

Teaching English as an Additional Language In The Global Classroom: A Transnational Study In The United States and United Kingdom

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Abstract

Global research has shown the persistence of inequality with regard to accessing curriculum with a view to obtaining suitable work and making useful contributions to society. The intersection of race, gender, language and low socio-economic levels creates situations which often marginalize ethnic minorities in school settings (Freire, 1968; Nieto & Turner, 2012). The graduation rates in the United States for Native American, African American and Hispanic students are lower than the graduation rates of Whites and Asian Americans. In addition, Bangladeshis and African Caribbeans currently living in the UK are under-represented in higher education, particularly young men in those communities. The research questions that guide this inquiry are: (1) According to databases, how does the academic performance of language minority groups compare to the academic performance of non-linguistic minority groups at the elementary and secondary levels of education? (2) According to language support teachers and university students, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the instructional practices for language minorities who are learning English in the United Kingdom (UK) (Bristol) and the United States (US) (Henrico)? Participants were: five UK teachers, four UK university students, five US teachers, four US university students. Data collection supervised by lead researchers included interviews, focus groups, classroom observation, and performance documents. Data analysis utilized a mixed-methods approach. Overall, linguistic minority groups performed lower than their English proficient peers. Culturally, UK teachers provided a greater emphasis on religious instruction, whereas US teachers addressed patriotic topics more frequently. Teachers in the United States and the United Kingdom were culturally supportive with slight variation in the encouraged use of the students' heritage languages.

Keywords

language support, social justice, comparative education, English as a second language, language minority group

Rationale and Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the variation in academic achievement among language minorities and their English-proficient peers. McEachron and Bhatti and their undergraduate and graduate students explored ways in which teachers in the US and UK work with students for whom English was not their first language. The study investigated whether institutions of higher education that prepare teachers take into account the promotion of good practice in relation to equal access to education. One aspect of best practice (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2012) is the ability of pre-service teachers to be culturally responsive and supportive of diverse linguistic populations. Two faculty members, one from The College of William and Mary and one from Bath Spa University, and eight students from their respective institutions investigated the intersection between ethnicity and English language proficiency among students at the primary and secondary levels. Data was collected in four schools, one high school and one primary/elementary school in each country. The student populations in the two institutions of higher education were predominantly white, whereas the school population where the graduates will be employed might well be diverse with students from many ethnic groups whose first language is not English. The research affirms the importance of differentiating the curriculum for language minorities as well as providing pre-service teachers with the opportunity to work with diverse linguistic populations and their teachers prior to their future teaching roles.

Literature Review

This study was guided by the principles of social justice and the assumption that all students who attend schools in the US and UK should be able to access curricula that provides them with the opportunity to enter mainstream occupations and become actively engaged citizens. Research

has shown the persistence of unequal access to effective schools and curriculum materials, thus making it difficult for some students to obtain suitable work and make useful contributions to society. The intersection of race, gender, language and low socio-economic levels creates situations which often marginalize ethnic minorities in school settings (Freire, 1970; Battu & Zenou, 2010; Mitton & Aspinall, 2011; Berrittella, 2012; Nieto & Turner, 2012; Hamilton, 2013; Gallagher & Beckett, 2014). For example, in the US, the graduation rates for Native Americans, African Americans and Hispanic students are lower than the graduation rates of Whites and Asian Americans. In the UK some communities are under-represented in higher education, for example Bangladeshis and African Caribbeans, and particularly young men in those communities (Tackey, Barnes, & Khambhaita, 2011). In English-dominated countries such as the US and UK, not to be able to operate adequately in English leads to disempowerment and social disengagement (Blackaby, Leslie, & Murphy, 2005). In 2005, McEachron and Bhatti reported that the lowest achieving TESOL students by ethnic status were White, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean, Black African, Black Other, and Other. Gypsy/Roma and Travellers of Irish heritage were considered to be one of the most disadvantaged groups in the education system. This study investigates the classroom experiences of these ethnic groups. They are a concern for educators because they are over-represented in the low achieving performance levels.

Low academic achievement has serious implications beyond formal education. Fraser and Honneth (2003) discuss representation and re-distribution which have implications for

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bigger questions about the purpose of education itself and its impact on the lives of young people whose parents may have been disenfranchised through lack of engagement with educational opportunities. For Fraser, recognition means taking the issue of students' identities seriously. Redistribution refers to taking resources to those who have few resources or none. This would mean re-distributing goods from those who have more to those who have nothing. This would lead to more social justice in a society and therefore by implication more opportunities for those who feel unable to contribute because they have been disenfranchised. Representation would mean respecting and listening to the voices of young people whose experiences add new and different meanings to the mainstream discourse. Re-distribution can work on at least two levels. On one level it would mean ensuring that both physical and intellectual resources (e.g., teaching resources, school building, teacher assistants, quality of teaching) are fairly distributed among all kinds of students. On a deeper level this raises difficult questions about social justice.

For example, how can teachers enhance access to English and opportunities for a better future without dismissing the wealth of linguistic, social and cultural capital brought into the classroom by students of disenfranchised communities? The approach which claims to value every voice equally can lead to relativism and this is not very helpful for young people's future. If students find it easier to operate and learn only their own language rather than English, the teacher will be doing them an injustice by not teaching adequate English, knowing that for example there are no jobs in the child's first language. However, under the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) all children are entitled to maintain their own linguistic and cultural heritage. Can heritage languages be supported as well as English? Do schools meet this challenge successfully? Teachers are expected to be versatile and creative, responsive and respectful to *all* their students. The

challenge for schools is to promote equity and opportunity, but how do schools do this? Researching what schools actually do with the resources they have and what happens in real classrooms can illuminate how language minorities receive linguistic and cultural support (Gerwitz & Cribb, 2008).

Freire (1970) writes about the importance of literacy for empowerment. Without the tools of the spoken language in a culture, citizens are powerless to be agents of change. Nieto, who migrated to the mainland United States from Puerto Rico, has written extensively on how important it is for teacher preparation programs to teach future teachers to be culturally responsive to language, ethnicity, religion, race, national origin and exceptionalities. Majors (2001), Cork (2005), and Nieto and Turner (2012) emphasize the importance of working with families. In *Learning Local and Global Literacies from Students and Families* Turner states the importance of understanding the socio-historical context of the community that future teachers will face in addition to the legacies of racism and classism: "It is important that they understand they're not coming there to save the students or save the community. Rather, they are coming to contribute to the ongoing struggle to improve education and outcomes for students' lives in those communities" (p. 68).

Griffiths (2003, p. 49) has argued persuasively for connecting localized narratives or "little stories" such as a small scale study like this one with large scale theory or meta narrative, without losing new insights from field work in educational settings. She talks about "bridging the gap" (2003, p. 51). Positioning theory can act as a bridge here. Investigating the daily interactions of language support among teachers, students, and researchers is supported by positioning theory. Analyses of these micro-interactions are based upon discourse assumptions outlined by Tirado and Galvez (2007) including the importance that language plays in the production of social realities. According to Tirado and Galvez (2007, para. 22)

discursive practice is the fundamental core of positioning theory:

Discourse is. . . a collective and dynamic process through which meanings are constructed, acquired and transformed. . . The constituent force of each discourse practice is rooted in the fact that we provide the subject's positions. In this sense the theory concedes a special relevance to conversation, so much so that it claims the positioning is a phenomenon of conversation. . . Once a determined position has been taken, the individual perceives and interprets the world from and through that strategic position. The concrete images, metaphors, narrative lines and concepts are relevant to the particular discursive practice and where they have been positioned.

