Teachers as a Context of Reception for Immigrant Youth: Adaptations in “Sheltered” and “Mainstream” Classrooms

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Education
in the
Graduate Division
of the
University of California, Berkeley

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Fall 2009
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by Dafney Blanca Dabach
Abstract

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Immigrant integration has largely been framed as a matter of how immigrants’ characteristics interact with broadly defined “contexts of reception” within host societies (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). This dissertation locates contexts of reception within contact zones where teachers receive and adapt to immigrant youth, as “institutional agents” (Stanton Salazar, 2001) in particular settings. One such setting is “sheltered instruction” (SI or SDAIE, Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English), which is a programmatic response intended to provide students who are not fluent in English (English learners) access to academic content.

Using qualitative interviews, focal observations, surveys, and case studies, this research is an account of 20 social studies, mathematics, and science teachers who simultaneously taught in “sheltered” and “mainstream” tracks across 7 urban California comprehensive secondary schools: how teachers were assigned to teach within the specialized sheltered institutional context, how they interpreted their students’ perceptions of sheltered classes, and how social studies teachers in particular adapted between their mainstream and sheltered courses. Analysis examined the points of intersection for three dimensions: institutional opportunities and constraints, teacher disposition, and teacher repertoire.

Teachers’ use of text emerged as a major site of teacher adaptation. While some teachers modified curriculum in ways that enhanced access and drew on students’ linguistic resources, others adapted to students in ways that potentially jeopardized access. Furthermore, due to departmental norms of seniority and credentialing constraints, the least experienced teachers were often placed in sheltered courses, unless more senior teachers requested these placements. Teacher surveys from one school site (N=43) revealed that teachers in
traditionally text-heavy subjects (i.e., social studies) were most likely to reject English learner (EL) placements, suggesting that teachers’ subject matter interacts with their preferences for EL courses. Additional analyses revealed that long-term EL students internalized bureaucratic labels of sheltered class placements and associated these classes with a lack of cognitive ability. Teachers’ dispositions and practices varied greatly, ultimately providing distinct contexts for students within their classrooms.

With the rise of bureaucratic categories and school policies intended to serve bilingual youth, this dissertation contributes a contextualized account of teachers’ roles within the processes of immigrant schooling.
Dedicated to all my family,
and to all my students,
    teachers,
    and mentors.
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Acknowledgments

Many contributed to this dissertation in profound ways—both to the research and writing as well as to the evolution of my thinking that underlies it. To begin, I would like to thank the teachers and school staff who participated in this study, often going beyond the call of duty to illuminate the nuances, challenges, and rewards of their work with immigrant and bilingual youth. I especially appreciated their intelligent and critical observations, candor, and openness to being vulnerable. I was deeply moved by the level of commitment of many of the teachers I interviewed. I will never forget the teacher who, during an interview that started shortly after 3 p.m., exclaimed that he would speak with me until 8 p.m. if it meant that this would improve conditions for students. Over the course of the next three hours, he proceeded to outline the gaps in his pedagogical knowledge, how this affected his students, and how the institutional constraints in his department and school affected his work. I am especially indebted to the case study teachers who opened their classrooms to me for extended periods of time and graciously answered my many questions. I hope I have portrayed teachers’ struggles in ways that will create more understanding about the nested complexities of teachers’ work with immigrant youth.

I would also like to express my profound gratitude to my committee: to my advisor Sarah Warshauer Freedman, whose enthusiasm, multiple forms of support, and deep investment in this work pushed me further and further; to Judith Warren Little, who provided invaluable guidance on research design, data collection, and analysis, and who also contributed greatly to my understanding of teachers’ work; and to Alex Saragoza, who understood this project’s essence from its inception, and who, from the time I was an undergraduate student, has contributed tremendously to my path through higher education and beyond.

I owe a great debt to Carola and Marcelo Suárez-Orozco, who were and continue to be extraordinary mentors. While working on their study, the Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation (LISA) study, I learned a great deal from their interdisciplinary and comparative approach, as well as from their warmth and generosity. The insightful ways Carola and Marcelo structured the LISA study meant that I had the opportunity to develop close relationships with the youth and families who participated, and see how their experiences changed over time and across contexts. I thank Carola and Marcelo for permission to reference LISA data in this dissertation’s preface. I would also like to thank them for access to the LISA archives while I was a visiting scholar at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) in 2003. My first attempts to grapple with teacher data from the LISA study allowed me to think through my analytical approaches, which contributed to the formulation of this current study.
I would also like to thank Pedro Noguera and Gilberto Conchas who were both at HGSE at the time. Pedro’s critiques of my early analyses required that I take a more sophisticated approach to the complexities of teachers’ work with immigrant youth, while Gil’s case study research methods course contributed to this study’s methods. I would also like to thank those at HGSE who welcomed me into LISA’s base at the time (including Fabienne Doucet, Josephine Louie, Vivian Louie, Desiree Qin, and Irina Todorova) as well as Nisé Guzmán, Adam Sawyer, Robin Waterman, and Rachel Zerner, for the generosity of spirit they extended to me in the middle of a New England winter.

I would especially like to thank Curtis Vaughn and my fellow research assistants on the Mexican and Central American LISA team (including Laura Alamillo, Marco Bravo, Carmina Brittain, Sonya Cotero, Rafael Directo, Claudia Flores-Somera, Celeste Gutiérrez, Teresa Huerta, Monica López, Laura López-Sanders, Julia Macias, Marcela Nazzari, Brecca Rodriguez-Griswold, Leah Rosenbloom, Sarah Hughes, Lilia Soto, and Lorena Soto). Our weekly discussions across our cases over the course of years contributed to my understandings of immigrant youth’s pathways on a more complex level than had I examined my cases alone. I wish I could openly thank the students and families who participated in the LISA study for welcoming me into their homes and communities. Witnessing their struggles and trajectories has left an indelible mark upon me and motivates this current work.

My time as a faculty member at the University of San Francisco’s School of Education also contributed to this current work. Moving from shadowing immigrant youth to the world of teacher preparation and certification thrust me into a different institutional reality that further developed my thinking about the possibilities and limitations of teachers’ roles in the midst of working with a talented faculty, student body, and staff. I am especially indebted to Susan Roberta Katz for her incredible mentorship, thought-provoking scholarship, and friendship. Patty Yancy’s work opened my eyes to the potential for innovation and creativity within teacher education through arts-integrated programs. While this dissertation does not venture directly into the realm of arts-integrated practice, my involvement with this work informed my approach to thinking about the field of possibilities within teachers’ adaptive practice. Many individuals involved in arts-integration efforts through other institutions contributed to my understanding of the possibilities embedded in creative education that is intimately connected to issues of social inclusion and social justice: Paul Ammon, David Donahue, Jayeesha Dutta, Lois Hetland, Louise Music, Della Peretti, Jennifer Stuart, Ann Wettrich, and my fellow AEFF’s (Arts Education Faculty Fellows) from the California College of the Arts’ Center for Art and Public Life. An extraordinary conversation with Lois Hetland helped me crystallize the dimensions of teacher adaptation. And Paul, as Chair of my Qualifying
Examination Committee at UCB, offered fantastic feedback on operationalizing teacher adaptation with a “baseline.”

In one serendipitous moment, I went from being a great admirer of Laurie Olsen’s path-breaking work on immigrant schooling to having the opportunity to converse with her, and later work with her at California Tomorrow. I feel lucky to know her (and Mike) and to have benefited from her extraordinary ability to listen, notice, and reflect back ideas. Her political knowledge, years of activism, and sincere interest in a graduate student working on a dissertation were absolutely humbling and inspiring. Laurie’s voice always reminded me of the larger political realities of schooling.

I would not have been able to develop, analyze, and write up this research without the tremendous support of the research groups I participated in, including Jabari Mahiri’s (2004-2005), Judith Warren Little’s (2005-2008), and Sarah Freedman’s (2007-2009); to each and every one of you who provided such quality feedback-- thank you! I also benefited tremendously from groups I formed with my fellow graduate students, Linda Charmaraman, Maris Thompson, Sera Hernández and Helen Maniates. (I would also like to thank Tim Zimmerman who first introduced me to the peer mentorship model and invited me into his own group at the time.) They all saw me through different stages of this research and I feel fortunate to have had their multiple forms of support. I am especially grateful to Helen who read many drafts of this current work and always had terrific feedback that helped to move the project along substantially.

Many others also provided valuable feedback. I would like to thank the members of Interdisciplinary Immigration Workshop (based in the Sociology Department at UC Berkeley) for their feedback on Chapter 1, as well as the members of the Language and Immigration Group (based in the Graduate School of Education at UC Berkeley). Additionally, I would like to thank Lanette Jimerson for her feedback on Chapter 4 and Sarah Wolfin, whose comments encouraged me to further develop Chapter 5. I also greatly appreciate María Almanzo and Sera Hernández’s feedback on an early report I had drafted with preliminary findings from Chapters 3 and 4. I benefited very much from the wonderful research assistance of Cassy Huang, Sarah Schubmehl, and Katherine Urbanic, from UC Berkeley’s Psychology Department; they all worked diligently in transcribing, but also in articulating some of the key issues that were emerging in their close work with the data. I also give thanks to Michael Ranney who facilitated this process and who always had encouraging advice.

Many assisted me in my early years of graduate school, during what was an especially difficult time, including: Carolina López, Julia Menard-Warwick, Deborah Palmer, Ernesto Preciado, Deirdre Semoff, and Bijan Yashar. I would also like to thank Saraswathi Devi for her support then and now, as well as Kathryn Young for always being there. Manuel Castells made a profound impact
on me, as much through his sincere encouragement as through his approach to
discerning and illustrating the power of local and global patterns of inequality. I
also thank Claire Kramsch and Glynda Hull for welcoming me into the Graduate
School of Education (GSE); their welcome consisted of equal parts warmth,
inspiration, and stimulating doses of language and literacy theory.

From the moment I entered the GSE until the moment I finished, Jabari
Mahiri has been an invaluable source of support, from reading my early work and
convincing me that I had something important to say, to providing those
spontaneous hallway chats with just the right advice, at just the right time. My
experience in the program would not have been the same without him. I would
also like to thank John Hurst, Ingrid Seyer-Ochi, Nina Hersch Gabelko, and
Jeanette Hernández for their encouragement along the way. Jeanette also helped
me envision the administrator interview, and this project has benefited greatly
from her feedback in this area.

Laura Sterponi showed me great kindness during a critical moment when
my father was on life support. Laura, along with Jules Freedman, Deborah
Friedman, Judith Warren Little, and Ilka Williams worked to clear an institutional
hurdle that nearly prevented me from being considered for funding. A special
thank you goes to Jules and María Dolores Menjivar, as well as Ruth Patiño, for
grants assistance. I thank them and other UCB staff for their support over the
years, including Billie Jo Conlee, Fani Garagouni, Rosandrea García, Margaret
Ganahl, Beth Muramoto, Deninge Sims, Karen Sullivan, Jenna Tower, Vic Wong,
and José Zaveleta.

I was fortunate to benefit from financial support from many sources. This
dissertation was funded by the Center for Latino Policy Research (CLPR), the UC
All Campus Consortium on Research for Diversity (UC ACCORD), and the
University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute (UC LMRI) under
the UC LMRI Grants Program for funding this work. Additional funding and
research training was provided by the Spencer Research Training Grant
Fellowship, convened by the UC Berkeley Center for the Integrated Study of
Teaching and Learning (CISTL). Opinions reflect those of the author and do not
necessarily reflect those of the grant agencies.

I am grateful to Colette Cann and Jean Wing for reading UC ACCORD
proposal drafts and for offering a great deal of support throughout graduate
school. I would also like Paula Fass and David Henkin for their encouragement
throughout graduate school, as well as when I was an undergraduate in UC
Berkeley’s History Department.

Last but not least I thank my family and friends. It is difficult to find the
words to express the depth of my gratitude and appreciation. I owe a great deal to
Adrian Bankhead; without his thought-provoking conversations, assistance,
technical wizardry, and penetrating insight, this work would have never been
completed. To Victoria, Elvi (y la familia López), Jack, Sharon, Helisa, Mark, Shaheen, Dan, Jess, Mariah, Shayna, Michelle, Latrice, Keren, Dom, Josh, James, Jake, Em, Gosia and the Stannage crew—thank you!

My husband, Joshua, has helped me in more ways than I can capture here. His many forms of support, including his assistance with this manuscript, have been essential. Joshua’s approaches to his own research inspire me to try my best, even when facing an uphill slope. His family has been extraordinarily gracious, generous, and also greatly inspiring.

I thank my parents, siblings, and extended family for all of their love, joy, soulfulness, and courage. My father did not live to see me finish this dissertation, yet his and my mother’s experiences are burned into my consciousness—forming the earliest inspiration for this work. My mother’s phonetic spelling of my name (Dafney with an “f” rather than a “ph”) has been a daily reminder of the intricacies of written language, particularly for non-native English speakers. Because of her own struggles with English, my mother adapted the spelling of my name. Standing before my birth certificate with pen in hand, contemplating my future, she spelled my name in a way she thought a first grader would be able to read it, wanting to spare me from the shame and difficulty she imagined I would encounter if I could not read my own name as a child. When I recently told her I was finishing my dissertation, she laughed raucously and exclaimed, “the Ph.D. doctor still has the name spelled like a first grader!”

Words in any language are inadequate to express my gratitude for the multiple forms of support I have been given. All oversights and errors are my own.
Preface

As a twelve year-old in a court room observing the proceedings, I was certainly out of place, particularly in a legal case that dealt with business transactions and contract law. What was I doing there? My father, an immigrant of diverse origins (with family spanning the Middle East and Venezuela), was the defendant and was being sued by his former partner, an American businessman whose grown children were lawyers.

Like many immigrants, my father came from humble origins with great hopes that coming to the US would fulfill his material dreams, dreams imagined in a childhood of poverty and scarcity—dreams nurtured by an older brother’s letters from a faraway place where exaggerated tales of prosperity created a hunger to migrate to the “land of plenty.” Joining his brother in the US, my father quickly began painting houses for a living during a period of economic expansion. Despite his lack of formal education, his brilliance was unmistakable; this combined with his charismatic and jovial personality lead others to want to open doors for him. Easily befriending contractors within his newly emerging social networks, he eventually entered into business deals that provided more means than his manual labor alone. However, because of his struggles with English literacy and his deeply rooted cultural practices which honored oral agreements, eventually he came to sit in that courtroom, with me looking on, as his former business partner swindled him legally through the court of law. Because my father had oral agreements with his partner, he thought they would be honored. Because my father’s partner saw an opportunity for exploitation and gain, and knew the workings of the law, he was able to use the law to his advantage—as a vehicle to steal, and win. As a twelve year-old, the unfairness was clear to me. Even young children understand the concept of fairness and unfairness—listen to any discussion on a school yard at recess. But in this case, the consequences were not restricted to the school yard.

At the same time that I was aware of my parents’ vulnerabilities within a society that frequently demanded formal literacy in English, I became aware of how teachers in schools could teach me things my parents did not know. Teachers were within my social networks. Perhaps I may have lingered in their classrooms, knowing on some level that my success was dependent upon them since it was clear to me that my parents would not be able to teach me what I would need to know in order to avoid similar vulnerabilities. Just because my parents struggled with English literacy, did not mean that I had to. However, for many immigrants and children of immigrants, this is not the case. Given my family’s relative affluence and my fair complexion, I had been spared from the worst of what these intersections have to offer to the most vulnerable within our society. The
more that I was drawn to work within the area of immigrant schooling, the more apparent this became to me.

****

My research interest in teachers’ roles in creating opportunities for immigrant youth came sharply into focus years later, while working as a research assistant on the Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation (LISA) study, lead by Carola and Marcelo Suárez-Orozco from 1997-2002. Shadowing one of our students, Luisa López, whom I had known ever since she had arrived from Mexico as a happy fourth-grader, I discovered that her adaptation was closely tied to her teachers.¹

I had initially decided to shadow Luisa when I received conflicting accounts of her school performance from two of her seventh-grade teachers: Mr. Fernández (bilingual mathematics) and Ms. Tylan (English Language Development).² While Mr. Fernández described Luisa as a student who was “very respectful to all” and “a high performer,” Ms. Tylan, wrote that she seemed “preoccupied by her social life.” She continued: “Her attitude is still okay, but the worst thing she does is block me out (typical ELD behavior). I can tell this is so! She talks constantly in Spanish.”

In order to find out more about this apparent contradiction, I decided I would shadow Luisa and follow her through her day to have a better understanding of what was occurring. When I arrived at her first period bilingual mathematics class, Luisa, and nearly every other student in the room, appeared to be highly engaged. Students’ arms were stretched out high, and they were aching to be called on. I noticed how Mr. Fernández addressed students using the Usted form in Spanish, a sign of respect. In the background, 3-D cardboard models of Aztec pyramids that students had built and used to solve problems adorned the classroom, with toothpick-sized flags atop each one, depicting students’ countries of origin.

After the class ended, Luisa and I walked upstairs to her next class: English Language Development. With each step we took towards Ms. Tylan’s classroom, Luisa’s posture shifted and shrank. Once I entered the classroom, I knew why. Ms. Tylan had presented students with decontextualized worksheets that appeared to have been quite old, as evident from their multiple photocopy marks and poor visual appearance. Students were expected to silently fill out these worksheets which seemed to have no overarching connection to any particular learning goal, other than to keep students occupied. Yet, Ms. Tylan had

¹ Luisa and her teachers’ names are pseudonyms. Data courtesy of the Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation Study. See Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, and Todorova (2008) for more information about the study.
² English Language Development (ELD) is synonymous with English as a Second Language (ESL).
clear goals for what she did not want students to do. To discourage the use of students’ native languages Ms. Tylan had a penny jar; students were expected to put a penny in every time they spoke Spanish. Luisa would quietly speak in Spanish anyways, conversing with friends, doodling and avoiding the work which appeared to provide little opportunity for engagement or interaction. Ms. Tylan, who prided herself on speaking and teaching French, but did not speak Spanish, had colorful posters of the Eiffel Tower in her room.

Thinking back on that spring morning when I witnessed Luisa’s transformation in response to each context, it became clear that each teacher offered very different opportunities within their classrooms, despite the fact that they were located in the same school, with the same administration, within the same ethnic enclave. Each teacher also came with very distinct views of their students’ potential, as I also found out when I had the opportunity to analyze interviews with each teacher (Dabach, 2006). However, as Luisa made her way through school she encountered both Mr. Fernández and Ms. Tylan daily. In a society where immigrants’ adaptations are always in question, and frequently the target of research, it seemed especially important to investigate how teachers respond and adapt in distinct ways that provide different opportunities for immigrant youth. It occurred to me then that understanding teachers’ roles and how they provide distinct contexts for students would be essential in deciphering part of the puzzle of immigrant students’ trajectories. In this dissertation, I strive to shed analytical light on teachers—those who come in daily contact with our youth, youth who are our future.
Chapter 1: Introduction

Too little attention had been paid to schools as social sites and lively arenas for experience, to those who inhabited the schools or the populations served by the schools. Moreover, those populations were often and repeatedly composed of immigrants, and the experience of immigrants and their children at school was...the necessary subject for understanding how American society was created and how the nation came to be defined.

---Paula Fass, 2007

To do justice to the subject of the school in American culture in the space of a short essay places upon the writer the necessity of focusing sharply on certain aspects of the question. I would like to discuss the teacher within the school, the teacher within the school within a changing society...

---Margaret Mead, 1951

Currently the U.S. is in the midst of the largest wave of immigration since the turn of the last century (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008). Immigration scholars such as Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, and Todorova describe contemporary migration as a “momentous social force, compelling Americans to face the challenge and opportunity of integrating and harnessing the energy of the greatest number of immigrants in the nation’s history” (2008, p. 1). And, despite the fact that immigrant-origin youth represent the fastest growing segment of the youth population—with some of the starkest variations in educational outcomes—Suárez-Orozco et al. note how little is known about the processes by which immigrant youth are incorporated into US society.

As divisive and fear-based immigration debates continue in the public sphere—typically centered on economics, national security, and “national character”3—nuanced scholarship is needed now more than ever. Missing from current scholarship are more precise understandings about the host society, as well as its human contexts of reception—the groups of people who systematically

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3 See for example Huntington (2004), Borjas (1994, 1999), as well as the rise of “Minutemen” border militias (Congressional Research Service, 2006). See Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco (2001) for a rebuttal of these issues.
come into contact with immigrants. Understanding teachers, as one such context of reception for immigrant youth, presents an important area for empirical study. By investigating those who come into contact with immigrants and those who form the mosaic of immigrants’ reception, we can better examine and analyze the contexts which greet those who arrive at our gates—contexts which are tied to the very nature of opportunities available within a society. New understandings can contribute to building more sophisticated models of interactions between members of the host society and immigrants and towards uncovering underlying processes of immigrant integration rather than only tracking outcomes.

In this dissertation, I investigate how teachers respond and potentially adapt to their immigrant and immigrant-origin students, specifically those whose life chances are most dependent on the quality of education they receive in public schools and those who are not yet fluent in English. I investigate how teachers adapt within a specific institutional context of “sheltered instruction,” which is one type of educational policy response aimed at providing access to academic content for English learners. Investigating how teachers understand and enact their practice within a system of specialized instruction called “sheltered instruction” is one way in which to achieve two goals: (a) developing a greater understanding of teachers’ varied practice with immigrant-origin youth—

4 While some may object to the use of the term “human contexts of reception” on the basis that people are agents rather than human contexts, the term does not preclude an agentive analysis; in fact, in my use of the term, I link it to Stanton-Salazar’s (2001) concept of “institutional agents.”

5 In contemporary schooling nomenclature, these students are referred to as limited English proficient (LEP), English language learners (ELL) or English learners (EL); these terms are often used interchangeably. Callahan (2005) and Walqui (2009) point out the generational diversity within the EL population, noting that many of those officially designated as EL were born in the US. For this reason I use “immigrant” to refer to foreign-born students and “immigrant-origin” to refer to both foreign-born and US-born students from immigrant families. While the nature of contemporary migration to the US reflects significant variation in income levels and human capital (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2008), my focus is on those of less means who attend public schools in urban areas and who are officially designated as English learners. My focus is not intended to reflect the range within immigrant populations, but rather on the populations whose circumstances require the most thoughtful policies for a more democratic society. Also, by associating “immigrant” with “English learner” I do not intend to suggest that all immigrants have yet to acquire English. Many already are proficient in English or are from Anglophone countries.

6 “Sheltered instruction” (SI or SDAIE: “Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English”) offers content courses (such as history and math) where teachers are supposed to make adjustments in order to make the same content comprehensible to those not yet fluent in English (for example, with the use of additional visual aids, vocabulary enrichment, etc.). Bilingual or native language instruction is another alternative that is less common, particularly in secondary schools. Sheltered courses enroll those designated as EL in lieu of bilingual or general education content courses. While professional literature often refers to these courses (and their methods) as SDAIE, I use the term “sheltered” because it was most frequently used at school sites. The meanings and connotations of this term will be discussed in Chapter 5.
practices which present distinct contexts of reception and (b) understanding a
contemporary political arrangement whereby efforts are made to educate
immigrant-origin “English learner” (EL) youth under the auspices of educational
access, while separating these students from their “mainstream” peers. A focus on
teachers’ enactment within sheltered institutional contexts is necessary, given how
common this approach is in comprehensive high schools with moderate to large
immigrant populations, and given its important purpose of providing access to
academic content, rather than English language development alone. Ideally,
sheltered instruction provides access to grade-level standards-based curriculum.
In California, sheltered courses are now designated as college preparatory (P) and
in most cases meet the University of California’s college entrance requirements.  
However, in practice sheltered instruction courses often carry low status as
compared to mainstream and advanced placement courses in schools (Olsen,
1997; Valdés, 2001).

This dissertation presents an account of teachers who taught in both
sheltered and mainstream/general education tracks across seven comprehensive
high schools, how they were assigned to teach within this specialized institutional
context, how they adapted between their mainstream and sheltered courses, and
finally, how they interpreted their students’ perceptions of their sheltered classes.

Before delving into the specifics of this current research study, I provide a
theoretical framework which integrates relevant literature, followed by a historical
and contemporary contextualization of teachers’ work with immigrant youth.

Theoretical Framework

As sociologist Alejandro Portes has noted (1997), much immigration
research has focused on distinct immigrant groups, rather than on larger processes
and concepts necessary for building immigration theory. One pivotal concept
which is understudied is the concept of the host society and its contexts of
reception. As employed by Portes and Rumbaut (1996, 2001), “contexts of
reception” refer to the distinct circumstances awaiting different immigrant groups,
typically evident in the host society’s institutional policies, regional contexts, and
social perceptions of different immigrant groups. Marrow (forthcoming) describes
“contexts of reception” as a framework for explaining immigrant integration into
host societies; it emphasizes “how the structural and cultural features of the
specific ‘contexts’ that immigrants enter affect their experiences and

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7 These college entrance requirements are also known as “A-G requirements.” While the
University of California Office of the President (UCOP) guidelines accept sheltered courses in
social studies, mathematics, and science towards fulfilling college requirements, sheltered English
courses do not always count towards these requirements. See the following for guidelines:
http://www.ucop.edu/a-gGuide/ag/a-g/bilingual.html
opportunities, *above and beyond* the role played by immigrants’ own individual characteristics or motivations (Portes and Rumbaut 2006: 91-102; Portes and Bach 1985; Portes and Borocz 1989)” (Marrow, forthcoming, p. 5). Marrow synthesizes four dimensions of contexts of reception research:

> [T]he most relevant dimensions of the contexts of reception affecting immigrants’ experiences and opportunities include: (1) the policies of the receiving government, particularly the government-defined immigrant categories used as the basis for granting benefits; (2) the conditions of the receiving labor market; (3) the characteristics of newcomers’ own receiving ethnic communities (that is, their presence, size, organization, and so forth); and (4) the reactions of receiving nonethnic communities, including the presence and/or degree of prejudice toward newcomers. (pp. 5-6)

Contexts of reception research is a corrective to approaches that focus excessively on immigrants’ characteristics, typically framed in terms of immigrants’ human capital (Marrow, 2005). Some scholars have attended to the features of host society’s labor markets in comparative settings (i.e., Kogan, 2007; Reitz, 2003). Others (i.e., Zhou, 1992; 2009), have focused on enclaves rather than exclusively focusing on individual immigrant characteristics. This research contributes to understanding: (a) spatial and ethnic variation within host societies as well as (b) how specifically-defined contexts provide collective resources and simultaneously buffer immigrants from some of the harshest aspects of host societies’ reception. However, even while this research reaches beyond individual immigrants’ characteristics, it is still fundamentally concerned with immigrants, immigrant communities, and immigrant-defined spaces. What is needed is research that more substantively examines aspects of the host society, including contact zones (Pratt, 1991) within institutional settings, where immigrants encounter members of the host society in potentially consequential sites such as schools.

Other scholars have investigated the host society in broader terms, capturing aspects of general public opinion (i.e. Cornelius, 1995, 2002; Sánchez, 1997). This research illuminates the general public’s ambivalent or negative perceptions of immigrants, particularly from Mexico, by skillfully drawing upon opinion polls, ballot initiatives, and historical events. However, this research also does not attend to actual contact between immigrants and members of the host society—particularly specific groups within the host society that may fulfill significant roles when interacting with immigrants.

Contexts of reception research has made strides in acknowledging the interconnectedness between immigrant trajectories and host societies; and yet,
more specific contexts must be defined that attend to both the dynamic nature of human contact on the one hand, and the structures embedded within particular roles and institutional spaces on the other.

Contexts of reception are not confined to government policies, labor markets, geographic locales, or general public opinion. In other words, contexts of reception within the host society also have a human face; they are composed of groups of people who inhabit specific roles: police officers, immigration agents, airport security personnel, health care professionals, local shop keepers, neighbors, and teachers. Some groups may have more access to institutional resources than others (i.e., social service workers versus local shop keepers). And, some may respond or adapt to immigrants in ways that may not be anticipated by opinion polls of the general public. Marrow’s (2009) ethnographic research highlights how public servants working within the host society’s institutions may have differing responses and different impacts on the immigrants they encounter. Rather than viewing public servants’ responses to immigration as a monolith, Marrow’s research sheds light on patterns of variation—patterns linked to the occupational structures of professions in fields as distinct as law enforcement, health care, and education.

**Teachers as a Context of Reception**

Teachers represent and shape local contexts of reception for immigrant youth; they constitute a group that is unlike other groups that immigrants encounter in the host society, as a class of professionals who come into contact with immigrant youth daily in spaces designed to socialize them. Historically, schools have had an important role in the processes of immigrant integration (Fass, 1989, 2007; Spindler & Spindler, 1990), yet most major immigration studies tend to focus on immigrant student achievement and attainment rather than actual processes of incorporation (or exclusion).8

Anthropologist Margaret Mead (1951) noted long ago that teachers are situated in key roles as cultural agents for immigrant youth. Stanton-Salazar’s (1997, 2001) more recent conceptualization of teachers within a social capital framework sheds light on important processes that are not only cultural but institutional in nature. His work defines teachers as “institutional agents”; in this role teachers can assist or deter non-dominant youth’s efforts in obtaining access to institutional resources such as school-based knowledge and grades which can

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8 Moreover, the research which addresses these issues focuses on students or student groups as the primary unit of analysis (e.g., Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, 2001; Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995, 2001; Suárez-Orozco, et al., 2008). However, some scholarship is increasingly looking at schools as sites of consequence for immigrant and second-generation youth, particularly those of Mexican origin (e.g., Callahan, 2005; Conchas, 2001; Katz, 1999; Valenzuela, 1999).
translate into diplomas.9 Stanton-Salazar’s work establishes the theoretical importance of examining teachers because of their roles, which may mediate students’ outcomes. His work, in dialogue with the construct of “contexts of reception,” also suggests that teachers not only receive immigrants—rather they respond, adapt, and interact in particular ways that are connected to immigrant youths’ opportunities within the host society.

A Teacher Focus: Possibilities and Limitations

As Ferguson (1998) notes, no matter what the schooling context, no matter how much or how little funding is allocated, no matter what ability group, and no matter what reforms are in place, students spend long hours with teachers and their peers. In the world of their own classrooms, teachers are ultimately the ones who make instructional choices about how to teach, albeit with multiple influences and limitations (Darling-Hammond, 1990). While Kohl (1994) and others have pointed out that students also make decisions about their participation in classrooms, teachers, by virtue of their positions, have more power in this co-constructed process. Put another way, teachers have more opportunities to alter students’ life chances (i.e., by teaching students valued practices or by excluding them from the classroom by sending them to the principal’s office). Students’ decisions about classroom participation do not carry the same consequences for teachers’ future opportunities.

However, an exclusive focus on teachers may be problematic. There is the danger of overemphasizing their roles in impacting students’ trajectories. In overemphasizing their roles, they can become targeted and blamed for complex issues that they, single-handedly, cannot completely control (Ingersoll, 2003). Many factors contribute to students’ trajectories—not only teachers’ roles, perceptions, and actions. For example, Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco and Doucet (2003) note both “contextual risk” factors (i.e., neighborhood segregation, school climate and quality) and demographic characteristics of students (i.e., socioeconomic status, gender, documentation status) as mediating the outcomes of students. They also highlight the role of peers. (Also see Gibson, Gándara, and Peterson Koyama [2004] for an analysis of the role of peers.)

Moreover, within the US and other stratified societies, the nature of inequalities is complex, profound, and has many sources. In sum, understanding teachers’ roles simultaneously requires an understanding of the possibilities embedded in their unique position and their limitations within institutional and social settings where—unlike the teacher heroes depicted in popular literature and

9 In fact, Stanton-Salazar theoretically defines multiple types of “institutional supports” as well as forms of “institutionally based funds of knowledge” (2001). For more information see pp. 268-269.
films—teachers face organizational and structural limitations that can be insurmountable. Deciphering teachers’ roles, as connected to their responses and adaptations to immigrant youth, can only take place while understanding how the larger institutional, organizational, and policy contexts of schooling are intertwined with teacher practice. How then to proceed? With caution, and with a contextualization of past and contemporary policies.

The Policy Context of Teachers’ Work with Immigrant Youth

What is the policy context of teachers’ work with immigrant youth? Policy demands come from many different sources and may be contradictory (Darling-Hammond, 1990). While many education scholars note the unprecedented rise of accountability systems in the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation (2002), where disaggregating distinct groups’ scores point toward increased attention on English learner (EL) outcomes, other policies, such as California’s Proposition 227, have eliminated some of the most important means by which English learners could make progress.

However, only focusing on the most recent legislation and voter initiatives may minimize the extent to which there have been fundamental shifts within US society and in US law. These shifts took place after this country’s last major waves of migration and currently have a bearing on immigrant schooling and immigrant integration. Fass’ (1989) historical analysis illuminates the ways in which modern public schooling was fundamentally shaped by and attempted to shape southern and eastern European immigrant-origin youth in the early twentieth century. The emergence of mass schooling, IQ testing, and vocational tracking systems was fundamentally intertwined with attempts to Americanize and socialize these youth. The systems and features set up in the context of mass southern and eastern European migration had enduring effects on school organization and remained, long after migration to the US was severely restricted by the Immigration Act of 1924. Researchers (e.g., Gebhard, 2000; Olsen, 1995) continue to allude to the ways in which historical migration and schooling intersected, particularly with regards to the creation of stratified vocational and

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10 For a more detailed analysis of NCLB’s impacts on EL populations, see Abedi (2004) and Menken (2006).
11 Proposition 227 was a California ballot initiative passed in 1998 which ended most forms of bilingual education. Similar ballot initiatives were also passed in Arizona and Massachusetts. Gándara (2002) notes the importance of the California context as it provides “guideposts for the nation.” For more on the intersections of bilingual education policy, reform, and bilingual student achievement, see García, 2005.
12 González’s (1999) research on the schooling of Mexican children in the southwestern United States offers an alternative logic of how non-European immigrants were segregated rather than brought into mainstream institutions, despite Mexicans’ legal classification as “White” at the time.
academic tracks which persist in shaping contemporary schooling. However, as Noguera (2003) points out, the US is home to contradictory tendencies where repressive structures commingle with the promise of democratic schooling. Nowhere is this more evident than in the spirit of civil rights legislation, enacted well after immigration restriction in the 1920s.\textsuperscript{13}

Many scholars note that contemporary immigrants face a different world where educational outcomes are far more consequential than in the past because of the rise of globalized economies (e.g., Castells, 2000; M. Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Suárez-Orozco and Páez, 2002). Immigration scholars also highlight differences in the demographic shifts between early twentieth-century versus post-1965 immigrant populations who hail largely from Latin America, Asia and the Caribbean rather than Europe (i.e., Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, 2001; Portes & Zhou, 1993). While these observations are important and consequential, what tends to be less discussed are the ways that the host society’s legal foundations for educating immigrant-origin youth have also shifted, creating new frameworks, policies, and bureaucracies for educating those referred to as “language minority” students—youth who arrive at schools speaking languages other than English. In other words, legal precedents within the US have also changed dramatically.\textsuperscript{14}

One of the US Supreme Court cases most relevant to contemporary immigrant schooling, \textit{Lau v. Nichols}, did not come about until 1974 and relied heavily upon the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in its ruling. In \textit{Lau v. Nichols}, a group of Chinese students in San Francisco successfully challenged the district’s practices of “immersion” (commonly known as the “sink or swim” approach). In a unanimous ruling the justices noted:

\begin{quote}
[T]here is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{13} In fact, as a result of the Civil Rights Movement, the 1924 immigration laws that excluded and restricted “undesirable” nationalities were increasingly seen as incompatible with aspirations for a more inclusive society. The 1965 immigration laws which emerged in the context of civil rights struggles allowed for the very legal changes which enabled mass migration that in turn transformed US society (Gjerde, 1998; Takaki, 1993).

\textsuperscript{14} At the same time that legal frameworks began to address issues of equal opportunity within the context of civil rights law, additional shifts within the US regarding immigration restriction and legal status translate into contemporary systems of penalty and surveillance of undocumented immigrants. Legal status was not as consequential for prior waves of immigrants because the mechanisms of identification, surveillance, and technology were fundamentally different. While the educational legal landscape shifted to include language minority students (even protecting the rights of undocumented language minority youth’s access to K-12 education in \textit{Plyler v. Doe} [1982], it is important to note the simultaneous rise in the regulation of undocumented people that greatly diminishes their opportunities, not only in labor markets, but also in higher education. As such, K-12 schooling represents one of the more open institutions relative to other US institutions for those who are undocumented (Marrow, 2009).
not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education. (*Lau v. Nichols*, 414 U.S. 563 [1974])

In their historical review of language minority legislation and policies, Ovando and Collier (1998) note:

> [T]he landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) has had by far the most significant impact in defining legal responsibilities of schools serving limited-English-proficient students. In the early 1900s, the few court decisions that issued rulings related to language policy were mainly concerned with preserving and promoting English as one of the key elements in the formation of U.S. national identity. (p. 45)

The *Lau* decision, in contrast, was concerned with the provision of “equal educational opportunity [for limited-English-proficient students] compared with their English-speaking peers” (p. 45). While specific remedies were not set by the *Lau* decision, the ruling established that schools would need to provide accommodations in order to provide equal educational opportunity for students not yet fluent in English.

However, Gándara, Moran and García (2004) note that important aspects of *Lau* have been significantly eroded; and yet, they also observe that a fundamental aspect of *Lau* remains uncontested: immersing limited-English-proficient students in English-only settings without modifications is exclusionary and violates equal opportunity statues (p. 34).

Following the *Lau* decision, the Castañeda v. Picard case (1981) was “perhaps the most significant court decision affecting language minority education after *Lau*” (Lyons, cited in Ovando & Collier, 1998, p. 48). Essentially, the Castañeda case established three criteria for evaluating programs meant to serve EL students, which later became known as the “Castañeda test”: (a) programs must be based on “sound educational theory,” (b) they must be “implemented effectively, with adequate resources and personnel,” and finally, (c) programs must be evaluated as effective for both English language instruction as well as access to the “full curriculum—math science, social studies, language arts” (Ovando & Collier, 1998, p. 48). These criteria have been used in other court cases and in the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) guidelines, specifically for compliance with the *Lau* decision.

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15 However, as Gándara et al. (2004) note, with equal educational opportunity provisions weakened by challenges to private party law suits, overburdened government offices are increasingly left with the responsibility of ensuring compliance, which, in reality, does not necessarily happen.
While support for native language education programs has recently declined (Gándara, et al., 2004), judicial and legislative precedents have set the contemporary stage for an infrastructure which adds provisions for the different needs for immigrant-origin youth who are not fluent in English. Moreover, although bilingual education may be declining on a federal and state level, in some areas it continues to thrive, with more resources, research, and precedents than immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century could have imagined.\footnote{For more information on the early existence of bilingual programs in the US and their subsequent development see Ovando and Collier (1998) and Crawford (1992).}

In order to keep up with changes in civil rights law (under equal opportunity provisions), national, state, district, and school levels have responded to contemporary immigration with the emergence of whole new bureaucracies, tests, and labels such as “limited-English-proficient” and “English learner”—classifications which did not exist at the turn of the century. Some may argue that these labels and their subsequent remediations are merely a contemporary means for continuing the earlier trajectory of sorting immigrants into educational tracks. However, to ignore the rise of the bureaucratic labels and programs meant to address contemporary migration in schools without thorough investigation overly simplifies the issues at hand and misses a vital opportunity to examine how contemporary systems and policies, as negotiated and interpreted by local teachers and school officials, may or may not offer the promise of educational access. Investigation and analysis are necessary and important precisely because of the tensions between the promise of educational access and the history of marginalization, with both its enduring and shifting features.

**The Emergence of Sheltered Instruction as a Policy: Addressing Access to Academic Content**

One of the most overlooked areas of policy that affects teachers’ work with immigrant-origin youth is the emergence of separate courses in secondary schools designed to provide EL students access to academic content in traditional subject areas such as mathematics, social studies, and science. While literature on sheltered instruction (SI) as a set of instructional strategies or “best practices” has recently proliferated,\footnote{See, for example, the increasingly popular Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) which is often used in professional development workshops concerning the teaching of EL students (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2000). Sheltered instruction has also appeared in the sphere of foreign language instruction as a means to promote and develop language through content; (See the 2001 special thematic issue in TESOL Journal, 10(2/3) for a description).} research on the emergence of sheltered courses as a school policy is conspicuously absent, especially compared to the vast literature on
bilingual education policy which tends to focus on elementary education (Faltis & Wolfe, 1999).

In essence, the set of instructional strategies known as SDAIE or SI came to denote the actual policy of separating intermediate-level EL students into distinct spaces where teachers would use SI as a means to provide students access to modified academic content, designed for maximum comprehension for students not fluent in English.

According to a former official in the California Department of Education, the Castañeda test (which specified access to academic content as part of the provision of equal educational opportunity) became a legal mandate enforceable through the U.S. Office of Civil Rights (OCR) (Interview, 11/8/09). Furthermore, states also have a role in ensuring compliance. Essentially, schools and districts have to provide evidence to both federal and state agencies that they are addressing EL students’ access to academic content, otherwise schools could be cited as being out of compliance. One of the clearest ways to present evidence of compliance is school’s creation of separate sheltered courses. Although sheltered courses offered in schools are not always entirely separate (especially with fluctuating enrollments), the emergence of separate EL academic courses responded to federal civil rights law, was promoted at the state level, and was adopted by local districts and schools (Interview, 11/8/09).

