationwide scope, I think the WIDA ACCESS should be valid enough.

Student Oral Language Observational Matrix. Besides getting access to Bara's WIDA scores, I have also conducted an observational protocol in the form of a short interview. Based on the samples that I collected, I decided to use the Student Oral Language Observational Matrix (SOLOM). I choose this assessment because it's exclusively measuring students' oral language skills, which can be perfectly adapted to Bara's performance during the interview.

For her comprehension, I decided to give her a 4. During our interview, she was keeping up with my prompts and questions fairly well. For most of the yes/no questions, she could provide a quick and clear answer. For other questions, she could give further explanation for 70% of the time, which means that she understood the questions well. For instance, when I asked her about the time when she transferred from the school in Mexico to the school here,

she said she was sent back for one grade here because it was different here. Besides, when I asked about the food that she often had, she first talked about what her family would go out to eat and then mentioned that she liked egg and fries, which shows that she can stay relevant to the question. But it also occurred several times that she could not connect the questions together. For instance, when I asked her “Which grade were you in?” after talking about when she went back to Mexico. She said “4th grade”, which was where she is at currently. I had to clarify that the question was about her time back in Mexico. Overall, she can understand nearly everything at normal speech, although occasional repetition may be necessary.

In terms of fluency, I also decided to give her a Level 4 because her speech in during the whole interview and in classroom discussions is generally fluent, with occasionally lapses while she needs to search for the correct expression. During the interview, she expressed herself in a continuous and coherent way. Generally, there was proper pause within between sentences, with only 3 to 4 times when she stopped for “Uh...” for a longer while before continued to say something.

From the perspective of the vocabulary, I rated Bara as Level 4, because she shows adequate vocabulary knowledge for daily communication. She has a good mastery of Tier 1 words like “happy”, “different”, “annoying”, “draw”, “carrot” and so on. Meanwhile, she is also able to produce some of the Tier 2 words including “escape”, “electrical”, “handle”, “recess” and so on. Although there is little evidence to show that she used certain words inappropriately, there’s still a gap between her current vocabulary level and that of a native speaker, concerning the variety of vocabulary used and the ability to use idioms and slangs.

Among the five domains of the SOLOM chart, pronunciation is what Bara needs the most attention on. Under the influence of her home language, Spanish, she always mixed some

sound pairs. For instance, for the sound /v/, she often pronounced it as /b/, as in “TV” and “very”. For the sound /z/, she often pronounced it as /s/, as in “because”. Meanwhile, her pronunciation for some of the vowels also needs to be further improved. It seems that she is having trouble pronouncing the diphthong /əu/, which she sometimes uttered as /ʌ/ as in “social”. In general, I have to pay much attention while she is talking in order to understand her pronunciation. With that done, her utterances are overall comprehensible with little misuse of vocabulary.

When it comes to grammar, I rated her as Level 4. During the interview, Bara showed good mastery of grammatical knowledge. She could use complete sentences with correct grammatical structures for most of the time. For around 60% of the time she would use simple sentences like “I don’t like sushi. I like carrots.” For some other time, she was able to use more complex sentence structures including the clause, for instance, “That’s where the boys eat”. Occasionally, she might make some errors like “My grandma and grandpa watches...” and “The weekend, I wake up...”. But these errors do not obscure meaning.

In all, I think Bara is close to Level 4 according to the SOLOM standard. Her ELP is proficient enough for daily conversations and classroom discussions but may still be inadequate concerning academic learning. Besides, Bara is still in the period of translanguage (Byrnes, & Wasik, 2012). With sufficient scaffolding, she will move closer and closer to the ELP as a native speaker.

Part 3—State and Federal Assessment Requirements

According to the ESSA, all students who may be English learners are assessed for such status within 30 days of enrollment in a school in the State (ESSA Title III, Part A, Subpart 1).

In Metro Nashville Public Schools, there has been a set of fixed procedures that new students take when they first enroll in the school. There is a Home Language Survey that is required for all incoming students to determine in first place whether a student may need EL services. After looking into Bara's files, I found the original copy of her Home Language Survey (Appendix C). The survey shows that Bara's native language is Spanish and also the frequency of her speaking Spanish at home. I also found Bara's W-APT score as stated in Part 2 and her MNPS Non- English Language Background Student Data Folder, which identified her as an "Active EL" (Appendix D). Besides, Bara is at 4th grade right now, which is proper for her age. All these comply with the Tennessee state requirements that students should be assessed for their language background (English Learner Assessments web) and be placed in academic study that fits their needs (Pray, 2017).

According to the Tennessee Rules and Regulations, students whose first language is other than English and who are limited in their English language proficiency be provided with a specially designed alternative language program (English as a Second Language web). J. E. Moss Elementary School does comply with that regulation for the EL services that the school provides. As I observed, the Guided Reading session is a part of the program which is specially designed for ELLs. Meanwhile, they also have sessions for language arts, where they may learn morphology and syntax knowledge. Besides, EL students also get to be pulled out to different teachers for their individualized language training. These services form a supportive environment for EL learners. Except for English language services, J. E. Moss Elementary School also provides music class, art class and physical education class for all students including the ELLs (Pray, 2017), which corresponds with the state requirements, too.

Speaking of how EL students are monitored throughout the term, there are various types of assessment that the school has implemented. What comes first is the WIDA ACCESS test, which assesses students' English language proficiency and is required by the state regulations. As previously mentioned, I was able to get access to Bara's WIDA ACCESS scores for 2016 and 2017. Besides, according to my interview with my mentor teacher, the school also conduct TN Ready and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). These two assessments aim at assessing students' academic achievement, which is an important indicator to consider in terms of their personal development. Considering that TN Ready is required by the state while NAEP is not necessarily required, the school's effort in monitoring each students' language and academic development as detailed as possible can be seen.

During the interview with my mentor teacher, I also recorded some other methods that she uses to better meet the needs of her students, especially EL learners. Some of the low-stake assessments that she often uses are the Text-Level Assessment (TLA), the "fast testing" and the "map testing". Basically, these assessments are typically targeting at students' reading levels. They give information on the proper level that the students should have for their Guided Reading session and what skills they need to work on. And they are conducted formatively, which can assess students' incremental reading development. Meanwhile, students have a culminating task which is mainly focusing on writing at the end of each unit. For listening and speaking, my mentor teacher mentioned that currently there are no specific assessments to measure student' listening and speaking skill, which I think is something the school can further work on. Except for that, I think the students' needs are well being met at J. E. Moss Elementary School.

Part 4—Participant's Language Use within Content Areas

Except for receiving EL services during their RTI session, Bara also has classes of guided

reading, language arts, math, social linguistics and so forth. During these classes, she has the opportunity to apply her language use to different content subjects. It is important to examine how ELLs learner other content subjects through language because it is directly linked to their academic success. And I have used two sets of assessment in this part so as to get a more comprehensive view of Bara's language use in different domains.

Running Record Assessment. The running record assessment is one type of assessment that is used to assess student's reading behavior as they read from developmentally appropriate texts. I use this assessment because their teacher has used it as a routine and students are familiar with it. More importantly, this assessment not only records students' reading ability with regard to each word, but also assesses how students use their prior knowledge and how they modify their understanding after reading the text (Hurley & Tinajero, 2001).

The text that I used is called Not Too Cold for a Polar Bear. That's under my mentor's suggestion considering Bara's current reading level. It shows on the recording sheet that she is now at level P. And this text is marked as a level-Q text, which is one level higher than Bara's current level. It makes perfect sense to assess Bara's reading comprehension with this text because it can monitor the progress that she has made.

In terms of the fluency of her reading, I hesitated between a score of 2 and 3 and finally decided on 2. Generally speaking, she could read primarily in large, meaningful phrases or word groups and her reading was mostly smooth. However, the reason why I finally decided to give her a 2 is that sometimes her pause was not contingent with the author's meaning and punctuation. There was sometimes a lack of pauses between two successive sentences and she seemed to pause whenever she felt she had been reading long enough for one breath. For instance, "...no animal is

better adapted than the polar bear. The polar bear is the largest...” was one chunk from her utterance with no pause at the period. Within sentences, inappropriate pauses can be seen from examples including “The fur protects / it from the cold” instead of “The fur protects it / from the cold”. Meanwhile, while she was reading, she read without showing much emotion. There was little change in tones and most of the sentences were read in a flat and casual manner, even including some interrogative sentences like “Do you ever wonder how animals stay warm in cold environments?”. As far as I’m concerned, the inappropriate pauses and emotionlessness may be due to her state of mind while doing this assessment. On the one hand, she might regard this test to be casual and informal and did not take it seriously. On the other hand, while she was reading, her brain might not be processing information to make sense of the words that she read. As a result, she divided the language chunks in a semantically inappropriate way. Overall, she read fluently with a slight problem in pausing.

