

QUALITY OF LIFE CHANGES IN ADULT LITERACY LEARNERS:
UNDERSTANDING THE PERCEIVED IMPACT OF AN ADULT LITERACY
PROGRAM IN SOUTH TEXAS

A Dissertation

by

MARY V. GLEASON

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This dissertation meets the standards for scope and quality of
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and is hereby approved.

Daniel Pearce, Ph.D., Co-Chair

Frank Lucido, Ed. D., Co-Chair

Kamiar Kouzekanani, Ph. D.
Committee Member

Karen Paciotti, Ph.D.
Graduate Faculty Representative

JoAnn Canales, Ph.D.
Interim Dean of Graduate Studies

December, 2012

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Abstract

QUALITY OF LIFE CHANGES IN ADULT LITERACY LEARNERS: UNDERSTANDING THE PERCEIVED IMPACT OF AN ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM IN SOUTH TEXAS

The multiple-methods research study explored how adult-literacy learners perceive the impact of their literacy instruction and how it relates to outcomes in their lives. Maslow's hierarchy of motivation and needs guided the study. The non-probability sample consisted of 76 adult literacy and English learners in a community-based organization (CBO) who completed a questionnaire about how their lives had changed with regard to socioeconomic well-being, community involvement, and self-esteem. For the qualitative portion of the study, information was collected through three focus groups, two of which included learners who had completed the quantitative questionnaire, and another consisting of teachers, tutors, and staff of the CBO. Participants perceived changes in their lives in the areas under study. The salient finding was that participants experienced growth in independence and self-reliance. The study provides a way of understanding the perceived value of literacy instruction in the lives of adult learners.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents: Dr. George R. Gleason (1881–1974), and Dr. Lillian H. Gleason (1908–1995), who shared their love of adventure and knowledge. I am eternally grateful they gave me two languages and three cultures in which to grow. I also dedicate this to my two wonderful daughters, Kendall and Cory, who never cease to amaze me. Finally, I dedicate this labor to the memory of Dr. Caroline Sherritt whose strong guidance helped me and many of my fellow doctoral students.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Background and Setting

Even though the United States is considered a world power, the illiteracy rate is higher than would be expected. The United States ranked 13th in the world for literacy rates, according to the 2009 Human Development Report prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (2009). The United States also ranked 12th in high school achievement, behind such countries as Slovenia and Portugal (Stewart, 2012). The National Center for Education Statistics reported (as cited in Mohadjer et al., 2009), that it is estimated that close to one fifth of adults in the United States read below the fifth-grade level, and in Texas the illiteracy rate was 19%. The English literacy rate was lowest in the southern counties of Texas closest to the border with Mexico (Mohadjer et al., 2009). In the county encompassing the subjects of this study, the adult illiteracy rate is 17%, although some portions of the area have much worse rates.

One way the impact of illiteracy has been measured focuses on the economic problems associated with illiteracy. These costs are calculated from various indicators. First, lost wages are a major consideration. Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend (2012) reported that the incomes of earners went up as their educational level increased, thus impacting the local economy.

Another economic cost of illiteracy is related to unemployment and poverty. Nationwide, 44% of people in the lowest literacy levels were in poverty, compared to 6% of those in the higher literacy levels, and nearly 84% of unemployed fathers and 82% of unemployed mothers lacked a high school diploma (Kutner et al., 2007). Unemployment

can be reduced when adults are taught to read (Alexander, 2009). Modern jobs tend to require a more sophisticated literacy level. Employees who would like to be able to progress in a job need to know how to write reports and to understand shipping labels, manuals, instructions, and memoranda. Jobs that require only physical labor, in which reading may not be such a crucial need, are in decline (ProLiteracy America, 2003). Closely linked to unemployment, public-assistance costs correlate inversely with literacy levels (Foster, 2012). The Ohio Literacy Resource Center (2009) estimated that one third of U.S. welfare recipients were functionally illiterate. “Welfare recipients with low education skills stay on welfare the longest; those with stronger education skills become self-sufficient more quickly” (Literacy Greater New Orleans, 2009, p. 3).

Businesses spend millions of dollars to retrain workers. For example, General Motors Corporation devoted more than 15% of the \$170 million yearly job training budget to remedial education (Ohio Literacy Resource Center, 2009). In *HR Magazine*, Tyler reported that “Illiteracy causes high turnover; employees with reading problems would rather resign than have their problem exposed. Consequently, co-workers are forced to train replacements, accept additional responsibilities, and work overtime to meet productivity quotas” (Tyler, 1996, p. 1).

When literacy is low, accidents at work happen more (Campbell, 2010). Also, illness is exacerbated by low literacy, because individuals cannot comprehend medical instructions and act on them. The American Medical Association (AMA) concluded that the cost to the healthcare system was \$73 billion per year in 1991 because of unnecessary doctor visits, hospitalizations, and failure to comply with treatment plans and preventive efforts (Swedersky, 2001). The AMA commissioned another study on illiteracy and

health a decade after that, and corroborated that illiteracy contributed to poor health and increased costs (Berkman et al., 2004).

Low literacy has also been linked to incarceration. Adams (2009) pointed out that 70% of inmates released back into society are at the bottom levels of literacy. Further, providing literacy services in jail has positive effects, keeping prisoners from reentering the system. The re-arrest rate is inversely related to education (Bentham, 2011; Oklahoma Literacy Resource Office, 2011). A study by the Virginia Department of Corrections showed that inmates who received educational programs while incarcerated had a better chance of staying out of prison than those who did not receive instruction. The same study found that inmates who had been in the learning programs kept jobs longer after they left prison than those who had not participated in literacy programs (Hull, 2000).

Efforts to alleviate illiteracy involve many organizations and models of adult basic education and English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction. Most models include pre- and posttests of literacy skills, including oral English ability. Although this information is helpful in guiding instruction, it is not sufficient to judge other impacts on the lives of adult literacy learners. There is little research on the effect that adult basic education and basic ESL have on the lives of adults and families. According to Greenberg of the Center for the Study of Adult Literacy (2009), the usual quantifiable outcome measures ignore the social aspects of the educational experience. Some research has been published about family literacy, a mother's influence on her children's literacy, and the influences of factors in the family on literacy and success in school. Not many studies examined changes that take place following adult-literacy training. Much

research has been skewed toward quantitative measures, possibly because many states use a reporting system that relies on test scores, and the National Reporting System requirements that are tied to many federal grants (Bingman, Ebert, & Bell, 2000; Greenberg, 2009). Yet, many quality-of-life issues are not addressed in the research.

Statement of the Problem

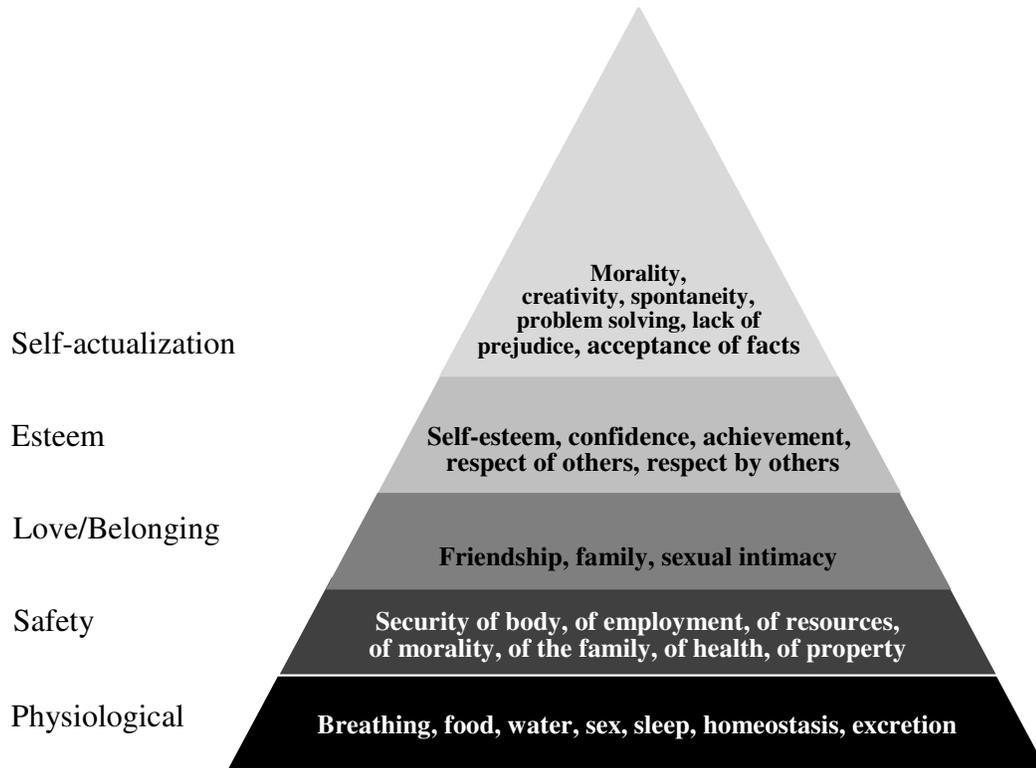
A nonprofit community-based organization (CBO) in South Texas, hereinafter referred to as the CBO, has been in operation since 1986. The mission of the CBO is to increase literacy levels in its geographical area. Since its inception, the CBO has served more than 6,500 adults. The CBO is located in a geographical area in which many immigrants form part of the population. Spanish is the most common language spoken in the immigrant community, though over 32 other languages are represented among the adult English learners at the CBO. Over time, the proportion of English learners seeking services at the CBO has increased in comparison to the learners who are native English speakers but need help with reading. In 2012, 87% of the learners were English learners. The most common model of service delivery is one-on-one tutoring, with a cadre of over 100 volunteers who are trained to tutor. Some have teaching experience, but many do not. English classes and reading classes involving larger groups of adult learners usually are taught by a certified teacher who is paid. Several curricula are available for the use of teachers and tutors. During the early years of the organization, the two most common curricula were the Laubach method, which emphasized phonics, and the Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) method, which was more whole language in its approach. The two organizations merged to form ProLiteracy (Proliteracy America, 2012b). Most recently, the CBO implemented Wrigley's training for ESL tutors and teachers (Wrigley,

2007). Although there has been some ad hoc evaluation of various aspects of the CBO, the perceptions and perspectives of adult learners regarding the impact of participation in the adult-literacy program have not been documented systematically

Theoretical Framework

The study relied on Maslow's theory of motivation and hierarchy of needs for the theoretical framework. Figure 1 depicts the most common depiction of this hierarchy (Van Wagner, 2009). Maslow theorized that human beings are motivated to fulfill their needs and that the most basic needs must be met before attending to the higher-level needs (Maslow, 1970). Physical and physiological needs are at the most basic level, which include air, food, water, and sleep. The next level describes the need for safety and security. Among those needs are such things as living in a safe neighborhood, having health insurance, and having job security. Above that are the social needs, also called love or belonging. People need to feel that they belong; they need to give and receive friendship and love. Esteem needs can be described as the desire to have some importance and recognition. Finally, Maslow called the highest level of need self-actualization.

Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs



Adapted from *Hierarchy of Needs*, by K. Van Wagner, 2009, retrieved from http://psychology.about.com/od/theories_of_personality/a/hierarchyneeds.html

The lack of literacy often correlates with very low socioeconomic levels, low self-esteem, and lack of involvement in the community. Many programs assume that providing literacy instruction will help people toward self-actualization and empowerment (Greenberg, 2009; Merriam & Brockett, 1997; Swanson, 2009). These programs usually are evaluated by attendance and by pre- and posttest reading levels. Other changes are taking place that are being overlooked (Greenberg, 2009). The present study explored some of these changes that parallel Maslow's hierarchy of needs in the following way:

Changes in meeting esteem needs were measured by an adaptation of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg Foundation, 2009; see Appendix A), by one additional question in the Adult Learner Quality of Life Questionnaire (ALQLQ), and by

responses in focus groups. Changes in meeting belonging needs were considered in the variable of community involvement, which was measured by responses to 10 items in the ALQLQ and by responses in focus groups. The study explored how literacy instruction impacts the variable of socioeconomic well being, which parallels Maslow's level of need of safety. The respondents were asked about changes in the security of the learners' work situation and their economic situation in 10 items in the ALQLQ and by responses in focus groups.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the study was to examine the perceptions of adult literacy learners and organizers regarding the impact participation in the CBO's adult-literacy program on adult learners' quality of life. Perspectives of adult learners and organizers of the literacy program were documented relative to the variables of socioeconomic well-being, community involvement, and self-esteem. The following research questions guided the study:

Research Questions

The quantitative research questions follow:

1. Is socioeconomic well-being affected by participation in the CBO's adult-literacy program, as perceived by adult learners?
2. Is community involvement affected by participation in the CBO's adult-literacy program, as perceived by adult learners?
3. Is self-esteem affected by participation in the CBO's adult-literacy program, as perceived by adult learners?

The qualitative research questions follow:

1. What quality-of-life changes do adult learners perceive to be associated with participation in the adult-literacy program at the CBO?
2. What quality-of-life changes do the organizers of the adult-literacy program perceive in the adult learners of the adult-literacy program at the CBO?

Operational Definitions

Community involvement was measured by section II of the questionnaire (Bingman, Ebert, & Smith, 1999). Self-esteem, the attitude toward one's own worth, was measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale in section III of the survey (Rosenberg Foundation, 2009). Socioeconomic well-being was measured by responses to items in section I of the survey instrument (Merrifield, Smith, Rea, & Cross, 1994).

Glossary of Terms

Basic literacy. Instruction in reading and writing at levels equivalent to fourth-grade assessments or less (Kutner et al., 2007).

Community-based organization. An organization that is formed in a community and is not affiliated with any governmental agency or university (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2010; ProLiteracy America, 2009b).

Computer-assisted instruction. Self-paced and self-directed learning using programs online or on a computer. Often includes in-person help from a computer laboratory assistant or instructor (ProLiteracy America, 2012).

English as a second language (ESL). According to Condelli, Cronen, Bos, Tseng, and Altuna (2010), ESL is instruction in reading, writing, and speaking English for persons whose original language is not English, regardless of educational level or reading ability in the person's first language.

Organizers. Staff, teachers, and volunteers who would be in a position to observe changes in learners' lives (Texas Workforce Investment Council, 2010).

Teachers. Instructors for more formal classes with 12 or more adult learners (Texas Workforce Investment Council, 2010).

Volunteer tutors. Unpaid tutors for one-on-one sessions, or for small groups of three or fewer students (Proliteracy America, 2009b).

Limitations and Delimitations

The study consisted of a nonprobability sample of adult learners who had attended the adult-literacy program at the CBO between 2007 and 2010. Due to non-probability nature of the sampling, external validity was limited to study participants. The study was delimited to outcome measures of socioeconomic well-being, community involvement, and self-esteem. There could be no comparison group because adults who needed literacy services but did not receive or request them could not be sampled. Because of the non-experimental nature of the study, no causal inferences were drawn.

Assumptions

Because of the cross-sectional nature of the study, which necessitated the collection of data on the basis of recollection of past events, it was assumed that the respondents would provide responses to the best of their ability. However, it was also assumed that memory is changeable and fickle, and results could be colored by unknown factors. All participants were volunteers who made the effort to return to the CBO to complete the questionnaire and focus groups. While that willingness could in itself be part of a factor that influenced results, no data addressing the possibility were collected.

Significance of the Study

The results of the study informed program decision-makers about how adult learners perceive the impact of the various instructional models offered in adult literacy. Knowing how adult literacy programs affect students is crucial to understanding how to serve the population of illiterate adults. This investigation may suggest a method for evaluating adult-literacy programs other than relying only on changes in reading levels measured by standardized tests.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

Introduction

This chapter explores the research that has been done with regard to literacy and how it relates to outcomes in adult learners' lives. The background will go over the importance of literacy to a functioning society, especially the relationships between literacy and economic factors, public assistance, work readiness, accidents and health, and incarceration. After describing various models of literacy programs for adults, and the theory of andragogy that governs much of adult education, the literature about how the impact of literacy has been measured will be explored, including a few longitudinal studies. Finally, a recap of Maslow's hierarchy of motivation and needs and how it relates to this study is presented.

Background and Setting

Ever since language was committed to writing, the ability to read has been valued. Reading has been regarded as the key to preserving ideas, empowering individuals, and, as Annan (1997), former Secretary General of the United Nations, mentioned in a United Nations press release, literacy is seen as a means to better employment and economic independence. He said, in part:

Literacy is a bridge from misery to hope. It is a tool for daily life in modern society. It is a bulwark against poverty and a building block of development, an essential complement to investments in roads, dams, clinics, and factories.

Literacy is a platform for democratization, and a vehicle for the promotion of cultural and national identity. Especially for girls and women, it is an agent of

family health and nutrition. For everyone, everywhere, literacy is, along with education in general, a basic human right.

Serious consequences face adults who do not know how to read. Freire (2005) saw that the lack of literacy oppressed populations. Freire described the lack of reading and writing as violence against people, writing “One of the violences perpetrated by illiteracy is the suffocation of the consciousness and expressiveness of men and women” (Freire, 2005, p. 2). The signs of the toll that illiteracy takes encompass poverty, illness, and incarceration. That is, illiteracy is higher among prison populations, among the poor, and among the ill. Medical expenses are higher for people with low literacy (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2011).

The lack of literacy is a serious issue all over the world, including in the United States. In the county in which the present study took place there are areas with illiteracy rates of 40% (Mohadjer et al., 2009). Census figures show that in some of the census tracts in the area, 50 to 60% of the adults do not have a high school diploma and many of those census tracts are in the CBO’s service area (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009).

Economic Impact of Low Literacy

Many studies have focused on the economic impact of illiteracy. As Mikulecky (2010, p. 189) pointed out,

After controlling for standard demographic variables, literacy remains a very strong and often most significant predictor of economic well-being, health, employment, and dozens of other benefits in every country presenting data. In international studies, the countries that made the greatest literacy gains also made the greatest gains in standard of living.

One impact on a region's economy is typified by the discrepancy in wages between persons with high literacy and those with low literacy. In general, income rises along with educational level. Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend releases reports several times a year that summarize economic indicators in the various regions of South Texas. In the report of May 2012, they noted that earners in Texas without a high school diploma may expect to earn just over \$15,000 per year. With a high school diploma they can expect \$23,000; with an associates' degree, \$31,000; with a college degree, \$43,000; and with a professional or graduate degree, \$54,000. The implication for the economy is enormous (Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend, 2012). Another factor that creates unemployment is that the number of jobs available for low-skilled workers is declining: Ferral, representing the Port Industries of Corpus Christi, said in a speech to the Tulosso-Midway ISD Education Foundation, "The days of getting a job without a high school diploma are over" (K. Ferral, personal communication, September 30, 2010)

Public Assistance and Poverty

Literacy can make the difference in how long persons receive public assistance. Fully one third of U.S. welfare recipients are functionally illiterate (Ohio Literacy Resource Center, 2009). Further, attempts to get off welfare rolls are often stymied by lack of literacy skills. Proliteracy America (2009a) reports that money spent on improving literacy has a great effect on many economic factors, including reduced payments for public assistance.

Retraining the Workforce

Retraining workers presents a huge cost to businesses (Ohio Literacy Resource Center, 2009). There are costs in training, and also costs of turnover because sometimes,

employees turn down promotions or resign rather than admit they cannot read or write. Turnover costs companies time and money for retraining and also for overtime pay for the remaining workers (Tyler, 1996). The Texas Workforce Investment Council (2010) estimated that there were 2,218,256 potential workers who had no high school diploma. Of those 2 million potential workers who had no high school education, 1,214,645 also were unable to speak English. Another 510,123 did have an education in another language, but could not speak English well enough to be a productive member of the workforce.

Accidents and Health Problems

As mentioned earlier, workers who have difficulty understanding written instructions, safety manuals, and posted signs are putting themselves and their coworkers at risk (Campbell, 2010). Campbell found that the actual literacy abilities of workers was lower than the employer's perception of the abilities. She went on to say

Workplace safety incidents impose high costs and serious repercussions on businesses, individual workers, their families, and communities. The costs of workplace lost time injuries potentially include property damage, lost production, lost manager and supervisor time(as they deal with the accident and with the injured person), costs to comply with [government] orders, higher insurance premiums, and lower productivity from the injured employee while he/she recuperates on light duty. (Campbell, 2010, p. 7)

In a similar manner, low literacy is linked to health problems and healthcare costs. Illness correlates with low literacy (Metcalf & Meadows, 2009; Wilson, 2002). If a person cannot read labels or follow written postoperative instructions, errors are likely to

prevent recovery, delay healing, or worsen the condition. The AMA reported that millions of Americans struggled to understand (and therefore follow) written medical instructions. The cost to the healthcare system rises because of extra hospitalizations, doctor visits, and inability to adhere to treatment plans, and preventive care (Berkman et al., 2004; Swedersky, 2001). For example, parents with low literacy were more likely to give their children the wrong dosages of medicine (Yin, et al., 2010). Low-literacy rates add to the economic burden of taxpayers, as the low-literate individuals require more indigent-care medical services (Wilson, 2002), and on average, patients who are reading at the lowest levels cost more to treat, over time (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2011).

Incarceration

Low literacy features heavily in issues related to incarceration. For example, the 2009 U.S. Census data showed far fewer persons who were incarcerated had college degrees. In prison, only 2.8% of inmates have finished college, compared with 28% nationwide (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009), and 67% of the people in jail have not completed a high school education (Goebel, 2005). Over 630,000 prisoners are released every year in the United States, and 97% of all inmates will be released at some time (Goebel, 2005). Programs to educate inmates have showed promising results in preventing recidivism (Labbe, 2011; Yamatani, 2008; Hull, 2000) and in helping recently released prisoners find and keep jobs.

Models of Literacy Programs

There are several models of efforts to alleviate illiteracy through adult basic education and ESL instruction. Some agencies employ large classrooms that resemble a

typical remedial high school class. Some have small-group classes in churches, homeless shelters, schools, or libraries. Some train volunteer tutors to work one-on-one with the adult learner. The latter is a common model for smaller CBOs (Proliteracy America, 2012; ProLiteracy Worldwide, 2006). In Texas, one third of CBOs often serve at multiple sites, many use donated facilities, and most rely on volunteer workers (Texas Workforce Investment Council, 2012). Curriculum and methodologies vary, but most CBOs use curriculum that observes the principles of adult learning, or andragogy, described by Knowles (1980).

Andragogy

Many of the programs for adult literacy plan their curriculum with the principles of andragogy in mind. Knowles (1980) described several principles that make adult education different from children's education. They are summarized below:

- Adults need to have a reason to learn something.
- Adults want to be responsible for themselves, and to be treated as competent individuals.
- Adults have years of life experience that they can add to the educational process.
- Adults are ready to learn what it takes to deal with their lives.
- Adults are more goal oriented than children.
- Adults' intrinsic motivation is paramount.

Brookfield acknowledged that by 1986, androgical approaches to adult education were common in many settings, including higher education. Brookfield pointed out that adults' perception of relevance was more important than an externally imposed idea of

what would be relevant. In the present study, adults' perceptions of relevance of their studies and their perception of the impact on their lives was sought. In particular with regard to learners of English, Krashen's (2004) principle that input must be understandable is also widely accepted in adult-literacy classes, including ESL classes. Consequently, tutors and teachers rely on real-life examples, visual and auditory input, and many kinds of authentic material that connects the classroom instruction with learners' life experiences (Wrigley, 2007).

Adult Education's Impact

Most models of adult education are aware of adults' need to learn in different ways. Curricula are often highly individualized (ProLiteracy Worldwide, 2006). Assessing how well the educational program is working, and what changes are taking place in learners' lives is a challenge. Most programs require pretests and posttests of reading levels, writing skills, and oral English ability (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2010). This information is helpful in placing students in the appropriate class, and in guiding tutors in level of instruction, but it does not document the impact literacy instruction has on the lives of adults returning to school, or the perception adult students have of the impact of literacy. Many experts in the field of adult basic education are striving to find quantifiable measures of outcomes because the usual measures ignore the social aspects of the educational experience (Greenberg, 2009). The literature, regardless of the many data bases searched for information on the influences that literacy has on the family and the individual, mostly cited articles about family literacy, parents' influence on their children's literacy, and the influences of factors in the family on literacy and success in school. Not many articles examined other changes that take place in learners'

lives following adult-literacy training. The same patterns were found in searching the psychology and education data bases. Even those articles that did address life changes following literacy training usually referred to one of two longitudinal studies: Merrifield et al.'s multiyear effort in Tennessee (Bingman et al., 1999; Merrifield et al., 1994; Merrifield et al., 1993) and Reder's in Oregon (Reder, 2011; Reder & Strawn, 2006). The first one, the study in Tennessee, looked at some of the changes in socioeconomic status, social changes, and self-esteem outcomes of adult-literacy programs. The questionnaires used in that study informed the instrument used in the present study. The Tennessee study was never completed, but several years' data were collected and analyzed.

Although some articles did indicate that training adults in literacy will help them with employment, there is very little written on what changes occur in the quality of life of adult learners. Literacy has been seen as a goal in itself, and as a means to some other societal goals such as better public health, access and involvement in democracy, curbing population growth, and improving the economy, both by helping people get better jobs and by creating an educated workforce (Ferrell, 1990). Although it has been commonly understood that literacy is good, and that bringing illiterate adults into the fold of the literate is good, in the last decade the evaluation of literacy programs has more and more focused on accountability, measured by increases in scores on reading tests. This holds true for schools as well as adult programs. Ferrell pointed out that in 1987 Knox posited four main purposes for adult-literacy programs. They were economic productivity, political change, social equity, and quality of life. Ferrell began an analysis of these four areas in 1990, but did not elaborate on the issue of quality of life. Only a few researchers

have focused on issues of quality of life. Reder, in Oregon, began a longitudinal experimental study to examine the “the impacts of adult literacy development on social and economic outcomes.” The authors of the study began reporting some preliminary results in 2011 which showed that literacy and economic well-being are positively correlated (Reder, 2011).

In 1999, Beder posited that adult basic education does result in an increase in self-esteem, and set out to identify a set of impact measures for adult-literacy programs. Beder studied 30 years of literature that expressed various outcomes for literacy programs. Out of hundreds, the author reported on six studies that came close to finding such impact measures. One, the National Evaluation of Adult Education (Beder, 1999) did report that a rise in self-image and learner satisfaction were outcomes of adult-literacy programs. However, Beder concluded that many outcome evaluations purporting to demonstrate accountability actually demonstrated “problems with the system’s capacity to generate outcome data.” Beder reported that “systemic evaluation at the local level is rare” (1999. p. 4).