The pursuit of common and transformative goals among school division personnel and university personnel may reflect motivational differences. Dallmer (2004, p. 43) participated in several school-university partnerships and expressed the following insight on motivational variations, "Collaboration does not mean giving up our differences; it means that we must trust in those differences to accomplish our mutually agreed upon purposes." Positioning theory illuminates the manner in which individual commitment is grounded in cultural contexts, including work, school, and community. For example, when positioning theory is applied to qualitative research, each member of a research dyad is perceived as influencing the other during the process of information exchange. When such relationships occur over a long-term period, trust is cultivated gradually and can lead to teamwork, collective problem-solving, and non-hierarchical relationships (Griffiths & Davies, 1995; Tshannen-Moran, 2009).

Positioning theory is applied in three educational contexts—primary, secondary and tertiary education—in two countries. Investigation and learning take place among (a)

lead researchers and their students enrolled in institutions that promote international collaboration, (b) among lead researchers, their students and high school teachers, and (c) among lead researchers, their students and primary/elementary students. Two research questions guide this inquiry. The first is: According to databases, which bilingual groups are performing better at primary and secondary levels of education? The second is: According to language support teachers and university students, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the programs for language minorities who are learning English in the UK (Bristol) and US (Henrico)?

No comparative studies were found that involved university researchers with graduate and undergraduate students in studies that were jointly conducted in two countries. However, insights from international studies that utilized a comparative lens among language groups were reviewed. For example, Goldstein (1997) and her research assistant conducted a pilot study of 28 Cantonese-speaking secondary students and their teacher who was teaching them math, using English, in Toronto. She discovered that a larger group of nine students spoke Cantonese to each other and spoke English with non-Chinese students while a smaller group of two students spoke English during all interactions. Goldstein maintained that the use of Cantonese and English created a language barrier that split the students into two groups yet concluded that it was not a question of whether to allow multilingual use when teaching English, but how to do so in a way that maintains positive interethnic relationships.

At the elementary level, Park and Justin (2012) investigated first language (L1) use and second language (L2) use by teachers in classrooms that were team taught by native Korean (N=4) and native English (N=3) speakers. Of the three English speakers, all held teaching licenses and one had TESOL licensure. Observations were classified based on frequency and optimal language learning environments, such as negotiation of meaning and exposure to

varied and creative language. Park and Justin discovered that L1 was used in Korean English Teachers' (KET) classrooms ten times more often than in Native English Teachers' (NET) classes with an assistant KET. The researchers recommend that KET utilize English more often and implement peer monitoring to make KET aware of frequent use of Korean. This study raises awareness of the impact of the interaction of adults in multilingual classrooms and how modelling can enhance optimal language learning.

Durgunoğlu & Hughes (2010) investigated the relationships among efficacy and preparation for 62 preservice teachers in the context of their field work with high school teachers who had English Language Learners (ELL) in their classrooms. They found that preservice teachers did not feel prepared to work with ELLs and that the mentor teachers were not effective in modelling ways to engage ELL students. These findings were relevant because seven of the student researchers in the current study aspire to work in classrooms with ELL learners. A related study of preservice teachers by Dorman (2012) underscored the importance of biographical awareness and history among future teachers who are placed in diverse settings that are different from the ones in which they attended. Also Bhatti (2007) discovered that pre-service teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds felt that there were misperceptions about their own biographical details when it came to interacting with mainly white mainstream teachers. For instance, one pre-service teacher who wore a hijab in a school setting surprised teachers by her skilled and confident use of computers. The pre-service teacher also found the white children in the same school to be more open-minded and accepting of diversity than the white teachers who taught them.

The literature review provides empirical and theoretical support for the basic right of children and youth to maintain their linguistic and cultural heritage. In school settings the realization of this right, or the lack thereof, is

mediated by the interaction of teachers, administrators, students and parents, a process that is purported to be dynamic and changing according to positioning theory. Researchers have begun to conduct empirical research about this dynamic process by focusing on the use of L1 and English by teachers, students and peers. Teachers appeared receptive to the use of L1 but the findings were inconclusive with regard to the appropriate proportion of the use of L1 in relation to L2, especially since the use of L1 was also perceived as a way to be culturally affirming. The design of the current study builds on this research by introducing the first known transnational approach.

Methodology

Data collection was guided by positioning theory which allowed the researchers to bring their own perspectives to discoveries and interpret their findings with one another, examining comparative themes and differences unique to school settings. In addition, the study provided university students an opportunity to be both participants and observers while conducting comparative, transnational research using a mixed methods design.

To gain insight for the first research question (According to databases, how does the academic performances of language minority groups compare to the academic performance of non-linguistic minority groups at the elementary and secondary levels of education?) databases through the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and the UK Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) were analysed to assess which ethnic groups were demonstrating higher performance levels.

For the second question (According to language support teachers and graduate and undergraduate students, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the instructional practices for language minorities who are learning English?) both the researchers and the university students interacted with teachers using an interview protocol and their analyses were integrated. See protocol in Appendix A.

The researchers looked critically at educational theory, both national and local, which influences the way TESOL is taught in schools (McEachron & Bhatti, 2005). Descriptions of the unique school localities were used to generate a deeper understanding of the challenges facing students and their teachers. University students were prepared by McEachron during three in-person sessions in addition to feedback on written reports for the first research question. Bhatti provided eight in-person sessions in addition to feedback on written reports for the first research question. These sessions took place eight weeks prior to school visits to ensure that student researchers followed appropriate data collection procedures such as respecting confidentiality and asking questions in a way that does not reflect bias or intent to lead the response. W&M students had had coursework in educational research and ESL so not as many orientation sessions took place. The scholars involved in guiding the research also analysed the data with the students. This project generated comparative data that demonstrated which teaching practices and instructional materials were being implemented and which ones were deemed more effective by teachers and pre-service students. The research was approved by the two universities' institutional review boards.

Collection of Data

One of the challenges in conducting comparative educational research is that K-12 school divisions in various countries do not follow the same school calendar, do not have the same institutional infrastructures, and do not have the same curriculum materials. This is also true for institutions of higher education. In a study investigating the internationalization of teacher education, Schneider (2005) noted that many obstacles for study abroad were related to the need for better logistical integration of student coursework. This study was designed

with attention to when students would have time in their schedules to participate in internships overseas and continue with required coursework. The four student researchers from Bath Spa University (BSU) coordinated with Bhatti and travelled to the US for two weeks during their spring break in April, 2014. The four College of William and Mary (W&M) student researchers coordinated with McEachron in conjunction with coursework relevant to the English as a Second Language (ESL) Dual Endorsement Program. They travelled to the UK in mid-May 2014. Respectively, each student spent eight days in the schools, seven hours daily, for 56 hours each, to total 448 hours of data collected by eight students.