In terms of her error record, most of her error is due to how she processed information visually. Throughout the whole text, there were a bunch of words that she didn’t know. So, while she was reading, she had to make an attempt on the pronunciation of these words. This is when she had to apply her morphological knowledge to the context. For some of the words, it is easier for her to guess out the pronunciation, for instance, “wrap”, “scarves”, “adapted”, “Arctic”, “temperature”, “predators”, “barrier” and so on. She gave the correct pronunciation of these words at the first time she tried. When it came to some more complex words, including “environments”, “species”, “climate” and “guard”, she struggled a lot pronouncing these words and I had to guide her towards the correct pronunciation. That’s when I found out that she might have some problems about diphthongs like “ir”, “ie” and “ua”. However, for those words that appeared more than one time, including “adapted” and “Arctic”, she was able to give the correct pronunciation immediately since

the second time, which shows her ability of taking in the knowledge and applying it within similar contexts. Other than pronunciation, a visual miscue occurred when she read “water” for “winter”. Except for visual miscue, the only syntax miscue that I recorded was in the first sentence where she automatically added a “the” between “in” and “cold environments”. This shows her well-developed knowledge of grammar. And there were no meaning miscues throughout her reading.

After Bara finished her reading, I asked her three questions at the back of the running record sheet to assess her understanding towards the text. The first question is “Tell me something about what you learned about polar bears”. Bara made three points for this question: polar bears have fur; they are excellent swimmers and that they eat seals. In relation to the text, the three points are in a reverse order as the text. This shows that she was able to remember the information as she read, and it makes sense that she came up first with the latest information that she had just read and then went further to recall earlier information. Besides, her answer to this question also shows that she was able to extract key ideas from the text. This is the point where she applies reading strategies to help her better understand the content knowledge (Valdez Pierce, 2001). The second question is about her understanding of an illustration in the book. The illustration is a biological structure of different layers that form the skin of polar bears. I asked Bara to tell me how the picture shows how polar bears keep themselves warm and she was able to identify each layer and make a statement that it was the fur that kept the cold air out of polar bears’ body. Through this question, I was able to see Bara’s ability to relate illustrations to the texts so as to better understand the content of the texts. And this is a strategy that will benefit her in other subjects, especially social studies. The third question asked about what else she wanted to know about polar bears, which is a beyond-text-level question. The answers that I had were “How many babies do they have?”, “How much do they work?” and “Are seals the only thing that they eat?”. From the answers, it is clear that she can

establish connections between the content area and her daily life. The questions that she asked are all from a daily perspective, although it doesn't make sense to say polar bears have to work. She may need to modify her language and express her thinking in a more detailed way.

Writing Sample. I collected one of Bara's test paper which included an essay that she wrote. The test is their culminating taking which they have to do after each unit ends. The test asked them to conclude a theme that applied to both the two books that they had read. The reason why I chose this writing sample is that it is a perfect example to show how students are applying language to what they know of the content area. Following the 6-Trait Scoring Rubric, I will give an exhaustive analysis of Bara's writing skills based on this test.

For ideas, I decided to give her a score of 4, meaning that she has defined the topic, although the development is basic or general. The topic asked them to come up with a theme that applied to both the books, but her writing shows two different themes for each of the book. That is due to her misunderstanding towards the topic. However, based on the writing itself, it is clear that she is developing her opinions on what she thinks are the themes of the two books. And she stays on topic throughout the essay, giving examples from the books to support her idea. For instance, she mentioned the kindness and sadness in friendship and wrote "Kindness is Steven and Mr. F share a lot of the stories...Sadness is when Mr. F dies and Steven doesn't want to eat". The two examples well developed her idea and enriched her essay quite a bit.

As for organization, I also marked it as a 4, which means the organizational structure is strong enough to move the reader through the text without much confusion. The whole essay is clearly divided into two paragraphs, with each paragraph stating the theme of one of the two books. This shows logic sequencing. The two paragraphs are in similar length with neither one seeming much more dominant, demonstrating that the pacing is well controlled. However, the essay lacks an introduction and a conclusion paragraph, which is something they may not have learned yet. The

transition between paragraphs is also something that needs further improve on. To summarize, I think Bara is able to organize her writing in a logical way. With further scaffolding in organizational structures, her writing would be much more holistic in structure.

In terms of conventions, I marked her as a 2. Throughout her essay, it is obvious that spelling is a major problem for Bara. The words are mostly spelled phonetically so that they don't confuse meaning in most cases. Examples include "ar" (are), "them" (theme), "famyly" (family), "ther" (there), "lessen" (lesson), "thers" (there's) and "friend ship" (friendship). The reason of Bara's misspelling of these words may due to the gap between her literacy skills and her speaking skills. Moreover, there is some spelling that doesn't make sense, like "thosent" and "maren", which confuse meaning. Except for spelling, the punctuation is also inconsistent throughout the essay. There is capitalization when a sentence starts but period was seldom used. Last but not least, grammar is definitely another major issue that influences Bara's writing. Many sentences don't follow the correct grammatical rules. For instance, "I think that a good lessen because what happen if you need someone of your famyly than you aren't do it because thers no one ther to help you". I can get the meaning of the sentence but it's just grammatically chaotic. I think convention is the priority to improve Bara's writing skills.

As for voice, I feel like she seems sincere, but not fully engaged or involved. The writing was personable but not compelling. That's why I gave her a 4. Through her writing, I can feel that she is willing to share her ideas and is trying hard to express them to the fullest extent. Since it is the topic of their test, I assume she might not be very passionate about it. I was kind of surprised when I read her statements about the kindness and sadness in a friendship followed by detailed examples from the book. This requires some deep thinking for a 4th grader about compare and contrast, even oxymoron. Overall, I think this is a piece of sincerely written essay.

In terms of word choice, I decided to mark her a 3, although I don't think the writing shows no energy at all as the rubric says. The major reason that I think the essay doesn't deserve a 4 for the word choice is that the vocabulary used in the essay is too simple. Little use of adjectives or adverbs is included in the essay so as to make it more colorful. Besides, figurative language is also rarely seen. Almost all the sentences are declarative sentences formed by Tier 1 words like "good", "strong", "old", "young" and so forth. Considering her misspelling of words and her limited word choice together, it is wise to say that enlarging Bara's vocabulary is crucial for her later language and academic development.

As for the last trait, sentence fluency, I think her writing is at level 4. According to the rubric, the text goes along with a steady beat, without apparent rises and falls. The sentences' beginnings show a bit variety in terms of the subject. However, sentence patterns remain kind of rigid. From another perspective, the sentences correlate with each other well. The meaning is generally coherent, and it is easy for reader to get the sense that the first paragraph is about family and nature while the second paragraph is about friendship. The first paragraph, though, may need extra effort from of the reader to figure out the relationship between family and protecting the nature.

Part 5—Instructional Recommendations and Assessment Plans

Instructional Recommendations. Based on the data and analysis, I have looked into different domains of language application as well as aspects that are related to Bara's academic achievement from a general sense. For each domain, I have come up with relevant instructional recommendations in order to better scaffold Bara's learning.

Leveraging funds of knowledge. The result of Bara's level of acculturation assessment implies the potential of leveraging her funds of knowledge during her learning process. Considering the

situation of her current class, using Spanish properly may be a good choice to consider. Since many of the students share Spanish as their home language and that Bara shows greater inclination to communicate with students who have the similar cultural background as hers, it may be better to put Bara in a study group where there are at least one or two students who speak Spanish. In this way, they can refer to Spanish to keep the conversation going when it's hard for them to do it in English. Another way of using Spanish in class is simply by asking for the Spanish version of a new word or phrase and encouraging responses. In this way, not only do the students like Bara who speaks Spanish become more motivated, but they also get a deeper impression of the new words. Besides using Spanish, it would also be helpful to prompt questions for students to connect with their personal experience every time before they start a book or a new concept. Based on my observation, Bara's class participation is at the medium level among her classmates. Thus, providing more chances to leverage her funds of knowledge may be an effective way to promote her participation in class.

Morphological instructions. Morphology can be a real issue for many EL learners because the sound system of English and their home language may be different. Bara's performance in the interview and the running record assessment displays the difficulty she has with pronunciation. And her writing sample also shows her deficiency in spelling. All these are due to her lack of morphological knowledge. Therefore, I would suggest spending 20 minutes on morphology each day, leading them through the sound system of English, from single vowels, consonants, to diphthongs. While they are learning, it would be better to prepare each of the ELL students with a mirror so that they will be able to see how they are producing the sounds. For Bara, her mouth doesn't open to the full extent to pronounce some of the vowels and diphthongs. And for some of the consonant, she can't produce the sound fully, too. So, it would be helpful to teach her step by

step the sounding system with a mirror. During the process of learning the sound system, students can also gain a better understanding of the spelling rules. This would help Bara to improve her spelling and reading. With that said, giving examples of words with targeted morpheme and opportunities for students to practice pronouncing and spelling the words is also important in their morphological instructions.

