

## Competing Motivations: LEP Adolescents' Attitudes Toward English, Learning, and Literacy

- This exploratory study examines the attitudes of 125 limited English proficient (LEP) students in an inner city middle school in Los Angeles. Although these students have completed bilingual or ESL programs in elementary school, they enter middle school with poor English literacy skills—all scoring below the 36th percentile on the Total Reading and Total Language parts of the California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). A teacher-researcher team conducted a survey to see if students' attitudes would provide insights into their poor literacy skills. The study probes attitudes toward using English in the classroom—feelings about class, peers, and parental involvement—and learning goals. The paper describes findings in which students' positive attitudes toward English and school contrast with negative attitudes toward parent and teacher involvement and a limited awareness of literacy difficulties. Further, students' attitudes contribute to their maintaining an environment limited to the fossilized English input of peers. The authors provide suggestions for working with students' attitudes and for heightening literacy awareness.

Recent statistics on the number of limited English proficient (LEP) students show that there are well over one million in California. Increasingly, many of these LEP students who have been enrolled in ESL and bilingual programs in elementary schools are arriving in junior high and middle schools still unable to cope with mainstream classes

because of poor literacy skills. Many of them find themselves in a no-man's land—ineligible for ESL classes because they have completed requisite classes yet unable to read and write English sufficiently to accomplish their school tasks. They are a population of seemingly linguistically fossilized and poorly prepared LEP teenagers. This exploratory study attempts to understand one such group of adolescents in the belief that insights into their attitudes will shed light on their fossilization and enable us as educators to help these children move beyond their current plateau. The study also provides an example of teachers and researchers working together systematically to find answers to their questions about LEP students.

Virgil Middle School has a population of about 2700 students, 65% of which is LEP. The 125 students surveyed in this study are part of the school's LEP population. This school is a large, year-round, multiple-track Title 1 middle school located in inner-city Los Angeles. Most of the students come from working class family backgrounds. Such is the location of the school that many of the students were personally affected by the Los Angeles urban unrest of May 1992. The school is 86% Hispanic, and the remaining 14% are made up of Anglos, African-Americans, Laotians, Koreans, Filipinos, and Thais.

In addition to poor reading and writing proficiency in English—as shown by CTBS-U scores below the 36th percentile in the Total Reading and Total Language parts of the exam—these LEP students were described by school staff as having characteristics of low self-esteem, difficulty in concentrating on school tasks, and a tendency to become school dropouts by the age of 16. The faculty was concerned as to what measures could be taken to work with this population. But first it was necessary to find out more about the students themselves. It was at this point that a teacher-researcher team began to study this group. The first phase, which is the subject of this paper, entailed surveying the students about their attitudes toward English. This study is part of a larger project which will investigate students' parents and school faculty for their understanding of reasons underlying students' poor literacy skills.

Attitudes and motivation toward second language learning have been the subject of much research in the past few decades. Underlying these studies has been the problem of operationalizing the concept of attitude. In our study, we use Brown's (1981, cited in Ellis, 1986) definition of attitude as a "set of beliefs that the learner holds towards members of the target language group (e.g., whether they are seen as 'interesting' or 'boring', 'honest', or 'dishonest', etc.) and also towards his own culture" (p. 117). We extend this definition to include attitudes toward language, the classroom environment, and personal goals.

Studies on attitude have examined a number of variables. These variables, among others, include the influence of the learner's attitude toward the second language (L2) culture, the influence of parents' attitudes toward the L2 culture on the learner, and the influence of the learner's need to identify with second-language speaking peers. Gardner and Lambert's (1972) seminal work on Anglophone students in French immersion programs in French Montreal found correlations that positive attitudes toward the second language culture create positive motivation for language learning. Similarly, Oller, Hudson and Liu's (1977) study of Chinese college students studying English showed that a positive attitude toward the L2 culture led to positive results for L2 learning.

