

**“AULAS DE ENLACE”: A STUDY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PILOT  
COMPENSATORY EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR NON-SPANISH SPEAKING  
NEWCOMER STUDENTS IN MADRID, SPAIN**

by

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This study investigates the recent implementation of the “Escuelas de Bienvenida” program (*Welcome Schools*), in the Autonomous Community of Madrid (CAM). Specifically, it focuses on the “Aulas de Enlace”, one integral part of the program. This research investigates the participants’ everyday experiences, and the perceptions and meanings attached to those experiences while in the program. Additionally, the study identifies the factors that affect participant perceptions, analyzes the impact of the program on student learning, and documents their intentions to continue to post-compulsory education. The study also attempts to uncover the match between the official policy and the participants’ lived experiences and perceptions of the program.

The participants in this study were 116 recently arrived Chinese, Moroccan and Romanian secondary students, 36 “Aulas de Enlace” teachers, 3 principals, 2 inspectors and 2 policy and decision makers. Research was conducted in 23 high schools in the CAM, and four were selected for case studies. Methods of data collection included survey questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, participant and non-participant observation, and document analysis. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, content analysis, and member checking.

This research shows that program design, implementation and practice do not reflect the research literature on second language acquisition and effective immigrant minority education. Consequently, policy and practice are guided by misconceptions that do not influence positively

the education of immigrant children. Furthermore, this research shows that the Spanish language learning goals of the program are not achieved equally by all children, and integration into the Spanish education system is not uniformly realized. This finding renders the claim that the program provides equal education for all invalid. The study also shows that program planning and implementation were not carefully undertaken, which resulted in stereotypical views of minority students. Stereotypes are posited to affect the teachers' interactions with children and their expectations of performance. The findings of the study raise questions about the political motivations behind program implementation.

This study underscores the importance of giving voice to the constituents of educational innovations. In doing so, I hope to promote conversation that will lead to more thoughtful and informed policy making and practice.

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## PREFACE

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the purpose of this research and its rationale in the Spanish context. It also presents the five research questions that the study intends to answer. Furthermore, Chapter 1 describes the “Aulas de Enlace” program in accordance with the official policy document and the observations carried out during the fieldwork. Additionally, this chapter briefly introduces the methodology employed to collect and analyze data. Chapter 2 reviews the research literature relevant to this study. It discusses the role of perceptions in academic research, provides an overview of the main theoretical proposals regarding the education of immigrant minorities worldwide, and reviews the different approaches to language program evaluation. The final part of the chapter introduces the main constructs of phenomenology, and its application to the study’s research methodology. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology and the instruments developed to collect data in this study. Moreover, this third chapter explains how the participants and the sites were selected, and it provides a complete description of both. The last part of chapter 3 introduces the data analysis techniques used in the research study. Chapter 4 analyzes the data collected to answer the five research questions proposed in chapter 1. Finally, chapter 5 discusses the three main findings of this study, providing commendations and recommendations for implementation, as well as further research directions. The final part of chapter 5 is a personal reflection about the research experience itself.

## 1.1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As a consequence of socio-economically or politically determined processes of migration, the immigrant population has increased dramatically in Spain in the past two decades. In the short history of immigration to the country, Madrid has played a decisive role in the reception of migratory flows (Lora-Tamayo D'Ocón, 2003). Madrid is the region that receives the highest volume of immigration, followed by Barcelona, which are the two largest job markets for both foreigners and Spaniards.

Statistical data about the number of foreigners living in Madrid can be obtained from three different sources: (1) the Population Census, (2) the “Padrón de Habitantes”, and (3) the National Police Department (“Dirección General de Policía”). A new Population Census ([www.ine.es](http://www.ine.es)) is issued every ten years in Spain, and it registers Spanish and foreign population (both documented and undocumented). The 2001 Population Census showed that 362,617 immigrants lived in the Autonomous Community<sup>1</sup> of Madrid (hereafter CAM), that is, 23.4% of the total foreign population living in Spain (the total population accounted for 1,548,941 people). The “Padrón de Habitantes” ([www.ine.es](http://www.ine.es)) includes personal information, i.e., name, age, address, level of education, country of origin and nationality from all residents in the CAM. Registration in the “Padrón” is compulsory for all people who want to have access to free health care and education, a reason why most immigrants register shortly after their arrival in the country. The 2001 “Padrón de Habitantes” showed that 305,656 foreigners lived in the CAM, and they represented 22.2% of the total foreign population living in Spain. This figure has increased dramatically in the last four years, and the most recent “Padrón de Habitantes” (January 1, 2005)

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<sup>1</sup> Spain is divided into 17 autonomous communities, each one with their own regional government. Each autonomous community has been transferred complete competencies from the central government regarding health care, education, and justice among others.

showed a total of 780,752 registered immigrants living in the autonomous community of Madrid. This figure represents almost 24% of the total foreign population registered in the 2005 “Padrón de Habitantes” in Spain. The National Police Department (“Dirección General de Policía” or DGP, [www.policia.es](http://www.policia.es)) issues updated statistics of foreigners with residence permits every three months. Since only documented immigrants are included in these figures, the data differ greatly from those of the Census and the “Padrón de Habitantes”. According to the DGP statistics, on June 30, 2002, more than 23% of the total immigrant population with residence permits in Spain lived in Madrid. [Table 1.1](#) summarizes the data from the three available sources.

Table 1.1 *Immigrant Population in Spain and the CAM according to Three Different Data Sources*

	<i>“Padrón de Habitantes”</i>		<i>2001 Population Census</i>	<i>Police Department</i>	
	2001	2005		2001	2005
SPAIN	1,370,657	3,730,610	1,548,941	1,109,060	2,738,932
CAM	305,656 (22.2%)	780,752 (24%)	362,617 (23.4%)	231,295 (20.8)	556,952 (20.4%)

Two main patterns emerged from contrasting the data from the three sources: (1) the role of Madrid as a main destination for recent migrations, and (2) the controversial issue of illegal immigration. Although the real figure of undocumented immigrants is impossible to determine (Lora-Tamayo D’Ocón, 2003), the different processes of regularization helped provide an estimate. According to the information appeared in the press (EL PAÍS, May 2005), the latest process of regularization (between March and May 2005) accounted for more than 300,000 immigrants that had applied to legalize their situation in Spain. As a result, growing numbers of

immigrant children are either undocumented themselves or the children of undocumented parents. Nevertheless, all children in Spain retain the right to attend primary and secondary school regardless of their parents' legal status. In addition to statistical data, qualitative data also provide valuable information to gain a better picture of the immigrant population in the CAM (Lora-Tamayo D'Ocón, 2003). The three specific characteristics that best describe immigration to the community of Madrid are: (1) low presence of European Union and other developed countries' citizens, and strong presence of citizens from underdeveloped countries; (2) a very strong presence of Latin American citizens; and (3) a remarkable presence of feminine immigration favored by the importance of domestic employment.

The immigrant population in Madrid comes from many diverse places. The 2001 Census showed an increase of the Latin American population living in Madrid (61.1% of the total population that entered the last process of regularization came from different Latin American countries), followed by Eastern European citizens. Ecuadorians and Colombians are the largest Latin American communities in the CAM, with 126,146 and 68,034 citizens respectively as of June 2002. Moroccans are far from being the most represented immigrant population in the region, although they are the third group in order of importance, with a slow but steady growth in the last ten years. The Romanian community constitutes the fourth most represented community in Madrid, and it will probably continue to grow in the future due to the suppression of the visa requirement to enter the EU since January, 2002. The growth of Peruvian and Dominican communities (fifth and sixth most represented communities) has been slow in the last decade due to the visa requirement for entrance imposed in the 1990s. Polish and Chinese communities occupy seventh and eighth places respectively in their number of citizens who lived in Madrid in 2004-2005.

The increase in the number of immigrants in the country has translated into an increase of their children's presence in the school system due to both the process of "reunificación familiar" (family reunification)<sup>2</sup>, and the growing number of children born to immigrant families. It is noteworthy that immigrant populations have the highest birth rates in the EU. Thus, Spanish classrooms have undergone a rapid and continuous process of diversification in their student population with regard to the number of languages spoken and the number of countries represented over the past decade. This trend is new in Spain, and it presents a challenge to the education system, which must devise effective means to address the needs of the newcomer population. According to the official statistics from the Spanish Department of Education (MEC), the number of foreign students in both public and private schools increased from 53,213 in the 1994-1995 school year to 447,525 students in 2004-2005. The same source (MEC) shows that 27,948 of these students were enrolled in secondary schools in the Autonomous Community of Madrid in the 2004-2005 school year. Thus, many non-Spanish-speaking immigrant minority students who arrive in Spain through the process of family reunification enter compulsory secondary education (ESO) every year.

While there is a general agreement that schools are crucial sites where children first confront issues of inclusion/exclusion, and the ideal place to lay the foundations for a truly multicultural society (Soriano Ayala, 2000), few real adaptations have been made when faced with classroom heterogeneity. The first contingents of immigrant students who entered schools in the 1980s were either directly mainstreamed or mainstreamed and sent to pull-out remedial education classes. In accordance with this "sink or swim" philosophy, all subject matter courses

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<sup>2</sup> Family reunification is the process by which a member of the family who initially migrated is allowed to bring other members, including their children, to the host country, provided that their economic situation allows it.

were taught in Spanish, and it was the exclusive responsibility of the students to succeed in their courses. The “Plan Regional de Compensación Educativa” (Regional Plan for Compensatory Education), approved by the Madrid regional government in November, 2000, is the legal framework that establishes that non-Spanish-speaking immigrant students should be placed in their designated attendance area school, assigned to grades in accordance with their age, scheduled in regular classes, and pulled out for Spanish instruction during certain class periods. The program intended to compensate for inequalities in education, especially those derived from socioeconomic status.

Given the demographic changes that have altered the face of Spanish schools, regional educational authorities have an unprecedented responsibility to reach out to immigrant students and to make them full and active members of our society. The community of Madrid was given full responsibility in educational matters in January 1999, and since then, the Autonomous Department of Education regulates the implementation of educational measures and programs for the immigrant student population. Remedial programs have undergone some adaptations over the years, according to the characteristics and needs of the immigrant student population they serve. One such adaptation was unofficially known as “programas de castellanización” (a Spanish language pull-out program), and it soon became the most frequently implemented program in the CAM. The emphasis of the “programas de castellanización”, still operating in many primary and secondary schools in Madrid, is on learning Spanish only. While content instruction is not a requirement or a major goal of these programs for immigrant students, a growing number of remedial education instructors do teach some content through Spanish, mainly in the area of Social Sciences. Compensatory education programs were the only educational alternative to meet the non-Spanish speaking immigrant students’ challenge in the

CAM until January 2003, when a pilot program, known as “Escuelas de Bienvenida” (Welcome Schools), was first implemented. The “Escuelas de Bienvenida” program has become the most recent effort to integrate immigrant minority students into the Spanish school system in Madrid. The program has four major components: (1) “Inmersión en el contexto social, cultural y lingüístico” (Immersion in the social, cultural and linguistic context); (2) “Desarrollo de la convivencia activa” (Development of an active classroom community); (3) “Formación del Profesorado” (Professional development of teachers); and (4) “Aulas de Enlace” (Linking Classes). Although the program has been presented as an innovative project since its inception, the Autonomous Department of Education in Madrid describes it as “a new measure of compensatory education whose goal is to accelerate the incorporation of newcomers to the mainstream educational system under the best possible conditions” ([www.madrid.org](http://www.madrid.org)), where the word compensatory reminds us of the remedial education programs that the “Escuelas de Bienvenida” program was intended to substitute.

## **1.2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study was to explore the recent implementation of the “Escuelas de Bienvenida” program, and its main focus was on the “Aulas de Enlace”, one integral part of the program. The “Aulas de Enlace” are special classes for recently arrived immigrant minority students located within a school. In these classes students are expected to achieve a level of Spanish that allows them to catch up with their peers at their same age level in the six months of maximum stay. A three-month extension is also available for specific students. Students in these linking classes spend the school day learning Spanish and, in some cases, other subjects in

their “Aula”, and they incorporate to the mainstream progressively. The final goal is their full integration into the mainstream class that corresponds to their age. The “Aulas de Enlace” were initially devised to attend the needs of both, non-Spanish speaking students and under-schooled students from Spanish-speaking countries. This research study investigated the first group only, since I was interested in the language learning process.

The phenomenological case study design resulted in a description and an implementation evaluation (as a preliminary stage of a formative evaluation) of the program by reporting the experiences and views of the participants (students, teachers, administrators and policy and decision-makers) through questionnaires (see Appendices [D](#) and [F](#)), interviews (see Appendices [G](#), [H](#) and [I](#)), naturalistic observations and document analysis. Data were analyzed and interpreted in relation to the research literature in the area of immigrant education and second language acquisition to provide a comprehensive analysis of the program’s value to various stakeholders.

The research study intends to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the participants’ everyday language learning experiences and events in the program?
2. What are the participants’ perceptions and meanings attached to those experiences?
3. What is the impact of the program on the students’ expressed intentions to continue to non-compulsory education?
4. What are the factors that most influence the teachers and students’ meanings and perceptions of the “Aulas de Enlace” program?
5. How does the Autonomous Department of Education official policy match students and teachers’ experiences, perceptions, meanings and expressed goals for the “Aulas”?

It was not the purpose of this investigation to consider linguistic outcomes, i.e., measurable results of students' learning processes. As necessary as I believe it is in the development of the program, there were some factors, further discussed in chapter 3 of this study, which made the qualitative paradigm the most appropriate approach to investigate an area that has not been deeply examined in the Spanish context. Furthermore, numerical data that would allow for an examination of student performance were not available, and access to the students' work was restricted to internal use only.

### **1.3. RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY**

In spite of the declared pilot nature of the program, the official policy that regulates the “Aulas de Enlace” program lacks clear-cut follow-up and evaluation criteria, which renders this study both relevant and timely. Although the policy section entitled “Coordinación y Seguimiento” (Coordination and Follow-up) establishes guidelines for the evaluation of the program, the goal is to ensure that the intended procedures were implemented according to the directions offered by the official policy, rather than to evaluate the program's academic and social outcomes, or the values of the program to its stakeholders (see Appendix K). These evaluation criteria are not so rare in the program evaluation practice. According to King, A. et al. (1987: 9-10): “Few evaluation reports pay enough attention to describing the processes of a program that helped participants achieve its outcomes ... you simply cannot interpret a program's results without the details of its implementation ... ignoring implementation ... means that information has been lost.”

The evaluation of programs implemented for recently arrived immigrant students is a major concern in countries with a large immigrant minority population. After her 4-year research study of newcomer programs in the United States, Short (2002) found very few evaluation studies of these programs. According to her, newcomer programs have received scant attention, although much research is needed “to help identify the optimal program design for a given group of newcomer students and educational goals.” (p. 173) Describing the program’s implementation, i.e. how the program looks in operation, was one of my major interests and responsibilities in this study, since policymakers need to take into account how policy will be interpreted by and implemented in schools in order to implement effective policies. As Plaut and Sharkey (2003: 2) have stated: “Policymakers, many of whom may never have taught, work as action executives. They define problems based in part on public opinion, and tend to offer broad guidelines regarding implementation.”

The relationship between policymakers and teachers has frequently been hierarchical and unidirectional, with policymakers telling teachers what to do and how to do it and, at the same time, holding teachers accountable for maintaining instructional goals. This has also been the case, even more so, with students from minority backgrounds. According to Nieto (1994: 395): “One way to begin the process of changing school policies and practices is to listen to students’ views about them; however, research that focuses on student voices is relatively recent and scarce.” Furthermore, “...the perspectives of students from disempowered and dominated communities are even more invisible.” Listening to the voices of all participants in the education system, i.e., teachers, students, administrators, policymakers and researchers, will show how their perspectives converge or diverge, and the role each can play in the implementation of educational programs that serve the needs of immigrant secondary students in Madrid. With this

research study I expect to promote conversation that will lead to more thoughtful and informed policy and practice.

## **1.4. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

### **1.4.1. Program Implementation**

The “Escuelas de Bienvenida” program was implemented on January 20, 2003. According to the information released in specialized journals (*Cuadernos de Pedagogía*, [www.profes.net](http://www.profes.net), *Cuadernos Cervantes*) and the press, the “Aulas de Enlace” were expected to serve a total of 1,500 students until the end of the 2002-2003 academic year (June 2003), although only 128 elementary and secondary students were enrolled in the program the first day of classes. This group was made up of both recently arrived immigrant students who did not speak Spanish and Spanish-speaking immigrant students with gaps in their educational backgrounds. As of June 2003, the enrollment for the 132 “Aulas” in operation in the 2002-2003 academic year had reached 764 students, 278 in primary education and 486 in compulsory secondary education. The marked increase in the number of students enrolled in the program in the first six months is an indication of the rapid growth of the minority student population in the Autonomous Community of Madrid in recent years, an important part of whom are adolescents entering the country through the process of family reunification. The latest data about “Aulas de Enlace” students for 2004-2005 academic year in the “*Informe sobre la escolarización de alumnos en Aulas de Enlace*” (Report on the schooling of “Aulas de Enlace” students) showed a total of 1,986 students schooled in the 186 “Aulas de Enlace” in the CAM (primary and secondary education) as of December 2004.

The number of “Aulas de Enlace” implemented to serve the needs of this growing immigrant population has increased in the three years that the program has been in operation. [Table 1.2](#) shows the number and distribution of the “Aulas” in primary and secondary education, and in public and “colegios concertados”, that is, private schools partly supported by public funds.

Table 1.2 *Number and Distribution of "Aulas de Enlace" from 2002-2003 to 2005-2006 school years*

	<i>January 2003</i>		<i>2003-2004</i>		<i>2004-2005</i>		<i>2005-2006</i>	
	CC <sup>a</sup>	Public	CC	Public	CC	Public	CC	Public
Primary Education		36	29	35	21	47	21	52
Secondary Education	65	31	29	38	49	61	36	69
“Mixta” (Primary and Secondary)	-----	-----	6	4	22	7	21	6
Total		132		140		188		205
Number of sites		115		123		-----		-----

<sup>a</sup>CC refers to “Colegios Concertados”

According to the most recent official figures released by the national Department of Education ([www.mec.es](http://www.mec.es)), 74.6% of immigrant students are schooled in public education, while 25.4% attend “colegios concertados”. Since public schools only house 58.3% of the “Aulas de Enlace” available in the CAM, some education unions and teaching professionals have seen this fact as an attempt of the autonomous government to favor private over public education in Madrid, giving program resources to private education even though they school less than a third of the total immigrant population in Madrid.

While the amount of students in the “Aulas” may not seem significant when compared to other countries with a large number of immigrant minority students, it must be taken into account that remedial education programs and the “programas de castellanización”, are still in effect in many schools and target the same population as the “Aulas de Enlace”. Participation in the “Aulas de Enlace” program is voluntary, and parents’ written consent is a requirement for enrollment. The decision to enroll their children in one specific school may be sometimes based on factors other than the students’ interests, such as proximity, cafeteria service or access to free extracurricular activities.

#### **1.4.2. The Official Policy: “Instrucciones”**

On July 16, 2003 the educational authorities in the Autonomous Community of Madrid issued a 12-page regulating document, referred to as “Instrucciones”, where specific directions were provided for the implementation of the “Aulas de Enlace” program. Since 2003, the document has been updated twice (once every school year) to include slight modifications and official forms to be used for administrative purposes (follow-up and final evaluation reports, parents’ consents, application forms for extensions, etc). Appendix K shows the most recent version of the official document, issued on July 21, 2005. The first part of the official policy establishes the rationale for the program, and it develops the legal framework that justifies the creation of specific programs aimed at immigrant students. Additionally, the document includes thirteen directives intended to guide and regulate the adequate implementation of the program.

According to the “Instrucciones”, the “Aulas de Enlace” are justified as a measure to favor the integration of foreign students into the education system, especially those who do not know Spanish or had no or limited formal schooling in their countries of origin (see Appendix K).

Furthermore, Casanova (Consejería de Educación, 2004) justifies the need to create a program for newly arrived students in the following terms: “Las opciones innovadoras se han ido aplicando progresivamente, pero la incorporación paulatina de alumnado día a día y semana a semana, hacía difícil la organización apropiada de cada centro en el que incidía (en casi todos, como resulta obvio), al igual que el desarrollo óptimo de los procesos de enseñanza y aprendizaje del conjunto del alumnado. Por todo ello, y con ánimo de solventar esa problemática puntual, pero amplia por su extensión, en enero del año 2003 se pone en marcha el programa ‘Escuelas de Bienvenida’...”<sup>3</sup> (p. 8).

With regard to the legal framework that supports program implementation, the first part of the official policy document includes: (1) the most recent “Ley de Extranjería” (Official Immigration Policy) issued in 2000, which regulates the rights of foreigners in Spain, including compulsory and free education for all students under the age of 18 (article 9); (2) a new educational law at the national level, known as LOCE (“Ley Orgánica de Calidad de la Educación” / Law on the Quality of Education, available at [www.mec.es](http://www.mec.es)), approved in October 2002, and then suspended due to the change of government after the March 2004 election. Article 42 of chapter VII of the LOCE vaguely establishes that educational authorities are responsible for developing specific programs that serve the special needs of immigrant minority students to promote their full integration into the Spanish educational system; and (3) the “Plan Regional de Compensación Educativa” (Regional Plan of Compensatory Education), which recognizes the right of all students (foreigners and nationals) to have free access to remedial or

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<sup>3</sup> Different innovations have been implemented progressively in the educational system of the CAM, but the steady incorporation of students made the proper organization of the school were they had an impact (in almost all of them), and the optimal development of teaching and learning processes of the whole student body, difficult to achieve. This is why the “Escuelas de Bienvenida” program was first implemented in January, 2003, with the purpose to solve this specific, although widely extended, problem. (*All translations are mine unless otherwise noted*)

compensatory education programs when differences derived from a disadvantaged situation exist. This point was eliminated from the 2005-2006 school year official policy.

The thirteen directives which make up the official policy include the following information: (1) target population, levels served, class size, and maximum length of stay in the program; (2) program model and daily enrollment; (3) goals and entry and exit criteria (transition measures); (4) location sites and grade levels served; (5) program staffing and teacher professional development; (6) teachers' responsibilities; (7) extracurricular activities (e.g., field trips, cultural activities, and special events); and (8) student assessment and program evaluation.

#### **1.4.2.1 Target Population, Levels Served, Class Size, and Maximum Length of Stay.**

The official policy is specific about the two subpopulations that the “Aulas de Enlace” program is intended to serve, that is to say, recently arrived immigrant minority students between the ages of 6 and 16 whose native language is not Spanish, and native-Spanish speaking immigrant students with limited formal schooling who demonstrate significant gaps in their preparation for academic work. The “Aulas” serve students in primary and secondary education, and there is usually one “Aula” per level. Thus, the “Aulas” program in the primary education level serves students from 6 to 11 years of age, and those in the compulsory secondary education, known as ESO (“Eduación Secundaria Obligatoria”), serve students between 12 and 16 years of age.

The maximum number of students allowed per “Aula” is 12, and the maximum time that students may remain in the program in six consecutive months, distributed in one or two academic years, depending on the entrance date. Since the program allows student entry at midyear, students who entered the program in May would spend two months in the “Aula de Enlace” that school year, and the remaining four months the following academic year. Beginning in the 2004-2005 academic year, the official policy allows an extension of the

maximum length of stay at the discretion of the “Aula de Enlace” teachers, which can prolong the time spent in the program up to three more months. Students may exit the program earlier as well.

**1.4.2.2 Program Model and Daily Enrollment.** The “Aulas de Enlace” is a program within a school model (Short and Boyson, 2004). In this model, “students are served in their home school (as per designated attendance area) ... Many of the students who exit this type of newcomer program remain at the same school to continue their studies in the regular language support program...” (p. 22). Immigrant students ages 12 to 16/18 are grouped in one secondary level “Aula de Enlace” in their high school. They may come from different mainstream classes and grade levels, from different mainstream classes and same grade level, or from the same mainstream class. Once they enter the program, students receive full-day instruction in their “Aula de Enlace”, where they spend most of their school day learning Spanish. They have opportunities to interact with their mainstream classmates for part of the day in classes such as Music, Art and Physical Education or during extracurricular activities. The most recent version of the official policy (July 2005) encourages the rapid incorporation of students into these classes, since this is expected to facilitate and speed up students’ integration into school life. This measure is in place partly to ensure that newcomer students are not segregated from the main student body, one of the main worries of the regional government, and one that the “Aulas de Enlace” program was intended to minimize.

The tenth directive of the official policy introduces three stages in the schooling of newcomers that will eventually result in their progressive integration into the regular school system: (1) reception and orientation stage; (2) intensive learning of Spanish; and (3)

incorporation into the mainstream classroom. According to the official policy, the three stages should happen simultaneously during the period of time students spend in the program.

**1.4.2.3. Goals and Entry and Exit Criteria (Transition Measures).** The second directive of the official policy establishes the goals (“Objetivos”) that the “Aulas de Enlace” are expected to achieve. The primary goal is to provide specific attention to foreign students, which consists of “full support to the students’ development of communicative competence in Spanish, and the facilitation of their learning processes through the necessary adaptations in the curriculum”. A second goal of the program is “to facilitate the incorporation of this population into the education system by making the time required for integration shorter.” As its third goal, the program seeks to facilitate the development of the students’ personal and cultural identity. Finally, the last goal is to accelerate their incorporation into the school and the larger community as quickly as possible and under the best possible conditions (see Appendix K for the goals as articulated in the original policy document).

The official document does not include any criteria for initial assessment and placement other than having no or low Spanish proficiency and/or limited formal schooling. The intake centers or “Comisiones de Escolarización” in each of the districts of the CAM are the first step in all students’ schooling process. These centers are in charge of determining immigrant minority students’ eligibility for the “Aulas de Enlace” program, and of assigning them to a school in their designated attendance area. Once the intake center determines the student’s eligibility, they offer the parents or guardian the possibility to register their child in a school with an “Aula de Enlace”. Acceptance is voluntary and parents are required to sign a written permission. Students are normally placed in a grade level based on their grade level in the school they last attended, provided that there are data to prove it, such as grade certifications or report cards. When this

documentation is not available, they are placed according to their chronological age. Students are not assessed for language proficiency or content level knowledge in the intake centers.

With regard to the program exit criteria, the official policy does not establish assessment procedures to determine when a student is ready to leave the “Aula de Enlace”. Most students exit the program once they complete the six-month stay, but some incorporate to their mainstream classroom before this period if their teachers consider they have achieved the goals intended by the program. The transition process starts with the student incorporation into the “Aula” by teachers keeping a fluid communication with their students’ mainstream teachers to decide, in conjunction, the best moment to incorporate them to Physical Education, Arts and Music regular classes. Communication with mainstream teachers frequently continues after students leave the program, and although follow-up has not been devised into the official policy, most program teachers informally track their students once they leave the “Aula”.

**1.4.2.4. Location Sites.** The requirements for a school to host an “Aula de Enlace” are clear in the “Instrucciones”, the first requirement being that the school accepts to house it. Other requirements include: (1) availability of physical space to locate the “Aula”; (2) high concentration of immigrant population in the district; (3) previous experience in teaching Spanish to non-Spanish-speaking immigrant students; (4) provision for other services such as extracurricular activities, the “Aulas Abiertas”<sup>4</sup> program, or cafeteria service; and (5) schools’ agreement to make every effort to incorporate the foreign students in their “Aulas” into that same school once their stay in the newcomer program is over.

Thus far the “Aulas” have been implemented in two types of school, i.e., primary and secondary public schools, and private schools partly supported by public money, or “Colegios Concertados”. Private schools are mostly Catholic, and students are believed to have a higher socio-economic status than those in public school. Admission criteria to private schools are believed to be stricter than in public schools, their academic standards higher, and the teachers more highly qualified and more committed to teaching. Private schools are allowed to hire their own “Aula de Enlace” teachers, while the educational authorities in the CAM are responsible for assigning the teachers (a maximum of two per “Aula”) to public schools from among a pool of professionals who have passed the qualifying national exam, or in-service teachers who voluntarily decided to change their position to teach in the program for a limited period of time. Public schools are free and secular in Spain, parents pay a symbolic annual tuition, admission is granted to all students, and students’ socio-economic status varies from high middle to working class. Apart from these variants, private schools usually have better resources and more

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<sup>4</sup> The “Aulas Abiertas” program is designed as an extracurricular activity in four areas: sports, theatre, music and dance, and library research, where immigrant minority students have the opportunity to interact with their mainstream peers.

available space, fewer discipline problems, lower drop-out rates, and better family-school communication.

According to the information released in the press and other specialized publications (e.g. *Cuadernos de Educación*) some private schools in Madrid have been reluctant to enroll immigrant minority students once they exit the “Aula de Enlace”, since these students are believed to pose extra challenges that might limit their classmates’ progress. The language barrier is viewed as the most important of these challenges for many groups. Most students schooled in “Aulas de Enlace” in “colegios concertados” exit after the six-month period of stay, or earlier in some cases (e.g. Romanian and Bulgarian students) to enter a new public school, mainly due to the lack of available places in their home school at that moment, or because the students’ families cannot afford to pay (or decide not to) for the additional expenses of extracurricular activities (usually free in public schools), uniforms, cafeteria services, etc. required in these private schools.

**1.4.2.5. Program Staffing and Teacher Professional Development.** The official policy specifies the desired profile of the “Aula de Enlace” teacher. Both qualifications and teaching experience in Spanish as a first or second Language are desirable. Moreover, they must have experience working with immigrant students or in remedial education programs. If none of these requirements are met by the candidates, they should, at least, have a specialization in foreign language teaching. Nevertheless, these general requirements can be adapted to the internal organization of each school (“Proyecto del Centro”), or to the students’ needs.

The program is staffed by two teachers per school, one of them being the so-called “profesor tutor” (or coordinator) of the “Aula de Enlace”. Each teacher spends a maximum of fifteen hours per week in the program, and teaches three to four classes per day. There is usually

only one teacher in class, although some “Aulas” have scheduled their time so that both teachers are in the classroom for at least one class period per day. Teachers of the program may receive support and professional advice from the “SAI” (“Servicio de Apoyo Itinerante para el Alumnado Inmigrante”)<sup>5</sup>. The official policy establishes that it is the responsibility of the “Dirección de Área Territorial” or DAT (each one of the five administrative areas in which the education department in the CAM is divided) to offer professional development to the “Aula de Enlace” teachers and principals.

The regional department of education also encourages teacher exchanges with schools in other autonomous communities in Spain, or other countries with a longer tradition in the education of immigrant students, so that the program may benefit from different experiences. No specific information is provided in the “Instrucciones” as to how these exchanges should be carried out or, if they take place, how they could be used to improve the program as implemented at a different site.

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<sup>5</sup> The SAI (“Servicio de Apoyo al alumnado Inmigrante”) was the first initiative intended to serve the linguistic needs of immigrant students created by the education department of the CAM in the 2000-2001 school year. This service, still in operation, provides both counseling and Spanish instruction in schools with high concentration of immigrant minority students. Students are removed from regular classes for a few hours every week, and language support is provided by itinerant teachers.

**1.4.2.6. Teachers' Responsibilities.** The official policy establishes the main duties of the “Aula de Enlace” teacher as follows: (1) to provide instruction; (2) to conduct “tutorías” (regular meetings of the tutor with small groups of students to discuss the courses); (3) to track students in their progressive incorporation into the regular class, in conjunction with the mainstream teachers; and (4) to assess their learning processes while in the program (see directive nine of the official policy in Appendix K for a detailed description of teacher’s responsibilities).

**1.4.2.7. Extracurricular Activities: Field Trips, Cultural Activities, and Special Events.**

The seventh directive of the official policy encourages schools to seek opportunities for immigrant minority students’ interaction with mainstream students. Thus, the promotion of additional activities outside school, either during the academic year or over the different vacation periods, is a requirement for schools that want to house an “Aula de Enlace”. These activities are intended to “favor exchanges, solidarity and cooperative attitudes between nationals and foreigners” (“Con objeto de favorecer un ambiente de intercambio, potenciando el sentido de la solidaridad y fomentado actitudes de cooperación se ofrecerá una serie de actividades de ocio y tiempo libre...”). Mainstream students are usually invited to join the “Aulas” students in these extracurricular activities, although they rarely participate in them. The activities proposed for “Aula de Enlace” students include fieldtrips (sightseeing tours for just arrived students and visits to museums), cultural activities (participation in the Chinese New Year celebration events), and workshops (a weekend of “capoeira” lessons). The “Aula de Enlace” students also participate in the extracurricular activities organized by their mainstream classrooms.

**1.4.2.8. Student Assessment and Program Evaluation.** Although the official policy does not establish specific directions as to how to assess the students’ learning process, one of the

teacher's responsibilities is "llevar a cabo la evaluación continua de los aprendizajes y progresos realizados..." (to carry out the assessment of the learning processes and the students' progress). Additionally, the appendices of the official policy include various checklists to be completed by the teacher (see Appendix L for a sample), which serve as an informal assessment of the students' readiness to join the mainstream classroom. Additionally, the "Instrucciones" section entitled "Coordinación y Seguimiento" (Coordination and Follow up) provides the guidelines for program evaluation. The goal of such evaluation is basically to ensure that the implementation was carried out according to the established policy, and that the intended procedures were used. The program has been evaluated as a great success by some stakeholders based on the number of participants, the number of parents who send their children to an "Aula de Enlace", or the short length of time that certain students spend in the program before entering the mainstream classroom.

### **1.4.3. The Curriculum**

Tucker (1999) defines curriculum as the "Framework that specifies fairly explicitly a set of language, content, cognitive and affective objectives illustrated by exemplary techniques, activities and supported by written materials." Such a curriculum has not been devised for "Aulas de Enlace" students, since the desirable outcome of their stay in the program is to achieve a certain level of communicative competence in Spanish to be able to follow the ordinary curriculum in the mainstream classroom. Without curriculum standards, individual teachers are left on their own to determine what instructional methods they use, and what content they cover. As a result, teachers usually focus only on the most basic oral Spanish and reading comprehension skills.

Spanish schools must follow a national curriculum. There are a few electives to choose from in the compulsory secondary education level, such as Foreign Languages (English, French or German in some cases), or Religious Studies. The decision to take one class or the other, or to incorporate into one class before others, is not entirely up to the newcomer students, since it is usually the coordinator of the “Aula de Enlace” who, together with the counseling service, makes the final decisions regarding the classes they think students will be able to comprehend, and that better fit their schedules.

#### **1.4.4. Program Funding and Educational Resources Available**

The official policy does not specify the funding sources for the implementation of the program. However, since the program was designed and implemented by the regional education department, it received bureaucratic blessing and abundant funding from the autonomous community budget. M.A. Casanova, one of the policy and decision makers interviewed for this study, confirmed (personal communication, January 2006) that the budget destined to the program was 500,000 euros<sup>6</sup> for the 2003-2004 school year. These funds initially covered the start-up costs, i.e., money and time spent on development of a program, and the expenses for equipment (computer, scanner and printer, television set, VCR and DVD player, and a boom box) and teaching materials.

Although the education department in the CAM had to hire teachers for the program the first year of implementation, instructors in the subsequent years were “funcionarios”, i.e., teachers who previously passed a qualifying exam, and have taught in the public school system ever since. Most teachers accepted a change of position to be part of the “Aulas de Enlace”

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<sup>6</sup> Approximately \$ 630,000 by June 2006

program staff for a determined period of time (what the administration system calls “Comisión de Servicios”), and they will return to their former positions once there is no need for their services.

#### **1.4.5. Language of Instruction**

Coping with linguistic diversity is particularly challenging in the Autonomous Community of Madrid, a monolingual community characterized by linguistic homogeneity until quite recently. The language of instruction in schools in Madrid and, therefore, the “Aulas de Enlace” program, is Spanish or Castilian. Although the official policy recognizes the value of maintaining the students’ languages of origin, and advocates for the richness of their heritage and traditions, the school system has not envisioned a way to make this possible in practice. None of the students’ mother tongues are offered in the regular curriculum, and with the exception of Portuguese and Moroccan ELCO (Education des Langues et Cultures d’Origine) programs, students’ first languages are ignored at the institutional level.

### **1.5. IMMIGRANT STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS**

Foreign population registered in the “Padrón de Habitantes” in the Autonomous Community of Madrid is mainly composed of young people (25-40 years of age). The most important demographic change in the last decade has been the increase in underage immigrants in the region, either as a consequence of family reunification processes, or the high birth rate of immigrant families. In 2002, 10% of the population under 20 in the CAM was of foreign origin, and 15.6% of the newborns were born to a foreign mother. According to the figures from the

department of Education, Culture and Sports for the 2003-2004 school year, foreign students accounted for 4.5% of the total student population in Spain, although it is higher in some communities. Thus, 8.9% of students in Madrid were foreign students, and most underage immigrant minority students come from underdeveloped or developing countries.

The education system in the CAM must serve students from a great variety of language backgrounds. Among the students in the “Aulas de Enlace” program are native speakers of many languages: Arabic, Bengali, several Berber dialects, Bulgarian, standard Chinese (Putonghua), Dutch, Farsi, Filipino, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Lithuanian, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Swedish, Tagalog, Ukrainian, and Urdu. Although Spanish-speaking immigrant students are a minority in the “Aulas de Enlace” program, they predominate in Spanish schools. While language does not seem to be a barrier for them, many Spanish-speaking students show gaps in their academic background.

According to the *“Informe sobre la escolarización de alumnos en Aulas de Enlace”* (Report on the schooling of “Aulas de Enlace” students), the Welcome Schools program enrolled 1,986 primary and secondary school students during the 2004-2005 school year, and Chinese, Moroccan and Romanian students were the three groups with the highest representation in the program. Of the 1,986 students attending the program, 350 came from Morocco, 508 from Romania, and 509 from China, of which 201 Moroccans, 259 Romanians, and 294 Chinese attended secondary school. This yielded a total of 754 students schooled in public secondary schools and “colegios concertados”. The report does not offer figures of students by nationality in public education only, and therefore it is not possible to know the exact size of the target population of this study. Whereas Moroccan, Chinese and Romanian students in the “Aula de Enlace” program were the target population of this study, other nationalities present in the

program (according to the “*Informe sobre la escolarización de alumnos en Aulas de Enlace*” for the 2004-2005 academic year) were: Bulgarians (198), Ukrainians (114), Polish (41), Filipinos (36), Brazilians (44), Moldavians (16), Dominicans (28), Russian (18), and a group labelled “others” (124). [Table 1.3](#) represents immigrant student distribution in the Autonomous Community of Madrid according to national origin.

Table 1.3 *Immigrant Students in Primary and Secondary Education in the CAM (2004-2005 school year)*

<i>EU countries</i> (8,149)	<i>Non-EU countries</i> (13,155)	<i>Africa</i> (14,213)	<i>North America</i> (1,490)	<i>Central America &amp; Caribbean</i> (5,263)	<i>South America</i> (54,792)	<i>Asia</i> (5,872)
Germany (635)	Bulgaria (2,288)	Algeria (222)	Canada (66)	Cuba (732)	Argentina (2,958)	China (3,165)
Belgium (113)	Romania (8,465)	Equatorial Guinea (780)	USA (868)	Dominican Republic (3,865)	Bolivia (2,509)	Philippines (982)
France (1,543)	Russia (528)	Morocco (10,606)	Mexico (556)		Brazil (956)	India (247)
Netherlands (165)	Ukraine (1,185)				Chile (1,136)	Pakistan (56)
Italy (128)					Colombia (9,743)	
Lithuania (11)					Ecuador (30,768)	
Poland (8)					Peru (4,776)	
Portugal (500)					Uruguay (483)	
UK (63)					Venezuela (1,309)	
Sweden (4)						

Elaborated from the statistics issued by the Spanish Department of Education ([www.mec.es](http://www.mec.es))

## **1.6. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS PROCEDURES**

The data collection stage of this study began on February 2004, when the first letters asking for participation were sent to nearly forty school principals (see Appendix A). Once the research questions were formulated, I developed the instruments that could better answer them. Data were recorded in a variety of ways, in an attempt to describe the program from multiple perspectives. I conducted structured interviews, and non-participant and participant observations, and analyzed available documents. The study also made use of quantitative data from questionnaires, administered to both students and teachers. The goal of the survey questionnaire was to obtain a profile of the “Aulas de Enlace” teachers and students through a purposive sample of the entire population.

The student and teacher questionnaires were specifically developed for this study, and they were approved by my dissertation committee prior to entering the research sites. Both surveys were piloted with three students and three teachers once IRB approval was obtained in October, 2004, after which slight modifications were introduced. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine students, five teachers, three principals, two administrators, and two policy and decision makers (see Appendices G, H and I). The interviews were recorded and transcribed for content analysis. I also conducted site visits at several program locations, and case studies at four selected schools, where field notes were taken. The data collection was ongoing and inductive in order to identify emergent themes, patterns, and questions, and the data analysis was conducted concurrently during the data collection period. Questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and interview transcriptions and field notes were content analyzed for recurrent patterns.

In this research I employed a number of strategies and naturalistic techniques to ensure trustworthiness. Triangulation (Denzin, 1978) was ongoing throughout this research period, and it was secured through multiple sources of data, multiple data collection techniques, and multiples sites. My themes were developed by data that were triangulated by what I observed, and what participants told me. The fact that I was in the research field for seven months also ensured that the themes I developed were occurring consistently and were not just isolated phenomena. The credibility of this research is further strengthened by consistently giving voice to participants' words and experiences.

### **1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study is the first of its kind to date that attempts to capture the participants' views of the "Aulas de Enlace" program. Since it is always the voices of policy and decision makers that are heard in the public discourse, I wanted to give students and teachers the opportunity to describe their experiences and to express their opinions about the program. Listening to the voices of all participants showed how their perspectives converged or diverged, and the role each can play in the implementation of education programs that serve the needs of immigrant secondary school students in Madrid. The findings are expected to provide the CAM educational authorities with information that will lead to more thoughtful and informed decisions regarding the education of immigrant minority students in the future.