A notable attempt to evaluate the social outcomes of a literacy program was the University of Tennessee longitudinal study conducted by the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL) and the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL). Under their auspices, the University of Tennessee’s Center for Literacy Studies began a longitudinal study of adult literacy in 1992 (Merrifield et al., 1993). They used a questionnaire that included subscales in four areas of quality of life: socioeconomic well-being, social well-being, personal well-being, and physical well-being. A year later, the same questionnaire was administered with some adjustments, and results were reported in

an article called “Longitudinal Study of Adult Literacy Participants in Tennessee. Year Two Report” (Merrifield et al., 1994). Bingman and colleagues (1999) wrote an analysis of the two reports. Merrifield and colleagues wrote two separate reports describing the very ambitious project, and the results after 1 year and 2 years (1993 and 1994) after the inception of the study. The study was not completed as planned, but valuable information did emerge, as described in the subsequent analysis by Bingman et al., (1999).

The studies intended to examine the changes in people’s lives after enrolling in adult basic education courses. From the Campbell, Converse, and Rogers study in 1976 emerged a life-satisfaction scale (Bingman et al., 1999). Also of interest was the use of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Bingman et al., 1999; Merrifield et al., 1994; Merrifield et al., 1993). Bingman, Ebert, & Bell (2002), Beder (1999), and Merrifield et al., (1994, 1993) all posited that adult-literacy programs do impact the quality of the lives of the learners, and that these impacts are social, economic, and personal. Lipnevich (2010; Lipnevich & Beder, 2007) studied self-esteem and its relationship to adult literacy learners with slightly different results. While acknowledging studies that conclude that self-esteem increases as an outcome of adult-education efforts (Lipnevich & Beder, 2007), Lipnevich (2010) suggested later that self-esteem was not investigated thoroughly enough, and that the reported links between self-esteem and literacy were not supported conclusively. Lipnevich found equally high self-esteem in Adult Basic Education students and doctoral students, positing that self-esteem is a relative construct because individuals tend to compare themselves favorably to others in their own situation and not to those in higher economic, educational, or social brackets.

The Portland State University longitudinal study (Reder, 2011; Reder & Strawn, 2006) collected information on participation patterns and impacts, and explored what variables would influence success in learning in students in adult basic education classes. Titled the Longitudinal Study of Adult Learning, the projected time frame was 7 years. Again, much of the inquiry was geared toward what factors would make learning take place, but less on what impact the classes had on the lives of the students. Yet, Reder affirmed that “These relationships between literacy proficiency and other social and economic indicators are enduring” (Reder, 2011, p. 14).

Equipped for the Future

Equipped for the Future (EFF) was a national effort to quantify the many complexities of adult education, including its purposes and outcome measures (Bingman et al., 2002). It was a constructivist approach in that it considered each adult learner’s goals for learning. It allowed for and encouraged learners to construct their own meaning from the lessons. Adults used their own experience and knowledge to construct meaning from new lessons. Also, students reflected on their own progress and were cognizant of how and what they were learning. The approach considered that adults are the best judges of the value of that learning—an opinion that was supported by Knowles (1980).

Inputs to Impacts Grid

EFF was a system for curriculum and an approach to teaching adults that focused on the learner. It included a “framework to identify, reflect on, and revise models of adult role performance” (Bingman et al., 2002, p. 4). Two of the persons involved in developing EFF also tackled ways to evaluate programs. Bingman and Stein of NCSALL and NIFL composed an approach to program quality based on EFF’s principles (Bingman

et al., 2002). Bingman et. al. went on to conduct action research in three states, striving to develop a framework for evaluating outcomes of adult-literacy programs. The process was much more complex than expected (Bingman et al., 2002); as a result of that research, Bingman et al. (2002) developed an Inputs to Impacts Grid to document outcomes (see Table 1).

This framework allowed for ways to analyze the myriad effects adult-literacy programs had on learners' lives. It depicted the process of taking inputs—the students and their experiences—along with what the programs offered, going through a process, and noticing outputs, which included test scores and course completions as immediate results. Long term results such as changed self concept, improved job situation were listed a step beyond the short term outputs. Finally, the impacts on society were listed as the final step. Many of the outputs, outcomes, and impacts described by the EFF inputs to impacts grid coincide with the measures included in the present study.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow published a construct of a hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970). Maslow postulated that adults are always trying satisfy the highest need, that of becoming self-actualized, and that there are certain other needs that must be met before that can take place (see Figure 1). The most basic level, the physiological needs of air, food, water, or sleep is important to understand *vis a vis* adult literacy, because persons who are struggling at this level most likely will not make any effort to attend adult classes. Very few learners will have serious physiological needs when they choose to improve their reading abilities. However, when things go awry, these needs crop up, and students drop out. This dropping out is very common in the lives of learners who are struggling with

issues at the lower levels of Maslow's hierarchy. Often, learners return to classes when they are able. The phenomenon of dropping out and coming back repeatedly is called "stopping out" by adult-literacy practitioners and is considered a normal and expected process (Belzer, 2007; Cora, 2008).

Table 1

Document Outcomes for Learning and Their Communities: Inputs to Impacts Grid

	Student	Program
Inputs—factors available for performance	Previous educational experience Life experiences Goals Abilities Commitment Needs Temperament (e.g., shyness) Challenges (e.g., learning disability, child care, transportation)	Building Equipment Staff Curriculum Materials Goals Volunteers Technology
Process—the educational and organizational processes contributing to performance	Intake interview Orientation Reading, writing, and math activities Social interactions School governance activities Testing and assessments Discussion/analysis Cultural expressions Computer use	Planning Recondkeeping Assessment Scheduling Instruction Staff development Advice, guidance, support Connecting to human services, etc.
Outputs—the immediate results of services provided	Test scores Journals More comfort in class GED Resume Certificates Documentation of improved performances	Number of classes offered Number of hours of instruction Number of students Number of staff Staff-development activities
Outcomes—the longer term results of education for programs	New reading, writing, and mathematics practices Changed self-concept Checking/savings account Computer skills New goals Changed/new skills Driver's license Workforce skills Citizenship A job Job promotion	Aggregation of student outcomes Test scores GED Student goals met Teacher changes Records kept Improvement program Changes in administration philosophy
Impacts—changes in community brought about by changes in learners' lives	Children more involved in school Increased use of public resources More activity in civic life Improved neighborhoods Better educated/developed workforce	

Note. Outcomes of Participation in Adult Basic Education: The Importance of learners' Perspectives, by M. Bingman, O. Ebert, and B. Bell, 2000, Cambridge, MA, National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy.

The next level in Maslow's hierarchy describes the need for safety and security.

Breakdowns at this level also impact attendance in literacy programs. This study asked about socioeconomic factors that would apply to this level of security and safety. At the

next level of needs are social needs: love and belonging. How people fit into their community, and their sense of their level of involvement in it was addressed in this study. Esteem needs can be described as the desire to be acknowledged and to have recognition. This fairly high level need was addressed in a self-esteem scale developed by Rosenberg, which can be found in Appendix A.

Finally, Maslow called the highest level of need: self-actualization. At this level people feel contentment, are able to help others, and are living close to their potential. This level is always elusive and probably never completely reached, or at least not for long (Van Wagner, 2009). There is some movement back and forth across levels, of course. This is not a strict step-by-step hierarchy, but more of a general construct (see Figure 1).

When adults attend literacy instruction, they are taking steps to fulfill their lives along ever-higher levels. As pointed out in the introduction, the lack of literacy often correlates with very low socioeconomic levels, poor health, low self-esteem, and lack of involvement in the community. Adults who cannot access the written and spoken word of their society struggle at all levels along Maslow's hierarchy. Many programs assume that providing literacy instruction will help people move toward self-actualization. These programs usually are evaluated by attendance and by changes in reading levels before and after a class. Other changes are taking place that are being overlooked. Before adults come to a literacy program, they must meet their basic physical needs. It is rare for someone to sign up for any self-improvement course if they are homeless and hungry. Those needs must be met first (Maslow, 1970).

Security

Security needs are usually met at least at some level before people are able to consider their intellectual needs. Yet, some adult learners are in the process of meeting needs at this level, and this study explored how literacy instruction impacts the variable of socioeconomic well-being. This construct was explored by Merrifield and colleagues (1994, 1993) in the Tennessee longitudinal studies. Ten items from the Merrifield et al. study were chosen for this study, as a means to explore perceptions of socioeconomic well-being.

Social Needs and Belonging

Changes in meeting social needs were considered in the variable of community involvement. Bingman et al. (1999) refined some of the variables from the Tennessee longitudinal studies (Merrifield et al., 1994; Merrifield et al., 1993) to create a construct for community involvement and belonging. That longitudinal study used a 19-page-long instrument, from which 10 items related to social and community involvement were chosen for this study.

Esteem

Changes in meeting esteem needs were measured by the adult learner's self-esteem and their understanding of how that has changed. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale was chosen by Merrifield and colleagues (1994, 1993) because it was relatively short and was well documented. The literature supports several variations in the mathematical construct of the scale. This study used a variation of that scale.

Chapter Summary

The chapter explored the research that has been conducted on how literacy relates to outcomes in adult learners' lives. Existing literature shows correlations between low literacy and economic problems, work readiness, increased accidents, poor health, and incarceration. A variety of programs offer help with literacy, and most use an androgogical approach to teaching adults. The chapter pointed out that very little research exists to understand what kinds of impacts these programs have on the lives of adults. The few studies that do so include two longitudinal studies done in 1993 and 1994. Also, the EFF movement did produce an "inputs to impacts" grid to describe outcomes and impacts of literacy programs. The theoretical framework for the study was Maslow's hierarchy of motivation and needs. The chapter concluded by describing the second, third, and fourth levels of Maslow's hierarchy (safety, belonging, and esteem) and how each relates to a portion of the study.

Chapter 3

Method

Introduction

This chapter provides the purpose of the study, and describes the sequential explanatory multiple-methods model used. Because there was a quantitative component and a qualitative component, the chapter includes discussion of the following:

1. Design
2. Qualitative Inquiry and Interpretivism
3. Subjectivity
4. Instrumentation: Quantitative and Qualitative
5. Subject Selection: Quantitative and Qualitative
6. Ethical Considerations and Reciprocity
7. Data Collection: Quantitative and Qualitative
8. Data Analysis: Quantitative and Qualitative
9. Academic Rigor and Trustworthiness
10. Synthesis of Quantitative and Qualitative Results
11. Artistic Presentation of Qualitative Results

Background

The purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of adult learners with regard to changes in their lives after attending adult-literacy or ESL instruction at a small CBO in South Texas. Of special interest were learners' and teachers' perspectives regarding socioeconomic changes, community involvement, and self-esteem taking place in learners' lives. The following questions guided the study:

Quantitative

1. Is socioeconomic well-being affected by participation in the CBO's adult-literacy program, as perceived by adult learners?
2. Is self-esteem affected by participation in the CBO's adult-literacy program, as perceived by adult learners?
3. Is community involvement affected by participation in the CBO's adult-literacy program, as perceived by adult learners?

Qualitative

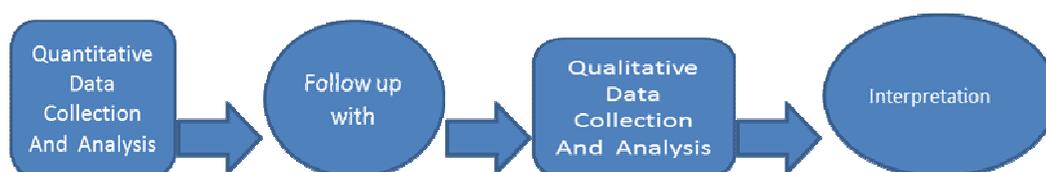
1. What quality-of-life changes do adult learners perceive to be associated with participation in the adult-literacy program at the CBO?
2. What quality-of-life changes do the organizers of the adult-literacy program perceive in the adult learners of the adult-literacy program at the CBO?

Design

The study employed a multiple-methods model. Researchers tend to focus on quantitative methods and their inherent deductive reasoning to draw causal inferences and examine relationships among variables of interest. Qualitative research methods, which use more inductive reasoning, are used to understand a process or experience, and to explore an issue with the intent to discover an emergent theory (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Using the two methods in the same study gives a more complete picture of the issues being studied than would the quantitative portion alone. To mix the quantitative and qualitative methods, several approaches are common. The emphasis can be on either quantitative or qualitative inquiry, or the two can be equally weighted. One can follow the other, one can be imbedded in the other, and the two can be conducted simultaneously

(Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). For the purpose of the study, the Explanatory Sequential Model (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) was employed. The quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data, and was concluded by synthesizing the quantitative and qualitative results to draw conclusions, discuss the findings, and offer theoretical and practical implications. The model is depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Explanatory sequential model



From "Explanatory Sequential Model," by J.W. Creswell and V.L. Plano Clark, 2011, *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*, p. 69.

Qualitative Inquiry and Interpretivism

In the last few decades, researchers in education have noted that the conventional way of doing research, that is, the quantitative methods so well-suited for physical sciences, could be bolstered by qualitative methods for understanding the human condition (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990; Schwandt, 1996). There was more interest in adding "why" questions to "how" questions as interpretive inquiry sought to explore social and personal meaning (Smith, 1996). New ways of thinking about knowledge and knowing grew into acceptance that "empathy might be every bit as important for cognition as detachment" (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990, p. 12). One of the tenets of qualitative inquiry is that it considers the views of the participants rather than placing people in an experimental and unnatural situation (Creswell, 2002). Qualitative inquiry employs an interpretivist position in seeking understanding. An interpretivist paradigm recognizes

that reality is subjective, and that truth is many-faceted (Lather, 2006). One of the early proponents of an interpretivist point of view was the sociologist Weber, who emphasized understanding rather than explanation (as cited in Crotty, 1998). In the 1930s, Dewey and Mead promoted interest in the “nature of self and intersubjectivity” and posited that people viewed the past through the lens of the present (as cited in Abouafia, 2009; Hay, 2011). From a background in sociology, ethnography, and symbolic interactionism, interpretivism is a concept that acknowledges people’s ways of knowing that is not subject to measurement by traditional tests. Eisner and Peshkin (1990) acknowledged that there is a “legitimate plurality of methods that will shed greater light on educational matters than any single set of methods can provide” (p. 11). Thus, for the study, in addition to the quantitative questionnaire, the interpretations of the participants, that is, the adult learners, as well as the organizers (teachers, tutors, and staff), was sought. In an interpretivistic paradigm, the dialogue between researcher and subject is vital to understanding, as is the cooperation between the two (Lather, 2006). In the study, the need to understand the subjects’ perception of their experiences relative to literacy classes required such a dialogue via focus groups and member checks. Participation was voluntary, and it was supported by a spirit of cooperation among all—subjects and researcher alike.

Subjectivity

In qualitative inquiry, the researcher is not removed from the participant, but rather is immersed in the research. The researcher and researched engage in a dialogue (Lather, 2006). There is always the possibility that the researcher could be perceived to hold more power, and that would affect the dialogue. There is also the concern that there

would be a halo effect; that is, participants would say what they thought the researcher wanted to hear. Also, if there were any negative comments, participants might not express them to someone they thought held power in the CBO. The fear of self-disclosure can be a deterrent to candid conversation (Zacharakis, Steichen, de Sabates, & Glass, 2011). Therefore, help was solicited from another researcher to conduct student focus groups.

The research assistant conducted the first one. The procedure was that the primary researcher would prepare the meeting room, welcome the participants, thank them, explain the consent forms, obtain signatures on the consent form, invite the participants to partake of the refreshments provided, introduce the research assistant, explain how the interviews would be conducted by the research assistant so that the participants could be completely candid in their commentary, and then leave the room. The first session went well. A few hours before the second session, the primary researcher had a medical emergency and was stuck in a minor emergency center for several hours. It became obvious that the primary researcher would not be released in time to prepare the room and introduce the research assistant. A suitable substitute could not be found. The event was postponed by contacting the research assistant and all the participants by telephone. After that, the research assistant had too many other obligations, and, to avoid waiting 2 or more months before resuming the interviews, the primary researcher conducted the remaining two focus groups. As will be seen in the results, this change in facilitators did not result in a great difference in the responses between student groups.

With regard to teachers and tutors, the possibility of a power difference existed as well, but the relationship between the teachers, staff, and researcher is not one of power but more of collegiality. They have talents and experiences that are appreciated publicly. Because the researcher and the tutors and teachers have known each other many years, and the rapport established would be conducive to honest and frank dialogue.

As mentioned in the introduction, a societal assumption exists that improving literacy will correlate with improved job situation. However, another assumption was that it was possible that the economic benefits of reading, writing, and speaking the dominant language would not be as marked as the literature suggested they would be, because the United States had endured a recession. People might not be getting better jobs as readily as hoped. Another assumption that affected the selection of participants was that those who had attended the most hours of instruction would have more experience on which to reflect. This assumption guided the order in which participants were invited to the focus groups.

Instrumentation

Quantitative. For the quantitative component of the study, the researcher developed a four-part survey instrument, ALQLQ. The ALQLQ was based on the instrument developed by the Center for Literacy Studies at the University of Tennessee (Merrifield et al., 1994, 1993), including the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965). All items in the three main sections of the ALQLQ came from the Merrifield et al. studies (1994, 1993). The original questionnaire was 17 pages long. The original instrument for the Merrifield year two study was administered to 27 individuals who were current pupils at the CBO and would not be candidates for the actual study. It

became obvious that it was too long and too cumbersome. There were many decision points built into it that created confusion. Those decision points were in the form of guiding respondents to one set of questions based on the response to a previous question. For example, if the answer to a certain question was *yes*, they were guided to skip over some of the questions. If the answer was *no*, they were guided to a second set of questions. There were also some questions that were redundant. The second iteration of the form omitted the redundancies, but many of the cumbersome elements remained. Merrifield et al. (1994, 1993) had grouped the questions during their analysis, so by using their grouping as a guide, the researcher reduced the form to 10 items from each of three subject areas, as described below. That version was piloted with 8 adult learners from another agency whose population was similar to the population of the CBO. The number of participants was 100% of those in attendance at that facility that day. The form was piloted using two versions. Half the respondents answered the questions “Has x changed?” with “more, the same, less, or not applicable” types of choices. The other half responded to “Has x improved?” with “yes, no, not applicable.” Observation by the teacher of the class in the other agency, an independent observer, and the researcher, plus participant feedback, led to the adoption of the questionnaire with answers simply “yes, no, not applicable.”

Part I of the ALQLQ included 10 items designed to measure the socioeconomic well-being of adult learners. The respondents were asked to consider the possible impact of adult-literacy classes on various aspects of the respondents’ lives, and indicate whether the various indicators of socioeconomic well-being had improved. Part II of the ALQLQ measured the extent to which respondents thought community involvement was affected

by the adult-literacy program. There were 10 items asking whether various aspects of community involvement increased.

Part III of the ALQLQ, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, was defined by a scale consisting of 10 items designed to measure the self-esteem of adult learners. The wording of the items was exactly as Rosenberg designed (Rosenberg Foundation, 2009; see Appendix A). A 4-point Likert-type scaling (4 = strongly agree, 3 = agree, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree) was used to measure the construct. Some items were reverse-coded to decrease the likelihood of someone just marking all positive or negative answers without reading the questions. Part IV was designed to collect demographic data that was used to describe the study participants.

A panel of experts examined the content validity of the ALQLQ. The panel consisted of two literacy instructors from the CBO, one from a different adult-literacy agency, two former students who would not be part of the research sample, a reading expert from a local high school, a college professor who specializes in reading, and a college professor who was a specialist in adult education. The feedback from the experts aided in the revisions of the instrument described in the section on instrumentation. The final revised version of the ALQLQ was pilot tested with a group similar to the CBO's adult learners, but at a different facility. The pilot data were used to examine the reliability of the ALQLQ.

Qualitative. In accordance with the explanatory design: follow-up explanations model, upon completion of the collection and analysis of quantitative data, lead questions were formulated to better understand quantitative results in an attempt to document the perspectives of adult learners and organizers of the adult-literacy program at the CBO

regarding the effectiveness of the program. A sample of the lead questions for adult learners was predicted to be the following:

- How has your life changed since coming to literacy classes?
- How has your economic situation changed?
- How has your job satisfaction changed?
- In what ways has that change been affected by coming to English literacy classes?
- Do you feel differently about yourself as a result of going to class?
- How has your involvement in your community changed because of you coming to English literacy classes?

After studying the results of the ALQLQ, the lead questions were revised to be:

- Please tell me three ways your life changed since coming to literacy classes.
- When you think about your economic situation, give me some examples of how that has changed.
- Think of an instance in which your job satisfaction changed, and how was that?
- In what ways has that change been affected by coming to English literacy classes?
- Please tell me a way your involvement in your community changed because of you coming to English literacy classes.
- Mention a specific way you feel differently about yourself as a result of going to class.

A sample of lead questions for the personnel of the CBO was projected to be:

- Have you seen any changes in the lives of adult learners since they attended the literacy classes?
- Have you seen any changes in the socioeconomic status of adult learners since attending the literacy classes?
- Have you seen any changes in the community involvement of adult learners since attending the literacy classes?

Again, the questions were refined to probe more deeply and to verify some of the results described by the adult learners. Questions to lead the group were the following:

- Name some changes you have observed in the lives of adult learners.
- Think of change in the socioeconomic status of adult learners attending the literacy classes. Please name a specific instance in which a learner's economic situation changed.
- Please name a way in which one or more of your students increased or decreased their community involvement since attending the literacy classes.
- Name some specific examples of changes in the self-esteem of the learners with whom you worked.

Subject Selection

Quantitative. The CBO keeps a database of present and former participants of the adult-literacy program. Permission to use the listing to contact the adult learners was obtained from the CBO. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi's Institutional Review Board (see Appendix B). The former participants were those who attended the adult-literacy program between 2007

and 2010. All present and former adult learners were invited to participate in the quantitative component of the study.

Qualitative. For the qualitative component of the study, two nonprobability samples were formed. One sample consisted of present and former adult learners who had completed the ALQLQ, and the other sample included administrators, teachers, and tutors at the CBO. After the data from the ALQLQ were tabulated, a few participants were called back to participate in the focus groups. Two focus groups of adult learners were held. Each sample consisted of 5–7 individuals. Participants who had completed the ALQLQ were telephoned again and invited to participate in a focus group. Purposeful sampling selects subjects who have experience and knowledge of the material being studied (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Purposeful sampling became the strategy for this selection in that those who had attended the most hours were called first. The answers on the ALQLQ were not part of the sampling criteria for focus group selection, since answers on the questionnaire were not linked to any names. Also, purposeful sampling chooses to deepen understanding by maximizing differences (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). By providing a daytime and an evening choice for the focus groups, a wider sample was obtained. The morning group consisted of those who did not work during the hours of the focus group, and consisted of women. The evening group included men and women, and those who held daytime jobs. When seven had agreed to come to either one of two time slots, calling stopped. For the focus group consisting of organizers, two classroom teachers at the CBO, the program assistant, and two tutors were invited, and accepted, to join a focus group. Again, purposeful sampling guided the selection of participants, so that those who had longer or more extensive experience in

the field were invited first. Table 2 describes some of the interrelationships between members of the focus groups, and some of the demographic characteristics of the participants. Pseudonyms were used for all participants.

Table 2

Participant Characteristics and Interrelatedness

Participant	Gender	Language 1	Employed	Pupil of Nina	Pupil of Alice	Pupil of Tee
Irene	F	Spanish	y	y		
Diane	F	Lebanese	y	y		y
Vicki	F	Spanish	y	y	y	
Cara	F	Spanish	n	y		y
Anne	F	Spanish	n	y		
Harriet	F	Spanish	n		y	y
Sissy	F	Spanish	n	y	y	
Lou	F	Spanish	y		y	y
Jon	M	Spanish	n		y	
Sara	F	Spanish	y	y		
Pat	M	English	y		y	y
Joy	F	Spanish	y		y	y

Ethical Considerations and Reciprocity

Confidentiality was one of the larger concerns for the study. However, many participants in each focus group knew each other. During the process of obtaining consent, confidentiality was stressed, as was the option of refraining from answering any portion the participant chose, and of withdrawing at any time. For the ALQLQ, a number was assigned to each participant, so no names were used in the data collection. Separate lists with names and phone numbers for the purpose of inviting participants did not include the code number. Transcriptions did not include individuals' names. Another consideration was power. As discussed in the section on subjectivity, the concern with

different levels of power perceived was addressed by having a colleague conduct the first focus group (see Appendix C).

Researchers often ponder the issue of reciprocity. Participants were willing to donate their time and to express their opinions. It is rare to pay participants, but it is acceptable to offer some way to show appreciation for their time (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). In consideration for their time, in this study, participants were treated to a meal during the focus groups. In addition, there was another reciprocal dynamic present. The CBO does not charge tuition, and participants in the study expressed in the focus groups that they felt gratitude for what they had accomplished with the help of the agency. One stated, during the discussion of the consent form, that the participant had already been paid—in the form of learning.

Data Collection

Quantitative. The quantitative data were collected in person. For the ALQLQ, all 709 adult learners who had attended the CBO's program between 2007 and 2010 were telephoned and invited to participate. Of those, a very large number were no longer reachable by telephone. When a telephone number was no longer viable, an invitation was sent by mail. Ultimately, 96 agreed to participate, and 76 did complete the ALQLQ.

Qualitative. To begin to understand how adult learners perceived changes in their lives after they attended class, the qualitative component of this study included three focus groups: two with former students and one with teachers and tutors. A total of three focus groups was desirable to get enough data to formulate themes (Kleiber, 2004). A focus group is a discussion: in a way, a group interview (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). Krueger and Casey (2000) define a focus group this way:

A focus group is a special type of group in terms of purpose, size, composition, and procedures. The purpose of a focus group is to listen and gather information. It is a way to better understand how people feel or think about an issue, product, or service. Participants are selected because they have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic of the focus group. (Krueger & Casey, 2000, p. 4)

Krueger and Casey (2009) also pointed out that focus groups are well suited for non-profit groups. Because this research addresses a nonprofit educational entity, focus groups were a logical choice for data collection and analysis. A common procedure in conducting focus groups is for the researcher to ask a question, then allow each person to participate in the answer. The richness in the material gathered is strengthened by the interaction between respondents. Often the interaction itself encourages participants to recognize opinions they had not realized they had (Creswell, 2002; Morgan, 1988). Focus groups are most effective if the length of the session is limited, and if the questions asked are similar between focus groups. The facilitator must pay attention to who is answering, and who is quiet, and try to elicit responses from all participants (Creswell, 2002). In this study, the focus-group interviews lasted an hour for the participants, and an hour and a half for the organizers: tutors, staff, and teachers.