In contrast, however, several studies found that negative attitudes toward the L2 culture correlated with increased proficiency. Thus, Oller, Baca, and Vigil (1977), in a sociolinguistic study of Mexican-Americans in the Southwest, found that positive test results did not correlate with positive attitudes towards Anglo culture but rather with a "colonized minority's" motivation to improve living conditions. Similarly, Gibson's (1987) study of working-class Asian Indian immigrants in a rural U. S. high school found that high achievement was related to motivation to be successful rather than to positive attitudes toward the Anglo culture. Other studies have shown that positive attitudes toward the L2 culture sometimes correlate with low English proficiency. Thus Grubic (1992), in a study of a group of working class Mexican-Americans in Los Angeles, found positive attitudes toward English correlating with poor English proficiency and with little improvement over several years' time. Grubic attributed this fossilization to a combination of factors including socio-economic pressure on learners to forego study for work, poor study habits, and limited educational opportunities.

Not only attitudes about culture, but parents' attitudes and peer associations can affect language learning. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) report studies in which parents' positive attitudes toward the L2 related to students' success in the L2. Peers are also seen to exert an influence on the kinds of L2 dialects learned. Thus Goldstein (1987) found that adolescent learners wanted to learn several varieties of English, including that variety (here, Black English vernacular) which would strengthen peer relationships.

Out of all these conflicting results, we surmised that a cluster of consistent psycho-social and affective variables would provide a key to the students' seemingly stunted English language growth. Given our students' minority status, low socio-economic background, and adolescent age, we hypothesized that this group would reveal negative attitudes toward the target culture and language, mistrust of school personnel, and a preference for

speaking the stronger L1 with peers. Our results were to disprove most of these hypotheses.

Thus, in the belief that attitudes toward L2 learning could only be determined by listening to the students themselves, this teacher-researcher team developed a questionnaire to survey a sample of the middle school LEP population. The research questions guiding the present study were:

1. What are students' attitudes toward using English?
2. What kinds of awareness do the students have about their literacy skills in English?<sup>1</sup> and
3. What are the students' attitudes toward teachers, parental involvement, school, and the value of their education?

### Method

#### *Design*

The tool for data collection was a questionnaire consisting of 28 multiple-choice, fill-in, and open-ended questions (see Appendix). Attempts were made to phrase questions so that students could understand them. Five intact English classes were used, and students were given an hour of class time to complete the questionnaires. During that hour, the researchers walked around the classroom, answered students' questions, and translated from English into Spanish when students were not sure of meanings. Students were repeatedly told that questions referred to their attitudes and feelings toward using English in school-related work. The activity lasted an hour because these respondents had very limited vocabularies and trouble reading and expressing their thoughts in writing.

#### *Respondents*

Out of the school's LEP student population, about 900 or one-third were designated as Preparation for Redesignation Program (PRP). PRP students, always classified as LEP, have been unable to make the transition from bilingual/ESL classes to mainstream English classes even after spending four to five years in the bilingual/ESL program. These students are multiply funded, at least through bilingual education/LEP Economic Impact Aid and Title 1 monies. They have been unable to achieve redesignation to Fluent English Proficient (FEP) status. A representative sample of 125 students from the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades was surveyed. This sample was chosen because the students' PRP English classes were on track and available to the researchers.

Out of that student sample, 77 were U.S. born and 48 foreign born.

The U.S.-born students were all from Spanish-speaking households. The breakdown for foreign-born students by country of birth was El Salvador 21; Guatemala 12; Mexico 9; Thailand 2; and one each from Honduras, Nicaragua, the Philippines, and France. The first language for 96% (121/125) of the students was Spanish. Most of the students had been in bilingual or ESL programs in elementary schools in Los Angeles. Of those that were foreign born, 67% began school in the U.S. in kindergarten or 1st grades, 10% in 2nd grade, 19% in 3rd grade, and 4% in 4th grade. Most of the students had thus had at least five years of schooling in the U.S.

#### *Analysis*

From the student questionnaires, numerical tallies in the form of percents and written comments served as the data base for generalizing about students' perceptions. Responses are interpreted with caution. As Oller (1981) has pointed out, responses can be suspect for several reasons: students' desire for approval, students' rating themselves as they would like to appear, or students' desire to seem consistent. For this reason, responses are described in terms of percentages and no statistics were used.