Furthermore, this research study intends to add to the body of knowledge on immigrant education, and to demonstrate the importance of evaluation as an integral part of the implementation of educational programs. Since evaluation is not a common practice in the

Spanish context, this study emphasizes the positive outcomes that may result from a systematic and rigorous process of evaluation. In addition, this research study also attempts to illustrate the advantages of using qualitative research methods in program evaluation, as systematic observation is a tool of incalculable value.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The purpose of this review is to relate this study to the body of research literature on the topic of immigrant education. Whereas not much has been written about the “Welcome Schools” program to date, there is a large body of research on minority education in contexts where immigration has been an ongoing phenomenon for decades that can inform this study. According to Johnstone (2000: 134-135), when doing research “it is necessary to put what you are doing in context.” In order to do so, the literature review section of this study describes other work that bears on the main research topic. Thus, this chapter intends “to describe the problem” (Merriam, 1988), and to contextualize it to provide a better understanding of the program and the implementation process. According to Brown and Rodgers (2002: 36-37) “A good literature review provides both the context and the justification for the new study.” Furthermore, the literature review is an important part of a research project design because “you want your research to fit with and add to the research that has preceded it” (p. 37). Apart from situating the study within the field, this literature review attempts to establish the relevance of the topic being investigated and the qualitative research paradigm, and to support the techniques employed for data collection and analysis.

In the first part of this section I attempt to underscore the import of students’ perceptions and beliefs in educational settings by providing an overview of research carried out with immigrant minority students in English-speaking countries. In the second section I broadly

introduce the topic of immigrant education and the lines of investigation open in the Spanish context to date. This section tries to illustrate the responses of educational authorities to the new reality in schools by providing a brief summary of different experiences implemented for immigrant minority students. The third part of this literature review presents the multiple options available for the schooling of immigrant students worldwide. This section is divided into the following subsections: (1) first language instruction; (2) bilingual education; (3) second language instruction; and (4) submersion education. The fourth section of this chapter introduces a quite recent educational experience for newly arrived minority students in the US, known as newcomer programs. The fifth section of this literature review discusses the topic of program evaluation and the different approaches to it. Additionally, it introduces the concept of implementation evaluation (developed by King et al., 1987), as it applies to the present study. The final section of this review introduces the bases of phenomenology as a research methodology that aims at capturing and describing how people experience, and make sense of phenomena.

## **2.1. STUDENT PERCEPTIONS**

There is a paucity of research that focuses on students' accounts on how they feel about themselves as learners. According to Nieto (1994: 395) "...the voices of students are rarely heard in the debates about school failure and success, and the perspectives of students from disempowered and dominated communities are even more invisible." Researchers routinely explore the perspectives of teachers and parents' about students' abilities, but the perspectives of students are frequently overlooked. Ironically, as Nieto (1994) points out, those who spend the

most time in schools and classrooms are often given the least opportunity to talk, although, she states, "... students have important lessons to teach educators and we need to begin to listen to them more carefully" (p. 396).

Debates on the implementation of programs specially designed for immigrant students usually take place among language acquisition planners, politicians, educators and researchers, while the participants are often excluded from these discussions and decisions (Nieto, 1994). Nevertheless, students can be a rich source of information about the relationship between teaching and learning. Theirs is a voice which is often ignored in decision-making about educational matters, more even so in the case of minorities (Martin-Jones and Heller, 1996; Cummins, 2000). Immigrant students often enter and pass through schools without their voices being heard or understood, and their place in these circumstances is seen to be the receiving-end of other people's deliberations.

The literature in the field reinforced the need to look at second language learning in secondary education from the students' perspective in order to enrich the present body of literature in the area. While research that focuses on linguistically and culturally diverse students' perceptions of and attitudes towards language needs has hardly been conducted in the Spanish context, a large body of research has revealed that student's opinions and voices pertaining to such changes were a valuable source for educational authorities. The studies carried out in other multicultural contexts informed the present investigation.

Au (1993) believes that eliciting students' perceptions is revealing, since perceptions give information about the learners' world and their immediate surroundings. Au's research study attempted to explain perceptions of students (minorities or otherwise) about different aspects of their school experiences, and many of them chose to focus on the differentiation between

academically successful and unsuccessful students and the factors students perceived influenced their academic success. Fullan's (1991) research on the process of how change in education occurs indicated that students themselves are perceived as the recipients of change rather than active participants in the change process. Research by King (1996), and Vance (1995) investigated what students believed to be the impact of educational changes made in their schools and classrooms.

Research by Cowart and Rademacher (1998) indicate that students' voices are an important component to consider for educators in designing and implementing educational innovations. The authors conducted research with public school students in eight Professional Development Schools (PDSs) in Texas. PDSs are a collaborative effort between school districts and colleges of education that prepares pre-service teachers for the world of education by exposing them to the real classroom, within a real school, rather than a university setting. This research gave voice to public school students in grades four through eight concerning their opinions and experiences as participants in the Professional Development School model, which helped college professors determine the quality of instruction provided by pre-service teachers.

Tan (2001) gave voice to Mexican American students and their perceptions regarding ease of learning, school achievement, intent to stay in school, and post-high school educational aspirations. Tan (2001) worked with students in six high schools, using observations, document analysis, focus groups, and in depth interviews. Participants were all Hispanic students, and they were asked what they liked about school, what they would describe as a good teacher, whether teachers taught material related to students' native culture, and whether this helped them to learn new information. The results indicated that there was a great deal of inconsistency between teachers and administrators regarding their understanding of student diversity. Tan affirmed that

students did better when there was more interaction with teachers, more cooperative learning, and when the teachers respected Hispanic cultures. This study underscored the benefit of knowing students' perceptions and the importance of considering their opinions and experiences in the learning process.

Tuan (1995) investigated the experiences of Korean and Russian students in one middle school in north Texas. Tuan's qualitative study was carried out for seven months, and it involved participant observation and more than 20 interviews conducted with teachers, principals, ESL staff, counselors, and community workers. The purpose was to develop a complete picture of the students and the factors influencing their experiences. The opinions of immigrant students in Tuan's study revealed that they were not passive participants in their schooling experiences. Rather, they actively interpreted the meaning of schooling and employed strategies suited to their particular circumstances and goals.

Ima (1991) conducted case studies of at-risk Southeast Asian students in secondary schools. This ethnographic study involved interviews with teachers and students. Students spoke about their problems, such as dislike of teachers, dislike of school, truancy, suspension, and conflicts with other students. Ima (1991) found how culturally alienated these students were from the school culture and identified the shortcomings of schools, which included inadequate materials, teacher's negative attitudes, and stereotyping of students. The study concluded that teachers often operated from a deficit model, and they lowered their standards for performance in ESL and bilingual classes.

The study carried out by Thompson (2000) in Southern California included tenth grade ELL students, and its purpose was to determine the teachers' instructional practices that either helped or prevented students from learning. Students were mostly of Hispanic origin, they were

enrolled in honors or college preparatory programs, and English was their second language. Data were collected through narratives and questionnaires, and five students were interviewed. The instructional strategies that students perceived to be most helpful to them in the classroom were literature based activities, oral practice, individual help, peer interaction, games, and the use of realia. The most ineffective strategies listed by students were being forced to read in front of the class, being corrected publicly, segregating language minority students from language majority students, embarrassing students, not providing adequate assistance, and covering information too rapidly.

In the interviews conducted with ELL students, Olsen (1997, 1988) found that these students were increasingly isolated from mainstream students, mainly due to their grouping in sheltered English classes. She argued that there was a mismatch between the traditional structure of secondary schools and the needs of immigrant students. The school structure lacked the flexibility to allow immigrants to accumulate credits toward graduation and failed to offer a coherent educational approach. Olsen's work is further confirmed by Lucas, Henz and Donato (1990), who found similar results in their interviews with English Language Learners.

Nieto (1996) gave voice to students by presenting her research results in the form of case studies. By listening to the voices of language and culturally diverse students, she developed a conceptual framework for the implementation of culturally responsive teaching in today's classrooms. Igoa (1995) provided a perspective of "the inner world of the immigrant child" that teachers and administrators could never provide by eliciting the students' opinions and experiences through dialogues. Only the student could aptly express what it was to be an immigrant and English language learner.

This research study was designed to bring the voices of high school newcomer students to the forefront to obtain a learner perspective on topics which researchers and teachers claim as their domain (Cotterall, 1999) by presenting students' perceptions of their own language learning and educational experiences.

## **2.2. THE EDUCATION OF IMMIGRANT MINORITIES**

A considerable amount of research conducted in Spain in the last two decades has been interested in the education of immigrant minority children from different perspectives. Although most of it has been strictly descriptive (Vila, 2000; Colectivo IOÉ 1996, 1997; Soriano Ayala, 2000), a few contrastive studies have also been attempted (TEIM, 1999; Tomás Rodríguez, 2002). This type of research has compared the results of the implementation of ELCO programs (*Education de Langue et Cultures d'Origine*), or other L1 instruction provisions, in the different European countries where they exist, mainly France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Spain.

A review of the academic literature revealed four main lines of investigation in the area of immigrant education in Spain. First, research which attempts to uncover ideologies behind school practices, most of it within the framework of critical discourse analysis (Martín Rojo 2001, Alcalá, 2001). Secondly, a body of research which focuses on the description of the Spanish version of ELCO programs (López and Mijares, 2001; Broeder and Mijares 2003; Franzé and Mijares 1999; Damen and Franzé, 1998). A third line of investigation corresponds to those studies which attempt to describe, and to a certain extent to make recommendations about, the impact of diversity in schools. In these studies, intercultural education is the new framework for treatment of diversity (Carbonell i Paris, 1995, 1997; Aguado Odina, 1998; Bartolomé Pina,

1997, 1998; Calvo Buezas, 1993; Colectivo IOÉ, 1996, 1997; Tomás Rodríguez, 2002; Díaz-Aguado, 1995; Muñoz Sedano, 1993). A fourth research direction within the Spanish context is related to the ways to deal with cultural and linguistic diversity in schools (Díaz-Aguado, 1999, 2003; Díaz-Aguado and Andrés, 1999; Morales Orozco, 2006; Pisonero del Amo and Eguskiza, 2003; Muñoz, 2003). The European context is taken as the starting point for the on-going debate on how to best educate immigrant minority children in Spain, at the expense of ignoring a large body of research carried out in the US and Canada that can inform the implementation of policies that favor the integration and success of immigrant children to Spanish schools. In one of the few studies in which the U.S experience is taken as the basis for comparison, Valero Garcés (2003) points out that we have an excellent opportunity to learn from their experiences, since Spain is now facing similar processes as those the US went through 20 years ago with regard to the education of immigrant minorities.

The incorporation of immigrant minority students to the Spanish education system has been so rapid, that the educational authorities have had little time to introduce real adaptations to provide for their needs. However, the basic premise for interventions with language minority students has often been one of compensation for perceived “deficiencies” on the part of the students in critical domains of knowledge and in Spanish language development. Therefore, programs implemented for immigrant children to date have been basically remedial or compensatory in nature, and their goal has been to facilitate the students’ incorporation into the mainstream classroom and their full access to the regular curriculum in the shortest time possible. For Milk (1994: 105) “deficit-based models for educational intervention are wrong for all minority children, but they are particularly wrong in the case of language minority children because they do not lead to the kind of learning environment that facilitates second language

acquisition.” According to Cummins (1986), immigrant students’ academic failure tends to be explained by deficit theories, that is, by arguing that minority children have a deficit that impedes them to be successful in school. Cummins’ response to such theory was that, since the assessment was carried out in submersion programs, the low level of knowledge of English that immigrant students showed put them in clear disadvantage with respect to mainstream students. Against these theories of deficit Cummins (1976) stands with new revealing ideas from the area of psychology in the 70s. His proposal is that bilingual students have superior thinking abilities than monolinguals, based on their dual linguistic systems. This principle is seen as one of the main reasons that support the implementation of immersion bilingual education programs in the three so-called historical autonomous communities in Spain (Catalonia, Basque country and Galicia). Nevertheless, while bilingualism receives support and encouragement in these areas, the maintenance of immigrant languages are the object of an intense debate and the question of whether these languages should be supported by the public school system is at the heart of the debate. So far, the tendency has been towards assimilation to the majority language through the implementation of compensatory programs that help fix their language “deficit”.

Whereas immersion programs in the so-called historical autonomous communities in Spain (Catalonia, the Basque Country and Galicia) are designed to produce bilingualism, remedial programs for immigrant minority students are intended to produce monolingualism and assimilation to the majority culture. As established in the 1978 Spanish Constitution, Spanish is the official language of the country, together with three co-official languages, i.e., Catalan, Galician and Basque. After the laws of linguistic normalization were passed in Catalonia, Galicia and the Basque Country in the eighties immersion programs were implemented to promote the learning of the autonomous languages at school. The success of these programs

varied in each of the autonomous communities, mainly due to historical, political and socio-economic reasons (Artigal, 1991, 1993; Siguan, 1988, 1993; Mar-Molinero, 1997). According to Arnau et al. (1992) a conflict exists in these autonomous communities now. On the one hand, there is a necessity to consolidate their cultural and linguistic identities, only recently regained with the establishment of a democratic regime after Franco's death in 1975. On the other, the existence of a growing immigrant population is making that consolidation increasingly harder to achieve.

Four have been the options for immigrant minority students schooling in Spain to date: (1) submersion education; (2) submersion with pull-out classes with an emphasis in Spanish language learning; (3) submersion with pull-out classes taught through some content; and (4) "Aulas de Enlace", "Aulas de Acogida" (*Reception classes*) or "Aulas Temporales de Adaptación Lingüística" (ATAL, or *Temporary classes for linguistic accommodation*), depending on the autonomous community consulted. The "Aulas de Enlace" are short-term, transitional programs designed to meet the needs of recently arrived immigrant students, with an emphasis on Spanish language learning on a full-day basis. All four educational options correspond to a "language as a problem" (Ruiz (1984) perspective, which is at the heart of program implementation. According to Baker (1996: 353) "Public discussion of bilingual education and languages in society often commences with the idea of language as causing complications and difficulties." Since "language diversity may cause less integration, less cohesiveness, more antagonism, and more conflict in society, the perceived complication of minority languages is to be solved by assimilation into the majority language" (p. 353). For Ruiz (1984: 21) "Whether the orientation is represented by malicious attitudes resolving to eradicate,

invalidate... or comparatively benign ones concerned with remediation and ‘improvement’, the central activity remains that of problem-solving.”

Soriano Ayala (2000) has suggested five phases in the responses given by the Spanish educational system to the theme of cultural pluralism (“diversity”). The first one is the “assimilationist” model, where the objective is that the children from minority groups quickly learn the language of the majority and become assimilated into the culture of the majority group in the best way possible. The second one would be the “compensatory” phase. The aim is for children of other cultures to overcome any gaps or deficiencies arising from their ethnic origins, so that they may join the culture of the dominant group. A third phase would be the “corrective” model response to diversity. In this phase the aim is to eliminate cases of discriminations and prejudice toward ethnic minorities as reflected in schools, programs and textbooks. The fourth phase is the “multicultural” model, where minority cultures are recognized as having equal rights with respect to the majority. Within this model “multiculturalism defends a symmetrical interchange and seeks to establish communication between cultures ... in equality and respect for difference” (p. 108). The last response presented by Soriano Ayala (2000) is the “intercultural” model. Here the goal is to establish a new culture based on the interchange of cultures, values, experiences, and so forth. According to her, “intercultural education should give high value to cultural difference as a source of enrichment, and should work in terms of difference and not of inequality.” (p. 108) Although the scholarly literature proposes “intercultural education” as the best model in the treatment of diversity (Malgesini and Giménez, 2000: 128), studies like the one by Soriano Ayala (2000) in primary schools in Almería show that schools still favor the assimilationist phase of education linked to a compensatory phase. As Cummins (1997) has pointed out, although practice should inform theory and the other way around, reality is never

that way because there are great difficulties for multicultural education policies to filter down to the classroom. In the end, decision-makers determine the nature of educational experiences that language minority students receive, and oftentimes their decisions are not guided by pedagogical principles.

### **2.3. REGULAR LANGUAGE SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

The measures to cater for the educational needs of immigrant children vary considerably from country to country, as does the philosophy underlying them and the implementation processes. Different alternatives from mainstreaming are in existence in many countries, but the effectiveness of various program models for language minority students remains the subject of controversy. Although there may be reasons to consider one program model over another in certain situations, a variety of programs may be effective depending on the needs of the students involved and the resources available (Genesee, 1999). It is critical to consider several variables that will ultimately influence the type of program most likely to be appropriate and effective in any given situation (Thomas and Collier, 1997, 2002).

This section is intended as an overview of the different alternatives that are in operation for the education of immigrant minorities worldwide, and it is divided into four parts: (1) native language literacy programs, or programs where some kind of L1 instruction is provided; (2) bilingual education, i.e., those programs where both minority and majority languages are used to varying degrees; (3) second language programs, or programs where only majority language instruction is provided; and (4) submersion education or plain mainstreaming (also referred to as “structured immersion” in certain contexts).

### **2.3.1. Native Language Literacy Programs**

Immigration clearly creates special challenges for the education system. One of these challenges refers to the role that the students' L1 play in their schooling process. This role has been traditionally limited (and frequently nonexistent), since most educational programs implemented for immigrant minority children have had L2 learning (the majority language of the host country) as the main priority for integration and success in their new education system. Therefore, the teaching of the immigrant students' mother tongue has rarely been a top priority per se for educational authorities.

In Canadian and US transitional bilingual education (the most common type of bilingual education in the US according to Baker, 1996), L1 teaching, and teaching through L1 is simply a temporary solution for students with low or no English proficiency. Once they are thought to be proficient enough in English to cope with the regular curriculum, they are mainstreamed. In some European countries, such as Germany, Netherlands, Sweden or Belgium, L1 classes were available for the children of guest workers who arrived in great quantities since the mid fifties to help the economic reconstruction of Europe. Since guest workers and their children were expected to return to their home countries after a limited period of time, immigrant minority children needed a solid knowledge of their mother tongue to successfully incorporate back into their native education system. Over the years, the originally planned labor recruitment for a limited period became permanent immigration, which made L1 learning less of a necessity. Nevertheless, some European countries maintained their L1 programs or transformed them to better serve the new needs of immigrant minority student population. Many European countries offer L1 instruction as part of the regular curriculum in secondary education, although the more and more diverse student population makes it extremely difficult for the educational authorities

to provide L1 instruction to all students, mainly due to the lack of materials and/or human resources.

In the Netherlands, a bilingual maintenance approach to the education of immigrant minority children is favored because it proves as effective in promoting majority language as other approaches, and even requires less time to be devoted to the teaching and learning of Dutch (Aarts, Extra and Yağmur, 2004). Since 1998, instruction in immigrant minorities' languages in primary schools has been labeled OALT (or education in non-indigenous living languages). In secondary schools, the teaching of immigrant languages as optional subjects does not have a long history. The teaching of languages which do not belong to the traditional curriculum, i.e. English, German and French, is known as ONST (or education in new school languages). However, starting the 2004-2005 academic year, the OALT was abolished by the government based on the argument that it contradicts the policy of integration of immigrant children. Thus, all the efforts should be focused on Dutch only. Regarding ONST, although it will remain in operation in secondary schools in the future, the budget has also been cut (Aarts, Extra and Yağmur, 2004).

In Sweden, the history of home language instruction is older than in most other countries in the western world. According to Boyd (2001), no other European nation has had government-funded home language instruction for children of immigrant origin for as long as Sweden, which included first language instruction in the public school curriculum after the approval of the educational reform in 1976, known as or Home Language Reform (Nygren-Junkin, 2004). Immigrant minority children in Sweden have the right to instruction in one's mother tongue through the publicly funded school system under the same circumstances as Swedish children receive Swedish language instruction as part of their curriculum. Therefore, immigrants can

decide for themselves whether they want to maintain and/or develop their native language or to adopt the mainstream culture.

Since 1964, foreign children in Germany should, in theory, receive the same educational opportunities as German children. In order to achieve this goal, the teaching of their native language, in addition to the regular curriculum, was considered to be an advantage which should contribute to the social integration of students for the duration of their stay in the former Federal Republic of Germany, and the preservation of their linguistic and cultural identity (Bühler-Otten and Fürstenau, 2004). Education, including education of immigrants, is a State domain in Germany (Gogolin and Reich, 2001). Thus, the organizational forms of *Muttersprachlicher Unterricht* (MSU or mother tongue teaching) differ among the federal states. Some Western German states are responsible for MSU, while others leave it to the consulates of some countries of origin. Regarding Eastern Germany, three of the five states have not developed MSU themselves, neither have they established it through the consulates so far (Bühler-Otten and Fürstenau, 2004).

Mother tongues spoken by immigrant minorities in the United Kingdom are known as “community languages”. Mainstream schools have had varying levels of involvement in community language teaching over the years. The 1976 draft Directive of the Council of the European Community was an important catalyst for the discussion of the need to teach the language and cultures of migrants’ children as part of the normal curriculum. Nevertheless, the revised final version of the Directive published in 1977 called on member states simply to promote community language teaching, and to offer it only in accordance with their national circumstances and legal systems. The Directive succeeded, however, in placing community languages in the agenda of mainstream educators for the first time, and they even became part of

the curriculum in a small number of schools. In 1985, the publication of the Swann Report represented a setback, since it argued that community languages were the responsibility of minority communities themselves, and it has remained that way until our days (Edwards, 2001).

In France, the beginnings of minority language teaching date back to the early fifties, when regional language teaching (RLT) achieved a form of recognition. It was only at the beginning of the seventies that the Ministry of National Education showed some concern about the languages of immigrant minorities (Akinci and de Ruiter, 2004). Until then, immigrant associations and consulates had been in charge of some kind of immigrant minority language education. The first measure was to implement two programs for recently arrived students, known as CLIN (*classes d'initiation*, or beginning classes) for primary students, and CLAD (*classes d'adaptation*, or adaptation classes) in secondary schools, where intensive French instruction was provided so that newly arrived students could be placed in the grade level appropriate to their age in the shortest possible time. A second measure was the implementation of mother tongue classes, which are the responsibility of the countries of origin, although they are controlled by the French educational authorities. Home language instruction in primary education in France takes the form of ELCO programs, or *Eduaction de Langue et Culture d'Origine*, taught by a teacher sent to France by the country of origin for a period of 4-5 years. Mother tongue teaching is offered in France to students from Portugal, Spain, Morocco, Tunisia, and Turkey, and the languages offered in this program are Standard Arabic, Portuguese, Spanish, and Turkish.

According to Verlot and Delrue (2004), from a historical point of view the Flemish elite have been the watchdog of the Belgian language laws. According to these laws, education can only be provided in the official language of the region, therefore rendering bilingual or

multilingual education illegal. However, the Flemish elite reacted positively to the EU Directive of 1977, and they set up pilot programs to provide home language instruction for immigrant minority children. In 1976 a limited number of schools started to experiment with mother tongue instruction in the regular school curriculum. From 1982, all schools could take part in the project, and most of the participating schools opted for the minimal model, that is, 2-4 hours of home language instruction. In 1981, the bicultural education project was implemented, using the home mother tongues of immigrant minority students as part-time languages of instruction. For Verlot and Delrue (2004) there was, however, an inconsistency between law and practice, which made it impossible to turn the temporary project into a more regular provision. The number of participating schools dropped over time, and home language instruction became increasingly marginal. While it is still provided in some primary schools today, it is not offered anymore in secondary schools.

For Clyne and Ozolins (2001), there are real similarities in the sociolinguistic situation between Australia and many parts of Europe in relation to immigrant languages in many cities. However, they point out, there are also great differences in terms of policy response to this situation. Immigration to Australia has always been intended for permanent settlement. The post-war immigration program was developed for reasons of defense and national development. In addition to immigrants from the British Isles, workers from Greece, Turkey, Yugoslavia and Lebanon also started to arrive. Australia did not set out to foster multiculturalism or multilingualism. On the contrary, Australia was a monolingual and monocultural country, and immigration policy was strongly oriented to British and Irish immigrants, and assimilation was stressed for non-British groups.

In education, it was assumed that immigrant minority children needed no special treatment in terms of language learning at school. There was no bilingual education, and the main languages taught in school were French and Latin. The official discourse of assimilation changed to an emphasis on multiculturalism by the mid seventies. This new orientation brought with it a rapid expansion of the number of languages taught in schools (up to 40 languages), and a growing recognition of the importance of supporting mother tongue development and literacy skills. A diversity of institutional measures has been used to accomplish this, such as links between mainstream schools, ethnic schools, and Saturday Schools of Languages.

In anglophone Canada, the longstanding attention given to the needs of francophone minorities also led to research and changes in policy and practice for immigrant children. Clearly, subtractive bilingual education was unsuitable for francophone Canadians who live in Anglophone areas. While they need English to live in that environment, the evidence confirms that strong French-maintenance approaches are the best way to ensure that they get this (Cummins, 1981a, 1981b, 1983, 1991, 1992; Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Tucker and d'Anglejan, 1972; Swain and Lapkin, 1991b; Ramírez, 1991). These studies confirmed that Francophone minority children in Ontario schools, who get most of their education in French as the medium of instruction, tend to achieve better in education than those submerged in English.

Most provincial governments in Ontario operate programs designed to encourage the teaching of heritage languages. According to Cummins (1992), the most extensive of these programs has been Ontario's Heritage Language Program (HLP), which provides funding to school systems for 2 ½ hours per week of heritage language instruction. A central aspect of the HLP is that classes must take place outside the regular school day. In some provinces (Manitoba, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Alberta) there are Heritage Language Bilingual

Education Programs where the heritage language (Italian, German, Mandarin Chinese, Arabic, Polish, Hebrew, Yiddish and Ukrainian) is the medium of instruction for about 50% of the day (Cummins, 1992; Benyon and Toohey, 1991). In Quebec, the *Programme d'Enseignement de Langues d'Origine* (PELO) was introduced in 1977. This program was similar to the Ontario HLP but on a considerably smaller scale, since heritage language instruction is usually offered for 30 minutes daily during the lunch break or before or after school.

Major reviews on heritage language education are provided by Cummins (1983a, 1993) and Cummins and Danesi (1990) and, as Baker (1996) has pointed out, while evaluations are positive, the Canadian population is divided on the issue. For Cummins (1992: 285) “whereas advocates of heritage language teaching stress the value of bilingual and multilingual skills for the individual and society as a whole, opponents see heritage languages as socially divisive, excessively costly, and educationally retrograde in view of minority children’s need to succeed academically in the school language.”

In the U.S. a 1997 survey conducted by the Center for Applied Linguistics (Rhodes and Branaman, 1999) found language classes for native speakers to be available in only 7% of secondary schools (up from 4% in 1987). Research conducted by Fillmore (1991) showed that loss (or lack of continued development) of L1 is the norm among language minority students schooled through English in the US. Transitional bilingual education (TBE) is, according to Baker (1996), the most common type of bilingual education in the U.S. This kind of instruction provides some L1 teaching to immigrant minority students for the time they are unable to function in English. Once they reach an adequate level of proficiency in English to be mainstreamed, minority language teaching is suspended, and their schooling takes place in English. The goal of TBE is, therefore, monolingualism in the majority language. Cummins

(1980) strongly opposed this type of bilingual education on the basis that one to two years (the maximum time spent in TBE) is not enough time to achieve what he called the cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) in English, that is to say, the cognitive and academic language to cope in a mainstream classroom. Thus, by the time students are mainstreamed, they have hardly had the time to achieve Basic Interpersonal Communication skills (BICS), or everyday conversational language, which implies that immigrant minority students enter the mainstream classroom with clear disadvantages that will limit their possibilities of school success. Furthermore, Cummins (1984) has observed that many politicians and educators have inappropriately cited the success of Canadian immersion programs as justification for early English immersion as a suitable form of education for linguistic minorities in the United States. Thus, a review of transitional bilingual education commissioned by the US federal government concluded that carefully conducted second language instruction in all subjects may well be preferable to bilingual methods. These conclusions gave place to a recommendation for submersion in English.

Within the Spanish education system, intercultural education is the new framework to manage the increasing presence of immigrant students in schools (Carbonell i Paris, 1995; Santos Rego, 1994), and the European Union has recommended the application of its principles in all European schools. The introduction of education in the immigrant students' languages of origin (European Commission, 1995) is among these principles. As a result of the European recommendations, and the cultural cooperation agreements signed with the Moroccan and the Portuguese governments, two programs were implemented to provide education in Arabic and Portuguese to children from these national origins, known as ELCO programs, or *Éducation de langues et cultures d'origine*. At the moment, the classes within this framework are offered

mainly in public primary schools, while they have been poorly implemented in private schools partly supported by public funds (“colegios concertados”), and in secondary education (Broeder and Mijares, 2003).

The ELCOs are currently the only public programs that acknowledge, within the school context, the native languages of Portuguese and Moroccan students in Spain. The Portuguese ELCO program was first implemented in the 1987-1988 school year, while the Moroccan ELCO had to wait until the 1994-1995 academic year. According to López and Mijares (2001: 284) the ELCO programs are far away from reaching all children that could benefit from this education. The program can be implemented in two different ways, i.e. outside (mode A) or inside (mode B) the regular school schedule. In mode A, Arabic language and Moroccan culture teaching are provided during an hour or an hour and a half, twice a week, outside the mainstream class schedule. In mode B, classes are integrated in the schools day, and students receive Arabic instruction during the periods where the subject of religion is taught. In neither of the two modes Arabic language or Moroccan culture subjects are assessed.

Other native language programs similar to ELCOs are managed by non-governmental organizations, many of which are partly funded by the educational authorities, and they take place outside the school hours. This is the case of the Chinese schools, which offer L1 Saturday classes for both Chinese and Spanish students who want to learn the language. ATIME (Asociación de Trabajadores Inmigrantes Marroquíes en España), and the Federación Andalucía Acoge to Moroccans offer classes to all children who want to learn Arabic irrespective of their nationality.

Two are the main criticisms to Moroccan ELCO programs in Spain (López and Mijares, 2001). First, their effectiveness has not been evaluated, and we are still unable to know if, and to

what extent, the children native language is maintained by means of these programs. There are not studies that relate the students' level of development in L1 to their academic achievement in mainstream classrooms in Spain. Second, the language taught in ELCO programs is Standard or Classical Arabic, although this is not the language that Moroccans speak natively. Standard Arabic is the official language of Morocco, and therefore the language encouraged by the Moroccan government for the education of its citizens abroad. Since ELCO programs are partly funded by the Moroccan government, Standard or Classical Arabic proficiency is the linguistic goal, while languages like Berber and Moroccan Arabic (widely spoken natively, and with the largest number of speakers) are usually left out of the curriculum. Thus, students in these programs often have to learn a completely new language as if it were their mother tongue. As López and Mijares (2001) have stated, if one of the main goals of these programs is the development of students' L1 in order to facilitate second language learning, this goal can hardly be achieved by teaching them classical Arabic.

There have been no attempts from the education authorities to include immigrant minority language teaching in the curriculum in Spanish schools. Spanish pull-out programs and SSL (Spanish as a second language), with an emphasis in language development only, are still the most common experience for immigrant children.

While a considerable amount of academic work on immigrant minorities' education has dealt with ELCO programs in the Spanish context, none have, however, thoroughly explained why it is important to maintain and develop immigrant students' L1. The justification for ELCO programs usually does not go beyond a brief explanation of the link between language maintenance and identity (Moreno Ródenas, 2002; Franzé, 1999; Pujadas, 1999). Research by Cummins (1977, 1986b) has attempted to emphasize the role of L1 in the education of immigrant

minority students. The “threshold hypothesis” and the “interdependence hypothesis” were proposed by Cummins in the early eighties as an attempt to account for research data showing: (1) that “many bilingual students experience academic failure and low levels of literacy in both their languages when they are submersed in an L2-only instructional environment”, and (2) that “instruction through a minority language does not appear to exert any adverse consequences on students’ academic development in the majority language.” (Cummins, 2000: 174). According to his “Threshold Theory” (Cummins, 1977) there may be a minimum or a threshold level of linguistic competence that bilingual children must attain in their first languages in order to avoid cognitive deficits and allow the potentially beneficial aspects of becoming bilingual to influence his cognitive development. Furthermore, the linguistic competence must be achieved first in their L1 so that they can transfer to L2. As a basis for educational policy, it suggests that minority language maintenance should be available to all minority children until the years of middle childhood if their academic achievement is not to suffer.

In his paper of 1979, “Linguistic Interdependence and the Educational Development of Bilingual Children”, Cummins proposed the “developmental interdependence hypothesis”, which looked at the relationship between the learner’s first and second languages. The central tenet was that the child’s first language skills must become well developed to ensure that their academic and linguistic performance in the second language is maximized. The developmental interdependence hypothesis suggests that growth in a second language depends very much on a well-developed first language. This hypothesis has been widely supported since its formulation (Thomas and Collier, 1997, 2002; Hakuta, 2000).

### **2.3.2. Bilingual Education**

This section is not intended as an exhaustive review of the complex field of research of bilingual education. It would have been impossible to do so in the little space allowed in the literature review section of a doctoral thesis. On the contrary, this section intends to provide an overview of the field under the broad label of bilingual education. For detailed accounts of bilingual education research, see Baker, 1996; Crawford, 1991; Romaine, 1995; Paulston, 1980, 1988, 1992b; Hornberger, 1991; Swain and Lapkin, 1982; Cummins, 1981, 1984, 1986b, 1992a, 1992b; Cummins and Swain, 1986; Dutcher, 1994.

A first distinction to be considered in the bilingual education debate relates to the two types of bilingualism made by Gardner (n.d) (cited in Paulston, 1980: 2) between “elitist bilingualism” and “folk bilingualism”. Elitist bilingualism, Gardner points out, is the hallmark of intellectuals and the learned in most societies, while folk bilingualism is the result of ethnic groups in contact and competition within a single state. As Paulston (1980: 2) has stated, research indicates that “elitists bilingual education has never been an educational problem” while folk bilingualism has been the focus of much research in the area for decades now, mainly due to the “language-as-a-problem” perspective that was adopted to cope with it. Romain (1995) reminds us that the traditional policy, either implicitly assumed or explicitly stated, which most nations have pursued with regard to various minority groups, who speak a different language, has been eradication of the native language and culture, and assimilation into the majority one. As she points out “It was not too long ago that minority children in countries like Australia, the United States, Britain, and in Scandinavia were subject to physical violence in school for speaking their home language” (p. 242). In this regard, Skutnabb-Kangas (1984) reports the experiences suffered by Finish children

in Sweden, who were forced to carry heavy logs on their shoulders or wear a stiff collar because they had spoken Finnish.

Bilingual education programs do not constitute an educative innovation. As Mackey (1978) has observed, bilingual education is by no means a modern phenomenon. On the contrary, “bilingualism and multilingualism are a very early characteristic of human societies, and monolingualism a limitation induced by some forms of social change, cultural and ethnocentric developments” (Lewis, 1977: 22). This is so mainly because “there are more bilingual and multilingual individuals in the world than there are monolingual. In addition, there are many more children throughout the world that who have been and continue to be educated through a second or a later-acquired language” (Tucker, 1999).

For Baker (1996) bilingual education is an umbrella term that refers to the different situations, which renders the term ambiguous and imprecise. According to Baker (1996: 172) “A distinction needs making between education that uses and promotes two languages and education for language minority children.” For him, this is a difference between a classroom where formal instruction is to foster bilingualism and a classroom where bilingual children are present, but bilingualism is not fostered in the curriculum. As Romain (1995: 241) has observed “the term ‘bilingual education’ can mean different things in different contexts. If we define it as a program where two languages are used equally as media of instruction, many so-called bilingual education programs would not count as such.”

The descriptive definitions of bilingual education vary enormously (Paulston, 1992). According to Cazden and Snow (1990a) bilingual education is a simple label for a complex phenomenon, since, as Hornberger (1991) has pointed out, the same terms are often confusingly used for different types of educational programs and conversely, different terms for the same

type. That way, she observes, the so-called transitional bilingual education is also referred to as compensatory or assimilation bilingualism.

**2.3.2.1 Typologies of Bilingual Education.** Although they have certain limitations, typologies have value for conceptual clarity, and this is why they are used in this review. Among the limitations of bilingual education typologies, Baker (1996: 174) includes the following: “(1) models suggest static systems, whereas bilingual schools and classrooms constantly develop and evolve; (2) there are wide and many variations within a model; (3) models address ‘inputs’ and ‘outputs’ of the education system, but rarely address the process; and (4) models do not explain the relative effectiveness of bilingual education.

There have been many typologies of bilingual education ranging from those which distinguish two basic types (Fishman, 1976; Hornberger, 1991) to Mackey’s (1970) typology, which accounts for ninety different patterns of bilingual schooling, considering the languages of the community, the languages of the curriculum, the languages of the community where the school is located, and the international and regional status of the languages.

Paulston (1992) has distinguished three types of bilingual education according to the choice of medium of instruction: (1) immersion programs, where all schooling is in the L2; (2) programs taught in the L1 with an L2 component; (3) programs in which two languages are used as the medium of instruction. As Paulston (1980) has pointed out, programs that are labeled as bilingual education programs may differ in fundamental aspects, and the primary differences lie in the arrangement of components, rather than in the existence of different components. The variables that, according to her, distinguish the various models, and that influence bilingual education program output, are: (1) the medium of instruction; (2) the sequencing of languages; (3) time allotted, both in sequencing and within the curriculum; (4) the emphasis on the mother

tongue and culture of the children; (5) the medium of instruction of specific subjects, such as reading and mathematics; (5) teacher ethnicity and qualifications; and (6) appropriate curriculum and teaching materials.

A different approach to categorizing types of bilingual education is to examine the goals of such education. A frequent distinction is between transitional and maintenance bilingual education (Hornberger, 1991). As discussed somewhere else, transitional bilingual education (TBE) aims at shifting the child from the minority language to the dominant majority language. The underlying purpose of this model of bilingual education is social and cultural assimilation. On the contrary, maintenance bilingual education attempts to foster the child's minority language, to strengthen their sense of cultural identity, and to affirm the rights of an ethnic minority group in a nation (Baker, 1996). Otheguy and Otto (1980) further distinguish between the goals of static maintenance and developmental maintenance. Static maintenance attempts to prevent the native language loss, but it does not seek to increase skills in that first language. Developmental maintenance seeks to develop a student's home language skills to full proficiency and full literacy or biliteracy.

Ferguson et al. (1977) provide a list of ten goals of bilingual education. These goals include: to assimilate individuals into the main society; to unify a multilingual society; to preserve ethnic and religious identity; to strengthen elite groups and preserve their position in society; or to give equal status in law to languages of unequal status in daily life, among others. This list of aims suggests that, according to Paulston (1980), bilingual education frequently serves the interests of the dominant groups in the education of their children. Moreover, the list also shows that bilingual education does not necessarily concern the balanced use of two languages in the classroom. As Baker (1996: 174) points out "Behind bilingual education are

varying and conflicting philosophies of what education is for. Sociocultural, political, and economic issues are ever present in the debate over the provision of bilingual education.”

Hornberger (1991) proposed her own framework which distinguishes between bilingual education models and program types. While models are defined in terms of their goals with respect to language, cultures and society, program types are defined in terms of characteristics relating to student population, teachers and program structure. This leads her to recognize three types of models, i.e. transitional, maintenance and enrichment, each of which may be implemented through a wide range of program types. Like Hornberger (1991), Skutnabb-Kangas (1984) recognized three types of bilingual education, which she calls immersion, submersion and maintenance. Therefore, when the educational aim of a bilingual program is the enrichment of majority children, an immersion program is chosen, and children are taught through the medium of a second language. The outcome is additive bilingualism. When the goal is assimilation, a submersion program is chosen, where there is no attempt to provide any mother tongue teaching or extra teaching in the majority language.

Baker’s (1996) typology of language education distinguished between “weak” and “strong” forms of education for bilingualism depending on the language outcome, i.e. monolingualism or limited bilingualism, and bilingualism and biliteracy. For Baker (1996), although submersion, withdrawal classes, and transitional approaches are often given the title of bilingual education (only because these arrangements contain bilingual children), this counts as a “weak” use of the term because bilingualism is not fostered in school. Only the so-called “strong” forms of bilingual education (immersion bilingual education, developmental maintenance, dual language bilingual education, and bilingual education in majority languages), as formulated by Baker (1996) will be briefly reviewed in this section.

Immersion bilingual education derives from Canadian educational experiments which started in St. Lambert, Montreal, in 1965 (Lambert and Tucker, 1972). An experimental kindergarten class was set up for English-speaking children to become bilingual in French, and bicultural, without loss of achievement. According to Tucker and d'Anglejan (1972) the aims were met: "the experimental students appear to be able to read, write, speak, understand, and use English as well as youngsters instructed in English in the conventional manner. In addition and at no cost they can also read, write, speak and understand French in a way that English students who follow a traditional program of French as a second language never do" (p. 19). The essential program features that led to this rapid growth are different from those of the "immersion" ("structured immersion" which equals submersion) programs implemented for immigrant minorities, i.e. prestigious (French) vs. non-prestigious language, optional vs. compulsory programs, competent bilingual teachers vs. unprepared teachers, same curriculum as mainstream students vs. watered-down curriculum.

Canadian immersion bilingual education has influenced bilingual education in Europe and beyond (Baker, 1996). In the Spanish context, research in Catalonia indicates that Spanish speaking children who follow an immersion program not only become fluent in Catalan, but also their Spanish does not suffer. Throughout the curriculum, such Catalan immersion children perform "as well and sometimes better than their Hispanophone peers who do not follow an immersion program" (Artigal, 1993: 40-41). Similarly, the EIFE studies in the Basque Country show that their Model B immersion program (50% Basque and 50% Spanish) has successful outcomes in bilingual proficiency (Sierra and Olaziregi, 1989).

Despite the proven successful outcomes of immersion bilingual education programs in different regional and national contexts, Romaine (1995: 251) observes that this is "The actual

number of children in the United States who presently receive bilingual education represents only a quarter of the population for whom it is intended. Most of these schools do not attempt to maintain the native language of the children and over half do not provide any content instruction in the native language.”

Another form of bilingual education that is considered “strong” by Baker (1996) is developmental maintenance, also referred to as late-exit bilingual education (Ramírez, 1992). Developmental bilingual education is an enrichment program that educates English (or other majority language) language learners using both the majority and their first languages for academic instruction (Genesee, 1999). The goal is to promote high levels of academic achievement in all curricular areas and full academic language proficiency in the students’ first and second languages.

A third “strong form” of bilingual education proposed by Baker (1996) is the so-called Two-Way or Dual Language Bilingual Education. The definition and goals of two-way bilingual education have been clearly articulated in the literature (Christian, 1994; 1996a; Christian et al. 2000; Genesee, 1999, Howard and Christian, 2002). Howard et al. (2003: 3-4) define two-way immersion as “an educational approach that integrates language minority and language majority students for all or most of the day, and provides content instruction and literacy instruction to all students in both languages.”