Data Analysis

Quantitative. The raw data were coded and entered into the computer. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for the purpose of data analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and organize the data. Specifically, frequency and percentage distributions and appropriate measures of central tendency and variability were used to answer the research questions. Cronbach's

Coefficient Alpha (Crocker & Algina, 1986) was used to estimate the reliability of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale.

Qualitative. Data analysis refers to the process of handling the data. It includes organizing them into smaller units, coding, and synthesizing (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). The qualitative portion of the study included three focus groups, which were audio recorded. The first step involved listening to each session once all the way through without pausing, to get a feel for the whole experience. Then the discussions were transcribed verbatim, making note of who was speaking. The notes used pseudonyms. Transcribing took a little over 6 hours per hour of recorded information. The original transcription comprised 59 pages of transcribed conversations for the three focus groups together (see Appendix C). Each transcript was read while listening to the audio recording several times to assure accuracy. Reading what had already been heard simply allowed the material to be seen in a visual way. To prepare the data from the focus groups for coding, the transcribed discussions were placed in a tabular format, with rows to indicate what was transpiring, and columns to record the time marker on the recorder (for ease of finding any particular section again), a column for who was speaking, a column for a verbatim quote of what they said, and a column for the initial codes. There are many ways to initiate coding (Saldaña, 2009). One is to write an initial idea briefly summarizing the content of the transcribed quote (see Figure 3). For example, in considering what the respondent was saying, the summation was that the person gained independence.

Figure 3. Brief summary of the transcribed quotation

Now she feels confident (3) she feels that that she can speak and go to the post office, the store, that she doesn't need the help now	(3) independence
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(The focus group transcripts are found in Appendix C, with the column for the recorder's timing markers removed for ease of reading.)

Coding proceeded by manually writing ideas that summarized what was being said (see Appendix D). The goal was to find the essence. The code can be a descriptive code—a short word or a whole phrase. This kind of first impression is part of *initial coding* (Saldaña, 2009). The next step in analysis is to form categories of codes. the researcher created more columns for subsequent categories, and a column for which of the original research parameters (socioeconomic status, community involvement, and self-esteem) might apply to the initial codes. For example, as participants explained their concern about not having family around as they aged, the category of *isolation* was created. This concern seemed to address the research question about community involvement (cmty). Table 3 demonstrates a sample of the codes, categories and relationship to the three research areas.

Table 3

Examples of Coding

Code 1	Code 2	Code 3 (category)	ALQLQ
Concern about aging	aging	isolation	comty
No family	alone	isolation	comty
Apologize for speaking poorly but people understand	shame	shame is less	self-est
2 languages used in varying degrees	bilingualism	shame is less	self-est

Note. ALQLQ = Adult Learner Quality of Life Questionnaire.

Transcripts of the focus groups were content-analyzed to derive themes that would document the perspectives of participants regarding the changes in their lives since starting adult-literacy and ESL classes. The following steps (Creswell, 2002) were followed: (a) getting a sense of the whole by reading the transcript carefully, (b) identifying text segments with brackets, (c) assigning a code word or phrase to describe the meaning of the text segment, (d) making a list and grouping the code word, (e) reviewing the transcript, and (f) reducing the codes to themes, which are similar codes put together, forming the major ideas of the transcript.

Academic Rigor and Trustworthiness

Academic rigor was important. For the data to be considered trustworthy, several methods were employed. Rigor is achieved in part by triangulation, which is the corroboration of data in several ways (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). One way to achieve triangulation was provided by the composition of the focus groups themselves. Some of the teachers had taught the learners who were in the focus groups. In a few cases, more than one teacher or tutor had worked with a particular individual. Trustworthiness was achieved by allowing participants to see what had been collected and analyzed. This member check assured that the researcher had indeed heard what the participant had to say. Peer debriefing included multiple instances of discussion and sharing writings with other graduate students and other college professors, who could add insight to the situation. Journals are an important tool in qualitative research (Ortlipp, 2008). The researcher's journal was also a source of verification, as entries were made daily to reflect what was happening in the data collection, analysis, and other issues of the research.

Synthesis of Quantitative and Qualitative Results

In accordance with the explanatory sequential model, at the final stage of data analysis, quantitative and qualitative results were synthesized to draw conclusions. The results and conclusions were used to discuss the study's findings as well as suggesting practical and theoretical implications.

Artistic Presentation of Qualitative Results

The weaving of quantitative and qualitative results produced descriptions of the findings in several ways. A portrait of common traits emerged, although individual situations were, of course, different. In qualitative studies, some researchers turn to the arts to help understanding. Drama can depict a situation vividly. For example, from a report about apartheid, readers might have remembered some facts, but seeing a play such as *Sizwe Banze is Dead* by Fugard would make it indelible. Learning the fact that people must get a work permit is not as memorable as seeing how that translates into their lives. Drama is an effective way to help people understand that a policy, and a dreadful one, affects people in so many ways, even so that faking one's own death becomes advantageous. Fugard himself is quoted as noting that "Facts are flat and lacking in the density and ambiguity of truly dramatic images" (Brink, 1993, p. 438). It is these dramatic images for which writers strive if they want their readers to truly understand. Poetry is another medium for expressing ideas in a clear and dramatic way. Poetry can evoke an emotion with few words and has been used in qualitative studies effectively to present data (Cahnmann, 2002). In this study, a poem was useful in painting a picture of participants in the study, and of how their situation changed after their involvement in literacy classes.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the purpose and research questions of the study, which used a sequential explanatory multiple-methods model. Because there was a quantitative component and a qualitative component, the chapter included discussion of the multiple-methods design, and discussions of qualitative inquiry and interpretivism. The issue of subjectivity is always present, but especially in the qualitative section of a study. The development of the ALQLQ was described in the section on instrumentation. The use of focus groups for the qualitative section was described. Subject selection included starting with the population of all 709 learners who had attended adult-literacy classes, and described how that led to 76 who took the ALQLQ, including the 17 who participated in the three focus groups. Ethical considerations and reciprocity were addressed. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and data analysis followed, with a discussion of academic rigor and trustworthiness. The way in which quantitative and qualitative results were synthesized was described. Finally, there was a discussion of how qualitative results can be presented by using an art form such as drama or poetry to aid understanding.

Chapter 4

Results

Introduction

This chapter reviews the purpose of the study, including the research questions. A brief demographic description of the subjects follows. The results of the quantitative section of the study include the categories of socioeconomic status, community involvement, and self-esteem. Qualitative results present major themes related to the study that emerged from the focus groups.

Background

The primary purpose of the study was to examine adult-literacy learners' perceptions of the effects of a CBO's adult-literacy program on adult learner's lives. The secondary purpose of the study was to document the perspectives of the organizers of the program, that is, teachers and tutors who would be in a position to observe changes in their students' lives. The study was guided by the following research questions:

Quantitative Research Questions:

1. Is socioeconomic well-being affected by participation in the CBO's adult-literacy program, as perceived by adult learners?
2. Is community involvement affected by participation in the CBO's adult-literacy program, as perceived by adult learners?
3. Is self-esteem affected by participation in the CBO's adult-literacy program, as perceived by adult learners?

Qualitative Research Questions

1. What quality-of-life changes do adult learners perceive to be associated with participation in the adult-literacy program at the CBO?
2. What quality-of-life changes do the organizers of the adult-literacy program perceive in the adult learners of the adult-literacy program at the CBO?

Quantitative Results

Profile of subjects. Seventy-six former students responded to the ALQLQ. The typical respondent was a 48-year-old Hispanic female who was working and earning less than \$40,000 per year. All respondents had attended the local community-based agency to improve their English literacy between 2007 and 2010. The demographic gender characteristics for this group were similar to those of the population that attends the CBO. Nationwide, 72% of the adult learners are women, 51% are between the ages of 24 and 50 (Proliteracy America, 2012). Texas Learns (2011) reported statistics on learners who attend state-funded programs only. In that population, 54% are women. In this sample, 90.8% of the participants were Hispanic. In the county in which the CBO operates, the Hispanic population is 61%, and in the state of Texas, it is 38.1% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Results are summarized in Table 4.

Socioeconomic status. The first section of the ALQLQ consisted of 10 items that addressed perceived socioeconomic changes. The percentage of those who felt better about their home was 86.8%; 84.2% felt better about their city or neighborhood; 85.5% felt better about their community; and 85.5% indicated they felt better about their nonworking activities, compared to when they started the literacy program. Many also agreed that their financial situation (72.40%), health/physical condition (68.40%), job

performance (59.20%), work responsibility (50.00%), and opportunity for promotion (46.10%) had improved. There were 23.70% of the respondents who indicated that they had taken a second job to make ends meet. Results are summarized in Table 5. At first glance, it may seem interesting that one third of the respondents did not answer the last three questions which pertained to satisfaction with current job. However, as reported in Table 4, 30% of the respondents were unemployed, which included those who were retired.

Table 4

*Profile of Subjects**n = 76*

Variable		<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	
Gender				
	Female	57	75.00	
	Male	19	25.00	
Ethnicity				
	Hispanic	69	90.80	
	Asian	4	5.30	
	Other	2	2.60	
	Missing	1	1.30	
Annual income				
	0 to 10,000	12	15.80	
	10,001 to 20,000	10	13.20	
	20,001 to 30,000	10	13.20	
	30,001 to 40,000	3	3.90	
	40,001 to 50,000	1	1.30	
	50,001 or more	7	9.20	
	Don't know	17	22.40	
	Missing	16	21.10	
Employment status				
	Part time	19	25.00	
	Full time	19	25.00	
	Unemployed looking for a job	7	9.20	
	Unemployed not looking	16	21.00	
	Missing	15	19.70	
Age	Mean	Median	Mode	<i>SD</i>
	48.87	47.50	38	14.52

Table 5
Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Responses on Socioeconomic Changes
n = 76

	Yes		No		Missing	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Since you started at the literacy council, do you feel better about...						
1. Your house or apartment	66	86.80	6	7.90	4	5.30
2. The city or neighborhood where you live	64	84.20	8	10.50	4	5.30
3. The community where you live	65	85.50	9	11.80	2	2.60
4. Your non-working activities, hobbies, and so on	65	85.50	6	7.90	5	6.60
5. Your financial situation	55	72.40	16	21.10	5	6.60
6. Your health and physical condition	52	68.40	20	26.30	4	5.30
Since the time you started at the literacy council,						
7. Did you need to take a second job to make ends meet?	18	23.70	43	56.60	15	19.70
8. Has your satisfaction with your present job increased?	45	59.20	10	13.20	21	27.60
9. Has your level of responsibility at work increased?	38	50.00	16	21.10	22	28.90
10. Has your chance for promotion increased?	35	46.10	18	23.70	23	30.30

Community involvement. The second part of the questionnaire asked about increased involvement in the community. Overall, the degree of involvement in various community events and organizations was not increased greatly. The activity that participants indicated had increased the most (76.30%) was use of the public library. This result could be skewed because many of the respondents attended the CBO's classes in a public library. Over half of the respondents indicated they were more involved with religious organizations (59.20%) and in interactions with their neighbors (61.80%). Almost half increased their involvement with charitable organizations (48.7%). Far fewer indicated more involvement in PTA (34.20%), youth groups (15.80%), social

groups (41.10%), voting (25.30%) or political events (21.10%). The mean age of participants was 48.7 (see Table 4), which could affect the lower rate of reported involvement in youth-oriented activities such as PTA and youth groups. Two other items elicited low agreement: voting and political events. This low rate could be reflect the fact that many of the participants are immigrants and may not yet be qualified to vote. The results regarding the community involvement variables are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Responses on Community Involvement Variables
n = 76

	Yes		No		Missing	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Compared with when you started at the literacy council, are you more involved in any of these activities?						
1. Religious organization (church, synagogue, temple, etc.)	45	59.20	23	30.30	8	10.50
2. Parent–teacher organization (PTA, PTO, booster club, etc.)	26	34.20	38	50.00	12	15.80
3. Youth groups (scout leaders, little league managers, etc.)	12	15.80	47	61.80	17	22.40
4. Neighborhood or community associations	22	28.90	47	61.80	7	9.20
5. Social or sports group	32	42.10	33	43.40	11	14.50
6. Interaction with neighbors	47	61.80	19	25.00	10	13.20
7. Voting in local elections	20	26.30	38	50.00	18	23.70
8. Use of the public library	58	76.30	10	13.20	8	10.50
9. Political events (rallies, fundraisers)	16	21.10	47	61.80	13	17.10
10. Charitable groups (volunteering, for example)	37	48.70	27	35.50	12	15.80

Self-esteem. The third section of the ALQLQ included the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, which was defined by 10 items. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each item, using a 4-point Likert-type scaling (4 = strongly agree, 3 = agree, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree). The frequency and

percentage distributions for each item are summarized in Table 7. The respondents were in agreement with the positively stated items (1, 3, 4, 7, and 10). The respondents indicated disagreement with the five negatively stated items (2, 5, 6, 8, and 9).

Table 7

*Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Responses to Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale
n = 76*

	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
1. On the whole I am satisfied with myself.		
Strongly Agree	36	47.40
Agree	34	44.70
Disagree	4	5.30
Strongly Disagree	1	1.30
Missing	1	1.30
2. At times I think I am no good at all.		
Strongly Agree	10	13.20
Agree	25	32.60
Disagree	13	17.10
Strongly Disagree	26	34.20
Missing	2	2.60
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.		
Strongly Agree	40	52.60
Agree	32	42.10
Disagree	3	3.90
Strongly Disagree	1	1.30
Missing	0	0.00
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.		
Strongly Agree	38	50.00
Agree	29	38.20
Disagree	6	7.90
Strongly Disagree	2	2.60
Missing	1	1.30

Table 7 continued

Table 7 continued

	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.		
Strongly Agree	8	10.50
Agree	16	21.10
Disagree	21	27.60
Strongly Disagree	29	38.20
Missing	2	2.60
6. I certainly feel useless at times.		
Strongly Agree	5	6.60
Agree	21	27.60
Disagree	21	27.60
Strongly Disagree	27	35.50
Missing	2	2.60
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth at least on an equal level with others.		
Strongly Agree	44	57.90
Agree	24	31.60
Disagree	5	6.60
Strongly Disagree	2	2.60
Missing	1	1.30
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.		
Strongly Agree	26	34.20
Agree	21	27.60
Disagree	9	11.80
Strongly Disagree	19	25.00
Missing	1	1.30
9. All in all I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.		
Strongly Agree	4	5.30
Agree	5	6.60
Disagree	21	27.60
Strongly Disagree	43	56.60
Missing	3	3.90
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.		
Strongly Agree	44	57.90
Agree	22	28.90
Disagree	3	3.90
Strongly Disagree	4	5.30
Missing	3	3.90

The means and standard deviations for responses to Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale are reported in Table 8. The respondents were in agreement with the positively stated items (1, 3, 4, 7, and 10). The respondents indicated disagreement with the five negatively stated items (2, 5, 6, 8, and 9).

Table 8

Means and Standard Deviations for Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale
n = 76

	<i>n</i>	mean*	<i>SD</i>
1. On the whole I am satisfied with myself.	75	3.40	0.66
2. At times I think I am no good at all.	74	2.26	1.09
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	76	3.46	0.64
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.	75	3.37	0.75
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	74	2.04	1.06
6. I certainly feel useless at times.	74	2.05	0.96
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth at least on an equal level with others.	75	3.47	0.74
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.	75	2.72	1.19
9. All in all I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	73	1.59	0.85
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	73	3.45	0.82

Note. * 4 = strongly agree, 3 = agree, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree.

The negatively stated items were reverse-coded. The internal consistency of the scale, using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, was estimated to be .80. The mean of the respondents' responses to the 10 items was used to compute a self-esteem scale score. The scale scores ranged from 1.00 to 4.00 with the mean of 3.15 (SD = .52), indicating that the respondents enjoyed self-esteem. When asked about overall self-esteem, the overwhelming majority of the respondents (90.80%) felt better about themselves. Results of that question are in Table 9.

Table 9

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Responses on Overall Self Esteem
n = 76

	Yes		No		Missing	
	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Compared with when you started taking the Literacy Council class, do you feel better about yourself in general?	69	90.8	2	2.6	5	6.6

Qualitative Results

Three focus groups were conducted for the qualitative portion of this study. The first two focus groups consisted of learners who had participated in the English-literacy program of the CBO; 11 of the 12 were English-language learners. One was a native English speaker but also an immigrant to the United States. Several of the participants indicated they had little or no education in their first language, blurring the distinction between ESL and basic literacy. The third focus group consisted of teachers, tutors, and staff of the CBO. Participants in the third group had had direct contact with learners in the first two groups (see Table 2).

The questions used as discussion starters in all three groups reflected the three major ideas of socioeconomic status, self-esteem, and community involvement. As the discussions progressed, a few other themes appeared as well. A picture emerged of a group of people who arrived in a new culture, afraid, isolated, and shy. As they realized they needed to speak the dominant language, they enrolled in classes. There, they encountered caring and compassionate teachers and other adult learners who shared the same fears and hopes, and they found themselves learning and growing. Many found themselves taking on new responsibilities, and were then able to help other adults. “I

went from being the beginner to helping the beginners,” said one woman. Their self-esteem grew as they received recognition from their families, bosses, and coworkers.

Table 10 shows codes that emerged from the analysis in all three focus groups.

Table 10

Codes for Qualitative Data

Code 1	Economic Changes
Code 2	Community Involvement
Code 3	Initial Shame, Fear, and Shyness
Code 4	Self-Reliance, Independence, and Self-Sufficiency
Code 5	Pride and Self-Esteem

Four major themes emerged from the focus group analysis. The first was that socioeconomic status did improve with literacy (see Table 11). The second was that community involvement did increase (see Table 12). The third was that self-esteem did result from increased self-reliance (see Table 13). The fourth was that participants expressed gratitude for the help they received in achieving better English literacy (see Table 14).

Table 11

Theme 1: Socioeconomic Advances

<p>Increased Income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I have more money” • “My husband got a raise when he could speak English” • “I got a job” <p>Wiser Spending Habits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Now I can read sales and ads” • “I learned about making a budget” • “I got a better deal from the cable company”

The state of the economy in the United States has been a bit precarious in the last few years. The question of whether a person's economic well-being improved since coming to literacy classes became hard to answer. Two themes in this category did emerge from the focus group. One was a direct link between salary and ability to speak English, in addition to their original language. Two participants were told by their employers that they would get more money if they spoke English.

Yes, before, I have no work because I did not speak English and now I have a month in the work, a month and a half, so my boss said, "If you speak English you get more money." I said, "I don't know, I don't understand the people. I try but I don't think so." He said, "I pay for you six dollars an hour." OK, the first week the people start coming to buy something and I talk with the people in English. My boss said, "Oh now you get not six but seven dollars because you speak English." I say, "Thank you; that is good because in this work I have more money."

In addition to a raise for herself, another participant mentioned her husband got a raise when his English improved. One was able to help her husband in his business.

The other way that the socioeconomic situation improved was that some made more careful use of the money available. That came about in two ways. Some of the participants mentioned that when their reading skills improved, they could make better financial decisions in the store. They could read labels, read advertisements in newspapers, and find bargains more easily. Another set of participants participated in a class in which a guest speaker presented concrete ways to save money: negotiating with utility companies, budgeting more carefully, and planning well. They found the

information useful, and did follow some of the advice given, resulting in monetary savings.

Table 12

Theme 2: Increased Community Involvement

Initial Isolation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I was scared because the teacher spoke only English” • “It was like when you put a bird in a cage” • “I was isolated for a whole year”
Becoming More Involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I am more social” • “I got promoted to teaching the teenagers” • “I can talk to my child’s teacher”

Even though the responses on the ALQLQ were weakest with regard to the community-involvement variables, the members of the focus groups indicated they did become more involved in community events. When the adult learners started their classes, they were shy and insecure in their communication abilities. Many were lonely and isolated. One mentioned that she refused to visit her child’s school at first. Cara stated:

When I started the class I don’t understand—a little, but not too much, and now I can understand more. This class helped me with my children in their school, and in my life, helped me anywhere, the mall, [the supermarket], anywhere I go.

As their ability to speak increased, they began to participate in their children’s school, join social groups at church, and converse with more people in general. “I am more social than I used to be,” mentioned another participant. Much of the community involvement concerned the immediate family. The learners became translators for their siblings, helped with paperwork, and accompanied family members to medical

appointments. One did volunteer work for the very agency in which she had studied. She wrote for and edited a newsletter, for example. Another was “promoted” from working with the babies at a church nursery to working with young people. “If I can work with these youngsters, I can work with anybody,” she said.

Table 13

Theme 3: Increased Self-Reliance and Self-Esteem

Initial Fear, Shyness, and Shame
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I am shy [at first]” • “My husband and daughter were laughing at me” • “In the beginning I am scared because I don’t talk or ask” • “I am embarrassed ...” • “My children were ashamed of me”
Increased Self-Reliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Now I can talk for myself” • “I can go anywhere now” • “I drive now”
Increased Self-Esteem and Pride
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “My children said, yes, you can ” • “Today they say Oh my mom is speaking English” • “They were amazed when they saw me pick up the newspaper” • “I can work with anybody” • “He now feels much better about his ability”

Many of the categories that emerged can be linked to increased self-esteem. The person quoted above showed newfound confidence and pride when she was promoted to working with teenagers and succeeded in that endeavor. A very common thread was that of starting out with shame, embarrassment, nervousness, and shyness about not knowing the language, not being able to read, and especially not being able to pronounce. There was a lot of fear: fear of saying the wrong thing, fear of not understanding what was going on around them, fear of ridicule (and actual ridicule), and fear of being a burden

and imposing on others. As their language skills improved, these fears began to recede. When they no longer had to ask for a translator, they began to feel proud. They basked in the appreciation of their families. They recounted compliments paid to them by their doctors, bosses, and their own children. Many noticed that their roles were changing from being dependent to being self-sufficient. One mentioned that wherever she and her husband went at first, the husband did all the talking. Her husband talked for her at the doctor, at the school, everywhere. She could not go anywhere without him. Now, that burden is lifted from his shoulders, and she can speak for herself. She goes on her own to the well-baby doctor visits, and drives herself where needed. One described a moment in which she felt proud, when she was talking English to the teacher of one of her children, and was apologizing, saying she could not talk English. “Yes you can!” whispered the child to her. The recognition that her own child had confidence in her boosted her self-esteem.

Another participant reported feeling great pride in finally being able to pick up a newspaper. He said it shocked his coworkers who had known he could not read. He also reported that his increased confidence brought on by learning to read gave him confidence to try other activities that would have terrified him in the past, such as kayaking and swimming. “I feel better,” “I think better,” “I speak better,” and “I am a completely different person” are testimonials to the increased self-esteem of these participants. One of the tutors reported that sometimes even a small change can make a big difference. She recounted a situation in which her pupil’s children were being accused of forging papers sent home for parental signatures:

I had a lady in my class who was extremely shy and one day she was crying. I thought it was something I did, so I took her aside. She said my children are ashamed of me. ... I asked, but why? It is very hard for me to sign when my children bring home papers for me to sign. I sign it but in block letters and the teacher doesn't believe it is an adult signing it. It looks like a child. And I said, we're going to take care of that. So every day, we would work on signing her name. Finally, she developed such a beautiful signature, then [the school secretary] just wouldn't believe it. [The mom] had to go and present herself. And this lady is the owner of a very big restaurant here in town.

The final theme that emerged was the importance of mutual admiration and appreciation between teachers and learners. Learners acknowledged that the hardest part of learning a new language was retraining the ear to hear what was being said. Many reported that they had an easier time with the written word. Pronunciation was much more difficult. Understanding spoken English was a major hurdle, especially taking into account regional accents. Tutors and teachers helped with this aspect of learning. Besides accents, idioms presented a problem. For example, one mom was trying to decipher a note that had come home with her child. "Pick up your child at the horseshoe," it read. She looked up "horseshoe" in the dictionary, and then the note still made no sense. She then asked her literacy coach, and the teacher explained that it probably referred to a driveway in the shape of a horseshoe. Bringing specific questions like that to the teacher was one of the codes that led to the theme of mutual admiration. Some of the teachers were mentors, counselors, and helpers in many more ways than just academic teachers. Praise for the teacher was mentioned often. This speaks to the

individualization that is required in teaching adults. Two of the respondents also mentioned interruptions in their education. One was for having a baby, the other for a serious illness. Yet they both came back to continue their studies as soon as they could, having “stopped out” to attend to other needs, which was described by Cora (2008) as normal and expected. That determination to continue one’s self-improvement was reflected in many comments. Tutors and teachers mentioned, for example, that it is possible to live in some parts of the United States without knowing English. It takes strength to realize how limiting that is, and to make an effort to expand one’s world by studying. Tutors and teachers also acknowledged that coming to class after a long day at work was difficult and exhausting for their pupils, and they expressed admiration for the determination that their students displayed in attending. Table 14 shows some of the threads of the theme of admiration and gratitude.

Table 14

Theme 4: Admiration and Gratitude

Teachers and Tutors Admired	Adult Learners
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We had a breakthrough” • “We did alphabets year after year and then it clicked” • “It is neat to see the culmination” • “...another student who we all love dearly” • “[a student who had been in the women’s shelter] is motivated and determined. She went to Houston by herself. ” • “They come to class tired after work, but they come”
Gratitude	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “[teacher] was like a family member” • “We are getting compensated- with learning” • “I learned a lot from her, a very very lot”

One way to paint a picture of the participants as a whole is through poetry, as described in Chapter 3. A composite of the learners’ experiences was put in a poetic

form. The following words do not purport to be great poetry, but they do attempt to describe the shared experience of the literacy participants as well as the description of changes observed by the teachers, tutors, and staff.

Look at me

No, don't look at me.

I am small and insignificant.

People do not see me.

They do not hear me.

When I speak, oh so softly

They stare back blankly.

My husband speaks for me.

My child translates for me.

My neighbor could help, maybe, if only I could ask.

That was then.

I don't know what force

Let me take that first step

I took a class.

Found many like myself.

Rudy who smells of turpentine

Fresh from work

Gina who hurried over and

forgot to take off her apron

covered in the droppings from

others' tables

Lou who owns a business

but can't read to his grandchildren.