### Results and Discussion

The results describing students' responses to the survey are reported in terms of the following categories: attitudes toward class and school; literacy awareness; peer language; teachers (or preferred sources of authority); parental involvement; and school and success.

#### *Attitudes Toward Class and School*

In this section, students' responses to questions about attitudes toward school in general, class participation, completion of homework, and course preferences are summarized.

A majority of the students reported a positive attitude toward their education. In Question 22, responding to questions about whether school succeeded as a place of learning, more than three times as many students (59%) responded that they "...learn a lot in school" than those (14%) who said that they didn't "...learn much in school." And only one quarter (25%) of the students concluded that they "don't think school teaches me what I need or want to learn."

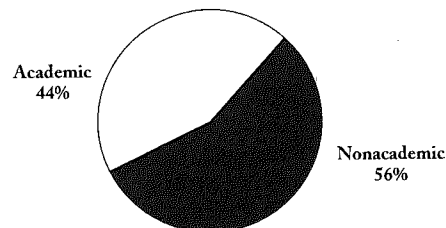
Class participation (Question 22) drew mixed responses: Forty six percent (46%) signaled they "like to answer questions in class" while 46% responded that they "don't like it when the teacher calls on me." When asked about the type of participation they preferred, twice as many students (45%) preferred to read aloud from books in class than did those (23%) who

liked to read from their own writing. Thus, students indicated that they liked to participate in class when they felt secure in their involvement. They felt more secure in speaking and reading aloud from a book, but not in reading their own writing aloud.

Students also had contradictory responses toward homework (Question 22). Forty-four percent (44%) signaled that they get most of their homework finished. On the other hand, about one-third (34%) indicated they never seemed to get all their homework done. Thus, nearly half the students believed themselves to be conscientious about homework, while one-third believed themselves to be always behind.

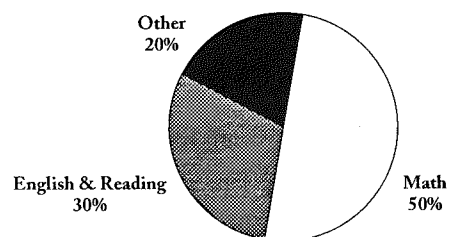
Questions about most and least liked subjects were also revealing about students' academic preferences. Students were closely divided in choosing academic versus nonacademic courses as their preferred subjects (Question 17). See Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Breakdown of preferred subjects in school**



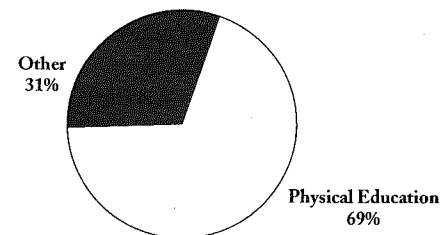
Of the 44% of students choosing academic subjects, 50% favored math, 30% chose English and reading, and 20% opted for social studies or science. See Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Breakdown of students preferring academic subjects**



Of the 56% of the students preferring nonacademic subjects, 69% chose physical education, while 31% chose a variety of other courses (wood shop, etc.). See Figure 3.

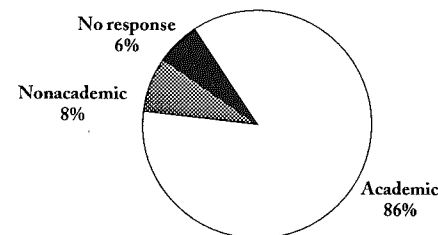
**Figure 3: Breakdown of students preferring nonacademic subjects**



Thus a majority of the students were more interested in nonacademic courses that do not promote literacy-related activities.

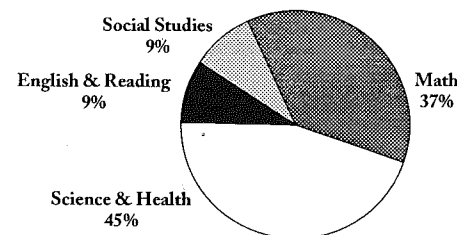
The choice of most disliked subject, Question 18, provided a sharper division of preferences. Over 86% of the students chose an academic subject as their least favorite course. Eight percent chose a nonacademic course, and 6% gave no response. See Figure 4.