The first two-way immersion programs in the U.S. started more than 40 years ago, with programs such as Ecole Bilingue, a French/English program in Massachusetts, and Coral Way, a Spanish/English in Dade County, Florida dating back to 1963. While the program model has been in existence in the U.S. for quite some time, the growth in popularity is a more recent phenomenon. Lindholm (1987) documented 30 two-way immersion programs in the mid-

eighties. Since then, the number of programs has increased dramatically, with 266 documented programs in 2002 (CAL, 2002). The longitudinal study conducted by Thomas and Collier (2002) from 1996-2001 on the long-term academic achievement of English language learners in the U.S, concluded that 90/10 and 50/50 Two-Way Bilingual Immersion and One-Way Developmental Bilingual Education programs are the only programs found to date that assist students to fully reach the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile (scoring above 50% of the other test takers) in both their native language and English in all subject areas, and to maintain that level of high achievement through the end of their schooling.

The last form of strong bilingual education referred to by Baker (1996) is bilingual education in majority languages, which comprises the joint use of two or more majority languages in a school. The goals of those schools usually include bilingualism or multilingualism, biliteracy and cultural pluralism.

**2.3.2.2 The Politics of Bilingual Education.** As Baker (1996) has observed, bilingualism not only exists within individuals, but is also directly and indirectly interwoven into the politics of a nation. Thus, “bilingual education, whatever form it takes, cannot be properly understood unless connected to basic philosophies and politics in society” (p 352). Underneath all forms of bilingual education lie different views about minority languages, minority cultures, immigrants, equal opportunities, empowerment, affirmative action, the rights of language minority groups, assimilation and integration, etc.

Ruiz (1984) has suggested three perspectives about language around which people and groups vary, i.e. language as a problem, language as a right, and language as a resource. The “language as a problem” perspective is based partly on the idea that perpetuating language minorities and language diversity may cause less integration, more antagonism, and more

conflict in society. The solution to the “complication” of linguistic and cultural diversity is assimilation into the majority language. According to Baker (2000: 154), such an argument holds that “the majority language unifies diversity” (Baker, 2000: 154), and a strong nation is regarded as a unified nation. Another orientation about language is thinking of it as a basic, human right. Within this perspective the eradication of language prejudices and discrimination in a democratic society is supported (Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson, 1994). A case in point of the dynamic and continuing contest to establish language rights in the U.S. was the “Lau vs. Nichols” case (1974), which declared English submersion programs illegal, and recognized the minority students’ rights to receive mother instruction and culture in their school district. The third perspective about language is the idea of “language as a resource” orientation. The assumption within this orientation is that language does not cause social separation or prevents integration. On the contrary, it represents a personal and national resource. The idea of language as a resource not only refers to the development of a second language in monolingual speakers. It also refers to the preservation of languages other than the majority languages.

Two contrasting ideological positions are at the heart of the social and political questions about bilingual education. For Taylor (1991: 1), “At one extreme is assimilation, the belief that cultural groups should give up their ‘heritage’ cultures and take on the host society’s way of life. At the opposite pole is multiculturalism, the view that these groups should maintain their heritage cultures as much as possible.” For Baker (1996: 374) “Multiculturalism has, as one foundation, the ideal of equal harmonious, mutually tolerant existence of different and diverse languages, and of religious, cultural and ethnic groups in a pluralist society”. Moreover, a multicultural perspective is based on the idea that “an individual can successfully hold two or more cultural identities” (p. 374). For Baker (1996) the basic beliefs of multiculturalism are the

following: (a) two languages and two cultures enable a person to have dual or multiple perspectives on society; (b) those who speak more than one language and own more than one culture are more sensitive and sympathetic, more likely to build bridges than barricades and boundaries. Ideally, a person who is multicultural has more respect for other people and other cultures than a monocultural person. Furthermore, while pluralism and multiculturalism may lead to a positive attitude to the host and heritage cultures, assimilation leads to a positive attitude to the host culture and a negative attitude to one's heritage culture.

At the heart of the assimilationist ideology is the belief that an effective, harmonious society can be achieved only if minority groups are absorbed into mainstream society (Baker, 2000: 163). In contrast to assimilation, integration refers to "the situations where ethnic groups are able to remain distinct and establish boundaries with the majority, while having relatively equal access to employment, affluence, power and self-promotion" (p. 162). While assimilation aims to shape everyone into the same characteristics and absorbs one culture and language into another, integration affirms the value of societal diversity and retains ethnic, cultural and linguistic differences.

Cummins' research studies in the 90s deepen their appreciation of the political nature of bilingual education, of power and status relationships in blocking form of it that would enrich students. He argues that there is a need to empower minority language students, against which there is so much prejudice. His theoretical framework accounts for dominated/dominant power relationships, culture, community, pedagogy and assessment and it is valuable for predicting the effects of submersion and transitional bilingual education. It also predicts how empowerment of students can be achieved when collaboration is one part of the political solution to certain educational issue for the empowerment of minority language students. One of the implications

of this theory is that the student should not to be blamed for underachieving, but rather the societal and educational surrounding the language minority child should be considered. Furthermore, there are changes that need to be done in politics, provision, policy and practice to ensure that a strong form of multiculturalism and anti-racism permeates all levels of the educational system, from teachers to politicians (Cummins, 1992, 1997, 2000).

### **2.3.3. Second Language Programs**

Since policy-makers have traditionally assumed that language is the problem that excludes immigrant minority students from equal educational opportunities, these students have often been removed from the all-majority language program and offered intensive L2 instruction in separate classes. While second language programs and teachers can provide immensely valuable support to second language learners, a vast body of research (Dutcher, 1995; Cummins 1981a; Thomas and Collier, 1997, 2002; Collier, 1995) has shown that learning in a second language (no matter how supportive the program) is less effective than learning in the first. According to a UNESCO report published in 1953, “it is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching is a child’s first language” (UNESCO, 1953; cited in Corson, 1993: 71).

Collier’s (1995) research in U.S. schools concluded that it takes two to five years to acquire social language and a minimum of seven to ten years to reach national norms when all schooling is done in a second language. As she has stated “immigrant students who have had 2-3 years of first language in their home country before they come to the U.S take at least 5-7 years to reach typical native-speaker performance” (p. 8). This is particularly so because, as Collier and Thomas (1989) have suggested, it is a monumental achievement for ESL students to catch and keep up with native English speakers in academic language and content. Most immigrant

students have to catch up academically while learning to use English, and also while integrating into a wholly new culture and society. But because the usual outcome of high school ESL education is eventually the full integration of students into regular classrooms, students are managing to do all of this, even in the face of these many obstacles.

Thomas and Collier (1997) found that most school administrators were extremely skeptical that 5-7 years are needed for the typical immigrant student to become proficient in academic English, with many policy makers insisting that there must be a way to speed up the process. This is why they decided to pursue the question (how long it takes for an immigrant minority student to become proficient in English) for several years with varied school databases in the United States. Their report, “A National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students’ Long-Term Academic Achievement” built on 14 years of related research to document the academic achievement of English language learners over the long term (4-12 years) and across content areas. One of their major findings was that the amount of formal primary language schooling that a student has received is the strongest predictor of second language achievement. This finding is in accordance with Cummins’ threshold hypothesis, which considers the relationship between the bilingual’s two languages, and the developmental interdependence hypothesis, which suggests that a child’s second language competence is partly dependent on the level of competence already achieved in the first language (Cummins, 1979a, 1979b, 1981a, 1981b, 1983).

Cummins’ (1984) distinction between the concepts of CALP and BICS provided a strong theoretical base for bilingual education in the 80s. BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) refers to linguistic surface fluency, which is not cognitively demanding, while CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) refers to cognitive linguistic competence, which is

closely related to the development of literacy skills. BICS is said to occur when there are contextual supports and props for language delivery. Face to face situations are context embedded situations that provide, for example, non-verbal support to secure understanding. On the other hand, CALP is said to occur in context reduced academic situations. Children from minority language backgrounds that have only one level of proficiency (BICS) are not ready to face the academic challenges of the all-majority language classrooms. According to Cummins (1984), when students leave their L1 classes they have only acquired the first level of proficiency, that is, the basic communication skills, while they are still far from achieving the cognitive and academic proficiency level that is necessary to succeed in mainstream classrooms.

In one of his studies Cummins (1981b) analyzed 1,210 immigrants who arrived in Canada at age 6 or younger and at that age were first exposed to the English language. In this study, he found that when following these students across the school years, with data broken down by age on arrival and length of residence in Canada, it took at least 5-7 years, on the average, for them to approach grade-level norms on school tests that measure cognitive-academic language development in English. While a significant level of fluency in conversational second language can be achieved in 2-3 years, academic second language proficiency requires 5-7 years or more to develop to the level of a native speaker.

The two dimensions or levels of proficiency proposed by Cummins provided a theoretical proposition about the relationship between language proficiency and academic achievement. He further suggested that this situation is particularly the case for immigrant minority students: “The sequential nature of BICS/CALP acquisition was suggested as typical in the specific situation of immigrant children learning a second language” (Cummins, 2000: 74).

Thus, it seems justified to think that students who are fully mainstreamed too soon into grade level classes without language support are at risk of failure (Watt and Roessingh, 1994). In a Canadian study of secondary school students, even students who entered the school with an advanced knowledge of English, compared with other newly arrived English language learners, had a dropout rate of 50% (i.e., 50% of the students left school without graduating); among students who arrived at secondary school as beginning learners of English, the dropout rate was 95.5%.

According to Rennie (1993) “ESL programs (rather than bilingual programs) are likely to be used in districts where the language minority population is very diverse and represents many different languages”. The benefits of these programs are basically that they can accommodate students from different language backgrounds in the same class, and teachers do not need to be proficient in the home language(s) of their students. Traditionally, language learners have been pulled out of some of their content-area classes to receive second language instruction. These students have usually been expected to shift to monolingualism in Standard English and to conform to mainstream societal norms of interaction in order to access equal educational opportunities.

As Coelho (1998: 86-87) has observed “in spite of the common use of the term ‘bilingual’ to describe students and programs, the dominant approach in Canada, the United States, Britain, and Australia is the ESL model, where English is the only language of instruction.” Contreras (2002: 150) supports this statement: “...as immigrant students enroll in schools, they need special or altered programs and services if they are to be served adequately. ESL programs are at the forefront of these accommodations.” In their study of school effectiveness for language minority students, Thomas and Collier (1997) found that “students who receive well-

implemented ESL-pullout instruction, a very common program nationwide, and then receive years of instruction in the English mainstream, typically finish school with average scores between the 10th-18th national percentiles, or do not even complete high school. In contrast, English learners who receive one of several forms of enrichment bilingual education finish their schooling with average scores that reach or exceed the 50th national percentile” (p. 9). Their recommendation is, then, clear: “If you must use all-English instruction, select and develop its more effective forms... Move your school away from its least effective form, ESL pullout.” (Thomas and Collier, 1997: 59)

Submersion education with pull-out classes is one of the options available to teach immigrant minority students the majority language. Language minority students spend part of the day in a mainstream classroom, but are withdrawn for compensatory classes in the majority language (ESL pull-out programs in U.S. and England). The focus of this type of program is on direct language instruction, and the goal is monolingualism and, for that matter, assimilation to the majority language. As Baker (1996: 177) has stated “such withdrawal classes are provided as a way of keeping language minority children in mainstream schooling.” Moreover, “withdrawal classes are administratively simple and require little or no additional expense” (p. 177).

Sheltered Instruction is a widely used approach to teach language and content to L2 learners (Genesee, 1999). Minority language students are taught the curriculum with a simplified vocabulary and also purpose-made materials and methods. In sheltered instruction content and curriculum materials are developed and pitched to match the L2 proficiency level of the student (Faltis, 1993b). This model is grounded in the understanding that learners can acquire content knowledge, concepts, and skills at the same time that they improve their L2 skills. Research has shown that language acquisition is enhanced by meaningful use of and

interaction in the second language (Genesee, 1994). Thus, although the acquisition of L2 is one of its goals of sheltered L2 or content-based programs, instruction focuses on content rather than language.

Transitional bilingual education has been included in this section (second language programs) because, while it has a component of mother tongue instruction, this is only developed in order to facilitate second language proficiency and mainstreaming. Native language development is abandoned once students are thought to have acquired the L2 proficiency level necessary to follow all-second language instruction. This model program is usually referred to as early-exit bilingual education (Ramirez, 1992). As it has been discussed somewhere else, Cummins' distinction between two levels of language proficiency (CALP and BICS) gave him the theoretical grounds to criticize bilingual educational practices in the U.S., and the transitional programs in particular.

#### **2.3.4. Submersion Education**

Submersion education is the label to describe education for language minority children who are directly mainstreamed after school entrance. According to Baker (1996: 174) "Submersion contains the idea of a student thrown into the deep end and expected to learn to swim as quickly as possible without the help of floats or special swimming lessons." In submersion programs, minority students are taught all day in the majority language alongside fluent speakers of the majority language. Students, as Baker (1996) points out, "may either sink, struggle or swim." The implicit message of submersion is that children are expected to achieve the level of second language required for academic success just by attending mainstream schools and interactions with their classmates.

As Thomas and Collier (1997: 58) observed, “this is NOT a program model, since it is not in compliance with U.S. federal standards as a result of the Supreme Court decision of *Lau v. Nichols*.” Although the submersion approach has often been considered bilingual education, Baker states that this is a weak use of the term, since bilingualism is not favored in school. The strong use of the term is represented by immersion education, which has bilingualism as an intended outcome. Therefore, submersion and immersion programs are different and they lead to different results. The basic aim of submersion is assimilation of language minority speakers, which usually results in language problems, since “there is no reason to believe that children will quickly and effortlessly acquire the majority language skills necessary to cope in the curriculum.” (Baker, 1996: 176) In addition to language problems, Baker (1996) suggests that problems of social and emotional adjustment may also arise, and they are connected with higher drop-out rates from high school.

According to Skutnabb-Kangas (1988: 26) “*Submersion* programs for *minorities* are still by far the most common way of educating both indigenous and immigrant minorities in most countries in the world”. The result of submersion programs is “dominance in the majority language at the expense of the mother tongue, and poor school achievement. Societally, this means assimilation for some, and marginalization for the many” (p.27).

In this situation, teachers are presented with extra challenges to educate immigrant minority children. As Baker (1996: 176) points out “Considerable variations of language skill in a classroom may often create problems in teaching and class management for the teacher. With students who range from fluent majority language speakers to those who can understand little classroom talk, the burden on the teacher may be great.”

In the US the Supreme Court decision in *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) found submersion programs unlawful. With this decision, the Supreme Court justices declared a San Francisco school district violated a non-English speaking Chinese student's rights to equal education opportunity when it failed to provide English language instruction or other needed special programs. An important consequence of this court decision was that all school districts across the country were forced to provide English as Second language instruction for all non-English speaking students.

The debate on how best to teach immigrant minority students continues into the 21st century. However, a "substantial research and theoretical basis for policy decisions regarding minority students' education does exist" (Cummins, 2000: 39), which means that "policy-makers can predict with considerable confidence the probable effects of bilingual programs for majority and minority students implemented in very different sociopolitical contexts" (p. 39).

The effectiveness of various program models for language minority students remains the subject of controversy. As Rennie (1993) has suggested, "Although there may be reasons to claim the superiority of one program model over another in certain situations... a variety of programs can be effective. The choice should be made at the local level after careful consideration of the needs of the students involved and the resources available." It has been suggested that the effectiveness of language programs for minority students needs to consider children, teachers, the community, the school itself, and the type of program, and one particular factor cannot be isolated from another (Baker, 1996).

## 2.4. NEWCOMER PROGRAMS

### 2.4.1. Definition

Newcomer programs have been considered to be “an entirely innovative concept” (Friedlander, 1991: 1), “a new model for immigrant education” (McDonnell and Hill, 1993), or “a fairly recent phenomenon, established to help reduce the underachievement of newcomers” (Short and Boyson, 2004: 7). The emphasis of newcomer programs is mainly on helping newly arrived students acquire beginning L2 skills along with core academic skills and knowledge, and to acculturate to the host country school system (Genesee, 1999).

Newcomer programs that have been identified in the United States to date vary in their definition of newcomers (Genesee, 1999). Some define the students by their length of residency in the country, their language proficiency, their test scores and/or their age. Some define newcomers as recent immigrants to the host country with limited proficiency in the second language, while others define students as new only to the district (Short and Boyson, 2004). Some newcomer programs select students who are below grade level or have had limited formal education. Others rely on a definition that is linked to federal aid, according to which a newcomer is a student who has been in the United States for 3 years or less and are limited English proficient (Genesee, 1999).

For Short and Boyson (2004: 20) the defining characteristics that distinguish newcomer students from other L2 and bilingual education students in the American context are “recent arrival to the United States and limited or no English proficiency”. The authors observe that these students have needs that traditional ESL and bilingual programs are usually not designed to

address, and that newcomer programs have been established to bridge the gap between newcomers' needs and regular language support programs (Short and Boyson, 2004).

A first definition of newcomer programs is provided by Friedlander (1991: 3): "...newcomer programs can be loosely defined as temporary transitional programs designed to meet the unique needs of newcomer students in the context of a nurturing and supportive educational environment." Moreover, "while emphasizing language acquisition in their curricula, newcomer programs operate on the premise that English language development by itself is not enough to ensure the successful adjustment and academic achievement of newcomer students" (p. 4). For Ruiz-de-Velasco and Fix (2000: 88) newcomer programs are "short-term, transitional programs designed to meet the needs of recently arrived immigrant students with a comprehensive set of services that may include orientation to the United States and its school system, and special curricula provided by bilingual teachers and counsellors." Another definition of newcomer programs in the U.S. context is provided by Short and Boyson (2004). For them a newcomer program is "a program that, in a special academic environment for a limited period of time, educates recent immigrant students who have no or very limited English language proficiency and who may have had limited formal education in their native countries."

Newcomer programs target middle- and high-school-aged immigrant students with limited literacy skills in the primary language often as a result of limited formal schooling, although newcomer programs also exist at the primary school level. However, it is newcomer adolescents who face the most serious challenges in the educational system (Short, 2002), since secondary newcomer students have limited time to learn the second language, study the required content courses, and catch up to their L2-learning peers before graduation.

In their 4-year study of 115 middle and high school newcomer programs, Short and Boyson (2004) reviewed the available literature to discover that this program type has received scant attention and that only very few studies have attempted to evaluate it. A few case studies and some comparisons of instructional practices across programs are available (Olsen et al., 1999; Constantino and Lavadenz, 1993). Furthermore, McDonnell and Hill's (1993) report evaluated newcomer programs from a cost-effectiveness perspective. For the researchers "... newcomer schools provide a more focused alternative that ensures recent immigrants fortunate enough to be enrolled in them with a richly integrated educational experience, at least for a short time" (p. 97). Nevertheless, they further state that, although "immigrant students have unmet educational needs that are unique to their newcomer condition, the best way to help immigrant students is to strengthen the school systems that serve them, not to create new categorical programs that single out immigrants for special benefits" (McDonnell and Hill, 1993: 97)

Even though research shows the many benefits of newcomer programs, Short (2002: 195) observes that there is "...a need for more rigorous evaluation of these programs, ... and a need for more research to help identify the optimal program design for a given group of newcomer students and educational goals."

#### **2.4.2. Theoretical Rationale for Newcomer Programs**

The rationale for establishing newcomer programs differ across different sites, but several specific considerations and beliefs have influenced the decision to set up this type of program. For Short and Boyson (2004: 15) "Overall, the goal of most programs is to accelerate the students' learning so they can make the transition to other school programs and be prepared for the literacy and content demands of bilingual, ESL, or mainstream courses." As Friedlander

(1991: 2) has stated “newcomer programs operate on the assumption that LEP newcomer students need a period of adjustment not only to the education system but also to the social environment of this country—a time during which they need an emotionally-safe educational atmosphere that fosters rapid language learning, acculturation, and enhancement of self-esteem.” Newcomer programs have come to avoid other schooling alternatives that have proven to be ineffective in the education of immigrant minority students. According to Olsen et al. (1999) “Temporary strategies, such as placing students in grades lower than their age cohorts, have been unsuccessful and are developmentally inappropriate.”

Although the goals of newcomer programs may appear similar to goals other language support programs, there are distinguishing characteristics that reflect the newcomer program philosophy” (Short and Boyson, 2004: 15). The researchers have found that newcomer programs in the United States differ from other forms of support devised for the same student population in five different ways: (1) “These programs are primarily designed for those students with the weakest English and academic skills, those who enter school several months after the academic year has begun, or those who are older learners”; (2) “Most newcomer programs limit enrolment to one to three semesters of instruction. This policy is partly in place to ensure that newcomer students are not segregated from the main student body; (3) “A number of course offerings are distinct from the regular ESL or bilingual education programs”; (4) “Newcomer programs help the students learn a range of school skills, depending on their age, backgrounds, and needs...”; and (5) “These programs involve the families in the range of services they offer ... newcomer program staff reach out to help families access social, health, and employment services...” (p. 15-16).

According to Friedlander (1991), newcomer programs are an excellent way to centralize resources and to bring newcomer students together and specialized personnel at one location (p. 3). By consolidating staff and resources in one location, newcomer programs can serve a large geographical area while maintaining the flexibility to serve the unique and changing needs of the newcomer population. Thus, the newcomer program presents itself as a different option for immigrant minority student schooling in a variety of ways. First, the population it serves is more specific. Second, it offers L2 and content teaching, with occasionally L1 development. The goal is therefore transitional, since students are expected to incorporate to one of their home school language support programs once they exit the newcomer program. Third, students spend most of the school day in one classroom with other minority students (the amount of time students spend in the programs daily varies according to the program model). Finally, the length of stay in a newcomer program is established between one term and two academic years.

Genesee (1999: 41) has criticized the transitional nature of newcomer programs and goals they are expected to achieve. For him, “If the decision is made to adopt a program that does not promote bilingual proficiency, three alternatives are possible: (1) transitional bilingual education; (2) a newcomer program that does not use the students’ first language or transition students to a bilingual follow-up program, or (3) sheltered instruction.” According to Genesee (1999), newcomer programs are transitional in nature, since they provide short, intensive programs that are specially designed to meet the immediate needs of majority language learners. As the author has observed, newcomer programs “do not provide long-term responses to the education of these students. Follow-up programs must be put in place with teachers who are prepared to work effectively with English language learners in order to meet the long-term responses to the education of these students” (1999: 41).

### **2.4.3. Program Features**

The pedagogical and programmatic features of newcomer programs differ according to their educational goals, site options, available staff, and resources. However, there are some salient pedagogical and program features that are specific of newcomer programs (Genesee, 1999). First, a newcomer program normally offers courses that are distinct to the program. Second, the instructors in the program use special strategies to teach literacy to adolescent students, and/or sheltered and bilingual content instruction to promote the development of core academic skills while furthering students' second language development. Third, many newcomer programs supplement classroom curricula with field trips, cultural activities and special events that serve their acculturation goals. Fourth, most newcomer programs handpick their instructors, looking for professionals experienced in working with recent immigrant students. Fifth, the instructional materials are cognitively appropriate to the ages of the students, and they include modifications appropriate for their level of language development. Sixth, most programs employ paraprofessional support to assist students with academic matters and primary language literacy development. Finally, most programs seek to include the whole family in the life of the school.

In an attempt to characterize the great variation observed in the 115 middle and high school newcomer programs in the U.S. of their 4-year study, Short and Boyson (2004) described the most salient features observed in them. First, newcomer programs in the U.S. are mostly located in urban metropolitan communities (more than 75% of them), while only 7% are located in rural areas. Second, the preferred school model is the program within a school model, where students are served in their home school. The newcomer program can also be offered at a separate site or at a whole school, although these two models account for less than 25% of the total programs. Third, the length of daily program, which depends on the resources available and the students

being served, may involve one or two course periods, half of the school day, or the full school day. Fourth, newcomer programs often develop courses distinct from those of the regular language support program, such as courses that facilitate students' social and cultural integration into American life. All newcomer programs in their study offer ESL or English language development courses, and a few also offer native language literacy courses. In addition, most programs provide instruction in one or more content areas through sheltered and bilingual approaches. In the fifth place, assessments are used in newcomer programs for initial placement, progress, achievement, and exit assessment. Most of them use commercially produced assessments to measure students' English language skills and/or native language skills. Finally, as regards program staffing, newcomer programs often includes an administrator, teachers, guidance counselors, and paraprofessional, and at least one staff member is proficient in one of the students' native languages. Some additional services provided by the newcomer programs studied in their research project include physical health services, social services, career counseling, and tutoring.

## **2.5. LANGUAGE PROGRAM EVALUATION**

### **2.5.1. Definition and Rationale for Program Evaluation**

The term "evaluation" tends to be used ambiguously in relation to other terms such as assessment and testing (Lynch, 1996). However, "an evaluation can make use of assessment instruments (including tests) but it is not limited to such forms of information gathering ... Likewise, assessment instruments (including tests) can be used for purposes other than evaluation..." (p. 2). For Lynch (1996: 2) evaluation is defined as "a systematic attempt to

gather information in order to make judgments or decisions.” Evaluative information can therefore be both qualitative and quantitative, and it can be gathered through different methods (observations, questionnaires, interviews, etc.). Scriven (1967) defined evaluation in relation to the goals it serves. He argued that, although evaluation may play many different roles, it has a single goal, that is, to determine the worth or merit of whatever is evaluated. According to Scriven (1967) evaluation’s goal usually relates to value questions, requires judgments of worth or merit, and is conceptually distinct from its roles. Although he has more recently added that “evaluation is concerned with significance, not just merit and worth” (Scriven, 1994: 380), he still presents powerful arguments to defend that an evaluation of any object is undertaken to identify and apply defensible criteria to determine its worth, merit and quality.

Shadish (1994) has argued that the definition of evaluation should encompass more than “scientific valuing”, extending also to include other key activities and practices of the evaluator, such as seeing that the evaluation is used and providing recommendations aimed at program improvement. Fetterman (1994) has also proposed to broaden evaluation’s definition and purpose to include using evaluation concepts and techniques to empower (or illuminate) those whose programs are evaluated. According to Lynch (1996), program evaluation in the field of applied linguistics has developed within a larger context of evaluation, especially as articulated in the education and psychology literature. The definition of program evaluation takes many forms depending on how one views evaluation, which in turn influences the types of evaluation activities conducted (Fitzpatrick et al. 2004).

Language program evaluations are usually motivated by an internal quest for program improvement or by an externally imposed requirement in order to justify program funding (Lynch, 1996). Therefore, most evaluations focus on answering a question of effectiveness, that

is, whether the combination of resources, activities and administrative arrangements seem to lead to the achievement of its objectives. Such a focus reflects a decision to judge program effectiveness by looking at outcomes. Nevertheless, King et al. (1987: 9) have suggested that “to consider only questions of program outcomes may limit the usefulness of an evaluation.” For the authors, it is not possible to know what made a program a success unless the details of the program’s operations are described in full. According to them, you simply cannot interpret a program’s results without knowing the details of its implementation. Nevertheless, this is not a common practice among evaluators: “few evaluations give a clear picture of what the program that took place actually looked like” (King et al. 1987: 10).

Thus, a thorough description of what happened during program implementation can provide program staff and other interested parties valuable information about which program features worked and which did not. This implementation evaluation is frequently considered to be the previous stage for the different types of program evaluation, since it includes a detailed description of the program characteristics, and the supporting data from different sources that helps to ensure the thoroughness and accuracy of an evaluation.

### **2.5.2. Types of Program Evaluation**

Prominent evaluation theorists differ widely in their views of what evaluation is and how it should be carried out (Worthen et al. 1997). Despite these different perspectives, however, some common concepts and distinctions exist about which there seems to be little debate. Two basic distinctions have been made in accordance to the roles of evaluation. In this respect Scriven (1967) first distinguished between formative and summative roles of evaluation. A formative evaluation is conducted to provide program staff evaluative information useful in improving the

program. Formative evaluation looks at a program as it is developing in order to make suggestions for improvement. The companion term for formative evaluation, also coined by Scriven (1967), is summative evaluation. According to him, a summative evaluation is conducted and made public to provide program decision makers and potential consumers with judgments about that program's worth and merit in relation to important criteria. This type of evaluation leads to decisions concerning "program continuation, termination, expansion, adoption and so on" (Worthen et al. 1997: 15). Although in practice distinctions between these two types of evaluation may not be so straightforward, the terms have become almost universally accepted in the field (p. 14). Nevertheless, some evaluators have suggested that Scriven's dichotomy is not sufficiently broad to include all forms of evaluation (Chen, 1996).

Fitzpatrick et al. (2004) classified many different approaches to evaluation in five categories: (1) objectives-oriented evaluation approaches; (2) management-oriented evaluation approaches; (3) consumer-oriented evaluation approaches; (4) expertise-oriented evaluation approaches; and (5) participant-oriented evaluation approaches. The objectives-oriented evaluation approach focuses on the extent to which the purposes of some activity are achieved. The information gained from this type of evaluation can be used to reformulate the purposes of the activity, the activity itself, or the assessment procedures. The second category, or management-oriented evaluation, is meant to serve decision makers, and its rationale is that evaluative information is an essential part of good decision making, and that the evaluator can be most effective by serving administrators, policy makers, boards, practitioners, and others who need good evaluative information. Consumer-oriented approach to evaluation is mainly a summative evaluation approach. It was promoted during the mid and late 60s by independent agencies or individuals who had taken the responsibility to compile information on educational

or other human services products, or to assist others in doing so. As regards the expertise-oriented approach to evaluation, it depends primarily on the expertise to judge an institution, program, product or activity. The fifth category, that is, participant-oriented approaches, is extremely relevant for this study, since it claims that the significant involvement of participants in the evaluation is central in determining the values, criteria, needs, data, and conclusions for the evaluation. In the participant-oriented evaluation approaches, evaluators work to portray the multiple needs, values and perspectives of program stakeholders to be able to make judgments about the value or worth of the program being evaluated. As Fitzpatrick et al. (2004: 154) have pointed out, “Many of those who contributed to the development and use of participant-oriented approaches to program evaluation prefer naturalistic inquiry methods.” Guba (1978) provided the first comprehensive discussion of the merits of introducing naturalistic methods into program evaluation. He differentiated between naturalistic inquiry, rooted in ethnography and phenomenology, and “conventional” inquiry, based on the positivistic, experimental paradigm. The primary concern of the naturalistic evaluator is evaluating the program as it occurs, and the goal is to describe a program fully while taking into account the different value perspectives of its stakeholders.

The major debate on program evaluation theory has been on how this evaluation should be better conducted. The so-called quantitative-qualitative debate (Reichardt and Cook, 1979; Smith and Heshusius, 1986; Howe, 1988) has more recently been referred to as “the paradigm dialog” (Guba, 1990a). At the core of this debate is the discussion of the ontological (what can be know) and epistemological (how we know what we claim to know) bases for research and how these affect the choice of methodology” (Guba and Lincoln, 1989).

On the one side of the debate is the positivistic paradigm, that is, the traditional, experimental approach to evaluation. This paradigm asserts that reality is objective, that facts can and must be separated from values, and that it is necessary for the researcher to remain detached and distant from the phenomenon studied (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). According to Lynch (1996), this paradigm has identified two major categories of research design, namely, true experiments and quasi experiments. Both designs compare the program of interest with a control group, but while students are randomly assigned to the groups in the first category, the assignment to one or the other of these situations is not random in the second category. As an alternative approach to inquiry, the naturalistic paradigm has challenged the traditional authority of positivistic paradigm (Lynch, 1996). In contrast to the “preordinate” (Stake, 1975b) design of positivistic research, “naturalistic design emerges as the evaluator proceeds to investigate the program setting, allowing new information and insights to change and from whom data will be gathered” (Lynch, 1996: 14). Naturalistic approach does not attempt to control variables in the research design, and the emphasis is on observing, describing, interpreting, and understanding how events take place in the real world. This approach views the educational program being evaluated as a process that is continuously changing. In general, naturalistic research stems from the belief that reality is not objective, and that “phenomena can be understood only within the context in which they are studied” (Guba and Lincoln, 1989: 45).

### **2.5.3. Evaluation as a Political Activity**

For Fitzpatrick et al. (2004: 440) “Evaluations are considered to be an inherent political activity in that they make political statements, albeit implicitly; they support decision making; and they are sometimes the by-product of political activity. Thus, evaluators are integrally involved in the

political process.” Weiss (1973) proposed three ways in which political factors intrude on evaluations: (1) the policies and programs with which evaluation deals are themselves, the products of political decisions; (2) evaluation, by its very nature, makes implicit political statements (such as those challenging the legitimacy of certain program goals or implementation strategies). Palumbo (1987) argued that politics play a major role in the practice of program evaluation, and Patton (1988) noted that politics played a pervasive role in everything from the evaluation’s theoretical orientation and design to utilization of the study’s results. Perhaps Chelmsky (1987) has contributed most to understanding the political nature of evaluation of programs and policies: “evaluators have learned that they ... must understand the political system in which evaluation operates and the information needs of those policy actors who utilize evaluation ... if the profession is making progress, it is due largely to those who ... focused our attention on the political environment in which evaluators expected to be useful but knew very little about” (pp. 17-19).

## **2.6. PHENOMENOLOGY AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL RESEARCH**

Phenomenology can refer to a philosophy (Husserl, 1967), and inquiry paradigm (Lincoln, 1990), an interpretive theory (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000), a social science analytical perspective or orientation (Harper 2000; Schutz 1967, 1970), a major qualitative tradition (Creswell, 1998), or a research methods framework (Moustakas, 1994). What all phenomenological approaches share is a focus on exploring how human beings make sense of experience and transform experience into consciousness, both individually and as shared meaning. This requires methodologically, carefully and thoroughly capturing and describing how people experience a

phenomenon, how they perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others (Patton, 2002).

By phenomenology Husserl (1931) meant the study of how people describe things and experience them through their senses. His most basic philosophical assumption was that we can only know what we experience by attending to perceptions and meanings that awaken our conscious awareness. Initially, all our understanding comes from sensory experience of the phenomena, but that experience must be described, explicated and interpreted. As Johnstone (2000: 36) has put it “to interpret something- an event, a verbal pattern, a set of numbers- is to decide what it means... Thus, it is always necessary to interpret the data and the results of the analysis.”

According to Becker (1992: 7) “Phenomenology is the study of phenomena, of things or events” and phenomenologists “study situations in the everyday world from the viewpoint of the experiencing person” (p. 7). Moreover, “the world of phenomenology ... explores and deepens our understandings of everyday life” (Becker, 1992: 2). For Van Manen (1990: 10) “Phenomenology asks for the very nature of a phenomenon, for that which makes a some-‘thing’ what it is and without which it could not be what it is”, since it “aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature of meaning of our everyday experiences.” As he has pointed out (p. 9) “Phenomenology aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences... Anything that present itself to consciousness is potentially of interest to phenomenology, whether the object is real or imagined, empirically measurable or subjectively felt.” Qualitative methods or approaches to the human and social sciences offer several traditions. According to Creswell (1993: 11), “These traditions may be method types for data collection, analysis, and reporting writing, or overall designs that include all phases in the

research process”. Two of these designs have been chosen as methods for data collection and analysis in this study, namely, case studies and phenomenology.

The topics of phenomenological research are countless: they can include all of human experience, since anything that can be experienced and can be put in words can be investigated by phenomenologists (Becker, 1992). The phenomenon that is the focus of inquiry may be an emotion, a relationship (marriage, friendship) or a program, an organization or a culture.

Currently, most phenomenological research approaches can be classified as either empirical or hermeneutical. Many phenomenological researchers collect data; they are empirical phenomenological researchers” (Becker, 1992: 32). Of these, some ask people to describe life events and then use these descriptions to understand the general structure or nature of a phenomenon. Other phenomenological researchers use descriptive data to show the essential features of a process. Still others use data to validate phenomenological concepts.

In general, phenomenological researchers want to know more about what a phenomenon is rather than what causes it to exist. The researcher eventually arrives at a general understanding of a phenomenon in its unique and essential manifestations. Phenomenologically oriented researchers design empirical studies that highlight phenomena as they are experienced by people. They study everyday events from the inside, from within the world of the person experiencing them. In doing so, they strive to understand what phenomena *are* for the experiencing person. According to Becker (1992: 34) “phenomenologists assume that experience is a valid source of knowledge and that people’s everyday experiences contain rich insights into phenomena”. In phenomenological studies, “human experiences are examined through the detailed descriptions of the people being studied. Understanding the “lived experience” marks phenomenology as a philosophy based on the works of Husserl, Heidegger, Schuler, Sartre, and Merlau-Ponty, ... as

much as it is a method of research. As a method, it involves the study of a small number of subjects through extensive and prolonged engagement to develop patterns and relationships of meaning.

The literature review in this study substantiated the value of giving voice to participants, especially students, in the process of program implementation. It also attempted to show how the education of immigrant minority students still remains a widely open debate and a divisive issue. In spite of the variety of language support programs available for the education of newcomers, some of the less effective ones are frequently selected, mainly due to reasons other than what is best for minority students. Additionally, this literature review also tried to underscore the role that program evaluation plays in the implementation of language programs for immigrant minorities, especially the type of evaluation approaches that go beyond outcomes and effectiveness. Finally, this literature review intended to show how qualitative approaches (vs. quantitative approaches) can provide stakeholders with valuable information about the worth of language programs.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. IRB APPROVAL AND MODIFICATIONS**

Formal approval from the Institutional Review Board at the University of Pittsburgh was received on October 22, 2004. Modifications to the research study were made regarding the number of participants and schools, for which a new approval was received on June 14, 2005.

#### **3.2. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

Methodological framework or research paradigm (Guba and Lincoln, 1994) is defined as a distinct way of approaching research with particular understandings of purposes, foci, data, analysis, and more fundamentally, the relationship between data and what they refer to. Two paradigms have been widely discussed in the literature, i.e., the qualitative, or naturalistic paradigm, and the quantitative, or positivistic paradigm (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The quantitative-qualitative debate has been referred to as the paradigm dialog (Guba 1990a), and it underscores important differences in the underlying philosophical traditions that define the two approaches to research. As Lynch (1997: 14) has pointed out “The naturalistic paradigm stems from phenomenology and the interpretive approach to social inquiry that developed in the late nineteenth century... it is shaped in the belief that reality is not objective, that there can be no

meaningful separation of facts from values.” For Walqui (2000: 93), one of the positive aspects of doing qualitative research is the fact that “there are many sources and different viewpoints represented”, and this should be encouraged. On the contrary, “The positivistic paradigm stems from logical positivism, which asserts that reality is objective, that facts can and must be separated from values and that it is necessary for the researcher to remain detached and distant from it” (Lynch, 1997: 15).

Different methodological designs correspond to the qualitative and quantitative paradigms. Although this study made use of a quantitative instrument for data collection, that is to say, a survey questionnaire, and data were reduced and analyzed using descriptive statistics, its assumptions are associated with the qualitative paradigm, as formulated by Creswell (1994: 4-10): “First, reality is subjective and multiple as seen by participants in the study ... value-laden and biased ... context-bound, and accurate and reliable through verification. Second, the researcher interacts with that being researched. Third, the nature of the problem is an important factor ... and the research problem needs to be explored because little information exists on the topic”. Creswell (1994: 11-12) introduced four designs frequently found in human and social science research: ethnographies, grounded theory, case studies, and phenomenology.

This research study was designed as a phenomenological case study in which a single entity, i.e., the “Aulas de Enlace” program, was explored. Creswell (1998) considers phenomenology as a major qualitative tradition, which according to Van Manen (1990: 9) “aims at gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences”. For Creswell (1994) this design is appropriate when one’s goal is to explore a phenomenon about which little has been written. In doing phenomenological research, the researcher collects information from knowledgeable participants who are asked to describe the phenomenon and the

data are then analyzed and interpreted, and the researcher's purpose is to describe and interpret the perspective of the participant (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). This study is also a case study, since "the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon ... bounded by time and activity ... and collects detailed information by using a variety of data collection procedures during a sustained period of time" (Merriam, 1988, cited in Creswell, 1994).

The purpose of this research design was to produce an implementation evaluation of the "Aulas de Enlace" program. As it was discussed in chapter 2 of this study, the focus of program evaluation studies in applied linguistics has traditionally been on summative, product-oriented evaluations, i.e., they looked at outcomes, and therefore fell into the positivistic paradigm. A move in the direction of investigating program process began to surface during the 1980s (Jacobson, 1982; Long, 1984; Beretta, 1986a), when it was suggested that language teaching programs should be evaluated using information gathered from multiple perspectives via such techniques as historical narratives, focused interviews, and systematic observations. Researchers argued for evaluation that would examine the process of language teaching programs and, in order to accomplish this, other approaches to evaluation were suggested, such as needs assessment, and implementation and formative evaluations.

Evaluators use many designs and methods in their evaluation studies, choosing among experimental, quasi-experimental, and descriptive designs (Fitzpatrick, 2004: 331). For Fitzpatrick (2004), descriptive designs are the most common design in evaluation and serve many useful purposes, and "case studies are invaluable for exploring issues in depth, providing "thick descriptions" of programs in implementation, different outcomes, contextual issues, and needs and perspectives of various stakeholders" (p. 331). According to Stufflebeam (2001b: 8) "Program evaluation that is based on a case study is a focused, in depth description, analysis, and

synthesis of a particular program or other object.” Since the main goal of this study was to offer a complete description of the “Aulas de Enlace” from multiple perspectives, the case study design was considered the most appropriate.

### **3.3. THE RESEARCHER’S ROLE**

I was the primary instrument for data collection, analysis and interpretation in this study. I distributed and collected questionnaires, interviewed participants, observed classes, maintained observational field notes, and examined available program documents. My desire to help the public understand the complexity of the educational process for immigrant minority students shaped my study in a qualitative design. Furthermore, my desire to give students voice and expression to their experiences as immigrant minorities in public schools in Madrid was determined by my own personal “immigration experience”. Thus, my own personal background and experience introduced the risk of bias in this study. I always had to be conscious that I did not unfairly bias my research in favor of the students, and I overcame this bias by also understanding the other participants’ perceptions and ensuring that I did this with fairness.