The rise of separate sheltered courses also coincided with important shifts in teacher credentialing policies in the state of California. As sheltered programs became more widespread, EL credentialing requirements became more lax. This was due, in part, to political pressure by the California Teachers Association to have easier routes to certification so that teachers working with EL students would be in compliance (Interview, 11/8/09). In contrast to prior policies where EL certification was voluntary, under current California state law all teachers are now automatically authorized to teach EL students. An important consequence of this policy is that now, more than ever before, more teachers are officially authorized to teach English learners; these policy shifts make contact between non-specialist (general education) teachers and immigrant-origin EL youth increasingly likely.

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18 The first reduction in requirements came with the shift from the Language Development Specialist (LDS) certification to the Crosscultural Language and Academic Development (CLAD) certification, under California Senate Bill 1969. Additional shifts in California credentialing policy occurred when the CLAD certification (which had previously been a supplemental authorization to teach EL students) became embedded in all new California teachers’ credentials under Senate Bill 2042.
In combination with contemporary policy contexts, teachers form a local context of reception for immigrant youth—fulfilling particular roles, enacting curricula, setting instructional goals, and making choices within their classrooms—all of which implicate the nature of opportunities for students. However, teachers’ choices are not unlimited—they operate within fields of institutional opportunities and constraints: historical and contemporary contexts, federal, state, and district policies and mandates, departmental and school norms, and systems of sorting within stratified schools. Teachers also operate within the opportunities and constraints embedded in who they are as individuals and as members of social groups: their collection of social and professional experiences, their societal understandings and educational knowledge, and their values, philosophies, commitments, and personal idiosyncrasies. Given that teachers’ work with students transpires within these complex opportunities and constraints, what do teachers choose to do within the spaces of their classrooms? How do teachers respond to immigrant youth? How might they adapt their instructional practices in response to the students they encounter?

Teacher Adaptation

This dissertation aims to understand how teachers adapt to immigrant and immigrant-origin youth who are identified as “English learners” and are placed in teachers’ sheltered content courses. In thinking about teachers adapting their practice, it is important to underscore that theoretically, adaptation is one type of response within a context of reception. Not adapting is also a response. I make no a priori assumptions that adaptations in and of themselves are necessarily beneficial.

At the same time, the issue of adaptation has important implications for students’ access to classroom-based opportunities. McLaughlin (1993) and Stodolsky and Grossman (2000) have investigated teachers and their responses to demographic change, including, though not exclusively focused on, immigrant and EL populations. McLaughlin found three types of teacher responses to changing student populations: (a) teachers maintained high standards without adapting their practice, with high numbers of D’s and F’s for “non-traditional” students, (b) teachers “watered-down” standards and content, and (c) teachers adapted practices for students’ success and maintained high standards. Stodolsky and Grossman conclude that specific variables mediate teachers’ adaptive responses to changing student demographics: teachers’ goals for instruction, their conceptions of subject matter (fixed vs. flexible), and teachers’ departmental contexts. Essentially, both analyses found a variety of teacher responses to student demographic change: While some teachers resisted working with new students and clung to old assessment, content, and instructional approaches, other teachers
were more willing to adapt to their new students. However, absent from their analyses are explicit considerations of the social distances and divisions between teachers and their “demographically changing” students.

Considering these ethno-racial, cultural and generational divisions is something which Valenzuela’s (1999) and Olsen’s (1997) work suggests is critical in deciphering why teachers would be inclined to invest their energy not only in adapting their practice, but even in volunteering to teach courses where immigrant students predominate. While Valenzuela’s Texas-based ethnography focused on how the schooling process divested resources from Mexican and Mexican-American youth, Olsen’s California-based ethnography examined how immigrant adolescents from different origins, ranging from Afghani to Brazilian, negotiated schooling in a new country and how adults and peers responded to their presence. A common thread through both studies is how teachers had distinct responses to working with immigrant-origin youth—at times in ways that were contentious and harmful to students.

While Valenzuela’s and Olsen’s ethnographic studies show evidence that some teachers are resistant to working with immigrant youth and unwilling to adapt, others show that under certain circumstances, teachers do adapt to their students in ways that promote more student engagement than leaving standard instruction in place (Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Tejada, 1999; Stodolsky & Grossman, 2000). Still, others (e.g., Valdés, 2001) document teachers of “goodwill” who are nevertheless unable to meet immigrant-origin students’ needs because of the limits of their teaching repertoires. Essentially this means that there are different reasons for teachers’ variation in responses and adaptations; the above cases illustrate that at times adaptation is constrained by teachers’ dispositions towards students (or towards their work) while at other times adaptation is constrained by the limits of teachers’ repertoires. A third option is the extent to which institutional factors mediate teachers’ adaptations. More investigation is needed to sort out how these factors mediate teachers’ responses to immigrant students—responses which affect the types of instruction, and opportunities, students are afforded.

Now is a particularly important time to be examining the question of teachers’ responses and adaptations towards their students. At present, tensions in teachers’ work with immigrant and non-dominant students in public schools pull in opposite directions. On the one hand, the current educational landscape pushes toward standardization, evident in accountability measures, English-Only policies,

\[ \text{\footnotesize 19 Such institutional factors include: teachers’ autonomy (to what extent they have control over their curriculum, instruction and assessment), availability of prep periods and/or paid time for collaborative planning (as noted in Olsen et al., 1999), and district or school funds for materials which would facilitate adaptive teaching (i.e., alternative texts in other languages, etc.).} \]
and resistance towards forms of culture and language which are non-dominant. On the other hand, more and more teacher education programs are socializing teachers toward models of adapting curriculum and instruction to better suit the needs of non-dominant students, including immigrant and language minority children (e.g., Banks, et al., 2005; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996) even though some teachers and teacher candidates report that keeping standards the same for everyone, and not adapting, is more equitable (i.e., McDiarmid, 1993). Within the context of these tensions, we have yet to understand how teachers make sense of pushes towards standardization versus adapting and changing for particular groups and particular students.

**Mediating Dimensions**

Synthesizing these distinct issues, I posit that three (in some cases overlapping) dimensions mediate teachers’ responses and adaptive practices: institutional opportunities and constraints, teacher disposition (towards student populations and work obligations), and teacher repertoire (knowledge, training, experience, and access to distinct “funds of knowledge” for teaching [Moll et al., 1992]). (See Figure 1.1)

**Figure 1.1: Mediating Dimensions**

![Diagram showing mediating dimensions: Institutional Opportunities and Constraints, Teacher Disposition, Teacher Repertoire](image-url)
Taken together, these three elements raise important questions, not all of which can be answered in the current empirical study, but are nonetheless important to consider:

(a) **Institutional opportunities and constraints**: To what extent are teachers free to make choices about adapting curriculum, instruction, and assessment (especially given pressures towards standardization)? What types of institutional opportunities and resources are available for adapting curriculum, instruction and assessment (i.e., in terms of planning time, funds for alternative texts, and professional development opportunities)?

(b) **Disposition**: To what extent are teachers inclined to teach and assume responsibility for students who are designated as English learners (EL)? To what extent do they consider teaching ELs part of their work obligations? To what extent do teachers think that modifying instruction for ELs (and other students) is worthwhile? What is their theory about what is good practice (i.e., good for students)? (Keeping practice standard or changing instruction?)

(c) **Repertoire**: To what extent do teachers’ repertoires support or impede them in their instruction? To what extent do they have access to “funds of knowledge” about students’ home cultures and practices (Moll, et al., 1992)?

It is important to emphasize that these dimensions should not only be looked at as separate entities; their points of intersection should be examined as well. For example, how do institutional norms mediate teachers’ dispositions to work with different student populations? When do institutional opportunities of professional development yield to an expansion of teachers’ repertoires?

Figure 1.2 illustrates how teachers’ dispositions, repertoires, and institutional opportunities and constraints combine, manifesting in teachers’ responses to immigrant-origin EL students. These teacher responses, which potentially include adaptations, have specific expressions, both in and out of the classroom.
While the primary focus of this dissertation is on instructional responses within the classroom, I have also attended to the categories of support that Stanton-Salazar highlights, for example: teachers as advocates, teachers acting as a bridge between school and communities, teachers as providers of emotional and moral support, teachers as sources of soundly-based advice, feedback and life

**Defining Adaptations**

In this research, adaptations are defined as the changes that teachers make between their mainstream and sheltered classes. Although there are many potential ways of defining and operationalizing adaptations (e.g., Baquedano-López, et al., 2005; Gutiérrez, et al., 1999; Stodolsky & Grossman, 2000), examining the differences between mainstream and sheltered classes provides a point of comparison and a point of departure for thinking about how teachers modify and think about these two distinctly labeled courses intended for different student populations.

**Research Questions**

The three sets of research questions work together to provide a contextualized account of teachers’ work in sheltered content settings. The first set of research questions serve to situate teachers’ work within sheltered courses by examining how teachers come to teach in these settings. The second set of research questions focus on the issue of teacher adaptation between sheltered and mainstream courses within a specific subject context. Finally, the third set of research questions focus on teachers’ perceptions of student experience in sheltered programs. The research questions are:

1. How do institutional opportunities and constraints mediate the process of teacher assignment to sheltered secondary courses? How are high school teachers assigned to teach sheltered content courses? At what organizational level(s) are decisions made regarding course assignments? To what extent do teachers indicate a preference for teaching sheltered courses? What explains these preferences?

2. How do teachers adapt to immigrant-origin youth, if at all? More specifically, how do secondary social studies teachers adapt between sheltered and mainstream courses? How do they describe and enact their practice in each?

3. How do teachers describe students’ experiences in sheltered courses? How do teachers describe their responses to students’ perceptions of these programs?
Dissertation Overview

In Chapter 2, I present the methods of this study, the Teacher Adaptation Study, including an overview of the research design that followed secondary content teachers across institutional categories in both mainstream and sheltered classrooms. Chapter 3, *Where Institutional Constraints Meet Teacher Preference*, addresses the first set of research questions; it reports results on the nexus between teachers’ preferences for sheltered courses and the organizational norms of how sheltered courses were distributed. Chapter 4, *Teacher Adaptations in Secondary Social Studies Classrooms*, addresses the second set of research questions and focuses on three issues: teachers’ reported differences in preparation between sheltered and mainstream courses, types of teacher adaptations, and the differences between teachers’ interview responses and observations. Chapter 5, *What Are We Sheltering Them From?*, addresses the third set of research questions and shows the emergence of social boundaries and stigma in teachers’ accounts of student experiences in sheltered courses. Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the dissertation with implications for further research.

Fundamentally, I am examining teachers’ adaptations to immigrant students within the context of sheltered classes because I want to find out how teachers form a context of reception for immigrant youth; this is in order to understand how contexts of reception vary and how these variations present different opportunities for students.
Chapter 2: Teacher Adaptation Study Methods

Summary

In order to answer this study’s research questions, in the first phase of data collection I conducted in-depth qualitative interviews with 20 social studies, mathematics and science teachers who were assigned to teach both sheltered and mainstream content courses in the exact same subject areas. I also utilized teacher preference surveys from one school site’s population of teachers (N=43), and interviewed 7 administrators and 4 site-based EL instructional coaches in order to contextualize teachers’ practice in EL courses. In the second phase of data collection, I conducted focal observations in 7 social studies teachers’ sheltered and mainstream classrooms. Finally, I employed a case study design (Yin, 2003), using additional observational and interview data from 2 social studies teachers over the course of an instructional unit. Essentially, this research design used a comparative approach, analyzing what the same teachers said and did within two distinct instructional and institutional contexts.

Background

The design for this study was inspired by Olsen’s ethnography, Made in America (1997). In it she highlights the case of social studies teacher Lisa Stern and her distinct teaching contexts that included both sheltered and mainstream classes:

[Stern] taught one period a day of “sheltered” history for limited English proficient immigrant students, and two periods a day of “regular” history. Thus, through her door flowed alternately a wave of immigrant students, then a wave of “regular students” (p. 37).

I reasoned that if Ms. Stern had both types of teaching assignments, other teachers in schools with similar demographics probably did too. Because of the contemporary structure of US high schools, where distinct periods or blocks are divided by subject matter and teachers teach many distinct courses, it was possible to see the same teachers’ practices across two different contexts. Conceiving of a design that capitalized on secondary schools’ multiple periods was the first step in finding a way to operationalize the concept of teacher

21 The EL population at Olsen’s “Madison High” was approximately 24% of the total student population (1995, p. 52).
adaptation. Sampling, then, would require a process where I would be able to find teachers who were assigned to teach both sheltered and mainstream classes.

Sampling

Recruitment: Schools

Teachers who were assigned to teach both sheltered and mainstream classes were recruited during the 2007-08 school year from seven California comprehensive high schools that served immigrant-origin and EL students. See Table 2.1 for school demographics. I targeted schools where EL populations constituted between 10-30% of the total school population. This was because in early field work I discovered that in settings with extremely high numbers of EL students, teachers often did not teach both mainstream and sheltered courses; there were enough EL students to fill teachers’ entire schedules with only sheltered courses. Also, based on early field work I realized that some of the schools with the highest percentages of EL students (50% of the student body or higher) created situations where there was little difference between the student populations in sheltered and mainstream classes. If EL students constituted more than 30%, then the lines between sheltered and mainstream courses were increasingly blurred. If schools had EL populations of less than 10% they may not have had specialized courses for EL students.

I first selected secondary schools for recruitment where I had previously been involved in research on immigrant schooling, and expanded to neighboring schools to find sufficient numbers of teachers who held teaching assignments in both sheltered and mainstream courses in the exact same content area. I used the California Department of Education’s Ed Data website to examine schools’ demographic data (http://www.ed-data.k12.ca.us/, retrieved 3/20/07).
Table 2.1: School Information Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>% EL</th>
<th>% FRM</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adams High School</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>Urban fringe, predominantly Latino and African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter High School</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Urban fringe, in the process of demographic shifts from White middle class to middle and working class African American and Latino students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson High School</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>Urban fringe, history of demographic shifts from White blue collar to Latino and African American populations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington High School</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>Urban fringe, predominantly Latino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garfield High School</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>Urban, with Asian, African American and Latino students, with the highest rate of free and reduced meals in the sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roosevelt High School</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>Urban cosmopolitan, bigger range of socioeconomic status (SES) between students, with some poor and others middle class and upper middle class; lowest rate of free and reduced meals in the sample. Also some immigrant students of professional families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polk High School</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>School in a mid-sized city in demographic transition. Used to be middle and upper class White. Has transitioned to poor and working class Latino</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spanish speakers predominated within EL school populations, although other language groups were represented at sites, especially Chinese and Vietnamese at Garfield High School and a diverse array of language groups at Roosevelt High School (especially Filipino/Tagalog, Punjabi, and Farsi). Schools’ general student populations were highly diverse in terms of students’ ethno-racial backgrounds, with most schools having pluralities of different groups rather than clear majorities; only two schools had slight ethnic majorities—a Latino majority at one site and an Asian majority at another. The schools’ White student

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22 School names, teachers’ names and locations are pseudonyms. Descriptions are purposefully very general in order to protect participants. FRM refers to Free and Reduced Meals, an indication of poverty levels. Percentages are based on data from the California Department of Education’s Ed-Data website which have been rounded, and in some cases, slightly altered in order to protect human subjects.
populations varied from 1.5% - 37%, with a majority of sites falling between 8-18%.

Contrast vs. proximity: The varying distances between sheltered and mainstream courses.

The use of the EL percentage sampling strategy (10-30%) was meant to lengthen the distances between sheltered and non-sheltered courses in order to capture a portrait of teachers’ practice in these settings. Such a strategy emphasized the contrasts between sheltered and non-sheltered classes; in other circumstances these differences would be lost. At the same time, because my recruitment strategy began with schools in urban settings where nearly all students, whether mainstream or EL-identified, contended with many obstacles such as poverty, the nature of the contrast between EL and general education was diminished. While I attempted to achieve contrast between sheltered and non-sheltered classes through sampling, this strategy did not result in comparisons between working-class immigrant-origin EL students on the one hand and White affluent suburban students on the other. Although some schools’ ethno-racial and economic demographics tended toward more privilege than others (particularly Roosevelt High School), all of the schools were diverse in terms of ethno-racial background and most tended to enroll working class and some middle class students. However, the 10-30% EL school sampling strategy (intended to focus analytical attention on teachers’ practice) excluded the very schools that represent some of the most troubling tendencies within immigrant schooling—schools where EL students are highly concentrated and hyper-segregated, at times representing more than half of schools’ student population (Rumberger & Gándara, 2004; Suárez-Orozco, et al., 2008, pp. 88-145). The schools in this sample offer a context within which to follow teachers through mainstream and sheltered settings that were largely differentiated by immigrant status and EL-designation—not in the black-and-white contrasts of a lithograph, nor in blurred muted tones of proximal grayness, but rather somewhere in between.

Sheltered Subject Matter Selection

In order to focus on EL students’ opportunities in secondary content areas, I chose to focus on teachers who taught sheltered and non-sheltered courses within social studies, mathematics, and science departments during the first phase of research, when I conducted interviews with teachers across these three subject areas. Although English constitutes an important academic subject I did not study it because, as noted earlier, University of California guidelines limit the number of English EL courses that count toward college admissions. I wanted to draw
from contexts that were identified as college preparatory and whose teachers primarily taught subject matter courses rather than English language development (ELD), also known as English as a Second Language, (ESL). Drawing from teachers in English departments might have introduced teachers into the sample who, in addition to their sheltered and mainstream course assignments, taught in the areas of ELD because these courses are often housed within English departments. I aimed to focus on teachers who taught college preparatory courses and whose primarily task or mission was to teach content matter.

During the second phase of data collection, which included observational data, I chose to focus on social studies because of my own academic knowledge and training in history. I was better positioned to identify “big ideas” central to the discipline as well as how those ideas were being addressed in sheltered and mainstream classes. Ultimately, interviewing mathematics and science teachers provided a context within which to situate social studies, in order to understand common cross-disciplinary challenges in EL content instruction, as well as highlight aspects of social studies that were unique. Interviewing teachers across content areas proved to be especially important in linking specific content matter to teachers’ preferences to teach EL courses (as evident in Chapter 3). And, focusing observations and analysis on social studies teachers (in Chapter 4) allowed for more depth than attempting to cover all subjects equally.

Participants: Teacher Criteria, Recruitment, and Characteristics

Twenty high school social studies, mathematics, and science teachers were included in this study from the participating school sites, based on the following criteria:

1. teachers holding a valid California teaching credential
2. at least 1 year of prior K-12 teaching experience
3. assigned to teach at least one sheltered and one mainstream class in the exact same content area at the time of recruitment.

To recruit teachers, I collected master schedules from participating schools and identified all teachers who appeared to teach the same subjects in sheltered and mainstream courses (i.e. Biology, Biology SHL), except in one school’s case where, due to limited access to master schedules, an EL coach identified teachers who met the study’s criteria. Teachers were informed through flyers in their mailboxes that described the study, including its compensation for participation in an hour-long interview and a survey. Because the nature of the criteria for participation were so specific, many teachers who taught sheltered courses did not qualify because they did not concurrently teach sheltered and mainstream courses,
or because the mainstream and sheltered courses were not “apples to apples” comparisons. (For example, a science teacher with two sections of chemistry and three sections of sheltered biology would not qualify for participation in the study.)

Teachers in the sample came from a range of ethnic and racial backgrounds and lived experiences, especially as compared to national averages of teaching professionals. Of the 20 teachers, 10 were White (including White ethnic), 5 were Latino, 2 were African-American, 2 were Asian, and 1 was South Asian. Half of the sample was comprised of teachers who were either foreign-born (6) or had at least one foreign-born parent (4). Additionally, 2 more US-born teachers lived abroad as residents of another country for a year or more.

The distribution of teaching experience in the sample was relatively bi-modal, with 8 teachers having 2-3 years of teaching experience in US public schools and 8 teachers having 11-23 years of teaching experience in US public schools. (First year teachers were eliminated by one of the study’s selection criteria.) Only three teachers had between 6-10 years of experience and one teacher had 5 years of experience in US public schools. In one case there was a significant discrepancy between years of teaching experience and years of teaching experience in US schools; Ms. Cardona had taught in the Philippines for many years before beginning to teach in US schools. See Table 2.2 for a summary of the teachers’ demographics.
Table 2.2: Teacher Participant Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ethno-racial Background</th>
<th>Immigrant Background</th>
<th>Additional Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Clark</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Canadian (White)</td>
<td>Foreign born</td>
<td>ABD, history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Newbury</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(White)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Zamora</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Garfield</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>Foreign born</td>
<td>ESL and community college experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Mueller</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Garfield</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>(White)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Johnson</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Garfield</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Thomas</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Irish American</td>
<td>Foreign Res.</td>
<td>MA in history, TESL certif.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Linden</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Child of imm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Harrison</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>WASP</td>
<td>Foreign Res.</td>
<td>ESL experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Wozniak</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Polk</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Polish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Flores</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chicana</td>
<td>Child of imm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Alexander</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Northern European</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Cardona</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>3/20</td>
<td>Asian (Filipina)</td>
<td>Foreign born</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Nguyen</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Garfield</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>Foreign born</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Garza</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
<td>Child of imm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Oakley</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Benavides</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Carter</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Foreign born</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Montero</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Garfield</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mexican American</td>
<td>Child of imm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Fox</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>20+</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Singh</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Roosevelt</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Indian (South Asian)</td>
<td>Foreign born</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Engle</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Caucasian from farms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23 Years Teaching: This number includes the current year that they were teaching, not the number of years completed. As noted above, Ms. Cardona was in her third year of teaching in the US but had a total of 20 years of teaching experience.
24 Ethno-racial information was self-identified by participants on an open-ended survey item. Descriptions in parentheses were added by the researcher when participants left information blank or for the purpose of clarification.
25 Immigrant background includes those who were born abroad (foreign born), those who had at least one immigrant parent (child of imm), and those who had lived abroad (foreign resident).
Data Collection

Phase I Data Collection: The Larger Sample

During the initial phase of data collection, I drew on many sources of data, summarized in Table 2.3 and described in detail in the next section.

Table 2.3: Phase I Data Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase I: The Larger Sample</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Teacher Interviews (N=20) | • In-depth qualitative interviews with high school teachers (10 social studies, 5 math and 5 science teachers) across participating school sites.  
• Audio-recorded and transcribed. Comprises 30 hours and 52 minutes of digital audio. |
| Teacher surveys (N=20)    | • From high school teachers (10 social studies, 5 math and 5 science teachers). |
| Teacher preference surveys (N = 43) | • From one school site in the sample (Jefferson High School). Survey was administered by local school personnel and used for staffing decisions, as such it also represents a school artifact. |
| Administrator interviews (N=7) | • In-depth qualitative interviews with 5 administrators, audio-recorded and transcribed. Comprises 4 hours of administrator talk. Interviews with 2 administrators were more limited, lasted about 5-10 minutes (due to administrators’ schedules) and were written up as fieldnotes immediately after. |
| EL coach interviews (N=4)  | • Audio-recorded and transcribed, comprising 2 hours and 29 minutes hours of talk. |
| School artifacts and documentation | • Including master schedules, bulletins, EL policy documents when available, and photographs of hallway displays |
Teacher interviews.

Interview questions for the main sample of teachers focused on how teachers entered into the profession, their school and departmental contexts, and their teaching practices in their sheltered and mainstream classes, including aspects of content, instruction, and preparation. (See Appendix A for interview protocol.) In order to minimize reifying the term “sheltered,” I asked teachers what terminology was used at local school sites and also asked teachers for their specific schedules so that I could refer to classes by their period or block numbers rather than “sheltered” and “mainstream” labels. Asking teachers about their daily schedules helped me to contextualize their work in terms of the nature of the courses they were assigned to as well as when in the day the sheltered classes occurred (which allowed me to attend to alternative descriptors such as the “after lunch crowd” or the “morning quiet” of first period students.) Getting a sense of teachers’ schedules and responsibilities provided a window into potentially competing priorities and constraints, such as when two teachers who taught AP courses noted that AP courses demanded far more of their available time than sheltered courses. Because I interviewed teachers in a number of teaching contexts and departments, I made sure to ask questions about local circumstances and student populations. For example, because the nature of EL and immigrant populations vary so dramatically, I spent time asking teachers about their students’ origins, generational status, and language levels. Capturing teachers’ distinctions proved to be revealing, as some teachers could relate detailed information about their immigrant-origin students, cite geographically specific regions within sending countries, and quickly referred to California English Language Development Test (CELDT) reports and school data bases with nativity information, while other teachers were more general, tentative, and used hedging language (i.e., “I think they are from Mexico, but I wouldn’t bet my house on it.”)

Teacher interviews were digitally audio-recorded and generally lasted about an hour or more; the shortest interview was approximately 45 minutes long while the longest interview lasted 2 hours and 46 minutes, with the vast majority between 60-90 minutes. Although interview protocols were piloted, I had underestimated the time that it would take to ask all of the questions on the protocol. Thus, I asterisked questions that were most essential to the project and only asked other questions if time provided. (The formatting has been preserved in the attached protocol.) Teachers were extraordinarily generous with their time and often continued discussing the issues raised after interviews were over.

All interviews were transcribed using standard transcription conventions. False starts and most fillers (i.e., “um”s) were omitted because they were not needed for the level of thematic content analysis I conducted. Audio recordings were transcribed by professional transcribers and undergraduate research
assistants, and checked for accuracy. Research assistants also contributed memos based on their transcriptions, and met with me in a group a few times each semester to discuss emergent themes and trends.

**Teacher surveys.**

Teacher surveys were also administered to the entire main sample and covered an array of topics including participants’ teacher education and subject matter preparation, demographic background, and departmental, administrative, and district support, including the availability of professional development, aides, and materials for teaching EL students. (See Appendix A for survey.) The survey’s principle purpose was to understand the nature of institutional opportunities and constraints that teachers worked with, particularly across different school and department contexts. I used and adapted some items from the Center for Research on the Context of Teaching (CRC)’s Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) 1991 survey. Given the CRC’s focus on understanding teachers’ work in secondary schools this instrument was especially useful. I also consulted with UC Berkeley’s Survey Research Center to review the survey items in order to eliminate bias in the ways questions were asked and to increase the usability and readability of the survey.

**Teacher preference survey, Jefferson High School.**

In addition to data collected from these 20 teachers at seven school sites, preference surveys from Jefferson High School’s teachers (N=43) were collected in Spring, 2008. These site documents asked which EL courses teachers were willing to teach during the 2008-09 school year. Surveys were distributed to teachers by EL personnel at the site and were modified for each academic department (English, mathematics, science, and social studies). In other words, a social studies teacher taking the survey had an opportunity to mark off specific EL social studies courses that they were willing to teach within his or her department (for example, expressing a preference for sheltered world history versus sheltered US history), while a mathematics teacher could similarly specify which departmental sheltered courses they would like to teach during the subsequent year. A teacher marked his or her preferences by placing a check mark

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26 This survey is available at:

27 Due to human subjects considerations and the potential identification of sites, this survey is not appended. Instead, I have provided a detailed description of the survey.
next to each departmental EL course in specific subjects they would be willing to teach.

While each set of surveys were modified by department, they all shared four things in common: (a) the same set of instructions which specified that teachers would be expected to modify courses for EL students, and that students would most likely be at the early intermediate and intermediate levels of proficiency, (b) an option to opt out of teaching all EL courses by marking the box “I’d prefer not to teach EL courses,” (c) an option to express teachers’ absence from the school site in the coming year, and (d) a space for comments.

To my knowledge, Jefferson was the only school in the sample where surveys specifying EL course preferences were administered by school personnel. While other schools asked teachers to submit preference sheets for planning purposes, they did not specifically ask teachers for their EL course preferences. Jefferson’s documentation provided a unique window into teachers’ EL preferences both because of its specificity (and option to indicate a negative preference for EL courses) as well as its authenticity. Rather than a survey intended for a research audience, teachers’ responses had an actual bearing on their teaching placements, thus increasing the incentives for candour.

*Administrator interviews.*

In the process of interviewing teachers about course assignments, I realized that I wanted to triangulate teachers’ responses with administrators’ and also gain administrator perspectives on school-related EL issues. I used a semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendix B) and had the opportunity to conduct in-depth qualitative interviews with 5 administrators, which were audio-recorded and transcribed. I also interviewed an additional 2 administrators, but due to their limited schedules, these interviews were informal, lasted about 5-10 minutes, and were written up as fieldnotes immediately after. In both the extended interviews and in the abbreviated ones I was able to obtain administrators’ perspectives on the process of teacher assignment, although naturally the in-depth interviews provided significantly more depth and nuance about this process, and often extended onto other teacher-staffing and EL related issues at the site.

*EL coach interviews.*

In addition to administrator interviews, I conducted informal recorded interviews with 4 EL coaches. These personnel had varying degrees of responsibility at their sites for EL placement and scheduling (with some

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28 In order to protect the possible identification of participants at Jefferson High School, this school artifact was not added to the Appendix.
intimately involved with student placement decisions, and others less involved with these issues), but all were in positions to provide instructional support to teachers, from providing teachers with instructional materials to facilitating EL-related professional development workshops. Interviews were unstructured and tended to be conversational in nature, even though they were recorded. Coaches described their local EL populations, school dynamics, and their experiences working with teachers assigned to teach EL courses. When these coaches were involved in the process of EL course assignments, they discussed this as well.

School artifacts, including master schedules and other documentation.

Master schedules were an extremely valuable source of documentation because they displayed the distribution of course offerings across teachers. In addition to providing the information I needed about which teachers taught comparable sheltered and mainstream courses, they also provided a greater understanding of sheltered course offerings within different school sites. For example, while one school offered everything from sheltered chemistry to sheltered keyboarding, other schools only offered the most basic EL content courses. On one occasion, the use of this artifact during an interview made issues of course placements all the more explicit and concrete; while interviewing a teacher about his teaching assignment, he pointed directly to the master schedule on the table and showed a pattern about course placement within his academic department—pointing methodically to different colleagues listed on the schedule in order of seniority and showing how their seniority corresponded to their preferential course loads.

The collection of master schedules also created opportunities for me to engage in conversations with administrators and counselors about the nature of school offerings and programs for English learners. (When these conversations would occur, I would write up fieldnotes to capture additional data on each school site.) Although not officially interviewed, school counselors provided invaluable contextual information and often directed me to additional sources of school data concerning the school as a whole or EL policies specifically. Often counselors would highlight particular aspects of their programs, such as when one counselor emphatically pointed to the AP Spanish courses on the schedule, and discussed how he would place Spanish-fluent speakers in these courses. At another school site a counselor alerted me to the changes that were about to take place within the science department, which had decided to stop offering sheltered content courses and distribute English learners across classes instead. Also, counselors often introduced me to EL-personnel, which in turn provided additional contextualization about EL students at each site.
In addition to collecting the master schedules, I also collected other available paper documents at each site and examined each site’s on-line websites. Finally, I took photographs of hallway displays and bulletins at each site when possible to further ground and contextualize this research.

*Phase II Data Collection: A Focus on Social Studies*

Data collection during the second phase of research concentrated on social studies teachers from within the larger pool of teachers. Table 2.4 summarizes the data collected during this phase of research.

Table 2.4: Phase II Data Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase II: A Focus on Social Studies</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focal observations (n=7)</td>
<td>• Initial focal observations to understand differences and similarities between teachers’ sheltered and non-sheltered classes within the exact same content areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fieldnotes and field logs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher case study data (n=2)</td>
<td>• Case study teacher observations to understand differences and similarities between teachers’ sheltered and non-sheltered classes within the exact same content areas. Observations at 4-5 intervals during a curricular unit, over a period of 2 to 6 weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fieldnotes and field logs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 21 video-taped classroom periods, yielding 24 hours and 50 minutes of video footage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Multiple audio-recorded interviews with 2 focal teachers (both formal interviews at the beginning and end of the curricular unit as well as frequent informal interviews throughout the instructional unit).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student data: Student CELDT scores and student classroom work that formed teachers’ assessment of unit learning goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Classroom artifacts, including lesson plans, handouts, and photographs of classroom displays and texts used.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Focal observations and teacher case study data.*

In the Spring, 2008, I observed 7 out of 10 social studies teachers, originally for the purposes of case study selection. These focal observations
involved at least two exposures to each teachers’ instruction, once in his or her sheltered course, and another in his or her non-sheltered course. I observed all social studies teachers who were available, with the exception of one. In this case, the teacher was available, but the school’s principal did not grant access. I had the opportunity to observe teachers’ sheltered and non-sheltered versions of: ninth-grade cultural geography, tenth-grade world history, eleventh-grade US history, and twelfth-grade US government/economics. In addition to generating fieldnotes, I also audio-recorded classroom visits in all but one case, where a teacher indicated that he preferred not to be audio-taped.

During the following school year (2008-2009), I selected 2 of the 7 teachers I had previously observed (Ms. Flores and Mr. Zamora) to become case study participants. Although initially I had planned to select case study teachers in order to contrast or compare analytic dimensions (such as teacher repertoire or institutional constraints), many teachers either did not have comparable sheltered and mainstream teaching assignments during the subsequent year or were unavailable; the 2 case study teachers who participated were the only ones who were both available and who still had similar sheltered and mainstream courses during the 2008-09 school year, at which time they both taught sections of world history.

I had originally planned to observe one set of sheltered and non-sheltered courses per teacher for 4 times over the course of one instructional unit, but both Ms. Flores and Mr. Zamora had more than one version of their courses to choose from. I decided to expand my observational sampling to include multiple comparable sections; this decision allowed me to gain an even richer sense of each teachers’ repertoire, particularly when the different courses were composed of students with varying language and academic achievement levels. Originally I had planned to observe two classes per teacher over the course of an instructional unit (for a total of 8 classroom visits on four days). Instead I observed all three of Ms. Flores’ world history blocks (sheltered, Puente, and “Academy”) on five days over a two-week period (for a total of 15 classes, 90 minutes each). Ms. Flores’ sheltered class consisted of primarily early-intermediate L2 language level students and was predominately Latino. Her “Academy” class (pseudonym), was similar to the school’s mainstream student population, ethnically diverse (including Latino, African American and Asian students), and tended to have more academically challenged students than students in the Puente class who were predominantly Latino and college-bound.

I observed three to five of Mr. Zamora’s periods on four days over six weeks (for a total of 14 classes, approximately 55 minutes each).29 I initially

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29 Ms. Flores’ and Mr. Zamora’s school sites (WHS and GHS respectively) operated on different schedules. At WHS teachers taught 3 out of 4 90 minute block classes, unless they taught on overload, and at GHS teachers typically taught 5 out of 6 55 minute periods.
observed five all of Mr. Zamora’s classes (3 world history, 2 US history) on the 
first day of the focal instructional unit in order to gain a better sense of his entire 
teaching day and to see his range of both content and students. Each set of classes 
(world history and US history) had comparable sheltered classes, but I chose to 
focus on his world history classes because this was the same subject Ms. Flores 
was teaching. Mr. Zamora’s world history classes included one ethnically diverse 
mainstream class (including Asian, Latino, and African American students) and 
two sheltered classes of differing language levels (with a predominance of 
Chinese and Vietnamese students in each, but with some Spanish-speakers as 
well). While his first period sheltered class was predominantly at an intermediate 
L2 level, his third period sheltered class was predominately beginning L2 level 
but also included a small group of intermediate level of students. Seeing his range 
of teaching practices across distinct sets of students of varying language levels 
provided me with a greater sense of his adaptive responses because of the great 
range in students’ language levels, sometimes even within the same class.

Despite the fact that I chose to observe both teachers when they each 
taught the same instructional unit on imperialism, each teacher structured this unit 
over different spans of time; Ms. Flores’ imperialism unit lasted two weeks 
and took place in the fall, while Mr. Zamora’s imperialism unit lasted six weeks and 
took place in the spring. I visited classrooms on four to five days in the beginning, 
middle and end of the unit.

Case study data included: (a) fieldnotes, digital audio records, and video 
tapes of teachers’ classrooms; (b) two formal audio-recorded interviews with each 
case study teacher, one at the beginning of the unit about instructional goals, and 
another at the end about outcomes of the observed instructional unit, including an 
examination of student work from the unit; (c) additional informal audio-recorded 
conversations about each class on each day observed; and (d) student data, 
including EL student CELDT scores for each class observed (from class rosters 
that had been de-identified) as well as student work from the unit I had observed.

For all observations, in both focal and case study classrooms, I collected 
teacher artifacts when available, including lesson plans and handouts, and 
documented classroom activities. During classroom visits, I took raw notes either 
on paper or on a tablet PC notebook, both which enabled me to draw a line down 
the middle of the (actual or virtual) page, separating observations from questions 
and comments and making drawings to document the classroom set up and 
student groupings. I principally attended to the teacher and how their practice 
varied in each setting, as well as their similarities across contexts.

From raw notes I generated written fieldnotes, following Emerson, Fretz 
and Shaw’s guidelines (1995) of marking off observations from questions and 
observer comments (OC’s) to reduce bias. Although the video records served 
occasionally as a memory aid, the findings presented in this dissertation are not
based on an analysis of video, but rather the fieldnotes and field log summaries of classroom observations.

**Summary of Research Questions and Data Sources**

Table 2.5 summarizes the data sources I used in the different chapters and how these connected to the study’s research questions.

**Table 2.5 Research Questions and Data Sources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>➢ How do institutional opportunities and constraints mediate the process of teacher assignment to sheltered secondary courses?</td>
<td>Teacher interviews   &lt;br&gt; Teacher preference surveys  &lt;br&gt; Administrator interviews  &lt;br&gt; EL coach interviews  &lt;br&gt; School documentation (Master schedules)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ How are high school teachers assigned to teach sheltered content courses?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ At what organizational level(s) are decisions made regarding course assignments?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ To what extent do secondary teachers indicate a preference for teaching sheltered courses? What explains these preferences?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>➢ How do secondary social studies teachers adapt between sheltered and mainstream courses?</td>
<td>Teacher interviews   &lt;br&gt; Focal observations  &lt;br&gt; Teacher case study data (Fieldnotes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ How do they describe and enact their practice in each?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>➢ How do teachers describe students’ experiences in sheltered courses?</td>
<td>Teacher interviews   &lt;br&gt; Teacher case study data (Fieldnotes)  &lt;br&gt; Classroom photographs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ How do teachers describe their responses to students’ perceptions of these programs?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Analysis

Phase I and Phase II Data Reduction and Analysis

Data reduction was facilitated by the organization of a field log, which catalogued each site visit or communication with participants across both phases of data collection. The field log allowed me to navigate through the volumes of data, track developments, and quickly access summaries of events. The log was organized on a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet with a row for each encounter and columns for: the date, nature of the activity/encounter (i.e., informal meeting, phone conversation, formal interview, class observation), types of data collected/recorded, and a summary for each entry. I adapted this field log from Miles and Huberman’s Contact Summary Sheet (1994, p.51). In addition to the field log, I also kept a dissertation log (which was one long document in a Microsoft Word file, dated and titled for each entry). The field log helped me keep track of my analytic decisions, develop hypotheses across cases, and when I was lucky, “connect the dots.” Often I would begin an entry in my dissertation log, only to realize that it had become a full-fledged analytic memo. At that point I would open a new document in the appropriate analytic folder to track decisions and insights related to specific aspects of analysis, cases, or chapters.

With the first wave of data collection, I wrote a summary of each interview. Subsequently I listened to interview audio recordings often to get a sense of participants’ actual voices, which I would recall during later parts of analysis. I uploaded all the interviews onto my portable digital audio device and literally walked around, listening to interviews as if they were music. Listening to interviews in this way repeatedly helped me to maintain a holistic sense of each interview, even when I turned to analyze particular sections of transcripts.

Given the size of the data set, I carefully selected which types and which parts of the data to go to for different analytic tasks. My principal strategy for systematic data reduction was to create thematic documents from interview transcripts. The thematic documents included a clearly labeled set of participants’ responses to specific interview questions. Interview protocol question numbers were embedded into the transcripts for easy searching and retrieval in Microsoft Word. I began my analysis with teachers’ interviews because these were the first data I collected, but also because teachers were able to articulate their experiences and their practice in ways which provided me, an outsider, with an orienting schema with which to make sense of later observations. While there were sometimes discrepancies between what teachers articulated and what I observed (which will be discussed in Chapter 4), overall, beginning with teachers’ accounts

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30 Because Phase I and Phase II analyses overlapped I present them here concurrently.
provided me with a place to start, grounded in the teachers’ representations of experience to me. This was especially important as observations were limited and could not capture the variation in teachers’ experience they way teachers’ interviews could.

While interviews provided my initial orienting framework, I read field logs and fieldnotes for two issues: (a) where I sensed discrepancies between teachers’ interview responses and observational data, and (b) more information on the nature of teachers’ adaptations, beyond what surfaced in interviews. Eventually, I used the same coding scheme for both fieldnotes and thematic interview documents related to teacher practice in order to differentiate between different types of teacher adaptations; I categorized adaptations between sheltered and mainstream classrooms as: omissions, reductions, modifications, and additions. (See Chapter 4 for definitions.)