All in some way determined

To find the clues and dreams

Hidden from them so long.

Like peeling layers from an onion

My teacher revealed

A new world

I opened my mouth and nobody laughed

I willed my hands to make that pen go just so

I found that certain squiggles

had sounds

and patterns

One day I said "thank you" to the bus driver

And she saw me as for the first time.

Yes, my husband talked for me then

Now I speak for myself.

The ability to speak for oneself, to become less dependent on others, was present in almost all participants. It was one of the characteristics mentioned often by teachers, tutors, and staff. Interestingly, none of the teachers, tutors, or staff described increasing test scores as the sign that students were improving their lives. Rather, they were impressed with the determination, the courage, and the personal growth they observed in

their pupils. The synthesis of the quantitative and qualitative results regarding perceived impact of the CBO's English adult-literacy program emphasized this independence and newly-gained strength.

General Summary of Findings

The typical participant in the survey was an employed female, Hispanic, age 48, who was making less than \$40,000 per year. In general, responders both on the surveys and in the focus groups noticed that attendance at the literacy classes coincided with improvement in their living conditions and their financial situation. Half responded that their level of responsibility or chance for promotion had increased. There was less agreement that their community involvement had increased, but the focus groups participants did express an increase in their sociability, and an increase in their participation in their children's school. On the whole, participants expressed a high sense of self esteem, with an average of 3.15 on a four-point scale for the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, and with many comments on how their confidence had increased. A blossoming of self-reliance enabled respondents to participate in society more fully, they reported. Tutors, teachers, and staff corroborated that they had seen these changes in self-reliance on the part of the adult learners.

Chapter 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Discussion

Introduction

This chapter reviewed the background of the study including the theoretical framework based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Conclusions include the observation that in both the quantitative and qualitative results, respondents indicated a perceived improvement in their lives after attending literacy classes. Implications of the study and suggestions for future study are discussed in this chapter.

Background

This study explored how adult learners perceived changes in their lives that happened during and after their enrollment in adult literacy and ESL classes. The ALQLQ was used to survey adult learners' views using variables related to some of the levels of Maslow's (1970) theory of motivation and hierarchy of needs. Figure 1 is an overview of this hierarchy (Van Wagner, 2009). Maslow theorized that human beings are motivated to fulfill their needs and that in general, the most basic needs must be met before attending to higher-level needs (Maslow, 1970, see Figure 1).

This study explored the perceptions and perspectives of adult learners with regard to changes in their lives after attending adult literacy or ESL instruction at a small CBO in South Texas. Given that a person who is not able to meet their basic physical needs would probably not be ready to enroll in adult education, the study looked to the next three levels. Of special interest were learners' perceptions of socioeconomic changes, community involvement, and self-esteem. Each of these categories corresponds to the second, third and fourth levels in Maslow's hierarchy of needs (see Figure 1).

Changes in perceptions and perspectives regarding meeting esteem needs were reflected in the variable of self-esteem as measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg Foundation, 2009) incorporated into the ALQLQ and by responses in focus groups. Changes in meeting belonging needs were considered in the variable of community involvement as measured by responses to 10 items in the ALQLQ and by responses in focus groups. This study also explored how literacy instruction impacted the variable of socioeconomic well-being, which parallels Maslow's level of need for safety, in that employment and financial security are part of the overall need for safety. Perceptions of changes in learners' lives with regard to their socioeconomic well-being were measured by responses on 10 items in the ALQLQ and the perspectives of the learners and their instructors were explored in focus groups.

Discussion of Results

As described earlier, low literacy has been shown to go hand in hand with a plethora of societal and personal problems. The assumption has been that improving literacy will address those social and personal ills. Yet little research existed to corroborate adult-literacy learners' perceptions of the impact that adult literacy programs, including ESL and basic literacy, had on learners' lives. Bingman et al. (2000) described that in the Tennessee Longitudinal Study, participants reported that their employment rates went up; they reported increased satisfaction with their financial situation, increased community involvement, and increased self-esteem. The results of the present study tend to corroborate those findings. The Tennessee Longitudinal Study, reported by Merrifield and colleagues (1994, 1993) and analyzed by Bingman et al. (1999, 2000) showed less change in the area of voting, which matches the results of this study. Most of the present

study participants were immigrants to the United States, which could explain the lower results in the political arena in that they may not be eligible to vote. The sample for the Tennessee study was largely African American, and most students were in adult basic education. The sample in the present study was largely Hispanic, mostly comprised of adults learning ESL, several of whom started classes at the CBO with little or no literacy skills in either their original language or in English.

The populations in Tennessee and South Texas were very different, so direct comparisons could not be made, but the fact that the trends are similar lends hope to the idea that these quality-of-life changes would be found in other populations as well. The idea that improving literacy leads to changes beyond literacy itself gains support from these findings. When a person is lacking the verbal skills and the written skills to thrive in their society, they suffer in their sense of safety, belonging, and esteem. As they grow in skill, and see themselves functioning at higher levels, their self-confidence blossoms. Participants in this study certainly reflected that.

Although these results support what Lipnevich and Beder (2007) suggested, they also provide some of the missing connections that Lipnevich mentioned in 2010. Learners themselves perceived an increase in self-confidence and self-esteem, and that is corroborated by the observations of their teachers. The self-confidence described in this study spurred learners to continue the cycle of self-improvement and moved them to satisfy higher level needs. As Reder (2011) pointed out, the relationship between literacy improvement and improvement in other social areas is supported. When a person makes a decision to return to school as an adult, be it to learn to read, to learn another language, or to get an advanced degree, an inner change takes place. In a sense, they are

reinventing themselves (Zacharakis et al., 2011). A new person emerges, with new skills and new confidence.

Implications

This study offers other ways of understanding the value of literacy for individuals, and the value of literacy programs to society. The fact that that low literacy correlates with many social problems is the impetus for literacy programs. The logical assumption seems to be that if the literacy situation improves, the other problems will be ameliorated. Yet the majority of programs judge whether a literacy program is working on the basis of pretests and posttests of reading levels (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2010). All too often, posttests are not available because learners have dropped out or stopped out (Belzer, 2007; Cora, 2008). One of the reasons the Tennessee study was never completed is that attrition made subsequent samples too small (Bingman et al., 2000). Asking participants directly via survey and conversation offers another way to consider program accountability in adult education beyond the measurement of reading levels at entry and exit points in the learners' schooling. Asking participants directly also follows the andragogical principle that adults are the best judges of the value of their learning experience. This study was able to sample learners who had already stopped or dropped out but were willing to return to give feedback.

Bingman et al. (2002), in their Inputs to Impacts grid, predicted that one input from the students would be initial shyness, and that a longer term outcome would be changed self-concept. In this study, one of the themes that emerged was that adult learners reported they began as shy individuals, and emerged with more self-confidence. Bingman et al. (2002) also predicted that adults would be able to get better jobs, and that

they would become more involved in their community and in the democratic process. This study supported those assumptions.

In Maslow's hierarchy of needs depicted as a pyramid, the basic physical needs are at the base. The study made the assumption that individuals who are struggling to get food or shelter will not seek out literacy classes. If an adult is meeting those needs, and is working to meet the next levels of needs, they may enroll in adult literacy or ESL classes. However, as Belzer (2007) and Cora (2008) pointed out, conditions in adults' lives might deteriorate occasionally. It is common for these basic needs to arise in the lives of adult learners who were enrolled in adult-literacy classes, causing them to drop out or stop out from class. Typically, when the basic needs have been met, the students are able to return to class.

Having met the basic physiological needs, adults might choose to improve their situation by improving their English literacy. There may be hope that improving their literacy will help them meet the safety needs described by Maslow, which include financial security. This study, along with the studies in Tennessee, support the idea that increased literacy will lead to improvement in employment. Better employment in turn will permit resources to address improved economic security.

Individuals can then look to the next level in Maslow's (1970) hierarchy: the needs related to belonging. Although in this study the measures of belonging, that is, of community involvement were not as strong as other measures on the ALQLQ, participants in the focus groups mentioned an increase in sociability and involvement in many areas, including involvement in their childrens' school. The literature available supports this idea as well (Bingman, et al., 1999; McDonald & Scoley, 2009).

The next level in Maslow's hierarchy of needs concerns esteem. In the Tennessee studies, the mean self-esteem score on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale rose from 3.52 to 3.66 on a 5-point scale (Bingman, et al. 1999). In this study, individuals reported that their self-esteem was high, averaging 3.15 on a 4-point scale. The strongest report of increased self-esteem came from comments by learners in the focus groups, and especially from the observations of teachers, tutors, and staff who could observe the participants. The increased self-confidence of adult learners led to even higher levels of functioning in their lives. Although the study did not ask about the highest level on Maslow's hierarchy, organizers did notice that the learners who were blossoming and growing were already giving back to the community, volunteering at the agency in which they had been learners, and helping others. Concern for others' needs is a sign of functioning at the highest level in Maslow's scheme: self-actualization (Maslow, 1970).

Suggestions for Future Study

Additional research in this area could focus on changes that affect the next generation as well. Studies such as those by McDonald and Scollay (2009) support the conclusion that improved literacy leads to improved self-esteem, improved economic outlook, and not only community involvement, but also direct improvement in the school performance of the children of participants in literacy programs. The cross-generational effects of adult literacy hold great promise for future study.

An examination of whether differences exist in the various subcategories of adult learners such as basic literacy, ESL, or a hybrid would be useful. A consideration for future study could include a comparison between pupils in basic literacy and those in ESL courses of study. However, the boundaries in the categories are less well-defined

than one would expect. Some of the English language learners in this sample were also basic-literacy students, because they could not read in either their original language or their second language.

The concept of stopping out (Belzer, 2007; Cora, 2008) is intriguing. It would be of interest to understand how stopping in and out affects the variables of this study as well as objective measures of reading gains. The recognition that adult learners are often struggling with issues in the basic levels of Maslow's hierarchy is reflected in the fact that adults leave their education for times when they must deal with more serious life issues, but return when the situation changes. With regard to the re-invention of self that Zacharakis (2011) mentions, it would be interesting to study whether that inner change takes place during the course of literacy study, or whether it takes place long before, and returning to school as an adult is just one of the manifestations of an earlier psychogenic event.

Many participants in this study were immigrants. Another area for future study is to see how long it takes for an immigrant to decide to attend English-literacy instruction, what triggers the desire to return to school, and how that affects their progress. As was pointed out in the focus groups, there are enclaves in the United States in which a person could live without ever speaking English. However, all the ESL participants in this study recognized that they were limited by their monolingualism and made that decision to improve their education. As the immigrant population in the United States keeps growing (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2010) the issues of English literacy and basic literacy will continue to be important. The responses from the providers of the needed education must be as varied as the pupils themselves.

Final Remarks

The study examined the perceptions and perspectives of adult literacy learners and their instructors regarding changes in socioeconomic status, community involvement, and self-esteem. Both in the responses to the ALQLQ and in focus groups, there was agreement that learners' lives had improved in those areas. Although causality cannot be inferred, learners at the CBO and the teachers, tutors and staff who worked with them, reported great improvement in the adult learners' lives. Literacy continues to be vital to improvement of socio-economic status, civic engagement, and personal growth.

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Appendices

Appendix A**Questionnaire:**

ADULT LEARNER QUALITY OF LIFE QUESTIONNAIRE

(ALQLQ) (Spanish and English)

Adult Learner Quality of Life Questionnaire (ALQLQ) Fecha _____

Porfavor piense en las maneras en cuales su vida ha cambiado desde que usted comenzó a tomar clases de inglés o lectura en el Literacy Council.

Tanto como pueda, diga si su vida ha cambiado en estos aspectos:

Part I SOCIO-ECONOMIC

Comparando ahora con el tiempo antes de venir a clases, se siente **mejor** acerca de estos aspectos?

1. su casa o apartamento	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2. la ciudad en la cual vive	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3. la comunidad en la cual vive	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4. sus actividades fuera del trabajo	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5. su situacion financiera	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6. su salud o condición física	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Desde cuando comenzó a venir al centro de aprendizaje,...

7. tuvo que encontrar un trabajo segundo para pagar sus gastos?	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
8. Ha aumentado su satisfaccion con su trabajo?	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No	NA
9. Ha aumentado su nivel de responsabilidad en el trabajo?	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No	NA
10. Ha aumentado su oportunidad de obtener promocion en el trabajo?	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No	NA

(si no trabaja ni busca trabajo ahora, puede responder NA= no aplica)

Part II: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Comparado con el tiempo antes de venir a aprender, esta usted **mas** involucrado en estas actividades?

1. Religión (Iglesia, templo, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Organizaciones para padres y maestros (PTA, PTO, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Grupos juveniles, como los boy scouts or girl scouts	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4. organizaciones para la comunidad o barrio	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5. grupo social o deportivo	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6. actividades con los vecinos	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7. votando en elecciones	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8. uso de la biblioteca publica	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
9. eventos politicos	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10. grupos de beneficio social, como voluntaria/o	<input type="checkbox"/> Si	<input type="checkbox"/> No

PART III: ROSENBERG Self Esteem Scale

Favor de indicar si esta de acuerdo o no con estas frases con respeto a usted mismo.

Fuertemente de acuerdo- indique con el FA

Mas o menos de acuerdo, indique con A (de acuerdo)

Mas o menos NO de acuerdo (esto no es muy de verdad para mi) indique D(= desacuerdo)

Fuertemente en desacuerdo (esto no es nada de verdad para mi) indique con FD

1. En general estoy satisfecho/a con mi misma/o	<input type="checkbox"/> FA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> FD
2. A veces creo que no soy buena persona	<input type="checkbox"/> FA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> FD
3. Siento que tengo varias cualidades buenas	<input type="checkbox"/> FA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> FD
4. Puedo hacer las cosas por lo menos igualm que otras personas	<input type="checkbox"/> FA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> FD
5. Siento que NO tengo muchas razones para sentir orgullo	<input type="checkbox"/> FA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> FD
6. A veces me siento inútil	<input type="checkbox"/> FA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> FD
7. Siento que soy una persona por lo menos a la par (de igual valor) con otras personas	<input type="checkbox"/> FA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> FD
8. Desearia tener mas respeto para mi.	<input type="checkbox"/> FA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> FD
9. En general creo que soy un fracaso.	<input type="checkbox"/> FA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> FD
10. Tengo una actitud positiva en cuanto a mi mismo/a	<input type="checkbox"/> FA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> FD

Comparado con el tiempo antes de venir a aprender, se siente usted mejor consigo mismo, en general?

si no

SECTION V: DEMOGRAPHIC

Edad: _____ [] Femenina [] Masculino

Raza o cultura:

___ hispano/a ___ asiatico ___ anglo/ingles ___ de herencia africana otro: _____

Cual es el nivel de ganancias en un año para toda su familia en casa:

1 ___ less than \$ 10,000

2 ___ \$10,001 - \$20,000

3 ___ \$20,001 - \$30,000

4 ___ \$30,001 - \$40,000

5 ___ \$40,001 - \$44,000

6 ___ \$44,001 - \$50,000

7 ___ \$50,000 o mas

8 ___ no se

Trabajo: ___ horas parciales ___ horas completas (cerca de 40 horas por semana)

___ No tengo empleo pero busco ___ no tengo empleo y no estoy buscando

Adult Learner Quality of Life Questionnaire (ALQLQ) Date _____

PLEASE Think about how your life has changed since you started attending English literacy classes. **To the best of your recollection, how strongly has your experience with English literacy classes and/or tutoring changed these aspects of your life?**

Part I SOCIO-ECONOMIC

Compared with when you started at the Literacy Council, do you feel **better** about ...

1. Your house or apartment	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2. The city or neighborhood where you live	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3. The community where you live	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Your non-working activities, hobbies, and so on	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5. Your financial situation	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6. Your health and physical condition	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Since the time you started at the Literacy Council,

7. Did you need to take a second job to make ends meet?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8. Has your satisfaction with your present job increased?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
9. Has your level of responsibility at work increased?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10. Has your chance for promotion increased?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Part II: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Compared with when you started at the Literacy Council, are you **more** involved in any of these activities:

1. Religious organization (Church, synagogue, temple, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Parent-Teacher organization (PTA, PTO, booster club etc)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Youth groups (Scout Leaders, Little League Managers, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Neighborhood or community associations	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
5. Social or sports group	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
6. Interaction with neighbors	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
7. Voting in local elections	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
8. Use of the public library	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
9. Political events (rallies, fund-raisers)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
10. Charitable groups (volunteering, for example)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

PART III: Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with a number of statements about yourself and your feelings. Circle "SA" if you strongly agree, "A" if you agree, "D" if you disagree, and "SD" if you strongly disagree.

1. On the whole I am satisfied with myself.	<input type="checkbox"/> SA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> SD
2. At times I think I am no good at all.	<input type="checkbox"/> SA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> SD
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	<input type="checkbox"/> SA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> SD
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.	<input type="checkbox"/> SA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> SD
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	<input type="checkbox"/> SA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> SD
6. I certainly feel useless at times.	<input type="checkbox"/> SA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> SD
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth at least on an equal level with others.	<input type="checkbox"/> SA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> SD
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.	<input type="checkbox"/> SA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> SD
9. All in all I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	<input type="checkbox"/> SA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> SD
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	<input type="checkbox"/> SA	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> SD

Compared with when you started taking the Literacy Council class, do you feel better about yourself in general? Yes No

SECTION V: DEMOGRAPHIC

Date: _____ Age: _____ Gender: [] F [] M

Ethnicity:

___Hispanic ___Asian ___Anglo/ not Hispanic ___African-American Other: _____

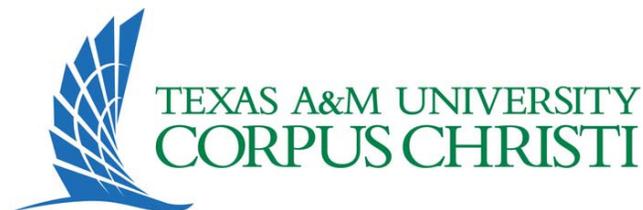
Income: What is the range that's closest to your total household income?

- 1 ___ less than \$ 10,000
- 2 ___ \$10,001 - \$20,000
- 3 ___ \$20,001 - \$30,000
- 4 ___ \$30,001 - \$40,000
- 5 ___ \$40,001 - \$44,000
- 6 ___ \$44,001 - \$50,000
- 7 ___ \$50,000 or More
- 8 ___ don't know

Employment:

___Part time ___Full time ___Unemployed Looking for a job ___Unemployed Not looking

Appendix B
Institutional Review Board Documentation



May 18, 2010

Ms. Mary V. Gleason
Doctoral Student, Department of Education Leadership
301 Catalina Pl.
Corpus Christi, TX 78411

Dear Ms. Gleason,

I have reviewed your IRB application for the research project entitled "Changing adults' lives through literacy: it is not just numbers. Adult learner's perspectives about the effect of literacy instruction on the quality of their lives" (IRB# 62-10). The project is consistent with Category 7.1.2(2) and is hereby deemed as Exempt. You are authorized to begin the project as outlined in your application.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erin L. Sherman".

Erin L. Sherman
Interim Research Compliance Officer
Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi
6300 Ocean Dr. Unit 5844
Corpus Christi, TX 78412
Tel: (361)825-2497
erin.sherman@tamucc.edu



CORPUS CHRISTI LITERACY COUNCIL
READ TO SUCCEED

Mary V. Gleason
301 Catalina Pl.
Corpus Christi, TX 78411

April 2, 2009

Dear Ms. Gleason:

We are pleased to grant you permission to conduct a survey and focus groups to examine the effects of literacy instruction on the quality of life of our adult learners. We will contact all former and currently enrolled learners to invite them to participate.

Mary Gleason
Executive Director

Informed Consent- Questionnaire

Changing adults' lives through literacy: it is not just numbers. Adult learner's perspectives about the effect of literacy instruction on the quality of their lives.

You are being asked to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. Mary Gleason, the Principal Investigator, will also describe the study to you and answer your questions. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything that you do not understand before deciding whether or not to take part. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can refuse to participate without penalty.

Description: I understand that the purpose of the study is to evaluate the effects of a literacy program on the quality of life of adult learners.

Confidentiality: I understand that I am asked to participate in a questionnaire about how literacy classes or tutoring have affected my life. All information collected from participants in this study will be aggregated. Thus, your name will not appear in any report, publication or presentation resulting from this study. If the results are published or presented at scientific meetings, identify of the participants will not be disclosed.

Compensation: I understand that participation in the study will not cost me anything and that I will not receive any money for my participation.

Risks: I understand that there are no specific risks associated with the type of information that will be solicited for the study.

Benefits: There is very little research done to determine the effects of adult literacy programs on the lives of the adult learners. As a result of the study, we will have a better understanding of the way programs work and have information to help improve the program.

Right to Withdraw: I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and stop participating in the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits for which I may be entitled.

Voluntary Consent: I certify that I have been informed about the study's purpose, procedures, possible risks and benefits; that I have been given the opportunity to ask questions before I sign; and that I can ask questions at any time. Additionally, I know that if I have any questions about my rights as a research participant, I can contact Erin Sherman, IRB Compliance Officer at Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi at (361) 825-2497. I have received a copy of this form and by signing it, I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Informed Consent Form- Focus group

Changing adults' lives through literacy: it is not just numbers. Adult learner's perspectives about the effect of literacy instruction on the quality of their lives.

You are being asked to participate in a research study's focus group. This form provides you with information about the study. Mary Gleason, the Principal Investigator, will also describe the study to you and answer your questions. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything that you do not understand before deciding whether or not to take part. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can refuse to participate without penalty.

Description: I understand that the purpose of the study is to evaluate the effects of a literacy program on the quality of life of adult learners.

Confidentiality: I understand that I am asked to participate in a focus group which will be audio taped and later transcribed. Both the audio tapes and transcripts will be kept confidential. If the results are published or presented at scientific meetings, identify of the participants will not be disclosed.

Compensation: I understand that participation in the study will not cost me anything and that I will not receive any money for my participation.

Risks: I understand that there are no specific risks associated with the type of information that will be solicited for the study.

Benefits: There is very little research done to determine the effects of adult literacy programs on the lives of the adult learners. As a result of the study, we will have a better understanding of the way programs work.

Right to Withdraw: I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and stop participating in the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits for which I may be entitled.

Voluntary Consent: I certify that I have been informed about the study's purpose, procedures, possible risks and benefits; that I have been given the opportunity to ask questions before I sign; and that I can ask questions at any time. Additionally, I know that if I have any questions about my rights as a research participant, I can contact Erin Sherman, IRB Compliance Officer at Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi at (361) 825-2497. I have received a copy of this form and by signing it, I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Signature of Subject

Date

Printed Name of Subject

Date

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

Mary V. Gleason

Printed Name of Principal Investigator

Date

**Información y permiso para el cuestionario sobre
cambios en la vida después de asistir a clases de inglés**

Le pedimos su ayuda con un estudio. Mary Gleason, la investigadora principal, le explicará el estudio. Por favor lea esta explicación y haga las preguntas que quiera, antes de decidir si quiere ayudarnos. Su decisión para participar es completamente voluntaria y puede retirarse a cualquier momento.

Descripción: Entiendo que el propósito del estudio es examinar los cambios que han ocurrido en la vida después de comenzar clases de lectura o inglés.

Su nombre no se usará: Toda la información obtenida de los participantes en este estudio será anónima. Así, su nombre no aparecerá en ningún informe, publicación o presentación resultando de este estudio.

Sin costo: Entiendo que no hay ni costo ni ganancia financiera con este estudio. No tendré que pagar nada, y no recibiré pago.

Riesgos: Entiendo que no hay riesgos para mí en este estudio.

Beneficios: Casi no hay información sobre cómo cambian las vidas de las personas después de asistir a clases de inglés o de lectura. Esperamos que las respuestas nos ayudarán a mejorar los programas que ofrecemos.

El derecho de retirarse: Usted puede retirarse del estudio en cualquier momento con sólo decirle a la investigadora que ha decidido retirarse. Además, usted puede negarse a contestar cualquier pregunta si usted lo desea. Es importante observar que estos datos se pueden emplear anónimamente y usarse en publicaciones y presentaciones académicas.

Permiso voluntario: Afirmo que entiendo el propósito del estudio, y la manera en que se usarán los datos. Se me ha ofrecido la oportunidad de hacer preguntas antes de dar mi permiso, y sé que puedo hacer preguntas en cualquier momento durante el estudio; Además, sé que si tengo preguntas sobre mis derechos como participante en este estudio, puedo hablar con Erin Sherman, en la oficina de conformidad de la universidad de Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi al teléfono (361) 825-2497. Al firmar aquí, doy mi permiso para participar en el estudio.

Firma del participante

Fecha

Nombre y apellido del participante en **letra de molde** (Favor de incluir nombre y apellido previo tambien)

Fecha

Firma de la investigadora principal

Fecha

Nombre de la investigadora principal

Fecha

Informacion y permiso para la conversacion en grupo sobre cambios en la vida despues de asistir a clases de inglés

Le pedimos su ayuda con un estudio. Mary Gleason, la investigadora principal, le explicará el estudio. Porfavor lea esta explicacion y haga las preguntas que quiera, antes de decidir si quiere ayudarnos. Su decision para participar es completamente voluntaria y puede retirarse a cualquier momento.

Descripción: Entiendo que el propósito del estudio es examinar los cambios que han ocurrido en la vida después de comenzar clases de lectura o inglés.

Su nombre no se usará: Toda la información obtenida de los participantes en este estudio será anónima. Así, su nombre no aparecerá en ningún informe, publicación o presentación resultando de este estudio.

Sin costo: Entiendo que no hay ni costo ni ganancia financiera con este estudio. No tendré que pagar nada, y no recibiré pago.

Riesgos: Entiendo que no hay riesgos para mi en este estudio.

Beneficios: Casi no hay informacion sobre como cambian las vidas de las personas despues de asistir a clases de inglés o de lectura. Esperamos que las respuestas nos ayudarán a mejorar los programas que ofrecemos.

El derecho de retirarse: Usted puede retirarse del estudio en cualquier momento con sólo decirle a la investigadora que ha decidido retirarse. Además, usted puede negarse a contestar cualquier pregunta si usted lo desea. Es importante observar que estos datos se pueden emplear anónimamente y usarse en publicaciones y presentaciones académicas.