My background and experience as Spanish teacher brought with it my critical and judgmental eye when it came to teaching practices. I had to be careful as a researcher to describe what I saw without passing any judgment. I tried to take notes of every event and interaction that took place in the classroom objectively, and I had to temper my pedagogical criticisms and be open to understanding rather than judging the teachers and other participants’ perceptions and practices.

### **3.4. PARTICIPANTS**

#### **3.4.1. Sampling Procedures**

This case study used purposive sampling as sampling procedure. In purposive sampling “units are selected based on a judgment that these units have certain desired characteristics” (Worthen et al. 1997: 520). According to Merriam (1988) this sampling technique is used successfully in case studies, where the goal is thorough understanding of a group. Since the purpose in this study was not to generalize the findings to the larger population, but rather to understand and explore some issues within a small group, in other words, a case, purposive sampling was considered to be the most appropriate technique.

The requirement to take part in this study was to participate in the “Aulas de Enlace” program as a student, instructor, or administrator. Four criteria were established to guide the selection of participating students before entering the field. According to these criteria students should be (1) newly arrived with no more than 9 months of residence in Spain; (2) enrolled in the “Aulas de Enlace” program during the 2004-2005 academic year; (3) 12 to 18 years old; and (4) native speakers of Romanian, Chinese and Arabic. There were not specific criteria for the selection of the participating teachers and principals. Since the purpose of this study was to investigate their experiences and perceptions about the program, I surveyed all the teachers who accepted to participate. This allowed me to obtain a more realistic profile of who the teachers in the “Aulas de Enlace” are. Regarding the program administrators, I limited the number of principals and inspectors to three and two respectively. The selection of the policy and decision makers who participated in this study was based on the roles they play in the education

department of the Autonomous Community of Madrid, and their responsibilities and power to make decisions that affect the education of immigrant minorities in the region.

### **3.4.2. Description of Participating Students**

The student sample consisted of 116 non-Spanish speaking immigrant secondary school students who attended the “Aula de Enlace” program in the 2004-2005 school year. I chose to study a purposeful sample of Chinese, Moroccan and Romanian students because I believe that they represent the diversity of public secondary schools in Madrid. According to Patton (1987) the goal of purposeful sampling is to gather data that reflect the maximum variation across the setting. In this study, Chinese, Moroccan and Romanian students represent opposite sides of the language learning success continuum. Since most Romanians reach acceptable basic communicative skills in Spanish shortly after they enter the program, they are usually mainstreamed within a few months after arrival. On the contrary, Chinese students struggle with Spanish during most of their secondary school years, and many enter compensatory education programs when they exit the “Aula de Enlace”. Although the group of Chinese students is not numerous (3,165 Chinese students in primary and secondary schools in Madrid in the 2004-2005 academic year) they pose great challenges to the education system. Regarding Moroccan students, many reach a good level of oral Spanish after a few months in the “Aula”, while they present difficulties in writing and communicating in Spanish in the content-area classes. [Table 3.1](#) shows the students’ profiles for the three nationalities and for all students in the sample.

Table 3.1 *Students' Profiles*

	Romanian N=34	Chinese N=45	Moroccan N=37	ALL N=116
<u>Sex</u>				
Male	47%	40%	49%	46%
Female	53%	60%	51%	54%
<u>Age</u>				
12-14 years old	59%	31%	29.7%	40%
15-17 years old	41%	67%	67.5%	58.5%
>17 years old	0%	2%	2.7%	1.5%
<u>School Year</u>				
First Grade (1° ESO)	26.5%	17.8%	13.5%	19.5%
Second grade (2° ESO)	35.3%	24.5%	16.2%	25.5%
Third Grade (3° ESO)	8.8%	26.7%	51.3%	29%
Fourth Grade (4° ESO)	29%	31%	16.2%	25.5%
<u>Last Class in Home Country</u>				
Not in School	0%	0%	16.2%	5.4%
Primary Education	17.6%	9%	30%	19%
First Grade (1° ESO)	30%	24.5%	10.8%	22%
Second grade (2° ESO)	12%	29%	13.5%	18%
Third Grade (3° ESO)	20%	37.8%	2.7%	20%
Fourth Grade (4° ESO)	15%	0%	10.8%	8.6%
<u>Time in Spain</u>				
Up to 7 months	29.5%	26.8%	40.7%	32.3%
8 + months	70.5%	73.2%	59.4%	67.7%
<u>Time in their HS</u>				
Up to 6 months	47%	49%	49%	48.3%
6 + months	53%	51%	51%	51.7%
<u>Time in their "Aula"</u>				
Up to 6 months	94%	49%	78%	73.7%
6 + months	6%	51%	22%	26.3%

With regard to the languages spoken by students at home, all Romanian students spoke Romanian, and only a few recognized to use Spanish occasionally. Regarding Moroccan students, 70% of the sample acknowledged Arabic as the language spoken at home. Since

standard Arabic is not the native language of anyone, it was dialectal Arabic or “Dariya” the language they referred to. There were 24% native Berber-speakers in the sample (“Tarifit”-speakers in all cases). Only 16% recognized speaking Arabic and Berber at home (for a description of the linguistic situation in Morocco see for example ElMadkouri Maataoui, 2003; El Assati, 1993; and Souaiaia, 1990). Most Chinese students (55.6%) in the sample spoke standard Chinese or *Putonghua* at home, and almost 29% used their local dialect, that is to say, different subdialects of *Shangainese*, a group of languages characteristic of the province of Zhejiang, the area where most Chinese students in Spain come from.

### **3.4.3. Description of Participating Teachers**

The total number of teachers in the program in the 2004-2005 school year was 372 for both primary and secondary education in public schools and “colegios concertados” (private schools partly funded by public money). The teacher sample for this study consisted of 36 in-service “Aulas de Enlace” teachers, and almost 70% were women. Their ages ranged between “41-50” (50%) and “more than 51” years old (44.4%), and most have been in the teaching profession for more than 20 years (75%). However, almost 70% of the teachers in the sample had “0-4 years” of experience in teaching Spanish as a second language. The education department in the CAM offered the teachers in the program a 25-hour training course right before its implementation in January 2003. This was considered insufficient by some instructors, and even useless and/or “nada práctico” (not practical at all). Some “Aulas de Enlace” teachers have managed their individual professional growth through E/LE certificate programs or masters in second language education.

Regarding their education level, 66.6% of the teachers in the sample held a B.A or “licenciatura” (a five-year university degree), and 33.3% held a “diplomatura” in “Magisterio” (a three-year university degree that prepares teachers for primary education positions). A low percentage of the sample (16.6%) held both degrees, and only 13.8% had postgraduate education (four teachers held a Master’s degree and one held a Ph.D). Concerning the teachers’ specializations, 22.22% were English teachers at the secondary school level, and 19.5% were Spanish Language and Literature teachers. The most frequently repeated specialization among the teachers in the sample was Social Sciences (25%). Geography & History teachers accounted for 16.66% of the sample, followed by physical education, mathematics, special education, and kindergarten (8.33%). Other specializations were adult education, natural sciences, and Arts, and 66.66% of the teacher sample declared to have one specialization, while 25% had two, and 8.33% had three. Moreover, 52% could speak English and French at different levels of proficiency, and 19.5 % could speak other languages, including Portuguese, Italian, Catalan and Russian, mostly in addition to English and/or French.

Almost 39% of the participating teachers have been in the program for one academic year, while 61% have been two school years or since the program was first implemented in January, 2003. All the teachers in the sample regarded the program as an enriching experience, being the most positive factors the small number of students in one classroom, the personal relationships created with students, the multiple resources available, and the students’ motivation. The totality of the teachers expressed their desire to continue in the program.

#### **3.4.4. Description of Participating Administrators**

The administrators who participated in this study were three principals of high schools with at least one “Aula de Enlace” and two “inspectores” at two different intake centers in the region. Moreover, the secretary of Education of the Autonomous Community of Madrid, Mr. Luis Peral, and Ms. M.A Casanova, Director of the “Promoción Educativa” section in the department of education were the two policy and decision makers interviewed for this study.

#### **3.4.5. Ethical Issues**

The University of Pittsburgh (through the Institutional Review Board) requires researchers to specify the procedures by which participants will be informed of what the study is about and how it will be conducted. The participants in this study were required to be involved in research through informed consent forms, and I obtained the participants’ consent, represented by their signature, as a previous step for data collection.

Consents were prepared well in advance in the design of this study (see Appendices B and E) to inform participants that anyone who participated in the study: (1) did so voluntarily; (2) was able to understand what the study demanded of him or her; (3) was able to understand participation’s risks and benefits; (4) had legal capacity to give consent; and (5) could leave the study at any time even if they consented (Lindlof, 1995). Informed consents were translated into the participating students’ native languages, stapled to the student questionnaire and the introductory letters from schools, and sent home for completion. Therefore, the questionnaire carried the sanction of the school principal, which made it more likely to receive the attention of parents and students. This procedure facilitated the process of informing each family or guardian about the objectives of the study. The student informed consent emphasized the efforts made by

the researcher to preserve anonymity, and to guarantee the uses to which the data might be put. Adult participants in this study were consented in person, and an introductory script was also prepared for them (see Appendix E) with similar information as that included in the students' consent form.

### 3.5. RESEARCH SITES

Potential participating schools were contacted during the design phase of this study from a list of schools where the “Escuelas de Bienvenida” program had been implemented during the 2003-2004 school year (available at [www.madrid.org](http://www.madrid.org)). The first letters to school principals were sent in February, 2004 (see Appendix A). Forty public and private secondary schools were then contacted and asked to participate in the study. In April 2004 I conducted visits to the schools previously contacted by regular mail. During these visits had the opportunity to meet many “Aula de Enlace” teachers and high school principals, and to explain the purpose of the study personally to them. Access to private schools was very limited, and I was never allowed to meet the principal or the “Aulas de Enlace” teachers in any of my visits to these schools. Given the great obstacles posed by the “colegios concertados” to grant me entrance, I was forced to eliminate them from the sample.

Entrance was granted by the principals of 23 public high schools in the Autonomous Community of Madrid through signed letters or e-mail messages. The participating schools were located in all the city districts and extra metropolitan areas, and special attention was given to the selection of schools that enrolled the biggest numbers of immigrant students. There were two main criteria to select the sites where observations were conducted. First, the number of students

enrolled in the “Aula de Enlace” at the moment. Since the maximum number of students allowed in each “Aula” is twelve, students’ origins became an important criterion to consider when selecting the participating schools for case study. I was very careful to select the research sites with the largest number of students of Chinese, Moroccan and Romanian origins whenever possible. The second criterium was the degree of accessibility to the “Aula” and the principals, teachers and students’ willingness to participate in the research study.

### **3.6. DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES**

Data for this study was recorded in a variety of ways and from a variety of viewpoints to describe the program from multiple perspectives, including the researcher’s, and to uncover the meanings attached to people’s lives and experiences. Students, teachers, and administrators were the main data sources. I developed different instruments for data collection (questionnaires and interview protocols), which were approved by my dissertation committee before entering the site. Slight changes were introduced in the questionnaire after the piloting stage of the study, and following the advice of some “Aula de Enlace” teachers who kindly agreed to review the survey questionnaire and provide me with their feedback.

Achievement data was not considered in this study. Since there are not clearly defined assessment procedures to determine the incorporation of “Aulas de Enlace” students into the mainstream classroom, achievement data is not trustworthy. Except for the sixth directive in the official policy, which establishes that immigrant students are allowed to remain in the program

for six months, decisions about their schooling process are left to the teachers and the so-called department of “orientación educativa.”<sup>7</sup>

### **3.6.1. Questionnaire**

Questionnaires are defined as “... any written instrument that presents respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers” (Brown, 2001: 6). For Braverman (1996: 17) “Surveys constitute one of the most important data collection tool available in evaluation.” The purpose of the questionnaire in this study was to collect reliable data from a representative sample of participants the most efficient way possible, and to cover a variety of different geographic areas in the Autonomous Community of Madrid. However, and since the survey was intended to gather opinions and perceptions about a specific program, I had to develop my own instrument, for which a design plan analogous to the study design was developed. Self-administered pencil-and-paper questionnaires, that is, written questionnaires that respondents fill in by themselves, were distributed to teachers and students of the 23 participating high schools. Students returned the completed survey questionnaires to their “Aula de Enlace” teacher, who either sent them to me by regular mail, or contacted me to pick them up.

**3.6.1.1. Student’s Questionnaire.** A total of 170 student questionnaires were distributed at the 23 participating schools, 36 of which were never returned to the teacher, or never returned to me by the teacher. Although a total of 134 students completed and returned the survey questionnaire for this study, only 116 were finally considered for data analysis. Thus, 18

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<sup>7</sup> In the organization of public high schools in Madrid the “Aula de Enlace” is ascribed to the “departamento de orientación educativa”, which consists of a team of pedagogues, psychologists and social workers that support students and teachers in schools in different ways.

questionnaires were discarded based on three facts: (1) five or more multiple items were left unanswered; (2) there were two or more incomplete open-ended questions; and (3) the survey was completed by students from nationalities that were not the focus of this study. Therefore, the student questionnaire surveyed a sample of 116 students, i.e., 45 Chinese (38.8% of the sample), 34 Romanian (29.3%), and 37 Moroccan students (31.9%). The total number of students surveyed accounted for 15.51% of the total population of Chinese, Romanian and Moroccan students in the “Aulas de Enlace” program in secondary education in the CAM, which consisted of 754 students.

The questionnaire took 30 to 45 minutes to complete, and it was translated into Romanian, Chinese and Arabic by certified translators. All Chinese and Romanian students felt comfortable completing the surveys in their native languages, while there were 14 Moroccan students who were unable to complete the questionnaire in Arabic and preferred to do it in Spanish. The student questionnaire included closed- and open-ended items. The closed-ended items consisted of rating scales, such as four-point Likert scales and True-False items, numeric items and multiple-choice items. There were six main scales, with ten to twenty items in each scale (see Appendix D). The homogeneity of the items making up the various multi-item scales within the questionnaire provided this instrument with internal consistency as a reliability measure. The open-ended questions consisted of short-answer open-ended items and specific open questions to be answered in one line.

The questionnaire and the voluntary informed consent form for parents to sign were distributed in class to Chinese, Romanian and Moroccan students. Once parents or guardians agreed to their children’s participation in the research project, students completed the questionnaires at home and returned them to their “Aulas” teacher. Some teachers preferred to

have students complete the questionnaire in the classroom. In these cases only the informed consent was sent home for the parents to sign, and once their permission was obtained students completed the questionnaire in the classroom.

The student questionnaire gathered the following data:

(1) Demographic and background information, which included age, sex, country of origin, date of arrival, future plans in the country, native language, knowledge of other languages, education level attained in their home country, school type, time in that school, and time in the “Aulas de Enlace” program.

(2) First Language proficiency level (as perceived by them), patterns of L1 use, and grade of L1 maintenance. Language use preferences at school and general attitudes toward their first language.

(3) Second Language needs, proficiency level (as perceived by them), motivation to learn Spanish, values assigned to Spanish learning, future uses, and attitudes toward Spanish and Spaniards.

(4) Students’ experiences while in the program (as perceived by them): reasons for being in the program, learning expectations, goals to be achieved, opinions about school, their teachers, the materials used in class, program type (separate classes), feelings about being mainstreamed.

(5) Students’ perceptions of parental opinions about the program. Parents’ profession (in Spain and in home country) and Spanish proficiency level, help received by parents with schoolwork, parents’ opinions about the value of education in general, and language learning in particular; parents’ future plans for their children, reasons to enroll their children in the program (as perceived by students).

(6) Future plans after compulsory education, reasons why they will/will not continue to post-compulsory education, professional goals, and how Spanish will/will not help achieve them.

(7) Open-ended questions focused on the program itself, and they inquired about the various activities carried out inside and outside the classroom, the activities that students prefer, and those they would like to change. The open-ended questions intended to investigate the level of satisfaction of students in the program.

(8) Students were asked to volunteer to participate in a follow-up interview. A short paragraph was included regarding the topic to be treated, the type and number of questions to be asked, and the duration of the interview.

The student questionnaire was piloted once before administration with a total of five “Aulas de Enlace” students: one Moroccan, two Chinese and two Romanian students. Item analysis was conducted after this piloting stage. Dörnyei (2003) states that item analysis can be conducted at two different points in the survey process: after the final piloting stage, and after the administration of the final questionnaire. In the first case “... the results are used to fine-tune and finalize the questionnaire.” (p. 68). In the second case “... the results are used to screen out any items that have not worked properly.” (p. 68). The pilot testing in this study was decisive at determining the changes that needed to be introduced before administration began in February 2005.

The collection of questionnaires went on until mid-June, although the data analysis began as soon as the first surveys started to arrive. The questionnaire survey yielded two kinds of data, i.e., ordinal or numerical, and nominal, or categorical. These data were coded and further analyzed in two different ways. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize the sets of numerical and categorical data obtained through the survey (Brown and Rodgers, 2002). Data

from open-ended questions were analyzed using content analysis, a technique “whereby a pool of diverse responses is reduced to a handful of key issues in a reliable manner” (Dörnyei, 2003: 117). Some key points from the analysis of questionnaires were quoted verbatim “for the purpose of illustration and exemplification, or to retain some of the original flavor of the response” (Dörnyei, 2003: 117).

**3.6.1.2. Teacher’s questionnaire.** Questionnaires were distributed to 46 teachers in the 23 participating schools, although only 36 completed and returned it to me. This amount accounted for nearly 10% of the total “Aulas de Enlace” teacher population in secondary schools in the CAM. No teacher questionnaires were discarded.

The teacher questionnaire took 30 to 45 minutes to complete, and it was administered in Spanish. Teachers were consented in person by the principal investigator, and although a signed voluntary consent form was not required from them for IRB approval purposes, I provided introductory scripts with written descriptions of the project (see Appendix E) to teachers and administrators. The survey questionnaire included open and closed-ended questions. Closed-ended questions included rating scales, such as four-point Likert scales and True/False items, multiple-choice and numeric items. The open-ended questions consisted of short-answer questions and specific open questions to be responded in a line. There were six main scales, with ten to twenty items in each scale (see Appendix F). The homogeneity of the items making up the various multi-item scales within the questionnaire provided this instrument with internal consistency as a reliability measure.

The teacher questionnaire collected data analogous to those gathered from students for comparison purposes. These data included:

- (1) Demographic and background information, such as teachers' age, sex, education, previous training and experience, area of specialization, knowledge of other languages, program selection process, time in their school, and time in the "Aulas de Enlace" program.
- (2) Teachers' attitudes toward students' first language, students' L1 use in class, learning expectations for the three groups of participants, and perceptions of students' first language use patterns.
- (3) Teachers' opinions about Spanish language learning, its status in the curriculum, its usefulness for students' future plans, and the students' Spanish proficiency level.
- (4) Perceptions of why students are in the program, expectations of success in the program, opinions about how the program is serving the students' needs, opinions about the official policy, as related to actual practice, what the program is helping students to achieve, and students' readiness to incorporate into the regular class.
- (5) Opinions about students' future plans, expectations about what they will be able to do when they complete the compulsory level of education or ESO, and variations in the different groups being studied.
- (6) Teachers' perceptions and attitudes of immigrant students' parent involvement in the children's education, and reasons in support of these perceptions.
- (7) Open-ended questions focused on the program itself, and they inquired about the various activities carried out inside and outside the classroom, the activities that teachers think students prefer, and the ones they do not consider much helpful. Open-ended questions intended to investigate the level of satisfaction of "Aulas de Enlace" teachers.
- (8) Teachers were asked to volunteer as participants in a follow-up interview. A short paragraph was included at the end of the questionnaire regarding the topic to be treated, the type and

number of questions to be asked, the duration of the interview, and the researcher's contact information.

Data obtained from the teacher questionnaire were analyzed in two different ways. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the sets of numerical and categorical data of the survey. Data obtained from the open-ended questions were analyzed systematically for content, establishing a set of repeated patterns or categories similar to the ones obtained from the student's survey for comparison purposes.

### **3.6.2. Interviews**

According to Fitzpatrick (2004: 347) "Interviews are often a key to qualitative data collection... Qualitative interviews are used for learning the perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors of others." Stake (1995: 64) points out that "The interview is the main road to multiple realities", while the retrospective in-depth research interview is one of the main data collection methods used by phenomenological researchers (Becker, 1992). Structured interviews were conducted in this study in order to gain insights into the meanings attached to the students and teachers' experiences in the "Aulas". Interview protocols were developed for each stakeholder that participated in the interview phase, and they were intended to survey similar topics for comparison purposes. The goal for teacher and student interviews was to further explore the issues previously surveyed through the questionnaire. For administrators and policy and decision makers the goal was to capture their views and perceptions about the program.

**3.6.2.1. Student's Interview.** A purposeful sample of eight students was selected among those who answered affirmatively to the last question of the questionnaire (willingness to participate in a follow-up interview). Three Romanian, three Moroccan and two Chinese

students were selected, and an effort was made to select an equal number of men and women, although this was not always possible. The interview protocol contained open-ended questions structured in five scales, and each contained four to up to sixteen items. The content in each scale corresponded to that on the questionnaires, except for the background information, and its purpose was to gain a better understanding of what the numerical responses obtained in the questionnaire survey actually meant to the participating students in the “Aulas de Enlace” program (see Appendix G).

Interviews were conducted in the students’ native language, or the language the students confessed feeling more comfortable speaking. In some cases, teachers perceived the interview as a good opportunity for language practice, and some asked me to conduct it in Spanish whenever they considered that the student’s proficiency level allowed it. Thus, the three Romanian and one Moroccan student were interviewed in Spanish. A recurrent pattern in some schools was to find immigrant minority students who volunteered to interpret for their friends, particularly among Chinese students. These student interpreters were of great help, since although they had been in the country for a longer period of time and already attended mainstream classrooms, they once went through similar experiences as those they were trying to help. For the interviews conducted in the students’ native languages I required the services of certified interpreters. The interviews were tape-recorded, and the Spanish versions were transcribed for analysis and interpretation purposes. Interview data were analyzed for key issues related to the descriptive statistical data obtained from the questionnaires. The potential relationship was interpreted in light of the official policy for the program, and the existing literature on immigrant education.

**3.6.2.2. Teacher’s Interview.** A purposeful sample of five teachers was interviewed from a pool of those who responded affirmatively to the last question in the questionnaire (willingness

to participate in a follow-up interview). An effort was made to select an equal number of male and female teachers, although this was not always possible, since the number of women teachers in the program (as in the teaching profession in general) outweighed the number of men instructors.

The interview protocol contained open-ended questions, structured in five scales of four to nineteen questions each. The content was parallel to that on the questionnaires, except for the background information and the future plans sections, and their purpose was to gain a better understanding of what the numerical responses obtained in the questionnaire survey actually mean to the participating teachers in the “Aulas de Enlace” program (see Appendix H). Interview data were analyzed for recurrent patterns and themes to be categorized and compared to the statistical data obtained through the questionnaire. The potential relationships were interpreted in light of the program official policy, language program evaluation theory, and the existing literature on immigrant education.

**3.6.2.3. Administrators' Interview.** Principals of three public secondary schools in different geographic areas of the Autonomous Community of Madrid, and two “inspectores” (inspectors) at the “Comisiones de Escolarización” (intake centers) in different districts in Madrid were interviewed. Ms. M.A. Casanova, director of the “Promoción Educativa” section at the autonomous department of Education, and the “Consejero de Educación” (secretary of education of the autonomous government in Madrid), Mr. Luis Peral Guerra, were also interviewed. The administrators' interview protocol contained open-ended questions structured in five scales of four to twenty-four questions each (see Appendix I). The content was parallel to that of the students and teachers' interviews, and slight changes were introduced and additional questions added regarding the official policy and program implementation.

The interviews aimed at capturing administrators and policy and decision-makers' opinions with regard to the official policy that regulates the implementation of the program, program evaluation, from both a pedagogical and an administrative point of view, and the program's worth to stakeholders. Data obtained through the interview were transcribed and content analyzed for recurrent patterns that were compared with the policy document and other participants' opinions about the program.

### **3.6.3. Observations**

As Fitzpatrick (2004: 336) has stated “Observations are essential for almost all evaluations”. According to him “If permitted, informal observations of the program being evaluated should occur frequently. Such observations give the evaluator a vital picture of what others (e.g., participants, deliverers, administrators) are experiencing, as well as the physical environment itself” (p. 337). For King et al. (1987: 85) “Most audiences consider the observations of people

... highly credible sources of information about program implementation”. Because of the credibility and richness of the information it can provide, “on-site observation is often a desirable part of an implementation evaluation. Of all implementation measures, observation places the evaluator closest to the operation of the program.” (p. 85)

Non-participant and participant observation was conducted at the four sites selected for case study from mid-November, 2004 until late-April, 2005. In non-participant, or passive participant observation, “the observer does not actively participate in the classroom interactions and does not have a role to play other than observer” (Lynch, 1996: 121). Although I initially planned on only conducting non-participant observation, the teachers in three of the observed schools got me involved in their classroom daily activities in different ways. Thus, I occasionally ended up teaching a class period myself, becoming a teacher’s aide, participating in students’ group work, or helping students complete their classroom assignments at the teacher’s request. I became, therefore, what Lynch (1996) has referred to as “moderate participant observation”, which is defined by “the observer alternating between active and passive roles within the setting.” (p. 121)

Understanding the perceptions of students, teachers, and administrators required time to develop a relationship between the participants in the study and the researcher. In order to promote this relationship I spent a total of 164 hours of observation, in which I recorded what occurred during class sessions through extensive field notes. School wide observations of the 23 participating schools were also conducted during the site observations, and in my visits to the participating schools to distribute and/or to collect questionnaires and to conduct interviews. During the observations conducted at the four sites, and the visits to the 23 high schools, I maintained frequent informal conversations with educators, principals and secretaries, which

helped achieve a more complete picture of the Spanish secondary school system, that is to say, the broader context in which the program was implemented. Observations tried to be the least intrusive possible to record the events, behaviors, interactions, activities, subtle factors and the physical setting in a natural way. The purpose of this data-gathering method was to provide insiders' views of reality and insight into the knowledge held by the subjects. No observation matrix was developed. As Lynch (1996: 110) suggests "...the more structured and tally- or counting-oriented are the observation instruments, the less naturalistic is the information they provide."

#### **3.6.4. Field Notes**

I maintained extensive field notes during all stages of the research study. Field notes are written descriptions of people, objects, places, events, activities, and conversations, and in the present study they supplemented the information I gathered from observations, questionnaires and interviews. Three types of field notes were collected: (1) descriptive notes, intended to capture the details of the participants' behavior and of the environment; (2) methodological notes, which recorded any valuable information regarding the data collection methods employed in the study, and (3) analytic notes, which included my own understandings and perceptions of the program, as well as the school organization.

According to Fitzpatrick (2004: 337) "All observers should keep notes to document their perceptions at the time. These notes can later be arranged into themes as appropriate." For Lynch (1996: 116) "The most important characteristic of field notes is that they are descriptive" and their main goal is "to record as thoroughly as possible what is happening in the observed

context. The judgments and interpretations should follow from the descriptive observation and should be taken as working hypothesis.” (p. 116)

### **3.6.5. Document Analysis**

I collected multiple program documents for this study. According to Lynch (1996) relevant documents include “program brochures, official press releases, newspaper articles concerning the program, advertisements, curriculum descriptions, policy statements, memoranda, organizational charts, and correspondence” (p. 139). Background reading of relevant documents about the program provided insight into the broader educational context in which the implementation of the “Aulas de Enlace” program must be situated.

Document analysis, as a method of data collection, yielded non-reactive data, i.e., not changed by the act of collecting and analyzing, which provided contextual and background information to inform data obtained through the various data collection techniques used in this study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested two types of existing information available for evaluation researchers: (1) documents, which include personal or agency records not prepared for evaluation purposes; and (2) records, or the official documents or statistics prepared for use by others. Guba and Lincoln (1981) further distinguished the different uses of documents and records. Records are typically used statistically, for tracking. Documents, because of their more informal or irregular nature generally require more qualitative methods of analysis, such as content analysis.

The official policy document, known as “Instrucciones”, was described, analyzed and compared with students’ and teachers’ perceptions of the program. Other documents available for analysis included educational legislation, such as the LOGSE (a nationwide law intended to

reform the educational system passed by the socialist government in 1990), the LOCE (‘Ley de Calidad de la Educación’, the most recent educational legislation passed by the PP government in 2002, although its implementation was suspended in March 2004), and the “Plan Regional de Compensación Educativa”. In addition to the educational legislation, I reviewed different “Proyectos Curriculares de Centro” (these are brief handbooks containing a description of the school internal organization and the goals for each academic year) of the sites where observation was carried out. I did not have access to the syllabus prepared by the “Aulas” teachers or their lesson plans. However, during the observation phase I realized that teachers do not adjust to a fixed and pre-determined syllabus or prepare lesson plans for their classes. I did not have access to the students’ grades, quizzes and test results as forms of assessment while in the “Aula de Enlace”, since these data are for internal use only. Teachers were not allowed to disclose any information about their students without the expressed consent of the corresponding “Dirección de Área Territorial” (DAT). Nevertheless, I was able to obtain samples of teaching materials and materials produced by students in class or as assignments.

The records analyzed in this study were statistical data. The figures of students in the “Aulas de Enlace” in the 2004-2005 academic year were provided by members of the area of “Atención a la Diversidad” in the department of Education of the Autonomous Community of Madrid. Statistics of immigrant minority students in Madrid, by district, age, sex, and origin are available from the Spanish Ministry of Education and Culture ([www.mec.es](http://www.mec.es)), and the autonomous community government ([www.madrid.org](http://www.madrid.org)) web pages.

### 3.6.6. Time Frame for Data Collection

The data collection for this research study started quite before entering the sites. A thorough internet and library search on the “Welcome Schools” program was carried out in the Spring term of 2004. The information gathered in this phase of the research study was very useful to allow an informed formulation of relevant research questions, and to provide me with valuable data regarding who to contact in the schools and the education department, when to do it, where, and for what purpose. Moreover, the library research provided me with a first approximation to the administrative structure of the education department in the CAM, which was very helpful during fieldwork. [Table 3.2](#) presents the different stages of data collection in this study.

Table 3.2 *Timeline for Data Collection*

<i>2003-2004 school year</i>		<i>2004-2005 school year</i>		
<b>April-June</b>	<b>Nov-Dec</b>	<b>Jan-Feb</b>	<b>Apr-May</b>	<b>Jun-July</b>
Documentation	Sites Entered	Observations & Note taking	Observations & Note taking	
School contacted	Observations & Note taking	Administration of student & teacher questionnaires		
Administrators contacted	Instruments ready & translated		Student & teacher interviews	Policy & decision makers interviews
	Piloting of Student questionnaire			

### 3.6.7. Verification Steps

The main concern in a qualitative study is the issue of subjectivity and the researcher’s bias, which, according to Merriam (1988) could reduce the accuracy of a study. Since I was the main

data collection and analysis instrument in this research project, clear trustworthiness criteria were established in order to avoid the risk of bias. In order to enhance trustworthiness, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that research should consider four components: (1) credibility, which relates to accuracy and truth value of research; (2) transferability, which relates to the generalizability of findings; (3) dependability, which relates to reliability and consistency of data; and (4) confirmability, which relates to the objectivity and neutrality of the study. The Lincoln and Guba (1985) typology was an attempt to provide qualitative studies with clear-cut strategies to ensure the robustness of their findings.

This research study employed a number of techniques, first introduced by Guba and Lincoln (1989), which are thought of as increasing the validity of findings, as well as providing the means of verification. First, this study accounted for credibility (or “internal validity” in quantitative studies) by using member checking (verifying the data, analysis, interpretations, and conclusions with the respondents) and triangulation techniques. Moreover, credibility was enhanced by prolonged engagement and persistent observation, i.e., by the immersion in the evaluation setting, establishing rapport and trust with program participants in order to understand their perceptions. Second, transferability of findings (or external validity in quantitative research) was achieved by offering a clear, complete description of the program, which is known as a “thick description”. According to Guba and Lincoln (1981: 119) a thick description is “a literal description of the entity being evaluated, the circumstances under which it is used, the characteristics of the people involved in it, the nature of the community in which it is located, and the like”. For Davis (1995: 434) thick description “involves an emic perspective, which demands description that includes the actors’ interpretations and other social and/or cultural information” from which the evaluation findings were drawn. Third, dependability (parallel to

reliability in the positivistic paradigm) was enhanced in this study through the use of overlapping methods, which involved carefully methodological triangulation, or the use of multiple data-gathering techniques. Finally, this study accounted for confirmability (or objectivity) by attempting to trace the evaluation findings back to the original sources, that is, by “assuring that data, interpretations and outcomes of inquiries are ... not simply fragments of the evaluator’s imagination” (Guba and Lincoln, 1989: 243). Confirmability involves full revelation or at least the availability of the data upon which all interpretations are based. This was achieved in the present study by careful record keeping and retention of data for further scrutiny.

Data for this study were collected from multiple sources through multiple methods. Diversity of method is known as triangulation (Johnstone, 2000), and “It means using more than one form of evidence or more than one procedure” (p. 61). Brown and Rodgers (2002: 243) defined triangulation as “the attempt to understand some aspect of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint, often making use of both quantitative and qualitative data in doing so”. Denzin (1978) first introduced four types of triangulation: data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation and methodological triangulation. Three types of triangulation were used in this study: data (multiple sources of information), methodological (multiple data-gathering procedures) and location (multiple sites to gather data) triangulation. Data triangulation was done by gathering information from students, teachers, principals, administrators and policy and decision makers. Methodological triangulation was accomplished by using individual interviews, observations, and questionnaires. Location triangulation was achieved by visiting 23 different school sites over the course of seven months in different districts and metropolitan areas in the autonomous community of Madrid.

### **3.7. DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES**

#### **3.7.1. Item Analysis**

Item analysis was conducted at two different stages of the survey process (Dörnyei, 2003). First, it was conducted after the piloting stage, and the results were used to make the appropriate and necessary changes before the questionnaire was administered. Second, after the administration of the final questionnaire, and the results were used to screen out any items that had not worked properly and to eliminate incomplete surveys from the sample to be analyzed. The procedures in both cases were similar, and they involved checking three aspects of the responses, namely missing responses, range of the responses, and the internal consistency of multi-item scales.

#### **3.7.2. Descriptive Statistics**

The standard method of analyzing quantitative questionnaire data is by means of submitting them to various statistical procedures (Dörnyei, 2003). One such procedure is descriptive statistics. According to Dörnyei (2003: 114) “Descriptive statistics are used to summarize sets of numerical data in order to conserve time and space. Holcomb (1998) has accurately described the use of descriptive statistics: “When there are large amounts of data that need to be interpreted, descriptive statistics are used to organize and summarize them”. It is important to keep in mind that these statistics do not allow drawing any general conclusions that would go beyond the sample. For Dörnyei (2003: 114) “this means that we ought to start every sentence which describes descriptive features by *‘In my sample...’*”. In order to make generalizations concerning the wider population and not just a particular sample, inferential statistical

procedures are necessary. Since generalization of findings was not the goal of this research study, only descriptive statistics were calculated.

Two types of data were obtained from the survey questionnaire in this research study, which may be classified according to what Holcomb (1998) refer to as scales of measurement, namely nominal, ordinal and equal interval scales. Nominal or categorical data may be thought of as naming data, in which individuals are classified with words instead of numbers. Ordinal data were obtained through the classification of individuals in rank order (questions such as age, class, number of years in the country, in the teaching profession, etc.). Descriptive statistics applied to these questions permitted to achieve participants' profiles to be interpreted in relation to data obtained from other data-gathering procedures. The statistical procedures employed to deal with these two types of data consisted in percentages and, very occasionally, the arithmetic mean (usually called the mean), defined as the balance point in a distribution.

### **3.7.3. Content Analysis**

Content analysis procedures are used to describe, analyze, and summarize trends observed in written documents, including data collected from interviews and field notes (Worthen et al., 1997). For Patton (2002: 453) “content analysis is used to refer to any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings”. The ability to use content analysis involves a number of underlying abilities. One of these abilities is known as pattern recognition, i.e. the ability to see patterns in seemingly random information, which are further placed within categories. Patton (1987b) pointed out that categories may be terms expressed by stakeholders themselves or themes identified by the evaluator.

Content analysis procedures were used in this study to categorize responses obtained from open-ended questions in the student and teacher questionnaire, transcripts of interviews with all participants, teacher responses to the member check, documents, and field notes. This type of analysis helped identify and clarify the participants' perceptions of experiences and the meanings attached to those experiences in an objective way no other source can match.

#### **3.7.4. Member Checking**

Member checking involves taking “the data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and ask them if the results were plausible” (Merriam, 1998: 204). According to Jonhstone (2000: 65) “Member checking involves asking the people you are studying whether your analysis of their behavior is right.”

The member checking phase of this study was devised to ensure that the reality that I had constructed through observations, questionnaires, interviews and document analysis was agreeable to the key informants. This technique was effective to reduce bias on the interpretations of findings. Member checking was an ongoing process in this study, since it started with my many visits to the participating schools and ended when I conducted individual member checks with two additional classroom teachers. The ongoing stage of member checking was carried out with informal conversations maintained with the “Aulas de Enlace” teachers and students at 23 participating schools. Whenever I had the chance I posed students questions about what I was observing in the classrooms and my understandings of it so that they confirmed or rejected my perceptions. As regards teachers, I maintained 20- minute to 1-hour informal conversations with 23 of them in my many visits to their schools to distribute or collect

questionnaires, to conduct interviews and observations or to ask for their participation in the study.

More systematic individual member checking was conducted with two secondary school “Aulas” teachers (both women), who were debriefed about the purpose of the member check process and about the first tentative findings. No formal member checks were conducted with participating students. The member checking phase consisted of individual 45 to 1-hour interviews that were tape-recorded and transcribed. Teachers were informed about the purpose and procedures of the initial interview phase, and teacher responses were described. Furthermore, participants were shown a thematic representation of teacher responses in questionnaires and interviews, and they were encouraged to ask questions and provide feedback. This initiated a participant-researcher dialogue in which I asked for input and clarifications about some of the teachers’ answers. Informal notes were taken of their responses.

[Table 3.3](#) presents the data-planning matrix (adapted from LeCompte and Preissle, 1993) that guided my study.

Table 3.3 *Data-Planning Matrix*

<b>Research Questions</b>	<b>Data Collection Techniques</b>	<b>Data Analysis Procedures</b>
<i>1. What are the participants' everyday language learning experiences and events in the program?</i>	Student & Teacher Questionnaires Participant & non-participant observation	Descriptive Statistics Content Analysis Triangulation of observations & interview transcripts
<i>2. What are the participants' perceptions and meanings attached to those experiences?</i>	Teacher interviews Student interviews Administrators' interviews Field Observations	Content analysis Triangulation of observations, field notes & interview transcripts Member checking
<i>3. What is the impact of the program on the students' expressed intentions to continue to non-compulsory education?</i>	Documents analysis (available statistics of the program) Student questionnaire & interviews	Triangulation of student questionnaire & interviews Triangulation with teachers' interviews Comparison with program available statistical data
<i>4. What are the factors that most influence the students' and teachers' meanings and perceptions?</i>	Student Questionnaires Teacher Questionnaires Teacher interviews Other participants' interviews	Triangulation with observations & interview transcripts
<i>5. How does the Autonomous Department of Education official policy match students and teachers' experiences, meanings, and expressed goals for the 'Aulas'?</i>	Administrators & Policy makers interviews Document analysis (official policy, standardized curricula, materials, manuals) Observations	Systematic content analysis Member checking Triangulation with students & teachers questionnaires & observations

### **3.8. DELIMITATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The purposeful selection of three groups of non-Spanish speaking secondary students may be seen as a limitation to this study. Immigrant minority student population in schools in Madrid comes from as many as 40 different backgrounds, and the researcher is aware that the perspectives of Chinese, Moroccan and Romanian students are insufficient to extend the findings to the entire immigrant secondary student population in Madrid, i.e., to make generalizations about program implementation. However, as it was discussed somewhere else, this was not the purpose of this study. The selection of only Chinese, Moroccan and Romanians students as participants is justified by different factors related to both the distinctive characteristics of the three groups, such as L1, education level or communication patterns, and the perceptions of different degrees of achievement of other participants, namely teachers and administrators, with regard to the three nationalities. Thus, Chinese, Moroccan and Romanian students are believed to represent distinct and opposite poles in the language learning process continuum in terms of achievement. Moreover, I considered their diverse specific needs very illustrative for the purpose of explaining whether, and then how, the “Aulas de Enlace” program gives (or not) a response to diverse groups of students. The findings of this study do not apply to all immigrant children in the program in schools in Madrid. Instead, it is a description of the three specific groups’ experiences in the “Escuelas de Bienvenida” program.

As a consequence of its qualitative nature, the characteristics of the sampling procedure, and the sample size, findings cannot be generalized beyond the respondents of this study. Although the students in this study are representative of certain ethnic groups, each individual experience is distinct and any reference to a particular group does not reflect its totality. Other source of possible limitations is that students may see the study with different degrees of

importance, which will in turn affect the degree of attention they pay to the completion of the questionnaire. One way to overcome this limitation is the use of methodological triangulation, i.e., interviews will follow questionnaires to further investigate the written responses provided in them.

The use of translations for the questionnaires and interviews can be seen as both a limitation and an advantage. Since the participant students in this study are newcomers with no more than nine months in the country, the study assumes that their Spanish proficiency level is not high enough to read and write about the topics included in the questionnaire, i.e., perceptions, feelings and experiences. However, the perspective of students is vital in order to present the wider picture possible about the implementation of “Escuelas de Bienvenida” program. This perspective makes of this study the first of its sort regarding the program implementation. Since I am not a native speaker of Chinese, Moroccan or Classic Arabic or other Berber languages, or Romanian, I had to rely on translations made by native speakers in order to obtain very relevant information about students that, otherwise, I would not have been able to gather.

## **4. DATA ANALYSIS**

Chapter 4 is divided into five sections to answer the research questions proposed in the first chapter of this study. Section 4.1 describes how actual practice looked like in the four “Aulas de Enlace” where I conducted observations, while Section 4.2 deals with the participants’ linguistic and educational experiences and perceptions in the program. The two sections encompass research questions 1 and 2. Section 4.3 is concerned with the factors that most influence the participants’ experiences and perceptions in the program, which answers research question 3. Section 4.4 addresses research question 4 and it investigates the ways in which program policy matched actual practice and the goals for the program. The last section of this chapter, Section 4.5, deals with the impact of the program on the participating students’ expressed intentions to continue to non-compulsory education, which addresses research question 5.