In addition to coding, I created matrices to further reduce and verify data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Throughout the process of research I documented my analytical choices and verified conclusions in order to have a credible path of analysis. Additionally, once I came to conclusions, I searched for counter evidence. As Corbin and Strauss note (2008), research that is “credible” acknowledges both the importance of documentation and simultaneously highlights that multiple interpretations from the same data are possible.

**Limitations**

Like any research study, this investigation and its analyses have limitations. One limitation is the use of self-reported data in interviews. However, with their length and depth, interviews offered rich emic perspectives and detailed accounts of experience, and as noted before, provided an orienting schema with which to interpret observational data. In Weiss’s (1994) analysis of the strengths and limitations of qualitative interview methods, he notes that they can be “oases of vivid memories within a desert of uncertainty” (p. 148). They are contingent upon the recall of events, as well as a willingness to make these events accessible. While interviews are partial accounts, Weiss notes that typically participants do not invent events that did not occur; the biggest source of discrepancies is participants’ omission of information:

If respondents want to keep from us events or behaviors or a sector of their lives, there is every reason to believe that they can succeed. While it would be difficult for respondents to produce the circumstantial detail and corroborating incident necessary to make an invented reality seem plausible, it is very easy for them not to report something—and to give no indication that there is something not being reported. (p. 149)
Weiss also notes that “shading responses to present a positive picture of the self is especially likely when respondents are asked about opinions, attitudes, appraisals, evaluations, values, or beliefs” (p. 150). For this reason, the interview protocol was designed to focus on concrete experiences rather than rely on attitudinal questions. Weiss also describes how inconsistencies within data do not necessarily invalidate them—“after all people can act in inconsistent ways or maintain inconsistent feelings” (p. 150). Corroborating evidence and triangulating interviews with other data sources, including observations, helped to increase the credibility of analyses.

An additional limitation of this study is that the observational data represented a small fraction of classroom time relative to the school year, and that my presence might have altered what I was observing. While these observations helped to provide triangulating evidence, by themselves they are especially limited. I tried to mitigate these limitations by purposeful sampling in order to situate data within a clear sequence. This meant moving from initial interviews with 20 teachers in three distinct subject areas to observations within the social studies sample. Because of the increased amount of time I spent in case study teachers’ classrooms (Mr. Zamora’s and Ms. Flores’), I believe that the case study data are more reliable than the initial focal observations, which provided only two exposures per teacher on the same day.

With respect to the Jefferson High School survey data, a limitation is its small sample size (N=43). Although the survey includes the schools’ population of teachers in academic subjects, these data only represent teacher responses at one school site. Additional research is necessary to ascertain how common the patterns of the survey are at other school sites, as well as how common the patterns found within the study as a whole extend to other contexts.

In this study I aimed to credibly capture a process within the settings I studied. An important point to emphasize here is that these settings are dynamic. Settings with the same official institutional titles (i.e., “sheltered”) can vary a great deal. The nature what sheltered and mainstream mean, who populates these classes, and how teachers respond will necessarily change from context to context. Participants themselves noted how even classes with the same official designations could vary quite significantly from semester to semester or even day by day. As Dorph (1999) has noted, these data and analyses capture a piece of a portrait at a particular point in time, in particular places, rather than the full three-dimensional reality it attempts to study.

Despite the limitations of this work, my aim remains to combine all of my data sources in the service of increasing understanding about teachers’ processes of adaptation to immigrant-origin students who are designated as English learners as well as the nature of what separates sheltered from mainstream classes.
Chapter 3: Where Institutional Constraints Meet Teacher Preference

How are secondary teachers assigned to teach sheltered courses? To what extent do secondary teachers wish to teach sheltered courses? While these courses offer the promise of providing access to English learners, they often carry lower status as compared to general education and advanced placement courses (Olsen, 1997; Valdés, 2001). The issues surrounding teacher assignment represent an important confluence of dispositional and institutional issues (i.e., teachers’ propensity to request sheltered courses, the pool of available teachers, state credentialing requirements, and federal laws such as No Child Left Behind [NCLB] that stipulate that teachers must only be assigned to courses which they are credentialed to teach.)

The nexus between teachers’ preferences and the institutional issues surrounding teacher staffing and assignment is a critical intersection. Teachers have ideas about what courses they want to teach, situated within the context of schools and departments as well as their own personal and professional trajectories. While organizational issues at the school level may trump teachers’ desires, teachers have varying degrees of status within their local sites that can translate into preferential placements (Finley, 1984). And, despite all schools’ bureaucratic constraints, different sites have norms that mediate how the teacher assignment process is conducted—ultimately affecting who shows up to teach in Room 225 for sheltered world history or Room 110 for AP government. The ways in which teacher assignments play out has implications for understanding precisely which teachers stand before our English learners, how experienced they are, what kind of knowledge base they have, and to what extent they are willing and able to meet the challenge of providing an equitable education for EL students.

Chapter Overview

This chapter analyzes the issue of teacher placement using data from high school social studies, mathematics, and science teachers as well as EL coaches and administrators.

Questions that guide this analysis are:

1. How do institutional opportunities and constraints mediate the process of teacher assignment to sheltered secondary courses?
2. How are high school teachers assigned to teach sheltered content courses? At what organizational level(s) are decisions made regarding course assignments?

3. To what extent do teachers indicate a preference for teaching sheltered courses? What explains these preferences?

In this chapter I first consider the role of administrators and departments in making decisions about which teachers get assigned to what classes, particularly EL courses. In sites where departmental control of courses predominated, norms of seniority tended to be present, where teachers with the longest history in departments had priority in their preferences while newer teachers had less control in determining their schedules. Unless more senior teachers had an explicit preference for sheltered courses, this meant that newer, less experienced teachers ended up staffing these courses. In schools with more administrative control, seniority tended to diminish because of stances by administrators who used other rationales for staffing, such as students’ needs. However, even where the norm of seniority was not present, credentialing requirements drove a process where newer teachers with EL-embedded authorizations (known in California as the Crosscultural Language Academic Development [CLAD] credential\(^{31}\)) were placed into sheltered courses in sites where not enough teachers were credentialed to teach EL students.

In the second half of the chapter I analyze what teachers’ preferences were in relationship to EL courses: First I examine teacher preference through qualitative interview data with content area teachers, presenting a spectrum of teachers’ sheltered course preferences as well as the underlying reasons for teachers’ preferences. Next I present survey results from one participating school site. The surveys specifically asked teachers about their EL preferences for staffing and assignment purposes. Finally I conclude with implications raised by the findings.

*How Teacher Assignments Are Determined: The Role of Departments and Administrators*

The ways in which teachers’ course assignments were distributed involved varying degrees of administrative and departmental control. In designing the master schedules, administrators discussed the need to look at projected

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\(^{31}\) CLAD, or Crosscultural, Language and Academic Development Certification was originally supplemental, satisfied by course-work in teacher education programs or state tests. New teachers obtaining SB 2042 credentials have CLAD competencies embedded in their credentials, authorizing them to teach English learners without supplemental authorizations.
enrollments to first determine how many sections of courses would need staffing. Once the number of course offerings and sections were determined, the task of assigning teachers to those particular classes fell either to administrators, departments, or a combination of both. The following chart displays where control over teacher assignments was based for the seven high schools in the sample:

Table 3.1: Type of Control Over Teacher Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Control Over Teacher Assignments</th>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
<th>Names of Schools (Pseudonyms)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>departmental control</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jefferson High School (JHS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Polk High School (PHS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mostly departmental control,</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Carter High School (CHS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with some administrative involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td>Roosevelt High School (RHS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(described as “veto power”)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mostly administrator control,</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Garfield High School (GHS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with some dept. involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td>Washington High School (WHS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administrator control</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Adams High School (AHS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Departmental Control**

In two schools, JHS and PHS, departments determined course assignments. While administrators and counseling staff may have been responsible for other aspects of the master schedule, such as determining the number of sections to be offered, the task of teacher assignment was based at the departmental level. In these sites the norms of seniority prevailed, where teachers who had been in the department the longest were able to request courses and have their preferences met. As Mr. Linden, a fifth-year social studies teacher recounted, teachers with the most seniority had their pick of the schedule. Because sheltered courses were not seen as desirable in his department, the assignment would fall to newer teachers:

[With] more seniority…you get first crack at what you want to teach. And gosh, teacher turnover being what it is, I’m actually, this is my fifth year, which means I’m getting up there now. So I basically, I can—I have the option of basically, “What do you want to teach?” and I can pick what I want to teach. (3/7/08)
[Your] first year teaching at JHS, you get quote-unquote stuck with all the sheltered classes, with ELL classes, because I think after you’ve been teaching for a little while, a lot of teachers don’t, I don’t know, they don’t want to do it. (3/7/08)

In contrast to Mr. Linden who now had his choice of courses, when a second year teacher in her first year at a new school site was asked how she obtained her current schedule she noted that her classes were comprised of what was left once other teachers had their preferential picks:

DBD: How did you end up with this schedule?
Ms. W: I was the last one hired and these were the classes that were left [laughs]. (3/26/08)

At JHS and PHS, departments rather than administrators determined teaching assignments, and the logic within these departments was one of seniority, where those with the most time on-site were able to have more control over their teaching assignments.

Mostly Departmental Control with Administrator Involvement

At RHS and CHS departments played central roles and essentially made most decisions around who would be teaching what, but administrators at these school sites discussed their “veto power” which would be used on occasion to change assignments. Department heads would work with magnetic tiles and gridded white boards, doing the work involved in making the initial placements, which would then be approved by administrators. In these sites seniority also played a role in course assignments. At RHS seniority worked in combination with a more general preference system where department heads attempted to give every teacher at least two out of five courses they had formally requested when possible. At CHS, despite teachers’ contracts stipulating that seniority would have no bearing on assignments, the practice continued. While assignments were nearly always decided at the departmental level, they were subject to administrator approval and “veto power.” (One issue this raises is: Under what circumstances would administrators exercise their “veto power”?; this issue will be returned to later.)

Mostly Administrator Control with Departmental Involvement

While departmental seniority may be the norm in many schools, at WHS and GHS, administrators took on a larger role in scheduling directly in response to
such norms, which had consequences for both students and teachers. One administrator noted the circumstances under which she was asked to take on the responsibilities of scheduling:

For many years the departments kind of made their own master scheduling, and what was happening was that teacher preference was taking priority over student needs…. And so what was happening was not only was it not equitable for teachers, because people who had more influence or who complained the most or – for whatever reason it wasn’t equitable in terms of teacher assignment within the department, and there was a lot of frustration underneath, a lot of lobbying that was going on, and – I mean there still is lobbying but it’s less than it was. When I was asked to start doing the master programming I said that I would be willing to do it, but I wasn’t going to do it the way that it had been done because – you know, that was one thing. And the other problem was that we weren’t offering all the classes that we needed in the times and places we needed them for students’ needs to be accommodated. So a lot of times students weren’t able to take certain classes that they needed or there were unnecessary conflicts. (A3, 6/5/08)

Through this administrator’s description, we see how the nature of master scheduling implicates opportunities for students—not only which courses are offered but also to what extent they are available at the right times to avoid scheduling conflicts that eliminate course opportunities for students. Moreover, as the process unfolded before departmental control, it was not necessarily equitable for teachers either, as those with more influence or those who were more vocal were able to obtain preferred assignments, while those with less influence had less of a voice in choosing their schedule. While influence or a propensity to be vocal about one’s assignments may not necessarily be tied exclusively to seniority, one teacher within the science department noted that the link between seniority and getting one’s preferred schedule was strong, and despite this administrator’s stance, the norm of seniority continued in the science department, but data from other departments showed the administrator’s involvement more elsewhere. Still, this administrator’s stance reveals a break

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32 This case raises the issue of the extent to which some departments experience more autonomy than others even under administrative control. Perhaps the science department may have additional autonomy because it is not considered as “high stakes” as other subjects (in the case of CAHSEE—the California High School Exit Exam that tests math and English). Additionally, with secondary science’s more specialized credentials and labor intensive preparations for labs, perhaps administrators who would normally exercise more control at a site would be more likely to give the science department more autonomy.
with “the way that it had been done” with an explicit reference to fairness for teachers and students.

Another administrator noted that the very practice of scheduling according to seniority was precisely what led her to become an administrator. Previously as a counselor she would determine the number of sections needed but had no input on which teachers were assigned to teach courses. She noticed that more experienced teachers choose not to teach courses that were more challenging:

What I noticed is that the teachers with the most expertise, with the most experience were always choosing easy assignments. They wanted the GATE [Gifted and Talented Education] students, they wanted the advanced students. And who ended up teaching everybody else-- it was the new teachers that had less experience. And so I thought if I become an administrator, then I can change that because I know that assignments are not based on seniority. It’s based on – I mean the principal makes those assignments….I believe that a teacher shows how strong he or she is not by dealing with the good students, but by dealing with the ones that need the most. (A1, 6/3/08)

As a new administrator armed with a vision of how scheduling could be different at her site she noted that teachers still had distinct preferences: “And this is my first year ….And [I found] the same things. It’s all about, ‘I want to teach these kids,’ and, ‘It’s not fair that I teach only the sheltered.’” Rather than continue with the status quo, she took an active role in teacher assignment and instituted a policy where teachers would generally receive both a “high” and a “low” class, “because if you know how to teach to the high and you know the level of standards, you will know what is it that you need to work with your low students in order to get there.” However, she acknowledged that this approach was “just a philosophical idea” that would not in and of itself create a transformation: “[I]t will take much more than just ‘low’ and ‘high’ and suddenly there’s a miracle…It’s not going to happen. So in the meantime, I need to work with all of the support staff here.” This administrator’s approach to redistributing courses follows a particular philosophical logic aimed at increasing teachers’ understandings of what would be needed for students who are currently described as “low” to reach “higher” levels-- a key concern for more equitable outcomes. However, assignment redistribution without additional support and coaching will not create “miracles.” Yet strategically using teacher resources in areas of need was also important for this administrator. She explained her rationale behind assigning a math teacher to a schedule of sheltered algebra repeater classes:
He’s teaching two term sheltered algebra classes which are probably 11th and twelfth graders that have failed, failed, failed, and now they’re – they’ve failed. And I assigned those to this teacher because I find him to have – he uses the SIOP lesson plan and he is strong in building relationships with the students, and he uses best practices in mathematics. So I’m thinking if they’re going to have a chance, it’ll be with this teacher, so I gave him all algebra (A1, 6/3/08).

Given the particularly high-stakes of algebra, this administrator made a decision to place this teacher where others may have distributed teacher resources elsewhere so that students who have a history of failure have a “chance” with a teacher who used targeted SIOP lesson plans, built relationships with students and had a knowledge of “best practices” in his content area.

As an administrator she had a vision of her priorities, one intimately linked with her own experience as an immigrant and language learner: “And I think about myself because I’m an immigrant, also, and I’m an English learner, also.” With a strong sense of commitment to EL students she noted that making these choices sometimes put her at odds with staff:

And still some teachers don’t like me. But it’s just being honest. It’s having those conversations. I know last week there was a teacher that said, “This is what I want. I don’t want to teach anything else.” And then I said, “Okay, so this about you. This is not about the students.” And then he told me that I disrespected him, and then I go, “Okay. I’m going to apologize for the personal, how I made you feel. But I still believe that we’re here for the students, not for ourselves,” and that’s what I want. I want teachers that want to be here that care about the students (A1, 6/3/08).

However, simply because administrators take a more centralized role in course assignments does not necessarily mean that students’ needs will be met. As one administrator noted, occasionally assignments would happen for “pragmatic reasons” rather than principled ones, as “weaker” teachers were placed in assignments strategically as well. She noted that while some teachers were genuinely interested in teaching EL students because of their own experience and linguistic skills, other teachers who were not strong teachers were simply placed there:

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33 SIOP: Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (Short & Echevarria, 1999)
In a lot of places I’ve seen, you know, maybe not the strongest teachers – you know, some teachers are interested in teaching SDAIE or ELD because of their own experience or being bilingual, and, you know, primary language skills or second language skills. But then some people kind of get into it just because, you know, people are – they’re placed there, kind of a not – don’t rock the boat kind of thing. So some people like to teach those classes, and some people don’t and find it frustrating, so you look at interest in teachers – I try to look – and language ability. But I like to look at having stronger teachers teaching those classes, or teachers who are able to differentiate instruction and adapt materials. But sometimes decisions are made in a very pragmatic way” (A3, 6/5/08, emphasis added).

While this administrator prefers to have “stronger teachers” teaching EL classes, using delicately hedging language (such as “maybe not the strongest” and “kind of”) she raises the issue that her own sense of priorities may not in fact be the basis of staffing decisions. When pressed for an example of a “pragmatic” assignment, she revealed a narrative about a “weaker teacher” who had been placed in an EL teaching assignment:

Okay, well, we do have a teacher here who is not a particularly strong teacher who was put back in the classroom from being out of the classroom34 …So, you know, this particular teacher may have some difficulty in management issues, and they have some issues from being in conflicts with students and maybe even parents. So, quite frankly those problems are going to be accentuated teaching a mainstream class than an ELD class where a more traditional attitude towards – you know, in terms of respecting the teacher and parents, not complaining to the school and things like that. So we find that happening also, not just here, but there’s other places where that happens … --which is not a good reason to assign someone, but it happens” (A3, 6/3/08).

Noting in passive voice that “it happens,” rather than speaking of administrators actively making these decisions, this administrator acknowledges that the practice of assigning “not the strongest teachers” to teach EL students was something that happened not only at her site, but at other sites as well. She observed that the issue was tied up not only with cultural norms of respect for teachers in many

34 This teachers’ movement “back in the classroom” is consistent with a larger pattern found by Bridges (1992) where less competent teachers are placed in non-classroom assignments during periods when more school resources are available, but in times when resources are scarce these less competent teachers are placed back into classrooms.
immigrant families, but also with language issues that potentially put immigrant parents at a disadvantage vis-à-vis their native-English language counterparts:

[I]n any school if you have students and parents who are native speakers, they’re going to be more vocal than coming from an immigrant background and not speaking English…So if you have a teacher who’s not a particularly strong teacher or who lacks management skills or lacks interpersonal skills, you’re going to have less resistance (A3, 6/5/08).

The perception that immigrant parents may not be as vocal in complaining about poor teaching contributes to a situation in which EL students are assigned teachers with weaker skills—as a path of “less resistance.” By this logic, placing these teachers with students from native-English speaking (either standard or non-standard native English) families would increase the levels of parental dissatisfaction, school scrutiny and potential conflict. (Not all immigrant parents may in fact fit this perception; however that this perception exists, and that many immigrant parents do struggle with English creates a situation where their sons and daughters may be placed with less skilled teachers.)

While some administrators may choose the path of least “resistance,” another administrator cast this very same issue in terms of teacher preference—in essence “weaker” teachers develop a preference for EL students precisely because of these teachers’ difficulties with management. This particular administrator recounted how she had used her “veto power” to pull out such a teacher whom she judged to be “not good for kids” and strategically placed her elsewhere, where, in her perception they would do less harm:

For me, it’s important that the right people are in the right place. So that one teacher I was talking about before, I think I kicked her out of sheltered last year. I just flat out removed her....And I’ve never let her back in even though she comes and she whines and she petitions and she tells us how credentialed she is and how this is her passion and blah, blah, blah-- she’s not good for kids. She’s not going to move the program forward. She’s not going to do those things I need her to do. So no matter what department [chair] comes up and says, “Could we give her this section? Could we do that?” The answer is no. (A7, 12/19/08)

35 The issue of immigrant families’ cultural norms of “respect” will be taken up in the second half of the chapter when discussing this perception in teachers, as it relates to their preferences for EL students.
If I can’t get rid of a teacher, if it takes me two to three years, and if I’ve got a teacher retiring in two or three years, I’m not going there. That teacher gets what they want as long as they’re not harming kids—where they want to be – normally it’s senior year. They can’t harm seniors. Seniors are done. So I tend to put my worst teachers at senior level. My best teachers go to the ninth grade or sheltered. If you want my philosophy of how I do that….It’s about getting to the kids. My ninth grade’s the most important year. My sheltereds are the most important kids. (A7, 12/19/08)

For this administrator’s priorities, EL and ninth grade students came first. However, it is important to note that she only had “veto power” at this school. Departments made nearly all appointments (between 90-100% assignments, according to the administrator), and she acknowledged that although she likes to nurture and care for her younger teachers, particularly because they potentially have a longer future in teaching, departmental norms of seniority were still in place at this school site, only to be disrupted by a strategic veto in cases where the administrator felt she must expend this political capital for a greater good. So although she articulated a vision that she acted on in particular cases, according to this administrator, the departmental norm of seniority persisted.

Administrator Control

Adams High School, the only site with exclusive administrative control over teaching placements, was a case of strong centralized administrative control, weak departments, and the practice of routing new teachers to sheltered courses due to credentialing concerns. This case was distinct from the examples of assignments shaped by teacher seniority or those which purposefully ran counter to it; however the result was similar: newly credentialed teachers were placed in EL courses because their credentials had an embedded authorization to teach EL students, unlike prior authorizations in which teachers had to obtain supplemental authorization through preparation or testing. As such, credentialing constraints structured the assignments at AHS, and to certain extent other schools, but most clearly demonstrated at this site.

In the case of AHS, where administrators played the most central role in determining course assignments, teachers in various departments noted the levels of uncertainty surrounding what courses they would be teaching, perhaps due to the newness of the administration as well as a climate of scrutiny by the major regional accreditation agency, the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Together these issues created an environment of tense centralized control at the site. Departments were weak, with little common purpose or power. According to
teachers in both the math and social studies departments, the position of chair carried no status; moreover, the job was one that no one wanted to perform. Even having a say in one’s own schedule, a common benefit of chairing departments, was not available at this site; the department chairs did not know what their assignments would be and were not involved in the scheduling process. When asked about how he had obtained his teaching schedule, the math department chair responded:

I didn’t have anything to do with it…. As far as what we teach, it used to be – when I first came here and there was another department chair and he’d been here for 20 years, 30 years – then the department chairs had power and they didn’t tell us what to teach (xxxx) on the state standards or that stuff there and he’d sit down with the department and they’d work out who was going to teach what and then he’d sit down with the principal privately and they’d work it all out. Now, they just – it’s just luck of the draw – whatever you get, and even at ten years that I guess I’ve been chairing ten years….– even ten years ago, it’s like I had more say in things, and they’d listen to me. They did…. To me it’s just more work for less pay. I mean for no pay. (5/7/08)

As the math chair described it, the task of serving as department chair carried no status or benefits—in fact it was simply extra work for no pay. And yet, he could remember a time when relations between the administration and departments were different and when department chairs played a role in shaping course assignments. Although the norm of seniority did not prevail at AHS, the practice of assigning newer teachers to EL courses continued there and elsewhere where CLAD-certified teachers were not as plentiful as in other sites.

A social studies teacher observed that it was precisely because he was a new teacher with a CLAD-embedded credential that he was assigned to teach sheltered courses. (Older teachers who did not have a CLAD credential were technically not permitted to teach EL students). He recounted how newer teachers were specifically routed into EL teaching assignments (which he referred to as “ELD” even though these were sheltered content courses):

Last year’s master schedule was decided on which teachers would qualify, which teachers were willing. We didn’t have a whole lot-- a lot of our teachers this year were getting the CLADS. We had a couple of teachers not get their CLADS. I’m already, I’m a 2042 [CLAD embedded credential]. So, immediately when I came in, they were saying: “new teachers, ELD.” Which is a very unfortunate circumstance, from what I’m like-- my mentality and my beliefs….ELD is typically given, and ninth
grade classes are typically given to newer teachers….Personally, I think it should be just the opposite. I think a teacher who teaches well should be at the ninth grade level, and ELD teachers for one, to get those kids up to speed in their skills. (4/23/08)

In this case we see the issue of teacher credentialing linked directly to newer teachers’ assignments. Additionally, at another site, Ms. Oakley, a math teacher, noted that as a newer teacher her sheltered teaching assignment was connected to the fact that she had a newer CLAD-embedded credential. Mr. Linden at JHS also observed that veteran teachers at his site were not permitted to teach EL courses because of their lack of a CLAD credential: “As far as the old timers go, they don’t have CLAD credentials, and they couldn’t teach sheltered classes even if they wanted to” (3/7/08).

Immediately after Mr. Linden stated this, he followed with a comment where he questioned the value of the CLAD: “And I will go on record as saying the CLAD credential is a worthless piece of paper and does nothing to further to make you a better teacher” (3/7/08). In Mr. Linden’s view, though the CLAD credential is required to teach EL students and bars older non-CLAD credentialed teachers from teaching these courses, it does not necessarily improve the quality of teaching. Furthermore, an administrator also shared concerns about the CLAD embedded credential noting that it was difficult to discern how much training teachers had had in their teacher education programs now that the CLAD was integrated into the credential “since the CLAD is embedded in the credential, you never know how strong they are” (A1, 6/3/08).

While the intent of integrating CLAD competencies into all teachers’ credentials was significant in so far as it sought to create a situation where all new teachers would be officially credentialed to teach EL students, until all teachers are CLAD-certified, credentialing requirements place an institutional constraint on who will be assigned to teach EL courses. Such a condition institutionally favors those with more recent credentials being placed into EL courses. Although some administrators noted that it is now easier to staff EL courses because an increasing number of teachers are now automatically CLAD certified, these assignments tended to fall to newer teachers in schools without sufficient numbers of CLAD-certified teachers, despite the fact that newer teachers have less experience.

In summary, the process of teacher assignment varied by school site with varying degrees of departmental and administrative control; however, institutional norms of seniority tended to predominate and, combined with credentialing constraints, led to a process whereby newer teachers were more likely to get sheltered course assignments, unless other teachers requested them. However, in some cases administrators took a more active role and positioned teachers in EL
assignments (or away from EL assignments) when this reflected administrators’ priorities. In these cases, administrators made decisions regarding how teacher resources would be distributed, and to whom.

While administrators and departments had distinct approaches and levels of control over teacher assignments, the question remains: What were teachers’ preferences?

**Teacher Preference**

Regardless of how course assignments are determined, teachers have preferences about which courses they want to teach. These preferences matter, especially in a seniority system where more senior teachers have a larger say in determining their course schedules than their less senior counterparts. In order to ascertain what teachers’ preferences were, teachers in the interview sample were asked what their ideal schedule would be. Teachers often referenced specific content (i.e., a preference for algebra II over algebra I) and times of day (i.e., not teaching first or last period), with sheltered courses sometimes explicitly mentioned, and sometimes not. For the 20 teachers in the interview sample, 18 reported their ideal or preferred teaching schedules while two did not (due to interview time constraints); hence, data presented here are from the 18 teachers who responded about this specific issue of preference.

Teachers’ talk about their preferences fell into a spectrum, which included a dislike on one end and a dedicated EL specialist on the other, with most teachers falling in the middle. Six teachers (or 1/3 of the reporting sample) had a fairly neutral or non-preferential stance and talked about how they either “didn’t mind” teaching EL students (3) or did not state a preference (3) for teaching EL courses. Four teachers (or 22%) talked about how they “liked” teaching EL students. An additional six teachers (or 1/3) definitely wanted to teach EL courses and actively sought them out. However, even for those who were especially committed to teaching EL students, teaching sheltered courses comprised only one class period in an ideal schedule (comprised of either 5 periods or 3 to 4 blocks). Only one teacher, a self-described EL “specialist” working in a social studies department, preferred to teach EL courses exclusively; what set apart those who were “committed” versus those who were “specialists” was that the “specialist” primarily saw teaching EL students as her exclusive purpose whereas those who are “committed” definitely want to teach sheltered courses in addition to other classes. (See Figure 3.1 for the distribution of teachers across the preference spectrum.)
Figure 3.1: Teachers’ Preferences for Sheltered Courses by Subject Matter

Note: Data Source: Interviews, N=18

It is not surprising that social studies teachers were seen across the preference spectrum, perhaps because they were overrepresented in the sample. However, the fact that they make up the extremes of the spectrum is an issue to be discussed in greater detail later in the chapter when I return to the issue of departmental subjects and how this intersects with teachers’ preferences.

Extremes on the EL Preference Spectrum:
The Case of Ms. Mueller vs. Ms. Harrison

Only one teacher in the sample explicitly stated that she did not like teaching sheltered courses and would rather not be assigned to teach these. Ms. Mueller, a 60-ish social studies teacher who entered the teaching profession 5 years ago after already having a career in management indicated that she did not want to teach EL students because she did not find it very rewarding. She admitted that though she was a fifth-year teacher, she hadn’t been assigned to teach a sheltered class in years and did not feel sufficiently prepared, even though she was CLAD certified. She thought that students would be better served by a specialist, particularly one with native-language skills. She recounted her frustration with a teaching schedule that included a government-economics course
comprised of immigrant twelfth graders who were predominantly at the beginning-levels of English proficiency; she noted that her most commonly used phrase in class was “Do you understand?” which she felt she seemed to say just about every other word. In her ideal schedule, she would only teach government-economics (to fluent English speakers) because of her content knowledge in these subjects and her preference for older students. She questioned tenth-graders’ cognitive developmental abilities and wondered if they were capable of abstract thinking. She also had a preference for teaching students who were in a specially designed academy at the school site. These students had a reputation for being college-bound and highly tracked. Ms. Mueller especially emphasized her desire to teach students who were mature and college-bound. She felt that seniors in her sheltered government-economics class were largely not college-bound and awfully noisy, while seniors in her academy government-economics were slated to attend elite public universities, and she felt especially connected to them.

On the other end of the spectrum was Ms. Harrison, a social studies teacher with over 20 years of experience specializing in ESL and EL content courses. Beginning her teaching career teaching English in West Africa while her husband was working there, she returned to the US and continued to teach English as a Second Language in local school districts. During the interview she discussed her specialization in language acquisition and referred to common concepts in the field such as Cummin’s BICS and CALP (1979) and Krashen’s “comprehensible input” (1985). Seeing herself primarily as a specialist in this area, when asked what her ideal schedule would be, she was the only teacher in the sample who indicated that she would prefer a schedule comprised entirely of sheltered content courses. In fact, for years she exclusively taught sheltered classes at her current high school and was teaching a mainstream social studies course for the first time as a result of EL program restructuring at her school site that cut sheltered courses in an effort to mainstream more EL students. Forced to teach a mainstream course in order to complete her schedule, she could no longer have a schedule of exclusively sheltered courses. She was upset by this turn of events, largely because, in her view as a specialist, EL students still needed these courses, and she felt that the political pressure to mainstream students was trumping their linguistic needs which were better served in sheltered content courses. She noted that because of her specialization she was assigned sheltered courses with lower levels of English proficiency while newer teachers tended to be assigned to the sheltered sections with more intermediate proficiency. She observed that more experienced teachers didn’t “gravitate” toward teaching sheltered courses because teaching sheltered was “more work” and “more difficult.”

As noted, most teachers in this sample (16 out of 18) neither explicitly objected to teaching sheltered courses, nor wished to teach them exclusively. Teachers tended to discuss teaching sheltered courses in terms which were either
neutral or positive. For teachers who actually discussed sheltered courses in neutral terms, a common phrase was that they “didn’t mind” teaching sheltered courses, while other teachers simply didn’t mention sheltered courses in their ideal schedules. Others stated that they enjoyed working with students in sheltered classes. One biology teacher, Ms. Engle, noted that she would be content either to teach sheltered or not: “either way” and then continued to describe “sheltered kids” as “good kids”:

DBD: In your ideal schedule, if you could just arrange your dream schedule, what would you teach and why?

Ms. E: Biology and Anatomy. I’m happy now. If I had to do a different option it’d be all Biology, sheltered or not, either way. Sheltered are good kids.

DBD: So either way whether you have them or whether you don’t, it would be fine with you.

Ms. E: Yeah, but I like them. I enjoy having them. I look forward to it.

(5/15/08)

As one can see in the exchange above, content courses (Biology, Anatomy) are Ms. Engle’s first concerns, with sheltered courses being of secondary concern (“either way”) but then preferable because she enjoys and looks forward to teaching language learners whom she likes and sees as “good kids.” Other issues around assignments were largely more salient, such as specific course content assignments and often prep periods. For a good portion of these teachers, teaching sheltered courses neither defined their teaching nor was it contrary to it.

Even for those who displayed increased commitment to teaching sheltered courses, they had other interests and sought to teach other courses in addition to sheltered courses. For example, Ms. Benavides had been teaching sheltered biology for years, yet she was also dedicated to teaching accelerated biology; furthermore, she was particularly upset when her assignment to an accelerated biology class was threatened. Also, Ms. Flores, a social studies teacher, enjoyed teaching both sheltered courses as well as other courses where she felt she could delve more deeply into materials and share college level texts. However, she, unlike other participants, was particularly interested in students and her relationships with them. While other teachers talked about their specific course preferences (such as US or world history, algebra or geometry) she talked about her desire to loop with students, teaching students both world history and US history over the course of two years in order to strengthen relationships with students and watch them grow. Her orientation was specifically geared towards building relationships with students. However for most teachers, specific content
dominated their talk of preferences, with sheltered courses more visible in some teachers’ preferences more than others.

*Teacher Preference, “Respectful” Immigrant Students and “Control” in the Classroom*

One surprise finding was that not all teachers who were seeking EL assignments were necessarily interested for reasons that would benefit students. (As noted earlier, two administrators at different sites mentioned the topic of teachers who had poor management skills who were assigned or had interest in teaching EL students. While in one case the administrator referenced an administrative decision to place a teacher with “management problems” with EL students because of a combination of teacher preference and external pressures, another administrator warned of this pattern.) When discussing staffing EL courses an assistant principal noted that administrators cannot always assume that teachers’ preferences for EL students are actually beneficial for students:

> It’s very hard because the other part of the teacher who wants to teach sheltered are the ones that believe they can control them because they don’t know [the] language….They could be quiet, docile, in terms of the fact that I can tell you what to do because also most of our students coming in come from very respectful cultures. They are not Americans. They don’t understand freedom of speech and rights, they respect the elders. *So a lot of teachers want those classes because they have respectful students, and they have very limited English language, so they can just tell them whatever they want, and keep the control.* So they tend to control the environment. *So when you walk into some classes you’ll see controlled environments versus that other environment that’s very rich in student learning.* (A7, 12/19/08, emphasis added)

As this administrator was able to distinguish, teachers who were especially interested in teaching EL courses because of control issues have classrooms in which environments are controlled versus “rich in student learning.” She continued by saying that regularly observing teachers’ teaching styles in the mainstream classrooms allowed her to gauge the strength of the teacher and the extent to which their deep content knowledge and fostering of active, messy learning environments in addition to solid management skills made them attractive in her eyes for staffing EL classes. She noted that in order to maximize language development, EL students need multiple opportunities to talk and hear others talking as well (not just the teacher). In this sense, teachers who emphasize
quiet controlled environments (as seen in Valdés, 2001) can hamper opportunities for language development.

However, thinking about the issue from the perspective of teachers: Who wouldn’t want classrooms with respectful students? But when some teachers’ proclivities for control produce particular preferences for EL students, these preferences are problematic. Moreover, unless administrators are aware of this tendency, what appears as a benign or even helpful interest in EL students might not be so helpful for students.36

Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco (1995) did note important cultural differences between Mexican and American students’ school orientations, however their findings also exemplify the ways in which the process of migration structures particular achievement orientations as distinct from what would be found in countries of origin. For example, while White American students in their sample were much more likely to say their principal or teacher was a “jerk” than Mexican students in Mexico, Mexican immigrant students placed the highest importance on achieving in school, higher than either their co-nationals, second generation Mexican-American students or White American students. Often displaced and on less certain ground than at home, for many immigrants the salience of doing well in school is heightened, particularly in a land constructed as one of “opportunities.” As such many have noted that immigrant students “try hard.” The ways in which the process of migration pushes forth these orientations, in combination with non-native-status issues, creates a sense of “politeness” in addition to previous cultural norms (norms that can quickly change for children and adolescents through new socialization experiences in US schools). As we will see in the next section, the perception of a “respectful” immigrant disposition intersects with the pre-existing structure of the teaching profession in important ways.

36 Furthermore, the general perception that immigrant students’ source of “respect” is their culture is one that needs unpacking. In what Valenzuela (1999) characterizes as recent immigrants’ “purported politeness,” she observes that issues of power and authority interact in important ways for those positioned as recent immigrants. Furthermore, invoking Bourdieu’s concept of “the power to impose reception” (1977), Norton-Pierce (1995) notes that the voice one takes to speak up as a non-native speaker is different than the authority one has as a native speaker. If immigrants’ deference is merely chalked up to cultural explanations which identify its source in the countries of origin, one analytically misses the dynamics of migration with its losses, including moving from the position in which one speaks the native language (in most cases) to one in which one does not. This is distinct from an explanation which postulates that the source of immigrants’ politeness is based solely in their countries of origin.
Reasons for Preferences: Underlying Issues

Understanding the dynamics that shape teacher preference and assignment requires more than knowledge of what teachers’ preferences were and how teachers were assigned to particular slots. This section discusses why teachers held particular preferences (or “negative preferences”) for EL courses.

Four issues tended to underlie teachers’ preferences around sheltered course assignment:

1. Teachers sense of the anticipated rewards or frustrations in the classroom
2. A sense of their subject specialization (or conception of subject) (working to favor or disfavor EL placements)
3. Workload considerations, and
4. For a minority of teachers, a sense of commitment to EL students through shared circumstance or immigrant background.

These categories were not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Rewards and frustration as two sides of the same coin.

Regardless of whether or not teachers liked teaching EL courses, the underlying reason why most teachers tended to prefer or dislike these assignments was bound with their sense of intrinsic rewards (or its opposite: dissatisfaction and frustration) as well as their sense of control in the classroom.

These very concepts—the primacy of intrinsic rewards and teachers’ attempts to control “endemic uncertainties”—are essential aspects of the structure of the teaching profession (Lortie, 1975). As sociologist Dan Lortie observed, the structure of the teaching profession tends to favor intrinsic (or “psychic”) rewards. Because the external rewards (such as income) are relatively minimal, the intrinsic rewards become more important. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that teaching by its very nature is plagued by uncertainties. There are no products to manufacture, no court cases to win. The basis on which teachers judge their success is necessarily ambiguous. This ambiguity hinders the ability of teachers to earn intrinsic rewards: “[E]ndemic uncertainties complicate the teaching craft and hamper the earning of psychic rewards. Intangibility and complexity impose a toll” (p. 159). The presence of such uncertainties raises the importance of working conditions, directing teachers to seek out conditions that will amplify rather than diminish their sense of rewards. Essentially, teachers “will care deeply about
working conditions which they believe increase the flow of work rewards (p. 161, emphasis added).” Lortie’s analysis of the structure of the teaching profession helps explain why an emphasis on rewards is so important to teachers: The rewards of the classroom are the predominant “pay off” in a profession filled with uncertainties and relatively low financial compensation.

What we find when we look at Ms. Mueller, who stated explicitly that she disliked teaching sheltered courses and hoped not to be assigned sheltered courses again, is that her talk is explicitly liked to her sense of rewards:

I don’t find it particularly rewarding. I don’t particularly like teaching sheltered. I think that if you were going to do a really good job with these kids, what these kids really deserve is that they need somebody who teaches solely sheltered. Unless you have some teacher who really loves it so much, they don’t mind, they get all the adaptations. (3/17/08)

While Ms. Mueller disliked teaching sheltered courses because she didn’t find it rewarding, Ms. Oakley, an algebra teacher said that she “definitely” wants to teach sheltered courses because of how rewarding it is for her:

It’s fun and it’s really exciting to see students so eager to learn. Like when I ask questions, they truly want to know how to do the stuff. The whining is not there. It’s such a different reason that they’re at school for the most part. I mean, there are students in that class who are—I can already see that they don’t care about school, but for the most part, they just really want to learn the stuff. Classroom management is just not even an issue. It’s amazing. (5/4/08)

Another math teacher, Mr. Alexander, noted a sense of respect and rapport with EL students which he did not obtain from mainstream students. Moreover, the existence of reduced class sizes for sheltered courses at his school site presents additional incentives that made teaching EL students enticing for him—to the point of envy before he was able to have a sheltered class of his own:

I always envied the people that had the EL class, always smaller and the kids are – they are – they’re just – that’s my most fun class ‘cause I’m jokin’ around with these guys. They just have a different approach to the teacher. Their cultures venerate the teacher. And the Americans’ culture denigrates the teacher. They [Americans] get – “You’re a fool for teaching ‘cause who’d want to be around those hoodlums,” etcetera...and you’re makin’ so little money, you know? (5/7/08)
If for some teachers the prospect of increased respect and diminished management issues represented rewards, others noted the potential for frustration and uncertainty. Mr. Newbury, a second-year social studies teacher (who “didn’t mind” teaching sheltered students, as long as they were at the intermediate level), recounted experiences from his first year of teaching with beginning-level EL students:

Last year, I was swimming. I wasn’t a functional, for my [CELDT³⁷ level] one and twos, at all. I felt very outwardly nervous about teaching them very, like I’d go home and say, did they get anything? Are they even understanding this? And then some days my first year… [I] just kind of got to the point where I’d say, “I’m going to teach this anyway. I hope you get it. And if you don’t, eh, I don’t know how to deal with it, so, sorry guys. Next lesson.”….If I had more support, if I had more techniques, if I had more training, I would not have any problem. But, you know, you can only do what you can do, and I truly feel like I’m weak. (4/23/08)

I don’t always serve my populations, and that’s being as blunt as I can about it. You don’t always succeed, and it’s frustrating, but, it’s what we do…. And you’re a new teacher, already just, it’s a far cry between theory and practice, and I’m already learning how to practice, I’m in the field because I really want to make a difference, I really want to have students come back to me in ten years and say, “You changed my life.” And with these kids it’s not going to happen, because I’m not getting through to them, or I’m not-- for whatever reason, it’s frustrating. (4/23/08)

Mr. Newbury’s desire to make a difference ran in sharp contrast to his perception of his capabilities (as a self-described “weak” teacher), creating what would be for most an untenable situation with the knowledge that he was not always serving his student populations, despite his best efforts.