Student Researchers

McEachron and Bhatti each interviewed and selected four participants from their respective universities. They were selected on the basis of their interest in ELL and their willingness to travel to another country to collect data and analyze the results. Applicants were asked to provide an essay including motivation for participation and relevant coursework to language study and research. From W&M, three undergraduate female students and one male graduate student were selected. All were enrolled in elementary (N=2) and secondary (N=2) pre-service programs and all were pursuing a dual endorsement in ESL. The four students had previously travelled abroad and had studied other languages. From BSU, three female and one male student were selected. One was pursuing a baccalaureate in sociology. The other three were pursuing baccalaureate degrees in Education Studies. All eight students were pre-service teachers. Table 1: *Participants and their Multi-cultural Backgrounds*, shows their varied degree pursuits, travel, and language experiences

Table 1
Participants and their Multicultural Backgrounds

Student Researcher	Gender and Ethnicity	Degree, Major Focus, & Country	Countries Visited Prior to This Study	Languages Studied	Age Range
A. AJ	Female, African American	Baccalaureate, Elementary Education, USA	Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Bahamas, Spain, Canada	Spanish Italian	20-30
B. AH	Female, White	Baccalaureate, Secondary Education, USA	Bosnia, Croatia, Italy, Greece, UK	Bosnian, Arabic, Spanish	20-30
C. RH	Female White	Baccalaureate, Secondary Education, USA	Honduras, Spain	Spanish	20-30
D. AN	Male White, Caucasian of European heritage	Masters, Elementary Education, USA	Canada, Netherlands, France, Italy, Germany, Portugal, Hungary, Romania, Iceland, Tanzania	Italian	20-30
E. AL	Female, White	Baccalaureate, Education Studies, UK	France, Spain, Holland	French Spanish	20-30
F. LH	Female, White	Baccalaureate, Education Studies, UK			20-30
G. LM	Female, White	Baccalaureate, Secondary Education, UK	Australia, Portugal, USA	French	20-30
H. BC	Male, White	Baccalaureate, Education Studies, UK	Bulgaria France, Belgium, Portugal, Spain, German, Italy, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Hungary, Greece, Romania, Turkey, Morocco, India, UAE, USA	Macedonian Russian	30-40

Classroom Teachers

McEachron and Bhatti coordinated with the field placement directors at their respective universities to identify schools with English Language Learners (ELL). McEachron and

Bhatti made a purposeful selection based on schools that had established Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) programs, for a period longer than ten years. School visits by McEachron and Bhatti were

made prior to selections. Letters of invitation were sent to teachers who worked with English language learners after approval to conduct research in the school divisions had been obtained by the respective universities and the respective school divisions. One limitation of the sample selection is that the schools in the UK were in an urban setting and the US schools were in a suburban setting. Locating schools where there were significant ESL populations combined with professional working relationships with the lead researchers resulted in samples of convenience.

Research Reports

Prior to travelling abroad, the faculty researcher and four students from each university researched the first research question for their respective country: According to databases, how do the academic performances of language minority groups compare to the academic performance of non-linguistic minority groups at the elementary and secondary levels of education? BSU students consulted the PLASC and local data bases and W&M students consulted the VDOE data base. After review by McEachron, W&M students shared their report with BSU students and BSU students shared their report with W&M students after review by Bhatti. The reports provided a context for the student researchers prior to their travel abroad.

Observation and Interview Protocols

After reviewing various observation protocols on cultural responsiveness and supportive classrooms for students who are learning EAL including those with special needs, an observation instrument was designed by McEachron and Bhatti. The instrument (see Appendix A) provides guidance to student researchers, some of whom have not had formal training in TESOL. Students in secondary schools and elementary schools were observed to see how they were participating in class with respect to their speaking, writing, reading and listening activities. Teachers were observed to see how they were presenting speaking, writing,

reading and listening pedagogies as well as how they were culturally responsive to students. In addition to the observation protocol, a second interview protocol, designed by the authors, included questions that were posed to the student researchers for a journal response or for a verbal response in a focus group setting.

Journals and Focus Groups

Student researchers were asked to keep a journal, starting in the weeks leading up to their travel abroad, the two weeks while conducting research, and the weeks following their classroom-based research. Focus groups were set up for interaction among the BSU and W&M students as well as for interaction among the two separate research teams so that McEachron and Bhatti could document perceptions at designated points throughout the research when they were hosting the student researchers. One combined BSU and W&M focus group took place in the US and another combined focus group took place in the UK. See Appendix B for examples of questions posed by McEachron and Bhatti. The student researchers also interacted informally to discuss the research without McEachron and Bhatti present because the student researchers were serving as hosts to each other during their visits.

Analysis of Data

Analysis of data followed an “explanatory sequential mixed methods” approach whereby quantitative research was conducted first to address the first research question about performance data in relation to ethnic and linguistic cultural groups (Creswell, 2014, p.15-16). The findings from the first question were then built upon by the qualitative research conducted in relation to the second research question about instructional practices. Ideally, the quantitative data identified in relation to the first research question would inform classroom observations in relation to the second research question. That is, general data about school performance in relation to ethnic and linguistic diversity could potentially be linked to the ethnic

and linguistic diversity of individual students in classrooms.

Data collected in relation to items on the classroom observation protocol (Appendix A) were inserted into spreadsheets by each student researcher. McEachron, Bhatti and student researchers then had access to the spreadsheet to discuss patterns that emerged for each question on the protocol. Discussions took place in person with those student researchers who remained close to campus and through email correspondence with those students who were not in close proximity. Positioning theory allowed for the researchers to explore their respective interpretations and illuminate cross-cultural differences as well as positioning differences and similarities.

Data analysis utilized pattern matching and explanation building. Each student researcher inserted his or her responses to the questions on the protocol into a spreadsheet that was posted to Google Docs¹ so that everyone had access to the data. Journal responses and research reports were also posted in order to triangulate the data. Pattern-matching logic compares an empirically based pattern with general predications. An empirically based pattern would be a pattern that emerged that was consistent with the demographic academic performance patterns for language minorities. Building an explanation about each school setting requires that the researchers explore possible causal links for phenomenon that are discovered for each person. According to Yin (1984, p. 107), “the causal links may reflect critical insights into public policy process or into social science theory.” He argues that interpretations of case narratives are stronger when they reflect theoretically significant propositions. Unfortunately, the researchers found reluctance on the part of school administrators and teachers to release specific performance data in relation to individual students which is consistent with one of the limitations identified by Creswell (2012) when attempting to bridge quantitative and qualitative data.

Findings

Findings are presented in two sections that correspond to the following research questions: (1) According to databases, which bilingual groups are performing better at primary and secondary levels of education? (2) According to language support teachers and university students, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the programs for language minorities who are learning English in the UK (Bristol) and US (Henrico)? The following pseudonyms will be used for the four schools: US Elementary, US Secondary, UK Elementary, and UK Secondary. In the UK, the elementary schools are referred to as primary schools, but the elementary designation is used here so that it is clear that the samples are comparable. Findings for the first research question follow.