Vocabulary instructions. According to the analysis of Bara's oral language based on the SOLOM rubric, her vocabulary is above the medium level. However, when it comes to her writing sample, inadequate vocabulary knowledge is shown. The gap between her vocabulary knowledge in speaking and writing makes me think of how to enhance her vocabulary. One of the effective scaffolding methods is to help Bara set up her own word bank, which contains the key words of the lessons. A better amount of the word bank may be 5 words a day so that by the end of each week there should be 25 words in her word bank. It is also better to keep her word bank in hard copies like index cards so that she can refer to it anytime. Meanwhile, at the end of each day and each week, there should be a time for her to review her word bank. Dictation would help her better remember the spelling of the words and asking her to explain these words can deepen her understanding of the meaning. Another way of bridging the gap between her speaking and writing is to have her answer a certain question first orally and then let her write down what she has just said. This shows more directly what words or phrases she needs to further work on in writing.

Grammar instructions. Based on the samples that I have collected, grammar is another component of the gap between Bara's speaking and writing performance. So far, they have language arts class that teaches them grammatical rules. The way they are learning it now it to learn the rules first and then do exercises on their textbook, which is a bottom-up way. What I think can be improved is to expose them to a variety of examples regarding one grammatical rule and have them figure out the rules by themselves. This top-down process can greatly enhance students'

motivation. Typically for Bara, she is likely to feel more engaged during a problem-solving process compared to a learning-and-exercising process. The grammar that Bara needs immediate improvement on is complex sentence structures, especially the use of clauses in her writing, since she has shown a strong desire to incorporate many ideas in one sentence in the writing sample. Therefore, complex sentence structures should be the priority for her grammatical instructions right now.

Comprehension ability training. Considering Bara's performance in the oral interview as well as the running record assessment, I regard it highly necessary to improve her comprehension ability. This is another time that Spanish can be used to help her develop her thinking and understanding. Using translation strategies in class can develop students' metacognitive skills and help them to gain better understandings through bilingualism (Jiménez & Goodwin, 2015). In Bara's case, it would be helpful to implement the translation strategy during the reading session. For whole class instruction, instructors can pair students who speak the same home language in groups and have them to discuss the translation of a certain text or paragraph. During the process, students can discuss the meaning of the text and strive to give an accurate translation, which helps them to develop metacognitive skills and to better understand the text. As for individual instructions, for instance, in the guided reading session, the instructor can promote questions about what is the main idea of each paragraph and how the paragraphs are connected together logically. Being able to grasp the main idea of paragraphs is crucial for her comprehension skills while figuring out the logical relations between paragraphs or between sentences trains higher-order thinking, which will benefit her in developing ideas for speaking and writing.

Writing instructions. Based on Bara's writing performance, especially her low score in a convention, the first thing that she needs to improve is her handwriting. It would be helpful to have her write in lined-papers, for instance, for her word bank index cards. Besides, teaching her how to

write introduction and conclusion paragraphs would make the structure of her writing more complete. Transitional words would diversify her writing and this requires more instruction to build her logical thinking skills. Besides what mentioned above about having them figure out the logical relations in texts, prompting questions in daily class to encourage deep thinking at the vertical level is also an effective way to train students' higher-order thinking skills. For instance, questions that promote thinking on opposite sides of an issue, or having a debate about a meaningful topic are both good instructional activities.

Assessment Plans. The following calendar is a series of suggested assessments for Bara based on a one-semester timeline. The assessments include two parts: the standardized assessments and formative classroom assessments, which lie in different fields in terms of Bara's language background and academic development.

Table. Suggested Assessment Calendar for Bara

Timeline	Assessments	Description
Beginning of the semester	Self-Evaluation	The self-evaluation assessment should contain questions from the following perspectives: student's expectation for each content subjects, student's five big goals for this semester; things that students might struggle with; any other things for teachers to know. The self-evaluation assessment is helpful for teachers to know what students are expecting for the classes so that teachers can better adapt the teaching plan to that. It would also be helpful for teachers to know the goals students set for themselves in order to have a clearer expectation for them. (15 min)
Daily	Dictation	At the beginning of each school day, instructors can do a quick dictation based on the vocabularies in Bara's word bank for the previous day. This helps her to review the key vocabularies as well as solidify her morphological knowledge. For the words that Bara goes wrong in spelling, it should be dictated again at the end of the school day before she leaves. (5 min)

	Listening Test (for Minimal Sound Pairs)	As an indisputable fact, this listening test should always be conducted at the beginning of the language art classes. Instructors are supposed to select one word from a group of words that contain minimal sound pairs, and students are expected to choose between multiple choice and pick the word that the teacher has read. The words should be limited to the morphemes that students are learning or have already learned. This test helps students to review morphological knowledge. With deeper impression from this test, test takers are expected to further improve their reading skills and increase their vocabulary base. (5 min)
Weekly	The Running Record Assessment	The Running Record Assessment is an individually or independently conducted formative assessment on a weekly basis. It will identify the strength and weakness in Bara's oral reading and provide necessary records for future analytical use either by teachers or other professionals. This test will be ongoing and curriculum based to better match the student's background and level of study. For Bara, keeping a regular running record assessment can efficiently develop her reading comprehension skills and track the improvement in her literacy skills, too. (20 min)
	Grammar Quiz	The grammar quiz is suggested to happen on a weekly basis aiming at assessing the student's grammatical knowledge. If possible, a customized quiz is strongly recommended to identify and strengthen the weakness in students' grammar framework. For Bara, the concentration will be put on the sentence patterns, especially the clauses. The questions in the quiz will follow the format of multiple choices or cloze. (20 min)
Monthly	Opinion Writing Task	Opinion Writing Assessment will have students presenting their opinions in terms of writing and composing. The questions are meant to spark some interest in students to write some of their views on the subject matter. This assessment should address the Bara's shortage of independent opinions by offering her the opportunity to think and express. The opinion writing also consists of an important part of the academic writing. Given Bara's writing levels, the opinion writing task should place a high

		premium on the structure and arrangement, the transition between sentences and critical thinking skills. This assessment is recommended to happen on a monthly base since critical writing is still challenging and conducting weekly may push Bara too hard. (40-50 min)
	Short Answer Questions for Reading Comprehension	The short answer questions for reading comprehension evaluation goes by reading an essay and answering several questions. This assessment is mainly designed to test Bara’s reading and comprehension skills. At the same time, because the questions are required to be answered with a couple of sentences, this assessment can also evaluate Bara’s expression skills. In this test, the student can either choose to respond by written English or by oral English. For Bara, oral English may be her preferred choice as her oral language skill is better. She has a better chance to express her thoughts more clearly. (30-45 min)
End of the semester	WIDA ACCESS Assessment	The WIDA ACCESS Assessment is required by state regulations. The aim of this assessment is to evaluate students’ English language proficiency at the four domains plus comprehension, literacy and oral perspectives. Being tested at the end of the semester, students will get an overall view of how their language skills have developed throughout the semester from their teachers. The test also provides the teachers with a clear, useful and practical way to conduct assessments. (Unknown)
	TN Ready	Required by the state regulations, this test can measure students’ academic achievements throughout the semester. It can also help teachers to develop different focuses on content areas (like mathematics, social studies, etc.) for students with different backgrounds for the next semester’s learning. (Unknown)
	Text Level Assessment	Taken at the end of the semester, this assessment aims at assessing the progress that students make in terms of reading and comprehension. The only difference between this assessment and the weekly running record assessment is that this assessment uses a set of authorized reading materials which are well categorized based on their reading levels while the record assessment does not. Therefore, this assessment can reflect the level of Bara’s

		reading and comprehension after a semester's work. (20 min)
	Self-Reflection	The final assessment that Bara has will be a self-reflection in which she is expected to discuss her achievements and gains throughout the whole semester. The self-reflection assessment should contain questions from the following perspectives: a review of the expectations in the Self-Evaluation assessment, accomplishment of the big goals for this semester, experiences or memories in overcoming big difficulties, overall evaluations on the performances on different subjects. The final assessment also provides the teachers with an opportunity to get direct feedback from their students. Aiming at realizing future development via retrospection, it comprises an essential part of the assessment system. (15 min)

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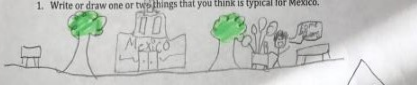
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Appendix