Permiso voluntario: Afirmo que entiendo el propósito del estudio, y la manera en que se usarán los datos. Se me ha ofrecido la oportunidad de hacer preguntas antes de dar mi permiso, y sé que puedo hacer preguntas en cualquier momento durante el estudio; Además, sé que si tengo preguntas sobre mis derechos como participante en este estudio, puedo hablar con Erin Sherman, en la oficina de conformidad de la universidad de Texas A&M University—Corpus Christi al telefono (361) 825-2497. Al firmar aqui, doy mi permiso para participar en el estudio.

Firma del participante

Fecha

Nombre y apellido del participante en **letra de molde** (Favor de incluir nombre y apellido previo tambien)

Fecha

Firma de la investigadora principal

Fecha

Nombre de la investigadora principal

Fecha

Appendix C

Focus-Group Transcripts

Focus Group 1, 10:30 A.M.

Participants: Former Students from the literacy agency. All pseudonyms used.

Setting: Board room at the main branch of the city library. A large wooden table in the center of room is surrounded by chairs. Researcher 1 (R1) moved all but 8 chairs to the side of the room, and grouped the 8 chairs at one end of the table for ease of recording. R1 had to ask people to leave it like that, explaining about the recording. R1 set up the recorder to record information from the 8 chairs. At the side of the room is a table with coffee and condiments, and another table in the corner had breakfast taquitos and cake and cookies. Someone, one of the participants, also brought cookies to add to the table but R1 did not see who did.

Participants are welcomed by R1, and the participants sign the consent form after R1 explains in both English and Spanish. The consent forms are written in English on one side of the paper, and in Spanish on the other. There is an easel with a white board and markers by the table. Nona (Researcher 2 who is facilitating) writes a sample time line on it before starting the session. When all are settled, R1 turns on the recorders. R1 leaves the room and Nona takes the lead in the interview.

Participants: Nona – facilitator, Irene, Diane and infant, Vicki, Cara, Anne, Harriet, Sissy All are adults learning English. Most speak Spanish, one speaks Lebanese.

Nona asks the participants to prepare a timeline starting with when they began classes at the literacy council and ending today.

-Nona - just take about 5 minutes, it does not have to be detailed or anything. Just to have something to work off from and have some discussion. Does anyone else need a pen?

-R1 – I will be right next door if you need me

-Cara -we make a list of what we learn?

-Irene - How are the things at the beginning do you feel

-Nona - Start on your first- start - Sort of make a line, maybe write, on the first day of class, something like found the room; that may have been a big deal, just reading the signs, and today a big deal was getting around the one way streets and getting to this building, so things that made – that you remember from the time you started to (until) today, & especially things that you - where - what you learned in your classes made a difference to you.

Things that stood out, just events

-Nona- This may be the second week in class, the third week of class, and different things that happened in between there.

-Unidentified Participant- If you don't remember the date?

-Nona -If you don't remember the date Just stick in on there the date is not important. It is what happens that's important

-Nona- You don't need to be real detailed, even if you just drew a picture, of a piece of pie or something that reminded you of something you don't have to actually write words if you don't want to, just something to remind you 'cause this -we are going to use this to talk about

Silence while the participants write we just have some minutes to do this. Just from the beginning Just write one word or put a picture, just some things that stand out for you to help you remember what happened

-Nona -Okay we will take about one more minute, just scribble down some ideas and we will start talking, ok?

-Nona - I hate to stop you because you all have some good things to write. Would you like some more time?

-Nona - Just hang on to your papers, and you can refer to them later

If you want to put your name on the corners, we'll just give them to Mary in case she may see - some she has something to ask you later. Also, when we are going through the questions, if there is something on your paper that you want to cover when we get to the end-

So basically what you have written down there are ways that things have changed for you since you started the literacy classes, can each one of you..., we can go around the table , be relaxed, Feel free we can start anywhere

And tell me 3 ways that things have changed for you since you started your literacy classes

-Diane-at the beginning I was I don't understand what the people say and everywhere I go with my husband and my husband talk with the people, when we went to the literacy council he talk with (2 names) , And I do a test, many questions I did not understand; That is a great change. I improved my English a lot in this class and I have a lot of friends in this class, and it was very special in my life I love so much I want to continue but with my baby I can't now

-Nona-Hopefully there will be some ways you can continue

-Nona-Can you give me two other incidents that happened to you

-Diane-Once I go to the literacy council I was very shy and I didn't talk a lot, but now I talk

-Nona-Wonderful, Any other

-Diane-Yeah, I helped the beginner. I am the beginner in the English and then I can help the beginners

-Nona -keep thinking if you think of any others we will come back to you, we that is wonderful. Who else would like to speak up

-Irene-the most important thing to me was understanding words, that at the beginning I didn't understand words that I knew. When I asked people to spell them, then even if the my ear wasn't used to the pronunciation so that is the most remarkable thing that happened to me that now I can understand more I am still learning but I can understand more

-Nona -a real eye opener

-Irene-I learned about the culture I was new and I was alone and ms -Nina-a the teacher is a very special person she helped people not just with the English to know more English and to learn but almost like the psychologist area I don't know how to describe it but is a good support for a person

-Nona-That is wonderful Can you think of a third thing that happened

-Irene-I helped writing the newsletter and that made me think of things to write, I have the idea but sometimes I don't know how to describe it and it was a wonderful experience

-Nona -Did you interview people for the newsletter. . to get the information to write, did you have to go from spoken English to written English

-Irene-most of the time Not, I put events, schedule, I wrote something, it was just 3 or 4 pages I had to do some (interviews), but not many

-Nona -that stretched you even more. Like I said, if you think of anything else be sure and let us know just So everybody else gets a chance. I am sure there are a lot of things that have happened for all of you. Who would like to go next?

-Harriet -When I started there I had a different attitude toward people because I live alone, I am a widow for 6 years and I don't have communication with people. I started going to that school and I was very happy because people there - Especially the teachers, want to take care of you. I was out for about six months because I got sick, I had an operation thanks the lord I am fine now. I wanted my GED I probably won't get it but I want it so bad I am not dumb or whatever they call you. Just for that reason mostly for me to learn more and to be able to get around people and not be embarrassed because I am not embarrassed if I do the wrong question because I am only human, But I enjoy it, And my teacher is a wonderful person she has helped me a lot and all the people around there

-Nona -And so they have changed the way you feel

-Harriet-I am a different person, a very different person; I see I haven't gotten over the stubbornness and being mostly about myself

-Nona -the stubbornness will help you get to your goal

-Harriet-And Maybe I will and maybe I won't make it on account of my age, I'm getting forgetful, I pray that I get the courage to get up

-Nona -Keeps you sharp

-Harriet-I hope so

-Nona-You keep thinking too if you think, Who else would like to go

-Vicki - I like the English language but I speak Spanish only in my work and my neighbors all speak Spanish a few . I speak English with the person, and I think ... oh I love to see you, thank you but I can write but Speaking is a little more difficult

-Nona-do you look for opportunity to speak just English

-Vicki-In Corpus Christi most people can speak both,

-Nona- So they don't force you to just speak English do they how have the literacy classes other than helping you practice your English How have they created changes for you

Can you think of something

-(unidentified speaker)- Repeat please

-Nona - A little bit slower? The classes in learning the English - in what way has that made changes for you

-Vicki-The English class is good but I can't practice speak in conversation

-Nona -The only way you can practice

-Irene-because outside the class

-Nona -Can someone help me frame my question better in Spanish

-Irene-que ha cambiado algo al tener esta oportunidad (*has something changed because of this opportunity?*)

-Vicki-si (yes) I am afraid for speak with people- American people- the small sentence - then it changed - my beautiful experience

-Nona-If you would like to speak that in Spanish and let someone translate it, any other experiences

-Irene-tienes otra experiencia que quieres decir en español Puedes hablar con mas (*do you have another experience that you want to describe in Spanish, you can speak with more..*)

-Vicki-Ya no tengo miedo (*I am no longer fearful*)

-Irene-Sientes que (*you feel that ...*)

-Vicki-Estoy muy contenta en la clase y No tengo miedo en ninguna tienda, en el correo en ningun lado necesito ayuda (*I am very happy in class and I don't have fear in any store, at the post office, or any other place do I need help*)

-Irene-Before class she was afraid, she was scared to be in a store Muchas veces quieren hablar con alguien (*many times they want to speak with someone...*)

-Vicki-un momentito (*just a moment...*)

-Irene -tu traduces ? (*you want to translate?*)

-(note: Irene realizes Vicki wants to try to say what she needs in English, but still needs a little help)

-Irene -(directed to Nona) Now she feels confident she feels that that she can speak and go to the post office, the store that she doesn't need the help now. She is not so scared.

-Nona-She gained confidence. Wonderful it - And if there is anything else you can think of

-Irene -Alguna otra cosa que haya cambiado (*Is there anything else that has changed ?*)

-Vicki-Bueno eso es grandioso, no ?, es que me ayuda a relacionarme mejor, inclusive estamos en un proyecto tengo que ver con el arquitecto, (*well, that is a very big deal, no?, it is that it helps me relate better, in fact we are in a project in which I have to deal with an architect...*)

-Irene-In her work they are working on a project, and now she can talk with the architect, and other people who barely speak Spanish so she feels good she can, for her work is good

- Vicki-Y ellos tambien se sienten agusto no sienten la presion de hablar espanol (*and they also feel comfortable, they don't feel the pressure of having to speak Spanish*)

-Irene-She thinks that people have a good feeling with her because they don't have pressure to speak in Spanish because they are afraid she doesn't understand

-Vicki-Me ayuda relacionarme mejor. El otro dia se nos descompuso el aire acondicionado y subio el hijo del senor y el papa estaba abajo y me dijo, entendio?, dijo si, si entendio

(it helps me relate better. The other day the air conditioner went out and the son of the gentleman went up and the father was downstairs and asked me if he (the son) had understood me. He said, yes, he understood)

-Nona-Some good experiences, I'm glad
And with that speaking to the architects, and using your English with them that will

-Vicki-Pero ya les entendí *(But I finally understood them)*

-Irene-You understood what they said

-Vicki-I understand the reports

-Nona-Who else would like to speak up - you ready?

-Cara-When I started the class I don't understand – a little, but not too much. and now I can understand more and ... This class helped me with my children in their school , and in my life, helped me anywhere, the mall, HEB, anywhere I go I know I need more practice

The class helped because I understand more, I feel better

-Nona-You feel better Good good, And your children, you talked about them. How did they respond, to you being... did that change the way they asked to do things or did you ask them for help

-Cara-my children, When I speak some words, they say don't, it is wrong, or sometimes I ask them if I speak well, but they, they help me

-Nona-Kids are wonderful help, mine help me with all sorts of things, Is there any other changes you can think of?

-Cara-I think big change because anywhere I feel better because
Sometime I am scared 'cause I don't talk or ask but,

-Nona-Feel more Confident

-Cara-Is good plans, I feel much better, I think better, The teacher is Wonderful, she has passion, patience, She's patient - this is good for me

-Nona-Keep thinking if you think of anything else you would like to contribute. We will come back around to this question again. We have two very quiet people

-Anne-When I was - I learned English in the adult learning center first and when I was in the adult learning center - I am now- when I was in the literacy council that time -I went to literacy council I think 3 months only, because the teacher was out of town in 3 months (at the adult learning center) I learned more English (in the 3 months at literacy council) more like that Before I went to the library I don't talk much because I am embarrassed with the doctors and like that My doctors only speak English and Most of the time I say will you give me a person in Spanish please when My daughter at Driscoll (*hospital*), nobody speak Spanish so I talked like some words and said to the doctor O yeah, in English

I said I am sorry I can't speak English, he said you speak English better yes you can - the words you use are ok but This moment in the library I learned to talk more and more with the persons, with the doctor, Now I talk a lot English with the doctors, with the doctors of my daughters and in my work, I need to learn more English because, Some words

-Nona-Your words are doing very well

-Anne-I am only I don't understand with , I .. African Americans talk different English it is the same English but the pronunciation is different sometimes I don't get it the words but can you speak English slowly , okay, Oh you wanted that okay, because the English , I think it is hard for us to learn

-Nona-I am sure they... Have they told you that in different parts of the US even people who grew up speaking English have trouble understanding, even in the state of Texas, they have different speech patterns and we can't understand each other sometimes. You are doing very well.

-Anne-I have two sisters, one in crystal city and one in Laredo, but they don't speak English like us - it is different, They say that my English is better – I don't know

-Nona-So what kind of events.. you say you feel better talking to the doctor and at school for the children. Are there other events where the literacy training has helped you

-Anne-I try to speak English more. (they ask me) "You need to translate?" (I say) "No, I need to talk" but the, like my daughters and husband are laughing at me, most of the time I say the words, o my gosh then I can't speak in English so I don't go to the school, my daughters, the first daughter said oh no you go and you learn English, no it is not good for me I can't, My second daughter don't talk Spanish so I said she is laughing a lot of times and says okay You learn Spanish and I learn English and , and you and me understand ok

-Nona-Caused a change in your family

-Anne-Today they say Oh my mom is speaking English, mommy can you talk in English

-Nona-Thank you. If you think of anything else and there is anything else on the timeline, We'll come back and talk

-Irene- I remember sometimes about that, sometimes when my children were sick I asked my teacher in the literacy council how could you say, this, tonsil, I didn't know the words. how to express they symptoms that my children had, that was good and sometimes at the school I did not understand - some letters for example the horse shoe, it was for a horse, - you have to pick up your children in the horseshoe.. oh in the area of the parking

-Nona-I kind of had to think about that one too

-Irene-and I asked Ms -Nina-a what is the horseshoe, sometime in the letters from the school I didn't understand even if I looked for the meaning in the dictionary I couldn't match

-Nona-So the teacher became a support and resource for you

-Irene-uh uh, For medicine and for school

-Nona-For horse shoes; Would you like to - No did not forget you
You need to leave? okay thank you Can we keep this for R1?

-Vicki-And now I think 2 or 3 years I am going with her in one room but not understand too much because the teacher speak Spanish and English and I learned because he helped and I looked in Ms -Nina-a room I was scared because she speak only English I no want to go with her, but I went with the other teacher but he died. Good teacher but he died, (Nona : oh no) and I thought I learn more or not. Ms (Name) and she have patience with us, too much patience. I learned a little, then more a little. When I have appointment with somebody whatever, or bill, with the doctor, I asked first -you speak Spanish? and they say no, well, maybe a little, if you not speak Spanish maybe you understand my English because I don't speak too much good and the person say, " ok you try" Grammatical may be no good`

- Vicki-I need to talk English because I need somebody who no speak Spanish and I need to speak English. The problem is verbs, this is hard for me. I learn naming words, when I'm reading in the bible, and some books, I understand the story. (teacher name) say if you not understand some words try in the classroom

-Nona-And so she helped you with those words when you brought them back

-Vicki-I learned but then my head is old now I not understand too much Maybe she learn more , because she , I looked her because of her babies help to her and my boy he is no help, when I ask he says "I don't know, Bye" Y se va- he go, has not patience

-Nona-You have good friends

-Vicki-Little by little

-Nona-And did you say you needed to go, or can you stay

-Vicki-I need work

-Nona-You need to go to work? Ok well stay as long as you can, and if you need to get up and leave whenever its time - feel free to, I understand. We are going to go on for another 22 minutes but if you need to leave I understand

-Vicki-I go 30 minutes to my job

-Nona- Your job starts in 30 minutes
Whenever you need to, but we'd love for you to stay as long as you can

-Nona-Economic.. Leave these here for R1 we'll give those to R1

-Nona-Think about money and give me some examples of the way you have used money or the way you have made money, the big word is - Economic situation, your job, your income and that sort of thing- Think of examples of how those may have changed - Can anyone give me an example of a change there

-Sissy-Yes I before I have no work because I did not speak English and now I have a month in the work, a month and a half, so my boss said, "If you speak English you get more money" I said I don't know, I don't understand the people -I try but I don't think so He said I pay for you six dollars an hour Y ok the first week the people start coming to buy something and I talk with the people in English my boss said oh now you get not six but 7 dollars because you speak English I say thank you that is good because In this work I have more money

-Nona - That is great

-Sissy-Excuse me . Thank you so much

-Nona-anyone else have an example of changes that have happened in your economics

-Harriet-but I still from ten years and from the school one day a man came from community college and explained the budget a little bit. Anyway I begin to learn from the examples he gave I had to make a list of things that I really need and are more important to me, like lights and water, food I managed that knew and whatever . Being perfectly honest I live on what I make Since I give them I don't live like a queen .. It is not that I don't want to go on vacation or have a car, but I cannot afford them, and my old house, but I cannot afford them so there is no sense

-Nona-And what you have learned in class has helped you manage

-Harriet-A person who came talked he gave me some examples

-Nona-That's wonderful

-Diane-my husband had a small store and I can help in the store sometimes

-Nona-So that has helped him and helped you-

-Diane-Yes

-Nona-That is really good and it has made you more confident

-Diane-I improved a lot

I don't have anybody to talk with to improve my English

But a lot of friends and Ms Nina likes to let us get together other times; in my house only my husband knows my language [Lebanese]

-Nona-but in his shop

-Diane-I talk in English

-Nona-You can help him instead of hiring someone in that spot

-Diane-My husband appreciates when I help

-Nona-What about you ladies

-Vicki-In the year 2003 the gas was 14 today 30 or 35, the economy

-Nona-so what you are paying is more, so the literacy classes understanding and being able to read the English and speak the English, How has that helped you with the way money, you manage it or - somebody help me speak better

-Sissy- Que es lo que dice ella ? (*what is she saying ?*)

-Cara-Que si las classes le han ayudado para tener mejor economia con tu dinero (*that whether the classes have helped you budget your money better*)

-Anne-I don't know but

-Vicki-I am happy because I can have conversation with my workers. Small thing. It is worth but - Before . I don't know, today I can

-Nona-Feel more comfortable

-Vicki-make a question,, ask

-Nona-Okay thanks. And what about with the money for you, your economic situation has the literacy changed you think has the literacy

-Diane-I don't work but my husband work and his boss say if he speak English he can get more money, and he speak English but he go to the school for the GED but I help him buy and save, or second sale, I try to save money but the class helped be because I know when is a sale, or I can buy more cheap

-Nona-Good, good very good example That makes a difference to you, doesn't it? Great ok thank you

-Nona-Let's see what else R1 wanted us to talk about here

-Nona-Let's think about the ways that you are involved in with other people, and a lot of you kind of talked about this, this may be your church, or just your neighbors in your neighborhood, or family and schools, how has learning English changed for you from when you first started until right now -and I see you nodding so you may have some ideas

-Harriet-Try to - to involve yourself, but hello and good morning, that is it. Not to get myself in the middle of an argument Respecting your space so they respect mine, to me I may be wrong but since I live by myself I don't have much to say
They did not know
They are young they have family, they have children I don't have family

-Nona-And what about outside your neighborhood

-Harriet-I enjoy church I can visit with them more often because there are some older people

-Nona-And has the literacy classes that changed or is that pretty much the same

-Harriet-No, when I start going to church with a friend of mine, I was very afraid I stay by myself but I got sick sometimes I did not want to impose on anybody but I enjoy church

-Nona-Did you start going to church after you started the literacy classes

-Harriet-Yes a friend of mine let me in I am Catholic but his church
To me open the door for me and the friendship they are called Christian too
The church of God she is my friend who takes me

-Nona- you take her (nodding to the friend)

-Harriet- , Oh no, I feel a lot different since I start going around people

-Nona-So the literacy classes helped you feel more comfortable outside your home

-Harriet-I am more social than I used to be

-Nona-I am kind of hearing that from everybody

-Vicki-In the church the American people invite me, take ice cream, Sunday, invite me to breakfast, at the restaurant

-Nona-Oh so after church you go out to a restaurant, More social activities
And that all started happening after you began to speak more good

-Diane-For me when I was pregnant I want to go to the doctor every time I went with my husband but after I start classes and now I go by myself, I go to my baby doctor by myself

-Nona-and have you become involved in Mom and baby classes

-Diane-yeah In the hospital, (they have) some baby classes

-Nona-oh good ok If you were invited now to be - I think they call them moms and tots - to do that with some other mothers..

-Diane-I'd love to

-Nona-good Do you think you would have enjoyed that before, before you started taking these

-Diane- I did not do any before

-Nona *to the baby*- You are so cute. What about you ladies

-Vicki-That is good classes because when, years ago I can't speak in English and ... I teach in the church, to the little kids but that is so hard, because the kids understand now when I went to the class and changed my class, today I teaching to the young people so I need to talk English with the young people, I don't know why they say, they say you can, you can teach the bible in English and Spanish I study in Spanish but and I need to translate it and teach it to the young people, because the young people don't talk in Spanish so I have to talk with them in English so
You understand me like that, I can, I can, If I can to talk to the young people, I can talk to everybody when I said the
(local hospital) the doctors told me like that
When I went to the doctor and the doctor said you speak English and you don't tell me. I say no doctor I can't, speak in English, no

-Diane-Okay, I try and today I meet with the doctor because I talk more with him

-Nona-And the changes at your church, working with the children, have really helped with that

-Anne-Because I think we need to have people push us to learn more I think like that because sometimes when My daughter and my husband push me I say oh no I cant and Oh my gosh I need more English because my daughter ..is proud of me when I went with my daughters to the school I said to the teacher she said Yes teacher my mom speak in English very well Don't say that (*stage whisper!*) Yes you can,

- Anne- you can speak English, no, a little bit, why you not do it? no, ok a little bit I, You can speak in English , Because I am scared, I am embarrassing myself I think like that, they need to push us to learn English.

-Diane-In the library they push a lot Name 1 and Name 2 and Name 3, they push, don't be shy

-Nona-And they did it in a sweet way

-Diane-You think it would make us mad if they This is for you for you, for yourself

-Nona-So it is easier if the community outside your home pushes you , you work harder And what changes have you seen in yourself outside you home, when you go to church or the store or school or any other

-Cara-the class helped me too much The most important for me is when my sister is pregnant was pregnant she needs to go to the hospital, my brother in law was working in Fort Worth I need to go with my sister to the hospital I helped to translate because she doesn't speak English or understand nothing I try I help fill some papers And the doctor doesn't speak Spanish and he ask my sister and I tried to translate but I the class helped me because otherwise I can't help my sister I was nervous but I tried to help my sister because her husband worked and she come back but in she I helped to translate some questions and fill out papers

-Nona-Does you sister live in Fort Worth?

-Cara-No, she lives here but her husband worked in Fort Worth

-Nona-I'm sure she appreciated that too sisters are wonderful Ok we have run over just a little bit Any last thing that anybody would like me to know

-Sissy-Keep our school open Our people can get some education

-Nona-I know that that is very important to (Name) and to you too

-Sissy-They helped me with a tutor and that helped me a lot I have tutor now she helped me a lot a lot

-Nona-If you all will give me these papers and I will give them to R1
I enjoyed getting to know you all
And I know R1 appreciates you spending the time

-Sissy-Go to the house and spoke in English more

-Nona-I think you all do a wonderful job This is your first time speaking in public?

-R1-There is still food over there

-Nona-I have to race off
You and I will debrief later Monday I will compress this and email it to you.

-Vicki-That wasn't so bad

-R1-Thank you all for coming

Focus Group 2: 6:00 P.M.

Small group meets in room 218. Chairs are clustered at one end of the table, so the recording can catch them all. There is general moving and locating and discussion about seating, and the permission/consent, risks, name, print, etc., Present: Lani, Sally, R1, Paul, Jason.

Jacki came in a little later.

General discussion about seating, eating, and filling out the consent form. You are not required to answer anything you don't want, you don't have to do this. You can quit anytime. May I have one copy? Do you have a pen?

Silence while signing, moving chairs. Today is the 17th, right? Yes it is the 17th.

Spanish and English both flowing. Samples: Es su permiso para que ella pueda usar .. sus ideas. No se va a usar para publicidad, No va recibir plata, ni nos va pagar ni le vamos a pagar.. (*it is your permission so she can use your ideas for the program and her studies. You will not be paid, and you will not pay.*)

-Lani- Si recibimos, porque aprendimos. *We did receive (get paid) because we learned.*)

-Jason- Esta estudiando Ingles ud? (*Are you studying English ?*)

-Lani- pos quiero (*well, I want to*)

-Lani- Lo hablo y lo entiendo pero no lo puedo escribir. (*I speak it and understand it but I can't write it well*)

-Jason- Oh es mi problema (*oh, that is my problem*)

-Lani- Y especialmente si estan tomando mi tiempo, ni menos, laugh (*especially if they are timing me*)

-R1- Si tienes seis minutos Para hacerlo. – uy- (*if you have six minutes in which to do it.. wow*).

Discussion officially begins here

-Lani-Cuando empeze con Teacher 2, habia yo- tenia 2 años trabajando en el spohn shoreline en la cocina subiendo los trays (translation follows)

-Sally-If you want to speak English you can, so everyone can understand

-R1-You may have to switch back and forth

-Lani-I started with Spohn shoreline, in the kitchen, dietary aide, but I never liked the kitchen, not even in my house- I cook because I have to but I don't like the kitchen; and the gossiping –it was horrible, and I don't like that because I worked in my home for 15 years, child care, registered home child care

-Lani-And there's too many people, They say they are your friends but they aren't your friends, I don't like that, so I had to find something else

-Lani-And I moved up, because I was a good worker, always on time, never asked permission

They gave me a position in CSR surgical instruments, so worked over there for two years

-Lani-the first day that I went over there

And there were so many instruments, so many, that I was afraid, and I was looking and looking and I said, well, I am never gonna learn all these instruments, but I went on that day but I did not want to go back.

-Lani-But then, I said to myself, I am not a failure,

-Lani-I mean, I came over here all by myself, to the United States, I didn't know nothing of English, I was all by myself, no family whatsoever

-I started my own business, and now

-I don't want to go? I am right here I don't want to start all over again; I started in august, September, no October, and in December I was working by myself in the whole department

-Sally-You learned quickly

-Lani-I learned real fast, and I was the only person at night time for the whole hospital, and the weekends the same, I was by myself

-R1-Oh here come some more people

Great, -Jackie come in, come in I'm glad you found us.

Me alegro de verla. (*Glad to see you.* Greetings all around) Get some food.. there is a chair for you; Get a drink then Alrighty, Well we were just talking about – the consent form- we are going to start with a little permission form. Explains. See if we are doing any good in the community. Anything changed in your life, anything like that.

It is just a nice thing that you are doing for us- (discussing and signing consent form.)

-R1-One of the things we did in the other group that was kind of fun, is we made a little timeline, like a little calendar- like, you started in the kitchen, and then you went to instruments, and then you started coming to class, right?