Language Policy and Performance Data in Henrico, Virginia

Unlike countries that have national language policies that provide guidelines for teachers, US teachers navigate federal, state, and local policies. This state of affairs has been influenced by *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB). NCLB, signed into the law by President George W. Bush in 2002, was the reauthorization of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. With NCLB, what was previously entitled the *Bilingual Education Act* was replaced by the *English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act*. Under the general provisions of NCLB’s Title IX, Part A, Section 9101, any student identified as *limited English proficient* (LEP) must have a Home Language Survey that identifies the student as bilingual and a score showing limited proficiency in one or all of the four domains—listening, speaking, reading, writing. According to NCLB *limited English proficient* describes individuals who are aged three through twenty-one, and are enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary or secondary school. Their difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English may affect their ability to succeed in

school and on state assessments and ultimately as citizens (Center for Public Education, 2007).

Language Policy

In a Virginia study, McEachron and Martin (2012) explored the impact of NCLB on selected school divisions, according to the divisions' ESL supervisors. The supervisors emphasized the challenge of realigning curriculum so that their school divisions would be in compliance with three distinct units—their local school division, the state of Virginia, and the federal government as specified by NCLB. Despite the alignment challenges with local, state and federal testing guidelines in the three reviewed school divisions, the researchers noted that ELL teachers and their supervisors were in agreement regarding the importance of differentiating curriculum and instruction for English language learners so that they would be more successful academically. One of the challenges in doing so is not to compromise high quality instruction, a sentiment echoed by Florida teachers. In a study of English Language Learner (ELL) teachers, Harper, Platt, Naranjo and Boynton (2007) reported that the implementation of NCLB reforms compromised high quality instruction for ELLs, specifically the standardization of curriculum content, the means of instruction, and the lack of opportunities for individualized instruction.

Performance Data

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) publishes annual reports for each school in the Commonwealth, providing the most up-to-date information regarding a school's performance on standardized testing, with a focus on English and Math examinations. According to a 2012 report from the National Center for Education Statistics, there were 87,472 students classified as ELLs, comprising 7.1% of Virginia's school population. This number is below the 9.8% of students nationwide who receive ESL services, but Virginia nevertheless has the seventeenth-highest percentage of ESL students of all fifty states (NCES, 2012). Although Virginia school

systems do not report data on the native countries of their ELLs, the top five home countries for immigrants to Virginia in 2010 were El Salvador, Mexico, India, Korea and Vietnam. The most common first languages of ELLs in Virginia were: Spanish, 56,445; Korean, 4,709; Vietnamese, 3,726; Arabic, 3,490; and Urdu, 2,765. As in all states, the number of ELLs enrolled in Virginia tends to be higher in the earlier grades.

Following a nation-wide trend of ELLs performing lower academically than their English-proficient peers, Virginia's ELLs pass the state standardized tests, the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL), at a lower rate than the statewide average. For example, in 2009-2010, only 84.7% of ELL Virginia third graders passed their Mathematics SOL test, scoring at or above Proficient, compared to 91.4% of the total school population. Likewise, this trend continued on the third grade Reading/Language Arts assessment, where only 77.9% of ELLs, compared to 83.1% of the total school population, scored at or above Proficient and in Science, where only 82.1% of ELLs, compared to 90.7% of the total school population, passed. This gap in performance on standardized tests between ELLs and English-proficient students continues at all grade levels; on the high school level, only 84.2% of ELLs passed the Mathematics SOL, 79.9% passed the Reading/Language Arts SOL, and 70.1% passed the Science SOL, compared to 91.3%, 94.0% and 89.7% of the total population of students statewide who passed each test (Virginia Department of Education, 2013).

Henrico County

As of September 2012, the total number of LEP students in Henrico County, Virginia was 2,703. Among the LEP students, 79 different native languages are spoken. Of the total LEP student population, Castilian Spanish was the most widely spoken native language (1,161 students) followed by Arabic (311 students) and Vietnamese (145 students). LEP students are required to take Standards of Learning

Assessments; English language proficiency is assessed annually and there are rarely any exemptions (Henrico County Public Schools, 2014a; Henrico County Public Schools, 2014b; Virginia Department of Education, 2014).

US Elementary

US Elementary is a fully accredited public school, meeting the accreditation benchmarks across all four subjects for the 2013-2014 school year. As of September 30, 2012, 531 students were enrolled. Data from the 2012-2013 school year showed that 73% of all students passed the grade three English reading assessment with 18% receiving advanced scores. On the same assessment, 52% of LEP students received a passing score, and 16% received an advanced score. On the grade three mathematics assessment, 68% of all students passed with 16% of those students receiving an advanced score. LEP students had lower scores with 43% passing the assessment and 7% achieving an advanced score (VDOE, 2014).

As of January 2014, US Elementary had 196 English language learners enrolled. It was one of the most culturally diverse elementary schools in Henrico County with students from 28 different countries (Henrico County Public Schools, 2014c). Of all the elementary schools in Henrico County, US Elementary has the most ELLs. Among the ELL population, 20 native languages are spoken with Spanish (86 students, 44%), Nepali (48 students, 25%), and Arabic (21 students, 11%) being the 3 most widely spoken native languages. Students from all six of the English proficiency levels are enrolled at US Elementary with most students being categorized at levels 1-4. Of the 196 ELLs, 38 students are at Level 1, 49 students are at Level 2, 62 students are at Level 3, 38 students are at Level 4, and 38 students are at Level 5.

US Secondary

US Secondary is a fully accredited public high school, meeting the accreditation benchmarks

across all areas when considering the student population as a whole. There were 1,738 students enrolled during the 2013-2014 school year. When looking at combined data for all students at US Secondary, the school continually performs higher than statewide averages on standardized testing. Currently, more than 25% of US Secondary students are enrolled in Advanced Placement courses, courses considered comparable to the college level (VDOE, 2014). In addition, 88% of all students graduate in the typical four year sequence with a Standard or Advanced Studies diploma as outlined by the Federal Graduation Indicator, compared to a statewide graduation rate of 83% (VDOE, 2014). Focusing more exclusively on English Language Learners, 73% of LEP students graduated in four years compared to a statewide graduation rate of 65% among LEP students (VDOE, 2014).

Overall performance on English and Reading assessments from the 2012-2013 school year show that 94% of all students at US Secondary had passing scores (VDOE, 2014). However, only 53% of LEP students at US Secondary had passing scores albeit consistent with a 54% pass rate for LEP students statewide (VDOE, 2014). As for Mathematics performance, 71% of LEP students at US Secondary had passing scores, much higher than the 59% pass rate for LEP students statewide, but still lower than an 89% pass rate for all students at US Secondary (VDOE, 2014).

As of January 2014, US Secondary has 112 students classified as English Language learners and this number is expected to rise before the end of the school year due to additional families moving to the area. Based on percentages from higher to lower, the native languages of these students is first Nepali, then Spanish, and then Arabic. The distribution among the six levels of English proficiency as determined by the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) levels is shown in Table 2.

