

EXPLORING THE ACCULTURATION OF TEACHERS FROM SPAIN WORKING IN A
U.S. URBAN DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Para mi familia

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Andrew Duncan Goodwin

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Employing best practices in the acculturation of teachers new to a given school is especially important when the new teachers are from another country, speak a primary language other than English, and have usually taught exclusively in their home country. Such is the case for the participants of this study, who were hired to work in a U.S. dual language immersion school through the J-1 visa visiting teachers program. This study examined how these teachers were acculturated into their schools and how acculturation affected their overall experience.

The research questions were explored via multiple-case design. The cases were the six then-current visiting teachers from Spain at the selected urban, U.S. dual language immersion school. The methods used to collect data were one-on-one interviews with each of the participants, a focus group interview with the participants together, and a review of documents pertinent to the intended and actual acculturation of the participants.

The results showed that the participating Spanish visiting teachers struggled to adjust in their first year, especially, because of not experiencing a strong acculturation from their host school. The study also illuminated how participating U.S. host schools might improve their acculturation practices to bridge pedagogical and cultural gaps for their visiting teachers.

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Chapter 1
Introduction and Overview

Chapter 1

Background

In schools where second language acquisition is a priority, administrators often hire native or heritage speakers of the target language in an effort to inject linguistic and cultural authenticity into their programs. This is especially true in bilingual and dual immersion schools, wherein the target languages are both the sole medium of instruction and a primary object of study. Administrators of such schools often seek to hire bilingual individuals who are trained to teach a given subject via the target language (Finney et al., 2002). However, the growing desire of dual language and other immersion-style second language programs across the United States to employ native-speaker faculty is often met by a limited availability of native-speaker licensed teachers (Walker & Teddick, 2000). Recent news reports highlight that many school districts are experiencing a teacher shortage in bilingual programs (“Florida Schools Struggle To Find Enough Bilingual Teachers,” 2015). This is especially true in certain states that do not offer additional certification specific to bilingual education because it increases the demand to hire from outside the U.S. (“REPA Educator Standards,” 2016; Walker & Teddick, 2000).

In response to these factors, the Spanish Ministry of Education and the U.S. Ministry of Education created a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between their two countries in order to employ highly qualified teachers from Spain in U.S. schools (“Estados Unidos,” 2016). Via the visiting teacher program, native Spaniards apply their language and culture fluency and their professional educator training from Spanish universities as a unique immersion experience in U.S. elementary schools (“IDOE,” 2016). Especially in dual language immersion schools, which teach two languages simultaneously by dedicating certain subjects exclusively to one or the other

language, a growing number of school administrators are signing up for visiting teacher programs (Freeman, 2000).

A challenge for administrators of participating U.S. schools is achieving a seamless curricular program match for the visiting teachers in combination with their professional preparation and culture and language fluency (Chan, 2014). However, visiting teachers and their U.S. administrators often find the transition more difficult than anticipated, largely due to a lack of a clear strategy for intentional, overall teacher acculturation (i.e., the ongoing process of pre- and in-service induction, mentoring, and cultural equipping of new teachers). Acculturation as applied to schools and their new teachers is both psychological (i.e., job satisfaction and personal well-being) and sociocultural (i.e., well applied and developed skills for effective living) (Sam & Berry, 2010). Practically applied, it is the training that teachers new to a given school receive prior to and during their tenure at that school in order to properly perform their teaching and other professional duties, as well as mentoring (i.e., the ongoing, 1:1 guidance teachers new to a particular school receive from a more senior and expert teacher at that school) (Walker & Tedick, 2000). Furthermore, proper grade level placement is key to the visiting teachers' maximizing their culture and language expertise, especially in light of their three-year maximum teaching stint in U.S. schools ("Teacher Program," 2016).

While the United States' J-1 visitor worker visa disallows Spanish visiting teachers from legally working in the program for longer than three years, a lack of acculturation of those teachers can lead to a decidedly negative immersive experience for the visiting teachers, or perhaps even early withdrawal from it (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Wechsler et al., 2012).

A significant number of studies have been conducted on the structure and efficacy of dual language immersion programs and on teacher retention as associated with acculturation, but few

studies have addressed the professional experiences and needs of Spanish visiting teachers in U.S. dual language immersion schools, especially in regards to their acculturation. Thus, this study explores the perceived effects that acculturation may have on the Spanish visiting teachers employed in a U.S. urban dual language immersion elementary school.

The Birth of Bilingual Education in the United States

Part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 and subsequent revisions through 1968 ushered in provisions for bilingual education in U.S. public schools (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988). But the addition did not foment bilingualism, which provides learning opportunities for and equally values both a native and a new language (Christian et al., 2000). Instead, bilingual education as such was intended to assimilate non-English speaking immigrants to the U.S. by phasing in English as the dominant daily operating language of each student in a bilingual program (Linton, 2004). But supporting bilingual education meant recognizing languages other than English as tools to achieving fluency in English. That recognition was met with an English-only backlash in the 1980s, which ironically insisted on learning English via immersion for non-native speakers of English (Linton, 2004). These English-only policies continue to be criticized today. In fact, voters in California in a 2016 state ballot initiative overwhelmingly voted to replace English-only policies with bilingual and multi-lingual programs in schools (“California,” 2017). The vote signaled a possible upward trend in positive national sentiment toward bilingualism and multilingualism in the U.S., which would be a monumental stride forward for the acceptance of and demand for dual language immersion programs.

Dual Language Immersion Programs - Learning Two Languages Simultaneously

Almost simultaneous to the onset of bilingual and English-only education, dual language immersion emerged as a response to the one-sided fluency and immersion paths of its counterparts (Gonzalez & Lezama, 1974; Ramos, 2009). Rather than focusing on assimilation or language exclusivity, dual language immersion offered both native English speakers the opportunity to learn a language other than English and non-native English speakers the opportunity to learn English via mirrored, progressive immersive studies (i.e., dual tracks for acquiring and retaining both languages). The previous alternative instilled a dominance of the English language in participating students, thereby diminishing the value of and the capacity for interacting via more than one language (Marian et al., 2013). The main challenge for dual language immersion programs was then and is still establishing and maintaining credibility via authenticity, which is best achieved through hiring a native or near-native level bilingual staff (Christian et al., 2000). Thus, visiting teacher programs like the one in Spain have become increasingly popular among dual immersion schools, since those teachers are truly native to the Spanish language and culture and may effortlessly represent that authenticity (Ramos, 2009).

Dual language, or two-way immersion (TWI), programs have broad academic benefits to their students, most strongly at the elementary level in language acquisition in math and reading. Both minority-language (typically Spanish) and majority-language (typically English) students outperform their non-immersion language program peers in the new language (L2) (Marian, et al. 2013). However, dual language immersion schools must take care not to make second language acquisition the sole focus of the program. Especially for heritage speakers (those who use a home language not dominant in the society in which they are raised), many ESL or bilingual programs (i.e., English acquired partly through the minority language) usually teach

English at the expense of an ever-lessening command of the minority language, which again is typically Spanish (Gonzales & Lezama, 1974; Marian et al., 2013).

Dual language immersion is not without criticism, of course. Primary among criticisms of such programs is that they tend to exclude many heritage languages. Most dual-language programs in the United States focus primarily on a Spanish-English combination as the medium of instruction and therefore necessarily ignore minority languages besides Spanish (Christian et al, 2000). However, while dual language programs in the U.S. respond to the overwhelming popularity of and interest in Spanish as either a heritage or a second language, they at least provide a bilingual education track that is far from the norm for the U.S. education system.

Structure of Spain Visiting Teacher Program

According to an agreement between the U.S. and Spanish governments, visiting teachers from Spain may be granted J1 visas, which in the context of the program are one-year work visas renewable for up to three years. The three-year visa structure holds barring unforeseen extensions to the visiting teachers' contracts, such as marriage to a U.S. citizen or other changes to their visa status ("Teacher Program," 2016). This structure allows both the visiting teachers and the U.S. schools for which they work the freedom to reassess their commitment to the program and to one another at the end of each school year ("Teacher Program," 2016). Some visiting teachers choose to return to work in Spain after working in U.S. schools for only one or two years ("IDOE," 2016). Therefore, participating U.S. schools necessarily commit to a perpetual hiring process of Spanish visiting teachers for their immersion language and culture positions associated with the visiting teacher program, whether that be once every three years or once per year. As a result, participating U.S. schools must also confront the acculturation of

their visiting teachers every year to three years, thus illuminating the value of high quality acculturation practices to U.S. host schools (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001; Finney et al, 2002).

As one-way and dual language immersion programs count on native speakers of the target languages (most commonly English and Spanish) for language and culture immersion authenticity, they have found a close ally in Spain for the regular supply of native Spanish-speaking teaching professionals. The Spanish Ministry of Education sponsors the Spanish visiting teachers program via a collaborative and exhaustive application process (“Estados Unidos,” 2016; “Teacher Program,” 2016). Highly qualified teachers from Spain can apply directly to the Spanish Ministry of Education, which determines those Spanish teachers’ actual eligibility according to the Ministry’s bilingual educator standards and the fit with the American and Canadian schools seeking teachers from Spain (“Estados Unidos,” 2016; “Teacher Program,” 2016). After professional eligibility and initial fit are confirmed, the Spanish Ministry of Education facilitates interviews for selection committees or other representatives from the American or Canadian sponsoring schools. Spanish teachers are then matched with one of the American or Canadian schools and begin preparing to teach abroad within weeks of the final interview (“Estados Unidos,” 2016; “IDOE,” 2016). The program thus lifts much of the burden of the teacher search and qualification verification associated with the hiring process off of U.S. school administrators. However, the in-country acculturation of Spanish visiting teachers is almost exclusively the responsibility of the host schools.

Local Context: The Visiting Teacher Program in a Midwestern Elementary School

As previously noted, dual language immersion program students consistently outperform their non-dual immersion counterparts in all academic areas (Marian, 2013). Still, while the number of dual language immersion programs in the U.S. continues to grow, the success of those

programs has not translated to an overwhelming surge in their existence in schools. Furthermore, while dual language immersion schools are best served by hiring native L2 speaking teachers, not all of them hire Spanish visiting teachers and none of them hire Spanish visiting teachers exclusively as their native-speaking Spanish faculty (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001). Therefore, understanding the Spanish visiting teacher acculturation and ongoing professional experience in dual language immersion programs requires the examination of a small, specific context of schools. With that in mind, this study focuses on the Spanish visiting teachers employed at Central Immersion Elementary School, a Midwestern, urban dual language immersion school. Central Immersion Elementary School describes itself as the only immersion magnet school within its sprawling urban district (“Programs,” 2016). It is also the only traditional K-6 public school in its district that is fully committed to dual language immersion, especially as facilitated via the Spanish visiting teacher program.

Research Problem

In the case of native-speaker teachers from Spain who otherwise qualify professionally to teach in U.S. schools, the issue of improperly applied or ignored best practices in teacher acculturation can severely strain the personal and professional cultural variances between the Spanish and American societies and pedagogy. In the worst case, a lack of intentional, ongoing new teacher acculturation can result in split programming, varying levels of instruction, weakened teacher preparedness and effectiveness, and poor student outcomes (Applebee et al., 2000). As such, this study examines the participating Spanish visiting teachers’ perceptions of the acculturation they may have received at Central Elementary, especially with respect to their feelings of the preparedness and effectiveness as visiting teachers (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001).

Framework

My research operates within the framework of best practices of teacher acculturation. Best practices in this regard begin with the need for school leaders to influence their schools toward full development by exemplifying the same in themselves and in continuously preparing the right people for the right positions (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995). Positive, intentional school leadership in the areas of teacher acculturation is a major factor in the establishment and maintenance of positive (or strong) school contexts (i.e., working environments). Positive school contexts are supportive teaching environments in which teachers receive what they need in the way of materials, supplies, and direction in order to be successful (Wechsler, et al., 2012). According to Wechsler, et al., (2012), "...school context was a significant predictor of a teacher's remaining at the same school. The predicted odds of teachers remaining at the same school were 2.05 times higher if they were working in a strong school context as opposed to an average school context, and 4.65 higher if they were working in a strong school context as opposed to a weak school context" (p. 401). Thus, where teachers receive weak acculturation through acculturation from their schools, they are nearly five times more likely to leave their current school, if not also the teaching profession. For Spanish visiting teachers, a weak school context could mean at best leaving their current U.S. school for another sponsoring school, and at worst foregoing the allotted full three years of their J-1 visas.

Similarly, language planning and implementation for dual language instructors is an integral part of achieving a strong school context (i.e., environment for teacher preparation and equipping) (Chan, 2014; Wechsler et al., 2012). As Freeman (1996) describes in a study on dual-language planning at a particular bilingual school, successful language planning and implementation creates "an educational language plan [that considers]... teachers and

administrators as planners [and] allows an understanding of how practitioners potentially shape the language plan from the bottom up” (p. 560). This is especially important to Spanish visiting teachers and their school contexts, since it points to the worth of following a particular ongoing induction and mentoring process above simply counting on the previous professional formation and experience of the visiting teachers. Still, little research has been done to understand this particular issue specifically for immersion language educators, especially visiting teachers from Spain. Consequently, identifying and understanding issues with school context and parameters for creative autonomy for Spanish visiting teachers is a major need in the field of education.

Research Focus

My research was guided by two main questions. The first was focused on the teachers’ perceptions about how they were acculturated into their American school context. This question was key to determining the makeup and operation of Central Elementary’s acculturation program. An ongoing acculturation program is different from sharing information at strategic points in the school year. Much like a strategy, an intentional program of this type “aligns behavior within the business [and] allows everyone in the organization to make individual choices that reinforce one another” (Collis & Rukstad, 2008, p. 2). It would have been an error to assume that Central Elementary followed or even had created a systematic acculturation program without confirming the existence and studying the makeup of the program. Should a well outlined program not have existed in written form at Central Elementary, it could have been assumed that at least certain standard operations, however limited, could have been articulated by the school’s administration by means other than direct interpersonal contact with the J1 faculty.

My second question related to how the participants' experiences with their host school's community were or were not affected by the acculturation that they received while working there. Using a definition of acculturation broader than merely the in-country and in-school induction and mentoring process, I was able to include other cultural, linguistic or other factors of positive or negative experiences associated with the J1 program at Central Elementary. The teacher interviews described in the methodology section were designed to draw out data pertinent to those possible fringe motivators. Additionally, the interview responses were contrasted with any acculturation documentation provided to the teachers by their host school and its district, as well as the Spanish Ministry of Education.

Methodology

In order to understand the effects of acculturation on Spanish visiting teachers in the context of a dual language program, I conducted a case study whose participants were the Spanish visiting teachers working at Central Immersion at the time of this study. The cases were the visiting teachers themselves, not Central Elementary as a school, since my interaction with the various participants centers on their individual experiences with the J1 program at Central (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014). Upon the selected teachers agreeing to participate, I interacted with them using in-depth interviews intended to gain an understanding of their views on items related to their own acculturation (i.e. settlement assistance, onboarding, curricular program transference, understanding school culture, pedagogical strategy, etc.) (Yin, 2014). Second, I analyzed data from a review of acculturation documents from the host school, its district, and the Spanish government. Third, I conducted a focus group interview that included all the participating teachers at once. The purpose of the focus group was to glean a specific set of data not readily or clearly covered in the individual interviews (Yin, 2014). I also member checked all interview

data in order to ensure the accuracy of my understanding of the participants' meanings for the data they may have shared (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014). After transcribing the individual and the focus group interviews, as well as thoroughly reviewing the acculturation-related documents, I then coded and analyzed the data from each data source using Dedoose® qualitative data analysis software.

Implications of this Study

For visiting teachers from Spain, working abroad is attractive in many ways. Firstly, they live and work in their very own extended immersive experience. In so doing, they are committing to living out the same bilingual experience that they create for their U.S. students, though in reverse, thus making English (often their L2) their primary medium of interaction with American culture outside the classroom. Secondly, they are able to work in their profession and do not have to relinquish their position in Spain (“Estados Unidos,” 2016). In this way, visiting teachers are professionally less discombobulated than they might be were they to work in a field that simply facilitated their stay but had nothing to do with their training. Thirdly, working in U.S. schools builds Spanish visiting teachers' resumes as bilingual professionals, as opposed to their Spanish bilingual colleagues who study and work exclusively in Spain. However, as exciting as these three benefits may be for Spanish visiting teachers, the realities of changing jobs and residence internationally make for a potentially highly stressful endeavor. Combined with the potential challenges of acculturation in their respective dual-language immersion schools, Spanish visiting teachers could greatly benefit from ever-improving acculturation programs (Chan, 2014; Freeman, 1996; Wechsler et al., 2012).

In a similar way, leadership and faculty in some states have financial incentives to establish or expand dual-language immersion schools. The Indiana Department of Education, for

example, established a Dual Language Immersion Pilot Program in 2015 that allocated \$500,000 in grants to “school corporations that establish or expand dual language immersion programs in Mandarin, Spanish, French, or other languages approved by the Department” (“Indiana Department of Education Announces,” 2016). In order to qualify, grant recipients must commit to and have a clear path for delivering instruction fifty percent in English and fifty percent in the target (or second) language (L2) (“State Expands Dual Language Immersion Programs,” 2016). As of 2015, Indiana only had six dual language immersion programs in the entire state. While some of the newly established dual language immersion programs in Indiana would eventually employ a mix of native and non-native Spanish speakers to lead their programs, most of the existing programs had employed the nearly 40 visiting teachers from Spain then currently working in the state (“State Expands Dual Language Immersion Programs,” 2016). Because of the attraction of authenticity that visiting teachers from Spain (and other native or heritage Spanish speakers) bring to dual language programs, it is highly likely that an increased number of dual immersion schools would mean an increased number of contracted Spanish visiting teachers working in those schools. Since it behooves such schools to retain their visiting teachers for the full three years of their visas, as well as maximize both their experience and potential as bilingual and bicultural educators, this study could potentially serve to improve the induction and mentoring process for both dual language school administrators and their incoming Spanish visiting teachers.

Problem of Practice

My original professional specialty was Spanish, especially as a medium for language and culture acquisition through my students’ and my own immersion studies. After having participated and in the IU Honors Program in Foreign Languages in Mexico in my high school

years, Spanish was an easy choice for my undergraduate major and subsequent master's degree in Spanish language and Hispanic cultures. Both of those degrees involved significant time studying abroad in Mexico and Spain. Those studies abroad were bolstered by multiple trips throughout Latin America for conference presentations, immersion experiences for my students, volunteer work with mission organizations, and exchange connections in Latin America and Spain for teachers from other U.S. schools. All of those experiences combined fostered a sensitivity to and appreciation for the challenges of the immersive learning and work of foreigners, whether short or long term.

As a teacher of Spanish language and Hispanic cultures, I had always been committed to teaching language and culture via immersion, which again simply meant making the target language both the medium and the object of study. The approach tended to result in the acquisition of the target language and its cultures, rather than simply a knowledge about them. I had observed through conference presentations and other interactions with world language teachers that in many world language programs that teacher acculturation in a particular school environment was far less a topic of conversation than were the professional qualifications or the professional achievements of teachers at any given school. On the other hand, in schools where second language acquisition was a priority, the administrations tended to hire native or heritage speakers of the target language in an effort to inject linguistic and cultural authenticity into the language classroom. In both cases, administrations tended to hire individuals to teach a subject according to their credentials without always acculturating their capabilities and styles within the philosophical and actional parameters of their schools' cultures.

Within the few years leading up to this study, I also had the opportunity to provide short-term housing to Spanish visiting teachers during their first few weeks to two months in the U.S.

These temporary scenarios provided brief insights into the acculturation challenges that my guests were facing, especially with respect to housing, transportation, work and other related processes and paperwork. Those insights piqued my interest in the possible ongoing challenges with acculturation that those same visiting teachers and their compatriot colleagues might have experienced over their entire stay in the U.S. via the J-1 visa program. It must be noted, however, that my interaction in these teachers' acculturation experiences also produced a compassion for their related struggles, along with a fascination about their motivations for living and working in the U.S.

As the principal of a high school and the former department head of the world languages program, it is essential for me to increase my understanding of how best to acculturate teachers new to a given school context. During my years as a full-time teacher and later as an administrator, I have worked alongside teachers from multiple countries who have been trained to teach various subjects. While the school is not positioned to begin a dual language immersion program, this study still informs the future acculturation of new faculty and staff, especially as it may once again become multinational and as it may grow in its multiculturalism.

Finally, as in all research, and especially in multi-case studies that are driven by a heightened degree of interpersonal contact, it was important for me as the researcher to recognize these potential biases and ensure reliability by following clear procedures that could theoretically be reproduced by another researcher and would yield the same results (Yin, 2014).

Chapter 2
Literature Review

Chapter 2

Introduction

This literature review serves six purposes. First, it defines the robust process of acculturation and distinguishes it from its sub-processes of integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization. Second, it details current trends and best practices in new (novice and new-to-a-school) teacher acculturation in the U.S. As noted in Chapter 1, the framework for this research is the practice of new teacher acculturation through induction and mentoring; therefore, I begin with a picture of the state of acculturation in that context. Third, it differentiates among language and culture immersion programs, thus giving context to the unique dual-language environment into which most Spanish visiting teachers are placed, as opposed to other so-called bilingual or immersion-learning environments. This important distinction further illustrates the cultural navigation challenges that Spanish visiting teachers face in teaching subjects via their native language as they have been trained in Spain but according to the norms of U.S. schools (Genesee, 1985; Hamayan & Freeman, 2006; Potowski, 2007). Fourth, this chapter explores the implications based in existing literature of a more effective Spanish visiting teacher acculturation through induction and mentoring, especially on the part of a host school's leadership team, its understanding of intercultural encounters and subsequent professional and cultural adjustments for the sake of the visiting teachers. Of primary focus herein is understanding teachers' perceptions of their efficacy in the classroom and fit in the schools' contexts (i.e., professional environments), as well as their desire to remain in the teaching profession as related to the acculturation they receive in their schools (Wechsler, et al., 2012). Fifth, this review addresses the need for more effective, intentional acculturation largely based on the cultural divide between Spanish visiting teachers' high-context culture and their American schools' low-context cultures

as they relate to the communication from school leadership during the onboarding process and day-to-day interactions with colleagues and students in their school contexts (Henry et al., 2011; Reynolds & Valentine, 2004). Lastly, this chapter illustrates the need for research specific to the acculturation of veteran teachers in new environments who might be well trained as teaching professionals but not well acculturated and, thereby, less effective in their current schools. While significant research has been done on the effects of quality acculturation of teachers new to the field of education, there is relatively little research that would inform the need for the acculturation of veteran teachers in a new environment, especially in cross-cultural and cross-lingual scenarios (Chan, 2014; Goddard et al., 2006; Wechsler et al., 2012).