### **4.1. DESCRIPTION OF ACTUAL PRACTICE**

I conducted classroom and site observations in four high schools in Madrid for a total of 164 hours from November 2004 to April 2005. Non-participant observation became participant in high schools (HS) 1, 2, and 3, although participation did not affect the normal development of the class in any way, since it was not my intention to interfere with teachers’ instructional practices but to serve as helper. I responded to students’ questions as requested, assigned work

when the teacher was not in class, or assisted with Math exercises. In HS4, observation was truly non-participatory, since the limited time spent at this site was not enough to establish rapport with teachers and students. The observation did not involve manipulation, change or intervention in the phenomenon being studied, and notetaking was the main method employed to record data. These data were analyzed and categorized in order to characterize instructional practice.

#### **4.1.1. Demographic Comparison across Schools**

Entrance to the schools varied a great deal according to the way it was granted, the time allowed for observations, the way I was received by the administrators, teachers and students in the program, and their willingness to participate in the study. Permission to enter the sites was granted by the principals in agreement with the “Aulas” teachers. Observations were conducted for one month in HSs 1, 2, and 3, and for one week only in HS4, with 35 hours of classroom observation and 6 hours of site observations at each school. For a summary of what follows see [Table 4.1](#).

**4.1.1.1. Description of the Settings.** The “Aulas de Enlace” program was implemented in HS1, HS2 and HS3 in January 2003 for the first time, and in HS4 in the 2003-2004 school year starting September 2003. The “Aulas” in the four high schools served an average of nine students, although HS1 served only six, while HS2 served eleven at the time of my visit. The demographics of the student body have changed from year to year in HS1 and HS2, as regards the number of students (enrollment has decreased in HS1 over the years) and their diversity, while it has remained the same in HS3 and HS4.

HS1 was located in the northern area of the CAM, and although this area may be considered middle to high middle class, it is in the proximity of one of the wealthiest areas of the region, which increases rent prices and has forced immigrant families to move to other parts of the CAM. HSs 2, 3 and 4 were situated in central Madrid. HS2 was located in a middle/high middle class district, while HS3 and HS4 were located in the southern and southeastern districts of the city respectively, both considered to be low middle to working class. The “Aula de Enlace” in HS1, HS3 and HS4 were on the third floor of the school building, and they were integrated with other regular and/or compensatory education classes. The “Aula” in HS2 was also located on the third floor of one of the school buildings, but it was isolated from mainstream or compensatory education classes. The class was only accessible from the second floor through a staircase that went directly to two classrooms, being the “Aula de Enlace” one of them. It is noteworthy that many students at this site did not know that the program was in operation in their own school and had difficulties locating it. HSs 3 and 4 held the district’s intake center or “Comisión de Escolarización”, i.e., the first step in the schooling of all children, immigrant or otherwise, and responsible for providing initial orientation and for assigning students to the schools in their designated attending area. Signs in different languages were posted in the

reception areas of these schools to indicate the directions to the intake center, and in HS3 this area was decorated with drawings and adornments made by students for the Chinese New Year celebrations.

The physical space available for the “Aula de Enlace” program varied across the schools, and only one teacher in HS3 complained about the lack of sufficient space, which she considered a disadvantage for the good development of classes. The four “Aulas” in the participating schools were decorated with posters, maps, drawings and samples of the students’ work, e.g., pictures of flags and names written in their L1, poems, family trees, posters of irregular verb conjugations, or drawings of scenes from Chinese life. The student schedule was hanging on the wall to remind both students and teachers of the classes they attended in the mainstream. An ample variety of materials for consultation was available in all four schools. Since technology was considered important to the program, each school has been provided with audiovisual equipment, and materials for class use (e.g, films, documentaries, and music CDs), besides a computer, a printer and a scanner. The availability of these resources in the classroom was often mentioned as one of the assets to the program by teachers, administrators and policy makers, although their use was not frequent and consistent across the schools.

**4.1.1.2. Description of Students and Teachers.** Students across the schools came from eight countries, and spoke ten different native languages. Students came from Romania, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Iran, China, Dominican Republic, Ivory Coast and Morocco. There were only Chinese students in HS3 once the two Bulgarian students in the program were incorporated to the mainstream shortly after the first day of observation. With regard to their ages, HS1 served students between 12 and 14 years of age (first to third grade of compulsory secondary education), and HS2, HS3 and HS4 served students whose ages ranged from 12 to 18 years old,

and attended all four grades of compulsory education (1<sup>o</sup>-4<sup>o</sup> ESO). Two Romanian students had already been incorporated to the mainstream in HS3 and HS4, and five more Romanians were about to exit their “Aula” in HS1 when I conducted observations or were mainstreamed during the observation period in HS4. All four schools received late entrants, a fact that teachers found the most challenging about the program and feared to a certain extent.

There were differences with regard to the classes that the “Aulas” students attended in the mainstream. Across the schools, Romanian, Bulgarian and Ukrainian students attended most of their regular classes, and they occasionally received support for Spanish language in the “Aula”. Moreover, these students were getting excellent grades in their mainstream classes, and some did better than native Spanish speakers did. On the contrary, Chinese and Moroccan students attended only a few classes in the mainstream (usually Physical Education, Music and Arts) during most of their stay in the program. Chinese students, except for late entrants, were started to attend mainstream Math classes soon after their arrival, since teachers believed that this class was less linguistically demanding. However, it required a level of language proficiency that many Chinese students had not yet acquired, a fact that turned this class into a frustrating experience for many of them. Some Moroccan students in the schools where I conducted observations were encouraged to attend French classes.

School attendance was good across the four schools, and absenteeism did not seem to be problem. Some teachers complaint about certain students always being late for first class period, although they were usually tolerant with the students who worked long hours after school. Students were reminded of their obligation to be punctula for class, but they were not penalized in any way for being late. In general, all the teachers registered the absences and inquired students about them, making clear to them that attendance was considered important.

There were two teachers per “Aula de Enlace”, as established in the official policy, and they were seven women, between their mid-forties and mid-fifties, and one man in his early-thirties. All the women teachers had more than 20 years teaching experience at primary and secondary school levels in different specializations. In HS1, T1 was a Natural Science primary school teacher (“diplomada” with a three-year college degree), and T2 was a Mathematics high school teacher (“licenciada” with a five-year college degree). The specializations of teachers 3 and 4 in HS2 were English and Math respectively, and they had both volunteered to teach in the program when it was first implemented at their school. T5 in HS3 was a former English teacher with ample experience in the mainstream and some experience in teaching Spanish to immigrant students in California. T6 in this high school was a Language and Literature teacher who was hired to substitute for the regular teacher for three months. Regarding the teachers in HS4, T7 was also a former English teacher, while T8 had taught Social Science in the mainstream for 30 years. Thus, there were three foreign language instructors among the eight “Aulas de Enlace” teachers across the four sites where observations were conducted.

**4.1.1.3. Organization of the “Aulas de Enlace”.** The school regular schedule went from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m every day, and it was divided into six 50-minute instructional periods with a 30-minute break after the third period. The break was the moment when teachers met with the mainstream teachers informally, planned activities, and prepared materials for meetings and/or classes. One of the teachers in each “Aula de Enlace” was the “tutor” or coordinator of the program in the school. The tutors coordinated the students’ transition from the program to other support programs (often compulsory education), or to the mainstream after their stay in the “Aula”. They also coordinated meetings with 12 to 20 mainstream teachers throughout the year

to discuss the incorporation of program students to their classrooms. Although once the students leave the program no formal monitoring usually occurs, the coordinators/tutors across schools informally checked on those former students who entered the regular program at the same high school. Teachers 1 and 5 were the coordinators in HSs 1 and 3 respectively. In HSs 2 and 4 both teachers coordinated the program and shared responsibility in making the decisions concerning the progressive incorporation of students to the mainstream.

The teachers in HS1 and HS3 had different but complementary schedules, and they did not teach in the same classroom at any given period during the regular school day. In HS2 and HS4, the teachers had made the necessary arrangements in their schedule to be able to teach in the same class for at least two periods per day, which permitted the classroom to divide into two groups to work at different levels of language proficiency. Moreover, the teachers in HS2 and T7 in HS4 used their knowledge and experience for the benefit of the “Aula” students, and they taught English (T2 & T7) and Math (T4) to those students who did not attend these classes in the mainstream three class periods per week.

Across schools, there were continuous comings and goings of students depending on the individualized schedules elaborated for each of them. The student schedule was tied to their mainstream classroom timetable, and was subject to continuous changes. Nevertheless, only a few changes were necessary in HS3 because students did not incorporate to more mainstream classes during the school year. According to T1, class plans had to be reviewed almost every month depending on the mainstream classes that students attended, their capacity for individual work, and/or the number and composition of students that remained in the “Aula” at any given time.

There were not bilingual paraprofessionals or guidance counselors specially hired for the program in any of the four high schools, or in any of the twenty-three schools that participated in this study. The “Aula de Enlace” tutor played the role of advisor and coordinator of the program, besides the role of educator and friend. The SAI (see footnote 5) continued to be in operation for some students in HS4, and translators and interpreters were available on call (a service known as SETI) from the department of education of the autonomous community of Madrid in the four schools. School meetings with parents were always conducted bilingually in HS3, for which the “tutor” always required the services of interpreters provided by the SETI at no cost.

Table 4.1 *Demographic Comparison across Schools*

	<b>HS1</b>	<b>HS2</b>	<b>HS3</b>	<b>HS4</b>
<b>Observation Period</b>	Nov 15-Dec 15, 2004	Jan.17-Feb 1, 2005	Feb. 4-9 & Mar. 15-30, 2005	Mar. 31-Apr. 7, 2005
<b># students &amp; age range</b>	6 (12-14 years old)	11 (12-18 years old)	9 (12-16 years old)	10 (14-17 years old)
<b>Student composition</b>	3 Romanian 1 Chinese 1 Iranian 1 Dominican	2 Romanian 2 Bulgarian 3 Chinese 2 Moroccan 1 Ivorian 1 Ukrainian	7 Chinese 2 Bulgarian	2 Romanian 1 Moroccan 6 Chinese 1 Ukrainian
<b>Teachers' age</b>	T1: early 40s T2: early 40s	T3: mid 50s T4: mid 40s	T5: mid 40s T6: early 30s	T7: mid 40s T8: mid 50s
<b>Teachers' specialization</b>	T1: Natural Science T2: Mathematics	T3: English T4: Mathematics	T5: English T6: Spanish Lg. & Lit.	T7: English T8: Social Science
<b>Teachers' schedule</b>	Independent	Shared (two periods)	Independent	Shared (two periods)
<b>Languages spoken by teachers</b>	English & Spanish	English, French & Spanish	English & Spanish	English, French, Portuguese & Spanish
<b>Language use (other than Spanish) in class</b>	NO	YES (English and French)	NO	YES (words and formulaic expressions in L1s)
<b>HS Location</b>	Middle-high middle class	Middle class	Low middle to working class	Low middle to working class
<b>Location of "Aula" in the building</b>	Integrated w/ compensatory education classes	Isolated	Integrated w/ mainstream classes	Integrated w/ mainstream classes
<b>Late entrants?</b>	YES (1 Dominican boy)	YES (2 Chinese girls)	YES (2 Chinese and 1 Ivorian girls)	YES (1 Ukrainian girl)
<b>Language vs. Content teaching</b>	T1: Spanish T2: content	T3: Span + content T4: Span + content	T5: Span + content T6: Spanish	T7: Span + content T8: content
<b>Bilingual paraprofessionals/ Counselors</b>	NO Translators & interpreters on call	NO Translators & interpreters on call	NO Translators & interpreters on call	NO Translators & interpreters on call

#### **4.1.2. Instructional Comparison across Schools**

This section describes the different types of interactional patterns, corrective feedback, and instructional input observed across the sites. Additionally, it provides an overview of the materials employed for instruction, the planning, and the assessment procedures in the four participating schools. For a summary of what follows see [Table 4.2](#).

**4.1.2.1. Classroom Interaction.** The quality of classroom interaction is an important variable in second language learning, since learning occurs as a result of opportunities for meaningful interactions with others in the target language (Hatch, 1992; Pica, 1994; Long, 1983; Vygotski, 1978; Lantolf and Appel, 1994; Lightbown and Spada, 1999).

The official policy or “Instrucciones” did not establish Spanish as the only language of instruction, although it implicitly assumed that the best way to help students achieve the proficiency level required to succeed in the mainstream was through Spanish-only classes. Teachers, administrators and policy and decision makers alike agreed that the students’ native languages had to be respected and valued in the classroom, but their use was very limited across the schools. In HS1, HS2 and HS4 the native languages were occasionally used among students to make L2 connections to their L1s and to make clarifications that facilitate comprehension. Teachers in HSs 1 and 4 encouraged students to register the new words in both Spanish and their native languages in their vocabulary notebooks, and teachers in HSs 2 and 3 often requested advanced students to act as improvised interpreters for them with beginners. Moreover, advanced students were frequently asked to translate vocabulary, difficult grammar points, or direction that would have taken too long to explain in Spanish. Nevertheless, L1 was usually banned from the classroom discourse. For example, students were reminded that they had to pay a symbolic amount of money if they spoke Chinese in HS4, and T5 in HS3 explicitly told her students not to

speak Chinese at all. Although the language of instruction was Spanish in HS3, Chinese was the language of communication among students, who used it for multiple purposes: (1) to provide clarifications about directions and difficult material; (2) to “fool around with language” and to tell jokes, e.g., **S**: “es tontería” (it’s stupid, instead of “estantería” or bookshelf); and (3) as inner speech. It was difficult for teachers to promote interaction in Spanish in HS3, since Chinese was the most immediate and natural form of communication among students, and there was not a real need to use Spanish in class. Regarding the use of L1s by the “Aula de Enlace” teachers, some knew and used a few words and formulaic expressions learnt from the students in HS3 and HS4. In HS3, notices and part of the students grade reports were sent home in Spanish and Chinese. Additionally, English and French were used by T3 (HS2) and T7 (HS4) with recent arrivals who were not able to communicate in Spanish at the beginning of their stay in the program.

All the teachers in the four schools controlled the classroom interaction, although the degree of this control varied across sites. The teachers in HS1 and HS3, and T8 in HS4 initiated and controlled the interaction, constantly orienting towards the achievement of instructional goals, i.e., they presented the materials, asked the questions and provided feedback to students. The teachers’ task in these HSs was to impart knowledge or skills that they possess and students have not yet acquired. They made most of the talking in class, leaving little space for students to participate. The role of the teachers in HS2 and T7 in HS4 differed in some respects from the other schools. Although the teachers still controlled the interaction, they also permitted students to become active generators of their knowledge by guiding and facilitating, rather than controlling, learning. As a result, many examples of spontaneous talk were registered among students in these classes, and the teachers allowed them to happen without participating. The diverse student composition of the “Aulas” in HS2 and HS4 (different origins, native languages,

educational experiences, diverse ages and educational levels) favored these exchanges. The following episode is an example of spontaneous interaction among students:

Episode 1: (HS 4)

- SCh1:** ¿Dónde viven las vacas? (where do cows live?)  
**SRo:** en campo ('in country' )  
**SMo:** en pueblo ('in village')  
**SCh1:** ¿qué comen? (what do they eat?)  
**SMo:** hierba (grass)  
**StCh2:** arroz y cereales (*laughs*) (rice and cereals)

Although no specific activities were aimed at encouraging interaction and cooperation among students, the teachers in HS2 and T7 in HS4 created an atmosphere of participation in their classes that motivated students to initiate conversations and metalinguistic discussions, to request clarifications and explanations, and to share personal experiences.

There were more referential (questions the teachers do not know the answers to) than display questions (questions the teachers know the answers to) posed by the teachers in HS2, HS3 (T5) and HS4, while display questions were preferred in HS1. This finding was in accordance with the goals intended for each class, i.e., form and meaning, or form vs. meaning, but also with the focus of instruction, i.e., language vs. subject-matter content. Thus, display questions were usually related to grammar and vocabulary exercises where form was the focus of instruction:

Episode 2: (HS2 and HS4)

- T3:** A ver, ¿es simple o compuesto? (is it simple or compound?) (*referring to the future tense*)  
**T7:** ¿cómo se llama lo que tienen los peces para nadar? (what do we call what fish use for swimming?)

while referential questions targeted meaning or content rather than form:

### Episode 3: (HS2 and HS4)

**T3:** A ver M., si viniera un toro ¿tú qué harías? (what would you do if you saw a bull coming?)

**T7:** ¿a dónde pensáis que va este señor? ¿va de vacaciones?  
(where do you think this man is going, is he on vacation?)

All the teachers across the schools modified their input to make it comprehensible for students. I observed that foreign language teachers provided more and more effective modified input than non-language teachers, who tended to make no adaptations to their discourse, and frequently got involved in lengthy explanations that did not facilitate comprehension and made students lose focus and interest in the topic. The most frequent techniques used by teachers to modify their input across the sites were: (1) lower speech rate; (2) explanations; (3) simplifications; and (4) provision of contextual cues. The following are examples of these techniques:

### Episode 4: Explanations (HS2 and HS1)

**T3:** Cena es la última comida de la noche (dinner is the last meal you eat in the evening)

**T1:** ¿entiendes vecino? ... una persona que vive cerca de tu casa  
(do you understand the word neighbor? It's someone who lives nearby)

### Episode 5: Simplification (HS3)

**T5:** ¿Quién ha venido hoy? (who has come today?)

**S:** ¿qué significa 'venido'? (what does come mean?)

**T5:** venir, venir (to come, to come)

**S:** ¿qué significa 'venir'? (what does 'to come' mean?)

**T5:** ir (she acts it out) ... y venir (to go ...and to come)

### Episode 6: Provision of Contextual Cues (HS1, HS2 and HS3)

**T3:** vosotros, cuando terminéis la ESO os darán el *título* de la ESO  
(when you finish compulsory education, you'll get your high school certificate)

**T6:** ¿sabéis lo que es el futuro? A ver, tú qué vas a hacer esta tarde?  
(do you know what's the future? Ok, what are you doing this afternoon?)

- T1:** ¿qué ciudades conocéis? (ok, what cities do you know?)  
**S:** *student silence*  
**T1:** a ver, Olga, ¿cómo se llama la ciudad donde vive tu abuelo?  
 (OK Olga, what's the name of the city where your grandad lives?)

Modified input in HS 2 and 4 also included the recounting of personal anecdotes relating to the instructor's own experiences, which were usually welcomed by students, who participated actively asking for clarifications and reacting to what was said by making comments.

Interactional modifications took place on the teachers and students' sides across the four schools. In HS3 negotiation of meaning produced short or incomplete utterances on the students' side due to their low level of oral proficiency in Spanish. In spite of these difficulties students managed to use their limited resources to react to the teachers' utterances. I observed that negotiation depended very much on the participation patterns established by the teachers in their classes. Thus, in HS1, where the discourse was mostly controlled by the teacher and the focus was on form rather than on meaning, there was little space for negotiation. Across schools, the most frequent resource to modify interaction on the teacher's side was comprehension checks, and this was the only resource in HS1.

#### Episode 7: Comprehension Checks on the teachers' side

- T1:** ¿entiendes? ¿de acuerdo? (do you understand? Is it all right?)  
**T3:** ¿comprendéis todas las palabras? (do you know what all these words mean?)  
**T5:** Lo habéis entendido, ¿no? (you understood, right?)

#### Episode 8: Reformulation (HS4)

- T8:** y en España ¿qué producimos? ¿a alguien se le ocurre?  
 (...and in Spain, what do we produce in Spain? Anybody?)  
**S:** profesora... (teacher)  
**T8:** yo produzco cultura, educación, para que cuando salgáis de aquí tengáis una cultura, habléis mejor español y podáis tener un mejor trabajo (I produce culture, education, so that you can have a culture, speak Spanish better and get a better job when you exit this class)

### Episode 9: Reformulation (HS2)

- T4:** Vamos a ver lo que os gusta de Madrid. ¿Algo que os guste de Madrid? ¿La gente? ¿el instituto? (ok, what do you like about Madrid? Is there anything that you like about Madrid? The people? The school?)
- S:** No, todo el mundo fuma (no, everybody smokes)

Clarification requests were the most frequent resource to modify interaction on the students' part in HSs 2, 3 and 4. The following are examples of clarification requests:

### Episode 10

- S (HS4):** ¿quién arregla enchufes, profe? ¿fontanero?  
(who fixes plugs? A plumber?)
- S (HS2):** ¿para qué sirven los camellos? ... ¿por qué los camellos en Marruecos y no los caballos? (what are camels used for? why do we use camels in Morocco and not horses?)
- S (HS3):** Ignacio, 50 años, ¿por qué fútbol?  
(Ignacio, 50 years old, why *do you play* football?)

The most frequent interactional pattern that I recorded across the schools was the I-R-E sequence (an initiation act, a response act, and an evaluation act) (Mehan, 1979) although in HS2 and HS4 this pattern was combined with an important amount of instructional conversations when T3 and T7 were teaching.

### Episode 11: I-R-E sequence

- T7:** ¿Cuál es el antónimo de amigo? (what's the antonym for friend)
- S:** enemigo (enemy)
- T7:** Muy bien! (very good!)

### Episode 12: I-R-E sequence

- T3:** A ver Mario dime todo el verbo decir (ok, conjugate the verb 'to say')
- S** *recites the conjugation*
- T3:** ¡Muy bien! (very well)

The evaluation part included responses such as: “¡estupendo!, ¡fenomenal!” (great), “¡eso es!” (that's it), “¡sí señora/señor!” (yes, madam/sir), or “¡muy buen trabajo!” (very good job). T3

(HS2) and T7 (HS4) also offered variations to this pattern by providing other types of evaluation, such as mimicking the victory sign after a right answer, or providing a comment to what the student had just said, sending the message that the sentence was correct.

A further variation to this traditional sequence was the I-R-R-E script, i.e., an initiation act, a response act, a repetition act (the teacher echoes what the student has just said or adds information to it), and an evaluation act. The repetition did not have a clear purpose in the sequence, since it usually did not include any language reformulations to make corrections to the sentence. Even correctly constructed sentences were often repeated by the teacher.

#### Episode 13: I-R-R-E sequence (HS4)

- T7:** María, empieza a contarme lo que ves en el dibujo (M, please tell me what you see in this picture)  
**S:** Hay dos chicas (There are two girls)  
**T7:** Aha, muy bien, hay dos chicas (uhm, very good, there are two girls)

#### Episode 14: Teacher elaboration on the student's response (HS3)

- T6:** A ver, ¿dónde está la carpeta? (ok, where is the folder?)  
**S:** la carpeta está entre la mesa y el chico (the folder is between the table and the boy)  
**T6:** sí, al lado de la mesa. ¡Muy bien! (yes, besides the table, very good!)

**4.1.2.2. Corrective Feedback.** Accross the schools, the teachers responded to the learners' errors differently, but they all provided some kind of corrective feedback to them. Research has shown that the quality and the type of corrective feedback that the student receives in a formal learning situation is directly related to second language learning (Bley-Vroman, 1989, Gass, 1989, Lyster and Ranta, 1997, Lightbown, 1992, Lightbown and Spada, 1999). Three main patterns of feedback emerged on the observational data. Verbal feedback (feedback on students oral production) differed according to the individual teacher, the contents of instruction, and the students' Spanish proficiency level. However, it was observed that most feedback provided by

the teachers in the sample was explicit, although it varied in the degree of explicitness across the sites. Teachers 1 (HS1), 4 (HS2), 6 (HS3) and 8 (HS4) offered highly explicit corrective feedback (Lyster and Ranta, 1997), and they drew on metalinguistic comments to lead students to self-repair. The following episodes are examples of explicit corrective feedback provided by these teachers.

#### Episode 15 (HS1)

- T1:** A ver, Olga, dime partes del cuerpo (ok, tell me some parts of the body)  
**S:** pantalón (trousers / pants)  
**T1:** No, Olga, eso es ropa y queremos partes del cuerpo ¿sabes lo que es el cuerpo?  
(No, that's clothing and we're looking for parts of the body. Do you know what body means?)  
**S:** pies (feet)

#### Episode 16 (HS2)

- S:** Nosotras desayunáis (student used the “we” form with the “you plural” ending)  
**T4:** desayunamos (we have breakfast)  
**S:** nosotras desayunamos (we have breakfast)

#### Episode 17 (HS3)

- S:** aRtavoces (stereo speakers)  
**T6:** Está mal, es aLtavoces. Eso es una L (that's wrong, it's 'aLtavoces'. It's an L)  
**S:** *student silence*

Furthermore, it was found that when the content of the curriculum was academic, correction feedback was provided less explicitly (recasts), or was not provided at all. Conversely, when the content was on mastering Spanish as a second language, the teachers in HS2 (T3), HS3 (T5) and T7 (HS4) used more explicit forms of correction, such as elicitation and clarification requests. Interestingly, the three teachers that offered less explicit forms of corrective feedback were all trained as foreign language teachers. The following are examples of the types of corrective feedback provided by these teachers:

### Episode 18: Elicitation (HS2)

- S:** ... y mi madre y yo traje mis cosas (mi mother and I brought my stuff; “-e” is the wrong ending)  
**T3:** ¿y tu madre y tú? (and your mother and you?)  
**S:** Nosotros trajimos nuestras cosas (we brought our stuff)

### Episode 19: Elicitation (HS3)

- S:** ¿tú vacaciones con qué? (*literally* what vacation with)  
**T5:** ¿con qué o con quién? (with what or with whom?)  
**S:** ¡con quién! (with whom!)

### Episode 20: Recast (HS4)

- T7:** ¿qué quieren comprar las chicas del dibujo? (what do the girls in the picture want to buy?)  
**S:** las chicas quieren comprar entrada (they want to buy the *ticket*)  
**T7:** quieren comprar entradas (they want to buy the tickets)  
**S:** sí, para el cine (yes, for the movies)

When feedback was less explicit, sometimes students did not notice the corrections being made, since they assumed that the teachers were reacting to content rather than to form. Highly explicit correction techniques (usually with metalinguistic comments), elicitation and recasts were used in structured exercises (fill-in-the-gaps type) where the focus was on form rather than on meaning. Conversely, students' spontaneous oral production was rarely corrected, except when errors hindered communication, although the correction in these cases was not consistent or intrusive, as the focus was primarily on letting students express their meanings.

Explicit correction was also provided to written work in HSs 1, 3 and 4. Since instruction relied mostly on individual work in HS1, frequent corrections were made to the students' written production in writing. T5 in HS3 corrected homework in a similar fashion, and both teachers in this school made frequent use of the board for group correction. I observed that uptake to this type of correction was minimal, and students continued making the same mistakes. On the

contrary, T7 in HS4 never provided the right answer to students explicitly but provided keys for self-correction, encouraging students to reflect on their errors.

**4.1.2.3. Instructional Practices.** The techniques employed by teachers to deliver instruction were similar across the schools. Thus, pair and group work was very rare in the four classrooms where observations were conducted, and whenever it took place it was aimed at grammar or vocabulary practice (e.g., finding the right answers to a fill-in-the-blank exercise). Cooperative-learning techniques were not observed in any of the schools, and no opportunities were provided for interaction between advanced and intermediate/beginner students, since the large group was frequently divided into small groups and assigned different tasks.

Individual work was a common instructional practice across the schools, after which the responses were shared in the large group, and the necessary corrections were made orally. In HSs 1, 2 and 4, where the student composition was diverse, large group work became a constant challenge for teachers. Although the “Aula de Enlace” in HS3 was homogeneous as regards the students’ national origins, the incorporation of late entrants made the teacher’s work equally challenging. In HS2 and HS4, T3 and T7 combined both individual and large group instruction depending on the student composition at any given time during the school day, and on whether the focus was on form or meaning. When meaning was the goal, large group instruction was observed, and each student was able to participate according to their capacities.

A combination of form and meaning-focused instruction took place in HSs 2, 3 and 4, while the main focus of HS1 was form. With regard to content instruction, HS4 was the only school where content was taught systematically, and there was a fixed schedule for these classes during the school day. It was observed that, while language teachers attempted to provide some

type of sheltered instruction to teach content, T4(HS2) and T8 (HS4) spent much of their time lecturing and posing frequent display questions to encourage participation.

Dictations and fill-in-the-blanks worksheets were a routine instructional practice across the sites. In HS1, dictations were mainly syllable and word dictations, and the goal was to teach students to discriminate certain phonemes that were confusing to them given their L1s (Chinese and Farsi). In HS2, partial or spot dictations were intended to direct students' attention to grammatical categories. In HS3, dictations (syllable, word and short sentence dictations) focused on the distinction between problematic phonemes for native Chinese speakers (t/d, b/p, c/g), and on learning how to separate words (e.g. *Mañana es el año nuevo chino*, "Mañana es el año nuevo chino": Tomorrow is Chinese New Year). Dictations in HS4 (T8) were part of the Spanish content class, and they were intended as starters for morphological and syntactic analysis of short sentences.

**4.1.2.4. Materials.** The goals of the program were so general in the official policy that many different materials were useful to help students learn the language. The materials were provided by the program to all students free of charge, and decisions on which materials to use was left entirely to the teachers, and this was considered one of the assets of the program. The materials used across schools consisted of textbooks, compiled photocopied materials in book form from commercially prepared materials, dictionaries and picture dictionaries, and other books for consultation.

In HS1, students used commercially prepared materials only, and these consisted of photocopies of structured exercises compiled in book form for both beginners and advanced students, and commercially prepared methods for learning Spanish for advanced students. Students in HS3 mostly worked on photocopies from commercially prepared materials, either

provided by the teachers or prepared by the pedagogic team at the DAT-capital. The materials prepared by the DAT consisted of thematic units developed to serve as guides for the field trips, and they included activities before, during, and after the visits. Some of the materials for the Chinese and the Iranian students in HSs 1 and 3 were selected from language and math textbooks for primary education. Although these were not age-appropriate, they seemed to serve the purpose they were intended for.

In HSs 2 and 4, the selection of materials was eclectic, and it varied from commercially prepared materials to materials developed *ad hoc* to teach content or to practice a specific aspect of the language. Among the commercially produced materials were different Spanish methods for young learners, such as *Mañana*, *Gente*, *Adelante* and *Uso*. These materials were preferred by teachers with less experience in teaching Spanish to foreign students (T4 and T8) to practice grammar and vocabulary, and they were sequenced according to the students' proficiency level of Spanish. Teachers 3 and 7 preferred to develop their own materials, and many of them were adapted from materials they had used in the English class for years. Material development was an opportunity for teachers to personalize the classes by including real information about students, which made practice more motivating and fun. These materials were usually developed to work on meaning rather than on form, and they were adapted to the students' appropriate age level to avoid including information that students might not be familiarized with. Only T4 (HS2) and T7 (HS4) worked with authentic materials (not edited) in her classes (e.g., the newspaper to initiate discussions with advanced students). T7 used realia such as subway maps or bus passes for public transportation (“abono transporte”) twice during my visit.

**4.1.2.5. Planning and Assessment Practices.** The “Aula de Enlace” program required a great deal of daily and weekly planning, since not all students were in class at the same periods.

Instructors worked on a schedule prepared for each student at the beginning of the year in accordance with the students' regular class schedule, and modified it as they progressively incorporated to the mainstream. Additionally, late entrants made teachers' planning work more challenging in HS2 and HS3. The teachers in HSs 1 and 3 did not seem to have a predetermined daily plan for classes, although they followed a schedule. Across the more than 70 hours of observations in HS2 and HS4 it was observed that classes were carefully planned with regard to the type of activities, the sequencing, the time devoted to content teaching, the materials, and the goals.

There were no regular classroom quizzes, tests or exams during the observation in HSs 1, 2 and 3. In HS4 students were given periodic exams, although these did not condition their stay in the "Aula" or their incorporation to the mainstream. Moreover, students were continuously assessed on their oral and written performance in HS2 and HS4, and to a lesser extent, in HS3. Students were promoted to the mainstream classroom or the compensatory education program based on the teachers' perceptions of their achievements, that is, a criterion vs. a standard-referenced type of assessment (Short and Boyson, 2004). Homework was assigned and collected on a regular basis in HS3 (e.g., reading short stories and writing about them, or recounting of students' personal experiences), but the response from students was uneven. Furthermore, since assessment was not an important part of the program (their schooling did not depend on good grades), they did not take homework seriously.

Grade reports were sent home every three months, and a final report for the mainstream teacher was prepared for each student when they exited the program (see Appendix L for a sample). Another final report about the functioning of the program was prepared by teachers to be submitted to the DATs at the end of the school year, and it included information about the

number of students served by the program that year, their progress, their incorporation to the mainstream, the teachers' evaluation, and the incidents occurred throughout the school year.

Table 4.2 *Instructional Comparisons across Schools*

INSTRUCTION	HS1		HS2		HS3		HS4	
	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8
<b>CLASSROOM INTERACTION</b>	T-St	-----	T-St	T-St	T-St	T-St	T-St	T-St
L1 use	very little (only students)		very little (only students)		Language of communication (Chinese students)		very little (students & T7)	
Teachers' role	controller	-----	Facilitator	facilitator	facilitator	controller	facilitator	controller
Teacher-fronted vs. Student centered	Teacher-Fronted	-----	Teacher-fronted	Teacher-fronted	Teacher-fronted	Teacher-fronted	Teacher-fronted	Teacher-fronted
Referential questions	Not effective	-----	√	√	√	x	√	√
Display questions	√	-----	√ (grammar)	√	√	√	x	√
Teacher talk / Modified input	√ (90%)	-----	√ (50%)	√	√ (90%)	√	√ (50%)	little (90%)
Modified interaction	Very little	-----	√	√	Little	little	√	little
I-R-E / I-R-E-E	√	-----	√	√	√	√	√	√
<b>CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK</b>	YES		YES		YES		YES	
Explicit correction	√	-----	√	√	√	√	√	√
Malinguistic feedback	√	-----	√	√	√	√	x	√
Clarification requests	x	-----	√	x	√	x	√	x
Repetition	x	-----	√	√	x	x	√	x
Recasts	x	-----	√	√	√	x	√	x
Elicitation	√	-----	√	x	√	x	√	x

Table 4.2 (continued)

INSTRUCTION	HS1		HS2		HS3		HS4	
	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8
<b>INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES</b>								
Pair / Group work	X	-----	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cooperative learning techniques	X	-----	X	X	X	X	X	X
Individual vs. large group	Both	-----	Both		Both		Both	
Form vs. Meaning-focused instruction	Form-Focused	-----	Form & meaning-focused		Meaning-focused	Form-focused	Meaning-focused	Form-focused
Interactive activities	Role-play (1)	-----	√	√	X	√	√	X
Dictations / fill-in-the blank activities	√	-----	√	√	√	√	X	√
<b>MATERIALS</b>	Provided by the program		Provided by the program		Provided by the program		Provided by the program	
T developed (TD) Commercially prod. (CP)	CP	-----	TD	CP	CP (DAT-developed)	CP	TD	CP & Developed by departm.
Authentic / Edited	Edited	-----	Edited	Authentic	Authentic	Authentic	Authentic & edited	Edited
Grade-level appropriate	X (Ch) √ (Ro)	-----	√	√	X	√	√	√
Visuals / Realia	X	-----	X	X	X	X	√	X
Technology use	√	-----	X	√	Not for language learning		√	TV / DVD
<b>PLANNING &amp; ASSESSMENT</b>								
Daily plan	X	-----	√	√	X	X	√	√
Assessment Measures	Not systematic		Not systematic		Not systematic		Not systematic	
Standard vs. criterion-referenced Assessment	Criterion-referenced		Criterion-referenced		Criterion-referenced		Criterion-referenced	
Grade reports	Trimestral		Trimestral		Trimestral		Trimestral	

## **4.2. PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS**

Information about the participants' experiences and perceptions of the "Aulas de Enlace" program drew on five sources of data: (1) student and teacher survey questionnaires; (2) structured interviews with program administrators and policy and decision makers; (3) structured interviews with students and teachers; (4) teachers' assessment of students' Spanish proficiency; and (5) naturalistic observations.

### **4.2.1. Students' Perceptions of Ability in L1 and Spanish**

For a summary of what follows see [Table 4.3](#). All students in the sample perceived themselves as proficient L1 speakers for all four language skills, with a little lower perceived ability in writing among Moroccan and Chinese students. This was shared by the Chinese and Arabic translators, who detected errors in the students' responses to the survey. Moreover, 40% of participating Moroccan students were not able to complete the survey in Arabic, a result of both the linguistic situation and their own schooling in Morocco. Overall, 88% of students in the sample did not feel the need to continue learning their L1. Since most students were fairly new to the country, Spanish was not perceived as a threat to L1 maintenance.

With regard to the students' perceptions of Spanish proficiency level, differences emerged across the three nationalities in the sample. Romanian students perceived themselves as high proficient (90% of responses to the well or very well option in the four language skills), while the most frequent answer for Chinese and Moroccan students was "Not well" (e.g., only 20% of Chinese and 40.6% of Moroccan students perceived they could understand Spanish well). Writing was the most difficult skill to master in Spanish, and overall 42.24% of the sample

perceived they did it “Not well”. Again, differences emerged across national origins. For example, while 82.35% of Romanian students were able to write “well” or “very well” in Spanish, only 43.2% of Moroccan students and 26.7% Chinese students were able to do it “well”. Speaking and writing were perceived as the most important skills to master in Spanish (83.6% and 68.1% of students respectively). This diversity in student perceptions of Spanish proficiency rendered the expected data, considering that language learning is affected by many factors, being the structure of the native and target languages one of them (Lightbown and Spada, 1999). Thus, similarities between their L1 and Spanish was an advantage for Romanian students, who considered Spanish “easy” or “very easy” (91.24%), while it was perceived as an obstacle by most Chinese students, and 68.91% of them perceived that learning Spanish was “difficult” or “very difficult”. I observed that this fact had a strong impact on students’ motivation to learn Spanish and to continue to post-secondary education. Spanish was not offered in any of the students’ education systems as part of the curriculum, the reason why Spanish was a completely new language for the majority of them at their arrival in the country. Thus, the students in the sample considered themselves as having a solid knowledge of their L1, which in the case of Romanian students facilitated the acquisition of Spanish and motivated them to remain in school.

#### **4.2.2. Students’ Perceptions of L1 Use outside of the “Aula” and Maintenance Efforts**

Native language use was frequent among participating students regardless of their nationality, and 66.37% admitted using it more than 6 hours per day: “Todo el día salvo cuando estoy en clase” (all day long except when I am in class), “Siempre utilizo chino” (I always use Chinese), “Dialecto todo el día” (I use dialect all day long), “Todo el día en casa” (All day at home).

Moreover, listening to music and watching TV and movies were the preferred activities in their L1s. All students in the sample considered L1 maintenance very important, although most did not make any special efforts to continue learning it apart from speaking with family members and friends. Since students considered themselves proficient in their L1, maintenance was not perceived as something to worry about. This was particularly the case among Chinese and Romanian students. Those Moroccan students who were native Berber-speakers were not interested in maintaining their mother tongue (relegated to domestic and oral use) but standard Arabic, and some attended classes at the Madrid mosque. With regard to the role that school should play in L1 teaching, the responses to the survey questionnaire indicated that 49% of the sample would like some kind of L1 instruction at school, although they believed this very unlikely to happen. Moreover, 68% of students agreed or strongly agreed that it would be very helpful if teachers could speak their first language. Therefore, the perception among all three nationalities was that their L1s did not have a role outside their private life, and most attributed school no role in maintenance.

#### **4.2.3. Students' Perceptions of Spanish Use and Learning Efforts outside of the Classroom**

The students in the sample did not have many opportunities for Spanish practice outside the “Aula de Enlace”, and 47.4% of them used Spanish an average of 1-2 hours per day: “Sólo cuando tengo ocasión” (only when I have the chance), “Casi nunca” (almost never), “poco porque sé poco” (just a little because I don’t know much), “no hablo nada” (I don’t speak any Spanish at all). The highest percentages corresponded to Chinese and Moroccan students (62.2% and 46% respectively). Only 14% of the sample took Spanish classes outside of the program,

and 34.48% would like to. However, most students did not plan on attending any classes after their stay in the “Aula” was over, and they were certain that they would continue learning Spanish by only interacting with native speakers. As it was the case for L1, watching TV and movies and listening to music were the two activities that students preferred to do in Spanish.

With regard to friendships and social patterns in school, differences emerged among students according to their national origin one more time. Thus, most Chinese students had Chinese friends only (49%), Romanians had mostly Romanian friends and some friends from other countries (but not Spaniards), and 46% of Moroccan students had some friends from Morocco, but also some from other nationalities, including Spaniards. These patterns were also observed during the visits to the sites. Thus, it was observed that the socialization patterns were related to the students’ proficiency in Spanish. As it will be further discussed in chapter 5, socialization has an important role on language learning, a reason why finding meaningful ways for interaction with native speakers should be searched in schools.

#### **4.2.4. Students’ Attitudes toward L1 and Spanish and their Speakers**

The attitudes toward L1s were positive across all three national origins, and the main motivation behind L1 maintenance was identity (45.7%): “Es mi lengua materna” (it’s my mother tongue), “No quiero renegar de mi lengua y mi cultura” (I don’t want to refuse my language and culture), “soy china para siempre” (I’ll be Chinese forever). The second most important reason for maintenance among students was the need to communicate with their families in their home countries (38%). Among Romanian students maintenance was also connected to their plans to go back to Romania (the immigration plan was temporal for most Romanian students) and continue their studies there. When asked about the words that define their fellow citizens,

Moroccan students thought they were “hospitable and good hosts”, “good people”, and “happy”. For Romanians students, the most repeated adjectives were “hard-workers”, “intelligent”, and “witty”, while most Chinese students considered their people to be “hard-workers”, “strong to overcome difficulties”, and “generous”.