Table 2.
US Secondary Students' WIDA Levels

Level One	Level Two	Level Three	Level Four	Levels Five and Six
13	20	25	26	18

Language Policy and Performance Data in Bristol, England

The Department for Education (DfE) in England determines the English School Curriculum. As education in the United Kingdom is a devolved matter this study focused solely on English policy, which is independent to the policies of the other members of the UK: Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. English as an Additional Language (EAL) has no curriculum status, or discrete content, in England, and therefore has no specialization in the Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) course, the most popular academic route into gaining Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and becoming a teacher.

Language policy

According to The National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum (NALDIC), the priority for children learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) is to promote rapid language acquisition and include them in mainstream education as quickly as possible (Overington, 2012). This means that EAL learners are taught alongside native speakers in mainstream classrooms, while newly arrived pupils may be supported by specialist EAL teachers or bilingual classroom assistants. In certain areas of high density EAL learners, schools may also set up separate classes to provide more focused support (Overington, 2012).

One of the key sets of guidelines which the government has issued in relation to EAL pupils is the Guidance to accompany the Standards for

Qualified Teacher Status (The Training and Development Agency for Schools, 2009). The Training and Development Agency for Schools offers teacher trainers best practice guidelines with regard to how to prepare and assess those wishing to gain Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). Under the section entitled *Achievement and Diversity*, the guidelines focus on *children with special educational needs* including those for whom English is an additional language.

Supporting the implementation of government policy and guidelines, NALDIC issued a document entitled *EAL and Initial Teacher Training: Guidance for Providers* (Davies, 2012). This provides detailed guidance for assisting Initial Teacher Training providers in supporting trainee teachers to meet the needs of EAL, and the related Standards for QTS. The document is drawn from a range of research, theoretical perspectives and practice, and is informed by the work NALDIC has undertaken to provide support and information on EAL for all professionals involved in initial teacher education. Davies (2012) reports that only 45% of Newly Qualified Teachers felt their training was *good* or *very good* in relation to preparing them to teach learners for whom English is an additional language.

Bristol, England

According to the Bristol City Council (2013), the estimated population of Bristol is 432,500, the largest city in the South West of England. The percentage of the total population who are not classified as White British is 22%, a number that

is increasing, and the percentage of individuals who were not born in the UK is 15%. There are at least 45 religions practiced, at least 50 countries of birth represented, and at least 91 main languages spoken by people living in the city. A period of unprecedented population growth occurred from 1990 through the 2000s. Since 2001 the population is estimated to have increased by 42,400 people (10.9%); this compares to an England and Wales increase of 8.0% over the same period.

Bristol experienced significant population increases, particularly from 2004-2005 when the A8 Accession countries joined the European Union (EU). The Black or Minority Ethnic group (BME) population (all groups with the exception of all the White groups) makes up 16% of the total population. Of the 15% born outside the UK, 19,686 (4.6%) were born in other EU countries (including 10,520 in the EU Accession countries) and 40,540 (9.5%) were born in countries outside of the EU. There are at least 50 countries represented in Bristol, the ten most popular countries of birth of all Bristol residents, excluding native UK citizens, are: Poland (6,415 citizens); Somalia (4,947); India (3,809); Jamaica (3,279); Other EU accession countries (3,025); Ireland (2,900); Pakistan (2,770); Other EU members countries (2,478); Germany (2,329). Of the people not born in the UK, 69% arrived in the UK when they were of working age and 30% arrived as children. The main languages spoken, other than English, are Polish and Somali. Overall 9% of people do not speak English as their main language.

The increase in population has service delivery implications. Concentration of this growth on particular population groups in certain areas of the city, such as Somalis in Lawrence Hill, Ashley and Easton, will have localized implications on the delivery of these

services. New communities bring both advantages and new challenges around cohesion and integration. The Community Cohesion Strategy, whose strategies include supporting innovation around the teaching of English Language (TESOL) (Bristol Government, 2014) provides guidelines regarding how Bristolians should foster good relations between homogeneous communities and the wider community.

UK Elementary

According to a *Supply and Voluntary Staff* document, the largest ethnic group in the UK Elementary is Pakistani followed by Black Somalian. In the classroom that student researcher AH was observing, there was also a student from Iraq. AN was told that the majority of students live within a 2-3 block radius and that the majority of the students' families were seeking asylum or work in Bristol, therefore, most did not speak English and most did not work. In the overall school population, 85%-90% of the students were classified EAL. Students primarily arrive from Pakistan, Somalia and areas in the Middle East and India. A smaller percentage of students come from Eastern Europe and various regions in Asia. Some of the languages students speak include Arabic, Farsi, and Kurdish. Many girls wear hijabs indicating religious affiliation to Islam. Students in the elementary school typically attend the high school described in the following section.

UK Secondary

UK Secondary is a state funded school for young people from the age of 11 to 18 years. The school serves a diverse multi-ethnic student population. It is situated near the city center, and comprised of many facilities for arts, science, sports and

catering with an industrial level catering center making it possible for students to choose a future in academic work, professional or vocational fields. According to a 2013-2014 school prospectus, 96% of students continue in education or training after the age of 16. The school has over 210 students involved in post-16 to 18 studies and around 60 students progress to university every year at average age of 18.

The area around UK Secondary had the highest unemployment rate in Bristol in 2012-2013, 9.7% compared to the city average of 4.1%. In 2013-2014, UK Secondary had 989 students of whom 56% did not speak English as their first language. In 2013-2014 there were 106 teachers and 41 Teaching Assistants. The pupil to teacher ratio is 10.4. There are 55.3% male students and 44.7% female students, 5.9% are on the Special Education Needs register, and 57.6% are on Free School Meals, an indicator of material poverty. On the whole, 73% of the students are considered to be disadvantaged and 27% not disadvantaged in terms of their socio-economic positions and parents' occupations.

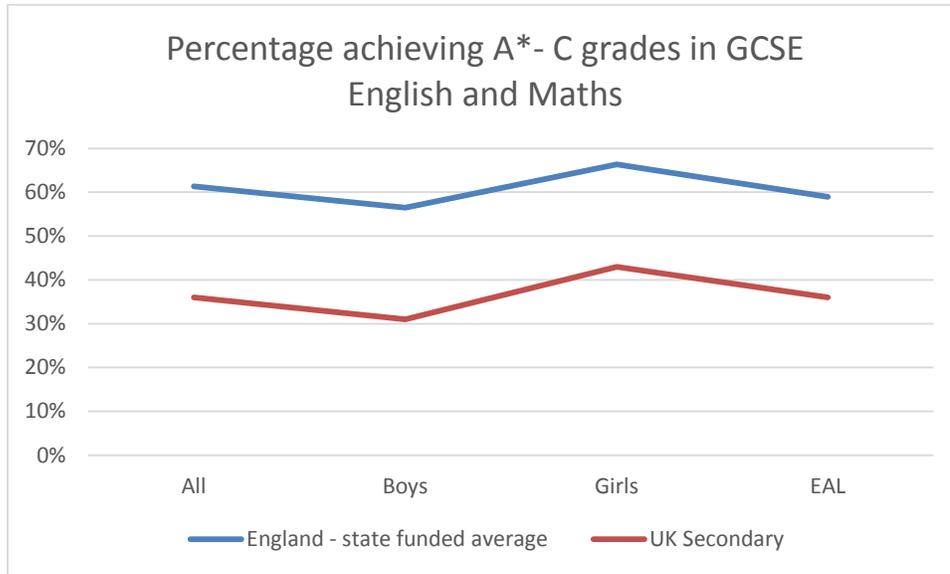
UK Secondary is a diverse school with many linguistic and ethnic variations. In terms of the UK Secondary student population, 33 nationalities from outside Europe are represented in the school. These include students who originate from Afghanistan, Armenia, Burundi, Cameroon, Cuba, China, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, India, Iran, Iraq, Nepal, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Zimbabwe. Religions represented in the school include Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Atheism and Buddhism.