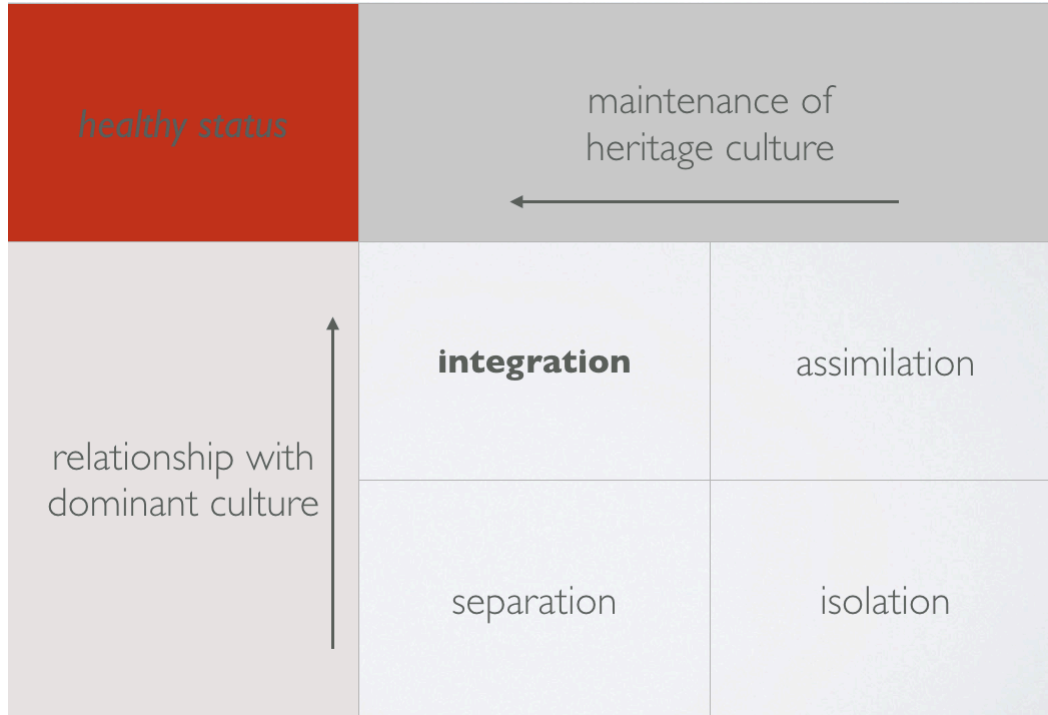
Acculturation as an Overarching Process

To this point in this study, acculturation has been discussed in terms of an ongoing process of pre- and in-service induction and mentoring, as well as the cultural equipping, of new teachers. This understanding holds true in the context of the Spanish visiting teachers at Central Elementary, as acculturation is understood as both a psychological (i.e., job satisfaction and personal well-being) and a sociocultural (i.e., well applied and developed skills for effective living) two-way process of interaction between two or more cultural groups (Sam & Berry, 2010). Furthermore, while acculturation is a two-way process in which each culture present is necessarily affected by the other to some degree, it must be noted that acculturation happens when a non-dominant group enters the culture of a dominant group (Raymond et al, 1974; Sam & Berry, 2010). Thus, acculturation is an accurate lens through which to understand the Spanish visiting teachers' (i.e., non-dominant group) professional and sociocultural experiences with the established culture of Central Elementary (i.e., dominant group). Although the existing literature is older, both the 1974 study and the 2010 study continue to be relevant today.

Acculturation is not to be confused with assimilation, as the former is the overarching two-way process of interaction between two or more cultures and the latter is a one-way process of an out-group's culture yielding to and essentially taking on the dominant group's culture (Raymond et al, 1974; Sam & Berry, 2010). Whereas acculturation “acknowledges the reciprocity of the influences that cultural groups have on each other,” assimilation is merely an option that cultures in contact have within the acculturation process and is primarily a dominant group over out-group relationship (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 473.) Furthermore, assimilation is viewed as only one of four processes that will likely occur within the process of acculturation, with integration, separation, and marginalization making up the other three (Raymond et al, 1974; Sam & Berry, 2010).

In order to grasp the potential acculturation experiences of cultural groups in contact, it is important to distinguish among the four acculturation sub processes that might be chosen by the visiting teachers, for example, at particular phases of their professional cultural immersion (See Figure 1). Each of the aforementioned processes falls on its appropriate position along a positive to negative x-axis of “maintenance of heritage culture and identity” and a positive to negative y-axis of “relationships sought among groups” (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 477).

Figure 1



(Sam & Berry, 2010)

Integration is positioned where the two axes meet at their most positive spectrums. This is because integration is viewed as the point at which each of the cultures in contact most positively balance between seeking robust relationship with the other culture(s) and maintaining their home culture(s) (Raymond et al, 1974; Sam & Berry, 2010). As such, it is seen as the healthiest available option within the acculturation process, since each culture is equally valued, engaged, and cultivated as an essential part of the community in which it interacts cross-culturally (Sam & Berry, 2010; Smokowski et al, 2008).

Assimilation, on the other hand, is positioned furthest from a positive orientation toward “maintenance of heritage culture and identity” but closest to “relationships sought among groups” (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 477). Assimilation, therefore, is viewed as the point at which the out-group, or hosted, culture desires to become more like the dominant culture and the host

(dominant) culture moves to welcome and accept members of the out-group as new members of the dominant culture (Raymond et al, 1974; Sam & Berry, 2010). Consequently, assimilation does not seek to preserve the non-dominant culture but rather to marginalize or remove its essence from the community in which it comes into contact with the dominant culture.

Separation is the exact opposite of assimilation. It is positioned closest to a positive orientation toward “maintenance of heritage culture and identity” but furthest from “relationships sought among groups” (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 477). Separation is understood as the point at which the out-group, or hosted, culture rejects becoming more like the dominant culture and the host culture does not move to welcome and accept members of the out-group as new members of the dominant culture, mostly for lack of intentional relationship on the part of the out-group (Raymond et al, 1974; Sam & Berry, 2010).

Lastly, marginalization is positioned furthest from all positive orientations toward “maintenance of heritage culture and identity” and “relationships sought among groups” (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 477). Accordingly, marginalization is the point at which the out-group, or hosted, culture neither desires to become more like the dominant culture nor seeks acceptance as either participants within the dominant culture or as new members of the dominant culture (Raymond et al, 1974; Sam & Berry, 2010). It is, therefore, the unhealthiest available process within acculturation, as it results in a complete disengagement from relationship and a loss of identity without any replacement of that loss through at least assimilation (Sam & Berry, 2010; Smokowski et al, 2008).

Given that integration on the part of each cultural group in contact with another is the most desirable of processes working within acculturation, it would seem to behoove both the host American schools and the Spanish visiting teachers to highly value, profoundly understand,

and fully engage each other's cultures and associated professional contributions to those schools' contexts. However, as was revealed by existing literature on new teacher acculturation, the majority of American schools of any type are far less intentional about the acculturation of their teachers, foreign or domestic, than a proper understanding of acculturation would inform.

Trends in New Teacher Acculturation

New teacher acculturation is a process that school leaders have largely left to teachers' individual classroom experiences and spontaneous or regimented interaction with their co-workers (Chan, 2014). This approach is justified on the part of many school leaders in that it discounts the efficacy of trying to prepare new teachers for every possible scenario they might experience in their first year of teaching, and it counts more heavily on new teachers' in-school or previous professional experience and socialization to mold them into informed, equipped and effective teachers (Chan, 2014). However, while mere classroom experience and spontaneous interaction with peers are powerful components for teacher acculturation, a lack of intentionality on the part of school administrators to effect regular processing, debriefing, and equipping meetings with new teachers, whether with the administration or with mentoring teachers and peers, can significantly contribute to new teachers' reduced efficacy at best and desire to leave the school or the teaching profession at worst (Karc-Kakabadse, 2001).

Among the most prominent questions new teachers ask is where they can get the help they need. In a study of new teachers' experiences specifically with the acculturation help they received during their first year, Hertzog (2002) discovered that most of them "reported the highest number of problems with classroom management, behavior management and curriculum planning" (p. 29). However, when their school administrations intentionally matched them with veteran teachers as mentors and designated those mentors as the first resource for any questions

they may have, the new teachers frequently avoided approaching their assigned mentors, at least as a primary option. Instead, the new teachers preferred to ask for assistance firstly from other new teachers (their immediate peers), followed by a veteran teacher of the same grade level with whom they had already built a particular level of trust, and then on to family members and even their teacher training program professors (Hertzog, 2002).

Unfortunately, new teachers often seek connections elsewhere than with their mentor teachers because of lack of guidance and willing engagement on the part of the mentor teacher. In a study of several new teachers in an Illinois school system, Wechsler et al. (2012) found that "...63% of the new teachers reported that their mentor never demonstrated a lesson in the new teachers' classrooms, and 52% reported that their mentors never invited them to observe the mentors' classrooms" (p. 393). The researchers do offer the caveat that "school schedules [often] did not allow for adequate release time for mentors and mentees to work together on... instructional problems and strategies for improvement" (Wechsler et al., 2012, p. 394). But even improving the school schedule does not resolve the relational issues that inhibit positive interchanges between new teachers and their assigned mentors. Conle (1996) describes this phenomenon as the power of an "echoed stories" narrative, in which teachers establish a level of relationship through which they can negotiate meaning through shared emotion, even if the stories they tell one another are not about equal or even shared experiences (p. 305). If that is indeed widespread, even when school administrators match veteran teacher mentors to their new teachers in an effort to match successful experience with yet untested inexperience, the new teachers are reticent to embrace that portion of an induction program and instead seek help wherever they perceive fewer barriers to an encouraging, comfortable relationships.

This does not negate the fact that new teachers generally desire to be informed by administrators and mentor teachers, among other school staff, as a means to fully engage in their professional communities. In a study on new teacher burnout (a rare find among teacher acculturation studies), Goddard et al. (2006) found that most new teachers reported being “committed to their jobs and... experienced greater co-worker support and... autonomy in their jobs, but [also had] less clarity about daily routines, rules and policies and [did not experience] accommodat[ion for] innovative work practices” (p. 864). Dealing with these unrealized expectations on their time and talents, as well as trying to establish a successful environment in the classroom caused 49% of the new teachers studied to report that they perceived more failure and frustration than success and confidence with their own efforts (Goddard et al., 2006). Thus, while new teachers are generally pleased with the dominion of their classroom that is allowed to them by their school administrators, they in fact strongly desire guidance and assurance on basic daily operations, as well as the perceived and actual expectations on their time and skills.

The lack of experience in managing expectations for teachers’ time and preparation is in spite of the pre-service experience that new teachers are required to navigate during their college years. Loeb et al. (2009) reported that of the 41 states that required a particular amount of student teaching, 42% required 10-15 weeks, 6% required more than 15 weeks, and another 20% required a full semester (p. 217). Given the discrepancy between in-service new teachers’ reported experiences with being informed and prepared for the entirety of the teaching profession and the significant time required of them to participate in the lengthy in-school experiential learning scenarios of new teaching, it seems there is a gap in the full acculturation of new teachers in general. Spanish visiting teachers who enter U.S. schools with a minimum of three years teaching experience in Spain fall into the same category as new U.S. teachers inasmuch as

they bring with them a particular professional preparation that has not necessarily been designed to acculturate them into the operational standards of their current endeavor.

Differentiating Among Immersive Language Acquisition Programs

Many scholars have written on the importance of differentiating immersive language acquisition programs. But in common language even among educators, little differentiation is made in discussing immersion language programs. This lack of specificity, often due to ignorance of the different programs that might be under the umbrella of immersion, can result in significant confusion and reduced efficacy for the various immersion programs and their teachers.

Immersion language learning is understood as instruction that makes the target language (L2) either the sole or the primary medium of instruction and a primary object of study, even when other subjects are taught via the L2 (Krashen, 1999). Practically speaking, it is “a communicative approach that reflects the essential conditions of first language learning and at the same time responds to the special needs of second language learners” (Genesee, 1985, p. 543). Immersion programs are generally differentiated among three basic types: bilingual education, one-way immersion, and dual language immersion programs. However, a fourth type of language immersion study, called indigenous language immersion, has emerged in recent years as an effort to revitalize marginalized and otherwise dying or small-population languages (Palmer et al., 2014). Regardless of the immersion approach, the basic goal of any language immersion program is that participants would fully acquire the L2 and be able to operate appropriately and effectively in the cultures where the L2 is the dominant language (L1) (Freeman, 2000).

Based on its political intention of assimilation of non-English speaking students in the United States, bilingual education is quickly distinguished from the above forms of immersion language learning (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988). Bilingual education does not have the goal of facilitating bilingualism for participating students, but rather the acquisition of English (in the case of U.S. bilingual education) as the dominant, everyday language. Furthermore, bilingual education sits outside of the accepted definition of immersion education. While bilingual education sometimes uses non-dominant languages (in this case, L1s) as a classroom tool for acquiring another language, its focus is linguistic and cultural assimilation of non-dominant language speakers into dominant language society (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988). Neither the preservation of the non-dominant language nor achievement of bilingual or bicultural fluency are goals or values of bilingual education (Linton, 2004).

Mirroring bilingual education, one-way immersion programs set students on an L2 acquisition track ideally from elementary through high school, and those students may hail from a variety of cultures and languages (“CAL Two-Way Immersion,” 2016). Opposite bilingual education, however, one-way immersion typically chooses a target language (L2) that is not the dominant language of the society in which the program exists (“CAL Two-Way Immersion,” 2016). Therefore, the intent of one-way immersion is not broad assimilation of several language and culture groups into a monolithic communication base (“CAL Two-Way Immersion,” 2016). Instead, one-way immersion in the U.S. offers native L1-speaking students the opportunity to acquire the L2 in an immersion setting that academically aligns with the same standards as non-immersion schools but that linguistically operates in another context. Administratively, this is an advantage for schools whose majority populations continue to acquire the L2 as a “foreign” language and who are more interested in intercultural functionality through the L2, which more

highly values the pragmatism of foreign language learning, rather than biculturalism and bilingualism, which value effective, simultaneous interplay among cultures and languages sharing the same space (Walker & Tedick, 2000).

While one-way immersion is lauded for its full K-12 commitment to full L2 immersion, it is also critiqued for its imbalance of language and culture acquisition between the L1 and the L2 in the academic setting (Marian et al., 2013). Since one-way immersion language programs typically are not designed with heritage L2 speakers in mind, were they to participate it could mean forgoing engaging and strengthening their English skills, at least in that academic setting, which essentially would give them a monolingual heritage language K-12 experience (Potowski, 2007). The equal opposite is also true for L1-speaking students, for whom one-way immersion is designed, in that one way immersion programs do not grant them a full academic experience in the native language (Potowski, 2007).

Dual language immersion distinguishes itself from other immersion and bilingual programs by equitably using both the L1 and the L2 as primary mediums of instruction. It was designed in Florida's Dade County as a means of valuing, preserving, and sharing English and Spanish as the two predominant languages in that and other areas of Florida ("Types of Immersion Education," 2016). While dual language immersion has expanded since its U.S. inception to include L2's other than Spanish, the approach continues to gain the most traction from its schools' housing a high percentage of heritage speakers of the L2. This is important to honoring native and heritage L2 speakers and their families, but it is especially so for achieving dual language programs' universal goals of bilingualism, biculturalism, and appreciation for and comfort in multicultural and multilingual environments, since having native speakers from both cultures authenticates the immediate academic immersion experience of the students (Freeman,

2000). Regardless of the two languages that drive the program, dual language immersion maintains a strong posture against monolingualism. As Freeman (2000) describes, dual language programs “reject the dominant language ideology that expects minority language students to assimilate to monolingualism in Standard English in order to have equal educational opportunities... [and they] expect bilingualism for English-speaking students as well as for language minority students” (p. 207). This makes hiring native-speaker visiting teachers all the more important for legitimizing the posture of bilingualism through language and culture equity, since acquisition of the L2 would suffer in comparison to the L1 were it not for an inherent native-speaker professional delivery of instruction in the L2.

A major curricular challenge specific to dual language immersion is that its faculty is tasked with managing cultural differences between native or heritage speakers of the Spanish, for example, and native speakers of English. The primary desire on the part of parents is that their students become bilingual, while dual language immersion programs also aim to produce bicultural students. However, especially Anglo students who complete dual language programs often do not consider themselves bicultural, but instead cite only having a deep knowledge of the L2 (usually Spanish-speaking) culture (Freeman, 2000). Similarly, Latino heritage students sometimes express feeling as though they are included in the program simply to make it fit the dual language immersion goal of balance between native L1 and L2 speakers. Thus, putting native English-speaking students and native or heritage Spanish-speaking students together in a program does not necessarily mean creating a cultural and social intermingling (Potowski, 2007). Similarly, Gonzalez and Lezama (1974) determined that dual language immersion can “threaten educators who misunderstand its real purpose, but [that it] offers a vehicle for meaningful change to those who recognize learning needs” (p. 158). But these struggles are lessened by the

presence of Spanish visiting teachers who have the perspective of having been immersion language students and are now trained L2 instructors in their own native language, in addition to their being present, authentic examples of L2 or heritage language living (Ramos, 2009).

Dual Language Immersion as an EL Program

Dual immersion programs can often be viewed simply as programs where students simultaneously acquire two languages that are the mediums of instruction for their foundational schooling. However, for students whose second language is the dominant language of the society in which they and their families reside, dual language programs and their native Spanish-speaking teachers can be important assets.

The parents of Hispanic heritage students tend to be particularly interested in the cultural and linguistic preservation of at least spoken Spanish for their children as culture and language minority students in the United States. These are students who are raised speaking Spanish with native-speaking relatives but who also have grown up in English-dominant society (Freeman, 2000). Many Hispanic heritage speakers lose proficiency in spoken Spanish as they progress through the standard English-only curriculum of most schools. And if Hispanic heritage speakers retain their spoken Spanish into high school, they are generally not admitted to classes in which they would acquire grammar, spelling, and other basic but imperative Spanish constructs (Mellander, 1998). This means that while Hispanic heritage speakers might sound fluent in Spanish and operate seamlessly in Spanish-speaking society, their total dominion of the language in particular disciplines, such as math and writing, is stunted (Gonzales & Lezama, 1974). Thus, programs that bridge the gap between the bicultural and bi-literate worlds of Hispanic heritage speaker youth by allowing each half to exist and grow simultaneously in an

academic setting are highly attractive to heritage and native-speaker Hispanic families (Freeman, 2000).

Heritage speakers and Hispanic students whose families desire that they preserve and better acquire Spanish greatly benefit from the academic valuation of Spanish as a foreign language in the U.S. This is because Spanish as a foreign language enjoys a high status as the major minority language in the U.S. and as the majority interest in Spanish as a second language. The Pew Research Center reported 37.6 million speakers of Spanish in the U.S. in 2011, with the next closest non-English language spoken in the U.S. being Chinese at 2.8 million (Gonzalez-Barrera & Lopez, 2013). According to a 2009 study by the Humanities Indicators of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Spanish represented 70.9% of all foreign language instruction in the United States, with the next closest language being French at 14.4% (“Language Instruction in Elementary and Secondary Schools,” 2016).

The issue for non-native English-speaking grade and high school students is not always the weakening or loss of their home language due to standard English-only curriculums in the United States. Students who speak a language other than English are often placed in one of three types of English Language Learner (ELL or EL) programs that can serve as those students’ foreign language requirement. The first type of EL program is the transitional bilingual track, which supports EL’s management of their general English-based curriculums via single-session instruction in their home language (Hamayan & Freeman, 2006). Similar to other foreign language programs for native speakers of English, transitional EL programs immerse native non-English speaking students in English instruction for them to sufficiently acquire English in order to appropriately participate in English-dominant and English-only classrooms (Walker & Tedick, 2000). The second type of EL program is the sheltered design academic instruction in English

(SDAIE), which focuses on EL student achievement in the content areas of language arts, math, and science (Wright, 2006). Typically, the SDAIE approach places ELs in a sheltered academic environment, sometimes with single-language and other times with mixed-language student groupings, in order to reduce distractions and zero in on content understanding and dominion of English (Wright, 2006). The third type of EL instruction is dual language immersion, which, as discussed, employs both the home language and English as equally valued mediums of instructions and objects of study. The primary goal for dual language EL instruction is proficiency in both languages, which means both preserving the heritage language, if it is one of the two languages offered, and acquiring English as a new language in an academic sense (Hamayan & Freeman, 2006). This is the type of language immersion environment for which visiting teachers from Spain are hired to work.

The scholastic challenges for EL students are often exacerbated by their parents' limited participation in their schooling. Native-speaker parents of ELs typically desire to engage in the children's education, but they are most often held back from robust interaction by their lack of skills in English (Hamayan & Freeman, 2006). By law, schools that participate in Title III funded programs like EL must notify parents in their native language of their children's identified need to be in an English language support program (Hamayan & Weinstein, 2006). Consequently, non-English speaking parents are at least empowered with the knowledge of their students' being placed in English proficiency programs. However, even with initial explanations and possible ongoing paper or electronic communication about the program and their students' progress in it, non-native English-speaking parents are generally informed bystanders in all EL programs except dual language immersion programs where one of the target languages is their home language. Thus, dual language immersion programs can offer monolingual non-English

speaking parents the built-in option of communicating directly with their students' teachers in their native language. Equally as attractive, at least for native-speaker parents of a language offered as one of the two languages, dual language immersion programs are the most supportive of their efforts to have their children continue in the home language, again if it is one of the two languages offered, while simultaneously acquiring English (Freeman, 2000).

Leadership in Dual Immersion Programs

Leading any school well takes a special breed of person, especially where changes in organizational culture are involved. The principal of any K-12 school is the hub and the catalyst for establishing and maintaining healthy school culture, but he or she does not achieve any success alone. On the contrary, the successful school principal involves teachers in the decision-making process and equips them to do their jobs well (Murphy & Meyer, 2008). But simply deciding to involve faculty on a particular decision or on an ongoing decision-making basis is less effective without the establishment of a healthy trust relationship between school leadership and its faculty. Ironically, healthy professional relationships in schools insist less on roles and outcomes and more on relationships and collaboration. Leadership expert Kenneth Leithwood (2010) explains that “in terms of teacher-administrator collaboration, successful leaders are more likely to build a trusting relationship by reducing the distinction between personal and professional roles” (p. 89).

This new posture of accessibility involves the establishment of a particular culture not intuitive to many K-12 leaders. While administrative, curricular and disciplinary challenges might abound in any school, certain types of schools present culture-specific challenges for school leaders, such as leading a school with a decidedly heterogeneous culture (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012). In this way, dual immersion schools are not so different from many of their non-

dual immersion counterparts. The only major difference in this regard is their intentional hiring of native-speaker faculty and staff who are asked to blend their native personal and professional cultures with those of their host country and school (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001). This difference cannot be overlooked, however. Aguirre-Baeza (2001) connects the similar non-immersion and immersion school roles by describing the ideal school leader as “a caring heart and soul; accept[ing] and knowledge[able] of multi-culturalism; accept[ing] of the fact that interacting with people is a leader's primary job; [willing] to accept change; and [able] to create a vision and share it with others” (p. 167). While perhaps few people would argue with the above description as a general one of any effective school leader, the importance of this training and posture on the part of dual immersion school leaders is especially key, given their particular multi-national staffing (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001).

Navigating Cultural Differences through Cultural Mapping - U.S. vs. Spain

Just as each country has its own unique, permeating, general culture, as well as regional and other subcultures to which foreign visitors must adjust, so too do schools have their own cultures to which visiting teachers must adapt, however professionally equipped they may be. As dual language program school leaders increasingly fill their L2 teaching positions with native L2-speaker visiting teachers, it becomes imperative that they augment their understanding of differences, both professional and personal, between American culture and that of the countries of their visiting teachers.

Cultural mapping is an important step in that direction (See Figure 2). It is the positioning of the national cultures along various points of the low-context to high-context spectrum (Karac-Kakabadse et al., 2001). Low-context cultures are those “where low levels of programmed information are used to provide context; therefore, a large amount of explicit information must

be present to specify meaning” (Karac-Kakabadse et al., 2001, p. 6). Low-context cultures are especially drawn to linear thinking, separating professional and personal relationships, conveying an exact and direct message with carefully selected words, a heavy emphasis on facts and numbers, and independence in decision making (Reynolds & Valentine, 2004). In contrast, high-context cultures are ones in which “a high amount of programmed information is used to provide context; therefore, more time is required to program and to abstract meaning from the given set of information” (Karac-Kakabadse et al., 2001, p. 6). High-context cultures are identified by implicit and nonverbal understandings, valuing health of relationships over production metrics, emphasizes on trust and equity, indirect and ethereal meaning, and circular reasoning (Reynolds & Valentine, 2004).