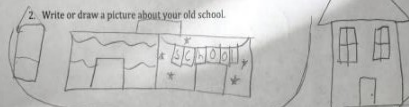
A. Acculturation Assessment

Name: _____
Date: _____


1. Write or draw one or two things that you think is typical for Mexico.



2. Write or draw a picture about your old school.



3. Write or draw a picture about what you are good at in school.



4. Write or draw a picture about what is hard for you in school.

Nothing 😊

5. Circle the face that shows how you feel about learning in J.E. Moss.

Very Happy Happy Sad Worried Angry

6. Circle the face that shows how you feel about reading.

Very Happy Happy Sad Worried Angry

7. Circle the face that shows how you feel about math.

Very Happy Happy Sad Worried Angry

8. Circle the face that shows how you feel about language arts.

Very Happy Happy Sad Worried Angry

9. Circle the face that shows how you feel about social studies.

Very Happy Happy Sad Worried Angry

B. Acculturation Observation Form

Assessing Level of Acculturation 109

Figure 4.2 Level of Acculturation Observation Rubric

LOA* Observation Rubric

Criterion	Range & Rating	Anecdotal Notes	Monitor Status**
Student: Date of Observation: 10/05/2017		Time of Observation: 9:15-12:30	
Level of affect	5 Upbeat 0 Sullen and/or Angry	normal mood, preparing for the project.	
Data:	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - 0		
Level of interaction with peers of a similar culture and/or language	5 Highly Interactive 0 Withdrawn	Commonly along. Highly depend on mood.	
Data:	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - 0		
Level of interaction with peers of a different culture and/or language	5 Highly Interactive 0 Withdrawn	usually involved in the interaction with by listening; Haven't been talking to the new student in class.	
Data:	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - 0		
Communication effectiveness with peers of a different culture and/or language	5 Highly Effective 0 Ineffective	have conversations continuously. asked me about China.	
Data:	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - 0		
Level of participation in group learning	5 Highly Participative 0 Nonparticipative	actively keep on track with the group work.	
Data:	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - 0		
Level of student engagement with classroom learning activities	5 Highly Engaged 0 Not Engaged	listen to others carefully, keep following notes. distracted only occasionally.	
Data:	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - 0		
Legend:	* LOA = Level of Acculturation ** Status Range = Enhance, Maintain, or Reduce Monitoring of LOA		

C. Home Language Survey

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
 Centro de Inscripción de Estudiantes Internacionales
 Oficina de Estudiantes de Inglés como Idioma Adicional

Spanish /

Encuesta para estudiantes de kínder a 12º grado sobre el idioma que usan en el hogar

Nombre del estudiante: _____ Fecha: 8-6-15
 Escuela: _____

- ¿Cuál idioma aprendió primero a hablar este niño? Español
- ¿Cuál idioma habla mayormente este niño fuera de la escuela? SPANISH
- ¿Cuál(es) idioma(s) se hablan típicamente en el hogar de este niño? ESPAÑOL
- ¿Cuál(es) idioma(s) habla su hijo con usted como padre, madre o tutor? español
- ¿Cuál(es) idioma(s) habla su hijo con sus hermanos? Español
- ¿En qué ciudad y país nació su hijo?
 a- ¿A dónde asistió? MEXICO
 b- ¿En qué año comenzó? 6 AÑOS
 c- ¿Cuántos días a la semana asistía? 5
 d- ¿Cuántas horas al día asistía? 5
 e- ¿Hubo interrupciones en la escolaridad del niño? NO Si es así, describa _____
- Si su hijo no nació en los EE.UU., ¿cuándo entró a los EE.UU.? 7-27-15
- Si su hijo asistió a otra escuela de los EE.UU., ¿en qué fecha comenzó? NO
- Como padre, madre o tutor, ¿qué porcentaje del tiempo lee y escribe en inglés? Favor de marcar uno:
 100% _____ 75% _____ 50% / 25% _____ 0% _____
- Como padre, madre o tutor, ¿qué porcentaje del tiempo habla inglés? Favor de marcar uno:
 100% _____ 75% _____ 50% _____ 25% _____ 0% _____

Firma del padre, madre o tutor: _____
 Note to school: If student was born in the United States, please fax a copy of the Home Language Survey to the EL Office at (615) 214-8655.

Office Use Only
 Resettlement Agency: _____
 Case Worker Name: _____
 Case Worker Phone Number: _____
 Community Resource Suggested for family: _____

D. MNPS Non-English Language Background Student Data Folder

MNPS Non-English Language Background student Data Folder – Office of English Learners

Receiving Services	No Services		
<p>ELL-ACTIVE ELL Services Required™</p> <p>Date: <u>8-12-15</u> English Learner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student was assessed as an English Learner. Student will receive EL Services</p>	<p>Affix Unable to Test Label here</p> <p>Date: _____ Unable to Test <input type="checkbox"/> Student was unable to test. Student will receive EL Services until proficiency level can be determined.</p>	<p>Affix Refused Services Label here</p> <p>Date: _____ Waived/Refused EL Services <input type="checkbox"/> Parents were informed about program choice in a language that was comprehensible to them.</p>	<p>Affix NELB-FEP Label here</p> <p>Date: _____ Initial Fluent English Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> This student has been assessed as Initial Fluent English Proficient. Student not eligible for EL Services through Title III.</p>
<p>Signed and Dated Forms Placed in NELB Blue Folder:</p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home Language Survey <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Screening Assessment/s <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parental Consent <input type="checkbox"/> NELB Letter <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver Form <input type="checkbox"/> Opt-Out Form <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migrant Form <input type="checkbox"/> Exit Form <input type="checkbox"/> Low Performance Monitoring Form <input type="checkbox"/> Re-Enter Program Form			
<p>Placement Assessments Year: 20__</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Not Proficient <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient Examiner's Signature: _____ W-APT Year: 20 <u>15</u> - <u>16</u> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Active <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient Examiner's Signature: <u>Stephenson</u>		<p>Opt-Out of EL Services</p> <p>Affix Opt-Out Label here</p> <p>Date: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/s requested that child no longer receive EL Services <input type="checkbox"/> S-Team or IEP Team and Parent/s requested that child no longer receive EL Services</p>	
<p>Exit Status</p> <p>Affix Exit- FEP Label here Affix Returned to EL Label here</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Student Exited from Program (ELP scores present & form completed)</p>		<p>Re-Enter EL Program</p> <p>Affix Re-Enter Label here</p> <p>Date: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/s requested that child be reinstated to receive EL Services</p>	

E. The Running Record Sheet

Recording Form
Not Too Cold for a Polar Bear • LEVEL Q • NONFICTION

Student _____ Grade _____ Date _____
 Teacher _____ School _____

Recording Form
Part One: Oral Reading

Place the book in front of the student. Read the title and introduction.

Introduction: Polar bears adapt to their environment. Read to find out how these interesting animals survive the cold.

Summary of Scores:
 Accuracy _____
 Self-correction _____
 Fluency _____
 Comprehension _____
 Writing _____

Sources of Information Used

Page	Start Time	min.	sec.	Text	Sources of Information Used															
					E	SC	M	S	V	M	S	V								
1				Do you ever wonder how animals stay warm in cold environments? They can't wrap themselves in blankets or turn up the heat. They can't bundle up in sweaters and scarves. They can't make soup or hot chocolate! But animals have their own ways of keeping warm.																
				Adapting to the Environment																
				When it comes to surviving extreme cold, no animal is better adapted than the polar bear. The polar bear is the largest of the eight species, or kinds, of bears. Polar bears live only in very cold climates, like the Arctic region.																
				Subtotal																

Part One: Oral Reading continued

Page	Text	Sources of Information Used																		
		E	SC	M	S	V	M	S	V											
2	The word Arctic tells you that the polar bear's environment is icy cold. In the winter, temperatures can drop to minus 50 degrees. As if that's not enough reason to shiver, polar bears also spend a great deal of time in the icy Arctic Oceans. Polar bears are the largest predators on land. They mainly hunt and eat seals, and because seals are usually found in the ocean, polar bears are often found in or near the ocean, too. They are excellent swimmers.																			
		Subtotal																		

Part One: Oral Reading continued

Sources of Information Used

Page	Text	Sources of Information Used																		
		E	SC	M	S	V	M	S	V											
3	Surviving the Cold How do polar bears survive all that cold? Polar bears are very well adapted to life in the frozen Arctic. A polar bear's entire body, even the bottoms of its feet, is covered in fur. The fur protects it from the cold. The top layer of fur is called guard hair. Guard hair sticks together when it's wet. The wet hair is a barrier that protects polar bears from the cold water.																			
				Subtotal																
				Total																

End Time _____ min. _____ sec.

Have the student finish reading the book silently.