**Figure 4: Breakdown of least preferred subjects**



The breakdown for the most disliked academic courses showed the following: science and health 45%, math 37%, social studies 9%, and English and reading 9%. See Figure 5.

**Figure 5: Breakdown of least preferred academic subjects**



Thus students' least favored subjects were academic—and most of these courses involve components in which students need to read and write.

### Literacy Awareness

In this section, survey results regarding attitudes toward English and literacy skills are described.

A majority of the students felt positive about using English and pride in being bilingual. (Question 16).

Over 60% of students chose the comment "I like being able to speak English because I know more than one language and that makes me feel good." Similarly, over 58% chose the option, "I like the way English sounds." And 44% indicated a leisure use of English by choosing the response "When I read for fun, I read in English."

Over one-third of the students indicated experiencing difficulty with English (Question 16). Thus 39% reported vocabulary difficulties in reading by choosing, "When I read in English, there are so many words I don't understand that I just want to say, 'Forget it!'" And over 38% indicated vocabulary difficulties in speaking by choosing, "I never find the right words to say what I think", and 37% indicated vocabulary difficulties in writing with the response, "I never find the right word to write what I think."

Question 21 asked students about their awareness of difficulties with spelling, vocabulary, or dictionary use. Only one-third of the students responded. The tallies show that 24% of the students were aware of problems with spelling, 6% had difficulty finding words in the dictionary, and 13% indicated vocabulary problems because teachers used words they didn't understand. Thus, only one-third of the students show awareness of poor literacy skills—and this awareness primarily involved problems with vocabulary.

Whereas the majority of students were not aware of problems with literacy, students were cognizant of the difficulty of the skills. In Questions 19 and 20 students were asked to choose their easiest and most difficult skill in English, a near majority (48%) chose speaking as the easiest skill, while 27% chose reading. And 9% combined the two to choose speaking and reading as their easiest skills in English. On the other hand, asked to name their most difficult skill in English, over two-thirds (64%) chose writing while 10% selected reading. Answers to these questions indicate student awareness of the differing demands in each skill.

### Peer Language

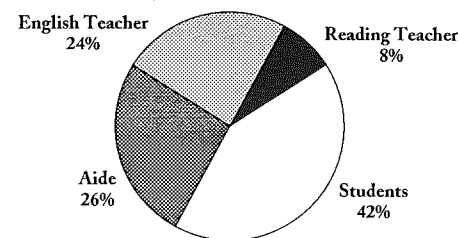
In Question 24, students were also asked about their preferred language of communication with friends. Over 75% (86/115) indicated that they use both English and Spanish with their friends. Only 21% (24/115) use only English with friends, while an even smaller percentage (6% or

7/115) use solely their L1 with friends. Many students were aware that they code switch by writing that they spoke "Spanglish" with friends.

### Teachers (or Preferred Sources of Authority)

Students' attitudes toward preferred sources of help were probed in Question 25, which asked, "From whom is it easier to ask for help? English teacher, another student, teacher's aide, reading teacher." Students were also asked to explain their choices. Students rank-ordered (a) another student (42%); (b) an aide (26%); (c) reading teacher (24%); and (d) English teacher (8%). See Figure 6.

Figure 6: Breakdown of easiest person to ask for help



Students' comments as to their reasons are revealing about attitudes toward peers and adults. (Numbers in parentheses indicate number of students giving each reason, and quotations are taken verbatim from the questionnaires.) Students made "another student" their first choice for four basic reasons:

1. The same age is more comfortable. ("I choose another student because I feel more comfortable and when I ask the teacher I get nervase" [15]);
2. The same age is more understanding. ("I like to ask my friends because they understand better"[6]);
3. The same age is more trustworthy. ("It's because friends help Friend in other way" [6]);
4. The same age is more accessible. ("Student he sits next to you" [6]).