Figure 2

Low-context cultures (i.e., U.S.A., Germany)	High-context cultures (i.e., Spain, Latin America, Japan)
direct communication (little attention to sentiment)	indirect communication (much attention to sentiment)
individualistic (own effort, own area)	collectivist (group effort, shared space)
certain/explicit (words are only meaning)	implicit (words evoke meaning)

(Reynolds & Valentine, 2004)

While different regions of countries and the various personalities living within their borders might differ from the generalized categories of the studied countries' cultures, countries as a whole can be squarely placed on a particular point on the cultural continuum. For example, the geographically expansive culturally mixed United States is most generally a very low-context culture, which garners its broader culture descriptors such as "direct," "individualistic," "certain," and "abstractive" for its professional and interpersonal interactions (Karac-Kakabadse et al., 2001, p. 13). Nearly opposite the U.S., Spain is, again in general terms, a very high-context culture, which means it would be commonly described as "indirect," "collectivist," "implicit," and "ambiguous" in its professional and interpersonal interactions (Karac-Kakabadse et al., 2001, p. 13). This means that in order for American and Spanish professionals to communicate effectively, they must be cognizant of one another's general and accepted positioning on the cultural mapping continuum, as well as be willing to adjust their own cultural norms to meet the communication needs of their cultural counterparts (Reynolds & Valentine, 2004).

Understanding each one's positioning on the cultural mapping continuum is especially important in contexts like U.S. dual immersion programs that employ Spanish visiting teachers. For a Spaniard hailing from a high-context Mediterranean culture, becoming part of low-context professional U.S. culture means navigating an environment dominated by explicit and often sparse communication (Reynolds & Valentine, 2004). A Spaniard having grown up and worked in Spain for several years "carefully observe[s] [nonverbal communication] for effective communication to take place" in his or her work contexts (Reynolds & Valentine, 2004, p. 15). Yet that expectant observation lacks sensible input for the Spaniard as he or she begins to work in a low-context U.S. environment whose U.S. employees "rely on words to convey exactly what

they mean,” rather than non-verbal cues (Reynolds & Valentine, 2004, p. 19).

Reynolds and Valentine (2004) researched various international workplace scenarios of individuals from both low and high-contexts. They found that those workers in mixed low and high-context cultural settings tended to gravitate toward their own cultures’ contexts rather than their host countries’ in order to make sense of their interactions with their host country, its people, and their own professional assignments. Whether it be an Israeli astronaut on a U.S. space mission who seeks advice from rabbis in Israel on when to observe the Sabbath while in space, or whether it be an Ecuadorian business person trying to explain him or herself in circular reasoning to an impatient linear-thinking American audience, those who are navigating cultural context clashes are at a loss without an intentional anchoring beyond themselves (Reynolds & Valentine, 2004). Even as the U.S. and Spanish ministries of education might appropriately match Spanish visiting teachers’ professional qualifications to those required of American teachers, the uniqueness of Spanish versus American culture in the U.S. workplace presents a significant professional and interpersonal adjustment for Spaniards (“Estados Unidos,” 2016; Karac-Kakabadse et al., 2001; Reynolds & Valentine, 2004). If U.S. dual immersion programs count on hiring professionals that happen to be Spanish visiting teachers who will seamlessly integrate into the school environment based on their parallel professional experience, rather than counting on and supporting a combined high and low context workforce in need of intentional communicative bridge building, Spanish visiting teachers will likely suffer a less than ideal cultural adjustment in the U.S. workplace (Reynolds & Valentine, 2004).

Implications for New Teacher Acculturation for Schools with Spanish Visiting Teachers

Spanish visiting teachers enter their positions in U.S. Spanish language and culture programs having already taught in Spain for a minimum of three years and having gone through

an extensive application process through the Spanish Ministry of Education and the host schools (“Estados Unidos,” 2016). They are professional teachers who are hired under essentially the same expectations of professional qualifications and teaching preparedness; thus, it is not beyond reason that the administrations of the dual language immersion schools that hire Spanish visiting teachers expect them to align with whatever acculturation process is available for all other hires (“Estados Unidos,” 2016). However, simply counting on teachers’ pre-professional training (or, in the case of Spanish visiting teachers, their pre-U.S. professional teaching experience of at least three years) as an indicator of their future success in the classroom is quite faulty. Rust (2010) cites multiple studies to support her own assertions that teacher education programs are falling well short of bridging the gap between their students’ achieving teacher certification and their actually becoming “dynamic and capable teachers” (p. 5). While many university teacher education programs in the U.S. have committed to increasing the number of pre-professional field experiences as a means to shortening the jump from certification to classroom immersion, teacher preparation courses at those same universities remain largely committed to university-based, rather than school-based, instruction (Rust, 2010). Therefore, pre-professional teachers are graduating from their programs with much theory and very little practical training in the management of real-world teaching.

From English as the lingua franca to the professional and cultural procedures of their U.S. schools to adjusting to a new cultural and professional norm, Spanish visiting teachers are in a sense first-year teachers upon being hired. And if their host schools follow the normal pattern of acculturation, then visiting teachers’ brief training prior to being turned loose to teach “is the beginning of their sojourn in the isolation chamber known as the classroom” (Hope, 1999, p. 54). Typical K-12 school leadership counts on its new teachers to have passed through a certain

professional training that is not happening in many colleges and universities. Russell et al. (2001) confirms that teacher preparation programs are criticized for having “both an ineffective process (how learning occurs) and an ineffective product (what is learned)” (p. 40). Thus, teachers are trained to become qualified enough to be hired, and then they are expected to perform as if their university training were professional experience. To exacerbate the issue, new teachers are too often initiated into the teaching ranks by being expected to manage the most undesirable conditions, such as larger classes, high disciplinary scenarios, non-electives and remedial courses, and low motivation students (Hope, 1999).

Increased Efficacy and Continuance in the Profession

By virtue of their being required to teach a minimum of three years in Spain prior to being considered for the visiting teacher program in the United States, Spanish visiting teachers enter their J-1 visa tenure essentially as new teachers in a new school and a new culture. Keeping this in mind, schools that employ Spanish visiting teachers would do well to understand how best to get the most out of their investment in relatively short-term native Spanish-speaking employees.

The gap between the expectations put on new teachers based on their pre-professional training and their actual success in their first years of teaching is closed when considering studies on new teacher efficacy. In particular, Henry et al. (2011) found in a study of teachers within one to five years of experience in North Carolina public schools that first year teachers were significantly less effective in their first year of teaching than they were in their second year, at least in terms of increased math and reading scores of their students (p. 274). Furthermore, the researchers found that teachers who stayed at least 5 years tended to be more effective in their third and fourth years of teaching, signaling a steady increase in teacher development and

confidence (Henry et al., 2011). That being the case, administrators who approach new teacher acculturation with a sink or swim mentality, giving their new teachers little guidance other than a few resources and procedural instructions to pair with their upcoming classroom experience, miss a golden opportunity to develop a more successful school. Summarizing their results, Henry et al. (2011) noted that “feedback and coaching on ways to improve instruction, professional development tailored to the needs of beginning teachers, and opportunities to share successful techniques and learn from others” may indeed increase new teacher retention and, thereby, augment the return on investment in new teachers’ second years and beyond (p. 278). For schools that employ Spanish visiting teachers, whose visa window is one to three years and for whom this study would suggest a most effective teaching contribution in their second and third years, committing to measures aimed at first year teacher retention would seem prudent (“Estados Unidos,” 2016; Henry et al, 2011).

As previously discussed, Spain is a high-context culture, meaning, among other things, that Spaniards prefer to “subordinate tasks to relationships” (Reynolds & Valentine, 2004, p. 23). This is especially important for schools that employ Spanish visiting teachers to keep in mind when considering the benefits of emphasizing camaraderie among all faculty, even in a task-oriented approach to training and carrying out daily business. Hope (1999) asserts that “when principals structure into the orientation and induction process a means of connecting new teachers with peers, they promote relationships that are mutually beneficial to the teachers involved” (p. 55). By making interpersonal, professional relationships primary in the approach to teacher acculturation, the entire workplace environment and the culture that drives it are positively affected. For any school that is trying to introduce positive change to its culture, a stable, returning faculty will play a key role in how quickly and how well that change is

established and maintained (Hope, 1999).

Basic Acculturation Process for Content Area Teachers

The basic acculturation process for content area teachers is a key component to understanding Spanish visiting teachers' experience once in the U.S. Basic acculturation into a particular school context is the training that all teachers receive according to their districts' and individual schools' protocols (Russell et al., 2001). The documents used in the basic acculturation process are not necessarily universal for all school contexts, as some address topics and future challenges specific to a particular district, area within a district, or particular types of schools. As an example, the Office of English Learning and Migrant Education of the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has assembled a "Resource Guide for the Content Area Teacher" which is here examined and critiqued according to its content and research about its topics ("Resource Guide," 2016).

In order to achieve consistency in practical information delivery and to equip teachers new to Indiana schools with an ongoing acculturation and methods reference tool, IDOE's "Resource Guide for the Content Area Teacher" can be distributed to any teacher, but especially to those who come into contact with English Learners (ELs) ("Resource Guide," 2016). The guide broadly covers two basic areas: 1) considerations for creating and implementing lesson plans for ELs and foreign language students, and 2) perspectives on migrant ELs and foreign language-speaking students' cultures as they relate to teaching and learning in U.S. classrooms ("Resource Guide," 2016).

In the considerations for creating and implementing lesson plans for ELs and foreign language students, the "Resource Guide for the Content Area Teacher" combines brief explanations of the context from which ELs arrive and the challenges that face them as they enter

public schools where the dominant language is English. For example, an introductory paragraph might read, “English learners have great difficulty jumping into new texts without any background support,” and the following might read, “Students need to know essential vocabulary in order to comprehend the text” (“Resource Guide,” 2016, p. 5). The rest of the pedagogy portion of the manual follows this same pattern of explaining the issue and then describing the need that ELs have. Subsequent to those introductory paragraphs, the manual switches to bulleted action steps to respond to the situations and needs described above, such as “create interest,” “relate material,” “model how to summarize,” and “elicit more language” (“Resource Guide,” 2016, p. 5-9). Thus, teachers who study the manual are equipped with a pedagogical framework and a cultural knowledge and understanding that can be quite useful as they prepare to teach ELs and students of other L2s (e.g., Spanish as a second language), as well as interact with their families (Karac-Kakabadse et al., 2001).

The manual does not explicitly make the connection between what ELs and other L2 learners experience as they adapt to a new culture and language, even if only a created one within the school walls such as in dual language immersion and the adaptation experience of Spanish visiting teachers. However, it is plausible that Spanish (and other) visiting teachers might glean helpful insight about themselves and their adjustment struggles from the descriptions of EL student experiences. The manual intends to present a universal progression of sentiment and processing. But it falls short in addressing how high-context culture Spaniards who naturally search for the meaning behind both their spoken and the unspoken interactions with their schools (Karac-Kakabadse et al., 2001; Reynolds & Valentine, 2004).

The manual denotes the five stages of cultural adjustment (“Adjustment Process”) as “‘honeymoon’ period,’ ‘culture shock,’ ‘initial adjustment,’ ‘mental isolation,’ and ‘acceptance

and integration”” (“Resource Guide,” 2016, p. 30). The “honeymoon period” is often the initial experience of those who enter a new culture, especially in a new country. It is the time when they are “fascinated and excited by everything new,” and can often blindly praise the nature of their new culture (“Resource Guide,” 2016, p. 30). The “culture shock” period is often the second stage of cultural immersion, though it is hardly a single instance in the progression of the immersive experience (Karac-Kakabadse et al., 2001). This is especially important to understand about Spanish (and other) visiting teachers, since they as adult professionals most acutely experience “problems (with) housing, transportation, shopping, and... mental fatigue... from continuous straining to comprehend the [L2]” in a professional and day-to-day context (Hope, 1999; “Resource Guide,” 2016, p. 30).

Following the first major set of culture shocks, visitors to new cultures usually experience an “initial adjustment,” wherein “everyday activities... are no longer major problems” and repetitive context vocabulary and expressions in the L2 are easily managed (“Resource Guide,” 2016, p. 30). The fourth stage in the adjustment process is “mental isolation,” wherein “individuals have been away from their family and good friends... and may feel lonely... [that] they cannot express themselves [well]... [and they lose] self-confidence” (“Resource Guide,” 2016, p. 30). For schools with Spanish visiting teachers who must commit to the academic calendar of their schools and who could spend as many as three years away from their families and close friends from home, issues of mental isolation brought on by cultural immersion ought to be a serious consideration for teacher support and development (Karac-Kakabadse et al., 2001; Reynolds & Valentine, 2004). Finally, visitors to a new culture might experience the “acceptance and integration” phase, wherein “a routine... has been established... [with] customs, foods, and characteristics of the people in the new culture, [and] the visitor feels comfortable

with friends [and] associates” (“Resource Guide,” 2016, p. 30). While the manual does not describe “acceptance and integration” as a goal, it is described in the most positive, lasting terms among all five stages.

What is missing from the manual, however, is guidance on how teachers should interact with their peers, where they might seek advice or simple camaraderie, or how they might understand the culture specific to their schools. But that acculturation process is the job of the host schools (Henry et al., 2011). If host schools were to understand and value how this cultural and linguistic adjustment process affects visiting teachers, regardless of their professional qualifications and preparation, and if acceptance and integration of Spanish visiting teachers were a goal of the schools who contract them, the visiting teacher acculturation processes could be positively affected. In a study of immersion teachers’ experiences with issues in immersion language teaching, Walker and Tedick (2000) noted that “the very nature of [immersion] programs places a great many decisions [on] immersion school teachers and administrators, requiring time to discuss, develop, and refine solutions, but all overlaid on a traditional school day structure that does not provide such time” (p. 13). The fact that the routine of a normal school day does not usually allow for regular, lengthy training meetings or even significant interaction with colleagues highlights the importance of a well-crafted new teacher induction process prior to the start of each school year.

Equally as pertinent, Walker and Tedick (2000) found that immersion program teachers were left to their own preference and wisdom to determine the amount of time and manner in which their classes would be conducted in either the L1 or the L2, thereby illustrating “how the micro context interacts with the macro context to complicate the picture of immersion education” (p. 14). Thus, if immersion language and culture teachers are not given specifics on how to carry

out their schools' immersion programs in concert with one another and with their administrations' design and vision for the programs, such as they might receive in the induction process and subsequent mentoring, immersion schools will likely experience significant variance in the satisfaction with their programs from new visiting teacher to new visiting teacher.

Summary

Healthy acculturation (i.e., two or more cultures in direct contact with one another in some sort of community context) is most consistently seen in the sub-process of integration (Raymond et al, 1974; Sam & Berry, 2010). Because the ideal sub-process within acculturation is integration (i.e., a balanced appreciation for and engagement of both the host culture (and language) and the native culture (and language)), dual immersion host schools in the U.S. would seem to significantly benefit from intentionally creating space for and encouraging bi-cultural and bilingual integration for their faculty and staff (Hertzog, 2002; Karc-Kakabase, 2001; Raymond et al, 1974; Sam & Berry, 2010).

In order to achieve and maintain the most effective school context (i.e., teachers feeling and acting most professionally and achieving the most successful results), especially teachers new to a particular school must experience an intentional, encouraging, and empowering acculturation from veteran staff of their new school, especially the administration (Chan, 2014; Hertzog, 2002; Karc-Kakabase, 2001). Otherwise, these teachers must count on their own perceived realities of the best management and application of the pre-professional training or the training and experience they received at their previous schools (Wechsler et al., 2012). Not getting clear direction and not hearing regularly from their administration are major causes of teacher dissatisfaction, and it can lead to teachers' resigning from their current school contexts or even exiting the teaching profession (Goddard et al., 2006). And, in the case of Spanish visiting

teachers, it can make for an unnecessarily difficult 3-year cultural immersion experience while working in their U.S. host schools (“Estados Unidos,” 2006; Karc-Kakabase, 2001).

The school context of Spanish visiting teachers in the U.S. necessarily works within the framework of dual language immersion, which facilitates the need for their presence in U.S. schools (“Estados Unidos,” 2006; Gonzalez & Lezama, 1974; Ramos, 2009; Walker & Tedick, 2000). Additionally, English and Spanish are by far the dominant languages for the U.S. dual language immersion programs, and elementary school native and heritage Spanish-speaking populations are expected to grow in the coming decades (“Estados Unidos,” 2006; Mellander, 1998). Therefore, the demand for dual language immersion programs, especially for native Spanish speaking parents wanting their children to both preserve their home language and fully acquire English, as well as non-Spanish-speaking families wanting the same for their own children but in reverse (Aguirre-Baez, 2001; Hamayan & Freeman, 2006). Spanish visiting teachers will likely continue to be in high demand in the near future and, as such, dual language immersion schools will benefit from a strengthened understanding of those teachers’ acculturation needs and experiences.

Chapter 3
Methodology

Chapter 3

Introduction

As stated previously, this case study was an investigation of the acculturation experiences of Spanish visiting in their assigned U.S. urban dual immersion school. The objective of the study was to understand the selected Spanish visiting teachers' perceptions of their acculturation into that professional context at Central Immersion. Thus, the first research question was related to the participants' perceptions about how they were acculturated into their American school context. Of special interest was how the Spanish visiting teachers might actually have been acculturated by Central's administration and staff and how that acculturation might have influenced the visiting teachers' experiences at Central. The second question, then, was how the participants' perceived experiences with their host school's community were or were not affected by the acculturation that they received while working there.

In treating the issue of experiential education, Allison and Pomeroy (2002) point out that most research is generated from a product/outcome epistemology, when in reality, data collection should expand beyond this to address the meaning participants make of their experiences (pp. 92-93). Short of claiming that anything goes as long as teachers and administrators are content with their school context, Allison and Pomeroy (2002) also assert that "reality is experience. The truth is about what works rather than what is" (p. 92). That is not to say that the validity of the data is strengthened by a departure from a product/outcome epistemology. Indeed, Spanish visiting teachers and their U.S. co-workers could very well benefit from "institutional structures and modes of governance [that] matter for the existence, maintenance and creation of social capital" (Grix, 2002, p. 183). In part, the research questions emphasized Spanish visiting teacher

experiences as a means to understanding the need for and effectiveness of visiting teacher acculturation through induction and mentoring.

It was beyond the scope of this study to interpret data from typical indicators, such as performance reviews and standardized testing results of the teachers' students. Instead, I sought to understand Spanish visiting teachers' expectations of the program in the application, hiring and onboarding process. However, data on the actual structure of Spanish visiting teacher acculturation also came in written form from acculturation documents provided to the Spanish visiting teachers by the Spanish government and the Central Elementary district and administration.

The collection of data was from direct interaction with those teachers via in-depth interviews, as well as school documents related to induction and mentoring (Yin, 2014). Interview questions for the Spanish visiting teachers focused on their in-country (U.S.) initial and ongoing acculturation (i.e., induction, mentoring, curricular transference) as it relates to their perception of fit in Central Elementary's dual language immersion program.

Why a Case Study?

My research followed a multiple case study design, as it sought to describe and understand the "attitudes... [and] behaviors" of a portion of the not so large population of Spanish visiting teachers working in U.S. schools (Creswell, 2012, p. 376). Since the case study was not focused on Central Elementary as a school but on the various experiences of the Spanish visiting teachers themselves, it followed a multiple case study design (Yin, 2014). Additionally, I desired to understand how and why Spanish visiting teachers in the selected dual language immersion school held particular attitudes toward their experiences in the J-1 visa program

through the Spanish and U.S. Ministries of Education as related to the acculturation they had received from their host school (Yin, 2014).

In case study research, triangulating data sources “strengthen[s] [the study’s] construct validity... [and] provide[s] multiple measures of the same phenomenon (Yin, 2014, p. 121). In order to pursue a most accurate depiction of the phenomenon of Spanish visiting teachers’ acculturation experiences in their assigned U.S. schools, I conducted individual interviews with each participating teacher at the beginning of the semester, performed one focus group session in which all participating teachers were to be interviewed as a group, and analyzed documents related to the intended acculturation practices of teachers new to the school, thus achieving a triangulated collection of data that directly addresses my topic (Yin, 2014).

Setting

Given that my research was to be qualitative in nature, I intentionally identified and selected a particular site and participants that fit the criteria for data collection specific to my area of study (Creswell, 2012). The site needed to be a dual immersion school, since the MOU between the U.S. Department of Education and the Spanish Ministry of Education intended for bilingual Spanish visiting teachers to serve as representatives of authentic Spanish language and culture in U.S. dual immersion schools (Freeman, 2000; “Programs,” 2016). The U.S. host school I ultimately selected was Central Elementary School, an urban K-6 dual language immersion school. They taught a variety of subjects in both Spanish and English.

I was made aware of issues with Spanish visiting teacher acculturation in their U.S. host schools by interacting with a couple of Central’s visiting teachers via a mutual acquaintance. The casual conversation that ensued led to those teachers sharing their acculturation experiences at Central without my asking them to do so. They were pleased to be living and working in the

U.S., but they expressed significant frustration with their acculturation experiences related to working at Central. The fact that those teachers were motivated enough to freely and readily share their experiences with what they perceived to be a lacking acculturation at their host school led me to question whether the acculturation experiences of Central's other Spanish visiting teachers might have been similar to those of the couple of teachers with whom I had engaged in casual dialogue.

Upon further investigation on my own and well after that initial conversation, I learned that Central Elementary had participated in the visiting teacher program since 2006 when the dual language immersion program was founded as the first of its kind in its district. The district itself was the largest among public school districts in the state in which Central Elementary was situated. At the time of this study, it employed more than 5,000 faculty and staffers and served nearly 30,000 students. More than 72% of the students in the district were categorized as "free/reduced lunch," nearly 80% of which were non-White and nearly 17% of which were classified as English language learners (ELLs). However, the district reports that under 25% of its workforce are teachers of color, which illustrates a significant domestic cultural divide between the district's teachers, who would tend to represent a more low-context approach to the school environment, and its culturally and linguistically diverse students and respective families, who very possibly hailed from high-context cultures (Karac-Kakabadse et al., 2001; Reynolds & Valentine, 2004).

The district had determined to begin the dual language immersion program at Central Elementary in 2006, the same year as the establishment of the visiting teachers program. Since the inception of the program, Central had regularly employed J-1 program participants from Spain as culture-bearing, native-speaking teachers to support authenticity of their dual language

immersion program. At the time of the study, Central Elementary employed six visiting teachers from Spain, of course a high-context culture who were at different points in their three-year visa, which afforded the study a more robust set of viewpoints on the subject of acculturation. Additionally, Central was the most geographically accessible to me as the researcher, which made the schedule of the multiple interviews significantly more manageable. All of these factors pointed to Central as the ideal choice of setting for this study.

While the Central Elementary's website did not use the term dual language immersion, it did describe the program as a "50/50 bilingual education model" in which students achieve reading, writing and speaking fluency in both Spanish and English ("Programs," 2016). Thus, by definition and practice, Central Elementary followed a dual language immersion model for the simultaneous acquisition of two languages from kindergarten through sixth grade (Linton, 2004).