Foundas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System

Comprehension Conversation

Engage in conversation with the student, noting the key understandings the student expresses. Use prompts as needed to stimulate discussion of understandings the student does not express. It is not necessary to use every prompt for each book. Score for evidence of all understandings pressed—with or without a prompt. Circle the number in the score column that reflects the level of understanding demonstrated.

Teacher: Talk about what you learned in this book.

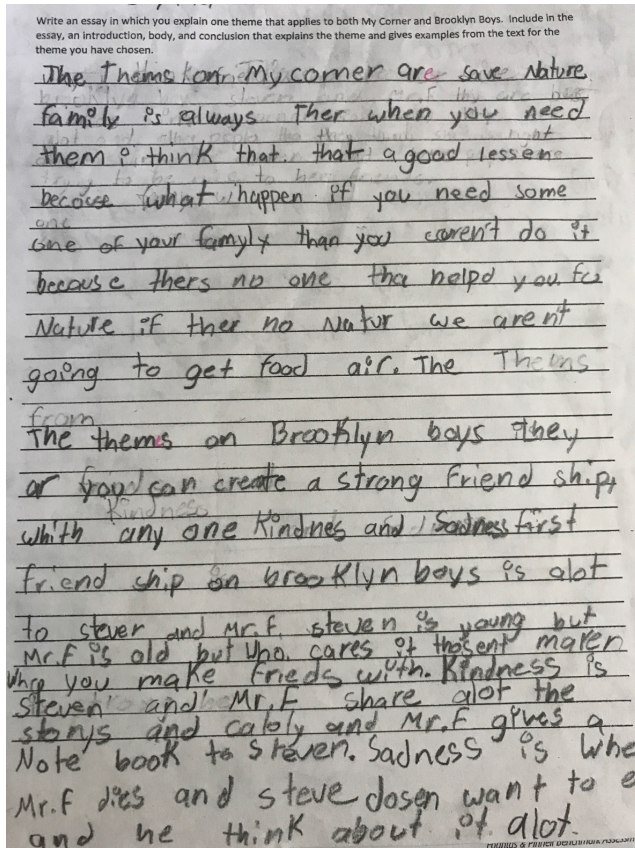
Comprehension Scoring Key

- 0 Reflects unsatisfactory understanding of the text. Either does not respond or talks off the topic.
- 1 Reflects limited understanding of the text. Mentions a few facts or ideas but does not express the important information or ideas.
- 2 Reflects satisfactory understanding of the text. Includes important information and ideas but neglects other key understandings.
- 3 Reflects excellent understanding of the text. Includes almost all important information and main ideas.

Key Understandings	Prompts	Score
Within the Text Tells 3-4 facts about polar bears, such as: Polar bears live in the Arctic where it is very cold; their bodies help them survive the cold (fur, black skin, blubber); they stay awake all winter but their body functions slow down; they cool off by lying on the ice; they live near the water because they eat seals. The drawing on page 3 shows four layers of the polar bear—blubber, skin, fur, and guard hairs—and talks about black skin. <i>Note any additional understandings:</i>	Tell what you learned about polar bears. What else did you learn? Text Feature Probe: Tell about what you learned from the drawing on page 3.	0 1 2 3
Beyond the Text Polar bears need to live in a cold climate near water because their bodies are adapted for that environment (and/or need to hunt for seals). wonder how they keep polar bears healthy in the zoo or other good question). <i>Note any additional understandings:</i>	Why is it important for polar bears to live where they do? What is a question that you still have about polar bears? <i>How many babies. How much do they eat. Is seals the only thing that they eat?</i>	0 1 2 3

continued on next page.

F. Writing Sample



Appendix D. Community Literacy Project Report

When the idea that teachers learn about students' home cultures by exploring their local community was first presented to me, I was extremely fascinated by it. After visiting a total of 6 places in the local community, including Casa Azafrán the community center and some international markets, I began to understand more deeply the community literacies and the importance of teachers knowing more about them. Addressing this point, I will focus on the background of the Hispanic community and elaborate some of my findings and thoughts on it.

Historical Presence

The U.S. Census Bureau defines Hispanics or Latinos as those persons who identify themselves as having family origin in Mexico, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, or Cuba, as well as other

Latin American and South American countries (Passel & Taylor, 2009). They are currently accounting for an increasing share of the population in the state of Tennessee and even in the whole United States. Speaking of the historical presence of the Hispanic immigrants, there are multiple reasons of their migration. On the one hand, people are forced to leave their home country due to wars, political exile, natural disasters and so on. These push factors mostly occurred during the 17th to 19th century so that a certain proportion of the Hispanic population nowadays are the descendants of those involuntary migration in previous times (de Jong, 2011, p. 24). In addition, the unsatisfactory living standard of the home country may also lead to migration to another place. Raul Lopez (2015), an immigrant to Nashville from Cuba, has stated his feelings as following:

In many parts of Latin America and the Caribbean, corruption is rampant. Innovation is stifled because of burdensome regulations and high levels of taxation. For many of my fellow members of Latinos for Tennessee, I know that those very conditions drove many to leave their families behind and immigrate to the United States and Nashville.

On the other hand, factors including job opportunities and small town living style are also driving Hispanic immigrants to Tennessee. Firstly, industrial reorganization has increased rural demand for low-skill labor (Nagle, Gustafson & Burd, 2012). Due to their limited English language proficiency and educational level, Hispanic immigrants have limited choice in job opportunity. At the same time, the demand for low-skill workers meets their needs. Secondly, ethnographic evidence suggests that many Hispanics who are moving to rural areas are attracted by better schools, fewer street gangs, more affordable housing, and greater “tranquility” in rural places (Nagle, Gustafson & Burd, 2012). That’s also a reason why Nashville and Tennessee are facing an increasing population of Hispanic immigrants in recent years.

Since there is an important link between students' literacy development and the diverse symbolic and material affiliations that they develop from their relationships and movements across

borders (Lam & Warriner, 2012), it is important to figure out the students' family and historical background and what the students might have experienced before coming to the United States. Personally, I would prefer to talk to students' parents about this and show my concern for the student's former experiences as well as let parents know that every experience for a child is unique and that it can develop into a positive strength. Then, parents will be more confident in their children, and teachers get to establish a favorable relationship with parents.

Economic Background

Although a common goal for Hispanic immigrants in Tennessee is to seek a better life, their actual living standard is still worth consideration, which is typically reflected in the economic backgrounds of the Hispanic group. There is a wage gap between Hispanic immigrants and native-born workers, both black and white (Nagle, Gustafson & Burd, 2012). Hispanic workers have lower wages than native workers, and the reasons can lie in their limited English proficiency and their lack of relevant working experiences. As mentioned above, working as low-skilled workers is a job option for them yet cannot bring them a decent salary. Therefore, life can still be hard for them.

That is exactly why organizations like Casa Azafrán can really make a difference. As reflected in the chromatic mosaic mural titled "Migration" above the main gate of the center, the mission of Casa Azafrán is to promote social, economic and civic integration of Latino families in middle Tennessee. From the exploration of the center, I noticed that the services that they provide could reflect some of the economic background of the Hispanic immigrants there. For instance, they offer tax-paying services for those who do not have a social security number, and there are also business programs and entrepreneur programs that will rent space for entrepreneurs to run their food business.

Knowing about the historical presence and economic background of the Hispanic community is essential to us as future teachers. In this case, I would give more thought into the background of the students I teach and be more careful not to offend or hurt my students' feelings when talking about anything related to their family background. On the other hand, in view of the perhaps low social status of the parents and lack of resources for information, I will definitely show my respect and tolerance towards each student I teach. For instance, after hearing from their parents some background information of their family, I can show my interest in certain topics related to the student's experience so that they will feel glad to have the relevant experience to share. Besides, I will also encourage my future students to develop the strengths they have relating to their own family background. For instance, if their parents have their own small business, I may design a class activity about planning students' own restaurants or stores or other businesses and have them apply what they have possibly know to a concrete context. Meanwhile, I will also try to provide them with possible resources of things that they are interested in.

Daily Life

By exploring several international supermarkets in the community, I did gain a deeper insight about the daily life of the local Hispanic community. The international markets including K&S World Market, Patel Brothers and Fiesta E-Market all provide a rich selection of Latin American food and products. The welcome billboards of the supermarkets are all multilingual and various kinds of food are labeled with Spanish on its packaging. Some of the food I can hardly recognize from the packaging, which I guess might be some traditional Mexican or Latino food. When I walked into one of the supermarkets, Fiesta E-Mart, there was a shelf with Spanish newspapers probably for free and also a Spanish song with strong, rhythmic beats playing inside the store. I asked one of the staff there which cultural group came there most often. He said Mexican. Thinking of the sense of familiarity I gained when I saw those Chinese food and

ingredients on the shelf, I suppose the multilingual billboard, the newspapers, the music in the store and the food with Spanish words all create a sense of belonging for those Latino immigrants in the community and make them feel more at home.