There was unanimity concerning the role of Spanish in the students’ new lives, and 100% of them agreed that learning the language was extremely important for them. Furthermore, their main motivation to speak Spanish was instrumental, and “to get a good job after school” was selected by Chinese and Moroccan students (85% and 78% respectively) as the first option. Romanian students selected “to do well in school and to obtain my high school diploma” (73.53%) in the first place, and getting a good job as their second (70.6%). Only a few students showed to have an integrative motivation to learn Spanish, e.g., “para tener amigos en el IES” (to make friends at high school), “mi vida será más normal mientras estoy en España” (mi life will be more ‘normal’ while I am in Spain), “para conversar con los demás” (to speak with others). Overall, the perceived benefits of learning Spanish were twofold: (1) being able to take advantage of their mainstream classes (63%), and (2) the possibility of making more friends in school (52.58%). All students agreed that both their education and their knowledge of Spanish would grant them better opportunities for the future. The students’ opinions about Spaniards were positive, and 83.6% of them “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that most Spaniards were nice people. For them, the three words that best described Spaniards were “good people”, “friendly, and “intelligent”.

In summary, students felt very attached to their L1s and cultures, and considered them essential for identity reasons. Regarding Spanish, their motivation to learn was basically

instrumental rather than integrative, although the type of motivation was not found to be the factor with the strongest impact on language learning.

Table 4.3 *Students' Perceptions of L1 and Spanish*

	Romanian N=34	Chinese N=45	Moroccan N=37	ALL N=116
<u>Overall L1 proficiency:</u>				
Well / V. Well	98%	96%	92%	95.3%
Not well / at all	2%	4%	8%	4.7%
<u>Overall Spanish proficiency:</u>				
Well / V. Well	89.7%	23.4%	39%	50.7%
Not well / at all	10.3%	76.7%	60.6%	49.2%
Easy / Very easy	91.2%	31%	67.5%	63.2%
Difficult / V. difficult	8.8%	69%	32.4%	36.7%
<u>L1 Use:</u>				
1-4 hours / day	14.7%	22.2%	24.3%	20.4%
5 + hours / day	85.2%	77.8%	75.6%	79.6%
<u>Spanish Use:</u>				
1-4 hours / day	41.2%	80%	67.6%	63%
5 + hours / day	58.8%	20%	32.5%	37%
<u>L1 Maintenance:</u>				
L1 classes	0%	0%	21.6%	-----
<u>Spanish learning efforts:</u>				
Spanish classes	5.88%	8.1%	8.1%	-----

#### **4.2.5. Students' Educational Experiences and Perceptions of the "Aulas" program**

Most students in the sample voluntarily agreed to enter the program, and they perceived it was a good idea to learn some Spanish prior to their integration into the mainstream classroom (77.58%). Moreover, 52% of them would prefer to remain in the program beyond the six-month maximum stay allowed, and almost 70% agreed or strongly agreed that they preferred their "Aula" to their regular class. This figure was very similar across the three national origins, with a slightly higher percentage of Moroccan students (78.3%) among them. When asked about their learning perceptions, most believed that the "Aula de Enlace" was helping them develop their oral skills (76.72%), while 60% of the sample admitted they could write better, and 62% had improved their ability to read in Spanish. The students' expectations for the program were high, and their main goals were being able to speak Spanish with any of their peers in school (69.8%), and to understand their mainstream teachers once they exit the program (57%).

Students had strong feelings about the maximum period of time permitted to stay in the program by the official policy, and they preferred to remain in the program "for a complete school year" (53.44%), or "as long as they needed" (24.13%) more than any other options. Despite this preference to remain in the program longer than permitted, 65.5% of the students in the sample agreed or strongly agreed that they were ready to incorporate to their mainstream classroom when I administered the survey. The percentage of Chinese students who selected these options was unexpectedly high (68.88%), as was that of Moroccan students (62.1%). Moreover, students were very optimistic about their incorporation to the regular class after they exit the "Aula de Enlace" program. Thus, although 44% of them agreed that they would need help from peers and teachers at the beginning, they thought that they would be able to participate in all the class activities (40%).

With regard to the “Aula de Enlace” teachers, the students’ responses to the open and close-ended questions of the survey questionnaire and the interviews were unanimous across the three groups. When asked about the three things that they liked the least about their teachers, the most frequent answer was “Nada” (nothing) or “Me gusta todo” (I like everything), and all students without exception agreed or strongly agreed that their teachers made every effort to help them learn the language and encouraged them to participate in all of the class activities. This data confirmed what I observed in my visits to the sites, where teachers were more like friends to the students. Regarding the materials that teachers brought to classes, 97.5% of the sample agreed or strongly agreed that they were really helping them learn, and no difference was made between teacher developed and commercially prepared materials in this respect. It was noteworthy that most students in the sample perceived that their “Aula de Enlace” teachers had high expectations for all of them, and considered them able to achieve at the same level as Spaniards in the education system (88%). Although responses varied a little across the three groups, i.e., Romanian students perceived their teachers had high expectations on their possibilities to succeed in school (97%), while the percentage was a little lower for Chinese (86.66%) and Moroccan students (81%), the percentages were still high. Overall, students in the sample perceived that school was easier in Spain than in their home countries (57.75%), especially Chinese and Romanian students (69% and 68% respectively). For Moroccan students school was far more difficult in Spain (78%).

When asked to provide the three words that best described their “Aula de Enlace”, three themes emerged from the data: (1) the good atmosphere for study; (2) the quality of teachers (both personal and professional), e.g., they are patient and always willing to help; and (3) the sense of equality for all.

#### **4.2.6. Teachers' Perceptions of Role of L1 and Students' Ability in Spanish**

Data for this section drew on two instruments developed for the study: 1) a teacher survey questionnaire, and (2) a teachers' assessment of students' Spanish proficiency. These sources rendered similar information about the students' second language development, which added reliability to the findings through methodological triangulation. For a summary of what follows (4.2.6 and 4.2.7) see [Table 4.5](#).

When asked about the students' L1s, 66.66% of the teachers in the sample perceived them as the major obstacle for integration into the Spanish education system, although they made further distinctions between Romanian, Chinese and Moroccan students as regards the role played by L1 in learning Spanish. For 79% of the sample, Romanian was an obvious advantage for learning Spanish, (both are Romance languages and very similar in all regards), while L1 was perceived as the main obstacle that Chinese students encountered when learning Spanish (75%). As for Moroccan students, 53% of the sample considered L1 to be a problem for the learning, although there was unanimity in recognizing that the gaps in their academic background and their lack of interest for academic work were two decisive factors that also had an impact on school success and integration. With regard to the use of the students' first languages in class, teachers were divided into those who believed they impeded or delayed the development of Spanish, and those who perceived L1 as a useful and/or necessary tool for learning Spanish. Across the interviews, teachers agreed that L1 use often played an important role for low proficient students when they just arrive to the "Aula", and student interpreters play an important goal in making communication possible between teacher and student.

The teachers' perceptions of students' second language ability clearly varied across the three nationalities under study. As it was expected, Romanian students were perceived as high

achievers in all the four language skills. This opinion was supported in the interviews: “Lo hacen todo bien” (they can do everything very well), “son estudiosos, se integran fácilmente, intentan hablar español...” (they work hard, get integrated easily, try to speak Spanish all the time...), “vienen con muchas estrategias adquiridas” (they have already acquired many learning strategies when they arrive). Chinese students were at the opposite end of the learning continuum, and teachers perceived that most of them were able to understand (82.6%), speak (95%), read (79%) and write (96%) in Spanish not well or not at all. According to the teachers: “todo es un reto para ellos” (everything is a great challenge for them), “todo es difícilísimo para ellos, empezando por la pronunciación” (everything is extremely difficult for them, beginning with pronunciation). For Moroccan students, only their ability to understand Spanish “well” was highly regarded by teachers, while they had more difficulties in speaking, reading, and writing skills. According to the teachers, Moroccan students “tienen facilidad para la lengua oral” (they are good at speaking), “entienden y hablan lo básico en poco tiempo” (they can understand and speak the basics in a short time).

A similar pattern emerged from the teachers’ assessment instrument (see Appendix J), where data about the students’ overall abilities in Spanish, and how this was perceived as linked to success in the mainstream were collected from 135 students across 22 high schools in Madrid. According to the teachers, 50.4% of students in their “Aula de Enlace” would be able to succeed once they integrate into the mainstream, while 49.6% would not. Data diverged when the three nationalities were considered independently. Thus, for teachers 80% of Romanians would be able to succeed in the mainstream (and do even better than Spanish students), while only 31% of Chinese and 34.8% of Moroccan students would be able to do so. Furthermore, Romanians were rated high in their Spanish abilities (80% of them in the 3-4 or “very good” and “excellent”

range), and this was the case for only 21% of Moroccan students and 29% of Chinese students.

Table 4.4 displays the data for the teachers' assessment instrument.

Table 4.4 *Teachers' Assessment of Students' Spanish Proficiency*

	Romanian N=50	Chinese N=42	Moroccan N=43	ALL N=135
AGE (mean)	14.2	14.5	15.04	14.5
TIME IN THE "AULAS"				
Up to 6 months	60%	23.8%	32.5%	38.78%
> 6 months	40%	76.2%	67.4%	61.2%
WILL SUCCEED IN THE MAINSTREAM?				
Yes	80%	31%	35%	50.4%
No	20%	69%	65%	49.6%
SPANISH PROFICIENCY				
1 Poor	6%	33.4%	23.25%	20%
2 Good	14%	38%	55.8%	34.8%
3 Very good	46%	28.6%	16.6%	31.85%
4 Excellent	34%	0%	2.4%	13.33%

#### 4.2.7. Teachers' Attitudes toward L1s and Spanish and their speakers

Continuing to learn and use their L1s was perceived as important for students by 89% of the teacher sample, and this opinion was supported across the interviews as well. Two reasons were perceived as important for L1s maintenance by teachers: (1) L1 was a crucial part of the students' identity; and (2) the need to communicate with family and friends in their home

countries (83.33%). Teachers were almost unanimous about the role of school in teaching the students' L1s. Although they believed that L1 maintenance should be valued and supported from school (e.g., encouraging students to use L1 and home, and to attend L1 classes), they agreed that schools were not to be held responsible for native language teaching. Additionally, the teachers in the sample did not consider speaking the students' languages to be necessary for teaching Spanish, although some agreed that it could help. When asked to provide the three words that best defined their students, Romanian and Chinese students received the most positive judgments. According to the teachers in the sample, Romanians were mostly sociable and communicative, highly motivated and hard-workers. As for Chinese students, they were mostly reserved (shy, introverted, inaccessible), hard-workers (methodical), and well mannered and respectful. On the contrary, Moroccan students were defined as having a very low educational level, low motivation (low or no interest in academic work), and discipline problems by teachers.

With regard to Spanish, most teachers in the sample agreed that learning Spanish was important for all of their students regardless of the national origin. Spanish was perceived to be important to continue studying or to get a good job after finishing school. Thus, motivation for learning Spanish was mainly instrumental, although the final goal did vary across nationalities, i.e., getting good grades that allow them continue studying was the main motivation for Romanians, while finding a job the quickest and easiest way possible was the objective for Chinese and Moroccan students.

Table 4.5 *Teachers' Perceptions of Students' L1s and Spanish (N=36)*

	Romanian	Chinese	Moroccan	ALL
<u>L1s:</u>				
main obstacle for L2	21.2%	75%	46.9%	47.7%
main obstacle for integration into school	-----	-----	-----	66.7%
<u>Spanish:</u>				
Important to learn	100%	100%	96%	98%
<u>Overall Spanish Proficiency:</u>				
Good / Excellent	98%	17.4%	25%	46.8%
Regular / Poor	2%	83%	75%	53.3%

#### 4.2.8. Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Experiences in the "Aulas de Enlace"

Most teachers agreed that, although students were assigned to the program by the intake center, most of them have a very good opinion about it once they know what it is and spend some time in it, and immigrant parents and students alike regard it as the best option for schooling. The fact that most students (89%) wanted to remain in the "Aula" after the six-month period of maximum stay was, according to teachers, one indicator of how positively students valued the program. However, most teachers agreed that students wanted to remain in the "Aula" because they had not achieved the language proficiency level required to allow them feel integrated in the mainstream. Moreover, the desire to remain in the program varied very much across nationalities, and Romanian students made every effort to exit the program as soon as possible. For some teachers, the students' desire to remain in the program depend on three main factors: (1) the proficiency level acquired; (2) their age; and (3) their national origin.

For the teachers in the sample, the program was intended to help students (1) reach an adequate level of Spanish as soon as possible (94.5%), and (2) adapt to the school and the education system in the host country (75%). With regard to the 6-month maximum period of stay permitted, opinions were divided into those who believed that this was enough time (50%), and those who considered it insufficient for certain students (50%), mainly Chinese students, whom some teachers believed should remain in the program for at least one school year. For the first group, remaining in the program further (the 1 to 3-month extension permitted by the official policy) did not result in an improvement of the students' Spanish abilities, but had a negative impact on their attitudes and educational habits, since students got easily used to the class routine and did not make any efforts to learn.

With regard to the teachers' perceptions about language learning, most agreed that their students were making progress in all the four skills (60%). Although they believed that most students would need extra support from mainstream teachers and classmates, and a period of adaptation to the new environment (very different to the "Aula de Enlace" in many respects) once they exit the "Aula" (75%), the expectations on students and the role of the "Aula" were high. Therefore, teachers hoped it would help them understand their mainstream teachers once they incorporate to the regular classes, and be able to communicate efficiently with their schoolmates. Teachers in the sample felt valued as regards their efforts to help students learn and participate in class. Moreover, they believed that students regarded the materials they brought to class as very useful for learning Spanish.

Overall, the teachers in the sample rated the "Aulas de Enlace" program as good or very good (97%), although some were cautious about this generalization and insisted that the program success depended on many factors, such as the students' prior knowledge, their acquired learning

strategies, and their L1s. Most teachers agreed that the students' education level was lower than the average Spanish student in general, although there were a few exceptions (e.g. Chinese students are considered to be very good at Math). As regards their perceptions about the students' possibilities to learn in the Spanish education system, teachers considered this to be the case for only for a few of them. While some teachers believed that the program may need some slight changes in order to be more effective for Chinese students, most agreed that it has meant an improvement with respect to the compensatory programs that used to serve the immigrant population before implementation of the "Aulas de Enlace".

When asked to describe their "Aula de Enlace", three themes emerged from the teacher responses: (1) diversity as an asset to the program and the school at large; (2) good reception and the degree of understanding and familiarity that students perceive in the "aula"; and (3) the learning environment provided by the program, with individualized attention and support. Overall, teachers felt supported by the department of education (88%) as far as resources were concerned (e.g. materials specially developed for the program, monthly or bimonthly meetings with other "Aulas" teachers to share experiences, and technology provided by the department of education).

All the "Aula de Enlace" teachers in the sample applied for this position or accepted to be in the program, and 100% of them planned to continue for as long as possible. The low turnover rate could be considered a result of the program success, although I found that some teachers had specific reasons to be in the program other than their interest in teaching immigrant students, such as (1) the search for new experiences after a lifetime in the mainstream; (2) teaching in the mainstream had become a difficult and very stressful job given the low motivation of high school students of today.

#### **4.2.9. Administrators' Perceptions of Students' L1 and Spanish**

The information in this section drew on data from the interviews conducted with: (1) three high school principals of schools where the program had been implemented, (2) two program administrators (or “inspectores”), and (3) two policy and decision makers, namely, the secretary of education of the community of Madrid and the director of the area of “Promoción Educativa” in this department. The information gathered from the secretary of education was mainly documental and on his personal opinions about the program and the participants in it. Since he was not the secretary of education when the program was first implemented, he confessed not to know all the details about it.

Across the interviews there was uniformity regarding the role of the students' first language in the program. For the administrators and policy and decision makers in the sample, the students' L1s had an emotional (identity) and social (communication with native speakers), rather than an educational, role in the program, and its use should be restricted in the classroom for the benefit of Spanish. The interviewees believed that maintenance should be encouraged from school, although school should not be held responsible for teaching L1s for two main reasons: (1) students must complete a national curriculum, and taking time from their regular classes for L1 instruction would limit their full access to that curriculum, therefore hampering their opportunities for equal education; and (2) hiring language teachers for the 57 languages spoken in the high schools in the CAM would be difficult and very expensive. Thus, L1 maintenance was regarded as important by all the interviewees to keep the students' self-esteem high, which happened when they perceived that their native languages were valued and respected at school, e.g., posting signs in their L1s or organizing international food festivals.

With regard to Spanish, all the interviewees believed that it should be the only language of instruction in order to maximize the time of exposure and therefore the learning opportunities for students. Moreover, since they spoke their L1s at home, school was the only opportunity for Spanish practice for many of them. Spanish was considered the main tool that gave students access to the knowledge required in school, and learning it as soon as possible was the only way to integrate and to succeed in the mainstream. According to one of the principals “the sooner they learn Spanish, the sooner they integrate into the mainstream, and the sooner their situation gets normal”. For the interviewees, the benefits of learning Spanish were countless: (1) to follow the mainstream classes; (2) to be able to communicate with classmates, (3) to have opportunities to get good jobs in Spain, (4) to do the chores, (5) to make friends, etc.

#### **4.2.10. Administrators’ Perceptions of the Students’ Experiences in the Program**

Overall, the administrators and the policy and decision makers in the sample perceived that the “Aulas de Enlace” program was an improvement over the compensatory education programs in existence in school prior to its implementation. This was so for three main reasons: (1) students attended some mainstream classes from the very beginning, which favored integration; (2) since students spent many hours learning Spanish only, the learning process was accelerated, and (3) there were more and better resources available for language learning.

With regard to the theoretical background or the teaching/learning philosophy behind implementation, the policy and decision makers were not able to provide an answer to this question. No experts were consulted during the planning stage, and one of the policy makers recognized that some teachers’ opinions were collected regarding the program-within-a-school or separate school options for implementation, although this was not done in a systematic way.

According to the policy makers, the program was implemented in response to a new reality, i.e., the continuous arrival of immigrant students to the schools throughout the year, a fact that was causing problems to mainstream teachers, who in many cases did not have the resources, the time, and the willingness to deal with this new situation. Regarding the school principals in the sample, they had accepted to implement the program in their schools when asked by the administration because they perceived it as an excellent idea to attend the needs of immigrant students.

All the administrators and policy and decision makers consulted agreed that the two main needs of newcomer students were learning Spanish and integration. Thus, the program targeted at those two basic needs by establishing them as its goals. With regard to the learning goal, all the interviewees agreed that it was attained by the program, although with different degrees of success. Thus, some perceived that both Chinese and Moroccan students might need extra time in the “Aula” in order to acquire the Spanish level required for mainstream classes. Nevertheless, since no achievement data were collected (students did not have entrance or exit tests) and assessment was casually undertaken by the program teachers throughout the school year, the measure of success or failure was not reliable, since it was based on opinions and perceptions. Apart from the difficulties of Moroccan and Chinese students, the program was perceived as a complete success by the administrators and policy makers in my sample “porque aprenden español, porque se incorporan a su aula, porque están bien integrados” (because they learn Spanish, they incorporate to mainstream, and they are well integrated). Nevertheless, all of the interviewees recognized that program success depended on factors such as the national origin, the academic level achieved in the home country, and the parents’ educational level.

With regard to the integration goal, all the interviewees agreed that this was more important than educational success. For them, the two major concerns about the education of immigrant children were: (1) the need to provide equal opportunities for all; and (2) the avoidance of ghettos in schools. Therefore, the provision of different types of education for students with different needs was out of the question: “Si la escuela es distinta, la oportunidad y la igualdad de oportunidades varía. Educativamente puede funcionar, pero creo que tiene repercusiones sociales luego...” (If the school is different, the opportunities are different as well. Although educationally it could work better, I think that it will have social consequences later on). There were no systematic data to support the achievement of the integration goal, and their perceptions were based on casual observations (“se les ve contentos, tú les preguntas y te dicen que sí, que están contentos”, they seem happy, when you ask them they respond that they are happy), and an annual report elaborated by the inspectors. Although I did not have access to this document, I was informed that it consisted of a 12-15-page qualitative evaluation of a school sample, where information was gathered from principals and teachers, but not from students, and some observation was conducted. According to the policy makers, the objective of this evaluation was to inform the administration of the necessary changes to be made to the program. Although it has brought about slight changes in the policy document so far, this evaluation has not affected practice.

#### **4.2.11. Summary**

Across the data analyzed in this section it was found that many of the students’ perceptions were similar to the teachers’, while both the teachers and students’ perceptions differed from those of

administrators and policy and decision makers about their linguistic and educational experiences in the program on some important issues. The following themes emerged from the data analysis:

1) The role of L1s was limited to private use and the school was not perceived as having any responsibility on maintenance. Moreover, L1s were seen to have no part to play in the Spanish learning process, since they were perceived as the main obstacle for learning and for integration in the case of Moroccan and Chinese students.

2) Uniformity was found about the students' proficiency in Spanish, and data showed great differences regarding achievement among the three groups. Learning Spanish was the absolute priority for all, and the students' success in the education system depends on how fast they can learn it. All of the participants believed that Spanish could be accelerated through intensive teaching. Content teaching was not regarded as a possibility while in the "Aula", since the changes to be made in the school system were not worth the time and the effort ("podremos entendernos con ellos en 6 meses, así que no hay que dramatizar", we'll be able to communicate with them in 6 months, so there's no need to dramatize).

(3) The extent to which the program goals were attained was perceived differently by the stakeholders. For students, goal attainment varied across the three nationalities, although they all perceived that the program was helping them to learn Spanish. For teachers, the program was helping Chinese and Moroccan students to achieve basic skills in Spanish, while Romanian students made the most of this experience and acquired advanced skills very easily. For the administrators and policy and decision makers, language learning was achieved in 6 months ("en 6 meses hablan y se integran") or even less for some students, while only a few Chinese might need some extra time for learning.

### **4.3. IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM ON STUDENTS' EXPRESSED INTENTIONS TO CONTINUE TO NON-COMPULSORY EDUCATION**

The information in this section drew on two main data sources: (1) the participants' opinions, as expressed by them in questionnaires and interviews; and (2) my own experiences and observations in the program throughout seven months of fieldwork. No official data on school continuation were available when fieldwork was carried out in the 2004-2005 school year, so it could not be consulted for this study.

#### **4.3.1. Students' Expressed Opinions about their Future Plans**

(For a summary of what follows see [Table 4.6](#) at the end of this section). The first distinction about the students' plans was concerned with the time they intended to remain in Spain, and differences emerged among the three national origins. For most Romanian students in the sample (85.25%), their stay in the country was temporary, and most of them provided a specific date of return to Romania when asked about this in the questionnaire. Some students mentioned the entrance of Romania into the EU as the main motivation to go back, since the country is expected to undergo an important economic development in the coming years. Regarding the Chinese and Moroccan students in the sample, their plans in Spain were long-term. While many would like to go back to their home countries (53.3% and 48% respectively), the open-ended question in the survey about their future plans rendered a majority of responses such as: "hasta que se jubilen mis padres" (until my parents get retired) for Chinese students, and "para siempre" (forever) for Moroccan students. This pattern was confirmed in the interviews as well. It is noteworthy that those students with long-term plans were not the ones that showed more interest in continuing beyond compulsory education. As it will be discussed, this fact supported the idea

that continuation was highly conditioned by factors other than the impact of the program: family aspirations, socio-economic status, students' age (students under 16 must remain in school by law), how much Spanish they can learn, and how fast they do it.

When asked to declare the jobs they would like to do in the future, all of the Romanian students in the sample chose professional careers, and the top four were lawyer, teacher, doctor and architect. Regarding Chinese and Moroccan students, 22 out of the 82 students of these nationalities in the sample were still undecided (“veremos cuando termine”, we’ll see when I am done), while only 20 were inclined toward professional careers. Nevertheless, only a few of these students actually believed that they would end up doing that job. Many Chinese students recognized that they would just be “gente sencilla” (common people), meaning store or restaurant owners, waiters, or shop assistants. For most Romanian and Chinese students in the sample, their plans had not varied very much in coming to Spain, and they believed they would be attending school in their home countries as well. Regarding Moroccan students, most believed that their opportunities to get a good job and make more money had increased in coming to Spain, and the role that education played in their plans was important, although mainly directed to language learning and professional training.

Overall, 58% of the student sample was interested in continuing to post-compulsory education, whereas 36% of the students preferred to leave school and start working. Differences emerged across the three national origins regarding the distribution of percentages and the type of studies selected to continue school. Thus, the school continuation rate was high among Romanian students, who were mostly interested in college education (64.5%) and, to a lesser extent, in professional training (9.7%). With regard to Chinese students, 45% selected “to quit school and start working” as their first option but, on the whole, 54.5% stated that they wanted to

continue in school to go to college (22.5%) or pursue some type of professional training (32.5%). Among Moroccan students, 40.5% of them would like to quit school and start working, and those who wanted to remain in school after compulsory education (54%) were more inclined to professional training (35%) than to college (19%). This information was further confirmed in the individual interviews with Moroccan students and through the observations in HS4.

Across the questionnaires and interviews it was found that the students' plans in the host country were related to their parents' plans for them. However, it was also found that parents held higher expectations on their children than the students themselves. The majority of students in the sample (76%) agreed that their parents would like them to continue in school after compulsory education (ESO), and only 19% perceived that their parents wanted them to start working right after.

Clear differences in the perceptions of the parents' expectations emerged in the interviews among the three groups. Romanian parents encouraged their children to do well in school in order to go to college. This was also the case of Chinese parents. They encouraged their children to learn Spanish well as a previous stage to post-compulsory education or the job market, since they were conscious of the limitations imposed by the language for the future of their children. Many Moroccan students perceived that their parents would like them to study just "hasta donde haga falta para ponerse a trabajar" (as far as they need to start working). Interestingly, the high expectations of the parents were not consistent with their involvement in the education of their children. Thus, 76.5% of the students recognized that their parents never helped them with schoolwork, and almost 78% of them agreed that their parents never attended the school meetings. The lack of time, due to parents working long hours, and their lack of Spanish proficiency, were argued as the two main reasons for this.

Table 4.6 *Students' Expressed Opinions about Future Plans*

	Romanian N=34	Chinese N=45	Moroccan N=37	ALL N=116
<u>Return to Country Of Origin</u>	85.3%	53.3%	48.7%	62.4%
<u>Plans after “ESO”:</u>				
Start Working	16%	45%	40.5%	33.8%
Continue to College	64.5%	22.5%	19%	35.3%
Continue to Prof. Training	9.7%	30%	35.1%	25%
<u>Spanish after “ESO”:</u>				
Spanish Classes	17.6%	51.5%	13.5%	27.5%
Non-Formal Instruction	76.4%	48.8%	87%	70.7%
<u>Future Plans:</u>				
Education will help	85.2%	95.5%	94.6%	91.7%
Spanish will help	82.3%	100%	97.2%	93.1%

#### 4.3.2. Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Future Plans

(For a summary of what follows see [Table 4.7](#) at the end of this section). Most teachers in the sample agreed that their students did not have clear plans for their future due to their young age, and because they had not been in the country long enough to make a decision. Their perceptions were confirmed in the interviews and the conversations that I maintained with the “Aulas de Enlace” teachers in the 23 participating schools during fieldwork. According to the instructors, the immigrant students' plans were mainly conditioned by their socio-economic status in the host country and, secondarily, by their ability to do well in school. With regard to their perceptions

about the students' intentions to remain in Spain, almost 69% of the teacher sample agreed that their students would like to go back to their countries some day, and this was especially perceived about Chinese students. Overall, 72.22% of the instructors agreed or mostly agreed that their students would quit school after compulsory education, although most also believed that many would do both working while simultaneously pursuing some kind of education. Furthermore, it was found that most teachers in the sample had clear perceptions about the possibilities and willingness of students to continue to post-compulsory education.

I also observed that there was a direct relation between the students' national origins and the teachers' perceived abilities for study. These findings were consistent with the teachers' assessment of students' Spanish proficiency (Table 4.4). For the teachers in the sample, Romanian students were the most firm candidates to go on beyond compulsory education. Although some Chinese students would like to continue as well, teachers recognized that it would be impossible for them ("les será imposible") mainly because of their low Spanish proficiency level. According to the teachers, many Moroccan students would be able to continue to some professional training, although most were only interested in working due to their economic needs, which was, in the end, the motivation behind immigrating to Spain.

When asked about the expectations for their students, the same patterns emerged across the questionnaires and the interviews, and these were different for each national group. According to the teachers in the sample, most Romanian students were capable of achieving at the same level as Spanish students, and even better in many cases, which made them suitable for any type of education they would like to pursue. Regarding Chinese students, most teachers agreed that the majority would end up working in the family business. In fact, many of the Chinese students I met during the fieldwork were already working in Chinese convenience stores and restaurants.

Moroccan students were perceived to have little interest in school, and to be good at manual work, the main reasons why most “Aulas” teachers believed that they would make good car mechanics, gardeners or painters, among others. The degree to which the diverse teachers’ expectations upon the students from different national origins affected actual practice was out of the scope of this study, and will be the topic of a future research study.

With regard to the parents’ plans for their children, most teachers in the sample agreed that these had a strong impact on students’ intentions to continue school. Approximately 50% of the teachers in the sample claimed that the students’ parents would like their children to drop school after compulsory education. Of those parents who would like their children to continue in school, teachers believed that 27.8% of the students would continue in professional training and only a minimal number would pursue college education. Teachers perceived two factors as important in the students’ decision, i.e., the parents’ education and their cultural level, and the students’ own abilities for academic work. The involvement of parents in their children education was perceived to be minimal by most teachers in the sample, although it was justified by the parents’ lack of time and/or their low Spanish proficiency level.

Table 4.7 Teachers' Perceptions of Students' Future Plans(N=36)

	Romanian	Chinese	Moroccan	ALL
<u>Return to Country Of Origin</u>	----	----	----	69.5%
<u>Plans after "ESO"</u>				
Start Working	----	----	----	72.2%
Continue to College	----	----	----	14.2%
Continue to Prof. Training	----	----	----	16%
<u>Spanish after "ESO"</u>				
Spanish Classes	----	----	----	14%
Non-Formal Instruction	----	----	----	71%
Will Stop Learning Spanish	----	----	----	15%
<u>Future Plans</u>				
Education will help	----	----	----	83.4%
Spanish will help	----	----	----	94.4%

#### 4.3.3. Administrators' Perceptions of Students' Future Plans

The administrators that participated in this study were three high school principals, two "inspectores" (inspectors), and two policy and decision makers in the education department of the Autonomous Community of Madrid (CAM). Across the interviews conducted with them, it was found that their opinions about the students' plans mostly converged, although the policy makers showed more optimism about the impact of the program on the students' willingness to continue in school. Whereas all the administrators expressed their concerns about the differential

performance of the three groups of participating students, they still believed that the “Aulas de Enlace” program was helping immigrant minority students achieve their goals. However, as it was the case with the teachers in the sample, I found that the administrators also held strong beliefs about what these goals were for each group of participating students. Thus, Romanian students were interested in pursuing post-compulsory education (“Bachillerato”), and then college, Moroccan students were not interested in post-compulsory education, and probably would end up doing minimum-wage jobs, and Chinese students would not be able to continue school after compulsory education (even if they wanted to) due to the great difficulties with Spanish and their family’s plans for them.

With regard to the policy and decision makers, two contradictory patterns emerged in the interviews. First, they had an idealized vision of the students’ achievements in the program. According to them, students would become whatever they wanted, just like any other Spanish student (“podrán ser lo que quieran ser, igualito que cualquier alumno español”), and the program was expected to help them gain “un nivel de conocimiento suficiente para que sean un alumno más, que es lo que pretendemos. Un alumno más de nuestro sistema” (... sufficient knowledge, so they can be like any other student. This is what we are looking for. Just like any other student in our education system). In this search for equality for all, students are urged to learn as much Spanish as possible in six months so that the national curriculum will be accessible to them.

The second pattern that emerged from the interviews with policy and decision makers concerned the differential performance of the three groups of students in the sample, and their perceptions were very similar to those of teachers and administrators. For them, the program had an impact on the students’ plans to continue in school, although these plans were different for

each group according to their goals in the host country. It was found that these perceptions had an impact on implementation and created three particular conditions that influenced policy and decision making. First, these perceptions generated the false assumption that the program was a success for all students, although the degree of success depended on the students' plans for the future and their interest in school. Thus, according to them those students who were really motivated to learn would go on to post-compulsory education, while the program would serve other students differently, e.g., helping them develop only communicative competence in Spanish. Second, since the different degrees of achievement were related to factors other than the program itself (e.g. aspirations, L1, etc.) it was perceived that those who did not perform well were not inclined to post-compulsory education. Thus, it was assumed that no changes needed to be made to the program. As a consequence, only slight changes have been introduced to the official policy document ("Instrucciones") updates issued every year, and these changes have not affected practice. Related to the second condition, the third condition concerns the fact that the implementation of policies that encourage all students to achieve at the same level, (regardless of their national origin, L1 and aspirations), is not perceived as being the entire responsibility of school, and therefore not a priority for the education authorities in the CAM. This condition is related to the goals for the program. Whereas the official policy establishes academic integration as one of the program's main goals, integration into the school system and society at large is the goal perceived as the most important by the policy and decisions makers interviewed. As one of them stated, the main goal of the "Aulas de Enlace" program is integration rather than academic success. This point will be discussed in detail in chapter 5.

#### **4.3.4. Summary**

In summary, it was found that there were clear differences regarding the plans for the future among the three groups of participating students. While Romanian students showed interest in continuing their education beyond the compulsory level, and then go to college, Moroccan and Chinese students were more inclined to either professional training or quitting school after compulsory education. Differences between Chinese and Moroccan students emerged. Although some of the Chinese students in the sample showed great interest in pursuing post-compulsory education, they admitted that this was very unlikely to happen, considering their immigration plan and their difficulties in learning Spanish. The great majority of Moroccan students who were interested in continuing their studies after compulsory education were more inclined to professional training, or any kind of training that can provide them with a job in the shortest time possible.

When asked about immigrant minority students' intentions to continue beyond compulsory education, both teachers and administrators agreed that the participating students' motivation to continue was conditioned by factors such as their aspirations in the host country, their socio-economic status, and their L1, which either facilitated or impeded learning Spanish. Therefore, the "Aulas de Enlace" program seemed to only have a some positive influence on those students whose immigration plan included higher education, and whose L1 was very similar to Spanish, this is to say, on Romanian students. Moreover, there was a general feeling that there was not much that the school system could, or should, do to reverse the situation, since school was perceived as having no control over the factors that conditioned students' success or failure.

#### **4.4. FACTORS THAT MOST INFLUENCED THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE TEACHERS AND STUDENTS IN THE PROGRAM**

This section provides an overview of the factors that contributed to the teachers and students' perceptions of the "Aulas de Enlace" program. Four main factors were found to have an impact on the teachers and students' perceptions: (1) the distance between the L1s and Spanish; (2) the student and family aspirations in Spain and their previous socio-economic status in the home country; (3) the age of arrival; and (4) the amount of formal schooling in the children's home countries.

##### **4.4.1. Distance between the L1 and Spanish**

Throughout the data analyzed for this study, it was observed that the differences between L1 and Spanish were perceived by the teachers and administrators as the main predictor of student success or failure in the "Aulas de Enlace" program. This distance was perceived to affect each group of students in the sample differently, either facilitating or impeding access to the regular curriculum. Thus, Romanian and Chinese students were believed to be at opposite ends of the facilitating-impeding continuum. One of the participating teachers illustrated the linguistic challenges that Chinese students face in the Spanish school as follows: "La estructura de las frases en su idioma es muy diferente de la nuestra. Por ejemplo, la frase 'La niña después de comer la manzana se lava las manos' en chino se diría literalmente 'La mujer niño comer terminar manzana después lavar mano'" (The structure of the sentence is very different in Chinese. For instance, a sentence like 'The girl washes her hands after eating the apple' would translate into 'The woman kid to eat to finish apple, after to wash hand'). Furthermore, it was observed that language distance also brought about communication problems that often

translated into difficulties for the instructors to find out what the students actually knew. This was frequently the case with Chinese students. On the contrary, Romanian proved to be an advantage for Romanian students to achieve a communicative level of Spanish in a short period of time. Since the students in the program were promoted to the mainstream according to their communicative competence, most Romanian students were mainstreamed shortly after their arrival. The effects of this early promotion will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5.

The distance between L1 and Spanish was found to be a determining factor regarding how well the participating students achieve in the “Aula de Enlace” program, and it had an impact on the students’ motivation to continue beyond compulsory education. Thus, Romanian students found Spanish very easy to learn, and this fact had a strong impact on the students’ motivation to continue learning, and to integrate into the school life and to society at large. The extent to which L1 affected Spanish learning in the case of Moroccan students was difficult to determine through the data. The linguistic situation (transferred to the host country) and their schooling process in Morocco often posed extra challenges to Moroccan students’ language learning. Regarding the linguistic situation in their home country, some Moroccan students in the sample spoke oral languages only and had been poorly schooled in their home countries, others had been schooled and had an incomplete knowledge of standard Arabic (a written language), spoke dialectal Arabic, and some French, and still others could write Arabic well, and spoke Dariya and some French. One of the Moroccan students interviewed for this study complained about the extra difficulties he faced in his language learning process in Spain, since he spoke a Berber dialect at home, had learned some standard Arabic at school and at the mosque, and was introduced to French in third grade (nine years of age) at school in Morocco. Thus, for him Spanish was the fourth language, which he considered an obstacle, since he recognized that he

had ended up having a very basic knowledge of each language, at the time that some languages interfered in the learning of others in a negative way.

#### **4.4.2. Student and Family Aspirations in Spain and SES in the Home Country**

As was discussed in section 4.3 of this chapter, most students in the sample had predetermined plans at their arrival in Spain, and this fact affected the ways they perceived how school could help them achieve their expected goals. It was also discussed in this section that the “Aulas de Enlace” program had little impact on the learners’ intrinsic motivation for learning Spanish and for continuing to post-compulsory education. Across the multiple data sources analyzed for this study, it was found that the socio-economic status in their home countries, and what they expected from their immigration experience was an important factor that determined their interest in school, and the role of Spanish. The students’ aspirations also played an important role on L1 maintenance. Similarly, whether their immigration project was temporal or permanent also had an impact on their motivation to learn the L1, and differences among the three groups of students in the sample emerged (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for details).

It was observed that the students’ aspirations were related to their perceptions of the “Aulas de Enlace” program. For Romanian students, the program was the link that will get them into the “real” classroom. Thus, they looked forward to integrating into the mainstream classes, since they knew that learning only Spanish was not enough to achieve academic success. The perceptions of Chinese and most Moroccan students were different. For these students, the “Aula” was the class to learn Spanish, and they were not bothered to remain there for as long as the teachers considered it necessary. With regard to the teachers, it was found that all of them had strong feelings about their student’s aspirations in the host country, and how these

aspirations affected their interest for learning Spanish and other subjects. Additionally, it was observed that teachers held different expectations of students according to these perceptions, which were, once again, different for the three students' national origins. The topic of expectations and perceptions will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5.

#### **4.4.3. Age of Arrival**

Extensive academic research has shown that learner's age of arrival to the host country is related to his or her potential for success in second language acquisition (Lenneberg, 1967; Johnson and Newport, 1989; Snow and Hoefnagel-Höhle, 1978; Long, 1990; Cummins, 1981b). The age of arrival of the students in the sample was perceived by stakeholders as an important factor for learning Spanish and for their successful integration into the school. However, no special arrangements have been made to deal with age-related issues in the "Aulas de Enlace" program. The impact that an underdeveloped L1 might have in Spanish learning was not mentioned by any of the participants in the study as important.

Students and teachers alike recognized that age of arrival had a strong impact on their lives in the following ways. First, it conditioned the time available to remain in school and learn Spanish in a formal setting. Students perceived more difficulties in learning Spanish when they arrived at an older age (15-16 years old). Additionally, the content that they had to deal with in the mainstream classes was more complex, which added extra challenges to their learning process. Second, the age of arrival conditioned their plans, since the older the students were upon arrival, the more determined their plans for the future were. These plans often depended on the plans that their families had for them, or on their ability to do well in school. In the case of Chinese students the difficulties encountered in learning Spanish made some older students

decide not to continue studying. Some teachers in the sample agreed that students who arrived in first and second grade of compulsory education would have more probabilities of success in the Spanish education system, while those who arrived in third and fourth grade had little chances to achieve the expected goals. According to them, although there were exceptions, in general the older arrivals were at greater risk of dropping out after compulsory education or of being promoted year after year without ever obtaining the required skills in Spanish to do well academically.

#### **4.4.4. Amount of Formal Schooling in Home Countries**

The amount of formal schooling in their countries of origin affected the perceptions of the students and teachers in the sample about the “Aulas de Enlace” program in three different ways. First, it affected the way that school was perceived by them, since some came from more demanding education systems, and their knowledge of certain subjects was better than that of Spaniards. Interestingly, the majority of teachers believed that their students’ academic level was lower than that of Spaniards. Since students did not take any standardized tests prior to their entrance to the program, the teachers’ knowledge about their academic background was based on their perceptions in the classroom. Second, the amount of formal schooling in their home countries affected the way in which students could transfer the previous knowledge to the new language. This was the case for Romanian students who, apart from speaking a similar language, believed that their education system was more demanding than the Spanish education system. Moreover, they were more disciplined. In the case of Chinese students, this transfer was frequently impeded by the linguistic barrier, which silenced students and many times relegated them to working with non-age-appropriate materials. Finally, the value that the students in the

sample gave to education was related to the students' previous schooling experiences. The way they valued their education in Spain was determined by the role of education in their home countries. For example, in Morocco, higher education does not guarantee a better job (Ed-Madkouri Maataoui, 2003), and it is perceived that the sooner you start working the better. Moreover, some students found it extremely difficult to cope with learning Spanish and the subject-matter content at the same time, and they wanted to start working right away, after pursuing some kind of professional training. One of the Moroccan students interviewed put it this way: "Well, you know how the families are. We need to help, we came here to work". In the case of Romanian students, it was clear that their schooling allowed them to cope with content, their L1 facilitated access to this content, and they rated education as one of their priorities in the host country for different reasons. It was perceived that a higher education would allow them to get a better job once they go back to Romania. Regarding Chinese students, it was difficult to determine the value of education for them because most were extremely conscious of the limitations that the language posed in their intentions to continue in school, and oftentimes the plans of the older students were predetermined by the family aspirations, and their immigration plans.

#### **4.4.5. Summary**

In summary, it was found that the factors that most influenced the participants' perceptions were some that have been clearly established in the reserach literature for the same student population (Lightbown and Spada, 1999; Kellerman and Sharwood Smith, 1986; Odlin, T, 1989; Lenneberg, 1967; Johnson and Newport, 1989; Snow and Hoefnagel-Höhle, 1978; Long, 1990; Cummins, 1981b; Cummins, 1984; Wong-Fillmore, 1991a; Oxford and Shearin, 1994; Gardner and

Lambert, 1972) Thus, these factors are some of the essential attributes to understand the immigrant students in schools and programs, considering that they may bring about different levels of achievement, and of continuation patterns to post-compulsory education.