-Lani-I started when I moved to the instruments I started class

-R1-And then if anything happened, you just put it in there, you make a little mark, like, a loong time afterwards I got my CNA

-Paul- I think this one works (pen) ok

-R1-This just totally an example, and then I got to be president of the USA

-Paul-Oh wouldn't that be lovely

-Lani-That is my next goal laugh

-R1- It could look like this, just something to help you remember
Translated into Spanish: es muy facil, como si fuera un calendario pequeño, estos son los años

-Jason-Los mios no caben ahi (*joke- my years don't all fit here*)

-R1 - Desde que comenzo a las classes, algunas cosas que han pasado ensu vida, puede hacerlo chueco, no importa- *Doesn't have to be real straight*
You are a landscaper, you want it real straight

-Paul-Yeah

-R1-just a little reminder If there was anything going on at that time, like you did not know English yet or anything else you can stick in there -give you a couple more minutes

-Lani-Ms Teacher2 told me go ahead, go to community college what are you doing over here

-Many talking over ea other while instructions on timeline)

-Sally - Como le ayudo' (*how it helped you*)

-Jason- Bien (*fine*)

-Sally - Yo pienso desde que llego'a los Estados Unidos (*I think since you came to the USA*)

-Sally - despues de 20 anos . y aprendio' algo importante, y que beneficio le trajo, cualquier cosita y que beneficio le trajo en venir a clases aca – no muchos detalles, algunos detalles

-R1- (translating what Sally said) Just a few things that you remember having happened from the time you started coming

-Lani- I came to community college, for a course I paid like \$70, I learned a little bit too Hmmmhu

-R1- You put whatever you want there, you started with ms Name2, and then she encouraged you, and I'll just shut up then. This is just for you to remember

-Paul-I know the first thing then, I came to America, didn't I ?
Silence while they write.

-Sally-do we need to put after how many years or no

-R1- You can write in there, if you want to say from this thing to this thing was a month, and this to this was 8 years, you can throw that in there if you want, to help you remember a little; talking over each other

-Paul-That's how long we have been here- 8 years Actually
We've been married- last month we'd been married 17 years

-Sally - Puede ponerle en español si quiere, No tiene que ser- sino acuerdese cuando vino a la comunidad, Acuerdese como era cuando ud vino por primera vez (explaining timeline again)

-Jason- Estoy tratando de ponerlo en inglés pero ahí lo que no entiendan pues, Como le digo al señor que agarre lo bueno que hay en mí, y lo demás que lo tire, así que aquí también (*I am trying to put it in English- but- whatever you understand there, then. Like I say to the Lord, take the good in me and throw the rest away. So here, the same.*)

-R1- Good idea

Silence

-R1- Nobody is going to argue with you; have water if you want,

- Sally + si si si

-Sally - La idea es de poner si se les ha ayudado acá', if any help, we gave you

-Sally - It can be Spanish, English , spanenglish (*yes she said spanenglish*)

-R1- Mostly just reminders

-Sally - It is not a model, right?

-R1- Up and down or sideways, no matter su repeats in Spanish

-Paul-I got these two (tutors) – now I got a good one, too

-Sally-Yes she is very impressed with you

-Paul-Very strict but she is very good
she is strict, She puts me right
when I make a mistake. She is nice I learned a lot from her, very very lot,

-Paul-Actually I have been happy with all of them, even the young girl, remember the young one out of Texas A & M

-Sally-she moved

-Paul-I think she went to the forces
She told me she got in the navy the air force

Cell Phone rings, and Jason answers it. Bueno, si...converses in Spanish then explains to the group that his bro is sick in Mexico and he is very worried.

R1- Sorry to hear that

-Jason- Por eso si necesito ir, (*that is why I need to go there*)

R1- buenos por entonces vamos a hacer que no te quedes demasiado tiempo (*well, then we will make it so you don't have to stay here too long*)

-Sally - Trate de pensar como se le ayudo' cuando tuvo el tutor, si le ha ayudado de alguna manera, (*try to think how it helped you when you had a tutor, if it helped you somehow*)

-Jason - Si, si, (follows : a discussion of his brother's illness and his travel plans)
- *phone again*. (more Spanish conversation about the trip to see his ill brother)

-Sally, R1- Ojala, Espero que salga bien (*I hope everything turns out ok*)

-Jo El peligro que hay, el peligro que hay (*there is danger*) (murmurs of sympathy)

-R1- You can wind it up and then (someone comes to the door)

Sally explains to Paul that Jason's bro is very sick and that is why he is so distracted.
silence

-Sally - Esta bien Jackie lo que tu escribas esta bien- Eso es Lo que tu sientes, (*whatever you think*)

-R1-So are there (side conversation in background):

-Sally - She said that you are very smart (to Jackie) To Paul- Now you are reading

-Paul, nodding- At west campus community college, Thursday and Friday a two day course (wonderful, ok murmurs in crowd)

-R1-Let's take turns and think a little more specifically- if you can think of a couple of ways your life changed, say with your job, how happy you are with your job, if you got a raise, or not, or anything changed in your economic or job situation, or

-Paul-well one thing – change, I had, was within in 12 months I became a supervisor.
That was from- I became a landscape supervisor

-Sally – Ooh

-R1-Within 12 months of having started the job

-Paul - I started the job and then went 12 months, and the next 12 months I qualified to now I do the whole front

As you come off 44 to the airport, that is all mine I look after about 6

-Sally-And how many employees do you have under your supervision?

-Paul- One. There is one supervisor and one aide employee. There's only three of us look after all the lot

-R1- Well that was good, That was a very good step for you

-Paul - Yes

-R1-That did happen before you came to the class, or before

-Paul-No I think I came to you and was telling you about it-

-R1- About the same time then

-Paul-Or course My wife got a pay raise, in the last couple of years she got a pay raise.

-R1- That is good too

-R1-Do you want to hold on to it, I will look at it at the end to help me remember. I am not going to grade them, then I will keep them

Don't need to put your name on it, Or do, it doesn't matter.

Como quiera (*as you wish*) yeah

-Jason-Para que sepa los errores (*so you'll know about the mistakes*)

-R1- No van a haber errores, Nomas para que yo recuerde (*Nah, there won't be such things as errors. It is just to help me remember*)

-Jason- Yo siento pero ahorita (*I feel, but.. right now...*)

-R1-Desde que vino a las clases, despues de venir a las clases, algo cambio? En su trabajo/(*After you came to the classes, did something change in your work ?*)

-Jason-Mucho, (*a lot*)

-R1-En el trabajo (*at work*)

-Jason- Si en el trabajo tambien, que se me acabo, no estoy trabajando. Si ya tengo como tres meses. (*Yes, at work too, that it ended. I am not working. It has been three months*)

-R1- Es la economia? (*Is it because of the economy?*)

-Jason- No, pero no - si me ayudo' bastante, ahorita puedo hablar ingles, aunque sea chueco, porque las enseñanzas que me dio el maestro aqui estan (points to head) (*Not sure. But the classes helped be a lot because now I can speak English, even if it is crooked, because the teachings of the teacher are here in my head*)

-Jason- Y en el momento menos pensado me van a salir. Hay muchas cosas que no me dejan trabajar, pero yo se ahí estan (*In a moment when I least expect it my [English] comes out. There are many things keeping me from work but I know they [English words] are there*)

-R1- Good, good, the things that you have learned are still in your head. I like that.

-Sally - Pero por lo menos ha podido- y entiende, a leer algo? (*but at least have you been able to, and you understand, and read some ?*)

-Jo - Si, si entiendo. (*yes, yes, I understand*)

Para mi es muy dificil porque no tuve escuela en Mexico yo no no tuve, escuela, entonces y para mi, pueden hacer un oracion, y batallo mucho, porque no se, el verbo y que el negativo' positivo Para mi es como hablar en chino (*For me it is difficult because I had no schooling in Mexico, then, they can make a sentence, I struggle, because I don't know, the verb, the negative and positive- for me it is like talking Chinese*)

R1- (to non-Spanish speaking students) Did you follow that

-Lani-Es mas facil si no lo sabe en espanol (*I think it is easier if you did not know it in Spanish first*)

-Jason -En espanol si (*in Spanish, yes*)

-Lani- Pero si empieza a escribir puro ingles Si (*But if you start to write only in English*)

-Jason- Entiendo lo que me quiere decir, pero yo necesito que me digan – que me enseñen mira este es el primer verbo y así así agarrar eso, no es igual que le enseñes a uno que es esta palabra Y yo necesito lo básico (*I understand what you are trying to tell me, but I need to be told, to be shown, look, this is the first verb, grasp that, it is not the same as « what is this word ? » I need the basics*)

Y si me esta ayudando mucho, puedo leer mas y puedo entender mas, y leer mas (*and yes, it is helping me a lot, I can read more, I can understand more, read more..*)

-Sally- He can read more,

-Jason- Pero como aqui estan (*but as here, they are ..*)

-Sally -No se preocupe- Don't worry about it too much we'll go back and forth

-Jo- Para eso estamos aqui estudiando (*that is why we are studying here*)

-Lani-Like I can listen, and I take notes in Spanish but I understand what you are telling me but I'm taking my notes in Spanish

-Sally- Can you translate it? yes,

-Lani- Yes I speak it to you but I don't write it to you

-R1-We were just thinking about in terms of your jobs, your change in jobs you definitely, can

-Lani-first when I came over here I was isolated for a whole year, I had nobody to speak to me in Spanish maybe that's why I got it, so for a whole year in San Antonio, then I came back here I didn't explore too much. I got here in 1982 in February, March; in May I got married

-Lani-A couple of months later I got married, an American, And I am still married with the same person and he didn't speak Spanish. You learn either way. And then I had two babies

I was 23, with two babies I was going crazy I didn't know what to do, I never stayed home when I was single I was busy most of the time. All of a sudden I was like when you put a bird in a cage. I never asked for money because I always had my own money I said I need to do something. I started selling Tupperware, Mary Kay, Avon this and that, but it wasn't enough. It wasn't enough for me.

Then I was here, and (they said) well you can take care of your babies, you can take care of others' babies too. So I did. I took classes- of course in English and I understood everything

So I got my license and I did the child care for 15 years. Of course my kids were young too so I killed two birds with one stone right there Take care of my kids and somebody else's too. And I was making real good money, real good money

But then my kids grew and I say I don't want to take care of kids anymore, so I decided to take care of old people. And I got tired.

I said I don't like this, I want to do something else, so I went to Spohn Shoreline and I started in the kitchen for two years and the job, it wasn't that heavy. It was easy, it was like nothing. And I said no, this is not what I want. Then I went - look in the same hospital, I look for another position. I found this one CSR, we call them CSR.

-R1-- It stands for certified surgical instrument tech.?

-Lani-Yeah, and I did it for two years. And the same, I got bored. I get bored real quick. And I'm not this good or this bad, because I can't stay still in one place. This is hard for me.

And when I went to school I took a few tests. I've been over there a couple of times and they told me you don't belong here, you need to go to Community college. And I didn't have no money to do it. But it was hard for me. And then I went back over there, I was stubborn.

I went back and they put me to read. And I say I read okay. That's not a problem and I comprehend and I understand whatever I am reading. The problem is to put them in English. That's my problem, right there, write it. I can get the newspaper and I read it, but

-R1- --the writing was difficult

-Lani-The writing is so difficult for me. It's so hard. I don't know why. It's just hard. But I was telling her I can see if you make a mistake. If something is spelled wrong, I can tell you it's wrong.

-But put me to write it? Nooooo, I'm afraid. I don't want to write it. Yeah, so Ms. Teacher2 told me well go to Community College and start some classes over there. And I did because I want to be in the medical field.

-Sally- And how did you pass the nurse test?

-Lani-Well, it was funny. I did it.

-Sally- Without writing?

-Lani-Well I write some things and I was petrified when I went over there. Me and my friend, she's from Monterrey, we went. She went in the morning and I went in the afternoon. She went from 8am – 1pm and I went from 5pm – 9 pm. So she took the test in Spanish and the classes were in English and she flunked

-Sally- In Spanish?

-Lani- Uh huh. And I told her you cannot take the test in Spanish because we have been here for so long and the Spanish changed a lot. No but I'm going to take in Spanish. No, you take it in English. But the funny thing, that she writes it, but she doesn't speak it.

-Sally- (laughter) You can combine...

-Lani-So when she finish her classes, she goes to work and like around 9pm when I finish my classes I went to the hospital and we did the homework together. Because I know what to do and she

-Sally- she can write?

-Lani-yeah ha, so we kinda stay together and combine. But I told her the problem is you can copy as much as you can, but when we take the test it's not going to be like that, so you need to do your own thing. You know, you copy me now and then later...

-Sally- When you came with Ms Alice, do you remember G?

-Lani-It was like 4 years ago, because when I went with her I was barely starting on CSR, with the instrument tech, and I was two years over there and it's been two years since I left the hospital

-Sally- Okay

-Lani- Because I couldn't do the work and the school at the same time, because it was too much for me. Either I work or I go to school. And I have a little money saved up and I pay my college. So I finish this- next month, next month it's going to be two years then I'll be a CNA. And then I want to go back to Community college and get another class to be a phlebotomist. That's how you call it, phlebotomist. Draws the blood. Because I like to be there in the medical field.

Why? I don't know. I like it.

-R1—Things have changed a lot with your job. Does anybody else have anything? - Jackie, your jobs have changed over the time?

-Jackie - No, I've been working? No.

-Sally- – no but she has No English

-Jackie –a- I am starting to trying to get my GED and I don't work with pay but I work at my house and I take care of my kids. They are four, four kids. For me it is hard because I am a single mother so I am trying to combine the time that they, the time for them and for me too, to go to school. And a long time ago I went to school at night but it was so hard because my kids, I get my kids alone in my house so I have to go in the morning. So now when I left my kids in the school I go to school from 9am to 4pm . I think I learn better in the morning than at night because, I don't know.

-Lani-Because you're not too tired. (others murmuring in agreement)

-Jackie-I was very tired because all the time I am like I can't do, I don't know it's hard for me. Like I am scared about everything. But the judge

-Sally- de ases

-Jackie-No. He say you pass. You have to study, you are very intelligent and I don't know,

But he like make me like strong and he always put something in me. He say you are shy and very quiet but you work very hard and...Then I started for my citizen and I got it. Now I am a citizen.

-R1- - Congratulations

-Sally- so you started with no English

-R1- You are doing wonderfully

-Jackie-I think you help me a lot because, I don't know, I am very shy. And for me it's, if you let me like here, I stay here, I don't know, I try to get out like some people tell me

-Lani-And I'm the other way. Stay there. No way! Laughter

-Jackie-I don't know but for now I want to get my GED and I want to work. When I get my GED I want to work with little kids

-R1- Well, that would be wonderful. Anyway you can. You were talking about being shy and then being a little less shy then coming to(agency) but you've gotten braver, it sounds like. That's kind of cool.

-R1-Did any of you change a lot in terms of what you do in the community? You started being able to go more places or

-Sally- It's called school.

-R1- Well School is one, your children's school, your. some sort of clubs, you know, anything like that?

-Paul-I'm a chair at - a trustee - for a church. And I've got 74 children (to be) looking after

-R1- Whoa

-Paul- We got a playschool and there's 74 children

-Sally- 74?

-Paul- 74 children. It's Wesley United Methodist Church, Calallen Weber. Everything comes through me, I look after the whole church

-Everything comes through me. So if I've got to put new exit lights up or there's no rules for the play area, it all comes to me. So I have to make sure we comply to state's regulations

-Jackie- You socialize More?

-Paul-Yes, Yes Yes. They call me in the daytime. They'll say we want some light bulbs changed and I'm at the airport. I thought how can I change light bulbs. And I try to plot the same and say oh you can change them.

-Paul-I think that is a responsible job

-various voices- Yeah, Sure

-Paul- You've got to get the state rules and they keep changing 'em every month they change the play areas. One minute you have to put gravel there and the next minute you gotta put peat down and another time you gotta put mulch there and then you go back to the gravel. It's constantly

-Lani-Changes

-Paul-Yes changes very, very

-Lani-They don't make up their mind

-Paul- And they're very strict

-Lani-Yes they're very strict. I remember when I had a day care, they usually check me. If everything was okay every 2 to 3 years.

-Paul-We get an inspection every 12 months.

-Lani- Every 12 months, Right?

- Paul- Yes, Oh yes.

-Lani- The first time is every year, then every couple of years, then every 3 years. Like I said I was making real GOOD money. I used to do my menus if all my menus qualified they gave me a refund, plus whatever the parents paid, And plus I used to make my contract and I make them sign if you are 5 min late, pay extra 5 dollars business is open 7 to 5, if you come at 5:30 you have to pay \$5 extra, Yeah if they came to my day care with a bag of Cheetos, early in the morning, I said ,you got enough for all the kids? If not, take it back home.

We are not responsible for toys you bring- you brought enough for everybody? No? take it home. He say but he is going to cry- either he cries now or you take your child home, So I have no shame in charging, I am not shy. And I was very patient with everybody I always talked real nice and very calm

-Lani-I always tell them, "Don't underestimate me; I'm short but

But my mind is on the right place” there are a lot of people they wanted to take advantage of you they think that because you don’t speak English that you don’t know your rights and now at least.. (*general agreement*)

-R1-Did you find any changes from the time you started learning English ‘til the time now in terms of how you felt about yourself, how much confidence you got or anything like that change? Can any of you think of any situations like that that you can explain somehow?

You were talking about being shy and afraid in the beginning and I think I have heard that from several people- then things changed

-Paul-I think since I’ve been getting the evening class in the evening, once a week, things are changing now. Once upon a time I never picked up a newspaper. Now I can sit there and read. And they (co-workers) look at me (implies surprise with expression). That is I noticed (talking over)

-Lani- Start with the funnies, start laughing all by yourself

-Paul- that is what I noticed in the last 3 or 4 weeks

-Lani- The best thing is reading out loud so you can hear yourself

-Paul-.yes but I am reading a book now but these...the manuals are massive

-R1- that is another language entirely

-Paul- It is a 5 hours of class 5 hours and 350 questions, 4 books, Gotta memorize all 350 (chemicals and what they do) it’s a 5 hour class that for a spraying license

-R1- Lots to be learned but now you are tackling it. Is it something you would have dared start 2 years ago?

-Paul- no my wife couldn’t get me to think about it to read a book but now, (if she says) Oh this is a good book... I pinched hers.-WELL YOU said it was a good book. What I did do a couple of weeks ago, I can’t swim, I am terrified of water

-Lani- I am not terrified but I can float

-Paul- I went to Texas a and m for a kayak class I turned it the kayak over I came up and got back up in it

-Sally -you tipped?

-Paul- Yes I tipped it over in the deep end then got it back up right then we went out on the kayak for about an hour and this week we are going again

-Lani- you went to the river

-Paul- yes, went from the ship channel to LLL park it is 8 miles

-Lani- that is one thing I won't do

-Paul- what kayak?

-R1- so you got over the fear

-Paul-I got over my fear of water but I can't swim

-Sally - this comes with the reading,

-Paul- yes, well, My wife said we are going to a kayak class then I thought IF THESE people in their seventies can do it...so can I. You don't know if you don't try. It is 8 miles, it will take us 2.5 hours

-Lani-We Mexicans we never say we can't do it we always find a way to do it (translates Nosotros los mexicanos no decimos no podemos – to Jason)

-Jason- Look in front

-Lani- Just look in front and don't be afraid (talking over)

-Paul- 'long as the kayak don't hit you

- Jason - yes I learned in the news I came from Mexico and don't speak English nothing, only with my with my people working with me I speak English little bit oh it is because you don't have time, Yes I don't have time for studying English, no not having time only for making babies

-Sally- how many you have

-Jason- 14

-Lani- 14, Oh my god 2 for me was enough

-Sally - You are able to read the newspaper now and before you were not

-Jason- Yes When I started in the hotel working I started 2 years making omelets all People come and I don't speak English very well but I speak English with all people. my teacher is good man and the people born in the United States I say maybe like the statue of liberty I say what is the significance of the points on the crown on the head of the and they say I don't know And my teacher this is this wow I speak English a little bit

-Sally- You are learning history of the USA

-Lani- there's a lot of people don't know the original 13 colonies and they asking us how do you know because we studied it

-Sally- I remember asking you

-Lani- I remember why the stripes, and white. We have to learn it to pass the test

-Paul- yes

-Lani- And a lot of young people take it for granted (Says in Spanish again)

-Paul- I think once you get that American citizenship its- I got it too

-R1- Are you proud of yourself nods

-Paul- yes

-Lani- yes

-Jason- yes La historia, Nada, O paso por alto, En Mexico, el rojo es la sangre...(describing how in early Mexican schools they learned symbols for the colors of the Mexican flag)

-Sally- I guess here they learned but they forget

-Lani- still in Mexico they teach you the colors, They don't appreciate

-Lani- Because sometimes my husband too, well he is from here, he did not know and I know because I had to study

-Sally- they don't appreciate

-R1- How do you feel when you know something that somebody who was lived here all their life doesn't even know

-Lani- It makes me feel Proud that I am here I am doing things
And the reason that I wanted to go to school is that my kids didn't want to go I say ok why waste my time on you kids you don't need me I don't need you I am going to school

-unidentified voice- your child...

-Lani-My baby is 25. My daughter is 28 she went to schools and became a CNA
But my son went to school, he did not finish because he said

I am wasting my time so I said so get out of school but remember you don't have a place to stay if you don't work. Either you are in school or you work. in this house I don't want any bums and you won't go to school go get your GED, No mom. Every day are you going today, no mom, When are you going to stop telling me this. When I am not your mother any more, he finally went. He did all the classes the same day he just don't want to go to school

He was in the Gifted program he went to pre k and kinder, took the test in Spanish and English, passed them both. He was - in (Gifted School) a couple of years but he said mom I am so stressed out I don't want to be here. He wasn't happy taking classes. Went to High School and it was not a good school for him. He was 16 with a car, he was skipping all the classes I told my husband. He is not going to stay in school because you gave him a car, a nice car, soon he was on drugs, skipping so I said, "Get out of here" I pulled him out, I went to rehab with him I took him I say you want to finish like these people, look at them, how they look, and he looked at me, if you don't stop you are going to finish like that. One time, I think he was drunk or something, I called the cops I said take him. It worked.

-Sally- sometimes you need to be strong

-Lani- He thought I would not -

He was my baby, I said no, my momma love me, but I don't want him over here if he doesn't want me I don't need nobody- want him here

-Sally- He is doing well now?

-Lani- He is doing fine, well, he is going to be a dad next year

-Sally to Jackie- you have how many 4?

-Jackie- I have 3.

-Sally - How do you communicate with the school now you can talk with the teachers/

-Jackie- yes, for me now it is easy because before when my kids have some my kids, another time if they had problems at school they answer in English
The first thing I told them, every person that answers me but my English is bad
When I am alone I practice I can talk better

-Lani- Entre mas lo hagas se te va hacer mas facil (*it will become easier the more you do it*)

-Sally- she didn't speak at all

-Jackie- When I go to school the principal and the teacher KNOW me,
They understand AND I Understand but when it is someone else, wow

-R1- Your confidence has gone up

-Jackie- All the time I ask in English, People answer in Spanish
And my kids say mommy you don't have to -It is time to speak English

-R1- Anything to add before you go

-Lani- I want to continue my education, I will be 50 with education or without, I'd rather
be with, And writing

-Sally: Joey.. ojala, su hermano, (*I hope your brother...*)

-Many speakers at the same time- Thanks for coming- have my phone.... good bye

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Focus Group 3: Teachers, tutors, and staff. Noon.

Setting: dining room table all seated around. Conversation started spontaneously before the focus group began officially. Present: R1; Alice, teacher; Mab, tutor; Sulin, works at CBO; Tee, tutor; Nina, teacher.

-R1-That was a really good point. I am going to put that in my backup system right there. So being able to interact with their schools, interact with their children and everybody that their children interact with, that's kind of interesting.

- Alice-I came up with something quite accidentally in my class this time, and that is that, I happen to have a family, the mother, the father and one daughter's in high school and even for babysitting problems they even bring up, [the other daughter]I think she is 9 years old, but she's smarter than the high school girl. And I realize an area that is very deficient is the attitude of the children who speak English, towards their parents who don't speak English and the impatience And this began to happen with the high school girl and even with the little girl, both impatient with their parents and we had to stop and talk about that.

-R1-Excellent. I'm glad that you did.

.-Nina -My students have told me they have this problem when I encourage them to talk maybe at the dinner table for 5 or 10 minutes in English only, since most their children will speak English and they'll say they don't want to do that.

-Sulin-They make fun of them.

-Nina-umhu, (yes) They don't say the words right, they don't want to take the time and so the family is not always supportive.

-Alice-And see this has, as I said, quite accidentally, that gradually I had to correct those two daughters. "Oh help your Daddy. Help your Mommy, you know" Oh one little girl said "Oh Daddy" (*intonation implies impatience*). No it's not "Oh Daddy" it's "You did it right Daddy", help him. That's another aspect. I hadn't worked with that before until now.

-R1-Sometimes it's a big burden for the kids to be translators.

-Mab-Well, I wish I had a video of what happened. We had, yesterday we had 21 people come but the week before we had 30 new people come to the Unitarian Church, and there were 9 children. 11 years old was the oldest and one 1 year old, was the baby. And we only had one babysitter. I had to find a second person to get in there and help . Yesterday 21 came and those same 9 children came and it is beautiful to see these kids and I have this theory of the morning - The children are who will keep these parents coming. These are young kids and they are all speaking English and I am praising them every minute I

can about how they speak English and they are helping their parents. And I will see, but I think that will be the success of that program and that we keep child care available. I never dreamed, I mean we never - We didn't plan for this. We have a young boy who sets up the church different rooms for the classes, but he's also supposed to babysit. For 3 months, but he had nobody and he was sleeping, and now he has 9 children. He loves it, so that is another thing is getting a teenager involved in helping with one of these programs. I am thrilled with it.

-(nods and mhuhmms of assent from others in room)

-Alice- In the past I just would not allow children in my class, I just couldn't handle it. I have never worked with children, that is the thing,

-Mab- not in the class, I agree.

-Alice- but they are in my class

-Mab-they are

-Sulin - yes

-Mab-oh how can you do it?

-Alice-they were there, they blend in. I did have to establish rules, very definite rules: we sit properly, all this sort of stuff. we don't interrupt. But now I realize there may be somewhere down the way where we have family groups

-R1- That would be wonderful

-Sulin- Their family can go because they bring their children, if not.