Furthermore, when recounting the anger of colleagues who had been assigned to teach a sheltered course, he offered a potential explanation linked to a sense of frustration and a lack of support:

Mr. N: There were teachers who didn’t want to, who were pissed off. I know particularly here a teacher here was angry to teach ELD. “Why do I have to teach ELD again? I did that last year! I don’t want that again.”

³⁷ California English Language Development Test (which ranges from levels 1-5).
DBD: Why do you think they feel that way?
Mr. N: Because I think it’s hard. It’s hard and it leaves you frustrated and I think, when you’re feeling that you’re not making an impact, and that’s what a lot of teachers I guess go into it for, to make an impact on the students, I think that level of frustration builds up, and when you don’t have the support systems, or you’re just even not ready to go through the support systems, you end up frustrated, and even angry or bitter. (4/23/08)

As is clear from Mr. Newbury and Ms. Mueller’s examples, frustration and a lack of rewards dominated their narratives where as for Ms. Oakley and Mr. Alexander a sense of respect and rewards accompanied teaching EL students. With the nature of the teaching profession emphasizing classroom-based rewards as highly consequential aspects of work, it is no wonder that teachers’ underlying preferences were linked to their evaluation of anticipated rewards or frustration.

Subject specialization.

Another theme that surfaced was the extent to which teachers linked their choice of sheltered courses to their conception of their subject matter (or their conception of themselves as teachers of particularly advanced content matter). This worked both ways to support EL preferences or to dissuade teachers from wanting EL course assignments.

As Mr. Thomas recounted, agreeing to teach sheltered courses allowed him to maintain a schedule of his true specialization, world history—a subject in which he had completed doctoral level course work. When asked how he obtained his teaching assignment, he responded:

I’m a world history guy. So I really don’t have a lot of training in U.S. History. I probably could fake it better than most, but I really am not – it’s not my strong suit….I said, “Give me all World, ‘cause that’s what I do.” And I said, you know – my department said, “Well, do you mind the sheltered classes?” I was, “I don’t mind. What the hell.” Some people will say, “I mind.” And they try not to give it to those people for obvious reasons. You know, for obvious reasons. But I’m happy to do it. You know? That’s good for me. (3/18/08)

As Mr. Thomas noted, some teachers object to teaching sheltered courses, while others “do not mind.” For Mr. Thomas, the ability to have a schedule composed exclusively of world history courses was his main priority. Teaching the student population of EL students was secondary, but served his interests.
Meanwhile, for a colleague of Ms. Flores’, teaching sheltered courses threatened her conception of herself as one who specializes in AP courses. Ms. Flores recounted how when her colleague was assigned a sheltered history course she felt “punished”: “This teacher feels that she was punished and given a sheltered class, and so she took it really bad like, I’ve been here for, I don’t know, seven years, and I’ve always taught AP and Honors, you know, and here I am teaching a sheltered class” (4/1/08). When I asked Ms. Flores why sheltered courses would be seen as punitive, she postulated that perhaps those who have identities as AP teachers who regularly are associated with particular advanced course specialties would have more of an objection than others such as herself who view sheltered assignments favorably:

**DBD:** Why do you think it was punitive? Or why would someone see it that way?

**Ms. F:** That’s a good question because for me, I mean, I’d be like, “hey, give me all the sheltered classes you want, those are the good kids, they want to learn.” I don’t know if it was an ego thing for her, because you know, teachers who teach APs tend, there is some kind of idea that they’re the better teachers, they’re more experienced, they have the better kids, and I think maybe that has something to do with it. (4/1/08)

In Ms. Flores’ description, a category of teachers emerges: “teachers who teach APs” which is associated with conceptions of them as “better teachers” who have “better kids,” even though in Ms. Flores’s estimation, sheltered classes have “good kids.” This category of “teachers who teach APs” also emerged at Ms. Wosniak’s school site. Ms. Wosniak noted that AP teachers at her site “minded” teaching sheltered courses, where as other teachers in the department were less likely to “mind.” (However two teachers in this sample concurrently taught sheltered and AP classes and did not “mind” teaching these courses). While teaching AP courses would not in and of itself place one at odds with teaching sheltered classes, for particular teachers for whom status matters more, sheltered classes may be seen as a threat to their self-conception as teachers of advanced content. In addition to the ways that conceptions of content and status intersect, two EL coaches at distinct sites noted that teachers who were especially attached to their content matter had increased difficulties teaching sheltered courses. The need to depart from their content and integrate more language instruction in their courses was seen as frustrating.
Workload considerations.

Workload issues also figured into teachers’ preferences. This issue was raised largely by coaches who had observed how some teachers did not want to be assigned sheltered courses because it involved additional preparation. As noted above in the case of Mr. Thomas, his preference for sheltered courses was influenced by his conception of his subject specialization (being a “world history guy” and not seeing himself as a person with much US history training); however, this stance also had particular implications related to his workload. In other words, a sheltered teaching assignment lessened his workload if the assignment resulted in a complete schedule of courses that were exclusively world history courses (as opposed to a combination of different types of mainstream social studies classes). Teaching sheltered classes in fact enabled him to minimize his load by focusing on the same subject matter, particularly because (as will be discussed in the subsequent chapter) he felt that no additional preparation was warranted for the sheltered class (even though he made some instructional modifications during class time.) This issue of workload was also raised by survey results to be discussed shortly. In a sample of teachers (N=43) who all worked at Mr. Thomas’ school (Jefferson High School), of those who wrote in comments to clarify their preferences, five mentioned managing workloads as a consideration in their sheltered course preferences. As one teacher stated: “A third prep might be a bit too much for me, at this point. If I did teach sheltered, I wouldn’t just add a few ‘tweaks’ to my USH [US history] curriculum. I would have to do tons of new curriculum, and my time & energy levels couldn’t handle it” (4/15/08).

Sense of commitment/shared immigrant background.

Another reason that emerged was a sense of shared immigrant background. Ms. Flores explicitly mentioned her shared experience as a sheltered student when discussing her preference for working with immigrant youth: “I love and enjoy working with immigrant students, and maybe that’s because I’m an immigrant, I’m the child of immigrant parents, and, I was also in sheltered classes when I was young” (4/1/08). Though born in the US, she initially states “I’m an immigrant” indicating a close sense of identification even though she is technically part of the second generation.

Ms. Garza, a self-identified Mexican algebra teacher (who was born in the US), refers to the sense of trust and mutual identification with her EL students when discussing her sheltered course preference:
I think it’s just a certain rapport I build with them for some reason so they trust me a lot more. We get along a lot better and that helps. It comes across [in the] classroom. Or I feel more connected to them, I guess. So, yeah. I have a better relationship with them than some of my mainstream students. I guess we can identify more with each other (3/20/08, emphasis added). (3/20/08)

Most likely the increased identification and trust these teachers feel with their predominantly Mexican-origin students is assisted by their native Spanish fluency. Once teachers are able to build this sense of trust, this can in turn confer additional rewards (Stanton-Salazar, 2001).

However, this sense of shared trust and connection may not necessarily be present with all immigrant-origin teachers. As one administrator recalled, when she assigned an immigrant teacher (from India) to a sheltered class, she was accused of “racism.” Siskin and Little also cite Bascia’s work (1994) which documents how ethno-racially marked teachers can be “restricted” to particular ethnic niches, thereby limiting career options (Bascia, 1994, p. 8, cited in Siskin and Little, 1995). However, the extent to which these immigrant-origin teachers identified with students, shared native-language resources, and had lived through shared experiences (particularly in Ms. Flores’s case, going through the system of sheltered education herself) seems to have generated a sense of rapport and mutual trust.

In a system where teacher preference assumes a role however, those who initially gravitate toward teaching EL classes out of a sense of commitment or obligation may find themselves quickly burnt out. Mr. Montero, a self-identified Mexican-American, initially volunteered to take sheltered biology courses from someone with no Spanish skills who was struggling with the assignment: “I asked for the sheltered English [Biology] in the beginning ’cause I spoke some Spanish and the teacher at the time who was teaching, was juggling the Spanish, spoke no Spanish, so I said, ‘You know, why don’t you give them to me? At least I speak a little Spanish” (3/28/08). He described how eventually classes where Spanish speakers predominated gave way to multilingual classrooms which taxed his abilities in new ways and made teaching more difficult than it had been previously. In response he began experimenting with educational technology in order to have a common visual language and additional resources to teach with:

First year, they actually gave me only all Spanish speaking and that was good ’cause I could focus on helping the Spanish-speaking. Then, after about the third year, they started mixing everybody in the Spanish class and now I couldn’t focus on helping the Spanish speakers ’cause they got 5 different languages in one class, so that’s when I thought, okay, let me
try to do this internet thing and maybe (then) I can get back to helping everybody. But, it’s very frustrating to have kids who speak 5 different languages in one class and being told, “Okay, help everybody.” You can’t do it, but maybe with this Internet thing, well, maybe I can. (3/28/08)

While the experience of teaching multilingual classrooms pushed his teaching into a new direction, he noted that the ways in which his initial volunteerism led to a situation where he was assigned all sheltered classes until finally he complained:

One year, they gave me all the sheltered and then I told them I’m kinda burnt out ‘cause that’s really hard. And so now, since then, they’ve been giving me half the sheltered and giving the other teacher with (xxxx) the other half of the sheltered. They’ve been splitting up since that one year I complained. (3/28/08)

Unless Mr. Montero actively complained, the default was that he would continue to be assigned sheltered classes since showing an initial interest, even though the demands of teaching multilingual classrooms with students not fluent in English was “hard” and entailed a level of complexity that eventually made him “kinda burnt out.”

In spite of the difficulties of teaching a sheltered class which was also a lower track “advanced biology” class (which students took if they were not on track for chemistry), he noted that it would be better for him to teach this course now that he’s “figured it out” rather than “dump” the course so that a new teacher would have to teach it. In the following quote he states that given the prevalence of the seniority his department, he would prefer to stick with the course:

If you’ve got enough seniority, you can tell ‘em, “No. No, please, no.” It’s kind of, you know, you can negotiate. And they ask you what you want to teach, then they try to – and you know, if people have a strong preference for the-- not do sheltered English, if you make that known, then they’ll try to accommodate you, but it’s kind of like they ask teachers, “What do you want to teach?” And I – I could have dumped my sheltered English, but I didn’t want to do that. I didn’t want to stick a new teacher with (xxx) really hard and, I kinda got it down how to teach, you know? And I just thought it’s a cruel thing to do to new teachers – give ‘em the hardest kids in the school to teach. So, I said, “I’ll just keep – I’ll take these classes” (3/28/08)

Preceding this quote Mr. Montero discussed how the norms within the science department had shifted so that each teacher was expected to teach at least one
sheltered course, with the exception of those with the most seniority who made their anti-sheltered preferences known. Teachers who had a particular proclivity toward teaching sheltered courses (or those who “didn’t mind”) could get additional assignments while those in positions of seniority had negotiating power to refuse such courses.

At the outset, Mr. Montero initially requested sheltered courses because of his Spanish-speaking skills and desire to help a teacher who was struggling with teaching the sheltered biology courses and was given all sheltered course assignments. With social and ethnic ties to Mexico through both his mother and wife, and additional language skills through three years of college-level language study, even Mr. Montero’s initial disposition toward teaching EL students was taxed as a disproportionate number of sheltered courses came his way. Demonstrating an interest in sheltered at the outset meant that all sheltered courses would be assigned to him until he became “burnt out” with the level of difficulty and made others aware of this. In this example we see a particular type of logic: Teachers who had a particular interest, skill or affinity were assigned more sheltered sections while those with seniority and status who disliked teaching these courses were free to teach other classes. Mr. Montero also noted that the department chair, who had the most seniority, had the easiest schedule—one mainstream biology prep for all classes.

As Mr. Montero recounts, when given the opportunity to “dump” his sheltered courses, something other than his own benefit or preference guided his decision: concern for newer teachers who would have additional difficulties teaching the course. With more seniority than when he began, he now had such an option, but took a different approach. The alternative to him seemed “cruel.” Mr. Montero’s stance was a quiet but principled stance. But rather than raise the issue within the department, it was an individual choice in which he took an assignment that was more difficult because of his knowledge and sense of what it would be like for a newer teacher.

*Teachers’ Potential Reluctance to Discuss True EL Preferences*

While many teachers were quite open in their discussions of their preferences, it is possible that some teachers could have been reluctant to articulate their reservations concerning sheltered courses resulting in some omissions of negative EL preferences. This is especially so in relation to the ways in which sheltered courses are inextricably bound with immigrant and minority status, particularly in a contemporary Californian context. It is hard to come out and say, “I dislike teaching these courses because of these students’ origins or status,” usually these stances are either unlikely to be revealed in interviews because they are subconscious or because individuals would not provide such
answers in a social climate where such responses could be construed as racist or prejudicial. As one administrator noted, sometimes the true sources of disinclination are masked by discourses of “training” and the need for “specialists.” So there is a cautionary note in interpreting these results—one that would suggest that, despite the alacrity with which some teachers may discuss the rewards of teaching immigrant students, others might in more muted tones suggest caveats or say that they “don’t mind.” However, during interviews many teachers would index their frankness with words such as “confidentially speaking” and “honestly speaking.”

But the issue of how to interpret these teachers’ stated preferences also raises a question: How different is this sample of teachers—that is those who agreed to participate in a study explicitly about teachers’ experiences working with immigrant youth—from others working in schools who may have not opted to participate? Teachers who agreed to participate in this study may have been more open to teaching sheltered courses because one criterion of the study was that teachers actually have a sheltered course assignment. The question remains: What would a sample of teachers composed of a population of teachers at a given school site—not simply those participating in a study who currently teach sheltered courses—have to say about the issue of sheltered course preferences?

Jefferson High School Survey Data

In the process of conducting fieldwork at the seven school sites, a unique practice emerged at one site whereby EL school personnel surveyed teachers in all academic departments about their preferences surrounding EL course assignments. These data reveal teachers’ preferences in ways that are distinct from other data previously reported because surveys were administered by school personnel and used specifically for the purposes of determining teachers’ schedules for the following year. Teachers’ responses on the survey had a direct bearing on what their assignments would be.

Each academic department (social studies, math, science, and English,) received a survey that listed specific courses in each department with an opportunity to check off specific courses that teachers were willing to teach for EL students. In addition there were two common items on all departments’ surveys: 1) an option to decline teaching EL students 2) an option to indicate that teachers would not be returning the following year. Results of the survey (see Figure 3.2) represent the percent of teachers within each department that did not want to teach EL courses (which I am calling “negative preference”.) This was based on frequency counts of which teachers marked the box “I’d prefer not to teach EL classes”; forty-three responses were received in total, but teachers who
were not returning to the school site were not counted (hence $n=39$ rather than $N=43$).\(^{38}\)

Figure 3.2: Distribution of Negative EL Preference by Academic Department

Note: Data Source: Surveys, $n=39$

One can see a clear pattern with dramatic differences between social studies and math departments. While 57% of teachers in the social studies department indicated a negative preference for EL courses, not a single math teacher marked that box. This raises important questions: Why do preferences vary so dramatically across departments at this high school? How common is this pattern? While this survey represents data from only one school this comprehensive high school had a population of nearly 2,000 students, 20% of which were EL designated.

These data suggest that subject matter intersects with teacher preference in potentially consequential ways. Upon looking at the departmental patterns, one may see that more text-heavy subjects (such as social studies and English) have larger percentages of teachers who have a negative preference as opposed to less

\(^{38}\)The departmental breakdown of teachers who marked the box “I’d prefer not to teach EL classes” was as follows: 4/7 teachers in history, 6/14 in English, 2/10 in science, and 0/8 teachers in math.
text-heavy subjects such as math. Science, with lots of vocabulary demands, finds itself between English and math. However, some (e.g., Lager, 2004) may object to characterizing math as free from EL language-based issues (particularly with the prevalence of word problems where one misunderstood word could result in a wrong answer.) Still, as one administrator at another site noted, EL students tend to pass the CAHSEE math section much earlier than the English. If this is so, this would mean that either students are coming in with more math skills from their countries of origin or that accessing math does not involve the same language demands as dense English texts, particularly if one is doing operations rather than word problems. This administrator (who had years of experience as an EL secondary teacher) also noted that in structuring EL students’ schedules, text-heavy subjects are the last to be transferred; in other words, once students begin gaining increased English proficiency, it is easiest to mainstream students into math classes first, before mainstreaming history and English classes. When asked which subject placed the most demands on sheltered teachers in terms of adapting content, this administrator noted that English has the highest demands, yet she seemed to have a hard time staffing history sheltered courses. There appears to be some connection between the nature of the content and the degree of difficulty in potentially teaching the content to EL students. Perhaps this is connected to the degree to which teachers perceive a need to adapt content matter—perhaps more visible in social studies and English than in math. In other words math teachers may not “mind” because they might not see the need to adapt content to the same extent that teachers in a more text-intensive field might.

When considering these data in light of data represented in Figure 3.2 (which showed social studies teachers distributed on the extremes of the preference spectrum), it is not surprising that we find a highly trained language-oriented specialist on one end (someone very familiar with adapting content for those not fluent in English) who easily fit into a social studies department (rather than a language specialist suddenly teaching sheltered algebra). On the other end we find a social studies teacher with minimal training (though CLAD certified) who immediately referenced her trouble teaching from the textbook. She mentioned that while the district had a sheltered textbook for US government, there was no such sheltered textbook available for economics, which increased her sense of frustration even further. Because her teaching style was especially reliant on texts and textbooks, this made the challenge of teaching a room full of beginning and early intermediate EL students especially challenging. What I am suggesting is that the extent to which teachers’ subject matter and teaching styles are text-based and rely on reading text for content, the more difficult teaching students who are not fluent English readers will be. However, additional research is needed to investigate the connections between subject matter and EL teacher preference.
These findings also suggest that the nature of what it means to teach EL courses in math may be very different than what it means to teach sheltered history. Perhaps this also suggests that the nature of teacher adaptations might be different in math than in social studies. One issue raised by further examination of the comments on the teacher surveys was the issue of “work” and “preps.” While no math teachers alluded to different preparation, two teachers in the social studies department noted that the amount of preparation involved would be too much. One teacher wrote about how she would not simply “tweak” the curriculum and make minor adjustments if assigned the class and that she simply could not invest the time this coming year. While the tone of her comment seemed to indicate that this preference was not permanent, and that given the right circumstances she would invest significant amounts of time in adapting course content, this raises an additional question: How do work load issues intersect with conceptions of adaptation? Do social studies adaptations seem to require more work than other subjects? But the most pressing issue is this: If these teachers prefer not to teach EL courses, who will? Most likely new teachers.

_Persisting Tensions and Pressing Issues_

_The Problem of Preference_

Teachers have preferences for the courses they teach for various reasons and with various considerations: time of day, subject matter, work load (in terms of number of preps), and of course, student populations. While concern over student populations is not the only element that drives teachers’ preferences, Little (1993) and Finley (1984) have observed that “teachers’ satisfaction with their job depends upon what and whom they teach….Within the institution, teachers take on the status of their clientele (p. 239, emphasis added).” Lortie (1975) has also noted the salience of clientele--teachers, unlike most professionals, generally have little choice over their clientele. Theoretically, they are supposed to teach whomever shows up in their classrooms. This helps us understand the importance of teacher assignment practices—the more teachers are able to exercise their control over their teaching assignments, the more control they have over who walks into their classroom and whom they are supposed to teach. And, as Finley has noted, this implicates not only their experience of rewards within the classroom, but the esteem in which they are held by their colleagues.

Within a Californian context, English learners, predominateley students of color who hail largely from Latin America and Asia and who are over-represented in urban schools with high concentrations of poverty (Orfield & Yun, 1999; Suárez-Orozco, et al. 2008), do not tend to occupy higher status in schools (Olsen, 1999, Valdés, 2001). Whether this has to do with racialization (Olsen, 1999) and
minority status in US society (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995) or with language ideologies that privilege “standard” native-English fluency (Lippi-Green, 1997) is hard to tease apart. No doubt the two interact in important ways, where one’s delicately pronounced English with any sign of an “accent” signals immigrant status and becomes synonymous with particular racialized identities and vice-versa.

However, independent from considerations of status, teaching English learners and immigrant students typically presents both potential “pushes” and “pulls”, which given the structure of the teaching profession, become increasingly salient for teachers who attempt to teach EL students (as distinct from teachers who do not try). If for some teachers the prospect of “respect” and diminished “management” issues represents rewards, others noted the potential for frustration, particularly from teachers who did not speak the native language of their students who are at beginning or intermediate levels of English. The “endemic uncertainties” noted by Lortie over a quarter-century ago are only heightened under such circumstances. Recall the experience of Ms. Mueller: the frustrated teacher who explicitly acknowledged her dislike for teaching sheltered classes and thought only specialists should teach EL students. And yet, Ms. Flores (who admittedly feels a connection with EL students as she once was in sheltered courses herself) noted that much of teaching language learners is “common sense”: “A lot of it is just, common sense, I guess. You know? Just getting a feeling for where my students are at, checking in” (4/1/08). This sense of ease and what seems obvious is facilitated by more than her disposition- her native Spanish skills assist her in assessing where her Spanish-speaking students are at.

Returning to the issue of preference, what are the problems of preference? What should we acknowledge before considering other models? One problem of a preference-based system is that, as noted earlier, teachers’ preferences are not always synonymous with students’ best interest. A surprise finding of this study was that in some cases certain teachers seek out EL placements because EL students are perceived to be “easier to control” with less “management” issues. As administrators in two distinct settings noted, simply relying on teachers’ preferences for EL students may not be sufficient. An additional problem with preferences is this: If teachers with more seniority or influence get their assignments, who gets the “left overs”? Typically newer teachers and those with less influence and often less experience. An additional problem of preference is that teachers tend to prefer to teach courses which they have previously taught before. While years of teaching the same courses adds familiarity with that content area and potentially pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986), as Gutiérrez (1996) noted, if teachers only specialize in the same courses over and over they lack a general understanding of what students need to achieve across the spectrum and how their particular course fits in with other courses at their school.
Can we (or should we) simply eliminate practices that use teacher preference, creating a situation articulated earlier by Mr. Alexander where course assignments are simply “luck of the draw?” No. This would undermine what little sense of control teachers have in a profession which, as Ingersoll (2003) notes, gives teachers little control over their work, yet lots of responsibility over the outcomes. One could argue, as one administrator did, that as long as enough teachers who have different preferences are recruited into the same school site, there is sufficient coverage for classes and teachers are satisfied with their assignments. However, there are problems with sticking to a preference-dominated system, just as sticking to a system that looks closely at credentials but nothing else will not necessarily improve the quality of teaching our students receive. One administrator who attempted to change the seniority system at her school site tried a different approach she called “high and low”—giving teachers the extremes on the schedule, both “advanced” and “basic” courses. Another administrator noted this practice and echoed Gutiérrez’s observation that one of the principal benefits which result is that teachers who teach on both ends of the spectrum have a better sense of what is required to get students from basic to advanced. They have a sense of where “basic” students are at, and understand what is required at the higher levels. However, it is important to note that when administrators do attempt to make single-handed changes to master schedules where there have been particular norms in place, they face resistance. Ideally, the move to make changes from a seniority and/or preference system to one that was more systematically cognizant of students’ needs would be based in departments as well. Gutiérrez’s work (1996) helps us understand more about the dynamics of departments that are in fact organized to promote student achievement.

**Departmental norms of seniority do not have to be norms.**

In an innovative study that investigated the contrasting practices, beliefs, and cultures of eight mathematics departments that were either “Organized for Advancement” (OFA) or not, Gutiérrez documented different departmental cultures and linked these to student achievement.\(^\text{39}\) Importantly, in OFA departments she found a “commitment to a collective enterprise” evident in a rotation of course assignments. Meanwhile, in non-OFA departments course assignments were distributed according to teachers’ preference sheets or seniority, or some combination of both. She notes that in OFA departments:

\(^{39}\) Student achievement included students taking additional mathematics courses—especially those at advanced levels as well as scoring higher on math achievement tests. She found four common components in OFA departments: a rigorous and common curriculum, an active commitment to students, commitment to a collective enterprise, and innovative instructional practices.
Not only were teachers in OFA departments more likely to be teaching a variety of courses, but they also tended to view this practice positively. Over time, the practice of rotating courses also seemed to expose teachers to the entire curriculum and student body. The end result was often a sense of shared responsibility for all students (p. 515).

In contrast, she notes that in non-OFA departments, seniority played an important role, especially when teachers wanted the same courses. A department head in a non-OFA department stated, “seniority does enter in. It has to. There’s not very many rewards in this occupation, or for hanging in there” (p. 515). In seeing the contrast between OFA and non-OFA departments, and the clear link between OFA departments and student achievement, we must think about how to best organize departments and teacher assignments for EL student achievement as well. Rotating courses (as part of a collective departmental endeavor) was only one part of these departments that were “Organized for Advancement”—they also included a common rigorous curriculum, an active commitment to students and innovative instructional practices.

*The Role of Teacher Education*

We must better prepare teachers so they are better prepared to teach (Gándara, Maxwell-Jolly & Driscoll, 2005). However, this preparation must go beyond “techniques” to include frank discussions of the types of systems present in schools and the ways in which courses are distributed. Perhaps if we discuss seniority and preference distribution in teacher education programs, there is less of a chance that teachers would buy into such a system. Ideally, we could cultivate a professional sense of obligation similar to the one Mr. Montero held privately of protecting the next generation of teachers once one has advanced in years—as well as thinking about obligations to all students.

The current levels of preparation are inadequate, and furthermore, until all teachers are CLAD-certified, newer teachers will continue to be routed into EL positions. Often when the subject of CLAD-training was raised in interviews, it was seen as insufficient at best. While teacher education is faced with constraints of its own, including limited time, we still have an obligation to do a better job preparing all teachers to teach EL students. Also, as one EL coach noted, student placements are often in mainstream rather than EL classrooms. Perhaps if teacher candidates were placed with skilled master teachers who could provide guidance and mentorship during student teachers’ teaching, this would break down some of the preference barriers and reservations that teachers currently have around teaching EL students. Potentially, if student teachers have quality placements in environments where they receive support, they will develop more competence. Also, in cases where newer teachers are assigned to teach EL courses, forms of
support combined with BTSA (Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Induction Program) may prove helpful, particularly if BTSA coaches are highly skilled and able to support newer teachers with the challenges of EL instruction. Furthermore, as one teacher commented, the opportunity to receive quality coaching that was flexible and centered around planning curriculum and generating materials (rather than pre-programmed) was seen as highly desirable.

The Role of the Administrator and Departments in Moving Away from the Norms of Seniority and Building Teacher Capacity

As Siskin & Little note (1995), well-integrated departments with a shared purpose that is focused on students is not the norm. Norms of seniority are prevalent and widespread. As mentioned previously, changing this type of arrangement does not happen instantaneously and does not happen without resistance. But administrators have important roles to play in staffing decisions and in helping to foster departments with a focus on students’ needs. Clearly the data demonstrate what happens when administrators prioritize EL students’ needs, and what happens when they do not.

Knowing precisely which teachers are best for students requires a commitment to understanding teachers’ practice in classrooms. One administrator in the study (A7, 12/19/08) had clear support from the district to spend time in classrooms in order to observe, coach and evaluate teachers. Support came in the form of additional secretarial staff who could handle clerical matters which then freed up time for more classroom-based observations. (Observations would have to be long enough and often enough that a teacher’s “bad day” wouldn’t constitute grounds for decisions based on a narrow sample.) Even so, ideally the hope would be that coaching would be in order- not simply evaluation. And, administrators’ own notions of what constitutes “good teaching” and for whom- as well as what their own personal priorities would be critical as well. For as long as administrators have priorities that do not match needs of EL students, their judgments could only serve to place skilled teachers with deep content knowledge with students whose parents may have more voice.

While one would hope that all teachers, even those deemed as having “weaker” skills, would have ample opportunities to improve their teaching and receive support, ultimately, teachers with “weaker” skills have to be placed somewhere - a constraint for those who make those decisions. In addition to where to place teachers that are deemed as “weaker,” the larger issue has to do with recruiting teachers with particular investments and dispositions toward EL populations who are also highly knowledgeable about content, pedagogical content knowledge and able to deal with the complexities of language issues, particularly in multilingual settings. As one administrator who was especially
committed to EL students noted, there are particular characteristics that are especially important for all EL teachers, but especially for those who teach academic content:

A: I’m looking for a teacher who believes the students can learn even with the language barriers. I’m looking for a teacher who is willing to sing and dance and hop on two legs in order to deliver a high-level curriculum that is attainable with language issues, that is – I hate to keep saying SDAIE strategies, but that is just you’ve got to try different things…I want a teacher who is cognizant enough to understand there needs to be group discussion and maybe a little noise of a classroom, who’s comfortable with five or six different languages going on in their classroom, who understands when they can talk in their language, and then they need to be speaking in English. I need a teacher who is very flexible, very, very comfortable in their own subject matter, and believes in delivering it at a very high level, even though they can scaffold it.

DBD: How hard is it to find those kinds of teachers that you’re looking for?
A: Let’s say I don’t have them all here. [laughs] (A7, 12/19/08)

As this administrator notes, the nature of what is required for staffing EL classrooms requires teachers with complex combinations of traits—but one of the traits that she emphasizes is the belief that students can learn despite linguistic barriers as well as the ability to deliver high quality curriculum in light of these linguistic issues (and not separated from them). This requires more than moving tiles around a master schedule grid but actively recruiting and hiring teachers who in her words have the unique combination of qualities that help EL students succeed, rather than relying on either teacher preference, credentialing requirements, or seniority.

In discussing teacher assignment, another administrator noted that the issue of master scheduling is intimately linked to teacher recruiting—her staffing choices expand when she actively recruits teachers, particularly early on:

I think if I wait to get a teacher just suddenly landing in my hands, I might continue to wait. And who is not hired at the end of the – or right before the beginning of the school year is somebody that began applying and has not – mostly likely everybody has said, “You’re not good enough,” most likely. I mean it doesn’t apply all of the time. And so a few years ago, I learned that if you make yourself available for recruitment fairs, then you have more choices of who you want to hire” (A1, 6/3/08).
This proactive approach toward recruitment has enabled her to staff more teachers who have the skills and dispositions she is looking for and increase the pool of who is available at her site for teacher assignments.

In addition to recruiting new teachers to her site, she and other administrators discussed “convincing” teachers to take on particular assignments. Rather than dictating teachers’ schedules she recounts a narrative when she asked two particularly “strong” teachers targeted moral questions in the process of “convincing” them:

And so I chose two of the strongest…And I had to speak to them and convince them because they didn’t want that kind of assignment…. I had to say, “Well, if you don’t do it, then who’s going do it? Because you know how hard it is.”… My idea is that I don’t impose, but I send back that question to the teachers (A1, 6/3/08).

This suggests that the role of the administrator is not only to seek additional teachers off-site, but recruit teachers who are already on-site to teach courses that they may not otherwise choose, through measures that may raise their own sense of moral obligation and fairness rather than by fiat. Furthermore, administrators would ideally spend time themselves or obtain resources for coaching so that those deemed as “weaker” could improve their teaching skills.

Structural Incentives

For teachers who already have developed expertise in their content and in teaching it, structural incentives, such as lowering class size for sheltered sections, may provide additional motivation for teachers to want to teach such sections. Additionally, for those teachers who already seek out such assignments who bring wide repertoires such as additional language skills, this may prevent the kind of burn out that can happen when all or most sheltered assignments go to one teacher in a department who becomes seen as a “specialist,” as in the case of Mr. Montero. Considering how long it takes to develop expertise in teaching in general, and teaching English learners in particular, preventing burn out is incredibly important, given the need that exists not simply for credentialed teachers, but for truly “highly qualified” teachers. Such incentives as class size reduction also benefit EL students by allowing teachers to better focus on each student.
Subject Matter Implications

Data suggest subject matter differences in preference may be part of a larger story connected to differential modes of preparing content in different subjects. What does it mean to prepare and adapt materials for sheltered math versus social studies? Additional research is needed to understand how specific subjects form unique contexts (as well as what they share in common). What about particular disciplines makes EL teaching especially challenging? Text-heavy disciplines may prove more troublesome to teachers who are especially reliant on reading materials to teach course concepts as well as those teachers who are especially oriented toward teaching subject matter through textbooks. (While choices of textbooks have become increasingly expanded, with multilingual glossaries and tools such as supplemental reviews, over-reliance on textbooks as a teaching style or philosophy may make EL teaching more difficult, particularly for those teaching students at beginning and early intermediate stages of English.)

Implications: Who Will Teach EL Students?

Findings from this study reveal a pattern whereby less experienced teachers are more likely to get EL assignments, unless other teachers prefer to teach them. Yet newer teachers are less likely to have developed the complex repertoires needed for optimal instruction for EL students. This was especially evident in the case of Mr. Newbury. Mr. Newbury desperately wanted to make a difference with his EL students, yet he did not have the necessary repertoire to do so. This predicament diminished his sense of efficacy; moreover, the situation did not serve his EL students, who were precluded from access to novels because he did not know how to teach them to students who were not fluent readers in English.

While dispositions certainly matter (and can play a role in teachers seeking out additional training), wanting to make a difference is not enough. On the other hand, conceptualizing the issue as purely a problem of “training” where decontextualized skills are seen as a cure-all is also problematic; this is something that Bartolomé (1994) refers to as “the methods fetish.” This is precisely what is so difficult about teacher staffing: the complexity of the task is so great, particularly when teaching in multilingual and cross-cultural settings, and yet, for most, the rewards are so small. Furthermore, this system of rewards is entwined with the very structure of the teaching profession. However, as Noguera (2003) notes, even in dire settings, there is always one successful teacher. What can we do to increase the odds that we have more successful teachers? What can we do to increase the odds that they will reach EL students?
Until greater efforts are made to retain highly skilled teachers with the vast array of complex competencies needed, the cycle of new teachers eventually fading will only continue, with costs measured not only in teacher-retention statistics, but by students’ diminishing learning opportunities, and their diminishing sense of light in a new home.
Chapter 4: Teacher Adaptations in Secondary Social Studies Classrooms

With sheltered courses’ distinct separation from mainstream courses by design, their intent is to allow teachers the space to modify instruction for English learners access’ to academic content and language development. How do secondary academic content teachers adapt to their immigrant-origin EL students within the officially designated spaces of sheltered classrooms? Do they strive to keep things the same? Or do they make adaptations? If they do adapt, how do they do so? What exactly do they change?

This chapter investigates the question of teacher adaptation through an analysis of 10 social studies teachers’ talk and practice. For the purpose of this analysis, “adaptations” are defined as the changes that teachers make between their mainstream and sheltered classes. Looking at the differences between mainstream and sheltered classes provides a point of comparison as well as a point of departure for thinking about how teachers modify and think about these two distinctly labeled courses and the students in each.

Social Studies as a Context for Understanding Adaptation

Social studies in general, and history specifically, present a rich subject matter context for understanding teacher adaptation. Given the results of the last chapter, where social studies teachers displayed the most resistance toward sheltered course assignments, this chapter’s focus on social studies takes place within a traditionally text-heavy subject with high reading demands (Schleppegrell, 2008).

In addition to high textual demands that might push teachers toward modifying their practice with students who are not fluent in English, differences in students’ prior background knowledge about US events as well as different perspectives on those events could potentially make this subject context a place where adaptations would be more visible than in other subjects. Both the discipline of history as a whole as well as the California standards and frameworks place a heavy emphasis on understanding multiple perspectives and primary source documents, something that immigrant students’ world languages and intercultural subjectivities lend themselves to, potentially in “world history” courses. And, given the US’s extended involvements, colonization, wars and treaties with other countries and tribes, immigrant students’ native languages and perspectives could potentially add different understandings of the nature of US history, particularly in the expansionist period after the Monroe Doctrine (1823), whose consequences, some would argue, are directly linked to current US migration patterns and the making of contemporary US society, as places with US
involvement became sending countries (e.g., Mexico, Vietnam, the Philippines, Cuba, Puerto Rico etc., [e.g., Gonzalez & Fernandez, 1979]).

As a subject area that regularly deals with issues of nation formation, world events, and civic issues, social studies has great potential for teachers to draw on immigrant students’ backgrounds (beyond their EL designations) as a source of curricular modifications. For example, when teaching newly arrived immigrant students about the US Civil War, educational scholar Susan Katz (who was a middle school social studies teacher at the time) realized that most of her students came from countries that had recently experienced civil wars—something that US students could not have had experienced domestically. Their understanding of the nature of what a civil war was and its effects were deepened through oral history assignments with family members, designed to capture the underlying conceptual nature of civil wars, as opposed to narrowly focusing on the dates of civil war battles (Weinberg, 1996).

Furthermore, social studies presents fertile ground to examine teachers’ practice with immigrant and immigrant-origin EL youth given the issue of socio-governmental socialization, embodied in US history and US government high school graduation requirements; social studies teachers are entrusted with the task of explaining concepts of citizenship and US national history to a group of students who may at some point be faced with the opportunity to take citizenship tests (or have family members in this situation). Furthermore, there are links between social studies courses and voting behavior: According to Callahan, Mueller and Schiller (2008) immigrant-origin youth “who take more high school social studies coursework have higher levels of reported voter registration and voting” (p. 1). As such, social studies as a domain of knowledge within immigrant secondary education is especially important.

How did teachers navigate the promise of students’ diverse languages and lived experiences, the challenges of students’ English proficiencies, and the consequential content which, in addition to constituting high school graduation and college admissions requirements, form the basis of US civic education at the secondary level?

Chapter Overview

In this chapter I present an analysis of three adaptation-related issues: (a) teachers’ reported differences in preparation between sheltered and mainstream courses, (b) types of teacher adaptations, categorized as omissions, reductions, modifications and additions, and (c) the discontinuities between interview responses and observations. Finally, I conclude with a synthesis of the nature of adaptation drawn from the case of an experienced focal teacher, Mr. Zamora. I posit that adaptations depend upon the quality of incoming information about students, teachers’ sense-making of that information, and finally the repertoires
that teachers have to draw on when making adaptations. This raises questions about the nature of teacher adaptation and how it intersects with teacher quality. First, however, I turn to the issue of whether teachers prepare differently for their sheltered courses as compared to their mainstream courses.

Do Teachers Prepare Differently for Sheltered Courses?

Preparations, or “preps” as commonly referred to by school personnel, refer to distinct courses that typically require different materials, even in the same general subject matter. A teacher who teaches three US history courses and two world history courses would have a course load of five classes but two distinct preps. Even if the number of classes remains constant, increases in preps result in additional responsibilities for developing materials and planning lessons. Because of the direct connection between preps and teacher workload, union contracts tend to stipulate a prep limit. In fact, during interviews both administrators and teachers referenced contractual limits on how many preps a teacher could be assigned. (What was more ambiguous in interviews was whether sheltered courses were contractually distinct courses from their non-sheltered counterparts.)

What is even more central to this current analysis is whether teachers themselves considered sheltered courses as a distinct prep from their general education courses when they taught the same subject (i.e., sheltered US history and mainstream US history). This is important because understanding teachers’ perceptions of sheltered preps provides one way of gauging the extent to which teachers modified instruction between sheltered and mainstream courses. Essentially, analyzing the question of preps opens a window into teachers’ thinking about modifying content in relation to the mainstream and sheltered classes they teach.

The ways in which teachers prepare distinctly for each course constitutes a form of adaptation. Clearly teachers make other types of adaptations during instruction that are unplanned (Baquedano-López, et al., 2005; Gutiérrez, et al., 1999); however, focusing on how similarly or distinctly teachers prepare for each course reveals information about important dimensions of teachers’ practice that are consequential for students’ access to quality curriculum, such as the selection of reading materials—something that typically happens ahead of time when teachers plan their classes.