Central Elementary's student population was nearly 70% Hispanic, which made the school's English-Spanish dual immersion program particularly attractive to its heritage and native Spanish-speaking families. (Hamayan & Freeman, 2006; "IDOE: Compass," 2016). The school's academic success was weighed by a fluctuating overall standardized testing performance record, which had consistently outperformed its district but had only outperformed the state average each of the three years previous to this study, even while achieving only a 56.2% pass rate in 2015. Still, Central Immersion Elementary's 2015 pass rate was 27.1% higher than its district's average pass rate ("IDOE: Compass," 2016).

Since the inception of its dual immersion program, Central Elementary had consistently maintained a group of visiting teachers from Spain as part of its native-speaker dual immersion staff. At the time of this study, Central had six Spanish visiting teachers (or 35.7% of the current total Spanish visiting teachers in Central Immersion's home state) employed at the school.

According to the published visiting teacher assignments, all teachers were hired and placed according to the immediate needs of the school, as well as the teachers' previous teaching experience ("Visit Us," 2016).

Principal Tony Creighton (pseudonym), who was hired in 2006 to help establish and lead the fledgling dual language immersion program, had placed the school's visiting teachers from Spain in a variety of levels from kindergarten through sixth grade ("Visit Us," 2016). Based on the previously mentioned sentiments of the Spanish visiting teachers with whom I had casual conversation, as well as Central's school data that confirmed it as an ideal location at which to focus this study, I contacted Central Elementary's principal in the spring and summer of 2016 via email, explained the nature of my study to him, and asked for his support to study the experiences of Central Elementary's Spanish visiting teachers. Based on his written expression of support to proceed with this study in his school, I anticipated his support and collaboration throughout the data collection process. In the interim between approval of the study by IRB and the initiation of the data collection, I sent the principal various email updates about the project in an effort both to keep him abreast of my progress and to maintain lines of communication that facilitated a greater welcoming of my research.

Participant (Case) Selection

Participant selection is an essential factor in properly aligning data generation and answering the research questions (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014). Selecting from among the Spanish language teachers exclusively from dual language immersion addressed issues of visiting teachers' general struggles but might not have addressed the common thread of the Spanish visiting teachers' professional immersion acculturation experience in dual language immersion schools in the U.S.

The participants, or cases, were the Spanish visiting teachers themselves, all of whom were then currently employed at Central Elementary, which aligned with the nature of qualitative research to “provide an in-depth picture” of the... participant(s) and within the bounds of my research of Spanish visiting teachers who still had a choice to return to teach in their host school another year (Creswell, 2012, p. 209). The qualifications of the participants were verified by data from each school’s administration according to their Spanish visiting teacher hires of the two years leading up to this study.

My focus in the participant selection for this study was to discover any intentionality in ensuring that Spanish visiting teachers were properly equipped and prepared to teach their assigned classes in their U.S. dual language immersion schools and that they were drawn into their professional community in a relational manner. I selected a group of Spanish visiting teachers from the school (N=6) and asked them via a standardized email to agree to participate in the study. Their agreement included their being individually interviewed at the beginning (audio recorded), collectively interviewed as a focus group (video recorded), and then once again being individually engaged to follow up on the original individual interview and the focus group comments and interactions. Each interview, as well as the focus group with all participants interacting together, lasted approximately one hour and centered on the teachers’ perceptions about their acculturation via induction and mentoring (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Creswell, 2012).

Data Collection Instruments

My primary data collection instrument was the interpersonal, direct interviews with inquiries specifically designed to address the research questions with particular subjects and settings and within an overarching context (Creswell 2012; Yin, 2014). The objective of the

interviews was to ascertain the teachers' perceptions as they relate to their initial and ongoing acculturation process. Within the interview questions, I offered the teachers the opportunity to compare their initial expected acculturation with their perceived actual acculturation. Comparing the experiences of Spanish visiting teachers within a single program allowed me to study variations in visiting teacher perceptions of their acculturation experiences (Yin, 2014).

Recognizing that each interview might have resulted in a conversation more unique to each participant, I encouraged a consistent direction of the interview via prepared, research area specific questions (Creswell, 2012). The demographic data were important for understanding how the participants' status and previous experiences might have affected their perspectives during their time at Central Elementary. As part of the basic demographic data, I also included some background questions to help set the context, such as their personal motivations for pursuing this program. This information also contributed to a richer narrative specific to the participants' acculturation experiences. Also, through these discussions, they offered a baseline of understanding to which to compare the data from the interview questions (Yin, 2014). The actual interview questions, excluding verifying demographic and professional information specific to their visiting teacher status, served to explore my two research questions. The first half of the questions pertained to the visiting teachers' understanding of and experience with their acculturation, while the latter questions address their perspectives toward their school communities in the context of acculturation.

Demographic Data:

Indicator	Response	Comments
Age		
Current year in J-1 Program:	1st 2nd 3rd	
Years teaching in Spain:		
Professional formation/level of education:		
Accompanied by spouse/partner	Yes No	
Experience living and/or working abroad		
Level of English proficiency	1) Intermediate (B1) 2) Upper intermediate (B2) 3) Operationally proficient (C1) 4) Proficient (C2)*	
Motivations for pursuing the J-1 visiting teacher program		

*(Common European Framework, 2011)

Interview Guiding Questions:

Question 1: Tell me how you heard about Central. How were you placed there and how was your current teaching assignment explained to you?

Question 2: Describe the professional and cultural support, if any, that you have received from Central Elementary. How was your current teaching assignment explained to you by your school's administration or veteran faculty?

Question 3: Describe the professional training you may have received in the U.S. If you did receive professional training, did this training impact your teaching experience at Central Elementary?

Question 4: Tell me about your experience with your mentoring teacher. In what ways have you interacted with him or her or others in the school?

Question 5: How important is it to you to feel like you are a part of this school community?

Question 6: Did your school's staff or faculty help you with housing, transportation, and other essential items for living and working in the United States?

Question 7: Describe how you may or may not have felt supported and guided from other Spanish visiting teachers. How might that have impacted your experience at Central?

Question 8: Describe any support and guidance you may have received outside of the school.

Question 9: How could your experience of living and working in the United States be made easier on the part of your school? Your mentoring teacher? Your fellow visiting teachers?

I anticipated that the style and nature of the questions above at times might have required further explanation and possibly interpretation in Spanish to the interviewees, which I was equipped to do. On the very infrequent occasions that the respondents needed to express themselves in Spanish, both the original answer and the answer translated to English was noted in the findings.

My third data collection instrument was a focus group in which all the Spanish visiting teachers were to participate in a large group discussion about acculturation experiences at Central Elementary (Yin, 2014). (Due to unforeseen circumstances, one of the participants was out of the country at the time of the focus group interview and could not join in.) The purpose of

the focus group was to glean a more robust insight from the Spanish visiting teachers about a certain aspect of their acculturation experiences (Yin, 2014). The goal of the focus group was not to revisit the same questions from the first interview, but rather to moderate a focused discussion amongst the Spanish visiting teachers (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Accordingly, as the moderator I functioned differently than as an interviewer, since my role was to spark a discussion about individual experiences as recalled and reacted to by both my questions and the responses of each group member (Krueger & Casey, 2015; Yin, 2014).

The two particular aspects of the participants' acculturation experiences on which I focused in the focus group were guided by the answers I received during the initial one-on-one interviews, since I wanted to avoid a reiteration of the same information previously gathered. My main focus was on the participants' acculturation experiences at Central Elementary; however, I also found it fruitful to explore the participants' pre-U.S. acculturation experiences within the context of the application process via question number one. That being the case, I asked questions that encouraged a type of comparative analysis among the focus group members, as each one either confirmed, negated, or otherwise reacted to the acculturation experiences of the other focus group members (Krueger & Casey, 2015).

Focus Group Questions:

Question 1: What were your expectations of the J-1 program when you began the application process in Spain? How were those expectations met or not during the application and hiring process? How were those expectations met or not in your initial experience at Central Elementary?

Question 2: What are some of the cultural challenges of being a Spaniard living and working in the U.S.? What are some of the cultural challenges of working at Central Elementary specifically?

Question 3: Describe how you interact with one another. How do you all share information? How do you support one another professionally, culturally, or otherwise?

Question 4: Describe a little more how you all interact with your American colleagues inside and outside of school. What opportunities and time does the school provide for you to work with others? What are department and faculty meetings like? What is the daily routine? What about friendships beyond school hours?

Questions 5: What are some things you might want future Spanish visiting teachers to know about being a visiting teacher in the U.S.? At Central Elementary?

Again, it was likely that the above focus group questions be influenced by the participants' one-on-one interview answers. Since focus groups used in conjunction with one-on-one interviews served to both illustrate data not covered or shared during the individual interviews and elaborate on that which was shared, I needed to be open to adjusting the above questions accordingly (Krueger & Casey, 2015; Yin, 2014). However, the focus group questions were preemptively intended to glean information unique to, as well as enhance, what I anticipated gathering from the individual interviews.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure followed an orderly flow of execution according to the data points described above of individual interviews, member checking of individual interviews, document review, one focus group interview, and follow-up questions to the focus group interview. Data collection that follows a logic process and adheres to the parameters set for it

prior to field research yields a more accurate depiction of the phenomenon identified as the object of study (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014).

The ideal time for the interviews was after the Spanish visiting teachers had experienced at least their initial acculturation at Central Elementary to make a personally informed judgement of their preparation, such as at the beginning of either semester. Additionally, Spanish visiting teachers were likely to begin making their decisions to return to Spain or extend their visas, where applicable, obligatorily by the end of each school year, which might have affected their availability to participate in this study should it be conducted too late in the school year or during the teachers' summer break ("Estados Unidos," 2016). However, at the time of the interviews, all six participants had committed to the full school year in which they were then working and all but one planned to return to Central for at least another year. The one participant that did not plan to return was already in her third year of the three-year J-1 visa.

The collection of data was completed within the first four months of the first semester of the 2017-2018 school year. This depended on the availability of each interviewee; however, each participant was very amenable to the study and made adjustment to his or her schedule in order to accommodate the data collection. Similarly, none of the participants received any of the interview questions ahead of time, for both expediency and accuracy based on initial thought responses (Yin, 2014).

The desired timeline for data collection was informed by the onset of important school calendar distractions, such as faculty meetings, extracurricular activities, school year planning, and other school events, as well as unavoidable items on Spanish visiting teachers' personal calendars. The major target completion date was prior to Central's fall break at the beginning of

October. In order to accomplish this, I worked closely with the participants to and adhered to the following procedures for each of the selected data points.

Data Collection: Interviews

Interviews of Spanish visiting teachers were the primary focus of this study, as their personal experiences were the essential key to my research. Accordingly, I interviewed each participant once with the prepared interview questions, once with all but one of the participants as a focus group (absence due to family emergency out of country), and then followed up with each participant via email with clarifying questions subsequent to the focus group discussion. In order to make it most convenient for the participants, I considered the school calendars and the participants' personal schedules in order to determine the best timing for their best availability and most focused responses (Yin, 2014). For example, had I tried to engage the Spanish visiting teachers at a time when they were especially focused on their school work or personal endeavors, such as during standardized testing, in-services, or longer breaks, their elaborate participation in the interview process might have been quite low. I anticipated that barring any personal schedule conflicts, the participants would have a similar availability and sentiment according to the school calendar considerations mentioned above.

Upon determining ideal interview times for each participant according to the guidance of the principals, I contacted the Spanish visiting teachers directly via a pre-formatted email according to the contact information already obtained from the Embassy of Spain's Education Advisor for the Midwest (Berrozpe, 2016). All six Spanish visiting teachers identified in my initial research of their qualifications for this case study agreed to participate, thus granting a more robust set of data (Yin, 2014).

Once each of the six visiting teachers had agreed to participate, I was able to establish a firm schedule for field work. I contacted the participants once more via email and asked them to indicate their desired time and place for their one-on-one meetings. All of the participants promptly coordinated a time and a place via text according to their daily routines, since half of them carpoled and were dependent upon a single vehicle each workday.

The interviews were conducted at times and places most comfortable to the interviewees. As the interviewer, I asked each participant to identify an hour within a particular window of time and a place that was public and easily accessible. I made arrangements with him or her to meet at a locale conducive to natural conversation, such as a local café (e.g., Starbucks,) (Yin, 2014). Half of the participants chose to meet at Central before the school day began, while another chose to meet at Central after school. The remaining two participants chose to meet off-site and after school. The initial interviews lasted approximately one hour each and were audio recorded and later transcribed.

While the timing of the interview was ultimately not dependent upon a particular segment of each school's academic calendar, Spanish visiting teachers' reporting of their experiences was based upon their experiences in the dual language immersion school up to that point in time. For example, for the initial interviews conducted toward the beginning of the school year, I anticipated the participants would answer my questions based more on the immediacy of their acculturation experience as typical conducted or addressed at the beginning of each school year. Conversely, with respect to interviews that would have been conducted toward the middle or end of the school year, such as the focus group interview and the follow-up interviews, I anticipated the subjects would answer questions based less on their immediate acculturation experience and more on their teaching experience and interaction with the school's culture. Equally, the timing

of the interviews could also have affected results given the subjects' current positioning on the "Adjustment Process" continuum, such that sentiments associated with extremes like "the honeymoon period" and "mental isolation" could motivate subjects to answer either more positively or more negatively to questions about how they had been prepared and supported as visiting teachers ("Resource Guide," 2016, p. 30).

With their permission, the individual participant interviews were recorded via the simple recording feature on an iPhone, with a separate voice recorder on hand as a backup. Not all of every part of my conversations with each participant was recorded; instead, I conversed with each participant prior to beginning the actual interview in order to build rapport and create a more comfortable delivery of information during the interview (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014). Also prior to asking the first interview questions, I ensured that the device had the proper charge and memory to record a substantial interview of up to one hour.

Post interviews, I transferred the recordings to my personal laptop computer and backed them up to a cloud server. I then sent the individual interview recording files of the interviews to be transcribed via Quick Transcription Service, a multi-language professional online transcription company ("Audio Transcription Service," 2017). Subsequent to receiving the transcriptions from Quick Transcription, I reviewed them for accuracy by simultaneously reading them and listening to the original to compare the two (Creswell, 2012).

Data Collection: Focus Group

Once the participants and I had made corrections to the initial interview transcripts, we arranged to conduct the focus group interview. The focus group interview was necessarily conducted at a place mutually agreeable to all participants and, ideally, a quieter place that would allow a voice recorder and, in the case of the focus group a video camera, to properly pick up the

participants' voices. The participants chose to conduct the focus group interview approximately 30 minutes prior to the participants' normal arrival time at Central.

As planned and communicated to the participants, the interview was video recorded and lasted approximately one hour. Because the focus group was scheduled immediately prior to Central's fall break, I transcribed the video recording during those two first weeks in October and invited feedback on the transcription from the participants upon their return. I then conducted follow-up discussions with each participant to clarify their meaning on particular items they mentioned during the focus group interview.

In order to follow recommended focus group interview protocol, I first established recommended focus group parameters, such as an explanation of the purpose of the focus group, my role as the moderator of the intended conversation among the participants, and a description of the procedure of data collection (i.e., video recording to more easily distinguish among participants' contributions to the discussion, my notetaking as a means of helping to guide the discussion, etc.) (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Participants were encouraged that there were no right or wrong answers, but that each of their individual, unique input was valuable to understanding Spanish visiting teachers' acculturation experiences at Central Elementary (Krueger & Casey, 2015). After that, I initiated the actual conversation as guided by the aforementioned focus group questions.

For each focus group question, I asked follow up and clarifying questions as necessary, such as "Can you explain that further," or "Would you elaborate on that, please?" In so doing, I hoped to avoid one participant's contributions becoming the dominant response with which all other participants simply respond with something like, "I agree," which would have effectively stalled the collection of data for a particular question (Krueger & Casey, 2015). I wanted to

ensure that each member of the focus group felt the freedom, encouragement and need to express herself or himself even in discordance with the other participants (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Additionally, because I am fluent in Spanish and have spent significant time studying and working in Spain, I was able to manage any points in the interviews that might have been conducted in Spanish, thereby allowing the Spanish interviewees to express themselves as comfortably and completely as possible (Yin, 2014).

Finally, the identities of the participants were protected per standard ethical practices (Creswell, 2012). No individual's data were shared with other participants nor anyone outside the scope of ethically assessing these data for the purposes of this study (Creswell, 2012). In order to protect the identities of the participants during and upon publication of the study, each participant was assigned a pseudonym to distinguish their data from all other participants (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014). Additionally, in order to best protect the identity of my participants and most accurately distinguish about the participants in the audio transcription, I transcribed the video recording of the focus group myself.

Data Collection: Documents

For the review of acculturation documents, I first requested permission from Central Elementary's principal to obtain any documentation of his school's intended or planned requirements, techniques and procedures for acculturation via acculturation (or "onboarding," as they might have understood it). Similar to obtaining the involved parties' permission to conduct the study, this step was essential to protecting both the integrity of the involved parties and the advancement of this research, since the information was to come from the designated steward of said documents from the school (Creswell, 2012). These documents might have included faculty manuals, explanation of the culture of the school, curriculum guides and maps, notes from the

new teachers' predecessors, and other materials specific to an intentional induction of teachers new to those schools and to helping them do their jobs well in their new environment.

The scope of my research on these particular data did not include information related to non-interpersonal information, such as benefits and compensation. My review of Central and its district's documents focused on only those items directly related to the acculturation of teachers new to the school as related to their teaching duties. Were the documents related to the acculturation of new teachers embedded in larger documents, such as employee and other policy manuals, I planned to essentially ignore the bulk of those documents where the information contained therein did not directly address new teacher acculturation. Again, the objective for reviewing these documents was to familiarize myself with the intended acculturation processes at Central Elementary.

Where these documents might not have existed or were otherwise unavailable to me as a researcher, I was prepared to interview the school principal in order to obtain a description of how teachers new to his school were acculturated. Such an interview would have been conducted at Central Elementary and would have been audio recorded for accuracy. I would have then transcribed the recording and checked its contents for points of unclearness and inconsistency by member checking via phone with the administrator (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014). However, my objective in that interview would not have been to ascertain the sentiment and personal experience of the administrators, but only the facts of how their new teachers are inducted and mentored.

Ultimately, however, Central's principal did not provide the acculturation documents as originally promised and as requested both in person from his assistant and via multiple emails directly to him. He did not respond other than granting his written permission to engage his

Spanish visiting faculty and the acculturation documents related to this study. However, the documents in question were supplied by the participants themselves via email and links subsequent to the one-on-one and focus group interviews in which they were mentioned and described, also by the participants. The documents that were obtained included curriculum guides and maps, as well as guides for understanding Midwestern culture and logistics of living and working in the state where Central is located.

Data Collection: Validity and Reliability

It is important to ensure validity and reliability during data collection. As such, when the transcriptions were complete and most accurately reflected their respective recorded conversations, I conducted a member checking review of the transcribed accounts of the interviews by emailing each participant a copy of their transcribed interview and asking them to check the information they had shared. The member checking served to both confirm the accuracy of what was recorded as being said and to verify the participants' meaning in selected points where I needed to either confirm or change my interpretation of that meaning (Creswell, 2012). The member checking did not permit the participants the opportunity to change the entirety of their interview nor to compare their answers with those of other participants, thus potentially tainting the validity and accuracy of the researcher's interpretations of the data in terms of individualized answers illustrating collective trends at a given time (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014).

As planned, accuracy of the transcriptions of the interviews was ensured by sending them to their corresponding participants for member checking. All but two participants provided feedback on the transcriptions. The four who provided feedback explained their intended meaning in particular comments they had made during the interviews. I then made the

corresponding changes to the interview transcriptions I received, in addition to reviewing once more all of the transcriptions by simultaneously reading them and listening to their recordings.

Once the transcriptions were completed, I assigned two initial parameters for determining validity. First, were the participants to not adequately answer a particular question (N=0), then that question would not be included in the analysis, as a qualitative approach will establish “units of analysis” that are reportable in quantifiable fashion (Creswell, 2012, pp. 141 & 164). Second, N for each answer might have varied and would have been reported as such (e.g., Question 1 has 3 out of 6 participants respond: N=3). Unanswered or skipped questions from my prepared questions were to be noted by deduction in the N but also not considered in the analysis, although no questions were actually skipped by any of the participants.

These data were then compared these to the sentiment, or perception, of the participating Spanish visiting teachers toward the J-1 program’s value. If, for example, satisfaction with the visiting teachers program as identified by the measured outcomes of the interviews were matched to the selected Spanish visiting teachers’ feeling positive about their acculturation process, then we could confidently say that the methods and measures were valid. These measures came from widely accepted research practices of a “purposeful sampling in which the researcher studies...[that which] is “typical” to those unfamiliar with the situation” (Creswell, 2012, p. 208).

Reliability, or trustworthiness, is addressed in this study through “the concept of dependability [together] with the concept of consistency” (Golafshani, 2003, p. 601). Although the measurement used in this study is not “administered in a standardized manner” that would necessarily be reproducible for other similar contexts, as in quantitative research, the objective of

this study was to ascertain the validity of a program in a very specific context and with a very specific purpose (Golafshani, 2003, p. 598).

The validity of the results of this study, as well as of the methods themselves, can be perceived as objective; that is, the results, especially, can be verified by the researcher's five senses and agreed upon definitions of descriptors used in reporting the data (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014). For example, if I had discovered that Spanish visiting teachers consistently expressed negativity (or vice versa) toward their acculturation experiences based on a particular question or set of questions asked of them in the interview, and the terms I used to understand the data of their experiences and states of being relative to the visiting teacher program, we might agree that those terms were valid descriptors in the given school context (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014). We might also agree that visiting teachers' reporting via these terms was valid by respecting "the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences...[for] social action" (Grix, 2002, p. 178). If the variety of teachers in this program were responding to and addressing situations with highly social natures, it would have behooved the researcher (and the school's administration) to pay close attention to an analyzed group's answers that might improve the visiting teacher program in the school studied.

Data Analysis: Participants

As previously noted, my target group of participants with "common defining characteristic(s)" to "identify and study," was six Spanish visiting teachers in their first, second, or third year of teaching in the J-1 visa program (Creswell, 2012, p. 142). Even though demographic data was certainly varied in areas such as age, marital status and professional experience, the group was fairly homogenous in terms of the crux of the data collection and

analysis, namely Spaniards participating in the J-1 visa visiting teacher program in dual language immersion school (Creswell, 2012).

In order to analyze the Spanish visiting teachers' sentiment toward their own and collective acculturation into their U.S. schools, I first carefully reviewed all of the interview and focus group transcriptions by simultaneously reading them and listening to their audio recordings. After making any necessary corrections to the predominantly or exclusively English portions and making any necessary translations (or translation corrections) from Spanish to English, I then entered the transcriptions into Dedoose® qualitative analysis software program to assist me in iteratively codifying responses to the interview questions (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014). The software was intended to help me highlight and organize recurring themes, actions, sentiments, opinions, and other items relevant to the Spanish visiting teachers' experiences with the acculturation process related to their work at Central Elementary. However, I did not expect the software to analyze the recurring themes, as that is something I needed to ascertain as led by highlighted items, especially as the highlighted items recurred in or contrasted the contributions of other respondents (Creswell, 2012).