Another aspect I discovered about community literacy when I visited Casa Azafrán was the art elements of the community. Casa Azafrán had artists join their community collaboration project, and many of the productions of the project are exhibited in the Casa Azafrán community center. The works are all really fascinating and embrace deep meaning behind them, too. For instance, the “Quipus” talking knots is a symbol of the connection and merging of different cultures to become one big family.

According to Igoa, during the uprooting period of all immigrant children, there will be a silent stage “when the children experience the school culture as different from their own and when there is an inability to communicate with peers”(Igoa, 1995, p. 38). Therefore, to alleviate such cultural difference, teachers can build connections between the school culture and the students’ community culture through bringing daily elements that students are familiar with into classroom settings. Based on the Hispanic community, the methods I have come up with include letting each students bring one typical type of their home food to class from local supermarkets. They can introduce the food they have, talk about its origin or the way they eat them, or they can also write an article about the food. In this way, they may be less resistant to class assignments. Another activity is to lead students in a visit to Casa Azafrán about the art exhibitions. Each student can choose a favorite work and write about what they think is the meaning of the work. During this process, both a student’s imagination and thinking ability can be improved in a more fun way.

Leveraging Community Literacies in Class Settings

As we were visiting the Casa Azafrán, we happened to see the scene before a class began. Parents and kids were sitting in the hallway, preparing for classes wholeheartedly. The scene

touched me deeply. Those kids deserve the equal right to be well-educated, and I will be willing to try my utmost to perform effective teaching to them if I have the chance. As I looked at the class catalog, I found the course contents were diverse and multi-dimensional. They included arts, career, create, finance, fitness, language, legal, life and technology. Besides, it is not hard to find that the teachers and officers there in the Casa Azafrán are concerned about the English language ability of the community members. Many of their office tables are covered with studying material for English language learners. Since “effective learning involves engaging prior understandings and background knowledge and integrating factual knowledge with conceptual frameworks by encouraging deep understanding” (de Jong, 2011, p. 33), I suppose it will be a good way to combine the knowledge students have learnt in those other classes and the new knowledge they are going to learn. For instance, students could share their learning in the other class or the reactions they have towards other classes. Such sharing can also reflect students’ learning abilities and their expectation towards classes, which will be a valuable reference for teachers to adjust class design accordingly.

Conclusion

Based on the exploration of the local Hispanic community, I have summarized the following community literacies that can be applied in classroom settings. Firstly, the historical presence of the Hispanic community can lead to some special cultural traditions, but can also be a sensitive topic to talk about. It is important to show enough consideration to their culture and encourage them to develop their self-identity and self-esteem. Secondly, the economic background of many Hispanic immigrant families may not be high-salary-based. But they also have funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 2016) related to the small businesses or other things that they do, which can serve as topic in classroom settings so that students can talk about something they are familiar to. Thirdly, the daily life of the Hispanic community embraces a huge potential of out-of-school

literacies. Teachers can use resources like home products from the supermarket or art exhibitions in the community center to build the bridge between students' out-of-school literacy and classroom settings. Finally, the classes of the community center also provide students with funds of knowledge in various areas that can be a significant reference for teachers to adjust their teaching and get to know their students.

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Appendix E. Instructional Activities

Activity 1

The IPA Interpretive Task is divided into four parts. In the first part, students should give expressions according to the features mentioned in the questions. For instance, “a smiling face” can refer to both “happy” and “relaxed”. In the second part, students express their opinions on what this poster is about. They might say “It’s about different emotion/expressions/faces”. As long as it makes sense, it is alright. In the third part, students should guess the meaning of the words from different faces shown above each word. They are supposed to organize their guessing into literal expressions. Words, phrases and sentences are all allowed. In the last part, students show their understanding of the target vocabulary by give their own reactions to different emotions. For instance, when I say “What is your face like if you are happy?”, students should all put on their smiling faces. They can also look at each other’s facial expression which can be kind of fun. The following is a template sheet designed for the activity.

I. Key Word Recognition. Find the correct expressions in the poster according to the given clues.

(1) Which expressions are used to describe the boy with a smiling face?

(2) Which expressions are used to describe the boy with a widely opened mouth?

(3) Which expressions are used to describe the boy with a sad face?

II. Main Idea(s). What is this poster about?

III. Guessing Meaning from Context. Based on the poster, what do the following words meaning?

- (1) Exhausted
- (2) Furious
- (3) Surprised
- (4) Jealous

IV. Personal Reaction. What is your face like if you are (happy/ exhausted/ depressed/ surprised...)?

Activity 2

This activity is based on the idea of narrow reading. The structure contains two parts, which respectively reflects the process from words to pictures and from pictures to words. In the first part, students will be provided with two set of text, one set contains all the vocabulary in the poster and the other set contains only the different faces in the poster. Students are supposed to match the faces with the words. In the second part of the activity, students are given different faces from the second poster of the appendix and then they are supposed to recognize the emotion of each face.



Appendix F. Final Project

Instructions of the Game

The game is best applicable to 8 players, with 1 host and 7 regular players. But considering the random number of students in classes, the game can also be played with 6 or 7 players. The estimated duration is 40 minutes or so, which usually takes a whole class time. Before the game starts, teachers need to first organize students to sit in circles or at round tables. Then, each player should be distributed with a number card, a role card and a reference card. When everyone is clear

with the role they are playing, the host begins to announce “The mist falls” and that’s when the game starts.

The roles are divided into three sides. The burglar team contains Bilbo, Gandalf and Thorin. Their mission is to find out who is the dragon and steal the Arkenstone. The protector team contains Smaug the dragon, eye of Sauron and Azog the orc. Their mission is to protect the Arkenstone from being stolen. Bard the Bowman is on his own. His mission is to find out the dragon and kill it with the black arrow. If there are only 7 players, Bard can be excluded from the game. If there are only 6 players, both Bard and Azog can be excluded. The following is the detailed procedure that the host should follow.

Lap 1

1. “The mist falls.”

2. “Everyone close your eyes and uncover your role cards to the host.”

The host records everyone’s role.

“Cover your role cards.”

3. “The Eye of Sauron, open your eyes. See through the mist and identify one.”

The Eye of Sauron chooses one player and the host sign whether the chosen player belongs to the burglary team or not.

“Close your eyes.”

4. “The burglary starts. Bilbo open your eyes and choose one to steal.”

Bilbo chooses any player including himself to steal from.

→If he doesn’t choose the Dragon.

“Bilbo close your eyes.”

→If he chooses the Dragon, the host plays the alert.

Once the alert is on, Bilbo closes his eyes and Smaug the Dragon opens its eyes.

“Smaug the Dragon chooses one player to burn. Smaug close your eyes.”
“Bard the Bowman, open your eyes. You have the last Black Arrow to kill the Dragon.”
Bard can choose one to shoot but he doesn’t have to.
“Bard, close your eyes.”
→If Bard kills the Dragon,
“The mist clears. Game is over and Bard is the only winner.”
→If Bard fails to recognize and kill the Dragon, the game goes on.
“Bard, close your eyes.”

5. “The mist clears. Everyone open your eyes.”

The host announces who is dead and the dead one gives his last words. The immortal ones would not be dead. The safeguarded one(s) would not be dead in this lap.

6. The host announces whom is stolen from.

→If it is the Dragon, the host doesn’t make any announcement. Let the dead one choose the player on his right or left as the first one to speak. Then every player but the dead one rotates to speak. If there’s no one dead in this lap, the host will choose the player on his right or left as the first to speak.

→If it is not the Dragon, the stolen one chooses the player on his right or left as the first one to speak. Then every player but the dead one rotates to speak.

Lap 2

1. Do Lap 1.1 and Lap1.3

2. →If the Dragon is not awake, go to Lap2.3.

→If the Dragon is awake, “Smaug the Dragon open your eyes.”

“Smaug the Dragon chooses one player to burn. Smaug close your eyes.”
“Bard the Bowman, open your eyes. You have the last Black Arrow to kill the Dragon.”
Bard can choose one to shoot but he doesn’t have to.
“Bard, close your eyes.”
→If Bard kills the Dragon,
“The mist clears. Game is over and Bard is the only winner.”

→If Bard fails to recognize and kill the Dragon, the game goes on.
 “Bard, close your eyes.”

3. “Azog, open your eyes and slay one. Close your eyes.”

→If Azog chooses the Dragon, and the Dragon is not awake yet, Azog disturbs the Dragon and wakes it. Do Lap2.2.

→If Azog doesn’t choose the Dragon.