Given that all teachers in the sample were assigned the exact same course with the exception of the sheltered/mainstream designations, comparing their responses is especially generative because it roots the analysis in their actual

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40 A “prep” can also refer to a teachers’ preparation (or conference) period—one class period during the school day which teachers have available in order to prepare materials or meet with others. This meaning of “prep” is distinct from the meaning I am discussing in this section.
courses as opposed to generalities about “how to teach English language learners.” Thus when teachers made decisions about how to prepare for their sheltered or mainstream US history class, the subject content was held constant. Because teachers were teaching the same content courses, one would imagine that a teacher would have to have some rationale for investing the additional energy required to change preparations for a sheltered class when classes are supposed to be covering the same subject matter. To the extent that workload issues concern teachers, it would seem that using the same materials in both classes would save teachers work. The more teachers specialized and made distinct preparations, the more time and energy they would have to exert. In order to invest their time in developing or selecting distinct materials, teachers would have to have some type of rationale that justifies this additional expenditure. For example, a teacher would have to believe that distinct materials were necessary or preferable according to some logic (i.e., “these students can’t read the standard materials,” “this activity will interest these students more”). Otherwise, why change the materials?

Spectrum of Teachers

Teachers had distinct views and reported a range of practices surrounding the issue of how they prepared for their distinctly-labeled but analogue courses. According to teachers’ descriptions, their preparation fell into a spectrum from preparing very differently for sheltered classes to not making any planned changes (see Table 4.1).

Freedman (1994) observes that in the British context, teachers’ differentiation in planning for different classes is more common than in the US; moreover, it is dynamic, connected to the contingencies of students’ interests. In fact, in some cases teachers would not select novels without student input. These cases are a reminder that there may be many reasons for differential curricular planning other than students’ origin or language status.
Table 4.1: "Is Sheltered a Different Prep for You?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Same Prep</th>
<th>Little Different Prep</th>
<th>Different Prep</th>
<th>Very Different Prep</th>
<th>It Depends (overlapping code)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Thomas (10)</td>
<td>Mr. Clark (3)</td>
<td>Ms. Flores⁴² (2)</td>
<td>Ms. Wosniak (2)</td>
<td>Mr. Newbury (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Linden (5)</td>
<td>Mr. Newbury (2)</td>
<td>Ms. Harrison (23)</td>
<td>Mr. Clark (3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Johnson⁴³ (10)</td>
<td>Ms. Mueller (6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Zamora (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Zamora (14)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Harrison (23)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate teachers’ years of experience.

Table 4.1 presents the spectrum of teachers’ reported preparation using four categories: (a) “same prep,” meaning that that preparation for sheltered and mainstream courses was not different at all, (b) “little different prep,” conveying that there were some changes to preparation, but most of the preparation was the same, (c) “different prep,” where teachers essentially approached the task of preparation for each class as separate and, (d) “very different prep,” where teachers elaborately or emphatically stated sharp distinctions between planning for sheltered versus mainstream courses. (Teachers’ own talk about their preparation formed the basis for category distinctions.) The last column in Table 4.1, “it depends,” was an overlapping code which signified that the nature of teachers’ preparation for sheltered courses was flexible and contingent. In other words, although during the time of the interview teachers’ preparation for their courses might have been have generally fallen into one category, they would shift their preparation depending upon different circumstances (such as students’ language levels or the linguistic demands of the tasks at hand).

⁴² Ms. Flores’ sheltered US history class was a year-long course on a block schedule (the equivalent of two years) and her mainstream US history class was a semester-long course (which was the equivalent of one year). Unlike other teachers, her differentiation was organizationally structured by the fact that she had twice as much time to spend on US history with her sheltered students because of their alternative schedule. However, the following year the site’s administration decided to put sheltered and mainstream courses on the same semester-long schedule to allow EL students to take more courses.

⁴³ Mr. Johnson noted that sheltered classes only required a little bit of different prep now that he was more experienced, but when he first started they required a lot of prep; as he has become more experienced he has been able to use the same textbooks and use strategies to increase students’ comprehension. This marks a shift in his preparation for sheltered classes over time with increasing ease of using the same materials in both classes.
“Very Different Preps” versus “Keeping Things the Same”

The strongest statements of preparation differentiation came from Ms. Wosniak, a new teacher and Ms. Harrison, an experienced ESL veteran. When asked about her preparation for sheltered and mainstream world history, Ms. Wosniak exclaimed that sheltered courses were very distinct: “I just really don’t do anything the same” (3/31/08). Ms. Harrison also spent significant amounts of time developing specialized materials for her sheltered courses with different lesson plans, different textbooks, and different homework assignments, despite the fact that she was teaching on overload (both in terms of numbers of preps and numbers of classes). Working to the point of exhaustion (which later exacerbated serious health problems), she felt a keen sense of obligation to make sure that students had adapted materials. If she did not adapt materials she felt that she would not be doing her job and that students would not have access to the material. (In fact, she would typically use the word “accessible” when she talked about modifications in the same breath). She noted that if she did not have as many preps she would have devoted even more time to differentiating the curriculum between her sheltered and mainstream world history classes. Perhaps her sense of conviction was due in part to her long history as an ESL teacher who formally taught ELD (English Language Development) and helped make decisions as to EL students’ placement levels. For her, students’ language levels were especially salient. She firmly believed that sheltered and mainstream classes should be distinct; however, she also noted overlap: Because the course content was the same, at times the same activities would work for both classes with only minor modifications.

On the other end of the spectrum was Mr. Thomas. Also a world history teacher, he felt strongly that students in both classes should have the exact same content. To modify the content was tantamount to reducing students’ access and sacrificing standards. In fact, he noted adamantly that sheltered classes were designated as college preparatory (P) which he saw as a clear sign that he had to maintain standards, hence keep the materials the same. With an earnest look, raised eyebrows, and tensed shoulders he declared that “college prep” really meant something to him. With his especially strong interest in subject matter (as evident in his doctoral level coursework in history) he felt that it was important for students not only to be exposed to the same content matter but to have the exact same assignments. Mr. Thomas emphasized the connection between keeping things the same and disciplinary rigor:

I give the same assignments to my sheltered kids as I do to my other kids. Even when I’ve got an English language document that’s in archaic English, I don’t translate it into modern English for my regular ed kids or
my sheltered kids because like that’s a no-no from a historical perspective. It’s tampering – you know, it’s like you try to get the most close to the original as you can and to do it any other way insults people’s intelligence. (3/18/08)

However, he noted that he did make some instructional modifications between classes, such as allowing students in sheltered classes more time to turn in assignments. Because students in the sheltered class tended to take longer to complete assignments, he also ended up assigning additional homework as he would try to keep the same pace between the two classes by assigning what students did not complete in class for homework. In Mr. Thomas’ view, modifications between the classes should be minimal—if any. In fact the idea of distinct classes for EL students seemed very problematic to him—something that seemed to unnecessarily segregate and stigmatize students. When submitting his teacher preference sheet he requested sheltered classes because this enabled him to teach a full schedule exclusively of world history—however, he thought separate classes were a terrible idea and were the cause of many problems for EL students. At one point he had even approached the principal asking if disbanding the sheltered courses was possible. In his opinion, the more he could do to keep courses the same, the better off students would be.

**Teachers in the Middle of the Spectrum**

While Ms. Wosniak, Ms. Harrison, and Mr. Thomas represented the extreme ends of the spectrum, 7 of the 10 social studies teachers fell somewhere in the middle, with their preparation being either “a little different” or “different” between the two courses. This suggests that most teachers adapted their preparation, even if a bit; they conceived of either the utility or importance of making planned changes. This is significant as it represents a shift in teachers’ orientation toward adaptation, toward a normative model where teachers felt they should make some type of change. Ms. Mueller noted that sheltered classes were a different prep “because you need different materials.” This was similar to Ms. Flores’ differentiated preparation, where she planned classes using different texts. While her mainstream class preparation generally involved culling texts from many sources, much like a college course reader, Ms. Flores designed her sheltered class around the use of specially designated sheltered textbooks.

For Mr. Johnson the sheltered courses used to involve more differentiated preparation but as he became more experienced, he learned how to use the same texts with different classes. In the case of Mr. Linden, he thought he should differentiate his preparation more, but did not differentiate as much as he thought he should because of time constraints, particularly because so much of his time
was spent preparing for his Advanced Placement course. Even teachers whose preparation was “a little different” rather than “different” still voiced normative orientations toward adapting practices for EL students.

Teachers Who Spoke of Contingencies: “It Depends”

Four teachers out of 10 discussed their planning in terms of contingencies; their language communicated a more nuanced view of planning for EL students, through the use of markers such as “if,” “depends,” and “when.” Mr. Clark, for example, noted the relationship between students’ English proficiency levels and how much additional preparation was required: “When it’s a low sheltered class it’s absolutely a different prep. When it’s—with the higher sheltered students, it’s sort of like a [laughs] half a prep” (3/12/08).

While three of these teachers made explicit references to students’ language levels (and one referenced mainstream students’ variable levels of preparation) as contingent factors, one teacher, Ms. Harrison emphasized linguistic demands embedded in activities she would choose for particular purposes. When asked if sheltered courses were a different prep she elaborated:

Ms. H: Well, I have different lesson plans. I use a different textbook. I give different homework. I give different tests.

DBD: So everything from the assessment, from the testing, to the instruction, everything is different.

Ms. H: Well, it is not 100% different like, you know, I might show a movie. It’s just that I wouldn’t be able to show the same movie. I do some PowerPoint presentations where I can use the same PowerPoint presentations.

DBD: Oh, okay. So you use the same PowerPoint.

Ms. H: Sometimes. It varies. It depends on what I am trying to accomplish and how, how much, how language intensive it is.

DBD: So you have to evaluate the language demands?

Ms. H: Right. (4/5/08, emphasis added)

While Mr. Clark, Mr. Newbury and Mr. Zamora all focused their comments on students’ levels, Ms. Harrison spoke of how her preparation was contingent upon her goals as a teacher as well as her evaluation of how “language intensive” different types of materials were for her students. In both types of cases, teachers’ talk revealed an aspect of their repertoire that could potentially help them meet students’ needs better by developing a more nuanced and contingent (or adaptable) view of their students’ needs and abilities. These teachers communicated an understanding about EL students: English learners vary just as
teachers’ own preparation might—depending on students’ levels or language demands embedded within texts.

Importantly, the four teachers who spoke about contingencies fell equally into two categories:

(a) veteran ESL teachers who had significant experience working in ESL departments (and who had originally taught in ESL departments) whose talk throughout interviews and subsequent site visits reflected an attention to EL students’ language levels.

(b) novice teachers who worked at the same school site (Adams High School) where during the previous year sheltered courses had been divided and organized by language-tested levels, with beginning EL students grouped together in one class and intermediate students in another class.\(^{44}\)

While Mr. Zamora and Ms. Harrison had developed their understanding of EL contingencies over years of experience, Mr. Clark and Mr. Newbury’s recognition of the salience of EL students’ levels as a planning contingency was most likely connected to their school’s policy of organizing EL students into distinctly leveled sheltered classes.

Examining the extent to which teachers reported prepared similarly or differently is one way of assessing the degree of adaptation. One question raised by differential preparation is this: What are teachers doing differently? What exactly are they changing?

**Types of Adaptations: Omissions, Reductions, Modifications and Additions**

Teachers’ talk and practice about their changes between sheltered and mainstream classes fell into four categories: omissions, reductions, modifications and additions. In the process of coding, I used the following definitions (see Table 4.2 below):

\(^{44}\) With the abrupt change of administration the following year, the practice of organizing sheltered courses by language level disappeared and EL students of all levels were mixed together within sheltered classes.
Table 4.2: Definitions of Types of Adaptations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Omission</th>
<th>When teachers <strong>omit</strong> or <strong>eliminate</strong> a type of instructional practice and/or content (i.e., type of text or material, units of study)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduction</td>
<td>When teachers assign <strong>less</strong> content and texts, or reduce assignments, or instructional practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modification</td>
<td>When teachers <strong>modify, substitute or change</strong> texts, instructional practices, content, type of assignment, instructional methods or tools from their mainstream to sheltered courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td>When teachers <strong>increase</strong> or <strong>add</strong> a teaching strategy, practice, content, type of assignment (i.e. project work), instructional methods or tools to their sheltered courses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These categories were distributed fairly evenly across teachers (see Figure 4.1 below), with the exception of omissions, which were distributed across a smaller number of teachers; only two teachers spoke of omissions, while seven reduced their content or instructional practices. Additions and modifications were represented throughout the sample for all 10 teachers.
While omissions were not seen or reported especially often, they were quite consequential when they occurred. For example, Mr. Newbury, a second-year teacher, reported that he did not assign novels in his sheltered class even though he did in his mainstream class. He explained that as a new teacher he had not had much success teaching novels to EL students, so he decided not to try this time, preferring to stick to his visually-rich PowerPoint presentations instead to cover course material in his ninth-grade cultural geography classes. Mr. Newbury felt an especially keen sense of loss, noting that eventually he hoped to be a better teacher for all his students, including his English learners. For Mr. Newbury, his omission was very much connected to his lack of repertoire—he found that he simply did not know how to teach novels to students who were not fluent in English and did not have sufficient supports to overcome this obstacle on his own.

Ms. Mueller, a sixth-year teacher who had little experience working with EL students, omitted homework from her sheltered courses, despite the fact that homework was a key tenet of her teaching philosophy. This was particularly important because for Ms. Mueller, homework typically provided her with a

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45 It is important to note that there were no standard textbooks available for Mr. Newbury’s cultural geography course. The course was initiated at the district level and was more flexible because it was not a requirement at the state level in the same ways that US and world history, government, and economics were. Especially in the absence of mandated textbooks, Mr. Newbury used novels in his mainstream courses to convey themes and issues of different cultural groups and their histories.
means to assess student learning. In the quotation below she describes why homework was the foundation of her teaching philosophy:

You [can] tell by looking at their homework, and I’m also always under the gun, because I’m one of the few teachers who looks at homework because, homework to me is the foundation. And I can see where kids, I can see the learning. I can see the pattern. Right away, where they’ve seen things in an entirely different way. And you have to look at it by homework—yeah, it’s the basic nuts and bolts of things. If you don’t understand the nuts and bolts of a thing, then how are you going to understand some, as we scaffold up, lay the foundation, going up to the next level, how are you going to get that if you missed a big chunk here which I can definitely see from an evaluation of your homework? (3/17/08) (emphasis added)

After emphasizing how fundamental homework was to her teaching approach, a few moments later she stated:

Ms. M: With my sheltered class I’ve never assigned homework...And, um, and I hardly give them tests. I’m not interested in grading them, I would just really like them to learn something, and I’m not quite sure what that is.

DBD: So then, how would you go about assessing them?
Ms. M: I don’t know.
DBD: Especially if homework is such a big part of your philosophy.
Ms. M: I don’t know. You’re right, I think it’s hard for me to assess them. (3/17/08)

The discontinuity between her philosophy of homework and the fact that she had never assigned homework for students enrolled in her sheltered course was difficult for her to explain. She couched her explanation in terms of the difficulty of the work (“it’s hard for me”). While Ms. Mueller’s omission was also connected to the issue of repertoire, it was far more perplexing because of how she had elaborated a great deal on how homework constituted a key part of her approach to teaching—constituting the “foundation” of her practice. When attempting to explain this disconnect, she reiterated the difficulty of the situation and told a narrative from when she, a monolingual white woman, had visited China:

I didn’t assign [homework] because it was just so hard just to teach the class....You know, every other thing is: “Do you understand what I’m
saying?” It’s like, oh, this is unbelievable, because you don’t know—I mean, you know, I was lost in China once, and …. Do you know how difficult it is to talk to somebody when you know no Chinese, and you’re trying to tell them that you’re lost, and that you are looking for, you don’t know the names of the streets and the roads, I mean, you’re an idiot, and they’re trying to help. It’s just like, it’s like, oh my God. It’s horrifying. That’s how you feel sometimes when you’re in this class because, um, you know, it’s new to me. (3/17/08, emphasis added)

In explaining her departure from her standard approach to teaching, she emphasized the newness or novelty associated with being in a foreign destination, with a complete sense of disorientation. Despite the fact that she was certified to teach EL students and had taught a sheltered class once before, the task of teaching a sheltered course (in this case, for predominantly beginning-level EL students) was “unbelievable,” “difficult,” “new,” and “horrifying.” Considering the type of language she used to describe the situation, it is probable that beyond the matter of repertoire, disposition was also an issue (especially given that she had previously articulated that she had no interest in teaching sheltered courses.) Still, teachers’ lack of repertoire was fundamentally a part of the process of omissions.

**Reductions: The Problem of Pacing and Time**

Teachers’ reductions tended to be intertwined with the issue of pacing and time. All but one teacher (Ms. Flores) had students for the same amount of time as their mainstream class, and yet, many found that teaching EL students required more time, which had implications for their pacing. As Ms. Harrison put it:

> I would say for me one of the major differences between what you are doing in a sheltered class and what you are doing in the mainstream class is the kids don’t have the academic language and so you can’t go to the same depth in the same amount of time. So you have to make choices. I can take the students-- if they are like in the intermediate level, like the sheltered world studies-- I can take them quite a ways in terms of getting to maybe roots of a problem or a more sophisticated level but it takes a lot of time to get there. (4/5/08)

She continued:

> You have to do a lot more scaffolding. You have to give a lot more examples, probably more activities to get them to where they are
understanding what you are talking about because just linguistically they
don’t get it when you first say it. (4/5/08)

Likewise, Mr. Johnson noted that because teaching the content took longer in the
sheltered classes, he had to make adjustments by reducing the number of
questions he would ask students: “If we have [in] third and fourth period ten
questions, I might give them three or four, just the important questions that I want
them to know when I assess them for the test.” Mr. Clark also noted: “I give them
a little bit less work sometimes” because maintaining the pace was especially
important to him since students would have to take the STAR tests in April. After
April his pacing and content strategies changed—both by broadening the types of
content (to include writing instruction for example) as well as having more in-
depth student-choice projects. However, Mr. Clark noted that his pacing strategy
was contingent upon the students’ language levels. Last year when he had a class
of beginning level EL students, his pacing tactics changed:

Last year with my lower [beginning level] sheltered class we didn’t get
anywhere near as far. I mean we barely got to World War II. And I just
had to make a decision. I don’t know if my [laughs] I don’t think my
administration really even knew what I was doing in my in that classroom
but, there is no way we were, getting to, [laughs] you know Reagan, or
whatever. There’s just no way. Unless I just talked at them, and…they
wouldn’t have got it, right? (3/5/08)

As Mr. Clark’s case highlights, the issue of reducing content is mediated by
students’ language levels. His case also highlights a tension between coverage and
understanding. Mr. Clark could have made the choice to cover more content with
his beginning EL students, but he felt he could have only accomplished this by
sacrificing students’ understanding of the content.

* Modifications: Key Issues of Pacing and Text

The areas in which teachers tended to cluster within the category of
modifications were in pacing (once again) and text. Similar to what other teachers
had expressed previously, teaching EL students required more time—and yet
nearly all teachers had EL students for the same amount of time as their
mainstream students. Four teachers discussed modifying the pace of sheltered
classes and one teacher, Mr. Thomas, revealed that despite the fact that EL
students took longer to complete assignments, he insisted on modifying deadlines
rather than the work itself:
I might have my regular ed kids do [an essay] in class. It might be due three days from now for my sheltered class…it’s going to take longer if you’re not as good at English and their brains are tired because it’s a different language….And, you know, I’m sorry, if a kid has to do some work on the weekend, it’s not like it’s the end of the freaking world. You know, it’s high school and some kids are going to have to do work over the weekend. (3/18/08)

Rather than reducing workload he stated that he would modify deadlines and add homework so that students in sheltered classes would have more time to complete the same amount of work on their own. While the idea of changing materials for different classes was problematic for him, he understood the difficulties associated with functioning in another language because he had spent a year living in Africa: “I know what it’s like to be going around all day functioning in a language that is not your native language. I understand that you have a headache at this point in the day. I’m aware…. And maybe that’s why I’ll be fluid on deadlines, but it’s like I’m not helping anybody out by not teaching a serious history class.” For Mr. Thomas the boundaries were clear: He could modify deadlines, but not the actual content itself.

Another central issue within the category of modifications was text. Nine out of ten teachers reported text-related modifications (substitutions or changes), including using a different textbook designed for sheltered classrooms (6), the use of guided reading (3), modifying use of a mainstream textbook (2), and/or re-writing materials such as supplemental handouts or PowerPoint presentation slides (2). While Ms. Wosniak rewrote her PowerPoint slides to make it “simpler” and more “digestible” for her EL students, Mr. Newbury showed the same PowerPoint slides to both classes, but modified his instructions in his sheltered class: he expected students to only read and copy down information from the first two bullet points of each slide. Students who progressed faster could read on if they wished, but they were only held accountable for the first two points on the slides. All ten teachers reported or were observed making some type of text-related adaptation (omission, reduction, modification or addition). (The issue of textual adaptations across adaptive categories will be covered in greater depth shortly).

*Additions: Scaffolding and the Intersections of Students’ Resources and Disciplinary Goals*

The things that teachers added to their sheltered courses tended to be scaffolding practices, such as pre-teaching vocabulary needed to understand a unit
or a text, adding more explanations for assignments, the use of visuals and realia, and comprehension checks. Three teachers also added native language materials.

While most teachers’ approaches to teaching sheltered classes were centered on issues of language, Ms. Flores’ approach to teaching sheltered courses also reflected an understanding of students’ experience that she drew on in an immigration unit she added. In the quotation below she elaborates on how she went about teaching the immigration unit, the nature of the activities students were involved in, and how important it was for the history content to intersect with students’ lives:

I do a big unit on immigration. I have them—we first look at immigrant experiences. We look at push and pull factors, and we learn about how [and] why were they pushed out. Why were they pulled to America? Why did they come to America? Why not China? Why not somewhere else? And we list them and then I have them pair up and interview each other about their immigration experiences. I have them do a presentation on their partner’s immigration experiences. And then we really talk about how much different or the same is it—our experience as immigrants today, then, from back then. And we just really try to analyze, you know, it’s the same system but shaped differently with different players and different people up at the top and bottom. And that’s really my goal in the immigration unit….We spend a lot of time on the expansion, because, again, a lot of my students are Mexican so we talk about the U.S.-Mexico War….I spend a lot of time on imperialism and the U.S. taking over other countries because a lot of my students are here for that very reason, you know, and I try to highlight, or have them see like, “Look, that’s why you’re here still today, because the same thing is still happening. Because think about, you know, 1994 NAFTA was passed, a lot of your parents came over here because I’m sure you lived on a farm, you can no longer sell corn because you can’t compete against the U.S. and now you’re here”…I go into that. And, I think that helps them understand, like, “Oh, this is why I’m here,” or, “that explains”—instead of having them blame themselves or their family for being poor and so and so on and so on. So, things like that. So I try to focus on making sense of who my students are, learning who my students are so that I can help them make sense of their lives in some ways—using, through history. (4/1/08, emphasis added)

In this description of her immigration unit, Ms. Flores dually emphasizes comparative analysis (past and present) and students’ experience. Using students’ experience as a springboard to talk about key disciplinary issues (i.e., connections between the past and the present) as well as issues many immigration scholars
investigate (“push” and “pull” factors), she ultimately approaches the subject matter as a way for students to “make sense of” and “understand” their own experiences. As such, the disciplinary goals intersect with students’ lived experience and knowledge.

While Mr. Zamora did not add additional units of study in the way Ms. Flores did, his approach to using native language materials also represented a case of using students’ knowledge and resources in order to deepen content knowledge. Essentially, he connected students’ native language resources to important disciplinary goals within history. While teaching a sub-unit on imperialism that investigated the Japanese invasion of China (in a predominantly Chinese-speaking class), Mr. Zamora brought sources from China that offered first-person accounts of the Rape of Nanking. In addition to offering his own account of speaking with survivors of the massacre (and presenting photographs of survivors whom he had met in China), he asked students who could read Chinese to translate the texts he had collected himself while on a scholarly tour of China. Central to his approach was the presentation of multiple perspectives, embedded in footage from different documentaries that showed the Japanese version of events in addition to the Chinese and American accounts of what had transpired. Mr. Zamora’s addition of native language materials, combined with an array of visuals, contributed to disciplinary goals of understanding multiple perspectives through reading first-hand accounts that contrasted with secondary source materials in the textbooks. Language was not an obstacle to overcome, but something that contributed to disciplinary knowledge for the class.

The Salience of Text Across Categories

One pattern that emerged was the salience of text across adaptive categories. The ways in which teachers went about this varied, but the highly salient nature of textual adaptations was clear. As seen in Table 4.3, text-related adaptations were especially prevalent in the area of “modifications.” However, across categories teachers grappled with the issue of how to adapt texts within their sheltered classes.
Table 4.3: Omissions, Modifications and Additions of Text-Related Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Yrs</th>
<th>Omit</th>
<th>Reduce</th>
<th>Modify</th>
<th>Add</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Flores</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Omit</td>
<td>reduce multiple sources</td>
<td>sheltered textbook choice of readings for project work</td>
<td>L1 textbook option</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Newbury</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>novels</td>
<td>reduce accountability of content to first two bullet points on PowerPoint slides</td>
<td>instructions on reading PowerPoint slides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Wosniak</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sheltered textbook rewriting PowerPoint slides to simplify text</td>
<td>L1 textbook summary option</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Clark</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>mod. use of mainstream textbook</td>
<td>political cartoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Johnson</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sheltered textbook mod. use of mainstream textbook guided reading</td>
<td>dictionaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Thomas</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>guided reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Zamora</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sheltered textbook guided reading</td>
<td>L1 sources for translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Harrison</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sheltered textbook mod. handouts (supplemental material)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While teachers may have grappled with text-related issues in their mainstream classes, the table accounts for text-related items that were adapted or changed between sheltered and mainstream classes. Whether teachers eliminated novels, like Mr. Newbury, substituted mainstream texts with “sheltered” textbooks, or added primary language materials, teachers made changes to their practice that involved either omitting, reducing, modifying or adding texts.

Textual orientations and repertoire: Departmental colleagues approaching text differently.

Given the importance of text, one question that emerges is: To what extent do teachers’ repertoires mediate their use of text? The cases of three departmental colleagues at Garfield High School, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Mueller, and Mr. Zamora, illustrate how teachers within the same department approached texts, particularly textbooks, very differently. Mr. Zamora taught World and US history while Mr. Johnson and Ms. Mueller taught US government in the Fall of 2007 and economics in the spring 2008. Even though the district provided sheltered textbooks for economics, there were no sheltered textbooks available for US
government. For Mr. Johnson, the lack of a specially designed textbook for use in his sheltered classes was not a problem. As he became more experienced, he learned how to use the same texts with different classes: “I guess as I got more experienced with teaching and how to modify and comprehend different textbooks.” He elaborated on what he did to make mainstream textbooks more comprehensible for his EL students:

Now, since I’ve been teaching for a while, I think I’m pretty good at-. Even if I had to use this [mainstream] book for first semester [US government], I think I could do it. Um, you know, just ways of going about doing it, just cutting certain things out, reading aloud in class. In the class, instead of having sometimes, the words, they [students] get intimidated by some of the words or the text in there, so we’ll read that aloud. Most of the time, I will read that aloud, and, stop them and have students, call on students: “What [did] we just read?” I’ll put the topics around the room, and we’ll have to go around and write down what we see, the topics, various questions up on the board, write them down-- post them all around, around the room, yeah (4/2/08).

Meanwhile, Mr. Johnson’s departmental colleague Ms. Mueller noted that she was unable to use the same texts with both sets of students and was upset when the district did not provide alternative textbooks for sheltered US government:

And you can put this down: There is no government sheltered textbook! I don’t know how Mr. Johnson has taught-- have you talked to him yet?....They have an econ sheltered textbook. government-- they didn’t have it. Let me just tell you!...One, I can’t believe, I will say, this I’ll throw back to the district, I’m not blaming the school, I’ll blame the district. I don’t know, I don’t know why don’t we have a government sheltered text? I don’t understand it. And horrible as it is in econ, sheltered text is better than nothing (3/17/08).

Angered by the situation and perplexed by how her colleague could manage without the sheltered textbook, she felt that despite the poor quality of the sheltered textbook, it was “better than nothing.” While her difficulties in teaching sheltered courses were exacerbated by the lack of institutional resources which provided sheltered textbooks for one class and not for the other, the enormity of the problem stemmed from the fact that textbooks played a big role in her teaching. For Ms. Mueller, textbooks were central to teaching and contained facts that were beyond argument:
I use the textbook-- I’m a big believer in textbooks. I mean I don’t care if they’re standardized or not, they give you structure, a framework, they’ve got facts in them. Facts that, you know, I don’t think people would be arguing about (3/17/08).

For Ms. Mueller, the role of textbooks loomed large. Mr. Zamora, who taught sheltered World and US history courses in the same department, observed that social studies teachers often relied on a particular formula for teaching their content that included lecturing, reading and sending students to the textbook to answer questions:

You can go to a lot of history classes I’d say, and then the teacher is saying “Okay, this is the idea,” this is what they are studying, and then they lecture, this or that, “Okay, let’s go to the textbook and answer these questions” (3/14/08).

And yet, as both an experienced ESL and social studies teacher, he observed that EL students needed more than textbooks. Ideally the emphasis would be on the development of concepts:

[For] ESL students and ESL instruction you need to teach the concept as opposed to a word, vocabulary. So in history, we are teaching vocabulary, yes, but that is the byproduct of our instruction. What we are teaching is a concept. And we need to use manipulatives and different activities to make that concept clear. For example, you cannot ask a student to go to a dictionary and find out what imperialism is and expect the student to know how to do the assignments. (3/14/08)

EL students typically presented a challenge to the lecture-textbook formula for history teaching because concepts required more elaboration beyond what textbooks and dictionaries could provide. Mr. Zamora’s focus was decidedly conceptual—linking vocabulary to understanding and deepening students’ understandings—something that required additional examples, activities and conceptual development. But beyond the issue of EL teaching (which he was quite experienced with), Mr. Zamora, as a history teacher, had a fundamentally different relationship with textbooks because of his underlying beliefs about the political nature of texts and the need for multiple texts and narratives to convey many points of view (which, in fact, is of key importance in the discipline as a whole). He clearly articulated what his goals were by carefully planning for all of his students without exclusively relying on textbooks:
My job is not to have them filling blank sheets. To me that is education that bypasses the brain, so, I want them to think. And I, to that end, I plan very carefully what I (do), what I want students to learn. I decide it. Not the textbook. Now, I do follow a textbook. And, I follow the standards, but there is also a lot of room for academic freedom, and by that, I try to present not just the textbooks’ point of view, but the students need to research history from the point of view of the…oppressed. The oppressor’s voice we have in the textbook. But, usually the poor and oppressed, those voices are not represented in the textbooks. So the students need to see that history is about themselves….They need to see that social group and then identify what is stopping them, what they are up against, and then try to analyze it, try to see the importance of what happened in the past and how that is being played out right now. And from there, they can decide what to do. (3/14/08)

Furthermore, as both a politically astute and multilingual person he was keenly aware of the politics of language embedded within textbooks and how this intersected with the issue of perspective:

In the readings, you need to-- I’m sure you realize this, these books have purpose. And, the point of view presented here is very favorable to the United States. In fact, we call “reservation” to this incarceration of Native Americans, where they lost their culture, everything…”Reservation.” It sounds nice. A nice euphemism. (3/14/08)

His orientation toward text as well as his attention to language were very distinct from most of the teachers in the sample and contrasted most sharply with his colleague Ms. Mueller, whose classroom was just a few feet away from his own classroom door. These teachers’ distinct orientations toward texts, “facts,” and language had important implications for their work with EL students.

Observed Areas of Disjuncture

Given teachers’ interview talk, I examined fieldnotes and field logs from visits to teachers during the spring 2008 to search for places of disjuncture: Where were teachers’ practices different from what I would expect to see, given what they had said previously about their preparation and approaches to instruction? I observed 7 out of 10 teachers (based on teacher availability), within four to five weeks of interviews. In the case of 3 teachers (Mr. Clark, Mr. Thomas, and Ms. Harrison), teachers’ practice departed from what I expected based on their interviews.
Although in interviews Mr. Clark acknowledged some differences in preparation (and great differences in preparation for beginning-level EL students), when I observed his mainstream and sheltered US history classes, his instruction was remarkably similar in both classes. Before class he spoke to me about how relieved he was that standardized state testing was over because it freed him up to be more creative with his lesson plans. Rather than focusing on content, he had developed a lesson focused on writing an historical essay. In both classes, however, he used the exact same handouts and language, without modifying instruction like I had anticipated he might. Afterwards when we were talking about his class, “he said ‘I thought about doing different handouts, but I was not sure how I would change it’” (fieldnotes, 5/28/08). In this case there was a non-adaptation based on his lack of repertoire rather than an ideological stance against changing materials.

Visiting Mr. Thomas’ class also produced a disjuncture. Mr. Thomas had taken a strong stance that materials and instruction should be the same in both classes in order to maintain high standards; the only changes he articulated as appropriate were adding additional homework, reading text out loud at times, and modifying deadlines to allow EL students more time in completing assignments because of cognitive-linguistic overload. His talk also conveyed a belief that many of his students were exceptionally bright and capable of high caliber academic work. At the same time his talk also revealed an understanding of the complex social and institutional issues immigrant and EL students faced in terms of discrimination and misclassification.

Entering his classroom with the imaginative lesson he had emailed me ahead of time for his world history classes, I found that I had developed high expectations for what I would see. Writing about the visit in my fieldnotes I reflected on how the ethos of the sheltered classroom was so distinct from the mainstream classroom:

While the assignment (and warm-ups) were the same, the sheltered class seemed to be behind by one class period. Perhaps this accounts for some differences, but the tenor in each class was very distinct. In sheltered, students were supposed to be working (and some students were) but with interruptions and pranks (like the periodic sounding of a hidden squeaky toy by a bunch of male students). Mr. T was visibly frustrated-stating more than once that he was losing his temper with the class: “I’m gonna blow a gasket!” he’d repeat when the noise of the squeaky toy continued. I also noticed that he kept extending the amount of time for students to turn in their work. Example: “You have 30 minutes to finish this”—30 minutes go by and… “Okay I’ll give you more time.” Afterwards he explained that he doesn’t just want to fail students [so he keeps extending deadlines even
though students are not on-task]. He is trying to give them another chance…. He didn’t want to fail students or just give them ½ credit, so they used the class period to do the work that they were supposed to have done at home. In an off-handed comment to me he said that teachers don’t assign much homework because students don’t do it. (4/22/08)

Mr. Thomas’ interview suggested a level of rigor that was not present when I visited. In subsequent email communications it appeared that disciplinary problems were only worsening, affecting his sense of engagement with teaching. While he largely attributed the behavioral problems to the students’ separation into sheltered courses that “insult[ed] their intelligence,” creating a self-fulfilling prophecy he felt he had to fight against, he did not appear to have developed the repertoire to effectively work with students who were testing his limits. Unfortunately, the deep content knowledge, creativity, and meaty academic goals embedded within his plans did not manifest themselves in the classroom. Ms. Harrison’s position about modifying materials and instruction had been quite distinct from Mr. Thomas’. Listening to the rising volume of her voice as she spoke of her strong convictions of making content accessible by having very distinct plans, I was surprised to discover how similar her mainstream and sheltered world history classes were when I observed her classroom. Shortly after our interview she invited me to her classroom to observe the same lesson that she had “re-written” to make more accessible for her EL students. The activity, which was within a curricular unit on the Holocaust, came from a source book from the organization Facing History and Ourselves. Students were asked to read the profiles of various German individuals during the Weimar period preceding Hitler’s rise to power, and, based on the textual profile, ascertain which political parties they would likely vote for, and present their conclusions to the class. Essentially each group was being asked to step into the minds of German people who lived under Weimar Germany in order to understand more about the choices and conditions at the time. When analyzing the differences between the sheltered and mainstream classes, the only substantive difference was that her handout had been modified so that rather than giving students a full sheet of dense text she summarized the main points in a paragraph and then broke down additional information with headings (i.e. “Who,” “What,” etc.) and added spaces so that the layout was easier to read. Students in both classes still worked in small groups to discuss the issues at hand and subsequently delivered presentations to the class, using information available from their materials. The modification of the handout seemed minor compared to the similarities in the nature of the activity and ethos of the classes. When I mentioned to Ms. Harrison that I had been surprised by how similar the two classes were given our previous conversations, she remarked that
because students were studying in the same content area (world history) there would be overlap at times. In fact, she had given the mainstream class the modified sheltered handout the night before for homework: “I had given them actually the sheltered version of it because it’s clearer. I went back and I looked at the mainstream version and I liked my version better [laughs] —so I gave it to my mainstream as well…—it was so direct and straight-forward” (4/11/08).

Modifying the handout, which resulted in a clearer text for the mainstream class, constituted a time investment for Ms. Harrison; and yet this was an investment she was willing to make because of her strong convictions that EL students needed this modification and would not have access to the activity otherwise. Toward the end of our time together she reiterated:

You saw that their ability to read is really different from my mainstream class. So you need adapted materials so that they can—because I believe firmly that just because they are ELD doesn’t mean we don’t want them reading and writing —we want them doing all of that stuff. So that means you have to have materials that are accessible to them or they can’t do it— you’re asking them to do something they are not ready to do. So I believe adapted materials are really important (4/11/08, emphasis added).

Ultimately Ms. Harrison planned carefully and would think about the embedded language demands within the activities in order to anticipate potentially troublesome areas for EL students. For Ms. Harrison this issue was very much intertwined with the issue of access.

Discontinuities and teacher repertoire.

On one level, one might conclude that Mr. Clark’s and Ms. Harrison’s courses were more similar than suggested by their interviews. However, observations only captured one set of teacher responses to two sets of students whereas in interviews some teachers (including Mr. Clark and Ms. Harrison) were able to articulate differentiated responses—more than what would have been visible at one point in time. (In fact, both Ms. Harrison and Mr. Clark spoke of contingences in their planning; thus, it is not as surprising that these teachers who spoke of contingencies had divergent practices.) However, there are still important distinctions between the two cases, distinctions tied to teachers’ repertoires. While Mr. Clark spoke of how he was unaware of how to modify the same handout for his two different classes, Ms. Harrison invited me to her class precisely to show me how she would use the same activity in the two classes, by making some modifications to make the activity accessible for her EL students.
However, this was an occasional practice in her classroom, as most of the time she assigned different texts, activities, and assessments.

In the case of Mr. Thomas, the discontinuities between his talk and practice suggested that his stance of “keeping things the same” was thwarted by gaps in his ability to manage the classroom. Issues with classroom management were apparent not only on the day of the visit, but in on-going communication afterward.

Essentially, the discontinuities between these teachers’ talk and practice stemmed from distinct sources. While Mr. Clark and Mr. Thomas’ discontinuities revealed gaps in their repertoires, the discontinuity in Ms. Harrison’s case was by design and was informed by her range of repertoire. She could make the courses more similar or differentiate depending on different goals for instruction and ultimately she made those decisions based on her notions of accessibility. Sometimes, some activities would be more accessible than others. Other times she would invest time and energy to make them more accessible. Importantly, Mr. Thomas’ stance of “keeping things the same” was also informed by his notions of accessibility—access to the exact same curriculum and exact same activities. However, gaps in his repertoire prevented his vision of “accessibility through sameness” from becoming a reality.

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In the process of observing teachers, an additional issue emerged in Ms. Mueller’s classroom that went beyond issues of linguistic and text-based adaptations, pacing, or classroom management. While Ms. Mueller’s classes followed the trajectories she had spoken of in interviews, such as using comprehension checks, paraphrasing techniques, and alternative textbooks, an unanticipated issue emerged precisely during the 2008 presidential election season: the issue of voting rights. The emergence of this issue signals that more than text-based adaptations are at stake, particularly in the context of social studies classrooms where issues of citizenship, voting, and documentation status are most likely to emerge.

The day that I visited Ms. Mueller’s government and economics classes was precisely the day after then presidential candidate Barack Obama had won decisive victories in the Montana and South Dakota primaries (6/3/08), securing enough delegates to win the nomination for the Democratic party in an historic election season. Ms. Mueller, a Democrat, was quite excited about the upcoming November general election. A self-described “political person” she was generally enthusiastic about communicating about the elections within the context of her government classes—a subject she enjoyed teaching very much because of her interest in politics. (Typically high school seniors take one semester of
government and one semester of economics, often taught by the same instructor). Although her twelfth-grade students were already in the economics portion of the series, both Ms. Mueller and her students were quite interested in talking about these matters, with students’ interest taking shape in the form of questions about who had won and what would transpire.

Before Ms. Mueller’s morning mainstream class began, she excitedly showed me voter registration forms she had picked up and had planned on distributing to her mainstream class. She had realized that some of her students might be eligible to vote because as high school seniors some of her students either were 18 years old or would be by the time of the November elections. With seriousness and anticipation, she stated that registering students to vote would probably be the single most important thing she could do in her classes. While most of the mainstream class period was dedicated to covering the subjects on the economics agenda (supply and demand), she had used the beginning portion of class to find out which students were already registered to vote and which students would be 18 years of age by election, distributing forms to those who were eligible and had not registered.