Fourteen nationalities are from Eastern and Western Europe, including Romania, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Albania. The 2013-14 demographics, combining national

census and school categories are as follows: Any Other Asian, 2.81%; Any Other Ethnic Group, .13; Any Other Mixed Background, 2.17; Bangladeshi, 4.59; Black Caribbean, 11.35; Black Somali, 19.90; Chinese, .51; Gypsy/Gypsy Roma, 2.17; Indian, 4.59; Information Not Obtained, .64; Other Black African, 2.81; Other White, .51; Pakistani, 11.73; White-British, 21.30; White and Asian, .26; White and Black African, 1.02; White and Black Caribbean, 7.40; White Eastern European, 4.46; White Western European, 1.40; identifier left blank, .26.

There are a high number of refugees and asylum seekers in the local area from which the school draws its students. Of the 16 year olds, 20% do not have any qualifications; 42% of those over 16 have a Level 2 as their highest qualification—which is what 12 year olds might be expected to achieve in usual circumstances. According to Bristol local government figures, the average number people from all ethnic groups aged 16 or over who have no qualifications is 20% (Mills, 2014). Overall 50% of children achieved Level 4 in English and Math at Key Stage 2. In 2013, only 30% of children achieved A to C grades at GCSE including English and Math at Key Stage 4. Performance in English and Reading assessments from 2012-2013 school year show that 66% of pupils achieved expected level of progress between Key Stage 2 and GCSE English at the end of KS4; 47% achieved expected level of progress between KS2 and GCSE Math at the end of KS4; 4% with low prior attainment achieved Level 2 threshold including A to C grades in both English and Math GCSEs; 57% of middle prior attainment achieved level 2 threshold including A to C in English and Math (Department for Education, 2013). Table 3. provides performance comparisons for EAL students and the state-funded average.

Table 3.
UK Secondary EAL Performance Comparisons



The overall performance of UK Secondary School compared to the average results of all English state funded schools, is considerably poorer. When looking at the total amount of pupils who passed both English and math at GCSE, they follow a near identical performance gap (overall this 25.3%). However, the number of pupils in UK Secondary School's EAL cohort who come from the weakest performing academic ethnicities is much higher than the national average. There is only a small performance gap between UK Secondary School and the national average, when comparing the percentage of pupils who have made the expected progress in English (4.4%), yet a much larger difference (33.8%) when comparing the percentage of pupils who have made the expected progress in math.

When comparing language needs between the Henrico and Bristol schools, the following differences emerged. In the US, the primary LEP groups at the elementary level were Spanish, followed by Arabic and Vietnamese; at the secondary level the relative proportions were

Nepalese, Spanish and Arabic. In the UK, the primary LEP group was Black Somali (including Somali and Arabic), followed by Pakistani (including Urdu and approximately ten regional languages) and Black Caribbean (including Dutch, Spanish and French). One challenge in reporting the data is the difficulty of aligning one reporting system with the other. As a result the relative proportions are reported rather than the actual percentages since UK Secondary reported ethnic group percentages for the entire school, the UK elementary school reported relative proportions of ethnic groups classified as EAL, the US secondary school reported the total number of ELL students with relative linguistic proportions, and the US elementary school reported total number of ELL students in various language groups which could then be converted to percentages.

How schools report ELL data varies within countries, within school divisions and between countries. This makes it difficult to devise intelligible tables for ease of comparison regarding resources on the one hand and

accountability through public examination results on the other. For example, if there was a standard basis for comparison such as the performance levels in the WIDA standards, levels of achievement could be compared. In addition, the curriculum and ages at which students are tested are not identical. This makes direct comparisons difficult. Despite reporting challenges it is generally evident that the US and UK are countries that attract immigrant populations and that the schools face similar challenges in accommodating linguistic diversity. For example, both the US (elementary) and UK (secondary) schools documented ESL student populations representing 28 or more nationalities. Among the ESL populations in the UK and US, the levels of English language proficiency demonstrated wide ranges, but compared to the performance of ESL students across the divisions, they

performed well at the schools selected for this study. This leads us to findings for the second research question—According to language support teachers and university students, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the programs for language minorities who are learning English in the UK (Bristol) and US (Henrico)?

UK and US Student Researchers' Perceived Strengths

Based on themes that emerged from an examination of responses to the questions on the protocol, journal entries, and focus group discussions, UK and US researchers agreed that the TESOL teachers were dedicated to welcoming new arrivals to their classrooms and to facilitating their increased knowledge of all subject areas and especially learning English. Their perceptions are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

Student Researchers' Perceived Strengths of Language Support Teachers

	UK Student Researchers' Perceptions of US Teachers	US Student Researchers' Perceptions of UK Teachers
Elementary	AL: Students are supported very well and most will be fluent in two languages, and all of them will be eventually fluent in English as their additional language which inevitably will help them immensely to get a job and have great prospects in America. Due to the incredible support from the teachers, the children's native tongue is valued.	AN: The teacher used a variety of strategies to elicit teacher-student interactions. This most common included question/response where the teacher provided many guiding questions to the students and modelled appropriate thinking for the students prior to letting the students respond. She also modelled expectations before completing activities.
Secondary	LM: The strengths of the educational experiences for EAL students are presented by the supportive and personable teachers that genuinely care about the students' success. Additionally, the waves of migration...presented a strength as students were able to translate for each other; this provided a kind of support-help culture amongst the students.	RH: I think that a strength of the EAL program is that the students are taught in full immersion and that the teachers demonstrate a lot of patience and experience working with EAL learners. UK Secondary appears to be a school that genuinely respects and honors each student's background while maintaining high expectations for all students.

The perceptions expressed by the UK and US students echo the social justice theoretical positions espoused by Freire (1970), Nieto and Turner (2012). Literacy can empower students and teachers are in a unique position to affirm culture while providing students with the knowledge and skills needed to be successful rather than marginalized in their new cultural setting. The insights of positioning theorists Tirado and Galvez (2007) also underscore the UK and US student researchers' insights regarding the manner in which classroom discourse and teacher-student interactions shape social realities.