Furthermore, some of the factors discussed in this section are perceived as fixed and difficult to change by teachers and administrators. This perception has resulted in a classification of students regarding their abilities for learning the L2 and for integration. There is a risk that the administrators perceive these factors as those causing unequal achievement of students, and that the school has a limited role in reversing the students' academic success. The assumptions about what the students' plans are, their specific characteristics, and how they affect learning might motivate policy and decision makers to believe that there is not much that the education system can, or should, do to reverse the situation so that all students can succeed in school.

#### **4.5. MATCH BETWEEN THE PARTICIPANTS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE PROGRAM AND THE EXPRESSED GOALS IN THE OFFICIAL POLICY**

This section investigates the extent to which the program official policy relates to practice through the perspectives of the different participants in the study. Thus, it attempts to answer the research question 5 proposed in chapter 1 by contrasting what was learned about the experiences and perceptions of the participants on one side, and the policy document and the opinions about it expressed by the administrators on the other.

#### **4.5.1. The Official Policy**

As was fully described in chapter 1, the official policy, known as “Instrucciones”, is a 12-page regulating document that provides specific directions for the implementation of the “Aulas de Enlace” program. The document has been revised and updated every school year since it was first issued in July 2003 (six months after the program had been implemented in Madrid), and it included the following information: the target population, the maximum length of stay, the program model and daily enrollment, the goals and exit criteria, program staffing, the teachers’ responsibilities, and the students’ assessment and program evaluation. In the first “Instrucciones” the program was referred to as “experimental” or pilot, a term that was removed from the latest updated version of the “Instrucciones” for the 2005-2006 school year issued in July 2005 (see Appendix K for the original policy document). The two general goals of the program were set up in the second section of the official policy, that is, language learning and integration, although the document did not establish general guidelines for action in achieving those goals. Thus, it was the only purpose of the official policy document to give legal status to the program within the regional education system, since it did not seem to be guided by pedagogical principles and performance data, but the result of a series of top down decisions where stakeholders were not consulted during the planning phase.

#### **4.5.2. Participants’ Experiences and Perceptions and the Official Policy**

The participants in this section were teachers and administrators only, since no data about students’ opinions on policy matters were collected through any of the instruments developed for the study.

With regard to the policy and decision makers in the sample, they explicitly admitted that the official policy was not originally meant to have a direct impact on practice: “Yo creo que las ‘Instrucciones’ son muy genéricas y muy básicas, es decir, que eso no incide directamente en la práctica del aula” (I think that the policy is very basic and general, this is, it does not directly impacts practice). Therefore, for them the policy served as a basic guide for implementation, although it was not intended to serve as a recipe to be used in all schools. Additionally, the schools have considerable autonomy to adapt the program according to the specificities of the minority student population they served. For the policy and decision makers “no hay una receta mágica que funcione para todos” (there is not a one-size-fits-all recipe), and the schools were allowed to decide how to implement the program according to their needs, the student body composition, or their own “proyecto curricular”. However, as it was discussed somewhere else, the adaptations made to the program so far relate mostly to the logistics rather than the teaching part. For one of the policy makers interviewed “Las instrucciones hablan de una forma básica de implantar las aulas y ya está... la consecución de esos objetivos ya depende de cada centro ... es decir, tienen una autonomía muy fuerte” (the official policy tells you how to implement the “Aulas” very basically ... goal achievement depends on every school, that is, they have complete autonomy).

Nevertheless, I observed that the adaptations made to the program were minimal in the high schools I visited during fieldwork. Moreover, these adaptations did not affect practice but the administrative part of the program (e.g. the teachers or the students’ schedules, the choice between teaching only language or language and content, or the materials to choose according to the student body composition). Since the goals to be achieved were established very generally in the official policy, i.e., learning Spanish to get integrated into the mainstream, individual

teachers (and the so-called “departamento de orientación”, see footnote 7) were left on their own to determine what instructional methods to use.

According to one of the policy makers interviewed for this study, the main goal of the program was the integration goal, and this goal was considered more important than academic success. Thus, the policy was believed to be directed to achieve integration, and this is the reason why some immigrant minority students start to attend some mainstream classes from the very beginning of their stay in the program. By integration, they understood both the incorporation of students to the mainstream or regular class, and their integration to the school life as a preliminary step for integration into society at large.

There were two major concerns of policy and decision makers regarding the education of immigrant students in the CAM. First, they believed in the need to provide equal opportunities for all students in the educational system. Second, they were particularly interested in avoiding the formation of ghettos and the segregation in schools. Regarding the first concern, the provision of the same educational model and curriculum for all students is believed to ensure equality in education. However, homogeneous curricula and similar materials for all students are problematic with learners from a single language and cultural background, and they cannot be defended given the great diversity in today’s classrooms, which requires a different conception of curricula and a different approach to teaching. With respect to the second concern, policy makers and administrators considered that being apart from the mainstream limited the students’ opportunities for meaningful interaction and, therefore, for language learning. Nevertheless, segregation is not necessarily considered a bad thing in the literature about immigrant education. As Walqui (2000: 206) has pointed out, “we should stop worrying that temporarily separate educational arrangements for particular students represent cases of segregation. Educational

designs that separate students are negative only when they condemn them to a lower quality of education...” Thus, while program implementation attempted to avoid segregation problems, it limited the students’ possibilities to achieve their academic and human potential while they develop proficiency in Spanish.

The different CAPs and UPEs (the districts’ education boards) help coordinate the methodological part of the program. One of the complaints of the teachers and principals in the schools I visited was that the policy and decision makers had high expectations on the schools to achieve the goals set up in the policy, but the schools were not allowed to play a role in the design and planning of the program, that is to say, they were not consulted during the policy making process. This fact, and the lack of information made available to teachers prior to program implementation, resulted in the instructors’ initial reluctance to accept a position as “Aula de Enlace” teacher (only 20% of the instructors were in-service teachers the first year of program operation). Moreover, although the material resources were many, most teachers in the sample agreed that previous professional development for teachers was scarce and, in many cases, not as good as expected.

With regard to the teachers’ perceptions about the way in which policy impacted practice, some of them admitted openly not to know what the policy said at all, and not to care about it. They recognized to comply with the bureaucratic requirements imposed by the administrators, but agreed that these were not important for them because they had little effect on their classes. This was the case with the syllabus for the “Aula de Enlace”, which the teachers were to elaborate according to the student composition of their “Aula” at any given moment. Most of the teachers interviewed, formally and informally, for the study, recognized that the syllabus was more an administrative requirement than an effective tool for practice, and they claimed that they

wrote a syllabus to be approved by the “inspectores” but then forgot about it. According to one of the teachers, this was so because “no hay programación que resista el aula de enlace” (there is no syllabus that can possibly be followed in the “Aula”). For these teachers, the policy had not changed their pedagogical approach to teaching minority students, and they admitted to use the techniques and teaching strategies that worked better for them and their students. According to their responses to the item in the questionnaire, most teachers in the sample admitted that they taught in accordance with the “Instrucciones”. In this respect, two patterns emerged from the interviews. First, the policy only established general goals, so it was easy to teach toward goal achievement in many different ways. Second, the teachers recognized that the policy had had no impact at all in their teaching style, since they continued to teach in the way that they knew best because these techniques had worked for them for years.

#### **4.5.3. Summary**

Three main patterns emerged from the data analyzed in this section. First, the fact that policy and decision makers sometimes work as action executives, defining problems based in part on public opinion, and offering broad guidelines regarding implementation. Second, although teachers have been neglected in the policy making process, they were held responsible for carrying out recommendations and mandates as established in the policy. This fact has resulted in a mistrust of instructors of all the new ideas and policies that come from the educational authorities in the CAM. Finally, the official policy did not seem to have a strong impact on practice, although it was not originally conceived to do so.

## **5. DISCUSSION**

This chapter is divided into five sections. Sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 summarize and discuss the three main claims of the study: (1) the contradictions between the program design, implementation and actual practice and the body of research literature on second language acquisition and immigrant minorities education; (2) the suitability of the “Aulas de Enlace” program for all immigrant students it was intended for; and (3) the lack of systematic program planning and implementation. Section 5.4 introduces the main commendations of the program, and section 5.5 provides recommendations for program improvement to share with teachers and administrators. Finally, section 5.6 introduces directions for further research in the area of immigrant minority education in the Spanish context. This chapter closes with a brief personal reflection on the research experience itself (Section 5.7).

### **5.1. THE “AULAS DE ENLACE” AND THE RESEARCH LITERATURE**

Across the different sources of data collected for this study, multiple contradictions were found between program planning, design and implementation, and the research literature on second language acquisition and immigrant education. The debate on how best to teach immigrant minority students has produced a considerable amount of academic research. As Cummins (2000: 39) has pointed out, “a substantial research and theoretical basis for policy decisions

regarding minority students' education does exist". Therefore, policy makers can predict with considerable confidence the probable effects of programs for minority students implemented in very different sociopolitical contexts. Additionally, research on second language acquisition has proposed theories for the most effective ways to learn a second language in classroom settings, and teaching methods have been developed to implement them (see, for example Larsen-Freeman, 2000, Shrum and Glisan, 2000; Lee and VanPatten, 1995, Hall and Verplaetse, 2000).

Previous research in the two areas mentioned above may inform planning, design and implementation of the "Aulas de Enlace" in different ways. First, it provides background knowledge to predict how this program model may work for the population it serves in this specific context. Second, the research literature helps avoid misconceptions that misrepresent the needs of immigrant students and present simplistic approaches to second language learning. Finally, research provides descriptions of the philosophies, designs and instructional approaches of exemplary programs that address the challenges of immigrant minority students. This section is attempted as an overview of what might be considered the misconceptions that guided the implementation of the "Aulas de Enlace" program. Furthermore, it discusses the implications of the contradictions among theory, implementation, and practice for program success.

### **5.1.1. Time to Master Spanish**

The official policy for the "Aulas de Enlace" program establishes "acortar el periodo necesario para la integración de este alumnado al sistema educativo español" (make the time required for students to integrate into the Spanish education system shorter) as one of its goals. This means that students need to achieve a sufficient Spanish proficiency level to succeed in the mainstream after a six-month stay in the program. Nevertheless, as the data analysis in chapter 4 indicated,

this goal was hardly attained by half of the student sample. Whereas it was observed that some Romanian students performed significantly better than their Spanish-speaking peers, the transition to the mainstream translated into difficulties in catching up with the regular curriculum for Moroccan and Chinese students. This outcome was expected in the light of the research literature on second language acquisition, and the characteristics of the student population that the “Aulas de Enlace” program serves.

As was discussed in chapter 2, Cummins (1979) made a distinction between two important aspects of language development, that is, basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). BICS refers to conversational fluency and most students develop it within the first two years of immersion in a second language environment. Regarding CALP, that is to say, the kind of language required for achieving academic success, learners need at least five years to develop age-appropriate CALP levels. Further support for the BICS/CALP distinction and the time required to achieve the academic level of proficiency in the second language is offered by Thomas and Collier (1995, 2002), Hakuta (2000), or Coelho (2003). According to Coelho (2003: 171), because of the time to develop CALP “students who have moved out of the core ESL programs need continued language support for several years after they exit.” The time required to acquire academic Spanish varies from one student to the other depending on a variety of factors (see section 4.4) and learner characteristics, a fact that was not adequately assessed by policy and decision-makers prior to program implementation. I observed that one of the outcomes of this lack of background information about students resulted in a great deal of frustration on the part of the teachers in the sample, who did not know how to best serve some students’ needs. Moreover, the time limit imposed for students to stay in the program disregarded the important distinction between oral

and academic language proficiency levels, and assumed that maximum exposure to the second language could accelerate the acquisition process.

### **5.1.2. Learning Spanish as the First Priority for Students**

The effective teaching of Spanish is considered the major task of the “Aula de Enlace” program, and the students’ lack of Spanish proficiency is perceived as their main deficit for complete access to the regular curriculum. As Cummins (1992: 134) has pointed out: “when the majority culture educators look at minority children they tend to focus on what those children lack, and usually what they see is the absence of a high level proficiency in the majority language and knowledge of the majority culture.” In terms of the three orientations to language planning distinguished by Ruiz (1988), the “Aulas de Enlace” program falls into the language-as-problem category, where Spanish should be learned as quickly as possible, since it represents the main obstacle for integration into the school life. However, adolescent language learners cannot wait until the second language is fully developed before achieving at high academic levels (Collier, 1995). As Walqui (2000: 26) has pointed out in the US context, “teaching immigrant adolescents to speak English (*the L2*) alone is not sufficient to enable them to succeed in American middle and high schools, where they will be required to perform at sophisticated cognitive levels in subject-specific areas.” Further support for this statement is offered by Short and Boyson (2004: 149): “success for newcomer students rarely relies on implementing the grade-level curricula alone. Courses that integrate language and content learning objectives are particularly valuable for newcomer students.”

Content instruction (sheltered or native language instruction) was not devised within the “Aulas de Enlace” program design and implementation, although the research literature (see

Genesee, 1994; Cenoz and Genesee, 1998 for research on French immersion and second language instruction) has shown that integrating content and language instruction is likely to be more effective than teaching language in isolation.

### **5.1.3. Type of Language Program and the Quality of Instruction**

The role of the students' L1s in their education has been the topic of a great amount of academic literature (Cummins, 1977, 1979, 1983, 1992, 2000; Thomas and Collier, 1996, 2002; Lambert and Tucker, 1972; Tucker and d'Anglejan, 1972; Swain and Lapkin, 1991; Ramírez, 1991; Fillmore, 1991). Research has shown that students learn better in their first language, and that they can think at a higher level and deal with more complicated ideas in the language in which they are more proficient. Although teachers and administrators are convinced that bilingualism will prove advantageous to their students' future, the teaching of the students' L1s in the Spanish context is perceived as a responsibility that is not within the purview of the administration. As a consequence, the "Aulas de Enlace" program falls within the most commonly implemented the "ESL-type program" (Genesee, 1999). In the US context, Short and Boyson (2004) found that 90% of the newcomer programs they researched offered an ESL option. Within this instructional model, sheltered instruction is a widely used approach to teach language and content to L2 learners. This approach is grounded in the understanding that learners can acquire content knowledge, concepts, and skills at the same time as they improve their L2 skills (Genesee, 1999). Nevertheless, the "Aulas de Enlace" program is organized and developed as an ESL (or SSL, Spanish as a second language)-pull out program where students are pulled out from the "Aula" to attend the mainstream. This program type is considered to be "the least effective form of all-English-instruction." (Thomas and Collier, 1997: 59)

#### **5.1.4. Discussion**

The design and implementation of the “Aulas de Enlace” program was the result of a series of top-down decisions not informed by the research literature on immigrant minority education and second language acquisition. As was discussed above, the literature can inform policy and decision-makers in various ways, i.e., predicting the effects of the program in different contexts, avoiding misconceptions that eventually lead to wrong policies, and discovering best practices. The lack of knowledge of the research literature resulted in misconceptions that have misguided policy and decision makers in the following ways:

- (1) The “Aulas de Enlace” program is too short to have an effect on the students’ acquisition of Spanish. One of the conclusions of the study by Hakuta et al. (2000) about the time it takes for English learners to attain proficiency in English was that “policies that assume rapid acquisition of English are widely unrealistic.”
- (2) Immigrant minority students are promoted from the “Aula de Enlace” to the mainstream classes considering only their communicative language skills. This fact results in difficulties catching up with the regular curriculum, since the students have not acquired the academic proficiency level of Spanish required for dealing with the mainstream class.
- (3) The program did not consider the fact that not all students learn the same way and at the same pace in the design and implementation phase. This has resulted in a great deal of frustration on the part of teachers and students alike, who see how difficult it is to achieve the goals intended for the program.
- (4) Students do not receive content instruction while in the program in a systematic way, which made them fall behind their native Spanish-speaking class mates of the same age.

In summary, three main ideas emerged from this discussion. First, the “Aulas de Enlace” program cannot be considered an innovation over the compensatory education programs in existence in the schools of the CAM prior to its implementation. Although teachers and administrators consider it an improvement over remedial education programs, and even though this program type is the most commonly implemented where there is a diverse immigrant student population, it was found that the model selected in the Autonomous Community of Madrid was not the most affective and conducive to language learning. Second, implementation did not always consider what was best for the student, but rather what was best for the administration. In this respect, this program model was administratively simple (no new curriculum was devised, students were schooled in the regular class, no new teachers had to be hired for the program, etc.) and required little expense. Third, although the policy and decision-makers were well-intended, it was found that the program is not realistic, as was supported by the fact that it was helpful for half of the participants in my sample. But good intentions are not enough to make a program successful, and this study has shown that damaging misconceptions affect the education of immigrant students at the secondary level. As Walqui (2000: 31) has stated “instead of basing our instructional programs on these misconceptions, we need to be guided by a solid understanding of the nature of second language acquisition informed by current research and theory.”

## **5.2. SUITABILITY OF THE PROGRAM FOR IMMIGRANT STUDENTS**

According to the official policy, the “Aulas de Enlace” program was meant for newcomer students with limited or no knowledge of Spanish, and for students with gaps in their academic

background (native Spanish-speakers or otherwise). Data indicate (see [Table 1.3](#)) that these selection criteria have resulted in very diverse “Aulas” with regard to native languages spoken, educational levels, motivation, and plans for the future, to mention just a few.

As was discussed in [chapter 3](#), the main purpose of selecting Romanian, Chinese and Moroccan students as participants in this study was to find out the extent to which the “Aulas de Enlace” program served the needs of the diverse immigrant student population of public high schools in Madrid. Program suitability refers here to the degree to which the “Aulas de Enlace” immigrant education program attains its goals of (1) developing students’ Spanish proficiency level, (2) integrating students into mainstream classes, and (3) reducing the time for the students’ integration. Based on the data analysis carried out in [chapter 4](#) of this study, it can be concluded that the program differentially achieves its goals.

### **5.2.1. Goal 1: Second Language Learning**

Throughout the hours of observation and the data obtained using different instruments specially developed for this study, it was found that the students attained different levels of Spanish proficiency depending on various factors, such as the distance between their L1s and Spanish, their aspirations, the age of arrival, and the role of education in their plans for the future. The different degrees of achievement were shown in the data collected through the various instruments developed for this study. First, the students and teachers’ perceptions of Spanish proficiency, as expressed by them in the questionnaires and interviews, varied according to the student nationality, and it depended on factors such as their L1 and their motivation to learn. Second, the teachers’ assessment of Spanish proficiency instrument showed that they perceived that only 50% of the student sample achieved an adequate level of Spanish that would allow

them succeed in the mainstream. Third, the amount of time that students remain in the “Aula”, and the number and type of mainstream classes that students attend while in the program showed that students in the sample achieved differently. As was discussed in chapter 1 and section 5.1, the learning goal of the “Aulas de Enlace” program is limited to language learning. Nevertheless, according to Short and Boyson (2004) “goals for the program (*referring to any newcomer program*) should include student learning objectives for language (the second language and perhaps the native language) and for content.”

### **5.2.2. Goal 2: Integration**

The integration goal of the program refers to two aspects of the immigrant student experience, i.e., (1) integration into the mainstream classes, and (2) integration as adaptation to the school system. The integration goal is perceived as clearly connected to the first goal, since integration is to be achieved as a consequence of second language learning. With regard to the first meaning, it was already stated that the program achieved different degrees of success depending on the students’ national origins. Thus, students were not mainstreamed until their communication skills in Spanish were sufficiently well developed (as perceived by the “Aulas” teachers) to follow the regular class. As discussed before, this was not the case for some students in the program, who were not incorporated into their regular class until their time in the program was exhausted. Thus, since adaptations to the school system usually take place only on the students’ side, the integration goal was unequally achieved. However, as Coelho (2003: 173) has pointed out “integration involves much more than assigning students a desk in the mainstream classroom. Without careful planned program adaptations and support, failure is likely to be the result.”

With regard to the second aspect of the integration goal, it was found that the three different groups of students in the sample achieved this goal differently. Although this depended very much on how confident students feel speaking Spanish to communicate with their peers, the fact that students did not have sound ways to interact meaningfully in the school played an important role. Although the “Aulas de Enlace” were integrated into the school, most were still peripheral to the school life. Furthermore, there was no or very little use of cooperative learning techniques in both their “Aula” and mainstream classes they attended during the school day. A future research study will investigate whether race and attitudes toward certain immigrant groups also played a part on the integration goal, as well as the fact that students have different socialization patterns, which in many cases are culturally determined.

### **5.2.3. Discussion**

The goals intended for the “Aulas de Enlace” program, i.e., language learning and integration into the mainstream and school at large, were perceived to be achieved in different degrees by only half of the student sample in this study by teachers and administrators. The first question that emerges from this finding is whether a program that serves hardly 50% of the target population may be considered successful. Furthermore, this percentage mostly corresponds to Romanian students, many of whom would have succeeded anyway in the Spanish education system given the characteristics of their L1, their previous schooling, their interest for education and parental support, among others. Therefore, their success was in part due to their own merit, although it was also related to the low standards of the Spanish public education system. Romanian students already had high rates of success in the mainstream before the program was implemented, while the degree of achievement of Chinese and Moroccan students continues to

be problematic. The differential performance of these three groups of immigrant students has resulted in different perceptions of them by the teachers and administrators in the sample. How these perceptions affected policy making is difficult to determine, and it is out of the scope of this study.

Various explanations have been provided to explain the different degrees of students' achievement by teachers and administrators, although all have in common the fact that it is usually the student who is to blame for their success or failure, either because their native language and their culture is different, their schooling in their home country was poor, or because education does not play a decisive role in their immigration plan. As was discussed in section 4.3 of this study, the students' future plans have a strong impact on their learning goals. Based on these assumptions, and on the perception that there is not much that the education system can do to change the students' plans in the six-month period of maximum stay, no adaptations have been made to the official policy or to the way the program has been implemented. This issue raises interesting questions about policy making and implementation, and the degree of commitment of the education authorities to provide every child equal opportunities to succeed. In my opinion, the program has been in operation long enough to show that some changes should be introduced to attend the very diverse needs of the population it serves. With respect to this, the program was labeled "pilot" in the first official policy issued in July 2003, although the term was removed from the latest version of it, implying that the follow-up of the program is not a need anymore and that few more changes, if any, will be introduced in the future.

The main and most important critique that could be made to the "Aulas de Enlace" program is that, while it was implemented to deal with diversity in the schools, the response has

been directed to transform this diversity into homogeneity. Although the official discourse recognizes the benefit that diversity (mainly linguistic, but also cultural) may bring to schools, the way that policy and decision makers have dealt with it is contradictory, since the main goal of the “Aulas de Enlace” program has been the assimilation of the newcomer to make him/her fit in an “ideal” homogeneous school and society. As was discussed in chapter 4, the possibility of providing different types of education to different students was out of the question for policy and decision makers, since they believed that this fact would limit the students’ opportunities in the mainstream. For them, one of the main assets of the “Aulas” program was the provision of equal opportunities for all students, and providing a different type of education would vulnerate this principle. Two main themes emerge from this perception. First, that the idea of equal opportunities has been misinterpreted. Although in order to avoid inequalities in education all students should have access to the same opportunities to succeed in school, this does not necessarily mean that they all have to follow the same paths to attain the same goals. A second theme is the concern of policy and decision makers regarding the risks of segregation, and the social problems that this could bring to the school and society in the near future.

From my point of view, this concern of the department of education for providing the same opportunities for all students to achieve in school was based on political rather than on social grounds. Since education (immigrant education or otherwise) has become one important focus of conflict between the opposite political party in the central and regional governments and the governing political party in the autonomous community of Madrid, the regional education department had to handle immigrant education with care, since it could be easily accused of segregating students. However, immigrant students in the program are segregated *de facto* when they are mainstreamed quickly, and apparently integrated into a class of native Spanish speakers,

where they are taught exclusively in Spanish, but have no access to the ideas being presented and no ways of engaging in the interactions. Thus, this insistence in not segregating students ignores the student diversity and hinders their opportunities for success.

### **5.3. LACK OF SYSTEMATIC PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION**

This section discusses the third claim of the study, i.e., the belief that program planning, design and implementation were casually undertaken. Evidence for this claim drew on document analysis, naturalistic observation of actual practice, and the analysis of interview data from the participating administrators.

#### **5.3.1. Planning and Program Design**

In their study of secondary school newcomer programs in the US, Short and Boyson (2004: 51) considered that “developing a newcomer program needs to be a thoughtful, informed and iterative process.” For the authors, program development involves, among others, conducting research on program design options, reaching out to a variety of stakeholder groups, visiting existing programs, and pulling together all the information into a program design that fits the goals and needs of the students.

A few publications issued by the department of education in the CAM (Reyzábal, 2003; Casanova, 2004) show a deep understanding of some of the main ideas discussed in chapter 2 of this study, such as the distinction between communicative and academic language proficiency and the need for frequent program evaluations that help improve the program. Nevertheless, these ideas have not permeated the program official policy and practice. As discussed in detail

in section 5.1.4 of this chapter, the implementation of the “Aulas de Enlace” program was not guided by, and in many cases contradicted, the available research literature on immigrant minority education and second language acquisition. This fact resulted in misconceptions that affected the policy and decision makers’ perceptions about the time necessary to achieve academic proficiency in Spanish, the role of L1 in the education, the relevance of teaching content, and the most effective teaching methodology for the classroom. The consequence of these misconceptions has been the implementation of a program that fails to provide an equal education for all. According to the teachers’ opinions (as expressed in the “Teacher assessment of students’ Spanish proficiency” instrument), only 50% of the students in the sample were able to achieve the goals of language learning and integration into the education system that the program was intended for.

Apart from the research literature as a source of information for program planning and design, the feedback from experts in the education of immigrant minorities would have proved an extremely helpful tool during the planning phase of the program. The term “experts” include scholars whose research focus on immigrant education (e.g., researchers from CAL, the University of Comillas and the University Antonio de Nebrija in Madrid), but also educators with long experience working with immigrant population in schools where no specific programs for them exist, instructors working for NGOs, and teachers in well-established programs similar to the “Aulas” implemented in other autonomous communities in Spain (e.g. the ATAL program in Andalucía) and different European countries. Thus, those members of the education community whose insights and contributions would have enriched the final program design were neglected from the planning process. Similarly, the “Aulas de Enlace” teachers were not consulted at any time prior to implementation, mainly because they were selected shortly before

the program started in January 2003. Nevertheless, these teachers are still held responsible for program success. Since the program was implemented, the “Aula de Enlace” teachers are required to attend regular meetings (once or twice a month) where they informally share their experiences and exchange information and materials with their colleagues. These meetings are also intended to keep the education authorities updated on the implementation process in each school.

When asked about the selection of this program type, i.e., an “ESL-type” program, the policy and decision makers interviewed were not able to provide solid arguments that justified their choice. Similarly, the official policy, or “Instrucciones”, does not provide any theoretical background that supports the selection of a second language program as the best option for the population it serves. For the policy and decision makers, it was obvious that learning Spanish was the main and only priority for immigrant minority students, and its knowledge was the key to integrate into the Spanish education system successfully. Therefore, the planning and design of the “Aulas de Enlace” was fundamented in the strong belief that students would be able to succeed in school only after they master Spanish. This was the reason why all the administrators interviewed considered that the “Aulas” program was an improvement over the compulsory education programs, since it allowed students to focus on language learning only most of the day. According to them, this would permit students to achieve a sufficient level of Spanish to incorporate into the mainstream in the shortest possible time.

Although the student population in the “Aulas de Enlace” program is subject to frequent changes depending on the migratory flows, by the time that the program was implemented there were sufficient statistical data available regarding the students’ nationalities and their distribution in the Autonomous Community of Madrid. The consultation of these data would have allowed a

rigorous assessment of the students' needs regarding language learning and academic content, as would the pilot study of two to five schools, where frequent classroom observations and surveys were conducted.

### **5.3.2. Implementation**

The lack of systematic planning resulted in a series of shortcomings that affected program implementation and impacted the education of immigrant minority students in different ways. First, concerns such as the challenges of Chinese students with Spanish, the time required to achieve academic proficiency, and the education of students with low academic backgrounds were not anticipated, which did not prevent them from becoming obstacles. Furthermore, these obstacles and concerns have forged the teachers' perceptions regarding what the students actually know and what they are able to achieve in the Spanish education system. As was discussed somewhere else, the impact of these perceptions in practice was difficult to determine in this study, and it will be the topic of a future research project.

The second shortcoming that resulted from the lack of adequate planning was teacher selection. According to Short and Boyson (2004: 70) "recruiting and hiring experienced teaching staff who are trained to address the special needs of new immigrant students" is a guarantee for program success. In the case of the "Aulas de Enlace" program, there was no time for the selection of teachers who complied with these characteristics. Therefore, the first academic year of program implementation teachers were selected from a list of those who had passed the national exam, many of whom lacked the experience required to work with diverse populations. The second and subsequent years of operation the "Aula de Enlace" teachers were selected among those who had showed an interest in teaching in the program and according to

seniority in the public education system. In the sample for this study, the “Aulas de Enlace” teachers who were language specialists were not the majority.

With regard to staff development, teachers were offered a 25-hour course prior to implementation or shortly after the program started in a few cases. This course was evaluated by some of the teachers in the sample as insufficient and not practical. Although the autonomous department of education also received critiques from some education unions which considered the training hasty and inadequate, the policy makers reacted by stating that the course was only intended as a workshop, since the teachers selected for the program already had a wide teaching experience, since they had been in the profession for more than 10 years.

A third limitation of program implementation was a consequence of the lack of proper assessment of students’ academic background prior to their entry to the program, which did not allow teachers to have enough information about the previous knowledge that their students brought to the “Aula de Enlace”. Thus, it is frequently assumed that immigrant minority students have a lower academic background than Spaniards (as was shown in the questionnaire data), although this is not always the case. For instance, many Romanian and Chinese students in my sample agreed that education in Spain is easier than in their home countries.

Finally, the last indicator that pointed to casual planning and design concerns program evaluation. According to Short and Boyson (2004: 69), “it is highly recommended that programs plan a formative evaluation process that examines student language and content development while they are in the program and after they have exited.” No such evaluation was planned for the program and included in the original official policy. Although the policy accounted for evaluation, this only targeted the administrative part of the program, since it evaluated that all the requirements were being met in the implementation process. However, as Short and

Boyson (2004) have observed, the formative evaluation process is an important vehicle for improving a program and verifying that it is meeting its goals and students needs, a reason why a formative evaluation of the program's implementation and the students' progress should be conducted each year.

### **5.3.3. Discussion**

In summary, it was found that the implementation of the "Aulas de Enlace" program was rushed, a fact that did not allow proper planning, design and piloting. The fact that the program was approved and publicized by the regional department of education in November 2002, and then implemented in January 2003, supports this idea. As a consequence, many issues were left to chance when the program first started, such as clear assessment and placement policies, teacher selection, follow-up provision for students, and clear guidelines for an effective program evaluation. Moreover, the main participants in the "Aulas de Enlace" program, that is to say, teachers and students, were neglected from the planning, design, and implementation process, and this process was basically guided by the administrators' opinions and beliefs about what was best for immigrant minority students.

There were three factors that, in my opinion, forced the regional government of the Autonomous Community of Madrid to implement the "Welcome Schools" program, and the "Aulas de Enlace" as its main component. First, there were a growing number of parents who were dismissing their children from public schools with a high number of immigrant minority children, in the assumption that schools with high immigrant enrollment automatically lowered the educational standards. Second, mainstream subject teachers started to show great concern about their lack of resources and specific preparation to attend newcomers' very specific needs.

Provided that newcomer students may enter the mainstream classroom any time during the school year, teachers find themselves unprepared to facilitate their learning and integration processes, and to offer quality teaching to the rest of students at the same time. Finally, with the autonomic or regional election approaching on May, 2003, the autonomous government was urged to show that they were able to respond to parents and teachers' concerns in a rapid and efficient way. Therefore, the implementation of a specific program for immigrant minorities was, theoretically, the best solution to an issue that had created social alarm.

Various education unions raised their voices against the implementation of the "Aulas" program based on the lack of coordination, information and resources that had accompanied program implementation. The critiques were responded by the second responsible of the department of education in the CAM, the "viceconsejero" Juan González Blasco: "this plan has been cooking for quite a long time, since August (referring to August, 2002)" (EL PAÍS, 16 January, 2003).

In my opinion, the implementation of this specific program for immigrant minority students in the CAM was in part a response to a real need, that is to say, the growing number of non-Spanish speakers in the education system, and in part the result of a political manoeuvre to gain votes. In general, the rush with which the program was planned and implemented shows a lack of real commitment to the education of immigrant minorities in Madrid, although as Walqui (2000: 208) has pointed out "a strong commitment to immigrant students' educational success is ultimately the foundation of all successful programs and instruction."

#### 5.4. COMMENDATIONS

This section presents the features that were found to be an asset to the program based on observations and the data collected through the student and teacher surveys. It was observed that some of these commendations produced undesirable outcomes that diminished their relevance and impact on the program.

The first commendation concerns the relationships established between teachers and students. Most of the “Aula de Enlace” teachers were like family to the students in the program, and students relied on them for guidance and support as they made the transition into the mainstream and the Spanish culture. Moreover, students felt valued and the focus of attention of their teachers, something that is not common in the mainstream, where the classes are larger. This fact led the teachers in the sample to show feelings of protectiveness toward students in the program, and a perception that the “Aula de Enlace” offered a comfortable and necessary cocoon from the “real world” of the mainstream classroom. Nevertheless, it was observed that this perception frequently gave place to a patronizing attitude toward the student. It was also observed that the teachers in the “Aulas de Enlace” program were committed to their students and they wished to reach out to children in an effort to make the curriculum in Spanish more accesible. However, some “Aulas” instructors perceived that this commitment was not shared by the mainstream teachers, who often perceived the integration of the program students into their classes as problematic. In general, it was observed that students valued the program and their teachers very positively, as this was confirmed throughout the questionnaire and interview responses.

Second, the fact that the students are integrated into the school system, and attend some classes in the mainstream was considered to be one of the most valuable features of the program

by all stakeholders. Moreover, the “Aulas de Enlace” timetable was designed to provide the best opportunities for integration, with the minimum disruption and the maximum continuity, and students could interact with their peers and become familiar with their grade-level curriculum. In addition, the mainstream classroom offered the students opportunities for language acquisition and social interaction.

The low teacher turnover rate could also be perceived as a measure of program success. In this respect, the teachers in the sample were highly motivated, perceived the program as a challenging experience for them, and showed great personal interest in working with this student population. Nevertheless, a different pattern emerged from the interviews, where it was found that many teachers had volunteered to teach in the program as a way of changing the mainstream classroom for a class that was smaller in size, where students were motivated, and where they could feel that their work was being valued.

Finally, a fourth commendation concerned the resources available for the program. Both the human (two teachers per “Aula”) and the material resources were considered one of the main assets to the program. The material resources consisted of field trips (free of charge), materials for the field trips, technological and technical resources, conversation guides in the students’ native languages, and all the textbooks that teachers requested for their classes. However, two drawbacks to this commendation were observed. First, many teachers were not sufficiently prepared to make the most of the technical resources available to them. Second, although the field trips were intended to favor interaction between program and mainstream students, it was observed that only the program students attended these trips most of the times.

## **5.5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

This section provides a short list of recommendations for program implementation and for practice based on what I observed during fieldwork, and on the experiences and perceptions of the participants in the program, as expressed by them in the interviews and questionnaires. These recommendations aim at what is feasible, given the context and the situation of the education system in Madrid, rather than at what would be the ideal, and are meant to be shared with those participants who are capable of introducing changes and modifications to the program, i.e., teachers and administrators. Nevertheless, education has been the battleground for the fights of the two major political parties at the national and regional levels in the last decade, and the continuity of the “Aulas de Enlace” program depends on the results of the regional election to be held in the CAM in March 2007.

### **5.5.1. Program Implementation**

The first recommendation concerns the role of the “Aula de Enlace” teachers. Instructors responsible for the education of immigrant student minorities need to participate in the design and implementation of new programs and approaches for this school population in Madrid. Feedback should be collected from teachers and students, so that the top-down policy making process could be turned into a bottom-up system, in which teachers and students’ opinions were really considered to make the program more effective. This would allow policy and decision makers to make informed decisions on policy and implementation issues that have a real impact on practice.

Second, teacher selection should be based on factors other than seniority and willingness to participate in the “Aulas” program. Although this may be difficult to achieve given the structure of the public education system in the CAM, it is highly desirable that the teachers’ background include an understanding of second language acquisition principles, cross-cultural awareness, sheltered content instruction, and literacy development (Short and Boyson, 2004: 70). Moreover, according to them, “It should be district policy to hire only experienced and qualified teachers for the newcomer programs.” (p. 150) Some voices have raised in the Spanish context regarding this issue in the last years. Thus, as Valladares (2005: 25) has pointed out: “El profesorado que se encargue de estas aulas debería contar con una formación previa en dos aspectos: sobre la adquisición de segundas lenguas y sobre la metodología ... porque muchas veces se trasladan a estas aulas esquemas que no son válidos” (The instructors in charge of these classes should be specialists in second language acquisition and methods, because very often teachers tend to transfer practices that are not valid to this classes). This recommendation is supported by data analysis in chapter 4, where language teachers were found to be more inclined to implementing different instructional practices, favouring interaction, providing corrective feedback and developing materials.

Third, assessment of program implementation should be carried out to gather evidence of success (e.g., analyzing student test scores, dropout rate, and attendance) and to identify areas of improvement. The policy should include the way to conduct an effective formative evaluation during the academic year, and a summative evaluation at the end of each year. As Short and Boyson (2004: 73) have stated, “all successful newcomer programs grow and evolve over time and the formative evaluation process is an important vehicle for improving a program and verifying that it is meeting its goals and students’ needs”.

Fourth, more monitoring and support of the students who had made the transition into the mainstream or compensatory education program should be encouraged. Again, this is a recommendation that many teachers that I interviewed or talked to during field work considered important. Some referred to it as the “post-Aula stage”.

Finally, professional development is necessary for all educators, and not only for the “Aulas de Enlace” teachers. Thus, professional development should be implemented for teachers of immigrant students working in various circumstances, and for teachers who work with linguistically and culturally heterogeneous populations (e.g. bilingual education theory and practice).

### **5.5.2. Practice**

The first recommendation regarding practice concerns assessment. Assessment measures should be identified to evaluate student growth in language and content knowledge. If one of the main goals of the “Aulas de Enlace” program is to attain Spanish proficiency, students’ progress should be reviewed regularly. Second, there should be a balance between oral and written skills in the classroom practice, since writing skills are a requirement for academic work. It was observed that teachers in the “Aulas de Enlace” often focused on the most basic oral Spanish and reading comprehension skills, which presented students with undemanding tasks that did not promote academic language learning. Third, teachers should develop their own materials whenever this is possible, since this allows real adaptations to adjust them to the specific needs of each group of students. Moreover, materials must be age appropriate, since students may get bored and not motivated by commercially prepared materials for primary school education. Fourth, sheltered techniques to provide subject-matter content in the most effective way for

students should be implemented. This does not mean a “watered down” curriculum, but the real adaptation of the content in ways that it is made comprehensible to students. Students would benefit from the use of cooperative learning techniques to learn through interaction. Finally, the program should promote more opportunities for meaningful interaction between the newcomers and fluent speakers of Spanish. This was one of the most repeated request for program improvement of the three groups of students across the questionnaires.

## **5.6. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS**

Research is needed in several areas to better inform the implementation of effective programs for immigrant minority students at the secondary school level in Spain. Further research studies will attempt to answer the following four overarching questions:

(1) How can education foster excellence in multilingual teaching and learning environments? As this study has shown, the “one-size-fits-all” approach is not a valid way to approach the education of immigrant minority students. Therefore, we need to know more about the many different ways in which schools can be effective for Spanish language learners. With respect to this, ethnographic case studies of minority students acquiring Spanish in secondary education and entering mainstream high school contexts could explicate the various daily life experiences that affect their language learning. Various questions might be addressed in such studies. First, when a student is ready to receive unmodified instruction in the mainstream, a question particularly relevant to the “Aulas de Enlace” program, given the differential performance of groups from different nationalities. Second, what the instructional practices that promote the kind of academic language learning that students need for school success are. Finally, how the

effect of the distance between the L1s and Spanish could be minimized in the classroom practice. At the student level, there is a need for more longitudinal research that tracks the students' development of academic achievement over time. Moreover, research is needed to find out about the long-term effects of the "Aulas de Enlace" program, as well as its sustainability over time.

(2) How can assessment of Spanish language learners be carried out in such multilingual environments? More research is also needed in instruction and assessment to learn more about what teachers need to know to work effectively in the "Aulas de Enlace".

(3) How could professional development arrangements be made that best serve teachers goal accomplishment in the "Aulas de Enlace" program?

(4) What is the impact of the teachers' perceptions of the different performance of the groups in the program on practice? Is there such a thing as the perception of the "Chinese learner" in the Spanish context? If so, how does it affect the daily experiences of teachers and students in the program? How are the expectations on the different groups of students related to race in the Spanish context?

## **5.7. PERSONAL REACTION**

The purpose of this section was to provide a reflection about what I learnt from this fieldwork experience as a new researcher. I found that fieldwork can be extremely challenging, especially when great amounts of data are collected using different research methods, from a variety of participants, and at many different sites. An important lesson that I learned from this experience

was that it is better to “think small” and reduce the scope of a study project in the early stages so that it is manageable regarding the amount of data to be collected and analyzed.

My research experience became a continuous decision-making process, and I had to adapt myself to the new conditions and the difficulties encountered during the data collection phase of the study. I learned that even the best-planned project is always liable to be changed and modified depending on the circumstances, especially when human subjects are involved. Nevertheless, I found that having a detailed plan, as described in chapter 3, and potent instruments, were two decisive factors that helped me keep focused on the purpose of data collection and analysis.