I expected the codes to illuminate both ordinary and new or unanticipated themes having to do with the interviewees' acculturation experiences at Central Elementary (Creswell, 2012). An example of an ordinary theme might be similarities in the basic acculturation of teachers new to Central, wherein the experiences of the study participants either matched or did not match the intended acculturation experiences intended by Central's administration. These consistencies or inconsistencies were coded according to their alignment with or divergence from the new teacher acculturation experiences intended by Central and the visiting teacher program (Creswell, 2012; "Estados Unidos," 2017). However, I did not expect to be surprised if there had not been

significant divergences from the intended experiences for new or visiting teachers as intended by Central's administration, or at least that the documents and their application in acculturation efforts would have somehow preemptively addressed or resolved the gamut of cultural interactions and experiences that the Spanish visiting teachers might have had at Central. In either case, I searched for the smallest possible units of analysis, such as a sentence rather than an entire paragraph, or a portion of a line in a given transcript rather than the entirety of a lengthy sentence (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014).

The codes, or units of analysis, themselves followed the central themes of the interview and focus group questions surrounding the participants' experiences with acculturation, such as settlement upon arrival, internal (school) and external (friends, volunteers) support, teacher development, mentorship, and relational connections. The units of analysis were marked, organized, color identified, and filed via Dedoose® qualitative data analysis software using a student license. The data was coded with seven major (or root) codes, with several minor (or parented) codes to lend specificity to most of the seven majors. The seven major codes were, in order of appearance in the interview and focus group narratives "Consideration for Pursuing J-1 Program" (with nine parented codes), "Program Qualification Process" (with eight parented codes), "Pre-U.S. Acculturation" (with eight parented codes), "Settlement Assistance" (with nine parented codes) "In-Country Acculturation" (with nine parented codes), "Improve Experience" (with nine parented codes), and "Satisfaction with the Program" (with zero parented codes). All of the codes had direct relationship to the overall acculturation experiences of the participants.

Data Analysis: Documents

My data analysis continued in the pursuit of an understanding of the phenomenon of Spanish visiting teachers' perceptions of their acculturation experiences at their assigned U.S.

dual immersion school via a study of the acculturation documents made available to them and the school administration. While the personal experiences of acculturation on the part of the Spanish visiting teachers are the primary data, the acculturation documents and other information was used to understand whether what was intended and perceived matched the realities of the Spanish visiting teachers (Yin, 2014). If what was prescribed in the documents was accurate and actually carried out from recruitment to officially working at the school and if the Spanish visiting teachers seemed to operate with confidence in their teaching environments, yet there was still a gap between that and the teachers' perceptions of their preparedness and comfort levels, then the data could have suggested a cultural divide. On the other hand, if what was described (or not) in the documents were not carried out, either in part or as a whole, and the teachers did not appear confident in an environment for which they are otherwise professionally equipped, then the data could have suggested a simple but major lack of teacher acculturation (Chan, 2014; Hertzog, 2002).

I analyzed the acculturation documents, where available, as follows. First, I determined the intended procedure of acculturating new teachers and assigning them a mentor, if such a procedure existed. Upon determining that procedure, I compared the designated procedure to the experience of that procedure by the Spanish visiting teachers. For example, if the procedure called for new teachers to receive a welcome packet detailing typical daily operations at Central, but Spanish visiting teachers never received or did not understand instructions about that packet, that breach of communication would be noted as an impediment to the Spanish visiting teachers' full acculturation into their schools' environment. Additionally, if Spanish visiting teachers were supposed to be assigned a mentor teacher who was a veteran teacher at Central, the intentional nature of the match would be a focus of analysis. For example, if the mentoring teacher's job

were described in the documents as ensuring new teachers' compliance with school mandates, rather than achieving an intercultural understanding among professionals, then that, too, would be noted as a significant disconnect between the acculturation documents and the positive, successful professional and personal experience of the Spanish visiting teachers. Equally, if a mentor teacher were a requirement, or at least a guiding principle for U.S. host schools to follow as a best practice in acculturation, and yet no mentor was assigned to the visiting teachers at Central, that, too, would become a central focus of the analysis.

Limitations of the Study

Firstly, language and culture barriers might have impeded free and accurate expression on the part of the native-speaking visiting teachers, which might have presented a need to interpret meaning beyond typical language nuances. However, I am fluent in Spanish and was able to translate from Spanish to English upon the very limited number of times that it was necessary to do so either during the interviews or upon transcribing them.

Secondly, it was important for me to keep my own subjectivity in check. Peshkin (1988) describes each person's subjectivity as "a garment that cannot be removed" (p. 17). My position and personal experience as an immersion foreign language instructor was that a lack of proper acculturation of teachers new to a given program could result in split curricular programming, followed by varying levels teacher preparedness, satisfaction, and expectations, as well as student outcomes. I wanted to understand how Spanish visiting teachers are cared for via new teacher acculturation offered at Central Elementary and anticipated viewing their experiences via the lens of his or her own expertise as a teacher.

Thirdly, I recognized that the implications of this study were limited in scope by the small number of participants in this case study, which may have limited its generalizability. As a

multiple case study with six participants in a single U.S. dual immersion school, the results cannot be seen as a representative sample of the entire Spanish visiting teacher population in the U.S. However, this case study did not seek to make statistical generalization (applications to a broader population), but rather analytical generalization (*how* and *why* a particular thing occurs, such as acculturation of new teachers in a particular school context). Thus, the small number of participants is not a significant consideration to the external validity of this study (Yin, 2014). Even without that inherent trait of multiple case studies, the participants' comparison of their acculturation experiences to those of their friends and countrymen at other dual immersion schools across the U.S. demonstrated a fluctuation in the typical acculturation of Spanish visiting teachers. Thus, the acculturation experiences of this study's participants cannot necessarily be considered a widespread norm in U.S. schools that participate in the J-1 visiting teachers program. However, based on best practices of teacher acculturation, the negative aspects of the acculturation experiences of the participants, and their awareness of the significantly more positive acculturation scenarios of some of their peers in other states, the recommendation that all host schools should implement best practices in teacher acculturation remains valid.

Lastly, this study did not include the perspectives of the American faculty and staff at Central Elementary, because it was intentionally focused solely on the acculturation experiences of the Spanish visiting teachers. While the triangulation of the data from the individual interviews, the focus group, and the acculturation documents offered a rich and consistent narrative about the participants' experiences, knowing and analyzing the American faculty and staff's experiences with the visiting Spaniards' might have provided valuable insight for understanding and improving Central's acculturation process even further.

Chapter 4
The Participants

Chapter 4

Introduction

The data would be insufficient if the six participants in this study were simply described as Spanish visiting teachers. In this multiple-case study, in which each of the teachers was a case, each teacher's experience with the J-1 visa visiting teacher program tells its own unique story within the shared context of Central Elementary School (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014). Similarly, each teacher's personal context, especially but not exclusively in terms of demographics, was unique. That six teachers from Spain happened to be clustered in a single dual immersion program via the J-1 visa program did not diminish their individual experiences and perspectives on the visiting teacher program, Central Elementary and its school context, or their cultural interactions outside of their work environment. Accordingly, this chapter is dedicated to a more detailed description of the participants pursuant to their qualifications for the J-1 program, such as age and family status, teaching experience in Spain, their professional formation and assignment in the U.S., their prior experience living and working abroad, and their self-assessed level of proficiency in English. The participants' motivations for pursuing the visiting teacher program are also included for additional context. These data served to better understand the participants' contexts and experiences as potential factors for each visiting teacher's success in the J-1 program.

Basic Demographics

Among the six participants, the mean age was 37, which was situated within a range of 15 years. The median was 36.5, the mode was 31 and the range in age was 15. Thus, all of the participants were well beyond the traditional starting teacher years (ages 22 to 24) upon entering their J-1 visiting teacher assignments. This is significant because of research indicating that life

experience, especially in a professional context, is a key indicator in teachers' continuing in the profession beyond the first few years of their undergraduate studies (Conle, 1996; Gray & Taie, 2015).

The participants' family status was less varied than their ages, at least in terms being in the U.S. with a spouse. Of the six participants, only two were unmarried, although one of the two was married during their first year of the J-1 program. All four of the participants who were married at the time of this study were accompanied by their spouses while in the U.S. One of the accompanying spouses had found car auction buying work in the U.S. through a mutual connection, while the other three were primary caretakers of their school-aged children. All of married participants reported that their spouses were quite supportive of their being in the J-1 visiting teacher program. By necessity, their spouses engaged the culture and the English language via the immersive aspects of living in the U.S. in the contexts of work (1) and their children's schools (3), as well as shopping, traveling, and other opportunities. All of them had at least studied English in school, and one (Caleb's wife) was a previous visiting teacher program participant. Thus, the majority of the participants in this study were able to share their experiences and challenges of living and working abroad in familial proximity at home.

Of those four at the time of this study, only one had no children of her own. Among the other three married participants, two had school-aged children and one had a pre-school aged daughter. All of the children of the participants were enrolled in U.S. schools in which English was the primary language. It was important to the parents that their children also benefit from the immersive English language and American culture environment afforded to them especially by typical American school schedules. However, the participants with children had also made the decision to live and send their children to schools well outside the urban district in which

Central was located. Rather than making the decision not to enroll their students at Central because of any potential parental bias in the classroom, the participants with children conducted internet searches and asked for advice on the city's best schools and their surrounding communities. The district on which they ultimately decided fit the housing and schooling criteria they desired. The move also landed them in close proximity to one another, which allowed them to carpool to Central most days.

Teaching Experience in Spain

Among the six participants, one was in the first year, three were in the second year, and two were in the third year of the three-year J-1 program. Since it is a requirement of the J-1 program that visiting teachers have at least three years of teaching experience in Spain, none of the teachers arrived with zero teaching experience ("Estados Unidos," 2016). Also, none of the teachers at Central Elementary had less than four total years of teaching experience at the time of this study, including their posts at Central. The average participant had eight years of teaching experience prior to arriving at Central, while the average total years of professional experience for all participants at the time of the study was 9.83. From these data, it is plain that all of the participants were well beyond their undergraduate years and had significant life experience, prior to beginning their J-1 visiting teacher assignments. These averages also place this group of participating teachers well beyond the one to four-year range most typical of the approximately 17% of American teachers new to the field of education who leave the profession prior to their fifth year in it (Gray & Taie, 2015).

The range of years of teaching experience in Spain was 12, and the range of total years of teaching among all participants was also 12. This is no surprise, since the timing of this study provided a snapshot of a group of Spanish visiting teachers working at the same U.S. school

during the same school year immediately following their prior teaching posts in Spain. The range of total years of professional experience in teaching was only 10, which was due to one teacher's having worked in the field of art history and restoration for 6 years prior to becoming an art teacher. Again, these ranges confirm that the participants in this study had significant professional experience and were not novices in their field. More importantly, varied experience coupled with the range of age yielded a richer, less homogenous narrative in the interviews and focus group than would have been collected from either a purely younger, less experienced or a purely older, more experienced group (Yin, 2014).

Professional Formation and Assignment in the U.S.

The participants differed widely in their professional preparation and city of origin in Spain. Ironically, in spite of the participants' having followed distinct paths to becoming teachers and having hailed from four different autonomous communities in Spain (Castilla-La Mancha, Madrid, Murcia, and País Vasco), they all landed in the same U.S. city to work at the same dual immersion elementary school. Their diversity in formation and origin were united in Central Elementary's need for trained native-speaker teachers to fill the role. As a primary interest for this study, however, I focused on the unique professional backgrounds of each of the teachers below.

Sara (pseudonym), age 31, had a teaching degree in early childhood education, as well as a bachelor's in psycho pedagogy (which she indicated no longer exists in Spain). While working in Spain, Sara applied her early childhood degree to teaching preschool-aged children. She described her bachelor's in psycho-pedagogy as a degree that would have equipped her to work in human resources, conduct certain standardized tests for children, or be a high school consultant; however, at the time of this study Sara had yet to apply her psycho-pedagogy

background outside of being a more enlightened preschool and primary school teacher. Sara had taught in Spain for six years prior to working at Central Elementary. At the time of this project, she was teaching third grade Spanish.

Mara (pseudonym), age 31, held a bachelor's in primary school teaching and is certified in Spain to teach science, math and language arts. She also earned a certificate to qualify her to teach English in Spain. Mara had taught for four years in Spain prior to participating in the J-1 program at Central. During her four years of teaching in Spain prior to participating in the J-1 program, Mara had taught at four different schools, one for each year of her professional experience. At the time of this project, she was teaching first grade Spanish.

Ana (pseudonym), age 40, had followed the least traditional path to her career in teaching. Initially, Ana earned a degree in Art history with a specialization in sculpture. From there, she worked for six years as a museum curator and art restorer; however, motherhood altered her career choice, as the chemicals used for art restoration were potentially injurious to her pregnancy. Ana soon pursued a master's degree in bilingualism and methodology, as well as a certification in English from the British Council in order to teach in a bilingual setting. At the time of this project, Ana was teaching third grade art and Spanish language, after having taught art for three years in Spain.

Jairo (pseudonym), age 46, was the most consistent in his professional formation while in Spain. He had earned a bachelor's degree and a master's degree, both in grade school physical education; although, he had been accustomed to teaching a variety of subjects at the elementary school he worked for in Spain. Jairo's consistency in his career was further emphasized by the fact that he had been a teacher in Spain for 15 years before pursuing an opportunity to teach in

the U.S. Ironically, at the time of this study, Jairo was teaching fifth and sixth grade science, rather than physical education.

Dafne (pseudonym), age 36, was certified to teach preschool through sixth grade English, Spanish, math and art, which she had done for 10 years prior to participating in the visiting teacher program. Her bachelor's in primary education focused on English education for lower grades. At the time of this study, Dafne was teaching kindergarten in Spanish at Central Elementary. Additionally, while she was in her third of three years in the J-1 program, she had initiated an application to extend her stay and remain at Central for another two years.

Finally, Caleb (pseudonym), age 38, held a bachelor's degree in primary education, with a specialization in physical education, and a master's degree in K-12 educational administration. He was certified to teach math, physical education, language arts, and science at the primary level, while he was certified to teach physical education through twelfth grade. Caleb had taught for 14 years at a charter school in Spain prior to arriving at Central Elementary. At the time of this study, he was teaching fifth and sixth grade math.

As demonstrated above, each participant's teaching appointment in the U.S. was commensurate with his or her professional university level training and professional background, even if the assignments were not a one to one match to their previous teaching assignments in Spain. This was consistent with the J-1 visa program's stipulation that Spanish visiting teachers' professional formation in Spanish would complement and closely approximate the professional formation required of U.S. teachers who might otherwise fill those same roles in U.S. schools ("Estados Unidos," 2016). It is also important to note that while none of the participants taught at the same school nor had experienced the same school context while working in Spain, each of them planned to return to the school that they left in order to teach in the J-1 program. They

were confident that their previous jobs would be waiting for them upon their return, even in the case of Caleb's charter school.

Prior Experience Living and Working Abroad

Sara was also unique among the group of participants in that she had previously participated in the J-1 program in another state prior to working at Central Elementary. She expressed having quite enjoyed that first round of teaching in the U.S., although she had been placed in the different school context of a private International Baccalaureate (IB) school that followed Spanish (i.e., non-U.S.) curriculum and, thus, did not have to comply with U.S. standardized testing. Upon completing her third year at that U.S. private school, Sara obligatorily moved back to Spain to comply with the two-year teach abroad hiatus stipulation of the J-1 program ("Estados Unidos," 2016). Upon teaching those two years in Spain, Sara once again applied and gained admittance to the J-1 program, only this time via a post at Central Elementary.

Among the six participants, three (Mara, Caleb, and Ana) had zero experience traveling or working abroad. In fact, when Mara decided to move to the U.S. to work in the dual immersion program at Central Elementary, it was the first time she had even left her home city. During her time in the J-1 program, however, Mara took advantage of the standard breaks in the school year to travel to various parts of U.S., thus making the most of her time her first country abroad. Caleb, had a similar experience in Spain, although living and working in the U.S. was not his first time out of his home city. During his time in the U.S., he and his family had attempted to travel to as many places accessible within the U.S. as possible. Ana, on the other hand, had traveled and moved several times within Spain because her husband had been a sports

professional and needed to be near to his various teams. She, too, capitalized on the schedule of Central's school year in order to more fully experience the U.S. during her stay.

The other two participants, Jairo and Dafne, each had significant short-term travel experience outside of Spain prior to arriving in the U.S., although neither had worked internationally. Jairo had traveled primarily with student groups from his school in Spain. The trips were one-week intensive learning opportunities exclusively in European countries, such as Finland, Italy, Poland, Northern Ireland, Sweden and Norway. While Dafne had not traveled as regularly, she had spent three months in France with her family and had studied in the U.S. for one month. At the very least, both Jairo and Dafne began their experience at Central Elementary with at least some notion of how to adjust while living among a new culture.

Proficiency in English

Proficiency in the language of the dominant culture to which a non-dominant individual or group is being acculturated is a major factor between healthy and unhealthy acculturation (Sam & Berry, 2010; Wechsler, et al., 2012). The information provided herein related to the participants' English-language proficiency was directly related to factors of acculturation having to do with direction in written and spoken form (Wechsler, et al., 2012).

To begin, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages provides language proficiency and pedagogy guidelines most widely accepted in European countries. Among its most important parameters, the reference outlines three main levels of language fluency, A (basic), B (independent) and C (proficient), with A being the lowest and C being the highest. Additionally, there are two sub levels within each main level, which are A1 (breakthrough), A2 (waystage), B1 (intermediate), B2 (upper intermediate), C1 (operationally proficient), and C2 (proficient) (Common European Framework, 2011). According to the

parameters of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Spanish Ministry of Education and the United States Department of Education, visiting teachers from Spain must have attained at least the B2 (upper intermediate) level of English proficiency prior to applying to the J-1 program (Common European framework, 2011; “Estados Unidos,” 2016).

Theoretically, when asked at what level the participants would have placed their then current level of English, none of them would have replied less than B2 (upper intermediate). However, when language competency is assessed within a fixed framework and testing regimen, the results do not necessarily indicate actual fluency of individuals when they are confronted with the everyday, loosely coupled contexts of immersion in a foreign culture. It is not surprising, then, that none of the participants judged themselves to be proficient (C2), and one of the participants (Dafne) estimated being at an intermediate (B1) level, even after having spent at least one year working at Central Elementary.

Among the comments from the six participants when asked about their level of English, most rolled their eyes in frustration and commented that they “needed to improve a lot.” Their identified areas for improvement generally centered around grammar and pronunciation. Ana, especially, mentioned a heightened (but positive) awareness of her pronunciation and grammar because of how her own children corrected her when she spoke English. Similarly, Mara expressed a need for greater improvement in her English skills, although she was content with having improved from her self-assessed B1 level during her first year to a B2 level by her third year of the J-1 program.

Only two of the participants (Jairo and Sara) had achieved the level of operationally proficient (C1). Jairo highlighted the variance between his assessed English skills in Spain versus the application of them in the U.S. He jovially lamented that while in Spain he had

previously felt that his English was a C1, but at the time of this study while in the U.S. he felt that his English was actually a B2. Sara had also achieved C1 status via testing in Spain. Due in large part to her previous experience teaching in another U.S. city, she expressed greater confidence in her English than did Jairo, even though she lamented not always speaking English perfectly.

Motivations for Pursuing the J-1 Program

In order to fully grasp the acculturation experiences of the six Spanish visiting teachers in this study, it is helpful to understand why they would embrace the stress and other challenges of changing jobs and residences internationally, sometimes in the middle of their careers in Spain. This component of the study was also key to contrasting the participants' generally negative initial acculturation experiences with their overwhelmingly positive assessment of the overall experience living and working in the U.S.

While it is common to hear of traditional-aged college students of many countries apportioning a few weeks to a few months to complete abroad a portion of their undergraduate studies, it is less common for adults to pause their established professional life for an extended period of living and working abroad. It is also intriguing that the motivations for doing so would become, where they are satisfied, more important factors for the participants' continuing in the J-1 program than any positive or negative acculturation experiences they may have had. At the same time, the participants' motivations to become visiting teachers in the U.S. illustrated below also illuminate the challenges that they faced in pursuing those goals. The challenges can then be used to illustrate the need for a more honed acculturation experience for Spanish visiting teachers at Central Elementary and similar dual language immersion schools in the visiting teacher program.

According to the participants, one of the most significant reasons for them to pursue the visiting teacher program was so that they and their families, where applicable, could better acquire the English language and American culture via immersion in the U.S. However, nearly all of the participants expressed initial frustration with the level of English they had achieved according to their proficiency tests in Spain and their perceived strength of their English when applied during the initial weeks in the U.S. For example, Jairo thought it would “be a good experience not only for [him and his wife] but for [their] daughter... to live something” new. But in regards to his English, he lamented that “when you are in the Spain, you think you are in that level. When you come here... you feel that difference. You can feel... that you don’t have the level you need really when you come here.” Ana also expressed excitement for the benefits to her and her family, while also recognizing the limitations of her proficiency with English. She said that “the kids can improve the language and perhaps be bilingual. They will have another different opportunity to improve the language... know what happens here with the culture. This is great to do this in another country... to speak English...” But she also acknowledged a significant gap between her then-current level of fluency and her desired level by the time she was to complete the J-1 program. She somewhat jovially shared, “I need to improve more. I think when I have no problem to think in English I will be able to come back to Spain, but for me it's my goal... [sometimes] my oldest kid has to translate for me. I smile and can't understand...” Caleb’s experience was not much different from Jairo and Ana’s. When he arrived in the U.S., he discovered that “you don’t control the language.” But he was proud to say, “Now, one year later I don't have any problem to go to a bank, to call [the internet company]...[But] at the beginning, the accent here was very strong for me... I understand a half of parts of the things.”

As for his children, “they are very well adapted... enjoying a lot. [They] started to control the language very quickly. They are very, very happy enjoying the things of the Midwest...”

While none of the other three participants had children which to reference in conjunction with their personal experiences with English in the U.S., they were certainly able to describe their English proficiency in context. When asked to assess her level of English, Mara noted simply, “When I came is like down intermediate, and now I can... I’m much better.” Dafne confidently and fluently rated her level of English by saying, “I do have to improve more in my English and I do have to think about... see, I struggle sometimes... But I think grammar is the most difficult thing.” Sara, who had picked up many American idioms and mannerisms from her first stint in the visiting teacher program, offered a harsher perspective on her English. She insisted, “My English is still a mess... well my accent.” Of course, Sara had achieved the Common European Framework level C1 (operationally proficient) prior to arriving at Central Elementary. When I asked whether she was operational proficient, she responded, “I guess, some.” Apparently, even though she demonstrated considerable fluency during the individual and focus group interviews and was C1 certified, Sara shared the same sentiment as all the other participants of needing to significantly improve her fluency in English.

Regardless of the positivity or negativity of their eventual acculturation experiences in the program, the participants were certain to find themselves in abundant contexts wherein English would be the sole medium of communication and American (Midwestern) culture would be the lens through which they would be received. Therefore, the participants were likely to achieve their goal of language and culture acquisition, even if that acquisition might have been significantly enhanced by a more intentional, relational acculturation on the part of the district and Central’s personnel.

Another major motivator for all of the participants to pursue the visiting teacher program was simply to garner a change of pace. As noted previously, the program stipulates that all participants have a professional teaching background and must have taught for at least three years in Spain prior to securing a visiting teacher position in the U.S. (“Teacher Program,” 2017). Therefore, by “change of pace,” none of the participants were pursuing a new career or even necessarily an opportunity to teach outside of the parameters indicated by their teaching credentials. However, each of them was looking for a new opportunity beyond their established professional and personal routine in Spain.