When the class was over, I asked if she had planned on distributing the voter registration forms in her afternoon sheltered class. She had not planned on it and did not bring enough forms. However, the topic still emerged in her sheltered class, as she communicated about the prior night’s election events and some students wanted to know more information. This appeared to be tricky terrain, as she was uncertain as to what to express to students whom she assumed would not be eligible to vote. While she answered a student’s questions using linguistic modifications (i.e., paraphrasing the meaning of the word “conceded”), her chuckle following her question to students (“You [all] can’t vote though, right?”) revealed a sense of discomfort with how to approach voting rights with students who might not have had access to the same rights and privileges she enjoyed and assumed others in her mainstream class enjoyed as well. Although Ms. Mueller was enthusiastic about discussing the possibilities of voting in her mainstream class, in her sheltered class, she appeared to be uncomfortable with the topic.

This episode highlights the complex nature of teaching immigrant youth, where matters of voting rights may emerge, especially in social studies classrooms. This issue goes beyond the traditional ways immigrant students are framed as “English learners”—which principally define students in terms of their language status, yet, as this episode in Ms. Mueller’s classroom demonstrates, teachers must navigate issues that transcend language alone. Moreover, one also

\[46\] Although some students in sheltered classes may be US-born and thus have voting rights, this class was composed of predominantly beginning level students who had recently migrated and may not have had the opportunity to naturalize.
might wonder how immigrant students with varying levels of documentation status experience teachers’ talk about elections and voting rights within social studies classrooms. Taken together, this suggests that the ability to effectively adapt to immigrant EL students requires a wide-ranging set of abilities, beyond linguistic modifications.

The Ability to Adapt

The nature of teachers’ adaptations and their ability to adapt fundamentally rests on teachers’ incorporation of complex information and situations. Based on a synthesis of an experienced focal teacher, Mr. Zamora, who was able to integrate students’ linguistic resources with important disciplinary aims, I illustrate how adaptation is bound up with a process that involves:

(a) the quality of incoming information available about students
(b) teachers’ sense-making of that information
(c) the repertoires that teachers have to draw on when making adaptations.

Information about students (as well as the nature of teachers’ interpretation of that information) are part of the “weak links” within this system. However a fundamental part of this process is inextricably bound with the quality (breadth and depth) of teachers’ repertoires and their ability to draw on students’ resources for learning. I define repertoire as teachers’ collected range of knowledge and experience from a variety of sources (teacher education, work experience, life experience, as well as access to distinct funds of knowledge for teaching) that teachers draw upon to plan and enact their teaching practice and potentially create opportunities to learn. Mr. Zamora’s case presents a window into a teacher’s work who possessed a repertoire of unusual depth and breadth (as well as extraordinary interest and commitment). By examining his case and spending time in his classroom I came to see how he drew on his repertoire in his practice under different circumstances with heterogeneous groups of students who differed with respect to their countries of origin, length of residence, native languages, L2 proficiency, prior schooling opportunities, and levels of academic engagement.

As an experienced teacher who began his career in a community college ESL department, Mr. Zamora came to high school teaching with a depth of knowledge about second language development (which was also aided by his Masters’ degree in Teaching English as a Second Language). As an adolescent immigrant from El Salvador, he had also experienced the process of second language development himself. Additionally, with his double-major in English and History, he was especially attuned to issues that crossed disciplines, such as how language plays a role in historical interpretation (especially in the construction of point of view in historical narratives). His profound interest in
both historical problems and the teaching of history lead him to take a study tour of China (where he gathered source materials), take up the study of Japanese (to better understand the Japanese occupation of China), and participate in a university-based two-year professional development program that assisted teachers in using primary source documents in secondary classrooms.

Furthermore, living within a racialized society Mr. Zamora was also acutely aware of how the categorization of people of color could have damaging effects, particularly in the context of schooling. When speaking about the pernicious effects of institutionalized racism, he shared a narrative of how his son had been miscategorized and placed in Spanish bilingual classes even though his son spoke no Spanish and was fluent in English upon entering the school system, simply because of his Spanish surname.

Mr. Zamora spent a great deal of time gathering in-depth information about each of his students. While he examined CELDT (California English Language Development Test) scores as an initial indicator of proficiency for EL students, he also conducted his own initial reading and writing assessments to obtain a fuller picture for all of his students, EL and non-EL. He carefully observed his students’ interactions. He felt that it was critical to understand more about students’ actual reading levels before assigning textbooks. Equating teaching with cooking, he remarked that before cooking a fine meal you have to know who is coming to dinner (fieldnotes, 11/13/08). He frequently spoke with colleagues in the ESL department of the high school to understand what exactly students were covering in their ESL classes. He also collaborated with the head of the ESL department in developing writing instruction materials.

When students did not perform to his expectations and disengaged, he sought out additional information to get a fuller picture of what might be going on. First he consulted attendance records to understand if students’ disengagement was limited to his class or was also occurring outside of his classroom. Next he approached students personally and spoke with them one-on-one to discuss what was happening. Because he did not speak the native languages of all of his students fluently, he also sought out help from parent and community liaisons. He managed discipline in ways that were so effective that sometimes the administration would assign a larger share of the most troubled students to his classes.

Given his repertoire of considerable breadth and depth, he had much to draw on when adapting instruction. He was able to differentiate not only between classes, but also within classes, creating small groups with differentiated assignments at times, and working on-on-one with students other times. In other words, he had resources with which to understand and enact instruction for heterogeneous classrooms that were highly diverse in terms of EL levels, L1 reading development, length of residence and academic preparation and
achievement. The ways in which he was able to combine disciplinary aims with
drawing on students’ resources, particularly during the unit on imperialism, was a
testament to the ways in which different parts of his repertoire combined within
his practice. Before planning, however, a critical part of Mr. Zamora’s process
entailed gathering in-depth information about students’ language proficiency and
reading levels (and knowing how to interpret and what to do with this
information). His information-gathering actions created the conditions for him to
more accurately adapt, not only to students’ needs but also to their strengths. In
this way he was able to bypass the “weak links” within the system of adaptation
(lack of accurate information or problematic interpretations of information about
students). Once he bypassed these weak links, he could tap into his repertoire to
combine language and content goals.

Discussion

Summary of Findings

The principal findings of this chapter are:

Teachers in this sample are adapting: A majority of teachers in this
sample reported altering their preparation for sheltered courses; for 7 out of 10
teachers in this sample, preparation was either “different” or “a little different”
from their mainstream courses in the exact same subject matter. All 10 teachers
reported some type of instructional adaptation between their sheltered and
mainstream courses.

Adaptations and repertoire are interconnected: The adaptations that were
most problematic (omitting novels and homework) were connected to teachers’
lack of repertoire. On the other hand, an adaptation that most closely bridged
disciplinary aims with students’ linguistic resources came from a teacher with a
repertoire of great depth and breadth (in terms of disciplinary training both in
History and TESL, years of teaching experience, languages spoken, and migration
experience.) This teacher created opportunities for students to use their native
language as a disciplinary resource to translate sources. This contrasted greatly
with adaptations from teachers with less robust repertoires.

Some teachers’ talk conveyed more contingency and complexity than other
teachers’ talk: Four out of 10 teachers’ talk revealed planning contingencies,
meaning that their preparation for sheltered courses depended either on students’
language levels or the language demands embedded within activities. This
“contingency talk” represents more complex conceptions of teaching ELs and
indexes the significant variation within EL-designated populations. Importantly, this talk only emerged from two sets of teachers: very experienced teachers (14-23 years) with significant ESL training and novice teachers (2-3 years) who worked at a school site that separated EL students into distinct sheltered courses by language levels.

Key issues in adapting in sheltered classes were text and pacing: Adaptations fell into four categories: omissions, reductions, modifications and additions. The salience of text-related adaptations emerged across categories, most heavily represented in teachers’ modifications (or substitutions), using alternative texts in their sheltered classes. Another key issue that emerged in adaptations were teachers’ struggles with pacing.

Institutional and Contextual Issues in Interpreting Findings

In examining these findings, it is important to recognize key institutional and contextual issues that are important in interpreting these results; institutional and contextual issues have a bearing on the composition of both mainstream and sheltered classes, which in turn may mediate the extent and nature of teachers’ adaptations. As noted in the methods chapter, the composition of teachers’ schools varied, although all had EL populations between approximately 12-30%. Given that the method of operationalizing adaptations was to compare teachers’ mainstream and sheltered classes, it is likely that in contexts where mainstream and EL populations are more similar (and in schools where ELs represent a larger portion of the student body), teachers may perceive less of a need for differentiation between classes. Also important to note is the variation that exists within courses described as “mainstream.” Because different schools structure different opportunities for students (Oakes, 1985; Conchas, 2001), the existence of different tracks will also mediate the composition of “mainstream” classes as well, with some mainstream classes being more inclusive than others.

An additional institutional issue that may mediate teachers’ adaptive responses is workload, as determined by teachers’ number of courses they have to prepare for (preps). The more distinct preps teachers are assigned, the less time they have to dedicate to differentiating classes with similar content. At the same time, teachers’ dispositions may mediate how they distribute their time and commitments across courses. Ms. Harrison faced an especially challenging situation. Her workload of four assigned preps (which surpassed contractual limits) combined with her view that adapting and differentiating instruction was a moral and professional imperative and created a situation where she invested time to differentiate instruction at great personal cost, sacrificing her health. During the interview she emphasized how untenable the number of preps was and how
acutely she felt the need to differentiate, yet she felt that the situation compromised her ability to develop as many quality adaptations as she could under other circumstances. Ms. Mueller also articulated that the number of preps impacted her ability to differentiate in ways that adversely impacted the quality of instruction her EL students:

In the regular subject matter I don’t have a problem. But I think to have more than two preps is-- forget it. I can’t do it….And if you’re teaching a world history and a government/econ, and then they throw in a sheltered, that’s three preps to me, it’s not two. I can’t modify enough to make that. I have to have a totally different lesson plan, and what happened was those kids always got screwed. I had the first four classes covered, by the time I got to the sheltered, I just didn’t have enough time to put out something special for them, so it was always half-assed. You know? And they are the class that got short-changed. Now, whether they care that they got short changed, looking at the class, sometimes I don’t know. But nonetheless, I would have liked to have done a better job as a teacher. (3/17/08)

Ms. Mueller stated that with the number of preps she was given, it was beyond her capacity to consistently “put out something special;” this situation resulted in planning that was “half-assed” which ultimately “short-changed” students. While Ms. Mueller’s time was structured in particular ways because of the number of preps, she also made choices about how to invest her time. Her comments raise issues not only about the relationship between teachers’ workload and the quality of instruction, but also the choices that teachers make within these institutional constraints.

Trend toward Adapting within the Context of Social Studies

All teachers in the social studies sample maintained that some form of adapting was appropriate and necessary (whether it be a modification of deadlines or a complete re-thinking of lesson plans, texts, and assessments). Even the staunchest advocate of “keeping things the same” (Mr. Thomas) acknowledged that EL students needed some accommodation because the same work would take them more time, given the cognitive demands of operating in another language. However, rather than change the nature of the tasks, he felt strongly that students should do the exact same work, while most teachers envisioned and enacted more changes between sheltered and mainstream classes.

This trend toward adapting is significant; it suggests that teachers are making modifications—the question then shifts to the nature, quality and
consequences of the adaptations. While these findings are from a sample of teachers who taught social studies (a subject context that may push for adaptations more than other subjects), with increasing numbers of new teachers being socialized into “adapting to students’ needs” (i.e., Bransford et al., 2005) it is likely that more teachers will think that making modifications would be a good thing. The issue, however, is that teachers may or may not possess sufficient knowledge or skills (repertoire) in order to make adaptations that are actually beneficial for students.

Adapting text: Simplified texts, L1 texts and hybrid visual texts.

The fact that textual adaptations between classes were so common raises important issues about the nature and quality of adapted texts. The most common form of textual adaptation was the use of sheltered textbooks. However, as Ms. Wosniak and Mr. Johnson noted, these texts tended to lack depth and were very repetitive. Ms. Mueller described the sheltered textbook as “horrible,” but “better than nothing.” Embedded in teachers’ description of these texts was a sense that they were over-simplified and lacked intellectual and conceptual complexity—something Wong-Fillmore & Snow (2000) and Gebhard (2000) have also noted as problematic in texts intended for EL students. However, using more complex texts posed its own set of problems for teachers, whether in the form of novels or standard textbooks. As Mr. Clark pointed out, the standard textbook was full of “land mines” for all of his students, and even more so for his EL students. Even though he used the standard textbook in his sheltered class he said it was “barely usable” for its text; when he used the standard textbook he relied instead on maps and pictures in the book. Attempting to work in the genre of novels rather than textbooks, Mr. Newbury noted that when he initially tried to teach novels in the prior year he noticed that students simply did not understand what they were reading. At the same time, Mr. Newbury did not have the repertoire to aid students’ comprehension skills.

As Schleppegrell et al. (2008) note, history teachers often face challenges when using history textbooks that contain dense academic language, and these challenges are especially magnified for students who struggle with academic English. Schleppegrell and colleagues present evidence that effective professional development that focuses on how meaning is constructed within history textbooks (using a functional metalanguage approach) can improve teachers’ abilities to use more complex texts successfully. Similarly Wong-Fillmore (2009) discusses how teachers engaging students in discussion on the sources of meaning within specific places in academic texts can advance students’ comprehension of academic language. This research points toward how to increase teachers’ capacity to use complex academic texts with both EL and non-EL designated
students who struggle with acquiring academic English. This is especially important within the discipline of social studies, where Paxton notes (1999) that the “anonymous, authoritative style of writing” in the discourse of history textbooks can lead to impoverished notions of agency and conceptual development in K-12 students’ understanding of historical events. In essence, the genre of history textbooks typically present conceptual difficulties in understanding causality and agency even for students who are able to decode and read English fluently.

Moving beyond texts in English, three teachers used native language (L1) materials in addition to English texts. These three teachers drew on different types of L1 texts for different purposes. While Ms. Wosniak was able to locate Spanish-language textbook lesson summaries (generally of a couple pages in length), Ms. Flores had access to an entire set of Spanish-language textbooks that were translations of the sheltered textbook she used in class (published by the same company that produced the sheltered textbooks). Her students were required to check out an English version of the text and had the option of checking out an additional Spanish set.

Mr. Zamora’s use of L1 texts was distinct from these two teachers in that his L1 use furthered disciplinary aims of working with documents from China to gain a better understanding of the event his students were studying. While not all students’ L1 skills were relevant in this particular unit, the fact that his predominantly Chinese-speaking class could participate in an activity to advance the whole class’ understanding about the Japanese invasion of China was significant. The purpose of using L1 text was not merely to read translated sheltered texts, but to gain insight into the nature of events from first-hand participants—a key disciplinary aim. In this sense, his textual approach used “language as a resource” (Ruiz, 1984) in ways that had a disciplinary pay-off.

Hybrid forms of text that combined visuals and text also represented an area of adaptations. While many teachers used Microsoft PowerPoint slides in both mainstream and sheltered classes to varying degrees, two teachers modified their use of PowerPoint between classes. While Ms. Wosniak actually rewrote the text of her slides to “simplify” the language, Mr. Newbury kept slides intact and instead instructed EL students to only read the first two bullet points. He also expressed that they would only be accountable for information in the first two bullet points. This allowed some students to focus on the top portion of the slides, and others who were more advanced to read on if they wished. The use of computer software programs like PowerPoint point towards teachers’ authoring their own texts, potentially combining them with visuals that in some cases could aid comprehension and provide contextualization.

The increasing digitalization of primary documents (including primary source images) provides an area for growth for social studies teachers to draw on
students’ visual resources. One teacher, Ms. Flores, actually used primary source images in PowerPoint slides for both mainstream and sheltered courses. While images from distinct historical eras and regions are not self-explanatory, Ms. Flores’ use of a visual question protocol allowed her to engage students in discussions in resourceful ways with a common visual referent (in this case, a political cartoon from the age of imperialism that depicted England as an octopus with tentacles stretching out to different countries and continents.) Though a new teacher, she had developed her ability to use the visual observation protocol (which featured a set of increasingly complex questions) both in her teacher education program as well as through district professional development.

The various approaches to text within the discipline of social studies suggest the importance of developing teachers’ repertoires as well as increasing the sources of materials available to teachers. As one EL coach noted, one of the primary ways in which she helped teachers improve their sheltered instruction was by providing appropriate materials for use. This speaks not only to teachers’ repertoire, but institutional supports that can facilitate the process of engaging students with quality texts.

**Implications**

*Teacher Variation Beyond Indicators of Credentialing*

As pointed out in the introductory chapter, much Immigration Studies literature tends to focus on immigrants and their characteristics as well as broadly defined “contexts of reception” that include, for example, labor markets and ethnic enclaves (i.e., Reitz, 2002; Zhou, 1992). On those occasions when scholars do mention teachers in their examinations of the schools immigrant youth attend, there is a tendency to use rates of teacher credentialing as an indicator of school quality and immigrant students’ opportunities within distinct contexts of reception (i.e., Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, 2001). While these indicators are certainly important, they do not capture the complexity of teachers’ adaptations to immigrant-origin youth who are in the process of learning English, nor do these indicators capture the wide range of differences between teachers who are all credentialed.

Beyond holding basic credentials, all teachers in this sample were “highly qualified” to teach English learners, according to state and national standards. And yet the variability in teachers’ responses suggests that current definitions of teacher quality may be insufficient, especially given the complex teaching demands and heterogeneity within immigrant-origin EL populations, including differences in national origins, languages, native language literacy and prior schooling, generational status and length of residence (Olsen and Jaramillo, 1999; Walqui & van Lier, in press). This heterogeneity presents a dizzying array of
complexities, especially when combined with the demands of teaching academic content. The repertoires of practice teachers need to develop in order to simultaneously address student heterogeneity and academic content are significant and exceed current legislative definitions of teacher quality (Walqui, 2009). As Guillen (2009) has asked: How might legislative definitions of quality (as well as their implementation) change to reflect the complex competencies needed for instructing immigrant and EL youth? As demonstrated, the terrain of teaching immigrant EL students involves many diverse and consequential issues and competencies, ranging from teachers’ use of text to issues of citizenship. These issues reach beyond simple instructional strategies to the nature of how quality teaching can build a more inclusive society, both through access to institutionally valued knowledge and language as well as broader notions of social inclusion.

In terms of thinking of teachers’ adaptations, which rest upon the breadth and depth of teachers’ repertoires, what are the types of adaptations that should be promoted? Discouraged? While this study focused on the nature of teachers’ adaptations (and clearly particular forms of adaptations emerged as more problematic, and others more promising), more research is needed that connects teachers’ practice to student outcomes.

Because teaching is always situated within particular subject matter, institutional, geographical, and community contexts, the nature of teaching “English learners” in “sheltered courses” varies a great deal. As Walqui notes (2009) the hallmark of good teaching is that it is situated—teachers are able to notice what students are doing and saying and respond in the moment. Also critical to this notion of situated teaching is the ability to understand not only students’ current levels, but how to draw on students’ resources and other contextual affordances to further their development (Gutiérrez, et al., 1999; Moll, et al., 1992).

Essentially the task of teaching all students, including immigrant and EL students, relies on the extent to which teachers can marshal their resources to make use of students’ resources to develop students’ potential. How can we best support teachers to achieve this aim?
On an early spring morning at Jefferson High School I explained my research project to a school counselor hoping that he would help me understand how sheltered courses were assigned. In the process of using such labels as: “sheltered” “mainstream” “AP” (Advanced Placement) and “AVID” (Advancement Via Individual Determination) while looking at the school’s master schedule, I gained a better understanding of how courses were organized at this school site. After both of us threw around such terms during the conversation, he told me that he never liked the word “sheltered,” with its protective and potentially paternalistic overtones. Besides, he asks, “What are we sheltering them from? Real language?” (2/13/08).

The counselor’s comments raise several issues that go beyond teachers’ instructional practice to the very nature of the organizational system that is intended to serve English language learners by separating them into a distinct set of classes. Separation is intended to meet students’ linguistic needs; however, as he notes, the “sheltering” may in fact be “protecting” students from different forms of language they might encounter otherwise in mainstream courses, “real language” as he calls it, as opposed to language that is presumably modified for comprehension. While the counselor’s comments raise important issues about the potential consequences of separate sheltered courses, they also reveal that the label itself carries particular meanings and connotations.

During the course of the research it became clear that the counselor was not the only one for whom sheltered course labels carried particular significance. It also became clear that there were more than linguistic issues at stake when the organizing principle for EL content courses was separation rather than integration with mainstream courses.

In this chapter I focus on three teachers’ perceptions of how the separation of classes affected their EL students, and how students drew boundaries, made distinctions, and engaged in impression management in order to mitigate their peers’ perceptions that they lacked intelligence merely because of their classification and placement in sheltered courses. Essentially, the sheltered label became intertwined with the logic and practice of ELs’ separation, and this separation fit within a hierarchical frame where sheltered signified a lesser status than mainstream courses, and carried stigma (Goffman, 1963).

This point has also been raised by Wolfe (1999).
While most teachers did not elaborate on the significance of having students in separate sheltered courses, 3 of the 20 teachers in the sample were especially attuned to how the organization of separate sheltered courses affected their students’ perceptions about themselves and their peers. Three teachers, at three different school sites, noticed how their students noticed the distinctions between “sheltered” and “mainstream” in ways that might make one pause to consider the potentially unintended consequences of sheltered programs that intend to expand educational access.

Although only three teachers volunteered their unprompted accounts of students’ perceptions, I focus on these teachers because of the potentially serious questions their accounts raise, particularly for the very students who are supposed to be the beneficiaries of sheltered programs. One would not expect all or even most teachers in the sample to raise the issues of students’ perception of social stigmas. First, teachers were not asked about these issues, and second, by its very nature stigma tends to have a “taken for granted” status. In other words, one would not expect most teachers to notice or comment on the more hidden aspects and impacts of social categories that are normalized.

In what follows I present three teachers’ accounts of their students’ perceptions of sheltered programs: Mr. Thomas, a social studies teacher at Jefferson High School, Ms. Singh, a science teacher at Roosevelt High School, and Ms. Flores, a social studies teacher at Washington High School. As noted in the methods chapter, I coded all interviews for instances where teachers raised the issue of students’ perceptions of sheltered programs and carefully attended to where these issues emerged in the context of interviews, particularly because these accounts were unprompted. When initially examining teachers’ accounts, my goal was to understand their perspectives on students’ experiences. I was not searching for negative accounts, yet all three teachers’ accounts emphasized negative aspects of student experience, some more elaborately than others. In presenting these accounts I have tried to convey a holistic sense of each teacher’s perception. Perhaps if I had asked all 20 teachers explicitly about their students’ experiences and perceptions of sheltered programs, I would have seen more variation.

While these data are from teachers, I also draw on Guerrero’s work (2009) that relies directly on multiple forms of student data and reflects more variation in students’ experiences of sheltered courses. With contrasting accounts from newly arrived immigrants and long-term ELs (LELs), Guerrero specifically links LEL students’ negative perceptions to their academic disengagement. Following a discussion of Guerrero’s work, I pose questions about the dilemmas and issues raised by the evidence presented.
Mr. Thomas: Making Connections Between Sheltered and Special Education

Mr. Thomas was a White history teacher at Jefferson High School who had taught English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Africa after teaching world history for many years in California. He was the first teacher to raise the issue of what he called “the social question” of teaching EL-designated students, as distinct from issues more concretely connected to students’ language levels. A new teacher to Jefferson, he recalled that there were “just things I needed to learn about how it operates here that I obviously didn’t understand until I taught the [sheltered] class once…How do people feel about being in, you know, entirely sheltered classes, which I’d never experienced before….You’ve got to deal with the social question” (3/18/08).

As a teacher who had previously had a special education assignment, he stated that he was “predisposed to spot how people feel about being in a …sheltered class and having that label because I know how people feel about being labeled.” Additionally, his experience in a different high school where EL students were integrated into the content courses in blended courses formed his frame of reference for how ELs should be taught and how classes should be integrated. Separating out students into a class of their own seemed to be highly problematic, both because the norms at his previous school were different with blended courses, and because the separation of EL students into distinct classes raised the salience of the EL label, something he was already sensitized to in his experience as a special education teacher.

Mr. Thomas began to pay attention to students’ perceptions of this issue when he had a particularly challenging sheltered class and began to wonder about the connections between their lack of engagement and their separation into sheltered classes. While discussing how students viewed sheltered classes negatively, I probed him for more details. In response he recounted how he had became aware of students’ perceptions of sheltered courses:

Mr. T.: I would say in general that the students think that it’s – that the [sheltered] classes are punitive, that they are beneath their intelligence.

DBD: What gives you that impression?
Mr. T.: They tell me.
DBD: They tell you?
Mr. T.: Yeah, they tell me explicitly, (3/18/08)
Mr. Thomas continued to recount how he was attempting to understand why his sheltered class was permeated with “discipline problems” with poor academic achievement:

The grades were atrocious. And, you know, grades are not necessarily off the charts at Jefferson High, but they were really bad. Why are people not—you know, I know that people can do this. Okay? I’m not teaching incredibly differently than [before where]….it wasn’t totally separated. And I started talking to some kids once I got to know them and it's like, oh, this, you know, this is no good. (3/18/08)

Contrasting his experiences at his previous high school with those at Jefferson High School, he perceived a connection between the separated EL classes and students’ disengagement. On other occasions he re-confirmed his perception that students held negative views of sheltered courses. An especially troubling observation was that students associated the sheltered courses with being unintelligent—even those who were doing well in his courses. For example one student, who he described as a student who “was always trying real hard,” stated that she didn’t like being in sheltered courses because “it makes me feel stupid” (3/18/08). In Mr. Thomas’ accounts, students had internalized the message that separate was not equal, but inferior and punitive. Moreover, placement in sheltered classes signified a lack of intelligence.

“I am not a shelter anymore!”: On separation, distinctions and boundary work.

While discussing how students were aware of and internalized the sheltered label, Mr. Thomas recounted a narrative of a student who had recently been re-designated. In this narrative, the distinction between students who were EL-designated and those who were not became viscerally demonstrated by one student who crossed the threshold of language proficiency status and created a scene to mark his newly distinct status from that of the other EL-designated students in the class:

Mr. T: This one kid got designated out [redesignated Fluent English Proficient] and I remember he walked in and I liked [him]– he was a great guy. He walks in. He says – he raises his hands and says, “I’m not a shelter!”

DBD: I am not a shelter?
Mr. T.: No. It was – he knew it was funny. I mean he was making a joke. He knew it was funny. He said, “I’m not a shelter anymore, not like you! Not like you!” And so he was not cool about it. But he said, you know, “I’m not a shelter! I’m not a shelter!” And this is what really irks me is that a lot of the advice that at least I get here, we get here is…nonsense. You know, “Oh, you teach the same content, but you can do it more slowly.” (3/18/08)

In this passage Mr. Thomas recounts how a student, upon being recently redesignated as fluent English proficient, creates a scene where he jokingly refers to others as a “shelter”—and with a linguistic sleight of hand switches the adjective “sheltered” into a noun—a thing. In this narrative, the student created a clear boundary between himself and the other students in the class by exclaiming “I am not a shelter!” repeatedly and pointing to other students when saying that he was not what they were. In this scene, students were not only described as adjectives but became reified into the very objects that could be pointed to and pulled away from. Proudly proclaiming his new status, freed from having to be a shelter, the student drew a clear and sharp boundary between himself and others who still inhabited the world of “shelters” through declaration, repetition and gesture.

Importantly, on the heels of Mr. Thomas’ narrative of this student’s boundary drawing, Mr. Thomas stated how frustrated he had become with the school’s EL staff that encouraged teachers to teach the same content “more slowly.” Presumably he added this comment to the end of his account in order to formulate an explanation within a narrative analytical frame (Ochs & Capps, 2001, pp. 18-19) because of what he saw as the link between teachers’ behavior (teaching content more slowly) and students’ internalization of negative labels, which result in such markings of social boundaries among students. Students feel “stupid” in sheltered classes that are “beneath their intelligence” when teachers teach content “more slowly.” Thus, slowing the speed of instruction, which the EL staff recommend as a modification for access, likely contributes to students’ internalization of negative labels, despite the fact that the EL-classification is determined bureaucratically by tests. This account suggests that despite the fact that students are the ones who internalize EL labels, they do so at least in part on the basis of what teachers are doing in their classrooms.
“We’re sheltered” vs. “this is sending you to college”: Explicit communication with students about rigor and college preparatory courses.

When Mr. Thomas understood that students had negative perceptions of sheltered classes, he chose to address this perception in his classroom by “leveling” with students and encouraging them to shed their negative perceptions of sheltered classes. He would tell students, “Okay, that’s between us. We can leave that at the door” (3/18/08). Furthermore, his awareness of the social perception of sheltered classes led him to explicitly tell students they were getting the same coursework as mainstream students:

Mr. T: This time around I made sure that my students knew that I was teaching the same stuff. I would give them the same handouts that we give to my other classes.

DBD: So you made a point to let them know.

Mr. T: Absolutely, because what happens at that point is that then the students who are the ones who are the most academically interested all of a sudden, they get – it’s like they get the go code that they – “Okay, now this is good for us,” they’re people who want to go to college, right, they’re – the students are furious that – I don’t know how many – not all English classes count for A to G requirements. I think it’s like a limit one or two years of ELD [English Language Development] counts for that requirement and there’s a reason for that, but it’s sort of like to whatever extent, they’re not fully in control of that or don’t feel fully in control of where they’re placed. All of a sudden, their academic future is plotted for them… People here [tell them]… “Oh, so go to a junior college,” which is cool, but for somebody who’s ultra serious about school and studies hard all the time, that’s not the best place for them. So I made a point of telling them. (3/18/08)

Mr. Thomas named the perception and its consequences; he also let students know that he was aware of this perception, but he did not abide by it. By addressing this issue openly, he felt he could get better results than letting the undercurrent of the perception eat away at students’ efficacy. Importantly, addressing students’ perceptions had implications for his own teaching. In other words, because of students’ general perception of sheltered classes being less challenging, Mr. Thomas insisted on teaching exactly the same content, and

48 A-G requirements are the minimum requirements necessary for admission to the University of California (UC) college system.
signaling this explicitly to students, so that he could mitigate the perception that the sheltered class would be less rigorous than the mainstream classes. According to his accounts, this helped students feel that they were getting college-preparatory curriculum and try harder.

For Mr. Thomas it was especially important to communicate with students that his class was college preparatory. He raised this issue again when combating a student’s complaint about the level of difficulty in the classroom. He recounted:

Someone was being a pain in the neck and complaining about something, “Why am I made to do this?” And…said, “Oh, you know, this is too hard, we’re sheltered,” you know….I just got on the discussion, “No, this counts for A to G requirements. This is sending you to college. We’re doing this because of that. These are the same things I’m giving to all of my other classes. Go ask your friends who are in blocks one, two and four. Talk to them, work on the homework together” (3/18/08, emphasis added).

In this account, a student states that because “we’re sheltered” (a collective identity) the class is “too hard”—something to which Mr. Thomas responds by reminding the class of two things:
(a) the class is college preparatory and (b) the students are receiving exactly the same work as all of his other students, something they can verify with their peers in other non-sheltered classes. Despite the student’s internalization and generalization of the label (“we’re sheltered”), Mr. Thomas insists that the work they are doing has value because it is the same as what other students in mainstream classes.

While Mr. Thomas noted that it was essential to keep the work the same, he also recognized that his response to students’ work would be different for EL students. He noted: “from me, as a teacher’s perspective, I don’t freak out if they spell it wrong. I don’t freak out if the sentence is, you know, not perfect. You look at it and try to like figure out the idea. Most of the students’ English is better than they think.” Focusing on the content of students’ ideas rather than their spelling and grammar became Mr. Thomas’ approach to assigning the same work for both classes.

EL designation vs. sheltered courses, arbitrariness of classifications.

While Mr. Thomas understood that in many cases EL students had linguistic needs, he thought that the process of EL-designation could be arbitrary and suffered the same short-comings as any test-based designation. When
comparing the EL-designation process to his experience in special education he observed:

> I think that what happens with Special Ed is that people are there in the classes and then there’s a process by which they are designated and testing is part of that process and that there’s meetings. Whereas what happens here [with EL students], I think that the first thing that happens with somebody who’s coming into a school with a vowel at the end of their name is that they test if they haven’t already tested…. All the flaws about testing, like how the kid feels about the test and etcetera, etcetera, the kid’s nauseous that day, all of those things then play a role in what class does the kid get put in. (3/18/08)

In Mr. Thomas’ comparison of special education and EL-designation processes, he notes that in addition to testing in special education, there are meetings where the students’ information is evaluated before the label is applied. However, in the case of linguistic minority students, who may be prejudicially identified by their surnames, they are given language tests that designate their EL-status without meetings. Mehan et al. (1986) have noted how in special education meetings the medical “expert” comes to dominate the process of “diagnosis” so that different people’s interpretations of students’ abilities end up conforming to the medical model of disability. Yet, even within this process Mr. Thomas points out that at the very least there is a space for discussing students’ designations. In contrast, ethnically-marked linguistic minority students’ surnames become a proxy for real information, much like Mr. Zamora previously reported with his own child’s experience. Furthermore, Mr. Thomas noted that the inherent flaws of testing could complicate the process of designation, leading students to be designated as EL when they might not be.

However problematic the EL-designation process was, the existence of an EL-label and its sometimes faulty application was not as problematic for Mr. Thomas as the separation of EL-designated students into distinct sheltered classes; they were two distinct but related issues. The fact that the school site had separate ELD and content courses for students who had this designation made him uncomfortable because of what he perceived as the potentially damaging effects of sorting students by proficiency status, even if they were “correctly” labeled. At one point he had approached the administration to find out if courses could be

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49 Typical district policies which govern initial EL designation are that school officials give home language surveys to all incoming students, regardless of their racial or ethnic backgrounds (Linquanti, 2001). Only those students who indicate that another language other than English is spoken at home are supposed to be tested. However, in practice the process is much more subject to bias.
organized differently so that EL-designated students could be integrated into mainstream content classes. After an unsuccessful meeting with the principal about disbanding sheltered classes, he remarked “we’re not there yet as a site.” In his view, the ultimate goal would be to abolish the programmatic distinctions between EL and non-designated students. Until then, if he had to teach a separate sheltered class, Mr. Thomas would make sure students knew that they were getting exactly the same content as their peers and he worked to explicitly minimize the sheltered distinction.

Ms. Singh: “Are We Behind?”—Managing EL Students’ “Self-Esteem”

Ms. Singh, a science teacher at Roosevelt High School and an immigrant herself from India, also observed that students in her sheltered biology class were attuned to the fact that they were in a distinct setting from mainstream classes and that this awareness had implications for her work with EL students. Ms. Singh noted how students would “keep tabs” on what students in her mainstream biology class were doing at any given time in order to compare what they were doing in their own class. Essentially EL students were asking the same questions that motivated this larger research study: How do sheltered and mainstream classes compare? How are they different? What do those differences suggest? Students wanted to know in order to pass judgment, perhaps on themselves. Differences between the two classes somehow implied that they were less capable than their mainstream counterparts.

Ms. Singh raised the issue of students’ perception of sheltered courses in the context of speaking of the challenges she faced teaching EL students. She noted that she had to balance students’ linguistic needs with her desire to teach all the content so that students would not be “deprived”:

Ms. S: Just because they are ELD they should not be deprived from their regular classes. And believe me! They compare—you know, they ask me if I am doing the same thing in the ELD classes compared to what I am doing in my regular classes you know.

DBD: They ask you?

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50Interestingly, throughout the interview she referred to sheltered classes and the students in them as “ELD” (English Language Development) even though in school contexts ELD typically signifies English language classes while sheltered refers to content courses for EL students. Perhaps the logic of this label is that the “English language development” categorization follows the students, even though they are not actually in ELD classes when they come to her. She used the term ELD as both a noun, to refer to students, and an adjective (to refer to both students and sheltered courses).
Ms. S: They know—like, “Are we behind?” you know, “Are we together?” (4/20/08)

In this excerpt, Ms. Singh’s indexing of deprivation is associated with students’ comparisons. In other words, the comparisons are not neutral—they are connected to students’ perception or concern that they may be getting less than other students in mainstream classes.

Immediately following Ms. Singh’s observation of students’ habitual comparisons, she described her pace, also in comparative terms:

Sometimes I am on the same page, sometimes I am behind because what happens is that— it's not the content also, some students because of their low English ability they tend to just phase out because they feel that they are not smart enough because they are not able to understand English. So they are acting out then you have to work on them. So yeah sometimes it will go slow, very slow my classes, but I tell them, “Yes, eventually we will catch up” or I tell them, “Well, we are behind because in this class you guys wanted to do the project whereas with the other [mainstream] students we skipped it because they didn’t want to.” You know, things like that. (4/20/08, emphasis added)

Ms. Singh recounted how students were concerned about the quality and pacing of the content as compared to other classes. Similar to Mr. Thomas, she realized that students’ experiences had implications for her practice and for how she communicated with students about what the two distinct classes were doing. Because it became clear that EL students were “constantly comparing themselves,” Ms. Singh found herself engaged in a form of impression management. Even though she faced challenges with pacing associated with students’ language difficulties, which she said made the class go “very slow,” in her account she countered the impression of difference with “we will catch up” or by framing the difference as one of student choice: “We are behind because in this class you guys wanted to do the project whereas with the other [mainstream] students we skipped it because they didn’t want to.” Also present in this passage is students’ perception that difficulty with English means students “are not smart enough.”

Ms. Singh often spoke of students’ perceptions largely in psychological terms, noting: “You have to maintain a positive self-esteem in them because they are constantly comparing themselves.” In essence, her concern was focused on students’ sense of self in light of the effects of labeling:

[T]hey have this complex for being you know labeled as an ELD and they want to be mainstreamed as soon as possible…. You really have to build self-confidence—that’s very important to kids who are in an ELD. Most of
them have a very low self-confidence and they don’t want to be treated differently. (4/20/08, emphasis added)

Ms. Singh notes that students have a “complex” for being labeled and that they want to escape this labeling as soon as possible by mainstreaming. Differential treatment also heightens their sense of being labeled. Ms. Singh’s concerns for EL students’ “self-esteem” and “complexes” reflects a very psychological, rather than structural, view of the issue. As a teacher then, she addressed these issues on a largely psychological level with impression management, attempting to minimize students’ perceptions of the distances between the “regular” class and their own.

Ms. Flores: Sheltered Means “You Speak Two Languages”

Ms. Flores was the child of Mexican immigrants, born in the US. Growing up in a rural Californian community, Ms. Flores had experienced sheltered courses first-hand through most of primary school. A second-year history teacher at Washington High School in the spring of 2008, Ms. Flores initially taught mostly in sheltered classes, and later was recruited to teach in two other programs: the school’s Puente program that served predominantly Latina/o college-bound youth, and the school’s “Academy,” one of a couple of thematic small learning communities at the school that focused on leadership and activism (similar to academies referenced by Conchas, 2001). While in the spring of 2008 she taught sheltered and mainstream courses, the following fall her schedule had no mainstream courses—only sheltered, Puente, and Academy world history classes.

In the context of debriefing about her adaptive use of Spanish in the sheltered class, we discussed how students themselves chose the language of reading materials. She had access to both Spanish and sheltered English textbooks for world history, and students had the choice of the textbook they would use. She discussed the case of a Spanish-dominant student who had selected an English textbook:

I would assume that his English comprehension when reading an English book-- it’s not going to make sense to him. I would actually prefer that he reads Spanish, but he chooses English. I think part of the reason for choosing English is because he doesn’t want to feel like he’s stupid and there’s a pressure. “Oh no, I can read English; I want the English book” (11/14/08).

51 I use the generic term “Academy” as a way of protecting participants’ identities.
In this excerpt Ms. Flores comments on how despite the choice of textbooks in both languages the student chose English because of a feeling of a “pressure” to not feel “stupid” for his lack of proficiency in English. In this sense, there is a confounding of language-specific proficiency and intelligence. However, a different set of pressures awaited students who chose English: “[when] the students…choose English-- they’ll be like, “Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah-- you think you’re all that because you can read English.” Students were teased for assuming competence in English; those who could read in English faced mocking from peers who ridiculed their fellow students’ potential presumptiveness based the notion that English signified superior status—and yet the lack of proficiency in English signified stupidity. These students inhabited a world of double-binds; they walked a tightrope where one side of the edge signified appearing to be “bigger than your britches” for having English proficiency, and the other signified “stupidity” because of a lack of that same proficiency.