Positioning theory also illuminates the interactive nature of conducting research when researchers are both participants and observers. With this in mind, the lead researchers, McEachron and Bhatti, asked the student researchers if they were having difficulty applying critical pedagogy since they had been welcomed so warmly. The general reaction was that they didn't have difficulty with critical pedagogy, but out of respect for the teachers and their own identity, they didn't want the information to be traced to the student. Table 5 presents the researchers' comments.

researcher or the specific teacher. This leads us to the student researchers' perceived weaknesses of the EAL programs.

UK and US Student Researchers' Perceived Weaknesses

The perceived ESL programmatic weaknesses fell into two categories—areas of congruence and divergence across US and UK contexts. The area of convergence was the frequency and cultural insensitivity of standardized testing. Both UK and US student researchers remarked that the teachers they observed were frustrated by the frequent testing that occurs in late April and early May, as well as cultural insensitivities with regard to expectations and test items. Below, AL describes when a teacher attempted to prepare two US newcomer fifth-graders to take a state test in science, the only subject where they were not exempted. Similarly, AH shares the perceptions of a teacher who complained that the state exams use questions that are geared at a British-born, middle class audience and do not consider different cultures when grading student responses.

Table 5

Cross-Cultural Convergence Regarding Perceived Assessment Weaknesses

UK Student Researcher's Perception of US Elementary Approaches to Standardized Testing	US Student Researcher's Perception of UK Secondary Approaches to Standardized Testing
<p>AL: [The] time spent...could have been used to teach and learn English. The fact that they even have to sit for the test in the first place is ridiculous. I didn't realize testing in Virginia was a major thing. I always thought in England that testing was over the top but here in America it really is beyond anything I could have ever imagined.</p>	<p>AH: The teacher expected that children of a middle-class background would get the answer, but noted that none of the students got the answer correct on the history exam. She also noted that last year in the GSCE English exam, one of the questions asked students to describe their home town in a travel brochure. One of the students described his home town in Eastern Europe, but received points off by the examiner for "low interest value" due to the topic of the response.</p>

Areas of divergence focused on teacher-student interactions, classroom environment, and teacher qualifications. The UK and US student researchers noted environmental concerns that were not conducive to learning; the US researchers noted the lack of licensure for ESL teaching, and the UK and US students reacted differently to what was appropriate for correcting student pronunciation. Table 6 presents a summary of the researchers' perceptions.

Environmental issues for the US student researchers focused more generally on the persistent discipline issues that teachers faced in UK secondary classrooms. Table 7 presents the issues. One area of divergence that may have

been related to educational differences between typical US and UK practice was the manner in which ESL students' pronunciation patterns were corrected. UK student researchers BC and AL were surprised that the US teachers did not correct students' pronunciation errors. BC, who has significant experience teaching English as a foreign language, wrote in his journal:

BC (US Secondary): Yet there were no summarized error corrections (particularly with mispronunciations) at the end of a particular activity or lesson, which I found to be the most integral part of my own ESL training: pupils learning through their own mistakes.

Table 6

Cross-Cultural Divergence in UK Perceptions of Classroom Environments

UK Researcher's Perception of US Elementary	UK Researchers' Perceptions of US Secondary	UK Researcher's Perception of US Secondary
AL noted considerable background noise in US Elementary pull-out class which was distracting	BC and LM noted that US Secondary lacked language-specific posters such as verb charts and metacognitive processes, common in UK	LM noted that visual support was minimal for an ESL classroom; there was evidence of valuing diversity and the promotion of equality via anti-bullying poster

Table 7

Cross-Cultural Divergence in US Perceptions of Classroom Environments

US Researchers' Perceptions of UK Elementary	US Researchers' Perceptions of UK Secondary
General lack of communication between classroom teachers and resource teachers and the lack of formal EAL training.	Persistent discipline issues were generally reported.

AH, who observed high school EAL classes in the UK, was surprised to find that teachers corrected individual grammar and pronunciation errors immediately after students spoke in class. Is this a cultural difference with regard to when and how to administer speech corrections or a matter of not having had coursework tied to pronunciation correction?

The authors gained insight from Samuel and other researchers to interpret these comparative differences. Samuel (2010) maintains that there are four reasons why ESL learners may have difficulty addressing target pronunciation: lack of knowledge of certain auditory features, the inability to hear the new sounds, L1 interference at the level of production, and low sound/spelling correspondence in English. Samuel (2010) and others (Hammerly, 1973; Parish, 1977; Nobuhiro, 2012) agree that errors should be corrected expeditiously; however, we still do not understand the tendency for the US teachers to correct less frequently than the UK teachers.

It is also possible that incorrect pronunciations perceived by the UK student researchers were acceptable pronunciations in the US. Given the vast geographic expanse of the US, teachers may be used to hearing and accepting a greater variation of pronunciations and dialects. Student researcher AN (US) posed an important question after his spirited conversation with BC (UK), "Are the differences integrally related to both pedagogy and culture due to the fact that the Europeans may be more influenced by Vygotsky whereas the Americans may be more influenced by Krashen?" Vygotsky (1934/1986) would lean more in the direction of editing speech to ensure language conformity and precision whereas Krashen (1981) would support less monitoring to ensure greater fluency (Lantolf, 2006).

In addition to perceived strengths and weaknesses, the student researchers expressed cultural differences that affect the learning environments for UK and US students. In the UK, teachers devote more time to religious instruction during assembly time when groups

of students are brought together in the same room. Noting larger student populations in the US, and thus logistical challenges for school-wide assemblies, announcements intended for larger audiences are often projected over the public address system, which the UK student observers found intrusive and impersonal.

The separation of church and state in the US has contributed to an absence of religious activities compared with UK schools. In contrast, more patriotic activities were noted in US classrooms such as saying the Pledge of Allegiance, a practice absent from UK classrooms. The moment of silence in Virginia was also perceived by the UK students to be symbolic of a religious act. Further research is needed to understand perceived differences in the intent of classroom rituals such as the Pledge of Allegiance, religious assemblies and moments of silence. A few studies have investigated pedagogy and religion as a cultural phenomenon in the classroom (Teece, 2010) and one study has taken a comparative investigation of US and UK social workers' religion and spirituality (Furman, Benson, Canda & Grimwood, 2005). These studies take us too far from our study of language but they are important in that they demonstrate that moving to a new country and school system often introduces cultural expectations that affect ethnicity, religion, and classroom discourse. For example, in a recent study conducted in Saudi Arabia, Al-Osaimi and Wedell (2014) concluded that students' own purposes for learning, which were largely religious, led to beliefs about Arabic learning that supported traditional pedagogy rather than contemporary pedagogy for L2 learning.

Discussion and Future Research

The current study provided unique opportunities for K-12 educators and students to collaborate across national boundaries. No other study has investigated multilingual comparisons across countries and K-12 grade levels with teacher educators and their students in undergraduate and graduate programs. The ambitious approach yielded many rewards and expectations for further research. Having a

more global dimension for perspectives on bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism allowed researchers to look beyond their cultural assumptions about best practice in language learning and student adjustment to a new cultural context.