“Gandalf, open your eyes. This player is attacked, would you safeguard him?”
 →If Gandalf has chance(s) to safeguard, the host signs to him who is attacked. Then Gandalf signs whether he safeguards this player or not.
 →If Gandalf has no chance to safeguard, the host signs nothing.
 “Gandalf close your eyes.”

4. “The burglary starts. Bilbo open your eyes and choose one to steal from.”

Bilbo chooses any player including himself to steal.

5. Do Lap1.5 and Lap1.6

Lap 3

1. Go to Lap 2 till player(s) win(s).

Template


<p>Attitude</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I agree with No.(1/2/3/...) player because... • I disagree with No.(1/2/3/...) player because... • I partly agree with No.(1/2/3/...) player. But I don’t agree with what he/she said about... • I am on the (protector/burglar) team. The only thing that I want to do is... • I suspect that...because...
<p>Direct & Indirect Speech</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No.(1/2/3/...) player said that... • According to No.(1/2/3/...) player... • No.(1/2/3/...) player misunderstood my words. What I meant is that..., but what he/she said is that...
<p>Reasoning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think that...because...

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't think that... because... • The way No.(1/2/3/...) player talks is different than the way he/she used to talk, so I suspect that... • You cannot say...just because... It can also be... • I highly doubt that No.(1/2/3/...) player belongs to the (protector/burglar) team, because...
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I suggest everyone should... • Let's focus more on... instead of on... • I think what happened last night is... • I think the (protector/burglar) team is about to win. • I think No.(1/2/3/...) player and No.(1/2/3/...) player are on the same side.

Appendix


A. Role Cards

Bilbo Baggins the Burglar
 I AM GLAD THAT I HAVE SHARED IN YOUR PERILS.




Steal from anyone when the mist falls, but if you disturb the Dragon, find cover and wait till the end of next lap.
You win if the following is true:
 You get the Arkenstone.
 You survive.

Gandalf the Gray Wizard
 WHY BIILBO BAGGINS? PERHAPS BECAUSE I AM AFRAID, AND HE GIVES ME COURAGE.




You have two chances to safeguard another.
 Immortal. When attacked, you are immediately dragged away from the Middle Earth and cannot come back till the end of next round.
You win if the following is true:
 Bilbo gets the Arkenstone.
 Bilbo survives.

Thorin Oakenshield the Dwarf
 IF MORE PEOPLE VALUED HOME ABOVE GOLD, THIS WORLD WOULD BE A BETTER PLACE.




You win if the following is true:
 Bilbo gets the Arkenstone.

Bard the Bowman
 KEEP IT SECRET. KEEP IT SAFE.



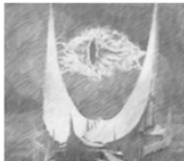
The last Black Arrow: after the Dragon sets out to ruin, you can shoot. Don't miss. This is the last Black Arrow you have.
You win if the following is true:
 The dragon dies.

Smaug the Dragon
 REVENGE? I WILL SHOW YOU REVENGE!




Burn one per round since disturbed. Only the Black Arrow can kill you.
You win if the following is true:
 You, alive, keep the Arkenstone from being stolen.
 Thorin dies.

Eye of Sauron



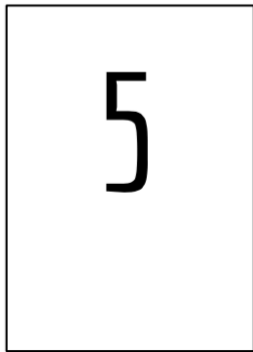
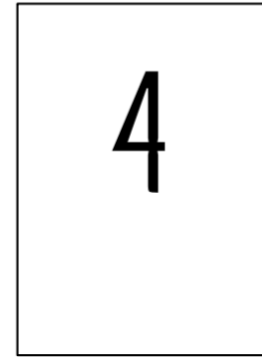
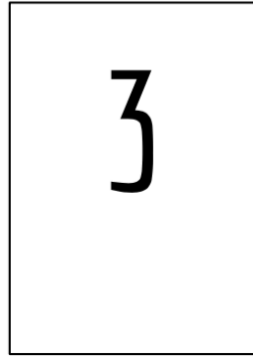
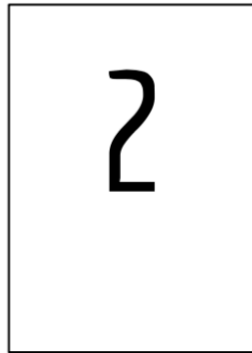
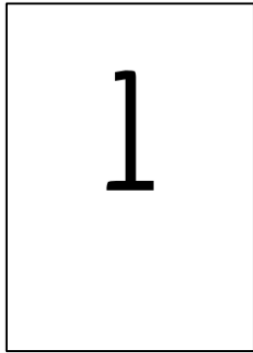
See through the mist and identify one.
 Immortal. When attacked, your sight gets veiled and will not recover till the end of next round.
You win if the following is true:
 The Dragon, alive, keeps the Arkenstone from being stolen.
 Thorin dies.

Azog the Pale Orc
 I DON'T WANT EXCUSES. I WANT THE HEAD OF THE DWARF-KING!



Kill one per round.
You win if the following is true:
 The Dragon, alive, keeps the Arkenstone from being stolen.
 Thorin dies.

B. Number Cards



C. Reference Cards

Reference Card

Bilbo Baggins the Burglar: Steal from anyone when the mist falls. If you disturb the Dragon, find cover and wait till the end of next lap. You win if you get the Arkenstone and survive.

Gandalf the Gray Wizard: You have two chances to safeguard another. Immortal. When attacked, you are immediately dragged away from the Middle Earth and cannot come back till the end of next lap. You win if Bilbo survives and gets the Arkenstone.

Thorin Oakenshield the Dwarf: You win if Bilbo gets the Arkenstone.

Bard the Bowman: You have only one chance to kill the Dragon after the Dragon is disturbed. You win if the dragon dies.

Smaug the Dragon: Burn one per lap since disturbed. Only the Black Arrow can kill you. You win if you are alive, keep the Arkenstone from being stolen, and Thorin dies.

Eye of Sauron: See through the mist and identify one. Immortal. When attacked, your sight gets veiled and will not recover till the end of next lap. You win if the Dragon lives, keeps the Arkenstone from being stolen, and Thorin dies.

Azog the Pale Orc: Kill one per lap. You win if Thorin dies and the Dragon keeps the Arkenstone from being stolen.

Reference Card

Bilbo Baggins the Burglar: Steal from anyone when the mist falls. If you disturb the Dragon, find cover and wait till the end of next lap. You win if you get the Arkenstone and survive.

Gandalf the Gray Wizard: You have two chances to safeguard another. Immortal. When attacked, you are immediately dragged away from the Middle Earth and cannot come back till the end of next lap. You win if Bilbo survives and gets the Arkenstone.

Thorin Oakenshield the Dwarf: You win if Bilbo gets the Arkenstone.

Bard the Bowman: You have only one chance to kill the Dragon after the Dragon is disturbed. You win if the dragon dies.

Smaug the Dragon: Burn one per lap since disturbed. Only the Black Arrow can kill you. You win if you are alive, keep the Arkenstone from being stolen, and Thorin dies.

Eye of Sauron: See through the mist and identify one. Immortal. When attacked, your sight gets veiled and will not recover till the end of next lap. You win if the Dragon lives, keeps the Arkenstone from being stolen, and Thorin dies.

Azog the Pale Orc: Kill one per lap. You win if Thorin dies and the Dragon keeps the Arkenstone from being stolen.

Appendix G. School Investigation Report

Haywood Elementary School Investigation Report

Haywood Elementary School is one of the Metro Nashville Public Schools located on Bransford Avenue. It serves nearly 900 students from pre-kindergarten to 4th grade and has an ELL population of 59%. According to the principal Edward Barrios, the goal of the school is to “educate

the whole child using best educational practices and cutting-edge technology in a diverse, multicultural environment to prepare them for higher education, work and life”.

From a school-wide perspective, Haywood Elementary School possesses a highly friendly atmosphere for ELL students. The setting of the school embraces various types of elements that reflect cultural diversity. At the reception office, handouts and pamphlets printed in multiple languages are available (see Picture 1). And after entering into the school building, the very first thing we saw was a poster on the wall that provided the information of translators for different languages, including Spanish, Nepali, Hindi, Burmese and Arabic (see Picture 2). This can support ELL students by promoting more effective communication among their teachers, their parents and themselves. Besides, there are also many assignments posted outside of the classroom showing multiple cultural backgrounds. A walking through the hallway enabled me to observe many unique characteristics of different countries (see Picture 3 to 6). Therefore, I believe that it is also a chance for students to share their culture and learn from each other.