In such tricky status-conscious contexts, youth not only navigated across languages of choice but also across the boundaries of labels and what those signified. For Ms. Flores, the label “sheltered” seemed an appropriate enough term to describe her third block class, just as “Academy” and “Puente” seemed appropriate monikers for her second and fourth block classes. However, immediately following our discussion of students’ choice of language, she mentioned that her explicit display of classroom artifacts using these labels made students in her third-block sheltered class uncomfortable, even though Academy and Puente students voiced no such qualms. She used these labels, rather than referring to their period or block number. The programmatic rather than the time-block monikers became her reference points when she identified and displayed items such as agendas intended for different classes. For example, when posting the prior term’s grades (by student ID number) she used the terms “sheltered,” “Academy” and “Puente.” (Figure 5.1.)
The “pressure” students felt around language choice also arose with the explicit display of the class labels. Ms. Flores noted that when she displayed “sheltered” on a vocabulary poster, students were “mad” and challenged her:

One time I made a poster, which is still up there, for this unit. I had a poster for each class for vocabulary words. I had “Academy,” and then I had “Puente,” and then I had “sheltered.” They noticed that and they got mad at me. They’re like, “Why do you put sheltered up there?” (11/14/08)

Ms. Flores recounted another instance when the sheltered display became all too salient:

Ms. F: On the grades on my wall, I have “sheltered.” One time the door was open and Mike was there. I think his friend was like, “Oh, you’re in sheltered.” Then Mike was like – I was trying to defend Mike, but I think Mike was like, “No, man, no.” I was trying to tell the kid, “It doesn’t mean anything. It just means that his first language is Spanish. And that means he knows another language that you don’t know. That just means he has two languages.” So Mike was kind of like, you know [pause].

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52 See Figure 5.1 for the display Ms. Flores refers to in this quotation.
DBD: How did Mike respond and how did the friend respond when you said that?
Ms. F: Oh, he was just kind of quiet, didn’t say much….They just kind of listened to me and they kind of took off. Mike was probably just trying to get him out of here. Like, “Let’s go” (11/14/08, emphasis added).

In Ms. Flores’ account of this incident, the explicit displays of the classroom signaled to Mike’s friend that Mike was in the sheltered class. His friend was surprised that Mike was in the sheltered class (“Oh, you’re in sheltered”) and this surprise was conveyed in such a way that Ms. Flores felt that she must “defend” Mike. Mike presumably kept his placement “on the down low” and yet was “outed” against his wishes. In this sense the sheltered label assumes the role of an identity, attribute, or status designation that Mike must manage. His way of managing the ascription of sheltered status is to try to save face in front of his non-sheltered friend by denying his association: “No, man, no.” Yet, Ms. Flores attempts to counter what is a negative association through various attempts at redefining what sheltered means: (a) It doesn’t “mean anything” (b) “It just means that his first language is Spanish” (d) It “means he knows another language that you don’t know” and finally, (e) “That just means he has two languages.” Clearly Ms. Flores worked hard to counter an implicitly negative meaning of sheltered.

This was not the only instance she felt she needed to communicate with students about the meaning of the label “sheltered” and its use in her classroom:

Yeah. There’s something about sheltered. I was trying to tell the class, I said, “There’s nothing wrong with me putting ‘sheltered’.” They were listening, wanting me to address that issue. But some of them are kind of like, “No, whatever. Just don’t put ‘sheltered’ up there. That’s embarrassing” (11/14/08).

This quotation reveals that rather than this being an idiosyncratic issue between Mike and his friend, Ms. Flores realized that she needed to address the whole class. When asked about how many students in the class felt negatively about sheltered classes, she noted “definitely more than 50%.” Even though students do not want her to make the label even more explicit than it already is in their lives, she objected, telling them that there is “nothing wrong with me putting ‘sheltered’.” Her assurances do not convince students who are embarrassed by the distinction, and would rather not have it be exposed, particularly in a space that is shared with students from other classes where this label was on display.

Although more than half of the class felt the twinge of shame and embarrassment about this explicit identification, Ms. Flores noted that a minority
of students felt differently: “Those that really are here to learn, they could care less-- like, ‘You can label me whatever. What’s important to me is my education’” (11/14/08). In the process of such classroom discussions, even these students came to understand that being in sheltered classes had negative connotations: “I think if they didn’t have a sense, they will learn about it through the other students in the classroom…. ‘Oh, okay. It’s bad to be sheltered. Oh’” (11/14/08). In general, students who protested most vocally about Ms. Flores explicit displays of the sheltered label were long-term EL students, whereas those who did not mind tended to be recently-arrived immigrant students.

In attempting to understand the puzzle of why some kids felt stigmatized by the label and others did not, Ms. Flores’ rooted her conception in larger societal patterns. For her, the sheltered/non-sheltered distinction was bound up with other social distinctions, namely status differences associated with being immigrant and being from south of the border:

DBD: Why do you think some kids deflect the stigma, while whereas others get more embarrassed and are more self-conscious about that?

Ms. F: I think if you look at it in California, the politics of immigrants and just the scapegoating of immigrants that this country has, the history of that. Mojados, “wetbacks,” crossing the border. There’s this bad thing about “Oh, you’re poor.” This historical context of immigration into this country, specifically from Mexicans coming here. I think that has a lot to do with it….There’s also a distinction about who is in sheltered. It’s recent immigrants from south of the border. Or colored students that come here. I think that has a big part of it too. (11/14/08)

In this exchange, when I asked Ms. Flores why some students feel stigmatized and others do not, she referenced the larger social issues embedded in the context of Californian immigration, particularly as these issues showed up at her school site, where students were predominantly Latino and had to contend with societal stereotypes about immigrants, poverty (“you’re poor”) and Latinos. She felt that racist constructions of immigrant identity transferred into the stigma of sheltered classes. Being in sheltered courses heightened the salience of being an “other”—particularly a recently-arrived “other” from south of the border where stereotypes abounded and attached themselves to other labels: “wetbacks”/“mojados.” She continued, noting: “People make fun of students that are in sheltered. You’re the immigrants. You’re the recent. You might even be illegal” (11/14/08).

Despite the fact that so much of the students’ population was Latino (or perhaps because of this), Ms. Flores also observed that Latino students made
distinctions amongst themselves, divided along the lines of those who were more recently arrived and those who were not. These distinctions were also connected to other identity groups, namely gangs that were represented at the school. While talking about the stigma of sheltered classes and the ways in which students identified and classified themselves, she stated: “There’s this whole gang thing about the norteños and sureños and about if you’re a recent immigrant you’re a sureño. If you were born here, you’re a norteño. It’s stupid. It boils my blood.” In essence, sureño and norteño gangs were divided between those who were more recently arrived, and those who had been here longer. Moreover, Ms. Flores noted that gang terminology that ridiculed sureños for being newly-arrived was also used to describe sheltered students at her school site:

Ms. F: They’re literally called scraps. The norteños call the sureños “scaps.”
DBD: So it’s like a derogatory name.
Ms. F: Yeah. Think about the word “scaps.” You’re the left-overs. You’re the bottom of the bottom that nobody wants. And they’ll also call sheltered kids “scaps.” I’ve heard it used in that context too. Scraps. I’ve heard it said several times, for recent immigrants…[but] you wouldn’t address a Vietnamese like that as “scrap.” That wouldn’t be used to classify him, or to talk about him, or to address him. (11/14/08)

With sureños being mocked for their recency, sheltered Latino students come to be associated with this term as well. However, the term has particular boundaries; for even though it extends to non-affiliated sheltered youth, it is not a term to be used for non-Latino students in sheltered courses, such as Vietnamese students. Perhaps in a Latino-dominant setting, the stigmas and stereotypes associated with being a recent Latino immigrant permeate and color the perception of what it means to be in a sheltered course, even when students of other origins populate sheltered classes.

Ms. Flores addressed issues of what the sheltered label meant to her students by explaining that the label was nothing students should be ashamed of; however, more of her efforts were directed towards what she perceived to be the source of unequal perceptions—unequal resources (5/22/08, 6/10/08, 11/14/08). She noted that she wanted the space of her courses to be a place where students could make these connections, but struggled with how to do so: “It’s just so all connected… And I challenge myself—how can I have students see that? I don’t

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Mendoza-Denton (2009) has investigated these divisions through a linguistic anthropology lens and found that norteños’ use of exaggerated Spanish accents when mocking sureños rendered them as “rural, backwards, uneducated and illegal immigrants.”
think I’ve quite connected the dots” (11/14/08). For Ms. Flores, the larger issues she attended to in her teaching were not merely perceptions tied to language proficiency but the historically unequal distribution of resources and the social divisions between groups that perpetuated the status quo.

*Students weighing sheltered placement options: Wanting to go to college vs. “learn something.”*

While students had their impressions of what it meant to be in sheltered classes, their desire to transition or to remain in sheltered classes was at times bound up with their notions of what “mainstream” and other courses entailed.

Ms. Flores noted that during the previous school year, two college-bound sisters (from Pakistan and Afghanistan) had originally desired to transfer out of Ms. Flores’ sheltered class because of their perception that sheltered courses would not look good on their transcripts. Sheltered course placements were incongruous with their desire to go to college, despite the fact that their sheltered social studies class was in fact classified as college preparatory (“P”): “So they wanted to leave this class because of wanting to get to college and making them look as if they’ve taken on all opportunities at their high school” (11/14/08). She described the sisters as “go-getters” who wanted “to do the best-- they want to be up there. They don’t want to take anything less.”

While sheltered classes seemed to be incongruous with the sisters’ college aspirations, Ms. Flores recounted what transpired when they were close to making the switch:

They had asked me to write to the counselors and ask them to review their transcripts and their scores so that they can be moved out. And, finally, when they were given the chance to move out, they kind of started to second-guess or think again about whether or not they wanted to leave. One of them came and said, “Well, we don’t know, because if we leave your class we might be in a class where the teacher doesn’t have control. And we might just not even be learning.” So eventually they decided, “Let’s just stay in your class because we’re going to learn more here and it’s going to be better for us in the long run” (11/14/08).

Ms. Flores noted that the sisters were wrestling with many issues, particularly because their desire and knowledge about college meant that they wanted to present a competitive application, yet there were advantages to being in Ms. Flores’ sheltered class. When speaking about one of the sisters Ms. Flores stated:
I don’t know at that point if she could do an AP. I think she’d do a regular class. I think that she was like, “Well, if I go to a regular class with a teacher, are the students going to be working?” I think she felt more comfortable in the sheltered environment…because she felt like there was control-- she had control over what she was learning. Maybe she was understanding things; she liked the way I taught… She probably felt like, “Well, I think I’m going to learn more than in the class where I don’t know who the students are. I don’t know who the teacher is” (11/14/08).

Unable to attend the AP class, the student’s only other alternative was the mainstream class where she had her doubts about whether she would be able to learn as much as she was learning in Ms. Flores’ class. Plagued by concerns about the quality of their education in mainstream classes, the sisters chose to remain in Ms. Flores’ class. Importantly, the fact that it was Ms. Flores teaching the class, someone with whom they had built up a trusting relationship and who recognized their learning in her classroom, figured in prominently in their decision-making. In addition, their notions of what might transpire in mainstream classrooms (possibly a lack of “control”) played a role in this process. In their estimation, making the move was not worth it. Forced to choose between what they anticipated as a choice between “learning” and being out of sheltered classes, they chose to remain in Ms. Flores’ sheltered class. This last point is significant insofar as it is a reminder of the local context of courses and how students may perceive different teachers as presenting different opportunities for learning. Students did not only categorize courses according to the labels of “sheltered” and “mainstream.” Also noteworthy was the fact that the sisters enlisted Ms. Flores’ help in their initial attempts to transition out of sheltered courses. Acting as an “institutional agent” (Stanton Salazar, 2001), Ms. Flores worked to help students whether by teaching in such a way that they felt they were learning, or by helping students jump institutional hurdles.

Discussion

According to teachers’ accounts, students drew boundaries and made distinctions, and these distinctions were often negative. Teachers’ unprompted accounts of students’ associations with sheltered courses arose out of distinct conversational contexts. For Mr. Thomas, the concept of sheltered labeling arose when speaking about his experience as a special education teacher. He noted parallels between the arbitrary nature of classifications in both special education and EL settings, as well as how all people “feel about being labeled.” However, Ms. Singh’s observations emerged in the context of instructional dilemmas around pacing; as students noticed differential pacing, they drew conclusions.
about their own competence, intelligence and self-worth. The context of Ms. Flores’ observations were distinct from the other two teachers because they transpired after class observations where we had been discussing the day’s classroom events. Her observations about students’ internalization, boundary work, and impression management came from the context of discussing the visible and political nature of EL students’ choice of reading materials (Spanish or English) and the connection to students’ distinctions, what those distinctions meant, and how they were connected to larger societal divisions.

While this study did not explicitly solicit teachers’ perspectives on students’ perceptions of sheltered programs, for these three teachers these issues nonetheless emerged. Moreover, each teachers’ account overlapped with other types of category and labeling systems: (a) special education (b) psychological “complexes”/“low self-esteem” and (c) racial constructions of immigration (i.e., mojado/wetback). The fact that not all 20 teachers commented on students’ perceptions of sheltered courses when they were not prompted makes it difficult to assess whether other teachers noticed this phenomenon as well. Some may suggest that these three teachers may have been more sensitive to these issues or perhaps more inclined to discuss them in the context of talking about their work with EL students. Whatever the reason, the fact that these teachers from different school sites spoke of these issues opens a window into three consequential issues for EL students: (a) the nature and process of how students perceive the sheltered label, (b) how teachers themselves understand this phenomenon, and (c) what teachers do about it.

Based on teacher accounts, students take what are initially bureaucratic and potentially “educative” labels (“sheltered,” “ELD”) and, within collective contexts, they imbue these labels with meaning (Bruner, 1990). Students’ navigate around these identity markers, which render them in particular ways that are consequential for their own conception of self—especially in front of their peers. Recall two contrasting narratives from Mr. Thomas’ classroom and Ms. Flores’: While a newly re-classified (FEP) student had proudly marched into Mr. Thomas’ classroom declaring that he was “not a shelter anymore,” drawing a sharp line between himself and others in the class, Ms. Flores’ student Mike denied his association with the sheltered class when he was “outed,” working hard to erase the kinds of lines Mr. Thomas’ student was reinforcing once he had crossed the “great divide.” Why were students engaged in such boundary work? Why should being in sheltered classes be something to hide?

In Stigma (1963, p. 5), Goffman defines this condition as “the situation of the individual who is disqualified from full social acceptance (i).” Stigmatized individuals, in contrast to those whom he calls “normals,” do not meet society’s expectations and are branded in negative ways. No matter the type of stigma, Goffman notes that “we tend to impute a wide range of imperfections on the basis
of the original one” (5). Thus, if not being classified as a fluent English speaker is the original “offense,” the stigma associated with this label comes to represent other “imperfections,” such as a purported lack of intelligence. Importantly, the word “stupid” or “lack of intelligence” emerged in each teachers’ account, despite the fact that these teachers all worked in separate school sites.

In Portes and Smagorinsky’s (in press) critique of infrastructures meant to serve the needs of language minority youth, they draw links between EL students’ segregation and Vygotsky’s notion of “defectology”:

One pernicious consequence of segregating ELLs is that the social setting of their education stigmatizes them and may lead to further diagnoses that they have learning disabilities and thus should be enrolled in special education programs. Vygotsky (1993), in his work on defectology, regarded such diagnoses as the social construction of a secondary disability: Kozulin and Gindis (2007), describe this condition “as a sociocultural rather than an organic or individual developmental phenomenon” (p. 14).

Furthermore, notions of “defects” easily emerge within a deficit view of learning a second language, even though bilingual students already know a first one. In essence students’ L1 is seen as a handicap or defect rather than as a resource. While the phenomena are social in nature, the effects are felt by individual students, and groups, who are labeled and stigmatized.

While data from this current study are from teacher reports, Guerrero (2009), a teacher-scholar, used multiple forms of student data (including fieldnotes, surveys and focus groups) to investigate similar processes in his own high school’s sheltered and Puente English classes. His work captures how sheltered stigma is experienced by students. Moreover, he also presents evidence that students’ placement in sheltered courses is associated with low intelligence. While Guerrero notes that his Puente class had a cohesive and academically-oriented identity, his sheltered English class was distinct; many long-term EL students acted out because they associated the class with being mentally impaired. As dramatically revealed to Guerrero early in the school year, one student exclaimed: “F____ this! We ain’t doing s__t! We are retarded and this is why we are in this class called sheltered. I am not going to do S_T in this class because you think I’m an idiot, So F____ Y____!” (p. 6)

Guerrero notes that for long-term EL students, their facility with English—especially profanity—exemplified how distinct their language and attitudes were from more recently-arrived EL students. The whole notion that they were not English fluent seemed preposterous to them precisely because many had been in the US for seven years or more and had sophisticated use of verbal
English that they could leverage for effect. Because they could demonstrate their competence in oral English so effectively, their placement in sheltered classes seemed highly offensive. And yet, Guerrero powerfully documented how these students had internalized an “attitude of inferiority” long before they had set foot into his classroom because of their placement in sheltered classes. This attitude, in turn, created additional obstacles for students’ engagement and achievement, as they rejected schooling. Because the system had failed them and denied their intelligence, they would fail the system.

Using student level data as well as district documentation, Guerrero points to how the system fails to work for students who have been tracked by their EL classifications. Callahan (2005) came to similar conclusions in her empirical study of 355 EL-designated students. She concluded “that track placement is a better predictor of English learners’ academic performance than proficiency in English” (p. 305). She suggests that students’ placement in sheltered classes can result in less rigorous instruction, in which “English learners fail to acquire the grade-level academic and linguistic competency necessary to exit English learner/LEP programs. Systematic tracking of English learners results in a lack of access to high-quality content-area instruction, which in turn has linguistic, academic, and programmatic consequences” (pp. 306-307).

Similarly, Guerrero notes that because of academic requirements for redesignation, EL students must meet criteria to exit EL classifications that monolingual English-speaking students do not have to meet. Indeed, his observation mirrors what Linquanti (2001) has noted in “The Redesignation Dilemma”: The criteria used to designate into EL programs are not the same criteria that are needed to exit EL programs. In other words, while students are designated into EL programs because they presumably are not fluent in English, English language proficiency by itself is not enough to be reclassified. Once in the system, many students face challenges exiting (Valdés, 2001), and have the added disadvantage that they may not be exposed to the same rigorous curriculum—and yet, in many districts EL-designated students must demonstrate academic competence on norm-referenced state content area tests. Callahan describes this process as a “vicious cycle” where the knowledge needed to exit the program is not accessible by virtue of placement into the EL system. In addition to raising questions about track placements, particularly for long-term EL students, Callahan also points to the importance of teachers’ roles and quality instruction. Both Callahan’s and Guerrero’s work serves as a reminder that sheltered courses operate within a bureaucratic system that fails many students, many whom have been in the US since kindergarten and are still designated as EL in high school.

While Callahan presents a statistical analysis of this phenomenon, Guerrero’s observations convey the texture of classroom dynamics, along with his own role in these processes. Part of what makes Guerrero’s work so fascinating is:
(a) his observation of how a program such as Puente—designed to counter the negative effects of tracking and cultural divestment from traditionally marginalized youth—in fact serve as a sore point of reference for EL-tracked students who are not in the program and (b) his interrogation of his own practice and observations of how he approached ameliorating the effects of the sheltered stigma to create opportunities for students to re-invent themselves.

As an astute observer of his students, Guerrero began to notice that the very manifestations of shared identity (T-shirts, posters, logos) among Puentistas drove his long-term EL (LEL) students further away from him. Understanding the intricate identity work taking place, Guerrero eventually built classroom morale in his sheltered classes, but not without hard work and many setbacks. Ultimately he worked toward helping students build an alternative identity of their own choosing, using many of the techniques already in use in his Puente class, such as the development of sheltered class T-shirts with students choosing the terminology to identify their class association: fourth-block family. While the structure of the EL sheltered system still permeated, he worked to create a culture within his own classroom that chipped away at his students’ resistance toward school, which Guerrero saw as intimately connected to students’ general sense of helplessness by not being able to choose their own destinies in the same ways that Puente students were offered choices.

Guerrero’s work offers a powerful counter to Conchas’ work (2001) which shows how institutions structure success and failure for students. Conchas’ empirical study illustrates the parallels between students’ participation in distinct programmatic tracks and their academic orientations. While Guerrero and Conchas both point toward the ways that institutions sort students and how these sorting processes have consequences for students, Guerrero counters Conchas’ portrayal of teachers as falling in lock-step with their institutional niches; rather, Guerrero attempts to deepen his understanding of the processes underlying the surface manifestations. He offers an example of what teachers are able to accomplish with careful thought and observation, as well as action.

Sheltered Instruction—What Are the Costs?

Evidence from teachers’ accounts and prior research raise a critical question: To what extent does separating (or as Portes and Smagorinsky would say, “segregating”) students based on EL classifications make sense? What are the benefits? What are the costs? Is the sheltered stigma a small, temporary price to pay in the upheavals of migration that diminish over time as English proficiency is gained, or are there long-term consequences to such placements that contribute to school failure for EL students? In other words, are these placements a matter of short-term pain for long-term gain, or as Callahan (2005) has argued, an instance
of tracking that reduces students’ opportunities to learn? According to Linquanti (2001), the system of EL classification is highly problematic and fraught with dilemmas. While EL classification may provide access to services and resources to pay for them, “the concept of reclassification, as currently defined and implemented, cannot credibly carry this responsibility. In fact, it may actually be contributing to educational inequity, lack of accountability, and student failure” (p. 1).

The Problem of Categorization: “Mental Quantum Leaps” and Categories vs. Distance

The work of cognitive sociologist Zerubavel (1991, 1997) helps to uncover the workings of the category systems we use to describe students, especially EL students who must cross the divide between official EL and FEP categories; how do we classify and conceptualize students’ capabilities, which become formally bureaucratized through language proficiency tests, which then become the basis, along with other criteria, such as state achievement tests, for continuing the classifications and school placements?

While discussing the concept of “mental quantum leaps” Zerubavel (1991) writes:

Rites of separation help us dramatize the considerable magnitude of the mental gaps we create. …[T]he void we visualize among mental entities is nonetheless experienced as substantial. Crossing it therefore requires a significant mental effort and often involves giant mental quantum leaps. We generally become aware of boundedness and separateness long before we learn to pay attention to distance…[W]e inflate distances across boundaries; that is, between points that are located in supposedly separate chunks of space…A very short trip is thus perceived as monumental if it involves crossing some critical mental divide” (p. 24).

In essence, Zerubavel notes that we attend to category systems more than distance, even when the distance between two points is closer across categories than within them. Similarly, bureaucratic systems and individuals may attend to the EL/non-EL distinction more than potentially similar language levels across EL/FEP/EO categories. The distance between a long-term EL-classified student and an EO (English Only) student may in fact be closer in distance than between the same long-term EL-classified student and a recently arrived immigrant with emerging English speaking skills. And yet, within the system they are still on one side of “the great divide” with implications for which courses they have access to
and how their schedules are determined (i.e., Callahan, 2005; Olsen & Jaramillo, 1999).

Zerubavel also writes of the phenomenon of “lumping and splitting” that affects all category systems:

[D]istance is greatly affected by mental processes such as lumping and splitting. Whereas lumping involves playing down mental distances within entities, splitting entails widening the perceived gaps between entities so as to reinforce their mental separateness…. Given the gaps we visualize between calendar months, we…experience the interval from June 30 to July 1 as significantly longer than the one from July 1 to July 2…. This also affects the way we mentally cluster people…. In order to accommodate our experience of some fundamental difference between “us” and “them,” we likewise exaggerate in our mind “distances” across mental divides separating families, ethnic groups, religious denominations, races, species, and other chunks of identity from one another. (p. 27)

The processes of “lumping and splitting” within and across categories raise questions about whether the EL category, and its resulting course placements, should be split up or lumped together with other students. Is it the EL category itself that is problematic, or simply that it has not been properly “split?” At Adams High School, Mr. Newbury noted, the practice of splitting up EL students into distinct sheltered classes based on language proficiency levels (with a separation between beginning and intermediate/advanced students in distinct classes) resulted in more students “fepping” (or redesignating as Fluent English Proficient [FEP]) because teachers could better target instruction. Moreover, when this system was changed the following year by a new administration that lumped all EL students into the same sheltered courses, Mr. Clark (a colleague of Mr. Newbury’s) spoke of his decline of self-efficacy as he noticed that he was unable to attend to all students’ needs. In fact he felt he was failing to meet students’ needs when they were all lumped together rather than split within the EL category, demonstrating what many have noted about the heterogeneity within EL classes and within the EL classification (e.g., Callahan, 2005; Linquanti, 2001; Olsen & Jaramillo, 1999). This observation points to how even when EL students are in separate classes, teachers still need to develop abilities to work with heterogeneous populations, as the distance between beginners and advanced long-term EL students may be quite wide. Some may conclude that additional classifications (and hence more programmatic differentiation) are needed between levels. And yet Freedman, Delp and Crawford’s (2005) study within the context of de-tracking English classes would suggest that building teachers’ capacity to
teach in heterogeneous environments would be important, desirable and, with the proper teacher development, doable.

When EL Classifications are at Odds with the Possibility of De-Tracking Interventions

Importantly, the bureaucratic labeling of students has implications for what types of courses they may be placed in. Yet, as one EL coach at Washington High School reported, there was an effort underway to de-track LEL students in English classes and integrate them into mainstream classes. The English department had decided to focus on how to better educate long-term EL students who were not making progress in sheltered courses, even though placing LEL students in mainstream classes was a departure from the district’s policies:

Coach: The way our district plan is written is any child less than a level four has to be in a sheltered class, but what we’re looking at is we’re looking at those twos and threes who have been with us for six or seven years and haven’t gotten better in English. Okay, so they technically cannot go into an ELD class, in the English development class, because they’re beyond that, but our district plan says they cannot also go into a mainstream class, because their levels are so low.

DBD: So, they’re kind of in this limbo.

Coach: That’s right. So...their needs are very different than an ELD newcomer, because they know how to speak English and they know how to read English. They know how to write English. They just don’t do it at the level they’re supposed to be doing it at. So, what we did at the English department is we’re saying those kids need models. They need English models who will then push them, because we know that that works. We’ve seen it. We’ve seen it when kids were going to their intervention class and were not doing anything in their intervention class, but they went to their mainstream class, and they were doing fantastic, and the teachers said that. So, what we wanted to do is we wanted to try de-tracking them and not putting them in a sheltered class, but putting them in with the regular population and seeing what happens. (6/10/08)

The English department’s de-tracking efforts focused on mainstreaming LEL students into grade-appropriate English classes with teachers who had received additional training and coaching support. While the coach noted that the program
was not “perfect” and that “we still had teachers who needed help” in her estimation it was more effective than leaving students in sheltered courses. (English had been selected as a target because of the importance of developing written language in other disciplines). However, because this intervention went against district policy, ultimately the school had to revert to their prior method of sending all EL students, including LELs, into ELD and sheltered courses: “Our district plan says is that those twos – those kids who are below fours have to be in a sheltered classroom, no matter how long they’ve been in here, in the country or how long they’ve been in the system.” She noted that consequently LEL students who had previously been de-tracked were going to have to go back to sheltered English classes. She described her concerns for LEL students noting that they would “probably have the same issues.” Moreover, “they’re not going to have any models, you know, and, you know—what’s the level of expectation of the work from the teachers, you know, because they don’t have any models to show that this is the best work that you can do or this is how you should be doing things, because that’s grade-level work” (6/10/08).

From the coach’s perspective, the knowledge and capacity of the school to effectively educate its students was blocked by the district, either because of bureaucratic limits of what the district had to provide legally for EL-designated students, or perhaps because of the district’s lack of trust. In other words, the district may not have trusted teachers’ capacity to teach the partially integrated classrooms. Local knowledge and strategies were suppressed both out of fear of being “out of compliance” as well as because the district did not “trust that teachers will do what’s right for those kids in the classroom.” To the coach, this seemed especially tragic, both because she thought there were many “really quality teachers here” and because of students’ missed opportunities to have a broader range of exposure and opportunities to learn within the mainstream classrooms. And yet, as much of a proponent of de-tracking as Washington High School’s EL coach was, she noted that not all students should be mainstreamed; she felt that students who were at the lower levels of EL proficiency should be taught in a separate setting. For her de-tracking was especially important for students who had been in the “system” for many years without being redesignated as FEP. In essence she proposed that LEL students be split from the larger EL category and taught with mainstream students.

**Not Simply About Mainstreaming: The Lau Dilemma and Providing Access**

Given the costs of separating students into distinct EL tracks, what might be the reasons for keeping EL students, particularly those who are not LEL, in sheltered courses? All EL coaches interviewed felt strongly that sheltered EL courses were in fact necessary to provide additional accommodations for EL
students, particularly for EL students at the beginning and intermediate levels who were not LEL. Instructional coaches at different school sites (Roosevelt, Jefferson and Washington) noted that when EL students were mixed with other students, their needs were less likely to be met. When students were separated into sheltered courses, not only was it easier for teachers to make accommodations, they also could notice the kinds of issues that could impede students and address these. This very issue came up during an interview with an algebra teacher at Jefferson High School (3/20/08). The morning after she had assigned homework to both her sheltered and mainstream classes to “sketch the graph and then write the vertex,” she discovered that none of her EL students in the sheltered course had completed the assignment because they did not understand the directions, while students in her mainstream class had been able to complete the homework. She realized that prior to assigning the homework she needed to spend far more time explaining directions; because the prior examples she had provided asked students to “graph the equation” (with graph as a verb) rather than “sketch the graph” (with graph as a noun), she realized that she had not provided sufficient language support to enable EL students to do their homework. The reason why this became clear to her was because the discrepancy was so stark between classes. Had both EL and non-EL students been grouped together she may not have noticed the need for such specific language support.

Additionally, a teacher at Roosevelt High School raised another critical issue: the accrual of units toward graduation. When EL students are mainstreamed in content courses, she argued, they have a greater chance of failing classes (in spite of cases of social promotion). This renders EL students at risk for not graduating if they fail classes and do not accrue enough units (in addition to pressures from high school exit exams.)

While it is tempting to locate the problem in the separation/segregation of students, this in and of itself will not solve EL students’ difficulties. Mainstreaming all EL students does not make students’ needs go away or their cultural and linguistic resources show up more—particularly if they are recently arrived immigrants. If we consider mainstreaming as an option for all EL students (even those who are recently arrived), we need to justify how this would be different from a “sink or swim” approach, especially given the Lau v. Nichols supreme court decision (1974) which stipulated that sticking kids in the same classrooms with the same texts as other students did not constitute equality of opportunity.

Advocates fought for years to get away from a “sink or swim” approach. Mainstreaming has its problems, particularly when teachers do not modify instruction or understand the language demands embedded within their materials and fail to provide meaningful access for students. Even on a subtle level,
teachers may not notice patterns and think that students’ difficulties are individual problems rather than patterned and collective.

There is a similar debate that has been taking place within special education communities that is quite relevant to the dilemmas around EL placements:

Much of the debate that has occurred in special education over the past two decades has centered on its location. Although it is now widely recognized that what is important in special education is not so much where it takes place, but what takes place, it is also important not to forget that what takes place cannot be divorced from the environment in which it occurs. For example, opportunities for interactions with typical peers are likely to be fewer in the special school compared to the regular school, although simply being in the regular school does not guarantee that such interactions will take place, or that, if they do they will be frequent and positive (Jenkinson, 1997, p. 8).

**Complex Systems Interacting Within Local Contexts**

Institutional sorting mechanisms interact in complex ways with local contexts, including local teaching contexts. Depending upon how teachers interpret and read their students’ abilities and potential contributions as well as the areas in which students need assistance, teachers can contribute to the conditions for learning and re-classification for students to cross the line between EL and FEP, or their actions may confirm what students have internalized about sheltered classes from peers and prior teacher experiences that are negative and accumulate over time. As Weinstein notes (2002), teacher and institutional expectancies are complex and interlinked phenomena. While we have yet to pinpoint a precise model for such complex interactions, it is necessary to examine the shortcomings of the current classification system as well as teachers’ roles within it. At the same time, it is important to note variation within students’ interpretation of their program placements.

Not all students experienced the same degree and sense of stigma. As Guerrero notes, more recently arrived students defined being in sheltered classes differently than long-term EL students because for them it signified a move “up” away from ESL and a bit closer towards mainstream instruction. Furthermore, because their English proficiency levels were so different from long-term EL students, their conception of the sheltered courses figured in as a form of assistance rather than segregation or punishment. However, as Ms. Flores pointed out, although students may not initially have negative associations with sheltered courses, over time they may learn from their peers about these social distinctions.
In Olsen’s ethnography of immigrant high school students, she observed that the process of Americanization meant that over time, students moved “from nation to race” (1995, p. 58). Her analysis points to how immigrant-origin students’ initial conceptions of who they are come to change and are tied to social constructs, such as race, that are enacted and embodied in new settings. Olsen’s observations about the racialization process may provide a parallel model for thinking about the eventual shift and accrual of sheltered stigma for immigrant youth over time, as students learn about and eventually embody social distinctions. Moreover, if students are exposed to ineffective instruction and bureaucratic obstacles that result in their inability to exit EL programs, the conclusions students draw within these settings may be especially pernicious as they internalize ideas about their capabilities framed by their bureaucratic label.

In addition to the issue of how students learn and internalize sheltered stigma, it is important to consider how nationality-based, pan-ethnic, and racial stereotypes might intersect with sheltered stigma. Research by Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco empirically demonstrates that even recently arrived immigrants as young as nine years of age are aware of negative social perceptions associated with their countries of origin (2001, pp. 96-103). For example, Latino and Haitian youth in their sample were most likely to say, “‘Most Americans think that we are bad” (p. 96) when asked about how their co-nationals were perceived by Americans. Representative responses included “Most Americans think that we are stupid” and “Most Americans think we are garbage” (p. 97). It is likely that different levels of stigma (nationality-based versus school-based) interact in ways that make local labels more damaging to youth who already encounter negative stereotypes in their lives.

Possibilities and Limitations: Teachers’ Roles

For the teachers in this sample, noticing what students noticed about the sheltered label had implications for their teaching. Mr. Thomas interpreted the sheltered stigma to mean that mainstream and sheltered classes should be exactly the same in terms of content whereas Ms. Flores tried to address the issue by giving students an alternate definition of what sheltered meant and its connection to bilingualism—affirming that students know more than one language. Meanwhile Ms. Singh carefully framed her communication with students to help manage what she perceived as a self-esteem issue. Guerrero’s (2009) attention to creating alternative identity markers allowed students to attempt to re-imagine themselves in the space of his classroom, with new units of affiliation, represented by a newly-created and shared classroom name, visible to others through tee-shirts and signs, which helped build a new basis for community. In response to the question of social stigmas, teachers can help students better understand and
manage stigma as well as create the conditions within their classroom to support students’ content learning as well as their redesignation to Fluent English Proficient status.

**When “Sheltering” is a Verb**

While sheltered instruction has its problems, the instructional modifications themselves could potentially be beneficial, depending on how they are enacted. It may be useful to separate sheltering methods (for use in any classroom) from the practice of educating students in separate spaces. One teacher in my study, Ms. Harrison, consistently used “sheltering” as a verb to refer to actions (i.e., “You take something and shelter it and make it accessible [4/5/08]”). In essence, for Ms. Harrison, *sheltering* meant altering practice to provide necessary support for curricular access. Sheltered was not merely a student label but implied something that she had to change within her own practice. This method contrasted sharply with Mr. Thomas’ approach; he felt that he needed to stick to the same, or nearly the same activities in both classes. The actual act of modifying course work explicitly may promote distinctions, yet if students are in separate classes and teachers are not doing anything differently in their practice, students have only the consequences of segregation, without the potential benefits of an instructional approach that may help them improve. The idea is to figure out what instructional practices actually make instruction more meaningful and contribute to students’ learning, as well as their ability to redesignate. Walqui’s work (2000, 2006) provides much needed assistance here. Approaching the task of differentiation with multiple entry points for the same activity means that students of different levels can work simultaneously on the same projects (without making the distinctions more salient) while allowing students the opportunity to grapple with issues at their own levels. Additionally, Freedman, Delp and Crawford (2005) provide an important example of successful teaching in heterogeneous classrooms even though their work does not explicitly target EL students.

A key variable that mediates the type of “sheltered” instruction students receive is what teachers do within the space of these sheltered classrooms. Some students chose to stay in sheltered programs because they thought the quality of the teaching was actually better than what they would get in a mainstream classroom. Regardless of where students are placed, there is the question of what teachers do within those spaces.

And yet, beyond the teacher level there are a number of pressing questions that arise: What conditions would optimally support redesignation? What roles do schools, districts and larger infrastructures have in this? Are there mechanisms in place to review students’ academic histories? Do current teacher authorizations
and certifications provide teachers with the knowledge and training necessary to teach in heterogeneous classrooms? Do schools have the instructional capacity to provide quality instruction for all students, including EL students, in sheltered or mainstream classes?

**Implications**

Important ideological and symbolic battles are being fought, both internally as well as in the public space of the classroom, the school yard, and the larger community. Yet these battles are not only symbolic, as important as symbolic battles can be; they also have an institutional and bureaucratic life. While bureaucracies maintain and arbitrate who is designated “sheltered,” “English learner” and “Fluent English Proficient,” students also judge themselves and their peers on the basis of these originally bureaucratic labels. Adults also weigh in on the construction of this label, sometimes explicitly, by openly addressing the meaning of the label, at other times implicitly by the nature of the activities they organize within the spaces that are designated as sheltered. The bureaucratic labels eventually become collective identities (i.e., “we’re sheltered”) which can result in students’ diminished sense of self, thereby making the transition into mainstream courses even more difficult.

The complexity of the problem presents no easy solutions. What the sheltered label means for some EL students, particularly long-term EL students, is detrimental to their sense of self and contributes to their perception that they are not academically capable. Despite the intention of sheltered courses to provide students with accessible content in line with Civil Rights law, the very separation creates a situation where students can easily notice their distinctness and draw conclusions that reduce their sense of capability. However, teachers’ keen observations of their students reveal ways of minimizing the distances between what can be a social, bureaucratic and organizational abyss between the worlds of EL designation and Fluent English Proficient status for students.

Apart from mitigating the internalization of this bureaucratically-originated label, it is also critical to note that the sheltered label is intimately connected with other distinctions in US society. Moreover, stigmas associated with program placement intersect with other aspects of immigrants’ social location. In the words of Ms. Flores:

> What does it mean to be an immigrant in this country, especially if you come from south of the border? Unless that paradigm shifts, there’s always going to be this stigma attached to “sheltered” because you know that “sheltered” is a recent immigrant. And you know that class is probably filled with people that come from south of the border... So it’s
much broader than just in school. I think our school, our children, our students are a reflection of the society. (11/14/08)

Until EL students are reclassified, they are subject to additional labels and to the salience of the distinctions when placed in separate content courses for EL students—courses where they find themselves “constantly comparing.”
Chapter 6: Conclusion

Teachers contend with multiple and contradictory layers of policy as well as deeply entrenched social structures. And yet, examining teachers’ work with immigrant youth provides a focal point for understanding how concepts such as opportunity and access—filtered through many unequal structures and mechanisms—manifest in particular settings.

The purpose of this study has been to gain a greater understanding of teachers’ adaptive responses within particular institutional spaces of contact between teachers and immigrant-origin students. Within schools’ institutional responses to immigrant populations, teachers exercise their judgment, not only in how they respond to immigrants, but in how they enact the very idea embodied in the landmark Lau (1974) decision: modifications for access.

As demonstrated through this study, the nature of teachers’ responses varied greatly, meaning that teachers provided very different contexts of reception for immigrant-origin youth in their classrooms. Sometimes these variations occurred within the same school sites and within the same academic departments. However, teachers’ adaptations were not solely the result of individual choices. While it is easy to point to particular teachers in this study who provided very distinct opportunities for students in the spaces of their classrooms, even more important is understanding how the three interconnected dimensions articulated in the introductory chapter (institutional opportunities and constraints, teacher disposition, and teacher repertoire) mediated teachers’ adaptations and their work with immigrant youth.

Furthermore, the ways in which teachers were sorted within schools through teacher placements meant that larger institutional norms and practices were part of the process of reception. Moreover, teachers had to work with students’ conceptions of sheltered programs’ marginalized status—where students inhabited a world where they came to embody and internalize the very bureaucratic labels designed to serve them. In what follows I discuss key issues that emerged in each analytic chapter of the dissertation.

Discussion of Key Issues

Chapter 3: Teacher Assignment and Preference

Encounters between teachers and immigrant-origin youth in sheltered classes were structured by sorting processes within each school site that influenced which teachers would assume roles in specific institutionally-differentiated spaces. At the same time, some teachers had more leverage than
others to exercise their preferences for particular types of students and classes. This chapter’s contribution lies in how it examines the nexus between the mechanisms of course assignment on the one hand, and teachers’ preferences (or negative preferences) for sheltered courses on the other.

Patterns of teacher assignment were largely mediated by departmental norms of seniority, and in some cases, credentialing constraints, particularly in schools where insufficient numbers of teachers were authorized to teach EL students. As a result of these combined institutional constraints, newer teachers were most likely to be assigned to sheltered courses, unless more senior colleagues requested these classes.

Despite its prevalence, this pattern was by no means uniform across sites. In some cases administrators exercised greater control over course assignments than in others, either by strategically “vetoing” departments’ choices, or in one instance completely, by controlling all teacher placements. Analyses revealed how teaching placements were indeed political and, like other political matters, connected to the distribution of resources—in this case the distribution of teacher resources to different populations of students.

An additional contribution of this chapter is in its documentation of a range of teacher preferences for sheltered courses that complicate prior research (i.e., Olsen, 1997) which represented teacher preference as binary, with some teachers wanting to work with EL youth, and others resisting. Interview data (n=18) revealed that teachers’ preferences were distributed across a spectrum.