With regard to social justice issues, this study revealed that schools can be welcoming places and, in some instances, safe havens and bridges for a new life for K-12 students whose families may be escaping ethnic discrimination or civil unrest. Conversations with teachers and administrators revealed that newcomers who came from areas with high levels of conflict often entered the school systems with aggressive behaviors that gradually dissipated once the families realized that the Bristol and Henrico schools were supportive of immigrants. Along with these welcoming behaviors was the introduction of patriotic and religious orientations that were in contrast to prior cultural experiences.

The recognized need for licensed ESL teachers in the US and the UK is another indication that school divisions are looking for resources to support language learning with the intent to ensure that recent immigrants can be successful upon graduation. With additional licensed teachers comes the opportunity to pursue research based on theoretical justifications. As the current study revealed, the student researchers who had formal ESL training were able to link pedagogy to the theoretical influences of Vygotsky and Krashen, pointing out that Krashen (1981) may have had a stronger influence in the US, whereas Vygotsky's (1934/1986) influence may have been stronger in the UK. Linking theory to practice is a very important step in articulating a context for instruction. More empirical research is needed to assess the effectiveness of instruction as theoretically linked to academic achievement.

One limitation of the study is that the schools in the UK were in an urban setting and the US schools were in a suburban setting, due to the proximity and accessibility to the lead

researchers' institutions. It is perhaps likely that some of the discipline issues noted by one student researcher in the UK secondary school would also exist in a US secondary school in an urban setting with a similar population. Further research is also needed to explore the relationship between the need for discipline and the length of time that the students have lived in their respective communities. It is possible that the aggressive behaviors are more a function of length of time in the new country rather than differences based on urban and suburban contexts.

Challenges existed in the areas of resource support for enhancing a classroom environment that affirms language and cultural diversity in more explicit ways, in creating a more productive balance between instruction and assessment, in providing licensed TESOL teachers, and in increasing an awareness of cultural insensitivities whether they exist in testing procedures, test items, interpretations of students responses, or time devoted to cultural inculcation through such activities as privileged holiday recognitions or patriotic rituals. Exploring these barriers through theory, research and practice can demonstrate the potential for teachers to further support linguistic and cultural variation, and that the newcomers to the respective countries can be perceived as enhancing the countries by nature of their diverse cultural identities.

Note

1. Google Docs are web-based programs created by Google, Inc.

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Appendix A

School and Classroom Observation/Engagement Instrument: Language Support

School: _____ Grade Level: _____

Subject Area: _____ Teacher: _____

Observer: _____ Dates/Time Duration: _____

Directions: Over the course of your observations, address the following areas of focus for student characteristics: language, culture, national origin, gender, age; if introduced, be receptive to and record ability/learning (exceptionalities), religion, socio-economic status and sexual orientation. Scroll down within each category to allow for space to record responses.

Section #1: Classroom and School Observation

- A. Describe the manner in which the following categories are met by the school and classroom environment.
 1. Describe the environmental print displayed about the room that demonstrates a valuing of diversity (i.e., visual supports, posters, banners, etc.).
 2. Describe grouping strategies that enhance student achievement and promote non-like group interaction (i.e., ability level, gender, flexible grouping, etc.).
 3. On a separate sheet of paper, draw the room with attention to the instructional arrangements; use rulers and/or software program (e.g., <http://classroom.4teachers.org/>). Does the arrangement facilitate language support and diverse interactions? If so, how; if not, why not?
 4. Describe specific instructional materials that illustrate valuing and promoting the understanding of diversity factors (i.e., multicultural literature, manipulatives, bilingual books, dual language books, microphones, equipment for special needs, language programs on computers).
 5. Describe speaking activities for students.
 6. Describe writing activities for students.
 7. Describe listening activities for students.
 8. Describe reading activities for students.
- B. Describe how teacher engages students.
 1. Evidence of interaction with each student (i.e., record names of students using pseudonyms and frequency of interaction).
 2. Describe the types of teacher-student interactions (i.e., question/response; role playing; demonstrations; experiments; hands-on activities, making dictionaries of often used words).
 3. Describe the activities designed by the teacher to encourage student-to-student interaction.
- C. Describe how teacher is culturally responsive.
 1. Lesson incorporates culturally diverse curriculum materials. Evidence:
 2. Assignments allow for culturally relevant personal responses. Evidence:
 3. Instructional strategies allow for or encourage cultural variation and opportunities for cultural connections among students. Evidence:
 4. Describe assessments and how they allow for cultural differences and similarities.
- D. School environment is culturally responsive to family.
 1. Visual material posted throughout office and reception area is diverse. Evidence:
 2. Support services are offered. Evidence:

Section #2: Guided Questions for Conversation with Teachers by Student Researchers

1. How long have you taught this age group?
2. What advice would you give a novice teacher like me about EAL teaching?
3. Are there any particular programmes/books/resources/strategies that you would recommend? What are they?
4. What is the biggest challenge that you experience as a teacher in this class?
5. Do you have an opportunity to talk to other teachers about EAL/ESL teaching? If yes, please explain how often that is and how helpful is it.
6. If you have a wish list of things you don't have at present which 2 things would help you in EAL teaching (prompts-resources, people)?

Section #3: Guided Questions for Conversation and/or Journal Entries for Student Researchers

- A. Engagement and Interpretations.
1. How have you been engaged with students?
 2. How have you been engaged with teacher(s)?
 3. How have you been engaged with administrators and staff?
 4. How have you been engaged with parents?
 5. How have these experiences informed what you think about teaching English as an additional language?
 6. What are the strengths of these educational experiences for EAL students?
 7. What are the limitations of these educational experiences for EAL students?

Appendix B

Questions for Student Researchers and Focus Groups

General Questions

1. What were your initial concerns about data collection/introduction to schools?
2. What helped ease access to schools?
3. What are the barriers to accessing information/data?
4. How useful were the meetings before you started classroom research?
5. What was missing in your training that would have helped you?
6. Do you feel part of a team? Explain.
7. What strengths do you bring to the research?
8. What areas do you want to develop?

Specific Questions

9. Describe information found in schools.
 - a. Was this documentary?
 - b. Practice based?
 - c. Student based?
 - d. Administration/principal based?
 - e. Your own perceptions?
10. What is of particular interest to you personally
11. What elements of best practice would you like to share with teachers and colleagues back home?
12. What was unusual to you about the school routine?
13. How do you think the children find your presence?
14. What did you actually do in class as you could not write notes?
15. Are you having difficulty applying critical pedagogy since you have been welcomed so warmly? In other words, since you have been developing personal relationships with the students and teachers, are you reticent about being too critical? Can you give an example of when this happened?
16. What can the UK students offer the US students with regard to the way in which Americans are perceived, perhaps in negative and positive light? What can be said about the way in which UK students might be perceived? [or vice versa for US]
17. In reference to the protocol, what can you tell us about what you have seen with regard to race, class, ethnicity, religion, gender, and so on?
18. What can you share about pedagogical approaches?
19. The protocol that you have been working from was developed by GB and GM. How has this experience enlightened you? Changed you? What are the perceptions you have that have not been addressed by the protocol?
20. [Continue to address questions from the protocol as time allows.]