A teacher's aide was second choice for four general reasons:

1. An aide gives better attention. ("I like to talk to the Aide because they put more attention to me and they are nice" [13]);
2. An aide is more accessible. ("because the teacher aide is always walking around and looking if the kids have problems" [6]);

3. An aide explains well. ("I choose my Aide teacher because she will explain talk abouted wen you get in trabble" [5]);

4. An aide has more knowledge (4).

Those who preferred a reading teacher for help gave the following four general reasons: 1) a reading teacher explains well, "She will answer mi correct" (2); a reading teacher understands students better (1); 3) a reading teacher is easier to talk to (1); and 4) a reading teacher is more trustworthy (1).

Finally, an English teacher was preferred for reasons similar to those of an aide, reading teacher, and even another student:

1. An English teacher explains well. ("Teachers always maks everything easy to understand"[9]);

2. An English teacher has more knowledge. ("It's easiest to ask the English teacher because they no more than anyone" [8]);

3. An English teacher is more comfortable. ("because I feel more comfortable and she helps me a lot on my self" [5]);

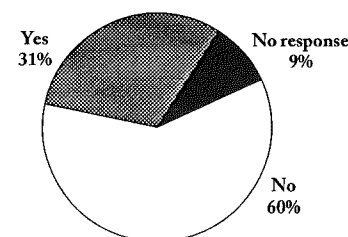
4. An English teacher is accessible. ("because it is easy" [3]).

Numbers show that students' favorite categories were in order of preference: (a) comfort (20); (b) clarity of explanation (16); (c) accessibility (16); (d) more attention (13); and (e) knowledgeableness (12). The adolescents' choices show that these qualities were all important when seeking help in school. While "another student" was preferred for his or her easy access and for friend-like qualities, teachers were preferred, though not exclusively, for their knowledge and clear explanations. The aides were sought after for their combined student-like qualities of accessibility and teacher-like qualities of knowledge and clarity of explanation. But aides also had an important quality of their own—that of giving good attention to students.

#### *Parental Involvement*

Students' attitudes toward their parents' involvement in their education was the goal of Question 27, "Do you like it when your parents come to school to speak with your teachers? Why or why not?" Nearly two thirds (60%) of the students did not want their parents to speak to teachers, while 31% did. The other 9% did not respond. See Figure 7.

**Figure 7: Breakdown of students wanting parent/teacher conferences**



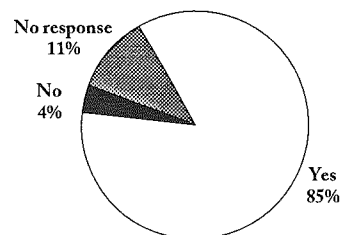
Those who did not want their parents talking to teachers gave the following main reasons: Fifty-four students were concerned with punishment ("first my mom is very extrict and if they teller that I tak my mom hits me"); 10 students were concerned with their parents' worrying over bad grades ("bec teachers don't give them good news"); and seven were concerned with teacher's informing on them ("because they'll tell her bad things about me").

Of the one-third who wanted parent-teacher talks, 22 students wanted parents to know about their school behavior and/or learning ("because they no how whe are begeben in are school"); nine felt parents' knowledge improved their work ("because they can tell her if I'm doing good in my grades and what do I need to try more"); and seven wanted to share pride with families ("because I want them to know how I am doing and I do good"). Students thus varied greatly concerning parental involvement. Those wanting involvement were proud of their accomplishments and wanted to share them with their families. The majority not wanting their parents' participation showed a fear of being found out and of being disciplined.

#### *School and Success*

In order to see if students connected education with the attainment of future goals, we posed Question 28 to the students, "Is being successful in school important to you? Why or why not?" Students overwhelmingly indicated that school was important for their future success—85%. Only 4% thought being successful in school was not important, and 11% of the students did not respond. See Figure 8.