Except for promoting multi-language communications as above mentioned, Haywood Elementary School offers further support considering parental involvement. They have carried out a series of “Parent & Community Voice Sessions” aiming at enhancing students’ academic achievement. During the sessions, open conversations will be set up for parents and district officials to discuss how to support students and exceed their expectations. However, one limitation of this seemingly attractive activity is that it is open to all parents generally, that is to say, there is no specific focus on ELL parents. Besides, the topics of the sessions didn’t show special concerning for ELL students, either. This may cause negative influence on ELL parents’ involvement in their children’s learning considering possible communication barriers.

Through our one-day investigation listening to ELL classes from 1st grade to 4th grade, I have got a very clear impression of how the ELL curriculums are designed align with grade levels.

Compared to native students, the level of difficulty of ELL classes is developing in a slower, but progressive way. In 1st grade morning class, the goal of teaching is students' correct pronunciation of different vowel sounds. Progressing into 3rd and 4th grade, students will be learning the ability to understand the theme of a story or short passage. Personally, this design of curriculum is highly related to the assessment of English proficiency of ELL students, a question that we have particularly asked during the investigation. One teacher told us about the WIDA MODEL they use. It examines ELL's English ability through reading, writing, listening and speaking. From my observation, training students' skills to extract main ideas of the passage shows clear tendency for the reading test. The assignments posted on the wall outside of the classrooms show how ELL's writing ability are trained and developed. Listening practice is mainly achieved through teachers' teaching, and a large amount of ELL students showed high motivation to speak in class during our observation.

Although the WIDA MODEL might constrain teachers' way of teaching and goal of teaching to certain extent, they still have room to conduct their way of teaching. So how do teachers design their class setting to achieve a more efficient way for ELL students' learning? To my delight, in the four classes we listened to, a common trend can be seen that how constructivism is applied to the class teaching. In the 1st grade language class, the teacher was encouraging her students to help each other when categorizing objects. In 3rd grade and 4th grade classes, students all got chances to work in pairs or in small groups to figure out a problem. I heard teachers say "Who'd like to help him/her?" and "I love to see you helping each other" many times in different classes. In a 4th grade geography class, students were playing with a set of toys that could make different words into their own sentences. They were playing with concentration and learning at the same time. All these reflect the view of constructivism that students' learning is built on their own experiences

(Windschitl, 1999). In this way, students can better interpret and more deeply remember what they have learnt.

Another question we focused on is how multilingualism is reflected in classroom teaching, concerning the high percentage of ELL students. I didn't see a very frequent using in bilingual or multilingual materials, but in one of the 4th grade class the teacher used a bilingual story book to read to students (see Picture 7). In their library, bilingual and multilingual reading materials also exist in abundance. This shows that the school does provide ELL students with sufficient resource, it is the teachers' actual teaching determines to what extent these materials are being used. Another thing highly related to multilingualism is the language allowed in class. Among four classes we observed, there is one 3rd grade class during which English is the only language allowed. We heard the teacher say "No Spanish" to a boy while he was speaking Spanish to his friend. This can cause a negative impact on the boy and other students whose home language is Spanish that their identity is not being valued. Except for that class, the other classes we observed allow other languages spoken in class. During our interview with one of the 3rd grade class teachers, she said "They are very smart. You can learn a lot of things from them, especially about their home country". The attitudes of teachers we observed and interviewed showed their respect for cultural diversity of the students and therefore reflect the Principle of Educational Equity that "each individual feels valued and respected" (de Jong, 2011, p.171).

However, we also noticed some areas that were not fully satisfactory. Firstly is the question "How do teachers take advantage of student's home language and culture in class?". During our class observation, we didn't see many connections between the content of teaching and ELL students' home language and culture. Instead, most of the class content is solely about English language learning and topics related to it. This is in discord with the Principle of Promoting Additive Bi/Multilingualism as de Jong has brought up. Teachers should view language minority

students' home language as resources for them to learn English and also try to create more opportunities to ELL students to connect what they are learning to what they already know (de Jong, 2011). There are many connections linking to ELL students' funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 2016) that a teacher can make in class. For instance, in one 3rd grade class the teacher was teaching students about the four seasons in a year. She had a picture including four different images of seasons and taught students how to identify the four seasons. What I think can be added here is to give ELL students opportunities to describe the four seasons in their home country. Since different countries is bound to have different scenery, it will be a good way for students to refer to their funds of knowledge and practice speaking skills at the same time.

Another thing worth mentioning about the class setting in Haywood Elementary School is about how teachers effectively organize their classes. All four classes that we listened to contain sections where students have to work on their own. In the 1st grade morning class, 2/3 of students were doing practices on computers on their own when the teacher took turns to help small group students with their reading. In 3rd grade and 4th grade classes, there were small group work and pair work. Oftentimes, the teacher was only able to be in charge one group at a time. There was long period of time that the students were left inattentive. This can greatly reduce the "positive evidence" (Gass & Selinker, 2001, p. 291) the students accept, which means that students are less exposed to positive factors like the care and guidance from the teacher. Therefore, methods should be used to promote the application of the Principle of Additive Bi/Multilingualism in the classroom.

To sum up, from the school-wide level to classroom level, Haywood Elementary School shows the Principle of Structuring for Integration (de Jong, 2011) to a moderately high extent. The whole atmosphere for ELL students in school is friendly and the staff and teachers have a caring attitude towards ELL students and fully respect their home language and culture. In classroom

setting, some teachers are trying to apply multilingual materials in class teaching, although it is expected to be in a more obvious way. Based on my observation and analysis, there are three particular suggestions that I would recommend to Haywood Elementary School.

Firstly, more support for ELL parents is needed. The current activities for ELL parents do not lay enough emphasis on cultural diversity, especially in terms of the language in communication. Therefore, I suggest that more bonding activities between teachers, ELL students and their parents can be designed. For instance, regular parent teacher meetings or Family Backpack Project (Rowe & Fain, 2013) are both good ways to promote communication between ELL students and their parents, ELL parents and teachers, and teachers and ELL students' family and culture.

Secondly, I suggest the teachers to learn about the Cultural Responsive Pedagogy and try to apply it into class. According to Gay, teachers should place their students at the center of the learning orbit (Gay, 2000). It also requires teachers to fully consider of their students' different cultural backgrounds and try to connect their teaching to the students' backgrounds. And there are many ways that teachers can achieve that, for instance, by choosing relevant topics, by encouraging different ways of doing homework, by using diverse teaching materials and so on. In this way, students can get the sense that their identity is being valued and also learn in a more motivated and effective way.

Thirdly, I strongly suggest that the school should hire more teaching assistance in class. Based on our observation, most classes have only one teacher and it is clearly not enough. And it requires even more for ELL classes since students have different home languages and cultural backgrounds, because more coordination will be needed. Therefore, I think that it will be better for each ELL class to have at least one teaching assistant who can take care of students when they are working independently while the teacher is in charge of only one small group.

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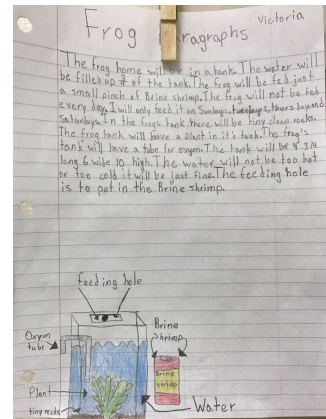
Appendix



Picture 1



Picture 2



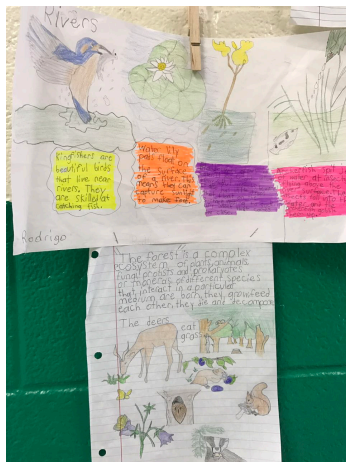
Picture 3



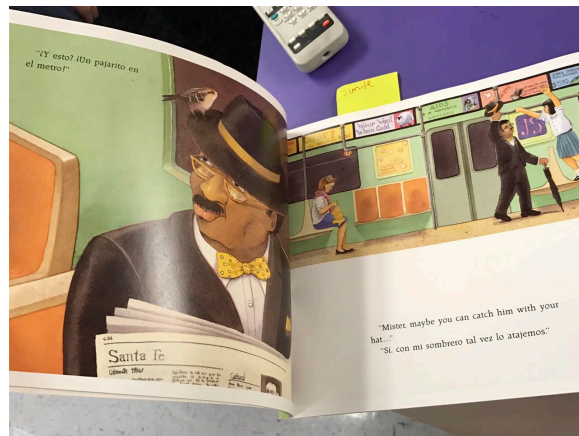
Picture 4



Picture 5



Picture 6



Picture 7