For the three oldest participants, Jairo, Caleb and Ana, that meant shifting professional and geographical gears after nearly two decades of professional careers in Spain. For Jairo and Caleb, the change was at least accompanied by the familiarity of a single career in teaching, while for Ana it was a matter of changing direction within her relatively short three-year stint in teaching while in Spain. As Jairo described pursuing teaching in the U.S. rather than in Spain, he said, “I... needed to live something new... I’ve been working during 15 years in Spain as a teacher and I thought that I needed a new way to work, something new, more experience in the education, and I’m here.” Caleb voiced a similar perspective when he said he needed a change:

“because when you are teacher... you do the same every year. In Spain, it’s pretty common to spend your whole life doing the same... I always thought to live abroad and to live one experience like this... 14 years 15 years [in one place] is enough. And the best motivation, the best experience, is to travel to meet another country to meet another way to work and another students.”

Ana, however, was used to moving around but had never lived and worked in the U.S. She commented:

“I was looking information about different program to...work... I said, okay...I don't have enough experience and I don't know if I can go to the States, but someday I am going to the States... to speak English, to have another different background, another different methodologies and I can learn...”

Neither Jairo nor Caleb nor Ana described themselves as thrill seekers. Instead, they were each at a crossroads in their careers and, far from seeking an escape from teaching, they all sought a new context for continuing in their teaching careers. But the newness of context, geography, and language afforded by the visiting teacher program was an inspiring enough factor for each of them.

Change was also a major motivation for Dafne, Mara and Sara, which were the three participants who had worked in Spain for less than a decade. However, the type of change desired by each of these three varied from that of Jairo, Caleb and Ana. Dafne, who had taught in Spain the longest of the younger half of the participants prior to coming to Central Elementary, was actually looking for stability. As an *interina* (traveling substitute teacher) in Spain, she found herself working in several schools over short periods, instead of being able to fully integrate into a single work community over a longer period of time. The opportunity to work in a set position at a single school granted her the stability she sought from the program.

She explained:

“I was like traveling around and knowing a lot of different schools. And for me was like I want to settle up (Settle down) settle down and I wanted to experience a little. Yeah, I needed change. So, not to be moving every year so just staying in one school.”

For Mara, participating in the visiting teacher program meant leaving her home city for the very first time. She was simply looking for a new experience that matched her experience and interests. She said in the one-on-one interview:

“This is my first experience being outside [my city]. I thought that it’s an experience to travel and ... to learn not only the language, the culture, the custom, everything... I was excited. But the most important thing... is the experience, to open my mind because it's the first time.”

Sara contrasted Dafne’s position yet reflected Mara’s excitement for exploration. She insisted that pursuing the visiting teacher program for her meant “avoiding the stability.” She explained further saying, “if I was living in Spain now I would probably be buying a house and finding the balance... but I needed like something new. A change.” As previously noted, this was Sara’s second experience with the J-1 program, so living and working abroad through the medium of teaching had become her norm. Ironically, her only major change was continuing the cycle of starting anew in another city.

Summary

The factors of the individual and collective personal narratives of the six participants contributed to the overarching story of their acculturation in the professional context of their experiences at Central Elementary. The demographic, professional formation and experience, English proficiency, and motivations for pursuing the visiting teacher program suggest that any difficulties that the participants may have endured with acculturation are not the result of a scenario wherein complete novices were confronting professional duties entirely unknown to them. Each of the participants had been trained in teaching their subjects and had acquired sufficient English language skills to qualify for the J-1 program and, thus, were qualified

professionals in their field. However, consistent with the challenges of professional and personal acculturation noted in the literature review, the participants' training and skills applied to a previously unknown U.S. school context did increase the level of stress the participants felt during the ongoing acculturation process at Central.

Chapter 5

Findings

Chapter 5

Introduction

The findings presented in this chapter highlight the various components of the participants' acculturation narrative. They are organized according to the timeline of the participants' journey through the J-1 visiting teacher program from Spain to the U.S. The progression is necessary for illuminating the fuller picture of the participants' acculturation experiences, as culminated in the U.S. at Central Elementary. All of the data of the following sections flowed naturally from the prepared questions of both the individual interviews and the focus group, as well as from the participants' experiences with the available acculturation documents of the *Guía para Profesores Visitantes*, the *Spanish Visiting Teachers* guide booklet for current and would-be host school administrators, and the Central Elementary curriculum.

A code co-occurrence analysis of the frequency of parent codes highlighted the complexity, not just the frequency, with which the participants noted issues related to their in-country acculturation. These code co-occurrences gave richer context to the participants' contributions under the various parent codes and together with either other parents codes, under a single parent code, or both (Saldaña, 2016). Once the importance of teacher acculturation was confirmed as not only one of the most important themes but *the* most prominent and pervading theme within all interactive data, it became clearer that the data would offer a solid understanding how the participants experienced acculturation at Central.

The confirmation of the importance of permeating data on the acculturation of the participants subsequently influenced the progression of the findings. The first section presents the findings on the participants' pre-U.S. acculturation experiences through the application process, which involved a lot of paperwork, several interviews for school placement and visa

granting, and a pre-departure training session with former participants and Spanish education officials. The second section presents the findings on the participants' acculturation experiences in the U.S., especially those having direct relationship to their placement at Central Elementary. These experiences included any training and mentoring they received from established school personnel. The third section recognizes other acculturation issues, such as the settlement assistance (i.e., finding housing, purchasing a car, and completing U.S. employment documents) upon entering the U.S. and immediately prior to entering their placements at Central. The fourth section presents the findings on the participants' own assessment of how the in-country acculturation experience could be improved for future visiting teachers. While their suggestions herein presented are not exhaustive, nor do they serve as the sole, mirrored recommendations of the researcher, they do display a level of care for the visiting teacher program and for its future visiting teachers on the part of the participants of this study.

Pre-U.S. Acculturation

The analysis of the findings via Dedoose® revealed that “pre-U.S. acculturation” occurred 212 times, or 16% of all co-occurrences, with the next closest being “Considerations for Pursuing J-1 Program” at 189, or 14.4% of all code co-occurrences. Additionally, “Pre-U.S. Acculturation” topped all other codes in the number of times it permeated the contexts of other major and sub themes within the researched media. Thus, the participants' pre-U.S. acculturation was revealed as an essential piece to the entirety of their acculturation respective of the visiting teacher program.

As stated previously, acculturation is both a psychological and a sociocultural two-way process of interaction between two or more cultural groups that happens when a non-dominant group enters the culture of a dominant group (Raymond et al, 1974; Sam & Berry, 2010). It

might be assumed that the Spanish teachers participating in the J-1 visa program would begin their acculturation process once they arrive at their U.S. host school. Technically, however, their acculturation entry points as visiting teachers was during the culture training and program orientation that they began to receive in Spain relative to the J-1 program. Therefore, this essential portion of the findings relates how the participants were initially prepared to immerse themselves in the permeating culture of their host city and school.

Aside from the participants' entertaining the idea of living and working in the U.S. via the J-1 program, the application process was the first context in which they began their acculturation journey. As would be expected, the application process included abundant requisite paperwork; however, it was also the first avenue through which the then-candidates began to interact with their future potential U.S. employing districts and schools. I pluralize that here since the journey to Central Elementary was far from a straight line from application to interview to placement. That applicants would see changes in their potential placements was not uncommon; however, for the participants in this study the timing and type of changes created a significant lag, which ultimately resulted in a very late start to the teachers' first school year at Central.

Dafne likely saw the most fluctuation in her application process. She watched her placement change twice in two months prior to ultimately being hired to teach at Central Elementary. She was first assigned to a school in a southern state and then to one in the southern Midwest, both of which fell through for reasons not fully explained to her other than the fact that the schools already had the requisite personnel. When she finally did receive confirmation of her placement at Central on July 1 of her first year in the program, she still had to wait to leave Spain until she could garner her DS-2019 (Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status).

The DS-2019 is required of all visiting teachers, as it “permits a prospective exchange visitor to seek an interview at a U.S. embassy” and “identifies the exchange visitor and their designated sponsor and provides a brief description of the exchange visitor’s program” (“Teacher Programs,” 2017). She also needed to wait to come with Mara, because together the two of them formed a sort of package deal for Central Elementary for that school year. They were the only two Spanish visiting teacher hires for their start year. In effect, Dafne and Mara were not able to start working at Central for more than one month after the start of the school year.

Jairo, Caleb and Ana had very similar experiences to those of Dafne and Mara. They were not given an DS2019 interview at the embassy until mid-August of their start year, which meant they would not arrive in the U.S. until late August. In turn, that meant that they would not start at Central until almost six weeks into their first semester. Ana was not sure why her interview at the U.S. embassy in Spain was even later than Jairo and Caleb’s, nor why, ironically, she was able to arrive in the U.S. only one week later than the two of them. But the scenario at least gave her the advantage of having two colleagues from Spain who had just gone through the settlement process that could help her during her first several days in the U.S. In all three cases, they were given a few days to settle into their new environment, including finding an apartment and transportation, before starting to teach. But needing to care for those items also meant not paying attention to the curriculum that they would need to take over in the next few days. Learning and delivering the curriculum to students on the part of the teacher is considered fundamental to new teacher acculturation, since the curriculum is the primary unifying factor between the host school and the visiting teachers (Chan 2014; Freeman, 1996). Furthermore, the curriculum is foundational for a successful professional interaction between the host culture and

the guest culture, because it serves as the portal between two distinct cultures of teacher education and student learning (Chan, 2014; Wechsler et al., 2012).

Sara described her frustration by noting the fact that several of her co-applicants in Spain who had secured placements in the same state as Central Elementary received all their paperwork before she did. Initially, she thought this was an issue with the state in which Central Elementary resides; however, she seemed to change her mind during the focus group when Dafne noted how her friends at other schools in the state had not experienced the same tardiness as she had. This led Sara and Dafne to agree that perhaps the tardiness in the approval process was not an issue with the entire state but only with the district. It must be noted, however, that Sara's experience differed significantly from her colleagues' because of how the accelerated timing of her interviews and approval of documents in Spain allowed her to arrive in the U.S. prior to the start of Central's school year. Still, her having arrived early only presented an advantage over her colleagues in that she had more time to settle (i.e., find housing, purchase a vehicle, plan for classes, etc.); it did not result in any more of a robust acculturation experience beyond what her colleagues had received specific to the Central's school context.

The first written guidance that the participants received, and thus their first acculturation document, was the *Guía para Profesores Visitantes (Guide for Visiting Teachers)*, which is generated by the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport and published by the Office of Education and the Spanish Embassy in the U.S. The participants received a copy of the *Guía para Profesores Visitantes* prior to their arrival in the U.S. and used it during their time in the U.S., which classified it both as part of their pre-U.S. acculturation and as part of their in-country acculturation. It was the first acculturation document specific to the state in which Central Elementary was located that the participants received.

The *Guía para Profesores Visitantes* is a colorful, easy-to-read manual that offers information about living and working in the state specific to visiting teachers' U.S. placements and is given to each Spanish visiting teacher prior to their arrival in the U.S. as part of their acculturation process. It is a well-organized 20-page document (17 pages of informational text) that was shared with the participants as a PDF online, which allowed the users to access links with more expansive information associated with the materials referenced in brief in the manual. The booklet addresses several important items about living and working in the state in which U.S. host schools are located, such as a description of each one's state symbols and culture, the local educational system, and an explanation of basics, such as public transportation, visas, insurance, Social Security, and housing options, as well as major purchases, such as a vehicle.

While the *Guía para Profesores Visitantes* was clear and well-presented, it was not as helpful to Central Elementary's Spanish visiting teachers as they would have liked ("Guía para Profesores Visitantes," 2017). All of them commented that the manual was too short and at times inaccurate or outdated, which often frustrated their plans more than it helped them. Caleb illustrated the point by saying that even if all the information had been correct and up to date, "sometimes you are totally lost. You have lists and lists and lists of what to do. You don't know what the most important thing to start with [is]." He and the other participants also commented on the lack of guidance on how to find an apartment, other than the recommendation to search for flyers and check with locals about the most recommended areas in which to live. To their point the *Guía para Profesores Visitantes* quickly covered three main topics, which were symbols and history of the host state, a description of the education system in the host state, and immigration and living arrangements for visiting workers ("Guía para Profesores Visitantes," 2017). At no time did the document address curriculum, host school culture, social interactions

with American teachers and administrators, or any other work-related operational or daily routine guidelines. Thus, even if all of the information in the *Guía para Profesores Visitantes* had been accurate and current, it still would not have offered the participants any acculturation guidance specific to their assignments at Central Elementary. It merely existed as a medium for action steps that facilitated their being able to live and work in their host state in a mostly general sense.

Among the participants' greatest frustrations with the guide was that the cost of transportation described in it was less than the actual reality they experienced upon arrival in the U.S. According to the guide, it was possible to purchase a car in the area surrounding Central Elementary anywhere from \$2,500 to 6,500 ("Guía para Profesores Visitantes," 2017). However, the reality that the participants experienced was that cars ranged from \$7,000 to \$10,000, or more, depending on the desired type of vehicle. Additionally, the manual indicated that apartment rental would range from \$600 to \$800 per month ("Guía para Profesores Visitantes," 2017). Their reality was often a couple to a few hundred dollars per month more than that. A difference of a few thousand dollars combined presented a significant challenge for the Spanish visiting teachers, because they had planned their budgets for life in the U.S. largely according to the *Guía para Profesores Visitantes*. In these ways, the participants began their acculturation for living and working in the U.S. at an unnecessary disadvantage. As Mara summarized, "I think [what we received] wasn't enough." The information was neither sufficient nor sufficiently accurate.

The participants agreed that the most helpful pre-U.S. acculturation they received in terms of information and training was in Spain from former visiting teachers. For example, it was particularly helpful to them to hear the perspectives of four past visiting teachers who had

worked in California, Florida and Wisconsin, as they gave a well-organized presentation about their experiences living and working in the U.S. The presentation lasted three to four hours and was mutually beneficial both to the veteran visiting teachers and to those who were about to enter their three-year stint in the U.S. Caleb explained that, “they were civil servants... When you are civil servant in Spain this is a part of your formation... they need[ed] points every year to get their license... They offer this course, this training because it's good for them too...” He further elaborated that the presentation offered “real... very useful information [from] people who had lived this experience this before,” like how to find apartments on Zillow and how to use Craigslist to find inexpensive cars and furniture, among other practical details. Knowing what worked and how to access it was immensely valuable to those fortunate enough to hear such presentations.

Acculturation in the U.S.

As was expected based on the predominant line of questioning in the interviews and from the review of the data in Dedoose®, “In-Country Acculturation” firmly topped all code co-occurrences with 504 intersections, or 39% of all code-occurrences. This meant that while other codes’ contexts intersected with that of “In-Country Acculturation,” those code occurrences at least shared, if not operated within, the context of the in-country acculturation the participants received at Central Elementary. Not only was “In-Country Acculturation” by far the single most saturated of all the parent codes, but it was also the most frequently occurring single code.

Forming an even stronger image of the importance of acculturation in general, “In-Country Acculturation” and “Pre-U.S. Acculturation” combined for 716, or 55% of all code co-occurrences, which was still 123 occurrences more than the co-occurrences of all other parent codes combined (593). Therefore, overall teacher acculturation was overwhelmingly the single

most permeating, reoccurring theme across all analyzed media. In short, an acculturation leading to knowing and understanding Central Elementary's school context mattered greatly to the participants.

While the participants' acculturation with respect to their posts at Central Elementary began well prior to their immersion into the school's community and the city in which it is situated, the acculturation that they experienced in the U.S. impacted them the most profoundly. That does not imply that their acculturation in the U.S. was in any way more effective than their acculturation while still in Spain.

Manual and Standards

In the 11 times sub-code "manual/standards" co-occurred with parent code "in-country acculturation," all of the participants said flatly that they received no manual or step-by-step guide for beginning their teaching roles at Central from either the district or Central's staff. Again, the participants all expressed a significant gap between the information and personal interaction that they needed and what they actually received. On the other hand, the participants did receive upon arrival in the U.S. online access to the district's curriculum specific to their teaching assignments. Central Elementary's district had contracted with an out-of-state company to author and provide the stated curriculum via an online portal. As Dafne stated in a manner that appeared to summarize the sentiment of the other participants, "I mean, I had...what I was supposed to teach and I had all the standards and I had everything online." Dafne did, however, concur with others' accounts that certain items like textbooks were often either entirely absent and took a long time in arriving in the classroom.

The primary reason why a manual and standards would be so important in the acculturation process is that they are intended to give concrete direction and parameters of

teaching and interacting with staff, faculty and students within a given school context, namely Central Elementary. In the absence of ongoing, proximate acculturation on the part of the administration, as well as the lack of assigned teacher mentors, an acculturation-oriented manual would have at least provided the participants with a reference tool upon which they could have depended for clarity and direction.

Meetings

According to the participants, their acculturation was quite minimal in terms of programming and intentionality. Specifically, there were few group meetings with the principal or other U.S. teachers. However, those meetings were what might be described as typical staff meetings, which can often be full of information but not particularly focused on building community or cultural bridges. Thus, the participants still lacked an avenue for a more relational connection with their American colleagues at Central Elementary.

All of the participants commented, sometimes on multiple occasions, that in order to receive direct guidance from their American colleagues at Central, they needed to go ask for it. All but one participant commented that this was a cause for significant stress, mostly because the majority (5) found it necessary to bridge an apparent communication gap through non-native English language skills and limited understanding of Central's culture. Additionally, the five participants who identified their imperfect English as a stressor also noted the cultural gap between how Americans typically communicated and how Spaniards were more typically accustomed to communicating. Even when they were in need of basic information, while hoping for relational (high-context) connections and eventual camaraderie, language and culture were significant challenges in their acculturation trajectory. In fact, while all six participants agreed on the particular point that Central's American faculty was "very willing to help," but they

qualified that “you [had] to ask” and that “you [had] to go to them.” However, none of the participants expressed having perceived any strong desire to connect relationally (or in a high-context fashion) on the part of the seemingly all low-context American faculty, who gave requested information in an effort to be helpful in a transactional, practical manner.

Looking further into the participants’ interactions with their American colleagues, they strongly lamented the infrequent programmed “collaboration time” (sub-coded under parent “in-country acculturation”) among faculty. Similar to having to go ask the American faculty for assistance with curriculum, planning, and procedures, the programmed collaboration times lacked the weekly, integrated departmental collaboration the Spaniards had been accustomed to in their employing schools in Spain. The collaboration times to which the participants had been accustomed in Spain were only partially task-oriented and were strongly valued as relationship-building exercises situated within the normal school day. As Jairo pointed out and others affirmed in the focus group interview, the rhythms of the workday in Spain simply allow for and in a way expect more interpersonal connections throughout the day. It is not that they cannot function outside of such rhythms, as evidenced by their capacity and desire to successfully continue in the J-1 visiting teacher program. But they flourish in a more relational, collaborative environment.

With respect to one-on-one or departmental acculturation, all of the participants stated that they had received no assigned mentoring during their time at Central. All of them noted that the American faculty were very nice and were willing to help but that they generally did not go out of their way to initiate conversation and offer assistance to the newcomer Spaniards. In the one-on-one interview, Mara recalled her initial interpretation of the American faculty’s lack of interaction with her as a sign that they did not care to get to know her. She thought, “Okay, if

you don't want to talk with me, I'm not going to talk with you." But after the first two years in the program, Mara's perspective had changed. By the time of the interview, which was at the beginning of her third year at Central, she had learned a lot about the curriculum, classroom management, and especially about her co-workers. However, she also lamented that "not to know [these things] at the beginning with the problems that you have, and you are so far from your country...family... everything, and you're going to react in different ways... I think I didn't react in a really good way." Her honest self-reflection revealed significant personal and professional growth, while it also recognized a legitimate frustration with that growth potentially having been stunted by the lack of acculturation through more intentional engagement with a mentor teacher or teachers.

Dafne echoed Mara's assessment of the lack of mentoring she received, noting the "very minimal time" that she initially spent working with Central's American faculty. In reference to having an assigned mentor, Dafne said, "Well, I didn't have any mentor. I didn't have any instructions like you have to do this, this...like this. I find out by myself." She conceded that she "had the curriculum guides that [she] was supposed to teach and... all the standards," but she "had to ask the people [American faculty] what to do and how to do it." Dafne did acknowledge that when she asked for help, she got it. "So, every time that I ask them what to do and how to do this... and how to fill out this paperwork, they always [were] there to help me." However, she did have to ask to get the help she needed. While Dafne received no formal mentoring or other assigned guidance from her fellow faculty members, she did contrast the associated frustration with a certain contentment with the creative freedom that that scenario afforded her. She said with a confident smile, "I have freedom to teach on my way, so I didn't worry about

anything about [mentoring].” For Dafne, the creative freedom was a worthy tradeoff to the lack of regimented guidance.

Assigned Mentors

Mentoring and one-on-one guidance proved to be starkly absent for all of the participants. “Mentor teacher,” which was sub-coded under “in-country acculturation,” was a near-absence from all of the references within its parent code “in-country acculturation.” The total times the sub-code “mentor teacher” was applied were 11. This was because the participants’ answers to the questions about their possible mentor teachers were quite brief and direct. None of the participants had been assigned a mentor teacher, nor did any of them meet with any frequency with a mentor teacher from Central. Thus, visiting teacher mentoring as a component of the participants’ acculturation was found to be majorly lacking according to the reports of the participants and the guidance from the acculturation documents as contrasted with the participants’ experiences.

In order to evaluate any acculturation that the participants might have experienced via a possible mentor teacher as assigned by Central’s administration, the code “Mentor Teacher” was weighted from one to 10, with one meaning “no mentor assigned, no mentor interaction” and 10 meaning “mentor assigned, significant mentor interaction.” All but one of the participants reported having no assigned mentor nor guidance from a would-be mentor (a weight of one). The outlier teacher who did not score a one still only scored a three on the “Mentor Teacher” weighting. When asked if she received mentoring or had been assigned a mentor, she replied, “not officially, but kind of.” When asked to clarify, she returned to the process of having received help whenever she requested it but that no veteran Central Elementary teacher had been

assigned to helping her. Plainly, none of the participants was assigned a mentor teacher during their time at Central, which certainly had an impact on their ability to acculturate.

Contrasting the number of references to mentor teachers, sub-code “Central’s administration” intersected with “in-country acculturation” 55 times. The experience of the participants with their school administration therefore resulted to be one of the most prominent of the sub themes. (Sub-theme “district” intersected with “in-country acculturation” only 11 times, which reflected the brevity of the one-day, three-hour policy training the district provided the participants upon arrival in the U.S. and the scarce ongoing interaction the participants had with the district. The participants described this training as useful but too quick and not enough. However, it is important to note that of the 55 occurrences, only 29 of the excerpts specifically referenced Central’s administration with such themes as quarterly (every nine-weeks) classroom observations (1), brief check-ins to make sure visiting teachers were “doing okay” (5), settlement assistance or welcome prior to beginning work the first year in the program (8), curriculum training and classroom materials (7), and once-per-month staff meetings (8). The other references were comparisons to other schools or programs (1), desire for more training and interaction with the administration (6), and comparisons to interactions with school administrations (training, meetings, collaboration) in Spain (5). Therefore, that only 29 of the 55 (nearly 53%) occurrences of the code “Central’s administration” were in conjunction with “in-country acculturation” suggested a lack of robust intentionality toward the acculturation of the participants on the part of Central’s administration.

In a deeper dive into the significance of the above sub-themes under “Central’s Administration,” it was discovered that the participants’ referred to the acculturation they received by Central’s administration in positive or, at times indifferent, terms only 31% of the

time. For example, the participants described Central's administration having allowed each of them paid leave (averaging a few days) at the beginning of their time in the U.S. to find housing, transportation, and to complete employment paperwork. But when talking about the once-per-month staff meetings, half of the participants noted that the meetings were "too infrequent," gave "no time to collaborate" with others, were "confusing" sometimes due to language barriers, and were "all talk." With respect to training and materials, five commented that what they received from Central's administration lasted "only two hours," one said she received "no materials," and another said a Central administrator "opened the classroom, and that's it."