Figure 8: Breakdown of students believing school brings success



Students' main reasons were instructive as to their thinking: Thirty-six students felt school leads to a career or job ("because wen I gro up I one to be a Doctor or a Artitec"); 25 felt school would help them to be somebody in the future ("because i want to be something in life"); 18 answered that school helped them learn ("Yes because you can learned other things that you don't know"); and five each said that school improves family relations ("because my parents can be proud of me and I want them to be proud,") and school leads to college ("because wen I graduate fro high school I can go to college") and school helps one care about people ("because i like to help other people"). Students were thus overwhelmingly aware of the function of school to prepare them for achieving goals in their later lives.

### Conclusions

Our survey shows that students have competing motivations and attitudes. Positive attitudes toward school, learning, and English are contrasted with limited awareness of literacy skills, less trust in teachers and parents than in peers, and a preference for nonacademic subjects.

On the positive side, students' attitudes towards English show that a majority take pride in being bilingual, like the sound of English, and use English for recreational reading. Students further report liking to participate in class. A majority also feel school teaches them a lot and report feeling relaxed and sure in class while a near majority like to talk and read aloud in class.

Further, students consider themselves to be socially bilingual as three-fourths of them use both English and Spanish with friends. Two-thirds also claim to be proud to know two languages.

On the other hand, only one-third of the students are aware of problems with expression in reading, writing, and speaking to teachers—although two-thirds are aware that writing is their hardest skill and speaking their easiest skill. Moreover, the students do not favor literacy-promoting courses. A majority prefer nonacademic subjects. Their favorite course is physical education and their most disliked course is math.

Students' negative attitudes also extend to teachers and parents. Students prefer to ask help from people they feel more comfortable with, another student or an aide, as opposed to a more knowledgeable source, an English or reading teacher. Students also prefer to keep their parents separate from their school lives. Nearly two-thirds do not want parents to confer with teachers, their main reason being fear of being disciplined.

Yet despite the negatives, students professed a basic optimism about their education. Eighty-five percent believe success in school is important for their future. School provides a promise of personal fulfillment, growth in family pride, a means to college, and even a path to a career.

### Implications

We believe students' social attitudes provide a comfort zone that leads to their maintaining a fossilized interlanguage. Students' interactions with peers both in and out of school and with their families ensure few opportunities to interact with speakers of standard English. In this they are no different from most students in large city schools across the country whose major populations consist of language learners. Moreover, students' limited contact with teachers, as shown by their preference for seeking help from peers and aides, further curtails interactions with teachers who speak standard English. Also, students' preferences for nonacademic subjects like physical education over academic courses like English and social studies limit their reading and writing opportunities.

Students' attitudes, nevertheless, also provide a key to solutions to the literacy problem. Their positive feelings toward class, English, their peers, and school show a basic good will which can be capitalized upon. We believe that our understanding of attitudes could be improved if we examined more closely our students' uses of language in its contexts. This could best be done through an ethnographic study of four to six students. Thus, students' use of language would be described in terms of literacy activities at home as well as in class. This includes looking at samples of oral and written language (e.g., school papers, notes, letters) and interviews with parents and teachers.

In order for students to progress beyond their current plateau in English, we suggest the following:

1. *Students must engage in a standardized but flexible curriculum.* This curriculum will provide teachers with a multitude of materials and guide students to distinguish among the varieties of English (formal, informal, standard, nonstandard). The curriculum would include the following components: discussion and teaching of learning and thinking strategies; modeling through oral and written interaction; interaction with other students

as peer tutors; more one-on-one attention from teachers and paraprofessionals; lots of process writing with audience feedback; and the regular use of learning centers.<sup>2</sup>

2. *Students must engage with other students using language.* Students' comfort in interacting with peers provides a natural pathway for language promoting activities. Older students can provide role models through becoming tutors, pen pals, or visiting class and setting up discussions on topics of interest to the class. Students can also become tutors themselves to students in lower grades. Although not perfect models of English, students will develop skills in using language to ask questions, analyze problems, describe situations, and so forth, to younger students. They will also learn how to talk about texts and perhaps share writing activities with their tutees—thereby developing the behaviors prized by schools. (See Heath & Mangiola, 1991, for a description of a tutor project in a bilingual elementary school.)