At the same time, survey data (N=43) presented a clear pattern that linked teachers’ rejection of EL placements with their subject matter. Social studies teachers had the highest rates of EL course rejections (57%) followed by English (43%) and science teachers (20%). These groups contrasted markedly with mathematics teachers, where none rejected EL courses (See Figure 3.2 for display). Essentially, teachers in more traditionally text-heavy disciplines were most likely to avoid EL placements. These results raise questions about how teachers managed the demands of texts in within traditionally text-heavy disciplines, as well as the relationship between subject matter and EL teacher preference.\(^5^4\)

The preference analyses build upon Olsen’s (1995, 1997) qualitative research and add an important dimension by considering how teachers’ subject context, as well as their repertoires, may contribute to teachers’ desires to teach or not to teach in sheltered classes.

\(^5^4\) This is not to say that mathematics does not have its own significant language demands (Lager, 2004; R. Gutiérrez 2002); the discrepancies between subject areas are not a matter of textual versus non-textual demands, but rather the nature, density, and obviousness to teachers of textual and linguistic demands within their subject contexts that mediate their preferences for EL courses.
Furthermore, while teachers’ initial willingness to teach EL courses certainly matters, it is insufficient to examine their preferences alone because: (a) the relationship between teachers’ willingness to teach EL courses and their ability to teach in these complex environments may be uneven, as demonstrated by Valdés (2001),\(^5^5\) (b) teachers’ preferences may change over time when initially enthusiastic teachers are confronted with the challenges of teaching EL youth if they do not have sufficient repertoires to be efficacious, and (c) teachers’ willingness to teach EL courses may not always be in EL students’ best interest, particularly when teachers’ preferences are guided by racialized notions of immigrant students’ respect and docility (in contrast to racialized notions of US-born youth), especially when a desire for classroom control supersedes teachers’ desire to create rich learning environments for students.

An underlying reason why teachers tended to prefer or dislike EL assignments was the extent to which they experienced classroom rewards (or dissatisfaction) as well as their sense of control in the classroom. The highly salient nature of intrinsic rewards is part of the structure of the teaching profession (Lortie, 1975). Understanding the structure of the teaching profession helps explain why an emphasis on classroom rewards is so important to teachers. The rewards of the classroom are the predominant “payoff” in a profession filled with uncertainties and relatively low financial compensation. Essentially, to understand teachers’ preferences, one must understand how teachers evaluate the rewards and challenges of their work.

Chapter 4: Teacher Adaptations in Social Studies Contexts

All 10 teachers in the social studies sample reported some type of instructional adaptation between their sheltered and mainstream courses. And, a majority of teachers in this sample (7/10) reported altering their preparation for sheltered courses (i.e., choosing different materials). Different types of preparation suggest that teachers are making modifications—the question then shifts to the nature and quality of teachers’ adaptations rather than their existence.

Teachers’ adaptations were classified into four categories: omissions, reductions, modifications and additions (For distributions across teachers see Figure 4.1). Omissions signaled that teachers eliminated content or a type of instructional practice; reductions represented teachers assigning less content, while modifications represented substitutions of one type of content, activity, or instructional method for another; additions resulted when teachers increased or

\(^{55}\) Valdés (2001) documents the case of a teacher of “goodwill” who, though enthusiastic about teaching EL students, did not have the repertoire to be able to teach them effectively.
added teaching strategies, content, type of assignment, language(s) of instruction or materials, or instructional methods.

The salience of text-related adaptations emerged across these adaptive categories, most heavily represented by teachers’ modifications, for example, in substituting mainstream textbooks with sheltered textbooks. Rumberger and Gándara (2004) note that one of the unequal conditions within EL schooling is teachers’ lack of access to modified materials; and yet, teachers within this sample commented on the poor quality of modified materials. This issue is also echoed in Gebhard’s research (2000) within elementary school contexts. Furthermore, in Gebhard’s study, poor materials were connected to widespread low expectations and a culture of seeing EL students as cognitively deficient (pp. 315-327). One must ask how students develop the ability to read challenging materials when they are systematically exposed to either impoverished materials on the one hand, or those that are intended for monolingual populations and may be greatly beyond their reading levels.

Research by Maniates (forthcoming) documents precisely how successful experienced teachers used their professional prerogative to adapt reading instruction materials within an elementary school context. This work points to the need for teachers to develop professional judgments about what students can do and sufficiently challenge them in order for students’ to develop.

One teacher within this study who demonstrated such professional prerogative was Ms. Harrison, an ESL teacher with over 20 years of experience who taught within the social studies department at her school. She not only re-wrote materials to make them accessible for her EL students, but also distributed her re-written materials to students in her mainstream class because she realized that her materials were clearer and in her view, better than the materials from the books she was using. In a contrasting case, a novice second-year teacher, Mr. Newbury, completely omitted novels from his sheltered cultural geography course because he did not know how to effectively use novels within his sheltered classes. As a first-year teacher, Mr. Newbury had tried to incorporate novels in his sheltered classes, but reported that he was unsuccessful. Subsequently he decided not to try, because of the limits of his repertoire. As a result, he felt a lack of efficacy that added to his frustration as a new teacher who genuinely wanted to make a difference but lacked the means to do so. These contrasting cases highlight the interconnectedness between teachers’ repertoires and the kinds of adaptations they made.

This is an issue that was also present in the case of an experienced focal teacher, Mr. Zamora. With Mr. Zamora’s dual background in teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) in community college and high school settings and a solid background in the discipline of history, his adaptations leveraged both areas to great effect. The best example of this was when he asked
Chinese-speaking students to translate Chinese language documents about the Japanese invasion of China preceding World War II. Using students’ languages had a disciplinary pay off; students’ languages could augment the classes’ understandings of multiple and contrasting perspectives: those embedded in the standardized textbook, and those alternative sources that offered differing perspectives—a key disciplinary aim within history.

His use of native language materials was distinct from novice teachers’ use of native language materials; his approach used “language as a resource” (Ruíz, 1984) for a disciplinary aim in which the ability to read sources in an original language framed students as the experts with the ability to decipher and contribute alternative perspectives. Meanwhile, the novice teachers who supplied L1 materials (Ms. Flores and Ms. Wosniak) did so in a compensatory fashion, in ways that Ruíz’s typology of language orientations would describe as “language as a problem.”

These findings also suggest that additional research within sheltered classrooms is needed that attends to the use of students’ native languages; in other words, although not labeled “bilingual education,” an examination of native language use within “sheltered” programs is also important because not only do some teachers use students’ native languages in these settings, but their use may have different effects.

Additionally, Mr. Zamora’s case also highlighted how teachers’ responses vary depending upon how they utilize, obtain, and interpret available information about their students. Rather than relying on CELDT (California English Language Development Test) data alone, Mr. Zamora obtained a fuller picture of his students’ language levels by developing additional reading and writing assessments and observing students closely in class. This contrasts greatly with teachers in Rossi’s (2009) study who used CELDT data as a proxy for students’ actual language levels, and who measured out limited doses of text according to prescriptive language units, rather than students’ actual language levels.

Assessing students’ language and literacy levels formed part of Mr. Zamora’s approach to understanding aspects of student heterogeneity within and across classes. Not only did he examine students’ writing and reading within sheltered classes, he did this in his mainstream classes as well. Because he had found so much variation between sheltered and mainstream classes, information gathering about students constituted a vital step that informed his subsequent steps.

Moreover, observing Mr. Zamora’s classes over the course of two different calendar years showed how he approached each sheltered class differently, reflecting the contingencies he spoke of in interviews. Essentially, Mr. Zamora’s case highlighted how adaptation fundamentally rests upon: (a) the quality of incoming information available about students (b) teachers’ sense-
making of that information, and finally (c) the repertoires that teachers have to draw on when making adaptations.

Chapter 5: Teachers’ Accounts of Student Experience in Sheltered Courses

An additional question that emerged in the process of analysis was how teachers perceived students’ experiences within sheltered programs. While only 3 of the 20 teachers in the sample offered unprompted accounts of their students’ perceptions, their accounts were similar, despite working at different sites. According to these accounts, students often had negative perceptions of sheltered programs, with long-term EL students (LEL) having especially negative views. Students internalized labels of sheltered class placements (i.e., “we’re sheltered”) and associated these classes with a lack of cognitive ability and stupidity. Furthermore, teachers’ accounts revealed the emergence of social boundaries (Zerubavel, 1991) and stigma (Goffman, 1963) associated with sheltered course placements, and in one case, the interconnections between sheltered programs and immigrant students’ racialized social location.

Importantly, embedded within each teacher’s account were descriptions of how teachers responded to and attempted to negotiate students’ stigmatized views of these programs. Although all three teachers reported that students had negative views, they responded to students’ perceptions in different ways. Teachers’ responses demonstrate how even within isolating structures and spaces, teachers participate in and attempt to broker students’ interpretations, sometimes by openly addressing these stigmatized views and presenting students with counter-narratives, and other times by modifying their instructional practices to minimize the perception of difference between mainstream and sheltered courses.

Teachers’ accounts correspond to other research that has highlighted the ways in which programs for immigrant-origin youth take on marginalized status as connected to their clientele. Valdés (2001) has referred to programs intended to serve EL students as “ESL ghettos.” The use of the term “ghetto” reflects not only the linguistic isolation of students, but also their marginalized status. Furthermore, Gebhard (2000) notes that students’ linguistic isolation and marginalized status has been confirmed in additional research and connects to reduced opportunities for EL students to develop academic English:

Olsen (1994, 1997), Harklau (1994), Little and Dorph (1998), and Gebhard (1998) have described how organizational structures, even ones euphemistically called the “International House” or the “Bilingual Family,” have the potential to box second language learners literally “in” and academic English literally “out.” As such the task of learning high-status varieties of English is often predicated on secondary students’
ability to negotiate their way out of these physically and culturally marginal spaces (p. 316).

This research builds on these prior studies, and adds an important dimension: how teachers at times attempt to broker the meanings of such programs, ironically to protect students from the negative meanings associated with “sheltered” classes.

**Interconnectedness of Issues and Analyses**

All three analytic chapters in this dissertation, when taken together, reveal the linkages between different yet critical domains with respect to educational opportunities for EL youth as well as the intersections between institutional opportunities and constraints, teacher disposition, and teacher repertoire. If one were to look only at Chapter 3 about the mechanisms of how teachers are sorted and assigned to teach EL courses, one may come to the conclusion that the problem is the inequitable distribution of teacher resources. If one were to only look at Chapter 4 about teachers’ adaptations between sheltered and mainstream courses, one may see how teachers’ different capacities, dispositions, and repertoires lead to distinct opportunities for students—particularly as connected to teachers’ use of texts. If one were to look only at Chapter 5, one might conclude that students, as well as their peers and teachers, assign meanings to and internalize bureaucratic labels often to students’ own detriment, and that the spaces created for EL students are marginalized spaces that are associated with a lack of cognitive ability. Taken together, these chapters contribute to an understanding of the complexities within immigrant schooling, which reach both within and across teachers’ classrooms and school sites, ultimately affecting immigrant-origin youth.

The marginality of immigrant schooling manifests through teacher sorting mechanisms that place those with the least amount of experience into EL courses (with some exceptions). However, dispositional elements of preference also come into play in this process.

Increasingly recognizing the need to adapt, teachers often do—particularly within text-heavy contexts. But the nature of teachers’ repertoires influence whether their adaptations look more like Mr. Zamora’s (which enhance students’ opportunities) or more like Ms. Mueller’s (which limit exposure to rigorous curriculum.) As such, expressions of marginality materialize through the pedagogical resources that teachers have to offer their students. And, the patterns connected to the distribution of teacher resources have cumulative effects (Ferguson and colleagues, cited sein Bransford et al., 2005).
Implications for Immigration Studies Research

Teachers’ different adaptations presented different contexts for immigrant and EL youth, some of which jeopardized access, while others created opportunities for engagement with important disciplinary ideas. These differences occurred even within the same school site. Recall that Ms. Mueller and Mr. Zamora worked side by side within the same department, nearly next door to one another, yet each teacher offered their students very distinct opportunities within their classrooms. These differences suggest that examining school-level indicators alone may be insufficient for capturing the nuances of local contexts of reception and how they vary.

The import of this study is not only in its findings-- it is also in its theoretical approach to grounding “contexts of reception” work within specific sites where teachers, as members of the host society, systematically come into contact with immigrant-origin youth and fulfill particular roles and functions as “institutional agents” (Stanton-Salazar, 2001). As Marrow notes (forthcoming), contexts of reception have been “broadly conceptualized or ambiguously operationalized in ways that make it difficult to understand how processes of immigrant inclusion and exclusion play out at the micro level” (pp. 3-4). There is a need not only to connect broad notions of context to geographical shifts (i.e., new destinations), but also specific institutional contexts, and to agents within those specifically defined contexts who are in positions to confer institutional resources. More research is needed that analyzes: a) how institutional agents mediate access to resources affecting immigrant-origin youth, and b) how institutional agents represent and shape local contexts of reception. These research foci contribute an intermediate level of analysis between immigrants themselves and larger structures and institutions within host societies.

A focus on teachers does not negate the importance of structures and policies-- it represents an opportunity for investigating complex negotiations within the manifestations of competing policies and structures and how they are ultimately expressed, managed, dealt with within the context of human relations that are framed by particular roles within institutional spaces. If the framework is one of contexts of reception, who then, specifically, are the hosts? How do they interpret and enact their roles within spaces that structure relationships between immigrant-origin youth and members of the host society? Why not look to the spaces of reception, how the metaphorical table has been set, as well as the hosts and their dynamic interactions with guests, as they fulfill their roles?56 Within

56 Like any metaphor, the metaphor of receptions, hosts, and guests works to a point. It is meant to push thinking towards spaces of social interaction and production; however the use of the term “guests” is not intended to reify notions of immigrants as temporary visitors.
Immigration Studies then, research can systematically analyze the roles and impacts of *hosts* with an eye toward understanding the nature of contact between hosts and immigrants: how this contact is structured, how this contact plays out dynamically, and ultimately, how it connects to immigrants’ incorporation or exclusion within the host society.

Such a move would push research toward an examination not merely of context but also of *contact*. And yet, a focus on contact is difficult. It is not simply about the search for indicators—as important as they are for outlining the contours of unequal patterns—it is also about understanding the dynamic forces within these spaces of contact. Research with a focus on contact would push toward more dynamic and nuanced understandings of both immigrants and the host society. For even though contexts of reception research attempts to apply a corrective to the exclusive focus on immigrants’ characteristics, it still ultimately focuses on contexts in order to explain immigrants’ trajectories. Moving toward notions of contact would involve a conceptual two-way street—understanding not only how the host society’s contexts of reception affect immigrants’ trajectories, but also the impacts of immigration on the host society. One example of this work is Marrow’s (forthcoming) research on Latino immigration to the American South and its relationship to the US color line. To exclusively focus on immigrants’ integration—as important as it is—misses a vital opportunity to examine how immigration reshapes the host society.

**Implications for Immigrant and Language Minority Schooling**

Teachers’ impacts have been historically under-appreciated within research on the education of children of color from poor and working class families, largely beginning with the Coleman Report’s conclusions in the 1960s (Bransford, Darling-Hammond, and LePage, 2005; Haycock, 1998). Similarly, within the sphere of immigrant schooling, Ogbu’s early fieldwork (1974) that highlighted the importance of historical modes of incorporation (and formed the bases for his subsequent influential typologies of “voluntary” and “involuntary minorities” [1978]), also contributed to underestimating the role of teachers and schools. However, with recent shifts across distinct research communities, teachers are assuming increasingly prominent roles, whether in studies showing the significant relationships between teacher quality and student achievement (e.g., Ferguson and colleagues, cited in Bransford et al., 2005, pp. 13-15) or in critical appraisals of teachers’ roles within social capital frameworks (e.g., Stanton-Salazar, 2001; Valenzuela, 1999).

As noted earlier, one of this study’s contributions is in its focus on three interrelated dimensions for understanding teachers’ work with immigrant youth: teacher disposition, teacher repertoire, and institutional opportunities and
constraints. Over the course of this research, the need for understanding these dimensions in all their depth and complexity became clear. The case of Mr. Thomas, for example, highlights this. Mr. Thomas might be described as “highly qualified” with his teaching credential, TESL certification, and deep content knowledge facilitated by his graduate level studies within the discipline of history. In terms of disposition, researchers might have attended to the ways in which he not only taught EL courses, but did not accept EL students’ marginal status at his school and attempted to disrupt students’ notions of sheltered courses as being less cognitively demanding. Moreover, his attempts to talk with the school principal to find out about how to restructure EL courses might lead some to see Mr. Thomas as a teacher who was going against the grain—a resister of the social order. All of these observations are valid, and yet, observational data revealed that there were gaps within his repertoire concerning classroom management that resulted in a chaotic classroom that had implications for students’ access to learning opportunities. Despite Mr. Thomas’ many strengths as a teacher, his lack of classroom management meant that students did not have opportunities to learn within this space, even with his creative curriculum plans, multiple certifications, good will, and refusal to accept the dominant ways his school framed EL students.

I also highlight Mr. Thomas’ case because of how my perceptions of his repertoire shifted and deepened with the triangulation of data. Despite the appearance of some aspects of his repertoire through surveys and interview data, the gaps in repertoire would not have been evident had I not visited his classroom. The discrepancy between what I had perceived as his repertoire based on interview data, certifications, years of experience, and advanced degrees versus what I encountered when visiting his classroom also has implications for future research; future research must look at sites of practice rather than exclusively at indicators such as years of experience or credentials.

Katz’s qualitative study (1999) also illustrates the complexities of the three interlocking dimensions. Katz presents the case of an experienced and award-winning ESL teacher, who would be described as having a high repertoire, yet she was perceived as racist by her Latino students. However, Katz also highlights how the institutional structures within the school contributed to policies that reinforced racial inequalities. Both Katz’s study and this current work demonstrate that looking only at one dimension (i.e., repertoire or institutional constraints) is insufficient for constructing more complex understandings of teachers’ work within immigrant and language minority schooling.

At the same time that teachers’ roles are becoming more visible in research on immigrant and language minority youth, there are important institutional issues highlighted by this dissertation that call for further investigation.
Institutional marginalization and connections to tracking.

As noted earlier, this study confirms prior research that has documented the marginalized status of EL programs (i.e., Gebhard, 2000; Katz, 1999; Olsen, 1997; Valdés, 2001). Importantly, Gebhard’s (2000) research also documents an exception to this pattern. Additional research is needed in order to understand the ways in which programs can simultaneously meet EL students’ needs without the potentially marginalizing effects of these programs. Both Callahan (2005) and Guerrero (2009) draw comparisons between the programs meant to serve EL youth and systems of tracking (Oakes, 1985). These parallels raise additional questions for research: Under what circumstances do EL programs take on the features of tracking? Under what circumstances do they depart from systems of tracking? Are tracking effects equal for all EL students, or as Guerrero suggests, are they particularly pernicious for long-term EL students whose “temporary” designations become increasingly “permanent?” In designing programs for EL youth, Gold (2006) emphasizes two vital points: (a) “separate settings are justified when and only when the access to education is strengthened through such settings” and (b) “such separation should occur only ‘temporarily,’ that is, for a reasonable but limited length of time” (p. 1).

Under what circumstances, then, do programs meet the needs of EL students without placing them at risk for the harmful effects associated with isolation and segregation? How can a more additive approach make use of students’ linguistic and cultural resources and provide improved access to academic opportunities, particularly at the secondary level? Gold (2006) notes specific ways of countering the isolation of EL youth, including: scheduling students into some integrated classes where appropriate, team teaching across sheltered and non-sheltered courses of the same content, and the placement of EL students in courses where they can excel, such as AP Spanish, and “serve as mentors and resources for English Only students” (p. 3).

The need to understand relationships between EL redesignation and content matter.

A focus on designation and redesignation procedures is critical, including the relationship between redesignation and academic achievement in content areas. Linquanti’s (2001) analysis of the redesignation process raises significant questions about the extent to which current mechanisms of testing and classification contribute to school failure for language minority students. In his review of seven districts’ procedures for EL redesignation, Linquanti noted that the criteria for designation into EL systems are not the same criteria for exiting EL systems. Learning English is not enough. If students do not demonstrate some
level of academic achievement in content areas (usually with grades of C or higher and norm-referenced test score percentiles between 33-40%) they may be barred from exiting the EL classification system, which in turn affects the types of classes they are able to take.

One of the contributions of this study is that it highlights how access to content may be increased or jeopardized depending upon who fulfills the roles of teaching content to EL students. Research is urgently needed that examines the ways in which content, in addition to English proficiency, intersects with students’ opportunities to redesignate. This is especially the case because, as Callahan notes (2005), a common presumption is that English proficiency is what blocks students’ access to increased educational opportunities. Yet, in her quantitative study, English proficiency did not predict academic achievement as much as track placement did. Lack of access to academic content, which she attributes in part to a lack of rigor within sheltered programs, intersect with institutional systems that systematically disadvantage students, particularly long-term EL students who are placed into the system and cannot get out, thus subjecting them to conditions where they are framed as “English learners” when they have been “learning English” for seven years or more.

Heterogeneity in EL populations and credentialing mechanisms.

Part of why EL students may be having problems with redesignation is that teachers working within sheltered programs may not be properly prepared to teach them, particularly given the heterogeneity of EL students. While all teachers in this sample were “highly qualified” according to state and national standards, the variability in teachers’ responses to EL students suggests that current definitions of teacher quality are insufficient (Guillen, 2009). Furthermore, “highly qualified teachers” for the general education population may not necessarily be “highly qualified” for English learners (Gándara & Contreras, 2009 p.147), despite the similarities in credentialing processes.

Furthermore, CLAD (Crosscultural Language and Academic Development) credentialing is intended to prepare teachers for teaching intermediate-level EL students, yet as documented by this study, CLAD credentialed teachers are increasingly coming into contact with beginning-level students. Either credentialing must be changed or expanded to include beginning-level instruction, or assignment policies at school sites should shift so that teachers who are not prepared to teach beginners are not assigned to teach them. However, in looking at redesignation data, a key concern is the “intermediate plateau” many EL students reach and never surpass (Walqui, 2009). As such, an understanding of the unique challenges of different language and literacy levels is
important in making sure that teachers are prepared to teach and recognize the heterogeneity within and across sheltered and non-sheltered programs.

According to Zeichner (2003), “the preparation to teach English language learners consistently comes up as one of the lowest-rated items on follow-up studies of teacher education program graduates” (p. 494). Perhaps this is because, as Walqui (2009) notes, CLAD training tends to be generic and non-subject specific. More systematic study of CLAD programs and their relationship to teacher quality within specific subject matter areas is needed.

While credentialing programs often serve as a beginning to teachers’ professional development, they are by no means an end. Given the complexity of repertoires needed to effectively teach heterogeneous EL populations, the nature of teachers’ professional development opportunities specifically related to EL instruction in both language and content areas must also be investigated. According to Rumberger and Gándara (2004), the lack of access to quality professional development constitutes one of the conditions of inequality for EL students’ achievement.

**Future Directions: From Contexts of Reception to Contexts of Development**

In examining the intersection of Immigration Studies and educational research, it is necessary to enter the terrain of “contexts of reception” but not stop there. Although a reception-oriented framework may be sufficient when examining those who inhabit the host society more generally, a reception framework is insufficient within the realm of immigrant schooling because educational institutions are charged with the task of providing all students with opportunities to learn. If we are truly interested in changing the status quo, we must shift from a focus on reception to one of the optimal development of immigrant youth. Teachers and educational institutions have a vital role in this process, as do educational researchers.

According to a former California State Department of Education official I interviewed, the development of sheltered programs was driven in part by Krashen’s theories of “comprehensible input” (1985). The State had a role in disseminating Krashen’s research, and the idea of providing sheltered courses seemed all the more important in light of this theory that emphasizes the importance of teachers’ modified “inputs.” While state officials may not be proponents of Krashen’s work currently, the underlying basis for sheltered programs still follows a logic of the centrality of teacher inputs rather than a logic that is more consistent with the advances that the field of applied linguistics has made in the 20 years since Krashen proposed this theory.

Current shifts toward sociocultural approaches in language learning follow a fundamentally different logic where “ecological affordances” rather than
mechanistic metaphors of “inputs” take precedence (Kramsch, 2002). These shifts to dynamic ecological models of conceptualizing language development in the field of applied linguistics have profound implications for the underpinnings of language minority programs that are constructed as “sheltered.” Within sheltered programs, an underlying idea is that “inputs” must be carefully controlled (and hence students must be separated by classes so that they receive the appropriate teacher “inputs”). If we shift to more ecological perspectives of language development, EL program designs become less about providing the right inputs, and more about providing complex and rich learning environments with varying levels of support. As Walqui and van Lier (in press) have outlined, within these more nuanced conceptualizations of language learning, teachers still have important roles, particularly in the extent to which they can skillfully scaffold complex instruction. Walqui (2006) has also noted that scaffolding includes not only planning curricular structures, but also adapting to what students say and do from moment to moment. Skillful, nuanced, and contingent teacher adaptations, then, form part of the intricate ecologies of opportunity to assist students’ development.

Examining the variation within contexts of reception is not enough. We must simultaneously work on many levels, including local levels where the possibilities and constraints embedded in teachers’ roles are expressed and experienced by youth. We must also call for critical attention to our society’s collective priorities with respect to immigrant schooling. Valdés (2001) observes that we have choices to make, by either ignoring the political nature of immigrant schooling or by directly addressing it. However, “if what we want…is to develop the full intellectual potential of all our citizens and future citizens, the challenge before us is enormous. We must plan carefully, and we must work quickly” (p. 159). We do not have a moment to spare.
References


Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC), State of California, CLAD Certificate, http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/cl628c.pdf (retrieved 1/7/09)


Appendix A: Teacher Instrumentation

Teacher Interview Protocol

Teacher Code: _______ Date: __________   School Code: ______

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with me. As you know, I am interested in learning more about your work with immigrant students, especially those learning English. I am especially interested in understanding how you go about your work, what kind of constraints are present in your work (in general and with immigrant students) as well as what kind of supports you have to do your job. I'm also interested in knowing more about your school, including your student population and your department. Everything you say will be kept confidential, and all information will be de-identified. Please feel free to share your thoughts as honestly as possible. Your candid responses will help me understand more about your work.

*1. [Read before opening paragraph] Before we get started, could you tell me a little bit about how you came to teach?
   a. How did you come to teach at this school?
   b. *What’s it like to teach here?
   c. How would you describe your preparation to teach your subject?
   d. What about for teaching SDAIE or sheltered courses?

*2. Could you list each of the classes you teach here on this sheet? How would you describe these classes? [If no indication ask the following:]
   a. Which classes are SDAIE/sheltered periods?
   b. Could you tell me a bit about the students in each class? [class as a whole]
   c. Think of a student who is doing well in your [x] period. Could you tell me about them? Think of a student who is struggling. Could you tell me about them? [Repeat for non-sheltered course if time].
   d. What would you say are the language levels within each class?
   e. Where do immigrant students predominate (those born abroad)?
   f. Where are they from? How did you discover where they are from?

*3. How did you end up with the classes that you teach?
   a. Is this typical for your department?

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57 Due to teachers’ extended responses to many questions, I developed a strategy of focusing on asterisked questions during interviews, and only asking additional questions if there was time.
b. How does your department decide to offer SDAIE/sheltered classes (for example, which courses and how many sections)?
c. In your ideal schedule, what classes would you teach? Why?

4. How do different students end up in your classes?
   a. What if there’s a student who doesn’t belong? What do you do?
   b. Where do students go after they take your class?

*5. What are you doing in your period # ____[SDAIE/sheltered class(es)] today?
   What are you doing in your period # ____[non-sheltered class(es)] today?
   a. How does what you are doing this week sit within your unit?
   b. What are you hoping that your students will understand?
   c. How are they doing in meeting your goals? Why do you think that?
   d. What about the curriculum is difficult for students? How do you help students with these difficulties?

*6. How do you decide what to teach in your classes? [Probe for 1 sheltered/ 1 non-sheltered class]
   a. Is SDAIE/Sheltered (period #x) a different prep? How do you prep for each class [for your period #__ class and your period #__ class?]
   b. Given that you have these different classes, how does this affect your planning? How about your instruction?
   c. Are you able to cover the same content in both?

7. What textbook do you use? What do you think about your textbook?

8. Some teachers modify their curriculum or instruction for different students. Other teachers think that all kids should be doing the same thing. What do you think? [If answer is affirmative, probe for examples]

9. In any job there are always some sorts of limitations. What kinds of things limit you or challenge you in your work with immigrant students? With all students? Where do you get the resources to respond to such challenges?

10. Is there anything you would like to add that I didn’t ask you about, especially about teaching immigrant students or English learners?

11. Could you suggest others who might be interested in talking with me?
Additional Questions (if time permits):

12. Imagine that a new teacher has come to your department and you are her mentor. She has just been assigned a sheltered class. What would you tell her about how to teach a sheltered class (as compared to a mainstream class)?
   Probe-a: What do you think she would need? How would she get support?
   Probe-b: What would you have to offer her?

13. If there was something you could change about your work here at this school, what would it be?
Teacher Questionnaire

Please fill out this confidential questionnaire. Thank you!
Should you have any questions, feel free to ask.

Teacher Code:_____ Date:_____

I. Professional Experience and Credentials

1. What grades and subjects have you taught?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. How many years have you been teaching? ______

3. How many years have you been working with immigrant students or ELLs? ______

4. Education: Bachelor’s Major: ______ Year Obtained ______

5. What teaching credential(s) do you hold? □ Multiple Subj. □ Single Subj.
   List Subject:______
   Year Completed ________

6. Year Completed ________

7. Credentialing Institution ______________

8. What other credentials, authorizations or degrees do you hold, if any?: (i.e., BCLAD, Special Ed or Master’s degree, other degrees, etc.)__________________________

9. How well did your credential program prepare you to teach English learners (ELLs)?
   □ Excellent Preparation □ Good Preparation □ Fair Preparation □ Poor Preparation □ N/A -No preparation at all
   Comments:____________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

II Current Work

1.a. How many hours do you spend on all teaching and other school-related activities
during a typical full week at this school? (include hours spent before, during, and
after school and weekends) Total weekly hours ______

b. How many preps do you have? ______

c. How many hours do you spend preparing for instruction in a typical week? ______

d. How many hours do you spend with students outside of class time (including
   tutoring, advising, activities, phone calls, etc.) in a typical week?________

Note: Some items were used or adapted from the Center for Research on the Context of
Secondary School Teaching OERI (Office of Educational Research and Improvement) 1991
and some items were used or adapted from Lee & Smith (2001). The survey font has been reduced to be in
accordance with dissertation formatting submission requirements.
2. How prepared do you feel you are to teach your subject currently? 
   *Please circle one of the numbers below.*

3. How prepared do you feel you are to teach English learners currently? 

4. To what extent do you feel successful in providing the kind of education you would like to provide for students in your SDAIE/Sheltered Classes? 

5. To what extent do you feel successful in providing the kind of education you would like to provide for students in your mainstream (or other non-SDAIE) classes? 

6. How many students do you have in your SDAIE/Sheltered classes this year (average, per class)? _____

7. How many students do you have in your non-SDAIE classes this year (average, per class)? _____

### III Teacher Control

Please circle the number that most closely represents your situation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How much actual control do you have in your classroom at this school over the following areas of your planning and teaching?</th>
<th>no control</th>
<th>minor control</th>
<th>moderate control</th>
<th>a great deal of control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Selecting textbooks and other instructional materials</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Selecting content, topics, and skills to be taught</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Selecting teaching techniques</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Evaluating and grading students</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Disciplining students</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Determining the amount of homework to be assigned</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV Support</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. My department supports me to do my job</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My department supports me to teach English learners</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My administration supports me to do my job</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My administration supports me to teach English learners</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V Bureaucratic and Institutional Constraints

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV Support</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I have to follow rules at this school that conflict with my best professional judgment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My teaching load reduces my ability to teach as effectively as I would like (because of number of classes or number of students)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Necessary materials such as textbooks, supplies, and copy machines are available as needed by the staff.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VI Teaching and Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV Support</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teachers make a difference in students’ lives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I work to create lessons students will enjoy learning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I work to create lessons which are tied to state content standards</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Student misbehavior interferes with my teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VII Curriculum & Instruction

<table>
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<tr>
<th>IV Support</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. If some students in my class are not doing well, I feel that I should change my approach to the subject</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I am philosophically opposed to changing curriculum or instruction for different students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Curriculum materials (textbooks, books, AV, etc.) for a given course should be different for classes with different achievement levels</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### VIII External Influences on Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I am encouraged to experiment with my teaching (in my department, by my administration or by others)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>State content standards have had a positive influence on my teaching.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Testing does not affect my instruction or choice of content</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I feel pressured to cover standards based content that appears on tests</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Departmental or School policies influence my instructional choices</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>District decisions or policies influence my instructional choices</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>State or national policies influence my instructional choices</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### IX Support and Assistance

What types of assistance for teaching English learners are available at your school?

*(Mark all that apply)*

1. Instructional aides in my classroom:
   - Available ☐ YES ☐ NO *(If yes, continue to b. If no, skip to 2)*
   b. How often do you use this?
      - ☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Once in a While ☐ Never
   c. How useful is this?
      - ☐ Very Useful ☐ Useful ☐ Not Really Useful ☐ Not Useful At All

2. Release time for planning or collaborating or to visit classrooms at my school or at other schools:
   - Available ☐ YES ☐ NO *(If yes, continue to b. If no, skip to 3)*
   b. How often do you use this?
      - ☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Once in a While ☐ Never
   c. How useful is this?
      - ☐ Very Useful ☐ Useful ☐ Not Really Useful ☐ Not Useful At All
3. Professional development about teaching ELL students:
   Available □ YES □ NO (If yes, continue to b. If no, skip to 4)
   b. How often do you use this?
      □ Very Often □ Sometimes □ Once in a While □ Never
   c. How useful is this?
      □ Very Useful □ Useful □ Not Really Useful □ Not Useful At All

4. School coaches (or district coaches) who offer targeted help for ELL instruction:
   Available □ YES □ NO (If yes, continue to b. If no, skip to 5)
   b. How often do you use this?
      □ Very Often □ Sometimes □ Once in a While □ Never
   c. How useful is this?
      □ Very Useful □ Useful □ Not Really Useful □ Not Useful At All

5. Alternative text books or supplemental curricular materials for use with ELL students
   Available □ YES □ NO (If yes, continue to b. If no, skip to 6)
   b. How often do you use this?
      □ Very Often □ Sometimes □ Once in a While □ Never
   c. How useful is this?
      □ Very Useful □ Useful □ Not Really Useful □ Not Useful At All

6. Books, Binders or other Materials about teaching ELLs (i.e., teaching strategies, assessment)
   Available □ YES □ NO (If yes, continue to b. If no, skip to 7)
   b. How often do you use this?
      □ Very Often □ Sometimes □ Once in a While □ Never
   c. How useful is this?
      □ Very Useful □ Useful □ Not Really Useful □ Not Useful At All

7. Funds for resources, special projects or field trips for ELLs or that can be used for ELLs
   Available □ YES □ NO (If yes, continue to b. If no, skip to 8)
   b. How often do you use this?
      □ Very Often □ Sometimes □ Once in a While □ Never
   c. How useful is this?
      □ Very Useful □ Useful □ Not Really Useful □ Not Useful At All

8. Other forms of support from school or district: (please list)
   Or: □ N/A If no others skip to 9
   b. How often do you use this?
      □ Very Often □ Sometimes □ Once in a While □ Never
   c. How useful is this?
      □ Very Useful □ Useful □ Not Really Useful □ Not Useful At All
9. Are there any forms of support you do not have, but wish you did? (for ELL students or in general)
____________________________________________________________________

10. What kinds of support are most important for your work?
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

11. Where do you get support for your teaching (if at all)?____________________

XI Personal Background:

1. Where were you born?  (If born in the U.S. skip a.)________________________
   ➔a. If born abroad, how old were you when you came to the US to live?_______

2. What country were your parents born in? Mother _________    Father ________

3. How do you identify your ethnic background? ____________________________

4. What was your first language(s) or dialect?______________________________

5. Do you speak other language(s)?   □ YES □ NO
   ➔If yes, please specify your degree of proficiency (in reading, writing, speaking):
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

6. Would you be interested in participating in a follow-up study?
   □ YES        □ NO        □ MAYBE

If you have any comments you would like to add about your teaching or about any of the topics addressed in the interview or questionnaire, feel free to discuss them or note them below.

Thank you for your participation!
Appendix B: Administrator Interview
Administrator Course Scheduling and Teacher Assignment Interview

I’m really grateful for your time. I’m hoping that you can educate me about a process that I’m trying to understand more about: How classes are assigned in the master schedule, what role the department plays, what courses teachers tend to prefer and what you’ve noticed in the process. I’m also interested in understanding the dilemmas you face as you work to create a schedule and assign teachers, particularly for EL sheltered/SDAIE content courses. Feel free to be as honest as possible: *All responses are confidential*

1 a. To what extent do academic departments decide teacher scheduling assignments?
   - No/Little Decision-Making
   - Some Decision-Making
   - Most Decision-Making
   - All or Nearly All Decision-Making

   □ 0-19% □ 20-49% □ 50-89% □ 90-100%

b. Please explain the departments’ role.

c. If departments have input, how do they make these decisions? Do you see differences in how courses are distributed in different departments? If so, please describe.

2 a. To what extent do administrators decide teacher scheduling assignments?
   - No/Little Decision-Making
   - Some Decision-Making
   - Most Decision-Making
   - All or Nearly All Decision-Making

   □ 0-19% □ 20-49% □ 50-89% □ 90-100%

b. If you have a role in scheduling:
   - What are your priorities when placing teachers?
   - What guides your decisions?

c. What are your main considerations when placing teachers to teach sheltered/SDAIE courses?

3. To what extent do teachers’ preferences figure into the process?

4. a. Have you noticed trends or patterns in teachers’ preferences?
   b. What classes tend to be unassigned or unstaffed after teachers submit preference sheets?

5. a. Have you noticed any patterns around teacher preferences for EL courses in the subject areas (i.e. strong preference [for or against], mild preference [for or against], or neutral in math, science, social studies or English)?
   b. Are certain subjects harder to staff for EL courses? If so, which ones?
6. a. What dilemmas or challenges do you face when placing teachers (if any)?
   b. What dilemmas or challenges do you face when staffing EL courses in the content areas (if any)?

7. Are there other comments about teacher assignments, staffing, or EL issues at your school that you would like to share?

*Thanks for your time!*
Appendix C: Definitions and Evidence for Key Dimensions

Headings in bold represent some of the major etic categories, with bullets indicating examples of what was coded as evidence of the main category. Italics signal definitions.

1. Institutional opportunities and constraints- Departmental, school, district or state policies, rules and norms that intentionally or unintentionally regulate behavior or outcomes. Also, the provision (or lack of provision) of material resources, physical space, and structures which potentially enhance or detract from opportunities to teach, learn, or interact.
   - funding for alternative texts, projects, field trips (opportunity)
   - professional development (opportunity)
   - release time for collaboration with other instructors and/or mentors (opportunity)
   - over-enrollment/excessive teaching load (constraint)
   - standardized testing pressures (constraint)
   - lack of autonomy (constraint)
   - departmental and school norms (opportunity or constraint)
   - credentialing procedures (opportunity or constraint)

2. Teacher disposition- Teachers’ disposition toward students (especially immigrant, EL, and youth of color) as well as their disposition toward work (their sense of obligation, responsibility and investment).
   - preference and commitment to teach sheltered classes
   - comments which signal a particular stance toward students’ families, countries of origin, or home languages
   - room displays which convey cultural knowledge or stance toward culture
   - open hours at lunch, afterschool or advising extracurricular clubs, programs, etc.
   - willingness and interest in providing Stanton-Salazar’s (2001) forms of support: advocacy, mentoring, bridging differences, emotional support and feedback
   - comments which signal commitment to students or student achievement
   - hours spent preparing for classes
   - comments which signal responsibility, obligation or investment in work, school, or department
   - meeting with colleagues to mentor or get mentoring during prep periods or afterschool
3. Teacher repertoire- Teachers’ collected range of knowledge and experience from a variety of sources (teacher education, work experience, life experience, as well as access to distinct “funds of knowledge” for teaching) that teachers can draw upon to plan and enact their teaching practice and potentially create opportunities to learn.

- years of teaching experience
- years of teaching experience with immigrant and EL youth
- cultural and linguistic knowledge relating to students’ home cultures and languages as well as access to communities’ “funds of knowledge” (Moll et al., 1992).
- pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1986) of core subject (knowing the most powerful ways of conveying content as well as where students are likely to encounter difficulties in understanding subject matter)
- depth of content knowledge embodied in activities and materials
- ability to enact multiple and varied assessments and discern information from these assessments that contribute to instruction
- use of multiple modalities for understanding (visual, kinesthetic, etc.)
- ability to provide students with multiple entry points
- knowledge and ability to structure classroom participation in a variety of ways