Caleb emphasized the need for a more comprehensive assistance from the host school's staff than simply adjusting to Central's curriculum by limited meetings and small bursts of information. He said that, "every help you received when you arrived here is not enough. Do you understand?... Because everything is new you have to start a new job, very different job from your country and you have to build a new life." He explained that he received certain helpful information from Central's district in a one-day training on curriculum and district rules and policies. The meeting was held at a district facility designated for these intensive trainings. It was a required training prior to the participants' beginning their teaching assignments at Central. The specific training Caleb and his companions each received in this instance was conducted by district personnel and was generally operational in nature, first addressing personnel matters and rules for engaging students and coworkers, and second sharing a link and an explanation of how to access and understand the district's subject-specific curriculum. Caleb went on to say that, "the first day here... we were in the staff meeting a couple of hours of math training and after that we [received] a lot of information how to deal with the students, how to deal with [the district]."

Subsequently, Caleb had access to math teacher training modules, some of which he was able to engage on his own time. He said:

“[Our school] was implanted a new math method, www.engageny.org and [the district representatives] tried to teach us about it as that was very different to other likely methods. Every training was very useful as we received a lot of information about to handle it, like online resources... tests... After the first two trainings, we got a private meeting with [a district] counselor after school, talking and showing our main concerns about the method. That was more useful because you could explain your real issues in your grades and got good solutions for them.”

Caleb said that he did not have any major issues making the transition to teaching math at Central since he had taught math quite a bit in Spain. The challenge for him was classroom management, for which he did not receive any formal training. As he reflected on that hole in his acculturation, he remarked, “Math is very important but class management is very important too... One without the other one is not very good business. You need both.” He went on to say that the simplest things in regard to classroom management and student discipline, such as not hugging students and insisting on orderliness and quiet in the classroom, were the hardest adjustments culturally.

Jairo expressed similar frustration in his one-on-one interview. He lamented, “I really needed someone who give me some papers and tell me, ‘These are the standards you are going to work, you have all these resources, you have to do it in this way.’” He commented that some of the most significant acculturation he received was from students who early on pointed out to him how their classmates were using cuss words because they thought he would not understand them. Through his students’ kindness, Jairo realized, “I needed that support in the language. So, it was

really a huge difference.” But when asked if he had received any other such support or guidance from people other than the students, he said confidently, “No. Never.” He elaborated that the problem was exacerbated both by his being told he was to teach science only three to five days prior to arriving at Central and by his not receiving a textbook to teach the science curriculum. He recalled, “When I came here I had to search all the standards and really I didn’t know how to start to work.” While he at least had access to the district’s curriculum online, he was essentially on his own to create and carry out lesson plans.

Ana arrived in the U.S. on September 5, almost seven weeks into the school year and the latest of all the participants. When asked if she had received mentoring or training from other teachers at Central, she said plainly, “Not especially.” She went on to explain that she maintained some contact with Central’s previous art teacher to ask “some really tiny question[s] about how to introduce the grades on the laptop or something like that.” Therefore, she, too, was essentially on her own to create and deliver her own course content. As she reflected on how she felt upon arrival and what she would want others to understand about the acculturation experience of visiting teachers, Ana said, “When you arrive here you don’t have nothing. If you think from this prospective you realize that it’s tough.”

Contrasting the viewpoints of her compatriots, Sara said firmly, “I feel that I have been helped.” As previously mentioned, Sara was the only one of the six participants to have arrived in the U.S. prior to the start of the school year in her first year at Central. Also, she was the only one who had been a visiting teacher for three years in another state prior to reapplying to the program. Partly as a result of those two experiences, Sara expressed a confidence in knowing where to find the help she needed. “It was great for the first week or so I was teaching, and just going to... American classes to see how they do it and learn from them.” She said that she was

not necessarily invited by the American teachers to observe, but rather just asked them if she could observe their classes. However, even though she managed to access her American colleagues' live examples of teaching, she also noted that the majority of acculturation that she received came "mainly [from] the Spanish teachers." Among other unique qualities to her experience at Central, Sara was able to count on the experience and guidance of five other Spanish visiting teachers. Spanish visiting teacher solidarity was thus a pervading theme of the focus group's questions regarding in-country acculturation. Simply put, Sara's account illustrates how she and the other visiting teachers survived their first several months mostly by their support for one another.

Many of the cultural items above were covered, albeit briefly, by "previous participants" (sub-coded as such under "pre-U.S. acculturation") during the pre-arrival training in Spain, and only barely so in the all-new-teacher district one-day training. As mentioned, it was not covered for the participants in the host school training in the U.S. But two of the participants had the distinct advantage of knowing personally some previous J-1 program participants. Dafne, for example, had a family member, as well as "some friends," who had been a J-1 visiting teacher in other states. She commented with a smile that "now they got their green cards," which had given her a vision for an even longer stay in the U.S. for herself. At the time of this study, she was actively pursuing the possibility of extending her time at Central beyond the standard three-year visa stint. Had she not come into the program with the confidence of envisioning grander possibilities than the basic program, it is doubtful that she would have pursued an extension to her visa. Additionally, as mentioned previously, Caleb's wife was a previous visiting teacher in another state. It is likely that he would have pursued the program otherwise, but he, too, entered his time in the U.S. with the confidence booster from his wife that, "You're going to love it."

Other Acculturation-Related Issues

A key piece of the participants' overall experience was that of the settlement assistance they received at the beginning of their time in the U.S. Settlement assistance refers to the help offered in finding housing, securing transportation, and completing Social Security and other legal documentation that visiting teachers might receive upon their arrival in the U.S. It is an important consideration for anyone who is taking up residence and employment abroad, especially. Parent code "settlement assistance" figured squarely into the acculturation experience of the participants, since its associated elements were immediate, unavoidable, and necessary for the participants to establish their residency and refuge, albeit temporary, in the U.S. It was also the first and kindest volunteer interaction with Americans and their households that the participants would have. The move to the U.S. was especially stressful for the participants since they were not provided any temporary housing or transportation directly by their host school. This single acculturation factor became a central theme for Central's six visiting teachers in both the one-on-one interviews and the focus group interview.

Shortly prior to and immediately following the participants' arrival in the U.S., they began to compare their experiences with that of some of their friends in other school and states. One of the biggest differences they noted was that of the settlement assistance that their Spanish visiting teacher friends in other places had received that the participants in this study had not, which was sub-coded as "comparison to other schools/states" under "settlement assistance." For example, Mara shared that her friends who had been placed at a dual language school in a southern state got "two weeks... to get an apartment and [learn] how to talk with people, how to buy a car, and what places can you go and what places you can't go." She expressed frustration that those friends were also picked up from the airport by school personnel and were provided

temporary housing until they could secure an apartment of their own. The only comparable experience she had was with a Spanish-speaking American family who had expressed unsolicited interest in hosting visiting teachers from Spain, where needed, to Central's principal. This family provided housing to her and her then-husband for nearly two months, but the family was unable to provide transportation since their house was on the opposite side of the city from Central.

Dafne actually lived with the same volunteer American family. This was a natural placement, especially since Dafne and Mara were the package deal for Central as described above. However, Dafne only stayed with the volunteer American family for her first couple of weeks in the city. She and her husband were anxious to find their own place, and Dafne was able to complete her Social Security and other U.S. employment paperwork within the first few days in the U.S. Again, Dafne assured me that Central was not involved with her settlement assistance. She emphatically stated, "Not the school. So, the school wasn't involved on that helping."

Most of the participants acknowledged that they had received at least some settlement assistance from a Mrs. Ramirez. This assistance was sub-coded as "Central's American faculty" under "settlement assistance." Mrs. Ramirez was an American teacher who had married a Spaniard, had lived in Spain for several years, and was teaching at Central Elementary at the same time as the participants in this study. Accordingly, Mrs. Ramirez became an empathetic cultural bridge for the Spanish visiting teachers. Caleb and Jairo recalled having lived with Mrs. Ramirez and her family for the first two weeks in the U.S., as well as having ridden with her to and from Central for that same time period. Ana, too, was able to stay at Mrs. Ramirez's home for her first two weeks. She said that the experience was "amazing...but... completely different

from the school,” since in her estimation she received no direct settlement assistance from Central.

Since Caleb, Jairo and Ana were all planning to receive their spouses and children after their first two to four weeks in the U.S., they each felt added pressure to find adequate housing of their own and to not add to the Ramirez household’s burden of hosting them. Caleb explained, “...I didn't have enough time to visit apartments... [and she helped find] a very good place for families, with very good schools, with libraries, with restaurants.” But while all three were grateful and complimentary of Mrs. Ramirez and the help she provided, they made sure I understood that the settlement assistance they received was not the same as having a mentor teacher. Ana summarized by saying, “She helped us in this way, but in the school we don't have a mentor or nothing.”

Sara’s entry into Central’s community was cushioned in comparison to the other participants’ experiences. While she had her challenges in preparing for her new teaching environment, she at least enjoyed the reciprocated hospitality of Dafne and her husband. She smiled as she fondly recalled what it was like to live with an experienced Spanish visiting teacher also employed at Central. “We were like twins.” Sara was also quick to acknowledge how valuable her scenario was in comparison to that of her Spanish colleagues at Central. “I don’t want to imagine what it was like arriving 6 weeks after [the start of school] with the pressure of all my families coming. Like, cuz it’s like a lot of changes.” She also pointed out that she already had her social security number from her last visiting teacher post, and she had a good handle on American societal norms. That confidence, along with Dafne’s compassionate hospitality, gave her a comparatively significant advantage over her compatriots with regards to initial settlement.

Further analysis revealed that Sara experienced the greater portion of acculturation from her compatriots at Central, as indicated by her offering 39.4% of all related comments and experiences. She summarized the details of how she had been acculturated by her more veteran Spanish colleagues with, “I’m lucky to have Spanish teachers in my school.” While she also had the advantage of arriving two weeks prior to the start of the school year, she also had been hosted by Dafne until she was able to secure her own residence, car, and other settlement items. Her comments were followed by Caleb’s comments, which constituted 24.2% of the assignment of sub-code “Central’s Spanish faculty.” Caleb noted that he felt like he “need[ed] to help everyone because [he had been] in the same place...the same situation before [the new participants].” All of the rest of the program veterans expressed this same sentiment in their own way, regardless of the amount of time they spent discussing “Central’s Spanish faculty” (Dafne at 18.2%, Jairo at 9.1%, Ana at 6.1%, and Mara at 3%). Being able to count on one another as resources for both information and relationship through shared experiences helped lift their spirits and fill some of the void they experienced via Central’s and its district’s acculturation process.

Suggested Improvements to the In-Country Acculturation

All of the participants had several suggestions for improving the visiting teacher experience at Central Elementary. However, the one pervading suggestion, or perhaps plea, from the participants for improvement to the visiting teacher experience at Central was acculturation through ongoing personal relationship. In the focus group interview, Ana summed up the sentiment by saying, “You have to depend on people.” She went on to explain that having an immediate connection with people in the U.S. who understood her situation and wanted to help her made her “very lucky,” but that the help she received was mostly for settlement during her first several days in the U.S. Jairo shared, “I think that maybe you [need to] know a person

to guide your life here, even [if only] the one week.” But Jairo also stated in the one-on-one interview that the lack of curriculum and classroom management guidance, as well as the lack of casual faculty interaction, had caused him to doubt his commitment to a full three-year stint at Central. He lamented, “There is no[t] many relationship here with the staff, just a meeting once a month. And there is no many time to have a relationship with other teachers.” At the time of the one-on-one interview, he estimated being about 60% sure he would continue in the program for the third year; however, he did not reaffirm that estimation during the focus interview. Caleb expressed a similar frustration, even though his was not to the point of teetering between completing the J-1 program and leaving early. He simply stated, “I missed more training, more advises for your mates or from the school. Because I felt like [the approach was], ‘This is your class. Start to teach. Whatever you do in your class is your business.’” Even though Caleb was a trained, professional elementary school teacher, the cultural and curricular differences from Spain to the U.S. were too significant for him to enjoy a seamless entry into Central’s context. Sara seemed more confident in her placement from the beginning than the other teachers. But she, too, affirmed the desire to “talk to the people. [The school needs to be] somewhere that you spend your time happy, because you spend most of your day there.”

The participants expressed the same for such in-country acculturation themes such as “socializing outside of school” and “American friends outside of school.” The sentiment across all participants was that “everyone was very nice” but that there was little spontaneity or frequency for informal socializing. Only one participant said that she “had friends at the school,” while others confirmed flatly that they did not have friends among the American faculty.

The sub-code “cultural norms” co-occurred with “In-Country Acculturation” 31 times with mixed sentiment. It referred to cultural experiences with direct ties to the participants’ interactions within Central’s faculty. The three eldest participants, Caleb, Jairo and Ana, all expressed difficulty in connecting with Central’s American faculty on a spontaneous level, such as “drinks with [the participant(s)] or one two or three people” and interacting like “a family... the way [they] used to work in Spain.” But they also noted that they were more tied to their spouses and children’s schedules and did not have as much flexibility beyond the normal school day to connect casually and, thus, more naturally discuss items like personal space, grading, curriculum, and general procedure as pieces of the school culture. One of the younger participants, Dafne, disagreed with the difficulty. She said of her experience navigating the culture of interaction among Central’s Spanish and American faculty, “...we [hung] out and we [would] go out for a drink or something, and it was like religion. It was every Thursday. But just close people.” The “close people” to whom she was referring were a mix of Spanish and American faculty members who had formed a sort of friendship and who enjoyed one another’s company in authentic dialogue. Mara demonstrated a significant change in mindset from her first year to her third and final year. She said that when she first arrived, she thought of the American faculty’s curtness as “Okay, if you don’t want to talk with me I’m not going to talk with you.” But in her third year, Mara was to the point of saying, “...now I say, okay, the people listen in this way, they have their temperament.” Short of expressing having any particular friendships with Central’s American faculty, she at least had gained an understanding of and appreciation for the norms of American communication as she experienced them. Sara was silent on this particular issue.

Not surprisingly, the participants found their interpersonal anchor for their initial acculturation in their interaction with their countrymen who had gone before them and who were still working at Central. The sub-code “Central’s Spanish faculty” co-occurred with “in-country acculturation” 30 times. Although that was just over half of the co-occurrences of sub-codes “Central’s administration” and “Central’s American faculty,” all 30 occurrences were expressions of positive experiences on the part of the participants. Five of the six participants (all but Sara) had traveled to the U.S. with at least one other participant, which they said made the trip “really easy” and that they were “really lucky” to be with other Spaniards. From that point forward, four out of five (Jairo, Caleb, Ana, and Sara) said they had at least two visiting teacher program veterans (Dafne and Mara) available to them for acculturation assistance. While Dafne and Mara did not immediately have the luxury of assistance from the group of participants for this study, they were able to connect with former visiting teachers from Spain who had worked at Central and had secured teaching jobs elsewhere since then.

In suggesting a model of acculturation that centered on a personal connection, the participants did not point toward the clustering of visiting teacher Spaniards into a single school as a good solution. Although all of the participants had significantly benefitted from the help offered by either Spanish-speaking Americans or other Spanish visiting teachers, they most touted the language and culture acquisition benefits of connecting with English-speaking Americans. Mara, for example, commented that some of her friends who were participating in the J-1 program in another U.S. city found themselves spending most of their free time with other Spaniards. Mara judged that to be a major inhibitor to full engagement of the host community, and, therefore, to those visiting teachers’ acquisition of American English and culture. So, while she had complained of not receiving the same hospitality as her friends in the

other state, she estimated that the saturation of Spaniards in a single school or district eventually limited their personal and professional growth.

Lastly, even though the participants expressed frustration with the acculturation-related events immediately surrounding their departure from Spain and the initial challenges of establishing themselves in the U.S., all of them concluded by giving their then current arrangement a positive review. They described their experience with the program as “amazing,” “perfect,” and “very good.” Mara said of her second and third year experiences: “I feel...it’s much better and there are new people who want to work more and join people. You’re ready... I’m feeling much better... It’s not like at the beginning, for sure.” Dafne was especially satisfied with the program. She commented that “all the expectations, everything [was] good... the school, the mates.” Her level of satisfaction with the program was so high that at the time of this study she was in the process of applying for a two-year extension of her visa, and her then current position at Central Elementary was available to her. Caleb agreed with Dafne’s sentiment during the focus group interview and added, “The expectations are met and we are comfortable and the experience in this school is amazing. We are learning a lot.” Jairo initially expressed a much greater frustration with his first year at Central, especially. He said, “If I [had] to grade from 1 to 10, [then] perhaps five.” However, Jairo spoke with a much lighter tone in the focus group than in the personal interview about his experiences. Rather than rating his experience similar to how he had as in the one-on-one interview, Jairo told the group, “I don’t know. [The beginning] was really weird for me. But this year, I’m really happy. I can say that. Most of the expectations are being covered.” Still, Jairo did not take such a positive tone as to express complete satisfaction with the program.

Summary

The results of the individual interviews and the focus group interview, in conjunction with the information provided in the acculturation documents the participants received in Spain and the U.S., yielded significant understanding of Central Elementary's six Spanish visiting teachers' acculturation experiences. During the course of the interviews, it became clear that the six Spanish visiting teachers at Central Elementary had all experienced the most significant acculturation challenges from the hiring process through the first several months living and working in the U.S. This was further confirmed by the limitations of the acculturation documents the participants had received from the J-1 visa program and school officials both while in Spain and upon arrival in the U.S. The findings illustrate how the participants experienced these acculturation challenges and how despite these challenges all the participants adjusted to and delighted in their work environment, at least enough to want to continue in the J-1 program at Central Elementary and to continue exploring U.S. culture, language, and terrain.

Chapter 6
Analysis

Chapter 6

Introduction

While Chapter 5, presents the findings in terms of the trends in the data and their associated broader narrative of the participants' experiences with the J-1 visiting teacher program, from application to acceptance to then-current status in the program, this chapter analyzes the findings in two parts. First, it answers the research questions according to the findings. Second, it analyzes the findings and in doing so addresses how the findings are situated within the existing literature. Second, it identifies gaps in the existing related literature, where the findings of this study discovered new information not available in previous studies. Finally, this chapter concludes with both recommendations for improvements to the acculturation practices of schools that participate in the visiting teacher program and suggestions for further research on the topic of visiting teacher acculturation based on the findings of this study.

Answering the Research Questions

The two research questions to be answered were 1) how the participants of this study were or were not acculturated into their American school context, and 2) how the participants' experiences with their host school's community were or were not affected by the acculturation that they received related to their work at Central. The individual interviews, the focus group interview, and the acculturation documents all served to illuminate the acculturation experiences of the participants, especially the in-country acculturation experiences of Central Elementary's Spanish visiting teachers.

With respect to research question one, it is concluded that the participating Spanish visiting teachers were not adequately acculturated into Central's school context either as intended by the U.S. Department of Education and the Spanish Ministry of Education or as the

participants would have liked as experienced educators newly placed in a U.S. elementary school. It cannot be concluded that the participants received zero acculturation, from their pre-U.S. preparation to their time at Central, but rather that the acculturation efforts and items afforded to them on the part of Central's American staff were lacking in intentionality and cultural sensitivity. Furthermore, those same acculturation efforts were strongly desired by the participants in order to both improve their interaction with their American colleagues and improve their efficacy, especially in their first year at Central. Therefore, intentional, regulated, ongoing acculturation was shown to be a necessary element for the positive adjustment of teachers new to a particular school context.

In regards to question 2, it can be perceived that while the participants were significantly negatively affected by the lack of intentionality in their acculturation into Central's school context, especially on the part of Central's staff, they ultimately thrived in that environment. That result does not negate the positive impact that a drastically improved acculturation might have had on their overall effectiveness and confidence as teachers at Central Elementary, as well as their total satisfaction with the visiting teacher program. Instead, it demonstrates that the teachers were committed to the immersive experience desired by them and afforded to them through the program, in spite of the fact that the lacking acculturation arguably stunted their full enjoyment of the program to some extent.

The Findings Situated within Existing Literature

The framework for answering the questions was best practices of teacher acculturation, which most typically involves preparing, equipping, and developing teachers new to a particular school so that they might become successful, integral members of a positive school context (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995; Wechsler, et al., 2012). The analysis of data consistently revealed that

the acculturation that the participants received, especially in the U.S. via Central Elementary's staff, lacked in the regularity and intentionality that best practices in acculturation would demand. That the vast majority of the acculturation the participants received was left up to them and their individual classroom experiences is consistent with the reviewed literature (Chan, 2014). However, the participants did in fact desire a more regimented acculturation on the part of Central's staff. This was especially the case in regards to curriculum and classroom management, which the reviewed literature revealed to be the two most prominent challenges and areas of requested assistance on the part of new teachers (Hertzog, 2002). None of the participants expressed having felt like they had ever failed at their assignments, but they did express feeling quite frustrated with the lack of sound instruction on routines and practices that otherwise might have increased their feelings of efficacy in the classroom (Goddard et al., 2006; Karc-Kakabadse, 2001; Loeb, 2009).

While it might be argued that the resulting data concerning visiting teacher acculturation could have been attributed to the type of questions asked of the participants, they were at the very least reflective of the fact that new teacher acculturation is consistently a major concern for teachers across the U.S. (Chan, 2014; Goddard, 2006). Furthermore, the consistency among the participants' accounts of the very limited acculturation experiences they had at Central Elementary, especially in comparison to the acculturation practices called for both in the reviewed literature and in the *Spanish Visiting Teachers* guidebook for participating schools, collectively demonstrated a lesser acculturation experience for the participants of this study (Chan, 2014; "Spanish Visiting Teachers").

Despite the above factors, the participants did not express having felt that the American faculty and staff were directly rude or wholly ignored them. Instead, the participants'

experiences reflected what could have been anticipated from a more intentional understanding of each one's typical placement along the cultural mapping spectrum. The participants, who hailed from the high-context culture of Spain, did indeed experience Central Elementary to be a low-context work environment that was conducted by explicit and sparse communication (Reynolds & Valentine, 2004). Perhaps this cultural gap might have been significantly narrowed had Central's staff followed a more regular and recommendable acculturation program for its visiting (and other new) teachers (Chan, 2014; Goddard, 2006). The lack of strength in good acculturation notwithstanding, however, both parties were true to form according to the Americans' tendency toward "low levels of programmed information to provide context" versus the Spaniards' more typical "high levels of programmed information" for the same (Karac-Kakabadse et al., 2001). In short, the Spanish visiting teachers were culturally more expectant and professionally needing of greater and more frequent amounts of information and direct interaction with their American colleagues at Central.

Again, this cultural disparity did not necessarily result in a lack of resourcing in terms of materials; rather, it highlighted a desire on the part of the Spaniards for greater intentionality and frequency in social interaction within the context of their professional acculturation, especially in the first year in the J-1 program (Chan, 2014; Karac-Kakabadse et al., 2001). Furthermore, the lack of proximate social connection with Central's staff beyond the shared context of teaching, illustrated the desire of individuals of a non-dominant culture to anchor themselves to a cultural constant. The participants simply desired more consistent and more robust interpersonal relationships, as a means to navigating their acculturation in the dominant culture (Reynolds & Valentine, 2004).