-Alice - And if you establish strict rules, like I had to with the 9 year old. Establish strict rules, and to keep her busy, she does a lot of my coloring for the others. It takes a little bit more work but

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-Mab- you have a class, a whole class (Alice umhumes) or just individuals, how many people?

-Alice- Oh gosh, about 21 on a good day -Mab- Oh really.

-Sulin- Yeah, 29 registered.

-Mab- And how many children go there?

-Alice -It's just the two.

-R1- It's not **designed** for children. So we don't have a system for it

-Alice - It just happened. It just happened.

-Sulin- It's only one and the other one is a 18, only one.

-Alice -But that gave me the idea, that there might be something in the future we can plan. Because I keep hearing this complaint really about the parents. And they're upset. They say "Oh, they criticize me, they embarrass me. They tell me not to speak it because I do so poorly and so, Ma'am , I don't practice at home because I am too e- embarrassed. So you see We had to overcome that. Because the children prefer English now.

-Mab- That's always been my theory about this type of an area that the children become so fluent in English and then they: well, you're stupid you don't speak English. As a teenager they would dare to say that to a parent and drop out of school. And my feeling is that if you can get those children to be positive about helping their parents, but at a young age, like mine are really young that are coming to this church program and my, it's almost like brainwashing the kids too. I am really just praising them all over the place, because I am so thrilled that they're there with their parents, who are really low English learners , really low. but they are little people and it's a really nice thing to see how they gather round afterwards and how they bring 'em. I hope it continues.

-Alice - I think it especially helps the adults not to feel intimidated by children.

-Mab- Absolutely. And They **will** be at a certain age, teenage adolescent years, the kids will get smart alec about their English, I think

-Alice - I know I had to stop Fatima, my teenager, from saying "Ay **Daddy**" (inflection in voice implies rolled eyes). I said "Fatima, no more of that. No more of that Ay **Daddy**." Well look at that- well the poor man just wouldn't say anything, you know.

-R1- It is a matter of getting them to understand that learning a second language is hard. it is easy for the kids, they don't realize how hard it can be, unless they start taking French or something in school.

-Sulin- And for me I know that I am speaking the wrong way and I thank you for correct me, for I know in my mind how to say but when I am talking – forget it. So it is hard.

-R1- and Tee, You have worked with both English learners and English speakers who are learning to read

-Mab- I know that she was telling me that I mean literacy

-Tee - I have a question - my student has been, I guess, with the literacy council for three years and um I just, I just want to know that what ever we say here won't go any further

-R1-No, because he was in her class, (nods toward Alice) and learned **some** things in a large group like that

-Tee- it doesn't take too much to reveal too much about him but 'um it's just, I'm just so Surprised and happy about how this is turning out, because when I was told that he is in his sixties, and he's already been working on trying to read and reading at a 3rd grade level, and I have no way of evaluating him myself, I am not a professional. And so I don't know what his problem is. If I don't know what his problem is, how do I know how to treat it? So in the answer to one of your questions, the literacy council doesn't do that and so you are groping in the dark to start with, you know? And so things are going through my mind, well maybe he's got some kind of brain damage you know, that I don't know about and that I can't fix and maybe this is going to be so frustrating for him and me and that sort of thing it didn't turn out that way at all, so but I guess I am lucky, that way, but anyway it did seem as though he really, really wasn't, this is when we first started out, he really wasn't familiar with the sounds that letters make. He didn't know a vowel from a consonant and that was a starting off place for us was to go through the alphabet. And, also, the other problem is, he can't write. And his printing was so terrible that when he would take notes, that he does have a pretty good job, he's a landscaper, and uh, he has to take certain tests or he has to attend certain classes, I guess, and when he would take notes he couldn't even read them back

-Mab-Oh my. How interesting.

-Tee-And I couldn't read them either, you know. So we had a lot to work on.

-R1-We have several students that would fit that description. Older, and they have been trying to learn to read for years, and sometimes it takes years and suddenly there's a breakthrough

-Tee-As it turned out before I started working with him and I didn't know how to start and what I was going to do, and I didn't know enough about him, and I picked up a book at family dollar store I don't know why I zeroed in on this book. And it was a book was written by Betty White, you know who she is, and she is an animal lover and rescuer, and the book is about a seeing eye dog. Although, it wasn't a seeing eye dog when the book started out. And it turns out that my student loves dogs and he . . .It was an adult story but the story would appeal to any age group, I believe, you know and anyway, that was what did the trick, he wanted to read that story, he wanted to find out what happened, and he learned to break the words down, you know, but so long story short, in just a few months he now feels so much better about his ability and I told him right from the very beginning I said everyday when you look in the mirror and shave and whatever, I said you tell yourself "I have no limitations". And you keep telling yourself that you have no limitations. So it's turning out very well and one day he came in and he said- I shocked all my co-workers because I picked up a newspaper at work and started to read it.

-Mab-That's wonderful.

-Tee - And the latest thing is that he came in and he said “I did something I never thought I would do, he said I am afraid of water. I can’t swim and I am terrified of water and my wife wanted to go kayaking and he said -so I went and he -said my tutor did this for me.

-Mab- Really! That’s great!

-R1-An increase in self confidence

-Mab-I’m dying to find out who it is

-R1-well It culminates that way, just like with the other older gentleman- the one who said he can finally read at HEB. It took years, years to get to the point where they actually make that breakthrough

-Sulin-but his tutor,- he is no longer here-. He start with the alphabet and the sounds but he is not very fast

-Mab-and many of our tutors have to do that, and you do that in your class

-Alice- What- Oh start with the alphabet.

-Tee-The other thing, the other thing is I had to, there were so many issues, and I had to sift them out in my mind and decide another issue is his pronunciation because of where he comes from. He’s English, but where he comes from is like My Fair Lady , he sound like her, and sometimes that gets in the way and I had to make a decision that I would not, I wouldn’t bother with that, that’s just adding too much on his plate to have to deal with so I don’t bother with that

But the one thing about writing, and that’s another thing he expressed an interest in learning cursive. And we started to do that, but then I figured no, this can wait. Because he’s more comfortable printing and he really needs to get his printing to where he can read it and I can read it and anybody can read it. But, except for signing his name, and after every class I make him sign a paper, and date it, because he had never signed his name and had never signed his paycheck and so that’s a big thing . He writes his name, doesn’t print it. He has a signature.

-R1-That’s big, that’s really big. Ms. Alice you had a student once learned to sign her name. And it really made a big difference in her life. Remember that situation?

-Alice-I had a lady in my class who was extremely shy and one day she was crying. I thought it was something I did, so I took her aside. She said my children are ashamed of me. A very young woman. I asked but why? It is very hard for me to sign when my children bring home papers for me to sign. I sign it but in block letters and the teacher doesn’t believe it is an adult signing it. It looks like a child. And I said, we’re going to take care of that. So every day, we would work on signing her name. Finally, she

developed Such a beautiful signature, then she just wouldn't believe it. She had to go and present herself. And this lady is the owner of a very big restaurant here in town

-Mab- (do you have a sheet of paper for me ms?)

-R1- It made a humungous difference in their lives.

-Alice-And the children were so proud of her

-R1-And they were essentially being accused of forging documents. They weren't of course

-Alice-that's true She learned to just put the little flourish and everything in her name. I know the student you're talking about, I had him in my class, also, but there was a different twist on this story because I had him in a **class** situation and for some reason, had nothing to do with me, the class decided that because of his British accent, he was **special**. And anything we learned, they wanted him to say, they wanted him to say it the way they say it in London. and that gave him a kind of prestigious position in the class . They **loved** to hear him speak. They would say "Can we talk like that?". I would say "No, no, no, no, no." I can't teach that, cause I don't know how. But in that case he was very uh- special.

-R1-but it is really neat to see the culmination, because he started with a basics and then you took him to the next steps and then we have the breakthrough. And with this other gentleman, (name). It took long. . .we did alphabets year after year after year and it finally clicked

-Alice-I had him also - is he in a class or did he have a tutor?

-Sulin-he was *With with* a tutor, remember he was in your class, but he couldn't remember

-Alice-I think the secret is a tutor

-Sulin-he went with (name)- remember the one who went to China

-Alice -yes of course. I very definitely believe that a tutor is helpful because

-Sulin -... for that kind of person.

-Alice-Yes. First of all you don't want to embarrass them.

- Mab- Yes.

-Alice- And second you don't have time to give them the attention and motivation they need individually and then you don't want the other students to begin to suspect It's just

like I have another student that we all love dearly. And the members of my class, because he doesn't speak out, they think he is so very, very smart and intellectual and quiet, (name), that he doesn't speak because, well, he is just above it all, and sometimes they'll say well Ask **him** Ma'am, you never ask him. I say Because he already knows everything, and he **does**, he knows everything in the class - he knows it perfectly, He can read perfectly he can do everything perfectly,

-Mab-and why is he there he doesn't speak.

-Sulin-he is like a ..

-Alice-It's like socialization. really

-Sulin-He's like a 9 year old mind,

-Nina-yeah

-R1-you've had him in your class too

-Sulin-he goes year after year. His home is the class. But we know that he is not going to pass that way.

-Alice-I don't even- because he knows everything I teach him, he has been there what, seven years ?

-Sulin-and R1 and Nina and Alice all at once - yes

-Nina-His goal is to get his GED and so he can be a janitor, that's what he used to be.

-Alice - But that will never happen, because his family does not encourage him. They don't want him to do that

-Mab-How old is he?

-Alice-51. -He looks about 24. and he acts about- He's like a child, about 9 years old, a very polite 12 year old boy.

-Sulin-He goes to class and he's happy to get 100.

-Alice-Oh he HAS to get 100

-Sulin-He goes to the computer and he knows everything on the computer already. Because he goes every day. And every time I -when was in the (location of library) with him he tell me, Sulin I made 100. I know he make 100. I know that he made 100 because he memorized everything

-Nina-He has a child's mind. He is a child in an adult body.

-Alice-He came up to me several times Sometimes I've had to mother him. He came up to me very very close and goes (sniffed) you smell so good. Thank you. I took him aside and told him you better not do that, I love it, but don't do it to other ladies. Why? Because they might think you like them. But I do like you ms Alice. There is not an ounce of malice in him.

-Sulin - No. But when he has a haircut. He say "How I look?". I say good. He says- My father made me do it.

-Nina-His mother died A few years ago and he's lost that support, he's got a sister, but I don't think they have a lot of patience with him.

-Sulin- Was in your class also.

-Nina-A long time.

-Mab-Oh my, how interesting

-Alice -He could work, I am convinced of it. he could be a wonderful greeter. He even came up to me and asked if I would be his business manager. If I could get him a job where I would just tell him what to do and he would do it.

-Sulin-Oh, yes. He does what you tell him. One time I forgot, I say you need to do this in the computer. And I forgot completely and he said do I need to do again and again? You just tell him to do this and this and this. No you just tell him do this, he does exactly what you tell him.

-Mab- and he is married and has children?

-Sulin- No, no.

-Mab- ok

-R1- We have a very large mixture of all kinds of individuals

-Mab- I'll bet

-Sulin- We have one 84 years and she wants to be a lawyer. She needs to pass GED first and now she has cancer. How is she doing, ms Nina?

-Nina- "She is doing well".

-Sulin- So she told me last week okay I go to study. if I pass the GED, that's fine

-Alice- So now the reason, at first I was a little impatient because well I have grown in the program, let's say, now he is important in that class because it has taught the others in class – they've caught on, they caught on. The girls stopped flirting with him that wasn't working real well, - how to be compassionate with those who are different and now they do invite him to do things. "Abby, you want some coffee?" Abby this and Abby that. Of course Abby always sits exactly like this. He says "Yes" and "Thank you" and all of that you know He'll go up to the board and he is huge, he is tall, and I'll say Abby, the class wants you to show on the board- show them how to do this sentence. I know you are going to do this perfectly. And he has this habit of coming up closer to me and says, you are going to help me though, aren't you? I'll help you, don't worry. You see, It has also taught the class to incorporate those who are different, you know, and to love them.

-R1- So we have talked a lot about how some of their self esteem has improved and how some of their- somehow their sense of community **in** the class have you noticed anything, Just anything like their being involved in PTA , or groups that you know of , we've talked about their children's school A lot of them have been more involved in the children's school

-Mab- I really say over and over again even if you don't speak English well go to parent teacher nights and you'll find someone who'll translate for you even if- but please go and try your English and I have had a couple of people go and come back and say "I went to parent-teacher's night and I spoke English!"

-R1- All right!

-Mab-It's so gratifying to hear this and my measure of success is who goes on community college, And really the majority go on to community college. I look at myself more as a cheerleader, I was a teacher taught ESL years and years and years ago I consider myself more a cheerleader because they're living in a society where hearing English all the time, all the time, all the time. Whether they're speaking or not I think I consider my best goal to get them to speak no matter what. If it is wrong, it doesn't matter, just speak and that was my background of living overseas, and I was learning other languages and I had the temperament –the guts, I guess, to speak whether it was right or not. I studied, I went to class and I studied, but it wasn't always right and my husband who went with me to these same classes wouldn't say a word because he wasn't perfect . So my background of knowing that experience and I then in over a two year period I became quite fluent in Spanish and Indonesian and Portuguese. But he was always – oh, it's not perfect, I can't say it. So With my students am really on to that. Don't be perfect, don't be perfect, just talk, talk, talk and then I do find that they do go on to Community college, that's my big thing and –or-going to get a job and I've had, I was counting coming over 8 passed their citizenship tests and maybe 10, I lost track of a couple of them but, most of them who come to the classes I have at the library, they are in citizenship, they go on to pass and that what could be I'm so proud of them - I can't say enough about that.

-Alice- I have a student I'd love to share with you, her name is Gigi. She is the most beautiful girl in class she is so pretty and she is not even aware of it.

-Sulin- Has she any education in English or Spanish

-Alice- nothing, but you see I didn't really know that I had always assumed they had some education in their first language Poor Gigi, all she did was cry. And that just hurt me, but she kept coming. I guess I was a little bit hard on her, maybe, cause I would tell her, don't cry, because you're , going to make me cry. I could say the sound of this letter is "a". five minutes later I'd say, what is it? but she couldn't remember. And I thought, do we have a learning problem? But then I told them about the (concept in) educational Psychology, the door, the door, I said one day you are going to walk through this door? And then your eyes will go aaah. We call that the "Ahhh Door." I made that up. And so we know that for months, I even told this lady, there is something I am not doing. one day She held her hand up and said Ms. Alice, that "y", I said yes. It's a semi vocal- a semi-vowel and everybody went ah- She actually remembered something we had had several weeks before that I had talked about. They all named her "Gigi of the semi vocal vowel" because every opportunity she had when she saw a "y" she would say- semi vocal vowel and I would say, yes, but why? Now she comes about every other class because she works at night at one of the restaurants. And when she does come she is so tired, so tired that one day she forgot to take off her apron. All messed up from the restaurant. She looked down and I said, to me, it is the most beautiful sight that you came here you forgot about the apron and I don't care about your apron.

-R1- I saw her participating in your class

-Alice-Yes you did So now once you saw it. And now when she participates, everybody applauds

-Sulin - and now she is different now and she walks different, and she could she feel confident that she could and she **wants** to go to the board, and she wants to go to the board and she's looking for that applause and they know it and they give it to her. I think Well she never had an opportunity to get applause

-Mab- Did you end up with Gonzalo? And Norma

-Sulin - No, maybe Ms. Nina

-Mab- Gonzalo and Norma, they went to Community college. Both Tuesday and Thursday for one hour and ½ , 9-11, 9-10:30, twice a week, they were there before me most of the time, they came by bus and they were an **amazing** pair and I went for a year ½ I had them, and then I said you need a real teacher now who is going to do grammar and parts of speech and the whole thing but I am not going to do that, go to the flour bluff library, and if you could come there, fine oh he was so angry that I that I would leave him but he went on- And he's now in Monterrey and he's a teacher he got his credentials to be

an official teacher, but his goal was to have an English school, an English, school for teaching English.

-Nina-But it wasn't...

-Sulin - they went to community college also?

-Mab- He was a hit at community college. He was an extroverted character

---Several speaking over each other. I thought it was ns Nina, Nina_ no—

-Sulin- I'm going to look who was the teacher

-Alice - I wish I could remember if

-Sulin- no

-Mab- you would remember him. All of community college remembers him

-Sulin - they were with a tutor both of them

-Mab- and it was someone who was serious about this because that's what was.... He had me reading Spanish literature, write and read, which I started doing And it was fabulous. But he's also I gave him a list of good English American authors, - he read 'em all. He was amazing, a student that you couldn't wish for a better student. He came on a tourist visa because he couldn't get a work visa or any other kind of visa, he came by student visa. And he was here 8 of the 10 years as a, he worked doing landscaping for a friend and did renovation of houses. While coming over to this class all the time, then he took another job doing lawns and at night he was a janitor in one of the office buildings. And he was a classic student where I said and I always say this to my students, find a friend to speak English with because you'll never learn English coming just here. You've got to speak it and talk it all the time. He would just go up to somebody and say "Would you speak English with me?" Well not many people do that but he did that- the night watchman at the office building then would always speak with him, the landlord where he rented would always speak English with him. And pretty soon he's got this whole network of people who only speak English with him. So, within, it was four years altogether when he went back to Monterrey. He's wonderful. His English is just incredible and he spoke nothing when he came.

-Sulin - I don't remember who was the tutor. But they were not in class. was in Ms. Nina's class only Norma

-R1- It's been several years since he left. So it is hard to remember

-Mab- It's two years now I hear from them

-Alice - The greatest things we do collectively is idea of a self-image,

-Mab- absolutely, absolutely.

-Alice - I have one little game, again, all of my games have happened by accident. I noticed there were some people in my class - I have had doctors, in my class, and nurses and everything, you know, in my class and then I have those who have very humble jobs, and some who have **no** jobs and I got the idea, okay, lets play a game. I'll tell you one of the jobs that have I had, I am a teacher as well, but there have been times when I didn't have a job or had (a really bad) job One time I worked in a hospital, and I had to engrave bedpans

-Mab-Engrave them with what

-Alice-with a name, I had to put spohn hospital, with an electric needle and I had to put Spohn Hospital. I had to figure out what you call that you never

-Mab- oh engraved hospital not a person

-Alice- then they tried to top me, one might say- I, one time, worked on a farm, en un rancho, where I worked with the pigs. That's nothing, I had a job where I cleaned the dirtiest houses you've ever seen. It was like hey can you Top this, ? and I said that's too good. I had another job... I had a job – my job was to clean the restrooms. Ms. Alice, you? Yep I did, I was working my way through school and in a way they took away the – hey- in this country.- We're proud of any jobs we have in order to get our education.

-Mab- When I talk about immigrants, I was teaching in citizenship classes My four grandparents came from Sweden and on and one of them polished boots on the ship and one of them had the ship {fare} paid for by the family in Philadelphia who was hiring her to be a nanny and they loved that because that is building a self-image. We are all Immigrants here except – and that is funny if they never think about. The Indians who were here but it was your country and our country, the only people here were the Indians they are on to the fact that when they ask citizenship thing said are you a member of nobility, I said well how do you know whether you're an Aztec king's great, great, great granddaughter? But that goes over most people's heads, but honestly this are you a member of nobility and to explain nobility

Because some of them could have been if came over. From Spain for example, condes And what about the Aztecs and the Mayas and those kingdoms and that is shat I joke about this- so how do you know, but I stopped doing that because but the Indians thing, they don't understand. I think it's really important to make them understand that we are all in this common thing of learning a language at some level someone's grandparent or great grandparent had to learn a language I am puzzled right now about how my grandparents did learn English because none of them had any education and they came and yet I am looking now at the letters they wrote. Where did they learn? And you said (nodding to vi) The foundation or the settlement houses but they didn't live in cities Who taught them English?

-R1 - I guess they just went to First grade and learned, maybe they learned from their kids.

-Mab- No they were teenagers, they were all teenagers, in the 1850 to 1875 and spoke no English and had no school in Sweden I think they had up to 9th graders, like 10 years old

-Nina- That was enough to read. And if you can read then

-Mab- In Swedish though,

-Nina- you can, in time, with the exposure, if you've got that basic reading concept because they all read and wrote by the time they reading
do you remember Humberto Cruz used to write for the newspaper, financial articles He was from Cuba. He came to Cuba as a teenager, I believe (she means came to the us?) , he was so determined to learn English that he taught himself using the Readers Digest

-Alice- that little thing about Can you top this - the young man, the one who wanted the most stars, he stood up now he comes to work sometimes all splattered with paint. I said if you think you smell, just sit apart. He said Ma'am , sometimes I smell. I don't care , you get here, just sit apart. I won't say a word. What he smells of turpentine sometimes pretty bad

And he stood up, can you top this, and he pulled out his wallet and he handed out his business card and on there it had on it his name, his telephone number, the things he could do- he could lay tile, he can do carpentry, plumbing, I mean there were three lines of things he could do. I can look at it ma'am, I am a gardener. So anybody needs a job, I can do it. I can try Isn't that wonderful.

-Sulin- (Name)

-Nina-I remember that about that evening class. I need to contact you sometime when I need something done ok

-Sulin- Nina you have (name 4) in your class. You can say (addressing looks of concern about using real names)

-

R1 - No real name will be used anyway.

-Sulin- a lady she is from The shelter, The Women's Shelter, out of the country but she was abused, has didn't have idea of English or writing in Spanish. Now she went to Houston by herself, communicated with a lawyer, she is improving and in class

-Nina- she is working hard.

-Sulin- She is working every day

-Nina- She is motivated

-Nina- Yeah.

- R1 - and determined.

-R1 - She's overcome a lot

-Sulin- a lot

-R1 - she was shy when she first came.

-Sulin- she did not know anything, , I guess because she was abused also it was like a

-Nina- And spoke no English

-Sulin- Nothing no Thank you nothing

-Alice - Consider something as a possibility. You know that I have a passion for phonics. I eat, sleep and drink phonics.

-Mab- laugh- I haven't been with a Real teacher in a long time.

- Alice - I have a passion about phonics. I think it would be terrific if we could have a three week course it would be

-Sulin - I would be in your class on phonics

-Alice - Understand the sounds of the letters, how to make the long sounds of the vowel, and have just nothing but all of these

-Nan - A class for whom

-Alice- The students. Or anybody

-R1-I guess for tutors it would be good too

-Alice - And to do it with a game because I tell them that when you know phonics, you know a third language. You can read a dictionary, the dictionary is one of our big props in class. Can you open up a dictionary, it doesn't matter what the word means, but can you **pronounce** it? You begin by learning to - That's why we are using the newspaper here at the college- pronounce it, that's a beginning. It would be fantastic to have a class that's ___just phonics___

-Mab- I take Such a different approach from you, I don't feel that's necessary at all ___laugh ___as much as when I was teaching, because I was a teacher when I started out

-Nina - You were the see and say

-Mab- but I just see it as use it, use it, use it. and it is because of my experiences I lived abroad for 22 years and I feel that being able to be conversant is much more important than all the other stuff. But when I got this Gonzalo at the point, I said okay that's all. I'm finished with you because you need the other if you are going to be a teacher and you are really serious about a new language you need the phonics, you need the gerunds, and prepositions and everything else by name

-Tee- You're talking about teaching English, but I'm thinking about reading

-Mab- that is a totally different field

-Tee- and my student had never used a dictionary now when he comes across a word and has difficulty breaking it down. Or understanding it He always comes to class with a dictionary.

But I wanted to say one thing about the program that We went to about learning disabilities the learning to achieve - and the very thing that I needed the most, the question that I needed answered, was the very, very last thing on the bottom, at the end of the day, the last day, because I have this problem with my high school student, I started with her in 7th grade, the program in the school system, it's not literacy council, , but she would read something she told me that reading was her problem and she was failing reading and I'd have her read out loud, and she read fine, just fine occasionally She was ignoring punctuation, but ultimately she read fine. . But then I would ask her to tell me about what she read- she had no idea, she had no idea what she read. I couldn't figure that out, I didn't know how to handle that. And so, that was addressed at that seminar. Vocabulary is the key. If you don't understand a word, you don't understand the sentence if you don't understand the sentence, you don't understand part of it. So now, I am very careful with my present student, that if he stumbles on a word, and there are a lot of words that he doesn't know what they mean, and so we look it up and he finds that so amazing that all those words are in the dictionary and he never used to do that. But there again, to learn the pronunciation is because in our language "p-e-a-r" is "pear" "p-a-r-e-" is "pare". "pair" is pair.

-Alice- And then "read" is also "read".

-Nina - The answer you have to teach context

-R1 - context is important

-Alice - here is the answer- you have to teach context, you have to teach phonics you have to teach read.. . It's not any one thing facet

-R1 - and the learners are all different

-Nina -Different levels, if you have a group. That is why it is so great if you can have a one-on-one of course, that would be great for children too

-Mab-I think I've got it, I'm not Sure

-Alice-I am so grateful that you Nina brought into my life the American heritage dictionary.

Laughs in crowd I love the American Heritage Dictionary. I had told my students that when they die I would visit their coffin and I would expect that in one hand they would hold the Bible, Koran, or what ever. But the other hand they would hold the dictionary. They are at the point where they want to buy their own dictionary

-Sulin-you went to the half price

-Alice-I did-And of course you know what happens I'll find one or two-But I am going to do what you opened my eyes to on internet my computer is in the workshop now

-R1- You can use ours

-Alice- because If I could find whatever is American Heritage

-Mab- have You seen the tiny little dictionaries on the key chain?

-Alice - yes, But that doesn't give you the diacritical marks

-Mab- the library gave me

-Sulin- yea we have

-R1 - we have those It's a good help

-Mab- they can take them all the time with them

-Alice - they don't they might have gotten just a little bit snotty- that one doesn't have diacritical marks, for that would go up a little bit more expensive But to me that makes it important that they can use big words they say, Ms. Alice my son, he's in high school, going to graduate, he did not know what a diacritical mark is.

-R1 - There you go

-Alice-That is not good. But I am looking for something to make them feel big. To let them know more about it probably than I do at this point. More than I did before I went into literacy council really.

-Mab-Did you send that program, that you said you helped work on, that OSHA program. Or was it the program AP for evaluation? I'd been watching it for the longest time.

-It was for teaching about employment rights for immigrants
Was it OSHA?