3. *Students must involve parents in their education.* Students' reported attitudes of keeping parents at a distance contradicted their reported pride in sharing their school success. Students can develop projects that include their families as subject matter. For example, students can collect family histories or folk stories by taping relatives, transcribing, typing (in either the L1 or L2), and publishing these stories in a class magazine and sharing them with their families. Heath (1993) has also described a way of involving students in parent-teacher conferences by using students as interpreters and/or by having students help develop with teachers the content of the conferences.

In this study, we have shown that students' voices can provide insights into what makes them comfortable and uncomfortable about school. This knowledge not only helps us understand students but also guides us into ways we can help them become literate citizens. Students' good will, optimism, and natural curiosity can lead them to see beyond a limited English language environment into the multiple worlds of English that surround them. ■

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## Acknowledgments

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>We believe literacy is not a set of skills but rather a process. However, for the purposes of the study we treat literacy as a set of skills such as reading, writing, vocabulary, and so forth.

<sup>2</sup>To meet these goals, we advocate smaller classes and an interdisciplinary team-teaching approach.

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## Appendix

### Student Questionnaire

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_
2. School \_\_\_\_\_
3. Grade \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Age \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Sex  Male  Female
6. Country of birth \_\_\_\_\_
7. Language(s) spoken at home \_\_\_\_\_
8. Age when you came to the U. S. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Age when you began school in the U. S. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Grade when you began school in the U. S. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Did you go to school in a country other than the U. S.?  Yes  No
12. If YES, what was the highest grade you attended? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Name all the schools that you have attended in the U. S. .  
\_\_\_\_\_
14. When you first came to the U. S., how did you feel about learning English? \_\_\_\_\_
15. Did you feel comfortable in class when you were first learning English?  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. Which of the following best express your feelings about English.  
(Check no more than 4.)
  - I feel relaxed and sure of myself in class.
  - I never find the right words to *say* what I think.
  - I like the way English sounds.
  - When I read for fun, I read in English.
  - I never find the right words to *write* what I think.

- I can't tell my teachers how I feel about problems with English.
  - I like being able to speak English because I know more than one language and that makes me feel good.
  - When I *read* in English, there are so many words I don't understand that I just want to say, "Forget it!"
17. What is your favorite subject in school? \_\_\_\_\_
  18. What is the subject you dislike the most? \_\_\_\_\_
  19. Which skill is the easiest for you in English?
    - Speaking  Reading  Writing
  20. Which skill is the hardest for you in English?
    - Speaking  Reading  Writing
  21. Do any of the following express your knowledge of English?  
(Check any that apply.)
    - I have trouble spelling words in English.
    - In my classes, teachers often use words that I don't understand.
    - When I read in English, I have trouble finding words in the dictionary.
  22. Which of the following best express how you feel about your classes?  
(Check no more than 4.)
    - I like to answer questions in class.
    - I don't like it when the teacher calls on me.
    - I like to read from books aloud in class.
    - I like to read my own writing aloud in class.
    - I get most of my homework done.
    - I learn a lot in school.
    - I never seem to get all of my homework done.
    - I don't learn much in school.
    - I don't think school teaches me what I need or want to learn.

23. Would you rather speak, read, and write in English or another language? (Write the name of the language beside each activity.)  
a. speak \_\_\_\_\_ b. read \_\_\_\_\_ c. write \_\_\_\_\_
24. When you are with your friends, do you like to speak to them in English or in another language? \_\_\_\_\_  
If another language, which one? \_\_\_\_\_
25. In class, from whom is it easier to ask for help?  
(Number in order from *1 = easiest* to *4 = hardest*.)  
\_\_\_\_ English teacher    \_\_\_\_ another student  
\_\_\_\_ teacher's aide    \_\_\_\_ reading teacher  
Explain your order. \_\_\_\_\_
26. Would you have been a better student in the country where you were born? (Answer only if you were born in another country.) \_\_\_\_\_  
Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_
27. Do you like it when your parents come to school to speak with your teachers? \_\_\_\_\_ Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_
28. Is being successful in school important to you? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_