In terms of written instructions and guidance, the participants were supposed to have benefitted directly from the *Guía para Profesores* and indirectly from the *Spanish Visiting Teachers* booklet intended for host school administrations. That *Guía para Profesores* was produced by the Spanish Ministry of Education and was written specifically for the Spanish visiting teachers, and the “Spanish Visiting Teachers” booklet, also a product of the Spanish Ministry of Education, was written as an instructional piece for participating American host school administrations (“Guía para Profesores,” 2017; “Spanish Visiting Teachers,” 2014). The latter should have benefitted the participants the most, even though it was indirectly addressed to their experiences via the hosting parameters it gave to the host school administrations. Among the few main responsibilities for those administrations was to provide “strong mentoring throughout the academic year” (“Spanish Visiting Teachers,” 2014). The instructional booklet further defined the requirement as “an intensive, yearlong mentoring program by a highly qualified mentor” (“Spanish Visiting Teachers,” 2014, p. 8). The purpose of the mentoring was, above all, to provide “cultural mentoring,” in addition to “high visibility... and check-ins from administrators,” which was determined to be a primary concern for the high-context Spaniards (Sam & Berry, 2010; “Spanish Visiting Teachers,” 2014, p. 15).

While the *Spanish Visiting Teachers* booklet gave American host school administrators those clear indicators for how to care for their visiting teachers from Spain in this regard, the participants were simply not assigned a mentor teacher at Central. The participants strongly desired and would have benefitted from the most essential portion of mentoring, which was direction from a longer tenured peer (Wechsler et al., 2012). However, the participants found comfort in supporting one another in place of whatever assigned mentors they should have gotten at Central. That the participants would seek out one another for their self-guided acculturation

aligned with the “echoed stories” phenomenon, in which teachers are more readily drawn to experientially and culturally proximate peers for guidance (Conle, 1996; Hertzog, 2002). But this behavior did not suggest a trend toward separation (exactly juxtaposed to assimilation) as a category of the process of acculturation, but rather a natural comfort level for drawing support from those of one’s own culture (Hertzog, 2002; Sam & Berry, 2010). Furthermore, the lack of an assigned mentor alone did not seem to produce a desire for the participants to leave their posts prior to the three-year stint intended by the program (Wechsler et al., 2012).

The multi-national staffing at Central Elementary as a result of its participation in the Spanish visiting teachers program added challenge to the school context experienced by the participants. This aligned with existing literature that pointed to teachers’ need and desire for a positive school context (receiving what they needed from the school administration to feel successful) and to be fully engaged, integrated parts of their communities, independent of their being from another country (Goddard et al, 2006; Wechsler et all, 2012). This also reflected the participants’ desire for integration into Central’s community, rather than assimilating by laying aside their home culture or isolating themselves by engaging only amongst those of their home culture (Sam & Berry, 2010). In short, the participants desired a healthy school context in which they could engage, learn from, and appreciate their American colleagues’ culture while also having that engagement, learning, and appreciation for their home culture be appreciated by their American colleagues (Raymond et al, 1974; Sam & Berry, 2010).

The presence of a multi-national staff at Central also illustrated the necessity for school leadership to combine warmth and kindness of personality with a very intentional, knowledgeable, and collaborative approach to leading a very heterogeneous staff (Camarata & Tedick, 2012; Murphy & Meyer, 2008). In Central’s school context, the administration’s being

that intentional in caring for its staff would have meant acquiring and applying a deeper understanding of the culture-laden professional needs of its international staff (Aguirre-Baeza, 2001; Walker & Tedick, 2000). Such relational intentionality on the part of the school administration is essential to quality teacher acculturation at any level, but especially in school contexts in which new teachers are navigating both the culture of the school and their native country's culture as applied to the host school's educational setting.

It is plain that certain very challenging experiences significantly affected each visiting teacher's experience in the J-1 program, especially within the first several months of his or her working at Central. All of the participating visiting teachers described an unnecessarily stressful initial several months in the program; however, at the time of this study none of them had chosen to forego continuing in the program as a result of the acculturation stressors.

The participants' references to an improved experience always centered on the lack of acculturation they received at the beginning of and for a significant portion of their first year of their three-year stay at Central Elementary. This is consistent with existing literature that found that non or poorly-accultured first-years teachers were less effective and less confident in their first year in their new school (Henry et al, 2011). Also, after conquering the hurdle of the first few months, albeit laboriously and sometimes awkwardly, each participant figured out a way to have a fulfilling experience in the program. Perhaps most significantly, all of the participants were committed to the benefits of the program in spite of the shortcomings of their in-country acculturation experiences at Central Elementary. In this regard, Central fell somewhere in between a strong school context, where teachers receive the guidance, materials, and other resources they need to be effective and feel prepared, and a weak school context, its opposite (Wechsler et al, 2012).

Remaining Gaps in the Existing Literature and Future Research

The most glaring gap in the literature is that no research has previously addressed the acculturation experiences of Spanish visiting teachers in the U.S. All of the reviewed literature conducted previous to this study significantly contributed to and clearly aligned with the issues that the participants of this study experienced during their time in the visiting teacher program. Until now, however, none of the literature existing at the time of this study had examined the acculturation experiences in question through the lens of best practices in new teacher acculturation nor with its accompanying filters of culture mapping, leadership of multi-national staff, or mentoring as a cross-cultural bridge to visiting teacher efficacy. However, this study provides insight into why acculturation matters on all these levels, even when the teachers new to a given school context are not at all new to either the teaching profession nor to the subjects they are hired to teach at their U.S. host schools. This is a significant contribution to the field of knowledge because it centers on the success of the Spanish visiting teacher program through cultural and professional mutuality, rather than forced parity of visiting teachers' professional qualifications with the utility value of their being native speakers of the foreign language of a dual language immersion program.

While what is required of potential visiting teachers in terms of professional qualifications and experience is made clear in the application process, it cannot be concluded from existing literature how would-be Spanish visiting teachers might be recruited, or otherwise encouraged or discouraged to apply. It would be of great value to potential host schools in the U.S. to know more about that professional trajectory of their potential visiting teachers so that they might better understand them beyond their resumes and the schools' needs. Therefore, further research should also be conducted specific to the complexities of the pre-U.S.

experiences of eventual visiting teachers, such as professional formation, socio-political scenarios in their country of origin, and their personal aspirations and development. Such research would serve both future participating teachers and U.S. host school administrations and their faculties by encouraging them to understand one another beyond professional qualifications and U.S. host schools' year-to-year hiring needs. This study does provide a strong foundation and impetus for pursuing such research in that it alludes to a larger narrative of the cultures in contact through Spanish visiting teacher acculturation, and it invites further dialogue with Spanish teaching professionals who might consider participating in the visiting teacher program in the future.

Finally, further research should be conducted on U.S. Spanish visiting program schools that consistently have particularly positive acculturation reviews from their visiting teachers. This research focus should not seek to confirm the worth of and need for implementation of best practices in acculturation specific to hosting visiting teachers from Spain; rather, it should seek to ascertain the many facets of strong visiting teacher acculturation programs so that they may be examples to other participating schools. This study would pair nicely with such future research, as the two perspectives would bookend and therefore contextualize and illuminate the objective of successful, ongoing visiting teacher acculturation for sake of high-quality teaching and learning, which is the success of visiting teachers and, consequently, the success of the host school and its constituents.

Recommendations

It is plain from the data that the participants' initial entry into Central Elementary's school context would have greatly benefitted from a more complete pre-U.S. acculturation while still in Spain. Too many unanswered questions remained even after their very brief training via

Central's district personnel and the school's leadership, such as classroom management, the designated curriculum for each course the participants were to teach, whether they would be assigned a mentor teacher, and to whom, when and how to ask for help at Central. While some of the participants did receive general advice from former participants about teaching in American schools, none of the former participants had taught at Central specifically. Furthermore, the *Guía para Profesores Visitantes*, which was created for Spanish visiting teachers, was never intended to help would-be visiting teachers to understand their eventual host school's context, its pervading cultural norms, or its daily routine. At least in the case of the participants of this study, that kind of information would have proved invaluable and, in a sense, would have served as a kind of surrogate guide in lieu of their absent mentor teachers.

At the most basic level, Spanish visiting teachers should be given the host school's curriculum specific to their teaching assignment well prior to arriving in the U.S. This would give them time to learn and understand differences in sequencing, as well as the flow of grade-level material. It would also give the visiting teachers something about which to be confident as they navigated cultural differences in classroom management and daily interaction with other school personnel.

When visiting teachers decide to stay at their current school, it might be assumed that there is no need for improvement in the area of teacher care via acculturation. On the contrary, it would be more accurate that the participants would have prized something far above the pains of self-guided cultural and professional adjustment, such as the promise of culture and language immersion. However, counting on that overarching desire to pacify the difficulties inherent in a lack of rigorous acculturation is an unnecessarily unhealthy scenario for any teacher new to a particular school context. but especially those who hail from other countries. Teachers' first year

at a new school brings entirely too much newness to allow them to be as effective as they would be in subsequent years. When new teachers, and teachers new to a given school context, are not relationally and regimentally supported and developed through ongoing, intentional acculturation, the entire school is negatively affected. Furthermore, not following best practices in new teacher acculturation potentially jeopardizes a school's future participation in the visiting teacher program. It is, therefore, not recommended to allow visiting teachers to tough it out in the first year in the program as a manner of acculturation.

Any American school wishing to participate in the Spanish visiting teacher program should ensure that a regimented, ongoing, relational acculturation process be in place prior to employing any Spanish visiting teachers. More specifically, host schools should, in collaboration with other entities such as the Spanish Ministry of Education, and former Spanish visiting teachers to create and implement an intensive first-year acculturation program. Such a program should span from the future program participants' pre-U.S. acculturation through at least their first year of working at the host school, and it should include such resources as webinars to meet school personnel, learn about the curriculum of their assignments, explain classroom management, and illustrate the school culture.

It would behoove host schools to engage their visiting teachers at this level well prior to the teachers' arrival in the U.S. so that in their first year they might more immediately and confidently approach their subject matter, their classroom, and their students. Host schools in the U.S. would be doing far more than simply connecting with their Spanish visiting teachers on an interpersonal level, which of course would be valuable in building camaraderie prior to the start of the school year of the host school. They would also be fomenting a culture of professional collaboration and appreciation that would strengthen how the students and families

at the host schools were served by the entire faculty. Additionally, it would be professionally savvy of the host schools' personnel to collaborate with former participants and their host school administrations to create digital resources, such as a webinar or voiceover PowerPoint, to explain each host school's context, its norms and strategies for classroom management, and the standards of the host school's state. Not only would this result in a significant collection of acculturation resources potentially available to all future host schools and their Spanish visiting teachers, but it would bridge the cultural gap between what is expected by host schools and what is hoped for by those new to the program.

Once visiting teachers arrive in the U.S., having an assigned expert teacher as a mentor becomes one of the key ingredients for any successful acculturation of teachers new to a given school context. The participants of this study desired to have intentional, proximate guidance from at least one established teacher at Central. An effective mentor teacher would have preemptively and progressively informed the participants on best practices for classroom management, exemplified the implementation of the curriculum, and provided feedback on the visiting teachers' performance in the classroom. This essential guidance would likely have reduced the participants' initial anxiety and workload as they tried to build out their assigned courses. At the very least, participating schools like Central should follow the basic guidance of the *Visiting Teachers Program Guide* to identify and provide a mentor teacher to each visiting teacher they employ. While simple compliance is not the ultimate goal, it would likely ensure that the leadership of participating schools would provide some kind of one-on-one acculturation to the newcomer Spaniards.

In the particular context of compulsory schooling, it cannot be assumed, nor is it herein recommended, that would-be American faculty mentors should volunteer to serve in that

capacity. Instead, schools that participate in the J-1 visiting teacher program should find and implement an incentivization program for mentors commensurate with their efforts and needs, as well as the school's goals for its participating in the program. For districts with a culture that highly values mentorship beyond any monetary compensation to the mentor, perhaps the school could offer to cover meals or coffees should the mentor and the mentee choose to meet off campus or during their lunch breaks. Otherwise, an amount of monetary compensation commensurate with assigned and expected duties of the mentor should be included in the mentor's contract. In either scenario, participating schools would demonstrate a more anticipatory and intentional approach to caring for both their visiting teachers and their American faculty.

In addition to the decidedly proximate one-on-one instruction that a better mentoring program would provide, it is recommended that participating U.S. schools provide a more robust, ongoing professional development program for all of their teachers, but especially for the Spanish visiting teachers upon their arrival in the U.S. and for at least the duration of their first year in the program. Again, teachers in any school context should not be left to their own devices to figure out the culture, curriculum, pedagogical expectations, classroom management, and social norms of their host schools. A quality professional development program would inform new teachers of the above norms, exemplify them in group and one-on-one presentations, and provide ongoing feedback and guidance to the new teachers throughout their first year at the host school. Otherwise, host schools error in counting too heavily on the pre-J1 program professional formation of the visiting teachers, which falls short of the ideal of continuing education.

In addition to following best practices in acculturation, it is also recommended that any participating school maintain a cadre of multiple Spanish visiting teachers at any given time. This study illuminated the benefits of such an approach, albeit an apparently unintentional strategy for new teacher acculturation on the part of Central's administration. The participants of this study received from other Spaniards the majority of the in-country acculturation they ought to have received from Central's American staff. Although this was predominantly the result of a weak acculturation from Central's American staff, it was also the result of a comfort level and mutual understanding among the participants. Among other Spaniards, there was no language or culture barrier, and there was a foundation of shared experience that motivated the participants to help one another as they had been helped. Even if a participating school were to offer a strong acculturation process for its visiting teachers, it would still behoove that school to embrace the phenomenon of "echoed stories" and support their visiting teachers with the presence of their compatriots (Conle, 1996). Simply put, it is comforting to not have to explain one's dilemmas through the wall of limited language and culture proficiency.

Among the more prevalent cultural needs of the participants was greater social interaction with their colleagues. They had been used to a far more regular yet spontaneous culture of mid-day and weekend small gatherings in Spain, and they expressed having missed that while at Central. While the participants recognized that the workday also functioned differently in Spain than in the U.S., most of them lamented not truly having a deep enough personal connection with their American colleagues that would result in non-programmed, non-holiday-inspired gatherings for simple conversation. Because this is such an important aspect to the Spanish culture, as well as just good practice for building camaraderie, host schools should take greater care to coordinate such social interactions among their American and Spanish faculty. The level to

which the two cultures might connect would still be up to the faculty; however, a greater intentionality in this regard could potentially bridge cultural and social gaps among otherwise similar professionals working in the same facilities.

Conclusions

As a result of the data mentioned above, the research questions were answered in two ways. First, the question of how the visiting teachers were acculturated into the work environment in this U.S. dual language immersion school can be answered as “limited,” meaning that they did receive some anticipatory, pre-departure guidance from J-1 program personnel in Spain and some informational guidance post-arrival in the U.S. However, none of the participants perceived having any intentional, unsolicited, relational mentoring from Central’s administration or faculty. That limited guidance and mentoring contributed to very long, stressful preparatory hours and unnecessarily prolonged adjustments to workday practices, intercultural dialogue, curriculum development, classroom management, student discipline, work-life balance (especially for those with families) and feelings of efficacy. Second, while each participant expressed significant frustration and challenges with the lack of intentional, unsolicited acculturation efforts on the part of Central’s staff and faculty, all of them also noted that those frustrations were short-lived relative to the three years they were allowed and planned to stay via the J-1 visa. Thus, while the participants’ initial acculturation could have been smoother and more effective, their commitment to the cultural and language immersion aspect of the program, as well the professional development afforded by it, were more important to them than their mediocre acculturation experiences. However, it cannot be concluded that the participants would still have remained in or been content with the program had their settlement into U.S. residency, their levels of confidence in their teaching assignments, and their

management of their new workloads not improved within the first several months of their first year.

Finally, an educator's professional formation, educational and professional credentials, and previous teaching experiences are not, by themselves, a guarantee of that same educator's future success in a school context that is brand new to him or her. Even in the hyper-specialized context of a dual language elementary school in the U.S., not all such schools are equal in programming, leadership, results, or, especially, local culture. If the Spanish visiting teacher program is going to continue to be a viable option for U.S. school districts that intend to perpetuate, or else establish, develop, and grow, dual language immersion programs, it behooves those current and would-be participating districts and their schools to take good care of their visiting teachers. None of the data of this study suggests that any example of the visiting teachers' not being properly acculturated puts the entire agreement between the U.S. and Spain at risk. However, those districts and states who stand out among others for their care for their guests will likely find it much easier to attract top talent from Spain and, most probably, enjoy more successful programs in the future.

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ANDREW DUNCAN GOODWIN

EDUCATION

- Ed.D.**, Educational Leadership Indiana University (Bloomington), 2018
Dissertation: *Exploring the Acculturation of Teachers from Spain Working in a U.S. Urban Dual Language Immersion Elementary School*
- M.S.**, Strategic Management Kelley School of Business, 2016
- M.A.T.**, Spanish Language and Hispanic Cultures Indiana University (IUPUI), 2003
Consortium Master's Program, Summer Immersion Universidad de Salamanca, 2002 & 2003
Thesis: *Una hibridación de la educación por la inmersión tardía con un programa no-inmersión de nivel secundario*
- B.A.**, Spanish (English Minor, Education Area Concentration) Wabash College, 1997
Junior Year Abroad Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara, 1995-1996

ADMINISTRATION

Covenant Christian High School, Indianapolis

- Principal & CEO 2012-Present
 - Overall School Management
 - Vision Casting and Implementation
 - Stewardship of Key Relationships for Advancement and Sustainability
 - Staff Resourcing and Accountability
 - New Program Development
 - Board Growth and Development
- January Term Student Travel Coordinator 2011-Present
 - Facilitate January Term trip planning and development
 - Manage trip proposals from faculty
 - Coordinate trip participation applications from students
- Academic Dean 2011-2012
 - Curriculum Development, Teacher Resourcing and Accountability
- World Languages Department Head 2008-2013
 - Supervised curriculum and instruction for Spanish, French (Online) and Chinese
 - Hired and trained World Language teachers in immersion-style language teaching

TEACHING

Covenant Christian High School, Indianapolis

1998-Present

Domestic

- Created an immersion-style Spanish language and culture program for Spanish levels 1-5
- Taught all levels of Spanish at various points over first 14 years with the program
- Currently teaching Advanced Spanish courses (Levels 4 & 5)

Abroad

- Piloted an online Advanced Spanish Conversation course while on sabbatical
 - Seville, Spain 2010-2011
- Planned and led January Term immersion study trips for juniors and seniors
 - Seville, Spain 2012, 2013
 - Manuel Antonio/Quepos, Costa Rica 2010
 - Cusco, Peru 2009
 - Madrid & Barcelona (& surrounding cities), Spain 2006
- Planned and led construction, medical and teaching mission trips for students and parents
 - Tijuana, Mexico 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007
 - Piedras Negras, Mexico 2008, 2009

Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

2004-2010

- Invited to become an adjunct faculty member by master's thesis committee chair upon completion of MAT thesis
- Courses Taught:
 - Beginner and Intensive Beginner Spanish (S117, S118, & S119)
 - Spanish Grammar (S311)
 - Advanced-Intermediate Conversation in Spanish (S313)
 - Academic Writing in Spanish (S317)

OTHER LEADERSHIP

Chapel Rock Christian Church

- Interpreter for marriage seminars – Alamar, Cuba 2018
- Presenter and interpreter for leadership seminars – Alamar, Cuba 2015
- Suspension bridge construction team – Jarabacoa, Dominican Republic 2015
- Interpreter for medical clinic and home construction team – Tijuana, Mexico 2005

Covenant Christian High School

- Supervising teacher for IUPUI graduate student classroom practicums 2006-Present
- National Honor Society Selection Committee 2003-2011
- Coordinator for Indiana University Honors Program in Foreign Languages 1999-2010
- “Understanding by Design” Curriculum Development Team 2004-2010

Global Indiana

- Exchange connections for Indiana public school liaisons in Seville, Spain 2016
- Student and faculty exchange exploration for Indiana teachers, Quito, Ecuador 2013

Team Expansion, Guarenas, Venezuela 2002, 2003, 2005

- Interpreted for large group of American lay coaches at inner-city youth basketball camp
- Coached primary and middle school student Venezuelan basketball teams

Iglesia Metodista Unida Vida Nueva 1999-2003

- Youth pastor for Latino junior high and high school students
- Organized and taught youth classes and extra-curricular activities
- Taught GED course to Spanish-speaking congregants and community members

CERTIFICATIONS

Diploma de Español como Lengua Extranjera (DELE)	Instituto Cervantes
Indiana Teaching License, Secondary Spanish, Master	Indiana Department of Education
Nonprofit Executive Leadership (CNEL)	Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University
Professional Educator Certificate, Principal (Lifetime)	ACSI
Professional Educator Certificate, Secondary (Lifetime)	ACSI

AFFILIATIONS

American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP)	2001-Present
▪ President, Indiana Chapter	2011-2013
▪ Vice President, Indiana Chapter	2009-2011
▪ Advisory Committee, Indiana Chapter	2005-2009
▪ Events Judge, “Concurso Académico”	2005-2014
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages	2008-Present
Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development	2013-2017
Indiana Foreign Language Teachers Association (IFLTA)	2001-Present
▪ Constituent organization representative for IAATSP	2011-2014
▪ Teacher of the Year Selection Committee	2009-2011
Indiana Association of School Principals	2015-Present
National Association of Secondary School Principals	2014-Present

PRESENTATIONS

Sister Cities Conference: Indianapolis as a Global Crossroad

- “Creating and Participating in an Immersion Community” Indianapolis, 2016

American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP) Annual Conference

- “Take Your Students Abroad” San Juan, Puerto Rico, 2012
- “Creating a No-Cost Immersion Program through Inter-Curricular Studies” Guadalajara, Mexico, 2010
- “Teaching Language Immersion-Style within a Traditional Classroom Setting” San José, Costa Rica, 2008

Covenant Christian High School Curriculum Development Seminars

- Institute for Immersion-Style Language Teaching for 9-12 WLAC Teachers 2008
- “Understanding by Design” Assessment Training for High School Teachers 2007
- “7 Principles of Pedagogy – An Experiment in Backward Education” 2005

Indiana Foreign Language Teachers Association (IFLTA) Regional Conference

- “Equipped World Language Teachers, Successful World Language Students” 2012
- “Collaborating with the Spanish-Speaking Community” 2008
- “Creating an Immersion Community – A Hybridization of Immersion Programs” 2007
- “A Planned Immersion Experience: Studying Abroad with Purpose” 2004

Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis

- “The Pablo Neruda Biography Game” for the IAATSP High School *Día de Inmersión* 2005
- “Immersion through Community Service” for the Congreso de Didáctica de Español 2003

HONORS AND AWARDS

Butler University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Teacher Excellence Award	2011
Lilly Teacher Creativity Fellow: “Preserving My Family Stories” (\$8,000)	2010
Teacher of the Year Finalist, CSCTFL (17-State Regional Competition)	2010
Battey National Educator of the Year, DePauw University (\$9,500)	2009
Teacher of the Year, All Languages and Levels, IFLTA	2008
Teacher of the Year, High School Level, AATSP (Indiana Chapter)	2008
Teacher of the Year Semi-Finalist, Indiana Department of Education	2007
IUPUI Student Athlete Favorite Professor	2006

Sigma Delta Pi National Hispanic Honor Society	2004
Who's Who Among America's Teachers	2004
Project E Teacher Excellence Award, Christel DeHann Foundation (\$8000)	2003
"Edra Staffieri" Professional Development Grant for Study Abroad (\$500)	2002
Phi Sigma Iota International Foreign Language Honor Society	1997