-R1-No it was work investment, Work Force

-Mab- So have you looked at all those different programs? I mean the program's wonderful. But I would have to study it before I could ever use it but I think it would be very pertinent for a lot of our students because they don't know what their rights are. I mean these are workers' rights. Did you all get that from Ms M? I mean she sent out

-R1- No I just sent it for the ones interested in immigration issues. It went to Heather and you

-Mab-Oh that's right. Oh yeah It went to Heather, I remember seeing her on there and she said too that she really liked it. I mean that was very useful stuff.

-Mab- That's part of building your self-image is making them realize they have rights because immigrants have rights. And this thing now with the education under the constitution, we have to educate all these kids. You know once they're 18 You don't they get public education. But then after that, like Perry giving illegal immigrants loans It's a political issue but isn't that nice but they still can't get a job when they get finished with that because they still aren't legal and anybody who says that they can be called legal by getting that college degree is crazy. I mean it's just not true. So to me it's really important that people understand their rights. And that's what that program that Ms worked on is about worker's rights because you have a right to work unless, well you don't have a right to work but you have a right to an education, you don't have a right to work under the current immigration laws

-

Please repeat that. Please say that again

-

-Mab- You have a right to an education but, you really, there's no right given you to work if you don't have papers. Yes, there really isn't.

-Alice - Do you have a right to exist, to live, to eat?

-Nan - No, no, you don't. You came here illegally. (PS she is using irony)

-Mab- It's a really, but it's important for all of us as teachers to understand where immigration reform is. Like the Dream Act, I feel, I cannot tell you how passionate I was about seeing that the Dream Act got passed. And when it passed the House and I was ready to celebrate but then it didn't pass in the Senate. I mean that was unbelievable, that these kids go through all this education and then are. .

-R1-It was particularly hard when someone was brought over here when they were 3 months old or a year old, they don't know any other nation, but their status is still

-Mab- And the language Most of them don't even know the other language from where they came and yet they can't get a job So the dream act was like no problem, it will pass...and then it didn't

-R1 – there's lots of facets to that and we sometimes get caught

-Mab- But we should all know that - I've got one of the rewards to that to me and is working in this ESL program, is that by moving into the citizenship, which I did because I heard so many sad stories about people being deported and detained and all that stuff and I thought

-Sulin-Pay to the lawyer

-Mab- Anybody with a legal residency card should become a citizen. It's really important because the number of people being deported. I mean if you hear the stories, and this came about, from Heather knowing what goes on. You know, take a German man who came here as a two year old with a residency card from his parents, smoked marijuana when he was 18. He is 51 years old, has 100 employees and he gets a speeding ticket, not a speeding ticket, it was a DUI, driving under the influence, they put him in a detention center. Out . He was 2 when he came here, he was German born, and now they are going to deport him. And this is what, you know, the attorney starts telling me these stories and I realized this is ridiculous, you know, we've got to anybody with a residence card needs to become a citizen and that's what made me interested. So going from the ESL what happens is the community interest that it has aroused in me, I think it's important. I mean, I feel that I've really become knowledgeable about immigration issues. I'll never be an immigration attorney, it's the most complicated law going, but I know the basic things now because I want to be honest with my students. I want them to understand what their rights are and where they stand as far as somebody coming to me.

-Nina- I need to sign you up to come talk to my class

-R1- That would be nice

-Mab- I would be happy to. As fast as- I had several students yesterday who don't have papers" I say "No importa" I don't care. It doesn't matter, if you are here and you learn English, even if you go back, like Gonzalo you are that much better off.

-Alice- It's also better for us because he would be our ambassador

-Mab-That's right. That's right. We spread the word. I actually say to my students, when they come in, "You're all ambassadors". Say to them " You're all ambassadors". By coming here, you can tell that many more people to come here too. To learn English. It's volunteer. I get out my soapbox .

-Alice- I heard it very much. I like to travel. I like people to think good things about our country. Now I can't deny that right now we are not projecting a very good image. We are endangering ourselves perhaps and losing some talent. We are crucifying some talent. We educate the talent we are talking about. And after we educate them instead of letting that serve us, then what do we do?

Deport them

-R1 - Well it's a complicated thing some of the employment issues
In your general population you hear stories about your students getting jobs or getting promoted. Or anything like that Do ya'll have any ideas? Have you seen that happen?

-Tee- My student is studying to get a license I guess the broad term for that license would be pest control but he is - it is offered to everybody who works in his field there- He works for the city as a landscaper. And most of them there have the attitude "why bother to go get the license, because they are not going to give us a raise in salary". I guess that's controlled by something else. But I just thought it was evidence of his ambition because I read -he has 4 thick study books all about the chemicals - there are words that I would never come across in my life and so together we look up these words and I am learning something maybe I don't need to learn but still in all he's learning...I forgot what your question was (laughing).

-Nina - Student Success stories. There is one right there. Pointing at Sulin-I tell people about her

-Tee- If he gets tired of working for the city or loose his job and he has a license to be a pest control person, you know. He can even have his own company. We've gone off the seeing eye dog book for awhile. Because we are learning all this stuff for these exams he's going to take a license from one company opens the doors to other companies. Just the fact that you have shown the initiative to go and do something even if his co-workers say why should we do that, they won't give us a raise.

-Sulin- It doesn't matter

-Tee- My student wants to do that and he's a little concerned about it, and I said take the exam. You can take it as many times I said take the exam and see how you do and you'll know better what you need to learn to study more. You know, but exam but you take

-Alice - It multi-level, but I'm sure you know that his wife is extremely educated and successful, well situated woman. And he once confided that he had to be...she was up here and he was down here as just a gardener and he has to do something about this. She is very kind to him, she loves him, regardless, but he needed to, somehow, make her proud of him.

-Mab-So what you are doing is fantastic

-Nina- I think being the best gardener in town would be a wonderful thing.

-Tee- He's a joy to be with and we laugh and joke around a lot. He can't say "pure". He simply can't say "pure". And I said "It looks like you're gonna kiss me" and I said "pure". Look in the mirror, kiss the mirror. And he was so embarrassed.

(Laughter)

And I said oh you're too bashful. He said "Yes".

(Laughter)

-Nina- I do a lot of that kissing too with sounds

-Mab- Another thing I do, well I hope we all do, promoting bilingualism, promoting language learning because, it's a beginning thing I do. Do not lose your Spanish because of the Spanish that we have. You know the Syrian that you sent me? You know that he's a physician, he brought his wife, we had a big discussion

-Sulin – another from Viet Nam, Was it Julie?

-Mab- This is Salad, and her husband is a physician. And we had this quick conversation out in the hall about how...I said, "Do you speak English at home with your wife?" He said, "No, because I want the children to learn Arabic." I said, "Good, good for you". And I wish that more people would do that. And I do with my students, "Don't lose your language. It's hard, but don't lose it. You want to speak English, because that's the predominant language here, but keep your other language". And I really feel that is important. AARP had that big article about doesn't prevent Alzheimer's but it helps the brain. This doctor and I got into this discussion about the function of the brain. Everybody can learn multi-languages. Everybody. The brain is the same in everybody's head and you can learn many languages but to think that you have to switch to one or switch to another. I mean you don't. A good linguist, I have a Dutch woman who just passed the citizenship exam. She speaks five languages. Her English is perfect. You know absolutely perfect. It's her fifth language. And I tell the students that to be .

-Alice- There is a wonderful article by he's from California -Rodriguez is his last name. And he wrote this essay, a wonderful essay, about our secret language. I live in a community of adults, and we're everything, it's like a little world. What happens in the evenings, we tend to separate, those of us who speak Spanish, kind of go over here, and we're eating, and those who speak English , just go over there, you know. And at times it would be conflict that those speaking Spanish should be speaking English. And I had to give this impassioned talk basing it on Rodriguez' essay. We all, many of us, have a secret language. The secret language is the one we grew up with, that we talk about around the table, and it happens to be Spanish for us and it's not even very correct Spanish but we manage. And then we have our public language, English, when we're

with everybody else, we speak English. But when I want to say something to you, you know “Did you know Mom zapatos “ We slip into that language.

(Laughing)

-Nina- Yo no se (in a strong English accent on purpose) (laughing)

-Alice-And if somebody is sitting over here they may misunderstand. I had a dear friend who lived there, she was convinced that when anybody spoke Spanish we were saying something about her. I would say “Oh Barbara, we’re not it’s just “

-Nina- Why do you think you’re that important?”

(Laughing) It’s not about you

-Tee-My mom Was one of seven kids and I’m an only child and my grandmother had more to do with my upbringing than my mother and she was fanatical about proper word usage

(laughing)

-Tee- At the dinner table, if the talk wasn’t about what was going on in the war, it was about when you use the word “continual” vs. “continuous” and stuff like that. That’s how I grew up. My mother on the other hand, with seven children, they had their private language. They had phrases and words that wouldn’t mean anything to anybody else. And right on into adulthood all my aunts and uncles were still using it.

-Alice - Was it a dialect.

-Tee- No, no. Words they made up. For example, I might say to you, my sister, about my friend, “Oh, isn’t that a lovely dress?” “Bip” Bip meant bullshit. (Laughter). Or “How was the party?” Oh it was a can you manage party” Can you manage means they didn’t really do the best they could have with the party. -And that was their private language.

-Mab- How interesting though.

-Tee- And I find, particularly Bip and Can you manage. I can say that to myself in certain situations.

-Alice- It’s probably going to stick with us too.

-Nina- Well when we hear you saying Bip, we’ll know what you mean. (laughter)
thank you very much

-Nina- to answer your question, though, about students. We've had several students to go on to Community college. So yes, yes that has happened. And I think of Irene and all that she has done.

End up getting jobs

-Sulin- And she's a tutor

-Nina- she came at the school now she working with a school

-R1- We just finished reading an article that was written about six months ago where somebody did a longitudinal study in Oregon And they all started out with low level readers but those that improved the reading over the years and those that didn't, and then the recession hit. And it was very interesting because they were both kind of paralleling each other in terms of income and jobs, but when the recession hit, those that had learned more and had made progress in their language weathered to the recession much better. It was the ones that had not learned very much that lost their jobs more quickly and that kind thing. It was very interesting

-Nina- I don't remember Ros is one you interviewed or not, I see a lot of difference in her, this year especially

-Sulin- – Who, Ms. Nina? Ros-name hmmmhmmm yes a lot

-Alice- Most of my students are waiters and waitresses because they come in. I allow them to get there as late a 5:30, because they get out of work at 5pm

-Mab- So you teach an hour, do you?

-Alice- I teach 3 hours

-Sulin- 5-8pm

-Mab- 5 to 8? Oh really.

-Alice-I start the real babies, the beginners, they start at 5 o'clock. I allow them to stay until 8 o'clock, but they can't participate after 6:30 because we take the ones who are ready to read

-Mab-So there are different groups

-Alice- Yes, they stay in the same room. It's a big, beautiful room, but you should see it- Their gorgeous room

-R1 – Oh no, our offices are cramped as all get out

-Mab-Where is this room? What floor is it on?

-Alice-It's the room right next to Ms's office.

-Sulin – It's room 433

-Alice-It's a nice room, state-of- the- art, with all kinds of equipment

-Nina - Oh really, because your offices really depress me. (laughter)

-Sulin – It's because we don't have any windows! But we are thankful that we have something. Maybe we can put in there. Make it look like a window. It can say "Our Window" (Laughter)

-R1 – So what kind of changes did you see, ? Confidence, or what?

-Alice- Yes, well, that and her conversation. She's talking a lot more in English.

-Sulin- – In English, She tries to speak everything in English

-R1 – Good for her.

-Nina- And her family is cooperating. Her husband is and the children are working harder to speak English with her. And transformation is fun to watch.

-Sulin – And another one is Tomasa.

-Nina- Tomasa, yes.

-Sulin – Tomasa Lastname.

-Nina- Yes, she has a lot of determination, also.

-Sulin – She's taking the GED now.

-R1 – Oh, good!

-Mab-Yes, and I had one who was eager to progress and he's going to start going to the Community college West Campus Classes

-Sulin –Bernardo? Bernardo Lastname

-Mab- An example I originally had a student who had 3 children at Flour Bluff High School and those 3 girls, and 2 or 3 of them would babysit for me so I used to have children come to the library and then this student of mine's kids did do the babysitting. Anyway the one girl asked me to help her with her resume to get into college. They were

raised in Monterrey and they went to English speaking school from the age of 4 and she was a gymnast, she played the piano, she had all these wonderful grades and all. So the whole resume, the whole page, down at the last thing...she's bilingual in English and Spanish. I went ballistic. I said, "Elise, that goes at the top!". But they don't understand. Even a sophisticated family like that who paid at age 4 for these girls to go to bilingual school or an American school, living in Mexico, don't have the understanding, that to be bilingual, totally, reading, writing in Spanish, English, it belongs at the top, as far as I am concerned.

-R1 – Because it will help with their job.

-Mab- -With anything. Getting into school. Sometime I say that to Ms. Ms doesn't brag about being totally bilingual. It's true. I tell how many people, how many people do I tell Ms is bilingual. Oh, she is? And you hide it.

-Alice - It was an issue, where I was doing the hiring. It was at the point where you were looking for somebody that was bilingual and unfortunately – as I tell my students, guess who I was hiring, it wasn't locals, it was Anglos from Connecticut, from New York who had gone to study Spanish as a second language and they were coming down here and getting these plum jobs because they were bilingual in their grammar and everything else. And I said, "and you have to be good, not only in English, but in Spanish, if you want these cushy jobs. Because now when we are dealing with Mexico we are not going to have somebody who speaks border Spanish. We want someone who speaks acceptable Spanish.

-R1 – Good

-Alice- To deal with customers who come in from Mexico or Colombia. So really we are at the stage where being bilingual is no longer an oddity, it's a necessity, if we are going to be competitive

-Mab- I agree, really. In this area I would say it should be your number one qualification to be bilingual. I mean

-Nina- I think we're missing the mark without teaching both, English and Spanish.

-Mab- One of my students, Ateea Lastname, you know, I don't know where she came from, she got a job, right away. She used me as a recommendation. Nobody called me, but she got a job right away

-R1 – We can wind it down, but keep going

-Tee- I'm sorry but I have a rented car I have to return by 1 o'clock

R1 – Oh my gosh, what happened to your car? My car died on September 21st, the day before my birthday when I had planned to transport five friends to a surprise for me.

R1 – a surprise party for yourself?

-Tee-Well, I had organized and paid for this event in Port Aransas, and then I couldn't take them. But they came up with the cars. My mechanic had returned the car to me 3 times and still had the same problem and finally he said I can't fix it. I can't find out what's wrong with it and it's at the Dodge dealership. And so, the car's 12 years old but I want my car back so I've got to get this little rented heap back to the...

-R1-Is your car fixed now?

-Tee-I don't know

-Alice-I know a good mechanic.

-Tee- He took it over to Dodge on Friday and sorry I can't stay till

-R1 – No we're done, we're physically done. We're just chatting now
Well thank you all

-Sulin – We thank you for coming

-Tee- Thank you and if you have the class, I want to be there.
I want to be there because it would help to teach

-R1 – I think it would be a great one to have for our tutors
Anytime
I don't know why I have fell in love with phonics. I get teary eyed
You should have been a first grade teacher
I have a six year old granddaughter and of course I'm teaching her phonics.
I mean... and she's been taught well
I tell them, please don't tell anyone you are studying because the words

-R1 – Thank you
She mustn't tell anybody, because everybody will speak English

From
Below this is out of order but pertinent-

-Nina-Well one of our students, Fama, she's in San Antonio, she's studying fashion and some of her fashions have been very well received.

-R1 – Morocco. So she is! How exciting!
That's what she has her degree in. Remember

-R1 –Right, but she just needed the language

-Nina-She was working as a repair person at that age

-Sulin – alterations

-R1 – but she had the other talent as well

She said she tore away from her sister, she had to just do it. She was so insecure and she said “I just went to San Antonio. She doesn’t know anybody who speaks Arabic. She has her own apartment, going to classes, and she has already presented something on the runway, she said.

-R1 – that’s good. Wow!

-Nina- I meant to go see her. So there’s a success story

-Mab- One more thing about these classes. Alice, do you know Ms Brewster, do you know her?

-Sulin – Mrs. Cuas, I know her.

-Mab-She has the Syrian, Turkish, the Taiwanese, the Mexican and Venezuelan. She has five in her class. She loves it. She’s so thrilled because of this international flavor, you know, of what she has. I’m jealous, because I love it too.

-Sulin – laughter

-Nina-We don’t have that much of a mixture, but we do have a little mixture in that we learn how to say Hello in various languages, so when they come in we can say hello That Vietnamese. And Neil. She hasn’t been coming to my class.

-Sulin – she was with car problems, the car broke

-Sulin – with Kate? Did you talk with Kate?

-Mab-Oh I haven’t talked with her and I need to because yesterday Azuela came and had those four elder, I call them the Elder Group, they’re two 60 and two 70 year olds, who want to learn English. I mean fascinating. Ones been here 47 years and speaks no English. I said Brasilia, are you Sure they really... they want the class. Okay, okay I’ll find someone. Now I’m going to call her up, because she said they were wonderful, they were really eager to learn. I thought they were kind of haughty about learning but not really interested. But she said they were really eager and they loved being by themselves. I put them at a round table way at the back of the sanctuary. So Donna’s not going to be able to teach anymore.

-R1 – she’s getting busier

-Mab- so I'm going to teach

-Alice-The ladies have said something very profound. You can be born, live and die in Corpus Christi without having to speak English

-R1 – You can. Your world is limited, but you can do it.

-Alice- Over in the north side, where I grew up- and I always go over that, you know it's so easy to live here without speaking English. It's so easy. But if you have children, it's not fair to the children. But you don't have to worry about the children. The children are like sponges. But to stay together with your family, it's really important because that is really important. Just like the first thing we started talking about today, that teenage attitude towards those kids, if those parents don't speak...I mean maybe they have a beautiful relationship, but that doesn't happen, but I really feel some of the dropout rate is from ... they're ashamed. They're ashamed of their parents. They tell their parents "You don't know anything. You don't know English to start with." That is so true

-R1 – when I was talking to a group like this of students last week was saying that she's learning English but some of her children don't know Spanish at all. And so you are having somebody who speaks mostly Spanish with someone who speaks only English and they can't talk to each other.

-Sulin –they just speak in Spanish, they understand but they don't

-Mab-They have this funny situation at church. There's Juan, who's the babysitter, right? And Dorca is Hispanic and she sells cosmetics at Dillard's for 17 years. She's their bilingual cosmetician. I think there's some others, but Dorca's been there 17 years. And her kids don't speak Spanish and yet the grandmother, like Juan can't talk to his grandmother so I put him out as here's Juan, he doesn't speak Spanish, you know, we have a good enough relationship that it's okay with him, because every Sunday I have to carry him over to Dillard's to pick her up. And I always say Juan, you are going to study Spanish, aren't you? And he jumps out of the car.
(Laughter)

-Alice-I grew up like that, my father's from Mexico, and he determined, because of the situation here in Corpus Christi, we were going to learn English, and my mother's from the United States and we only spoke English, but we could understand but we could not speak Spanish. I didn't speak a word of Spanish until I went to college to study Spanish. And then I could not communicate until I was well passed my 40s. Now I feel much more comfortable, but it's been a real effort. My nieces, my brother, my father, my sisters would say I will pay you because you speak Spanish so bad, not to speak it at all. If you're going to speak it that poorly, I'll pay you, don't speak it.
(laughter)

-R1 – That dampens things, doesn't it?

-Alice-But that was the reason why, you know? With so much discrimination Is it Gregory Rodriguez, you talk about the reporter from California. Because he's written a wonderful book "Orphans, Vagabonds..." It's Gregory Rodriguez is a writer from California. Writes really good essays and the book he wrote, I just think everybody should read it

-Mab-He really knows...I've seen him speak, also, on TV. He's very impressive speaker. Then there's the other Rodriguez, the one who is on NPR. But Gregory is a writer There's one more thing. On NPR this morning, the thing about Libertyville, Iowa, which is a town where the schools are completely Spanish/English and everybody learns from grade 1 both languages because it's a town where they do turkeys, they package turkeys, raise and package turkeys. And so all these Hispanics came there years ago, like 20 years ago, so the schools have just been teaching both. And it's completely successful.

-Sulin – that's good!

-Mab- It's on NPR this morning

-R1 – that would be an interesting case study. Yeah. That would be a fascinating case study

-Nina-Is there anything else we can do to help you?

-R1 – No I think that's it. I got little bit about the job situation. A lot of times they don't tell us that they got another job or they got a promotion They disappear

-R1 – and you find out later that's why, because they got a job or they got promoted and got too busy
In the Supermarket....

-Mab- Oh, this one student, Julie. I don't know if you have ever worked with Julie

-Sulin – Julie is in her class

-Mab- I ran into her there at Community college going for her citizenship. She's actually in the fluency class, but she really should be in the citizenship. But she's ready to get her degree.

She's going to get her degree, I forgot now what she told me.

-Sulin – she told me a nurse. She wants to be a nurse.

-Mab- But she has a professor husband, so her English, I mean she's really way up there. I stopped, the two of you don't know this, but I did just Fluency at the Flour Bluff Library, English Fluency. And then I started getting all these professors' wives, with all their degrees and everything. And that really wasn't my point, so I switched to citizenship

because of that and Heather's immigration stories. I thought, oh this is my way to get rid of them. So what happens, last week, here comes this Korean woman again. Well gee what are you doing here? Well we decided my daughter should graduate here from high school, so I came back. I said so you're not really teaching citizenship now? Oh okay and I rapped with her and I had another student at the time. And she said I'll listen in to the citizenship. The next week, she brings her neighbor, who's from Colombia, who needs to get her citizenship.

-Sulin – What is her name, do you remember?

-Mab- What is her name? I don't remember her name. I don't remember her name. I'll email it to you, because she won't be ready to get it till April, I think.

-Sulin – Okay.

-Mab- But here comes June

-R1 – So now you're out promoting!

-Nina- June, the Korean lady.

-Mab-Yes, very tall. I told her that she may come to the citizenship classes but she has to write me an essay this week. (laughter) She can do it. But that's the type I was getting. I was getting a whole class of those people. The Hispanic people know no English at all. They were so overwhelmed by these people that I would - so don't answer - that's who it is. So you know her too. Yes, uh huh

-Sulin – It was in Ms. Nina's class. She was in Ms. Nina's class.

-Mab-And there was another one. And talk about the influence that we have teaching. The other one who's name I don't remember, she was there two years ago, too, said "You know, Ms Alice, when I get back to Korea, I'm going to teach English, I'm going to teach Korean for Americans working in Korea. She said we don't know volunteerism like this, but if you do this as a volunteer and you don't get any money, I can do this. I can teach Korean.

Well isn't that a great thing. Think about that. And tell them it's American in English

-Sulin- eleven volunteers,

-R1-you really don't have in other countries don't have the kind of volunteers that we have here

-Sulin – Nor, in Colombia, we don't use to have a volunteer.

- R1- You don't either In Mexico they don't that much, oh, a little bit

-Sulin – Yeah, a little bit like a

-Alice- Well in Mexico they used to have a program, years and years ago, I used to hear it advertised on radio “El que sabe leer, tiene la obligacion de enseñarle al que no sabe” (*One who knows how to read is obligated to teach one who doesn't*)

-R1 – each one, teach one.

-Sulin – I am reading a book in Spanish. The name is “ Basta Historias” How do you translate? Enough Stories. Enough Stories is really, really good. The author went country by country looking for what is important and everything is location, location, location in the countries. In South America it is more important talking about the past, all the history. And in Finland, India, China, - Nice technology and the future is really really good.

-R1 – that would be interesting.

-Sulin – It is really interesting.

Meeting comes to a close amid comments such as: Does the lunch come with a little bit of their ice cream? I think so. I'm going to have mine – Ice Cream is part of the deal there.

Discussion on easels- for uu class

Discussion on charging the cell phone

Thanks for lunch etc. etc. good bye

Appendix D

Sample Coding Sheet for Focus Group 1

Table D1

Sample Initial Coding Sheet for Focus Group 1

Irene	Before class she was afraid (1) she was scared to be in a store (translating for Vicki) Muchas veces quieren hablar (2) con alguien	(1) fear of being in store- in public (2) fear of being spoken to and not understanding
Vicki	un momentito	Stands up for herself
Irene	tu traduces ?	
		Note: V became confident enough to wing it without translation at this point then reverted back to Spanish. Note: later in the hour she speaks in English on her own
Irene	Now she feels confident (3) she feels that that she can speak and go to the post office, the store that she doesn't need the help now She is not so scared.	(3) independence
Nona	She gained confidence (4) Wonderful it And if there is anything else you can think of	(4) confidence increased- moderator is repeating
Irene	Alguna otra cosa que haya cambiado	
Vicki	Bueno eso es grandioso (5), no, es que me ayuda A relacionarme mejor, inclusive estamos en un proyecto tengo que A ver con el arquitecto,(6)	(5) Big deal (6) Speak with architect
Irene	In her work they are working on a project, and now she can talk with the architect, and other people who barely speak sp so she feels good s he can, for her work is good	
Vicki	Y ellos tambien se sienten agusto no sienten la presion (7) de hablar espanol	(7) Others comfortable around her
Irene	She thinks that people have a good feeling with her because they don't have pressure (8) to speak in sp because they are afraid she doesn't understand	(8) Relieves pressure on others
Vicki	Me ayuda relacionarme mejor (9). El otro dia se nos descompuso el ac y subio el hijo del senor y el papa estaba abajo y me dijo, entendio (10)?, dijo si, si entendio (11)	(9) Better relationships (10) Understanding (11) Others recognize that she understands
Nona	Some good experiences I'm glad and with that speaking to the architects,	

Table D2

Sample Second Coding from Focus Group 1

Code 1	Code 2	Code 3	ALQLQ
Concern about aging	aging	isolation	com
No family	alone	isolation	com
Apologize for speaking poorly but people understand	shame		self-est
2 languages used in varying degrees	bilingualism		
Relieves pressure on others	bilingualism		
Trade lessons	bilingualism		
Translated for sister	bilingualism	helping	self-est
Used to request a Spanish speaker	bilingualism		
Used to request Spanish speaker	bilingualism		
How to manage bills	budget		econ
Husband also told he could make more money if bilingual	budget	earning	econ
If you speak English you get more money”	budget	earning	econ
Learned about budgeting	budget		econ
Learned to save money	budget		econ
Life is more expensive	budget		econ

Note. ALQLQ = Adult Learning Quality of Life Questionnaire.