The human dimension of doing research in schools is also an important factor that needs to be carefully addressed before engaging in fieldwork. In my study, this aspect provided me both the best and the worst moments of the research experience. One of the most positive aspects of fieldwork was the daily contact with teachers and students in the actual classrooms, where I had the opportunity to share their experiences, their worries and their accomplishments. I felt welcomed by teachers and principals in most of the schools I visited, and I soon I realized that many teachers were willing to share their experiences in the program with me after a little talk about the project. In addition, the visits to a great number of schools allowed me to see the program in all its diversity, which resulted in a deeper and better understanding of how it was implemented. During my time in the field I was able to share materials that I had seen being used successfully in other “Aulas”, so that they could be useful for everyone. Finally, I learned that three of the keys for success in doing fieldwork are perseverance, momentum and excellent personal communication skills.

With regard to the negative aspects of fieldwork, the most difficult issue to deal with was the little interest and support that I received from the administration. They had the power, and did use it, to interrupt my work in different ways, e.g. informing teachers that they did not support my entrance in schools, which caused many of these teachers to politely turn down their participation in my study. Moreover, I observed that sometimes I was perceived as an intruder, and some teachers feared that I could criticize their work. However, these feelings usually disappeared once I clarified the purpose of the study and what was expected from them, and after my first visits to the sites where observation was conducted.

A final remark about doing research is concerned with the researchers' dilemma when faced with reporting findings that will not praise the researched. With respect to this, I tried to be the most objective possible in reporting my claims, and I attempted to avoid bias by supporting these claims with data collected during fieldwork.

**APPENDIX A**

**LETTERS TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**



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20 febrero, 2004

Estimado/a Director/a del IES / CC \_\_\_\_\_

Mi nombre es María Dolores Inglés y soy estudiante de doctorado en el departamento de Español de la Universidad de Pittsburgh, PA (EEUU). En estos momentos estoy trabajando en mi proyecto de tesis, titulada provisionalmente “‘Aulas de Enlace’: A Study of the Pilot Implementation of a Newcomer Program in Madrid” (*‘Aulas de Enlace’: Estudio de la Implantación de un Programa Educativo para Estudiantes Extranjeros en la CAM*).

El motivo de esta carta es el de solicitarle su colaboración en este estudio, cuyos objetivos son básicamente dos: (1) ofrecer una completa descripción del funcionamiento de las ‘Aulas’ desde diferentes perspectivas, es decir, la de alumnos, profesores, directores, autoridades educativas y creadores del proyecto; (2) indagar en cómo este programa puede servir de base para futuros proyectos educativos destinados al mismo colectivo al que las ‘Aulas’ atienden. .

Mi trabajo está interesado en especialmente en alumnos chinos y rumanos que participan o han participado en el programa de ‘Aulas de Enlace’ en el nivel de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria. El estudio se llevará a cabo durante 9 semanas desde el día 18 de abril hasta el día 18 de junio de 2004.

Los métodos de investigación que se emplearán en el estudio son los siguientes:

(1) cuestionarios a alumnos de las ‘Aulas’ este curso académico y a los profesores de las mismas sobre sus experiencias en el programa. La duración máxima será de 20 minutos. Este instrumento pretende recoger datos de los estudiantes de IES y CC de la Comunidad de Madrid. Los cuestionarios estarán escritos en su lengua materna;

- (2) entrevistas a un número reducido de profesores, directores y miembros del Servicio de Orientación Educativa con el fin de corroborar los datos obtenidos mediante cuestionarios;
- (3) observación no participante/pasiva en el aula y en el centro durante un periodo aproximado de cuatro semanas (sólo se hará observación en dos centros previamente seleccionados);
- (4) notas;
- (5) análisis de distintos documentos públicos relacionados con la ‘Aulas’ y los estudiantes que a ellas asisten.

Con esta carta desearía solicitar su ayuda en el proyecto, bien facilitándome el acceso a su centro para realizar las entrevistas y los cuestionarios, bien para servir como uno de los centros donde llevar a cabo la observación intensiva durante un periodo de cuatro semanas. Un punto que debe quedar absolutamente claro es que la participación en este estudio será del todo anónima, sin que en ningún momento se mencione el nombre del centro, de los profesores o de los alumnos participantes, a lo que me comprometo mediante la firma de esta carta o de cualquier otro documento que ustedes consideren oportuno.

Les agradecería mucho su respuesta por escrito (a la dirección indicada en el encabezamiento de esta carta o por correo electrónico a la dirección bajo mi firma) El permiso de entrada al centro es un requisito imprescindible para comenzar el proyecto, tanto de la Universidad como de los profesores que forman mi comité de tesis. No obstante, mi intención es ponerme en contacto con ustedes telefónicamente en breve.

Espero poder saludarles pronto en persona. Muchísimas gracias por su atención a esta carta y por su futura colaboración en este importante proyecto. Si lo desearán pueden contactar con mi director de tesis, Prof. Richard Donato, en la siguiente dirección de correo electrónico: [donato+@pitt.edu](mailto:donato+@pitt.edu). Él estará encantado de responder a cualquier pregunta que pudiera surgirles.

Gracias de nuevo por su atención a esta carta. Reciban un saludo muy cordial,

María Dolores Inglés López  
[mdist6@hotmail.com](mailto:mdist6@hotmail.com)

**APPENDIX B**

**INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS**



# University of Pittsburgh

*Faculty of Arts and Sciences*  
*Department of Hispanic Languages and Literatures*

1309 Cathedral of Learning  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260  
412-624-5225  
Fax: 412-624-8505

Dear parent/guardian:

My name is María Dolores Inglés, and I am a doctoral student in the department of Hispanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Pittsburgh, PA. I would like your child / protégé to take part in a research study on the implementation of the "Aulas de Enlace" program in high schools in Madrid.

The main objective of this study is to describe the program from the perspectives of all participants (students, teachers, administrators and policy and decision-makers). For that reason, I will administer questionnaires, conduct interviews, analyze documents, and observe some classes, in order to provide a complete picture of the participants' experiences in the program and the meanings attached to them.

If you agree that your child / protégé may participate in the research, he/she will complete the attached questionnaire (with your help) about his/her first language, Spanish, the 'Aula de Enlace', his/her future plans and his/her opinions about your role (as parent or guardian) in his/her education. The questionnaire will take 25 to 30 minutes to complete, and it will be administered in the language they feel most comfortable, either the student's first language or Spanish. It will be returned to your child / protégé's 'Aula de Enlace' teacher after completion.

The last question in the questionnaire will ask your child / protégé to volunteer for a follow-up interview. If you agree that your child / protégé may be interviewed, I will meet with him/her at their high school during the lunch hour, a break, or at another place and time that we agree on. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes, and it will be conducted in the language they feel most comfortable, either the student's first language or Spanish. The interview will cover similar topics as the ones covered in the questionnaire, and I will ask your child / protégé about his/her learning experiences in the 'Aulas de Enlace'. Our interview will be audio-taped to be later transcribed verbatim for analysis purposes.

Your child / protégé's school may be selected as an observation site for this research study. If this is the case I will observe the functioning of the 'Aula de Enlace' for a maximum period of time of four weeks. During this time I will take notes of what happens in the classroom.

I will protect your child / protégé's privacy in every way I can. He / she won't have to write his/her name on the questionnaires, and it will not appear in the transcripts based on our conversations or it will be substituted by an invented name. The student's name will remain anonymous during the observation, and it will be substituted by an invented name or a symbol to designate it for analysis purposes. I will not let other people listen to the tapes or read the questionnaires, transcripts and notes taken during the observations. Furthermore, I, and the person serving as interpreter, will not tell your child / protégé's friends, teachers or family members what he/she said during our conversations.

Your child / protégé's participation in this study is voluntary, and he/she may withdraw from this project at any time. You may refuse them to take part in it. Whether or not your child / protégé participate will have no effect on his/her standing at his/her school. There are not foreseeable risks associated with this project and your child / protégé will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study. However, the findings will help the educational authorities and decision-makers improve the quality of education for non-Spanish-speaking newcomers in high schools in Madrid.

If you have any questions about the research, you may contact me, **María Dolores Inglés**, at **653105745**. If you agree that your child / protégé may take part of this research, please return a signed copy of this form to the "Aula de Enlace" teacher, together with the completed questionnaire attached. You should keep one copy of this consent form for your records.

Your signature below indicates that you give permission for your child / protégé to participate in the research study.

"I give permission for my child / protégé to take part in this research study".

Student Name and Signature

Date

---

Parent/Guadian Name and Signature

Date

---

**APPENDIX C**

**SCHOOL INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

Dear parent / guardian:

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am  
\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ High School. On

behalf of this school, I would like to introduce you to María Dolores Inglés, a doctoral student at the University of Pittsburgh, USA. At the moment, she is working on her dissertation about the “Aulas de Enlace” program, in which your child / protégé participates. She has asked for the participation of this school in the project, and we have granted her this participation.

María Dolores’ study will be very helpful for us, as educators, and for the educational authorities, since it will allow us to broaden our knowledge of the implementation process of the “Aulas de Enlace” program. Her work will also present us with an objective assessment of this program, which will favor a more informed decision-making process, and will in turn benefit your child / protégé’s education.

Please do not hesitate to contact this school or the principal investigator (María Dolores Inglés) in case you need further information about the project.

Sincerely yours,

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

**APPENDIX D**

**STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

Please take some time to answer these questions about your 'Aula de Enlace'.  
This is NOT a test and there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers.  
You DON'T even have to write your name.  
Please give your answers sincerely. Your personal opinion is VERY important  
for this study.

Many thanks for your help!

## I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. I was born in \_\_\_\_\_ (CITY/VILLAGE and COUNTRY)
2. I am
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ a girl
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ a boy
3. I am
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ 12
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ 13
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ 14
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ 15
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_ 16 years old
  - f. \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please specify)
4. My class is:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ 1º de ESO
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ 2º de ESO
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ 3º de ESO
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ 4º de ESO
5. The language I speak at home is \_\_\_\_\_
6. I can also speak \_\_\_\_\_
7. My last school year in China was \_\_\_\_\_
8. I have lived in Spain for
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ 0-1 months
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ 2-3 months
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ 4-5 months
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ 6-7 months
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_ 8-9 months
  - f. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
9. Before living in Madrid I lived in \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ months / years
10. My family plans on staying in Spain until \_\_\_\_\_
11. I have attended this school for \_\_\_\_\_ months now
12. I have attended this 'Aula de Enlace' for \_\_\_\_\_ months now

## II. YOUR FIRST LANGUAGE

13. I **understand** Chinese on TV and when spoken to me by my family and my Chinese friends
  - a. Not at all
  - b. Not well
  - c. Well
  - d. Very Well
14. I can **speak** Chinese to my family and my Chinese peers in school and my neighborhood
  - a. I can't speak at all
  - b. Not well
  - c. Well
  - d. Very Well
15. I can **read** books, newspapers/comics and letters sent to me by family and friends in Chinese
  - a. I can't read at all
  - b. Not well
  - c. Well
  - d. Very Well

16. I can **write** Chinese to respond to letters, to write my diary, and to write stories
- a. I can't write at all      b. Not well      c. Well      d. Very Well
17. Continue learning Chinese is important to me:
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ **YES**      b. \_\_\_\_\_ **NO**
18. (If you answered **YES** to question #17). Continue learning Chinese is important because (**select all that apply**)
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ my parents don't speak Spanish  
 b. \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to go back to China some day  
 c. \_\_\_\_\_ I have to communicate with my family in China  
 d. \_\_\_\_\_ it's an important part of my identity  
 e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
19. I attend Chinese classes after school
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ Yes  
 b. \_\_\_\_\_ No, but I would like to  
 c. \_\_\_\_\_ No, I don't think I need it  
 d. \_\_\_\_\_ No  
 e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
20. I usually (**please select all that apply**)
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ watch TV/movies in Chinese  
 b. \_\_\_\_\_ read Chinese books/comics and newspapers in Chinese  
 c. \_\_\_\_\_ listen to Chinese music  
 d. \_\_\_\_\_ write letters, send e-mail or chat in Chinese  
 e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
21. I usually speak Chinese:
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 hours per day  
 b. \_\_\_\_\_ 3-4 hours per day  
 c. \_\_\_\_\_ 5-6 hours per day  
 d. \_\_\_\_\_ more than 6 hours per day  
 e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
22. If I had the choice, I would prefer that:
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ my school teaches me only Spanish  
 b. \_\_\_\_\_ my school teaches me Spanish but encourages me to keep Chinese  
 c. \_\_\_\_\_ my school teaches me Spanish and I learn Chinese at home  
 d. \_\_\_\_\_ my school teaches me both Spanish and Chinese  
 e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
23. It would be very helpful if my teachers could speak Chinese
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly agree  
 b. \_\_\_\_\_ I agree  
 c. \_\_\_\_\_ I disagree  
 d. \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly disagree
24. In my opinion, the **THREE** words that best describe Chinese people are:
-

### III. YOUR SECOND LANGUAGE (SPANISH)

25. I **understand** Spanish when spoken to me by my teachers and peers, and on TV
- a. Not at all                      b. Not well                      c. Well                      d. Very Well
26. I can **speak** Spanish to my teachers, my peers in school, and to people in the street and my neighborhood
- a. I can't speak at all                      b. Not well                      c. Well                      d. Very Well
27. I can **read** my Spanish textbook, newspapers, magazines, and the materials my teacher brings to class
- a. I can't read at all                      b. Not well                      c. Well                      d. Very Well
28. I can **write** in Spanish to do my assignments for school, to respond to letters, and to write stories
- a. I can't write at all                      b. Not well                      c. Well                      d. Very Well
29. Antes de llegar a España sabía hablar español:
- a. Not at all                      b. Not well                      c. Well                      d. Very Well
30. I think that learning Spanish is
- a. Very difficult                      b. Difficult                      c. Easy                      d. Very easy
31. Learning Spanish is important to me:
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ **YES**                      b. \_\_\_\_\_ **NO**
32. (IF you answered **YES** to question # 31)  
Learning Spanish is important
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ to do well in school and to obtain my high school diploma
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ to make friends in school
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ to get a good job after school
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ to help my parents
- e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
33. I attend Spanish classes outside school
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ Yes
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ No, but I would like to
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ No, I don't think I need it
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ No
- e. Otro (por favor, especifica) \_\_\_\_\_
34. I usually (**please select all that apply**)
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ watch TV/movies in Spanish
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ read books in Spanish
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ listen to Spanish music
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ write a journal, letters or other documents in Spanish
- e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

35. I usually speak Spanish (**outside my 'Aula de Enlace'**)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 hours per day
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 3-4 hours per day
  - \_\_\_\_\_ 5-6 hours per day
  - \_\_\_\_\_ more than 6 hours per day
  - Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
36. If I had the choice I would prefer to (**please select all that apply**)
- \_\_\_\_\_ only learn how to speak Spanish
  - \_\_\_\_\_ only learn how to write Spanish
  - \_\_\_\_\_ only learn how to read Spanish
  - \_\_\_\_\_ only learn how to understand Spanish
37. If I could speak Spanish as a native speaker
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would have more friends in school
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I would learn more in regular classes
  - \_\_\_\_\_ my parents would feel very proud of me
  - \_\_\_\_\_ my teacher would think I am smarter
  - Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
38. My best friends in school are
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chinese
  - \_\_\_\_\_ mostly Chinese and other nationalities, but not Spanish
  - \_\_\_\_\_ some Chinese, some Spanish, and other nationalities
  - \_\_\_\_\_ mostly Spanish, and a few Chinese
  - Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
39. Most Spaniards are nice people
- \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I disagree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly disagree
40. In my opinion, the **THREE** words that best describe Spaniards are:
- 

#### IV. YOUR 'AULA DE ENLACE'

41. I'm taking this class because
- \_\_\_\_\_ the "Comisión de Escolarización" recommended it to my parents
  - \_\_\_\_\_ my parents think it is a good idea to attend this class
  - \_\_\_\_\_ my teachers think it is a good idea to attend this class
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I think it's a good idea to learn Spanish before entering my ESO class
  - Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
42. If I had the choice I would
- \_\_\_\_\_ quit school altogether
  - \_\_\_\_\_ attend my regular class rather than the 'Aula de Enlace'
  - \_\_\_\_\_ attend my 'Aula de Enlace' for 6 months, and then go to regular classes
  - \_\_\_\_\_ remain in the 'Aula' after the six-month period allowed
  - Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

43. The main goal of the 'Aula de Enlace' is **(please select all that apply)**
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ to teach me Spanish the fastest way possible
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ to teach me Spanish and other subjects before entering my ESO class
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ to make me adapt to my new school as soon as possible
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ to make things easier for us as foreigners
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
44. My 'Aula de Enlace' class is helping me **(please select all that apply)**
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ learn how to write in Spanish
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ learn how to speak Spanish
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ learn how to read Spanish
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ understand Spanish better
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
45. When I exit the 'Aula de Enlace' I would like to **(please select all that apply)**
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ be able to understand my teacher in my regular classes
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ be able to read my Spanish textbook without any help
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ be able to do my Spanish assignments without any help and mistakes
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ be able to speak Spanish with any of my peers
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
46. Right now
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to stay in my 'Aula de Enlace' until the end of this academic year
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to stay in my 'Aula de Enlace' only as long as I need it
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to attend more regular classes, but not all
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ I can't wait to incorporate into the regular class
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
47. I think I'm ready to incorporate into my regular class
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly agree
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ I agree
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ I disagree
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly disagree
48. When I incorporate into my regular class
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ I'll be able to participate in all the class activities
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ I'll be able to participate actively after a period of adaptation
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ I'll need my peers and teachers' help
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ I won't be able to participate at all
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
49. My 'Aula de Enlace' teachers make every effort to make me learn Spanish
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly agree
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ I agree
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ I disagree
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly disagree

50. My 'Aula de Enlace' teachers make every effort to make us participate in all the activities they bring to class
- \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I disagree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly disagree
51. The materials that my teachers bring to school are helping me learn Spanish
- \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I disagree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly disagree
52. I prefer to be in my 'Aula de Enlace' with other foreign students than in my regular class
- \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I disagree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly disagree
53. My 'Aula de Enlace' and my regular class teachers think I have the same capabilities than Spanish students to learn
- \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I disagree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly disagree
54. School is more difficult in Spain than in China
- \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I disagree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly disagree
55. In my opinion, the **THREE** words that best describe my 'Aula de Enlace' are:
- 

## V. YOUR FUTURE PLANS

56. I would like to go back to live in China some day
- \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I agree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I disagree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly disagree
57. When I finish compulsory education (ESO)
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will quit school and start working
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I will continue school and will go to college
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I will continue school and will go to 'Formación Profesional'
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I will go back to China
  - Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 
58. I would like to be a (*profession*) \_\_\_\_\_ when I grow up
59. I will be a (*profession*) \_\_\_\_\_ when I grow up

60. When I finish the ESO (compulsory education)
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ I will continue attending Spanish classes
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ I will try to learn without classes
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ I will practice my Spanish in conversation as much as I can
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ I will stop learning Spanish
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

61. I think that school will help me achieve my future goals

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly agree
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ I agree
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ I disagree
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly disagree

62. I think that learning Spanish will help me achieve my future goals

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly agree
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ I agree
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ I disagree
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly disagree

## VI. YOUR PARENTS

63. My father's job is \_\_\_\_\_

My mother's job is \_\_\_\_\_

64. My father's highest level of education is \_\_\_\_\_

My mother's highest level of education is \_\_\_\_\_

65. My father's Spanish proficiency level is

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair

66. My mother's oral proficiency in Spanish is

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair

67. My parents help me with schoolwork

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ every night
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes, whenever they have free time
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ very rarely
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ never
- e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

68. My parents participate in all the events organized by my school, and attend meetings

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ always
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ often
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes, whenever they have free time
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ never, or only when it is really necessary

69. When I finish the compulsory education (ESO), my parents would like me to

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ quit school and find a job
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ continue my education and go to college
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ continue my education and go to professional training
- d. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

1. The **THREE** activities that help me the most to learn Spanish in my 'Aula de Enlace' are:

2. These activities help me learn because:

3. The **THREE** activities that I don't think help me learn Spanish in my 'Aula de Enlace' are:

4. These activities don't help me learn because:

5. The **THREE** activities that I would like to do in my 'Aula de Enlace' that I don't do now are:

6. The **THREE** activities that I enjoy doing with my regular class peers outside the 'Aula de Enlace' are:

7. The **THREE** things that I like the most about my 'Aula de Enlace' are:

8. The **THREE** things that I don't like about my 'Aula de Enlace' are:

9. The **THREE** things that I like the most about my 'Aula de Enlace' teachers are:

10. The **THREE** things that I don't like about my 'Aula de Enlace' teachers are:

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP!**

**Will you be willing to participate in a follow-up interview?**

**YES** \_\_\_\_\_ Please provide a contact phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

**NO** \_\_\_\_\_

- NOTE:**
1. The interview will be conducted in Chinese (or the language you prefer)
  2. A native speaker of Chinese will serve as interpreter
  3. The interview will be tape-recorded
  4. It will take 30 to 40 minutes to complete
  5. It will take place at your school during the lunch break, or any other time and place that is convenient for you

**RESEARCHER'S CONTACT PHONE NUMBER:**

653105745 (María Dolores Inglés)

## **APPENDIX E**

### **INTRODUCTORY SCRIPT FOR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS**



# University of Pittsburgh

*Faculty of Arts and Sciences*  
*Department of Hispanic Languages and Literatures*

1309 Cathedral of Learning  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15260  
412-624-5225  
Fax: 412-624-8505

My name is María Dolores Inglés, and I am a doctoral student in the department of Hispanic Languages and Literatures at the University of Pittsburgh, PA. At the moment I am working on my dissertation, entitled *“Aulas de Enlace’: A Study of the Implementation of a Pilot Compensatory Education Program for Newcomer Students in Madrid “*.

With this letter I will like to inform you of the goals of the study, and to ask for your participation in the project. This research study wants to describe the implementation of the “Aulas de Enlace” program from the perspectives of all participants in it, i.e., students, teachers, administrators and policy and decision-makers. Its main objective is to provide a complete picture of their experiences in the program, and the meanings attached to those experiences. I will administer questionnaires, conduct interviews, analyze documents, and observe some classes to investigate the program’s worth to the different stakeholders. The study is particularly interested in Chinese, Romanian and Moroccan students who participate, or have ever participated, in the ‘Aulas de Enlace’ program at the compulsory level of education, known as ESO (Educación Secundaria Obligatoria), in Madrid. It will start in October, 2004, and it will last 20 weeks approximately.

Your participation in this research study will consist of a semi-structured interview, which will take approximately 45 minutes to complete. The interview will ask your opinion and feelings about the “Aulas de Enlace” program and its participants, and it will be tape-recorded and transcribed for analysis purposes. A copy of this transcription will be made available to you. Your participation is voluntary and anonymous, and you are free to refuse to take part in it. Furthermore, you may withdraw from this project at any time. I will grant confidentiality in every way I can, and the name of the participating schools, teachers and students will not be disclosed at any time in the questionnaires, the interview transcriptions or the notes taken during the observational period. Names could be substituted by fictitious or false names, or symbols for analysis purposes.

There are not foreseeable risks associated with this project. You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this study. However, the findings may help the educational authorities and decision-makers improve the quality of education for non-Spanish-speaking newcomers in high schools in Madrid.

If you have further questions about this research study, please do not hesitate to contact me at **653105745 (María Dolores Inglés)**.

**APPENDIX F**

**TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE**

Please take some time to answer these questions about you and your 'Aula de Enlace'.  
This questionnaire is ANONYMOUS, so you don't have to write your name on it.  
Please give your answers sincerely, since your personal opinion is VERY important for this study.

Many thanks for your help!

## I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. What district is your school located? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How old are you?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ under 30
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ 31-40
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ 41-50
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ over 51
3. Gender:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ Female
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ Male
4. What's the highest degree you earned?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ 'Diplomatura'
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ BA
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ MA
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ Ph.D
5. Other studies (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What languages do you speak? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Years of teaching experience:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ 0-4
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ 5-9
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ 10-14
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ 15-19
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_ over 20
8. Years of experience teaching Spanish to immigrant minority students:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ 0-4
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ 5-9
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ 10-14
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ 15-19
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_ over 20
9. What's your area of specialization? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Please describe the specific training you received before starting teaching in your the 'Aulas'  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. Please describe the specific training you are receiving now or have received along the academic year  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. How long have you taught in the 'Aulas de Enlace' program? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Do you plan to continue in the program? a. \_\_\_\_\_ **YES** b. \_\_\_\_\_ **NO**

## II. FIRST LANGUAGE INFORMATION

14. Students' first language represents their main obstacle to learn Spanish
- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |
15. **Chinese** students' first language represents a major challenge to learn Spanish
- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |
16. **Romanian** students' first language represents a major challenge to learn Spanish
- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |
17. **Moroccan** students' first language represents a major challenge to learn Spanish
- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |
18. Students should continue developing their first language skills while in Spain
- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |
19. Continue learning their first language is important for the Chinese, Romanian and Moroccan students in your 'Aula'
- |                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| a. _____ <b>YES</b> | b. _____ <b>NO</b> |
|---------------------|--------------------|
20. (If you answered **YES** to question # 19)  
Knowing Chinese, Romanian or Arabic well is important for these students because
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ their parents don't speak Spanish
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ some students will go back to their countries of origin some day
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ they need to communicate with their families in their countries of origin
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ their first language is an important part of students' identity
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
21. The use of students' first languages
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ hinders the learning of Spanish and should be prohibited in the 'Aula de Enlace'
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ slows down the learning of Spanish, although its use could be allowed occasionally
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ helps the Spanish learning process and it should be supported whenever it happens
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ it is necessary for in language learning and it should be encouraged in the 'Aula'
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
22. In your opinion, school should
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ teach only Spanish
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ teach Spanish and support the maintenance of students' L1
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ teach Spanish and students continue learning L1 at home
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ teach both Spanish and the students' L1
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
23. It would be very helpful if the 'Aula de Enlace' teachers could speak the students' native language
- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |

24. The **THREE** words that best describe your **CHINESE** students are:

---

25. The **THREE** words that best describe your **ROMANIAN** students are:

---

26. The **THREE** words that best describe your **MOROCCAN** students are:

---

### III. SECOND LANGUAGE INFORMATION (SPANISH)

27. Your **CHINESE** students **understand** Spanish when spoken to them by their teachers, peers and on TV.
- a. They do not understand      b. Not well      c. Well      d. Very Well
28. Your **ROMANIAN** students **understand** Spanish when spoken to them by their teachers, peers and on TV.
- a. They do not understand      b. Not well      c. Well      d. Very Well
29. Your **MOROCCAN** students **understand** Spanish when spoken to them by their teachers, peers and on TV.
- a. They do not understand      b. Not well      c. Well      d. Very Well
30. Your **CHINESE** students can **speak** Spanish to teachers, classmates and people in the street.
- a. They can't speak at all      b. Not well      c. Well      d. Very Well
31. Your **ROMANIAN** students can **speak** Spanish to teachers, classmates and people in the street.
- a. They can't speak at all      b. Not well      c. Well      d. Very Well
32. Your **MOROCCAN** students can **speak** Spanish to teachers, classmates and people in the street.
- a. They can't speak at all      b. Not well      c. Well      d. Very Well
33. Your **CHINESE** students can **read** their Spanish textbook, the activities that you take to class, and any type of text they may find in their daily lives.
- a. They can't speak at all      b. Not well      c. Well      d. Very Well
34. Your **ROMANIAN** can **read** their Spanish textbook, the activities that you take to class, and any type of text they may find in their daily lives.
- a. They can't speak at all      b. Not well      c. Well      d. Very Well
35. Your **MOROCCAN** students can **read** their Spanish textbook, the activities that you take to class, and any type of text they may find in their daily lives.
- a. They can't speak at all      b. Not well      c. Well      d. Very Well
36. Your **CHINESE** students can **write** in Spanish to do their homework, answer letters, and tell stories.
- a. They can't speak at all      b. Not well      c. Well      d. Very Well
37. Your **ROMANIAN** students can **write** in Spanish to do their homework, answer letters, and tell stories.
- a. They can't speak at all      b. Not well      c. Well      d. Very Well
38. Your **MOROCCAN** students can **write** in Spanish to do their homework, answer letters, and tell stories.
- a. They can't speak at all      b. Not well      c. Well      d. Very Well



49. The main goal of the 'Aula de Enlace' is (please select all that apply)
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ to make students learn Spanish the fastest way possible
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ to make students learn Spanish and other subjects before entering their ESO class
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ to make students adapt to their new school the fastest way possible
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ to make things easier for them as foreigners
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
50. The maximum period allowed in the 'Aula de Enlace' is enough to achieve this/these goal/s
- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |
51. Your 'Aula de Enlace' is helping your students (please select all that apply)
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ learn how to write in Spanish
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ learn how to speak Spanish
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ learn how to read Spanish
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ understand Spanish better
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
52. When they exit the 'Aula de Enlace' you would like that your students would
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ be able to understand the teachers in their regular classes
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ be able to read the Spanish textbook without any help
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ be able to do their regular class assignments on their own
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ be able to speak Spanish with their peers in school
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
53. In your opinion, the students in your 'Aula de Enlace'
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ would like to stay in the 'Aula' until the end of the academic year
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ would like to stay in the 'Aula' the time they consider necessary
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ would like to attend more classes in their regular class, but not all of them
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ would like to exit their 'Aula' earlier and attend all of their regular classes
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
54. When your students finally incorporate into the regular class they
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ will be able to participate in all the class activities
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ will be able to participate actively after a period of adaptation
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ will need extra help from peers and teachers
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ won't be able to participate at all
55. The students in your 'Aula de Enlace' value the efforts you make to help them learn Spanish
- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |
56. The students in your 'Aula de Enlace' value your efforts to make them participate actively in your class
- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |
57. The students in your 'Aula de Enlace' value your efforts to prepare appropriate materials to help them learn
- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |

58. Your students prefer to be in the 'Aula de Enlace' with other foreign students rather than in their regular class

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly agree
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ I agree
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ I disagree
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ I strongly disagree
- e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

59. In your opinion, foreign students have the same possibilities to learn than Spanish students

- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |

60. The general knowledge of your **CHINESE** students is higher than that of their Spanish classmates

- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |

The general knowledge of your **ROMANIAN** students is higher than that of their Spanish classmates

- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |

The general knowledge of your **MOROCCAN** students is higher than that of their Spanish classmates

- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |

61. Your teaching makes every effort to comply with the expressed goals in the official policy for the program

- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |

62. How would you rate the 'Aula de Enlace' implemented in your school concerning your students' language learning?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ excellent
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ very good
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ good
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ fair

63. I feel supported by educational authorities in the autonomous community of Madrid

- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |

64. The **THREE** words that best describe your 'Aula de Enlace' are:

---

## V. FUTURE PLANS

65. In your opinion, your students would like to go back to their countries of origin in some years

- |                  |         |            |                     |
|------------------|---------|------------|---------------------|
| a.               | b.      | c.         | d.                  |
| I strongly agree | I agree | I disagree | I strongly disagree |

66. In your opinion, when your students complete compulsory education (ESO)

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ they will quit school and start working
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ they will continue school and will go to college
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ they will continue school and will go to 'Formación Profesional'
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ they will go back to their countries of origin
- e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

67. In your opinion, when your students complete compulsory education (ESO)
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ they will continue attending Spanish classes
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ they will try to learn without classes
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ they will practice their Spanish in conversation as much as they can
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ they will stop learning Spanish
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

68. I think that school will to help my students achieve their future goals
- |                              |                     |                        |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. _____<br>I strongly agree | b. _____<br>I agree | c. _____<br>I disagree | d. _____<br>I strongly disagree |
|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|

69. I think that learning Spanish will help my students achieve their future goals
- |                              |                     |                        |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a. _____<br>I strongly agree | b. _____<br>I agree | c. _____<br>I disagree | d. _____<br>I strongly disagree |
|------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|

## VI. PARENTS

70. Your **CHINESE** students' parents/tutors can speak Spanish
- |               |             |         |              |
|---------------|-------------|---------|--------------|
| a. Not at all | b. Not well | c. Well | d. Very Well |
|---------------|-------------|---------|--------------|

- Your **ROMANIAN** students' parents/tutors can speak Spanish
- |               |             |         |              |
|---------------|-------------|---------|--------------|
| a. Not at all | b. Not well | c. Well | d. Very Well |
|---------------|-------------|---------|--------------|

- Your **MOROCCAN** students' parents/tutors can speak Spanish
- |               |             |         |              |
|---------------|-------------|---------|--------------|
| a. Not at all | b. Not well | c. Well | d. Very Well |
|---------------|-------------|---------|--------------|

71. Your students' parents/tutors help them with schoolwork
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ every night
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes, whenever they have free time
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ very rarely
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ never
  - e. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

72. Your students' parents tutors participate in all the events organized by my school, and attend meetings
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ always
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ often
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes, whenever they have free time
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ never, or only when it is really necessary

73. In your opinion, when your students finish compulsory education (ESO) their parents would like them to
- a. \_\_\_\_\_ quit school and find a job
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ continue their education and go to college
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ continue their education and go to professional training
  - d. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

1. The **THREE** activities that help your students the most to learn Spanish in your 'Aula de Enlace' are:  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. These activities help them learn because:  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The **THREE** activities that you don't think help your students learn Spanish so much are:  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. These activities won't help them learn because:  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. The **THREE** activities that you would like to do in your 'Aula de Enlace' that you don't do now are:  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. The **THREE** activities that your students enjoy doing the most with their regular class are:  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. The **THREE** things that you like the most about your 'Aula de Enlace' are:  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. The **THREE** things that you don't like about your 'Aula de Enlace' are:  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. The **THREE** reasons why students should incorporate into their regular classes after 6 months are:  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. The **THREE** reasons why students should NOT incorporate into their regular classes after 6 months are:  
\_\_\_\_\_

**THANKS VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP!**

**Will you be willing to be contacted for a follow-up interview?**

**YES** \_\_\_\_\_ Please provide contact phone number \_\_\_\_\_

**NO** \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:**

1. The interview will be tape-recorded.
2. It will take 30 to 40 minutes to complete
3. It will take place at your school during your lunch break, or at any other time and place that is convenient for you

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have further questions

**RESEARCHER'S CONTACT PHONE NUMBER:**

653105745 (María Dolores Inglés)

**APPENDIX G**

**STUDENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

## **I. FIRST LANGUAGE INFORMATION**

1. Is maintaining your first language important to you? Why? Why not?
2. What specific efforts do you make to maintain your first language?
3. Do you think your first language should be used in your “Aula de Enlace”? Why? Why not?
4. Do you think that your High School should teach you Chinese/Arabic/Romanian? Why? Why not?

## **II. SECOND LANGUAGE INFORMATION**

1. Is it important for you to learn Spanish? Why? Why not?
2. What specific efforts do you make to learn Spanish and practice outside your “Aula de Enlace”?
3. How much Spanish did you know before coming to Spain? Do you like learning Spanish? Why? Why not?
4. What benefits do you personally see for learning Spanish?
5. What do you think you do especially well in learning Spanish? What is your major challenge?
6. What is the best way to learn Spanish for you?

## **III. YOUR “AULA DE ENLACE”**

1. Why do you attend the “Aula de Enlace”?
2. What do you expect to learn in your “Aula de Enlace”?
3. Why do you think there is a program like the “Aulas de Enlace”?
4. Is a period of 6 months in the “Aula de Enlace” enough for you?
5. How would you describe your “Aula de Enlace”?
6. How effective are the materials provided by your teachers in helping you learn Spanish? (e.g. textbook and supplementary materials). Please give an example
7. Do you think your teachers are doing a good job making you learn in the “Aula”?
8. What do you like the most of your “Aula de Enlace”? What do you like the least?
9. What do you like the most of your “Aula de Enlace” teachers? What do you like the least?
10. Who decided your entrance to the “Aula de Enlace” program? Did you pass an access exam?
11. Do you usually take exams in your “Aula de Enlace”? How important is the evaluation process for you? (Describe the ways in which your performance is assessed in the “Aula de Enlace”)
12. What regular classes do you attend? Do you like attending your mainstream class? Why? Why not?

13. After the allowed six-month stay in your “Aula de Enlace”, do you think you are /will be ready to incorporate in your mainstream classroom definitively?
14. If you could add or change the program, what major changes would you introduce?
15. Would you say that you feel supported by your teachers and peers? If so how?
16. How would you rate the program? Has it been /is it being useful for you? If so how?

#### **IV. YOUR FUTURE PLANS**

1. How do you think your life will be like in three years time?
2. Do you plan to complete the ESO diploma? What do you plan to do after compulsory education (ESO)?
3. Do you think your studies are going to help you achieve your goals? And learning Spanish?
4. Did your plans for the future change after coming to Spain?

#### **V. YOUR PARENTS**

1. How far would your parents like you to get in your studies? Why?
2. Do your parents/guardians attend periodic meetings with teachers and other parents?
3. Do your parents help you do your homework?
4. What are your parents/guardians’ future plans for you?
5. How do your parents/guardians rate the “Aulas de Enlace” program?

## **APPENDIX H**

### **TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

## **I. FIRST LANGUAGE INFORMATION**

1. Do you think it is important that your students maintain their mother tongue? Why? Why not?
2. Do you think your students do /should make any efforts to maintain and keep learning their mother tongue? Why? Why not?
3. What would you say is the role of students' native language in the "Aula de Enlace"? What do you think it should be?
4. What do you think should be the role of the Spanish school system in maintaining students' native languages?

## **II. SECOND LANGUAGE INFORMATION (SPANISH)**

1. What would you say is the main reason why your students must learn Spanish?
2. How important is learning Spanish for your Romanian, Chinese, and Moroccan students?
3. What would you say are the benefits of learning Spanish for your students?
4. What do you think your Romanian, Chinese, and Moroccan students do especially well in learning Spanish?
5. What do you think are the major challenges for your Romanian, Chinese and Moroccan students when learning Spanish?

## **III. YOUR "AULA DE ENLACE"**

1. Why do you think your students attend the "Aula de Enlace" program? What would you say is their main motivation?
2. Why are you in the program? How did you become a part of it?
3. What would you say are the "Aula de Enlace" students' specific needs?
4. In what specific ways do you think the "Escuelas de Bienvenida" program, and the "Aulas de Enlace" in particular, provide for all non-Spanish-speaking students' needs?
5. In your opinion, what are the objectives of the "Aulas de Enlace" program? Are your personal goals related to those stated in the program's official policy or "Instrucciones"?
6. To what extent do you think these goals are being achieved in your "Aula de Enlace"?
7. In your opinion, is the maximum period of stay allowed in the program enough to achieve the intended goals? Why? Why not?
8. How would you describe your teaching approach for the "Aula de Enlace"?
9. Did the goals stated in the official policy change your teaching approach in any way?
10. What do you think is the key for successful teaching in this class?

11. How do you plan for your class? What criteria do you use? What are they based on?
12. How is entrance to the program determined? Is there any kind of test to determine their language proficiency level once in the “Aula de Enlace”?
13. How is students’ progress evaluated in your “Aula de Enlace”? How important is student evaluation for you? Why?
14. How is student exit of the program determined? Who is in charge of making the decision? Is there final exam taken at the end of their stay in the “Aula de Enlace”?
15. If you could change anything about the “Aulas de Enlace” program, what would your changes be? If you could restructure the program, how would you do it?
16. What kind of support (workshops, formation) have you received from the educational authorities in the CAM since you started teaching your “Aula de Enlace”?
17. Would you say that you feel supported by the educational authorities? If so how?
18. How would you evaluate the program overall? Why?
19. In your opinion, how do your students’ evaluate the program overall?

#### **IV. FUTURE PLANS**

1. Imagine your students in three years time, how do you think their future will be like?
2. How many of your students do you think will go on to post compulsory education?
3. In what ways do you think your “Aula de Enlace” students’ future plans condition their motivation to learn Spanish?
4. How do you think their education level will help your students achieve their future plans? How will their Spanish proficiency level?

#### **V. PARENTS**

1. What is the role of parents in the “Aulas de Enlace” program?
2. How useful / necessary / positive can be parent involvement in the program?
3. How close / far are students and their parents’ expectations for the future?
4. According to your experience with students’ parents, how do they rate the existence of this specific program for their children?

**APPENDIX I**

**ADMINISTRATORS' INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

### **I. FIRST LANGUAGE INFORMATION**

1. Do you think it is important that your students maintain their mother tongue? Why? Why not?
2. Do you think students should make any efforts to maintain and keep learning their mother tongue? Why? Why not?
3. What would you say is the role of students' native language in the "Aula de Enlace"? What do you think it should be?
4. What do you think should be the role of the Spanish school in maintaining students' mother tongues?

### **II. SECOND LANGUAGE INFORMATION (SPANISH)**

1. What would you say is the main reason why students must learn Spanish?
2. How important do you think it is learning Spanish for Romanian, Chinese, and Moroccan students?
3. How do you think this have an impact on learning and integration?
4. What would you say are the benefits of learning Spanish for them?
5. In your opinion, what is the best way to learn Spanish for the "Aulas de Enlace" students?

### **III. THE "AULAS DE ENLACE" PROGRAM**

1. How and why was the "Welcome Schools" program implemented?
2. What learning theory or teaching philosophy is behind it?
3. Where did the idea of implementing a program like this come from?
4. How was it planned?
5. In what ways is this program similar or different to others already in existence in the CAM for the same student population?
6. Who decided in which schools to implement the program?
7. What would you say are the "Aula de Enlace" students' specific needs?
8. In what specific ways do you think the "Escuelas de Bienvenida" program, and the "Aulas de Enlace" in particular, provide for all non-Spanish-speaking students' needs?
9. In your opinion, what are the objectives of the "Aulas de Enlace" program?
10. To what extent do you think these goals are being achieved in your "Aula de Enlace"?
11. In your opinion, is the maximum period of stay allowed in the program enough to achieve the intended goals? Why? Why not?

12. What do you think is the key for successful teaching in this class?
13. To what extent did the official policy guide implementation?
14. How is entrance to the program determined? Is there any kind of test to determine their language proficiency level once in the “Aula de Enlace”?
15. How is students’ progress evaluated in your “Aula de Enlace”? How important is student evaluation for you? Why?
16. How is the program evaluated? In your opinion, how important is program evaluation?
18. How is student exit of the program determined? Who is in charge of making the decision? Is there final exam taken at the end of their stay in the “Aula de Enlace”?
19. If you could change anything about the “Aulas de Enlace” program, what would your changes be? If you could restructure the program, how would you do it?
20. What kind of support (workshops, formation) does the program receive from the educational authorities in the CAM?
21. How would you evaluate the program overall? Why?
22. In your opinion, how do the “Aula de Enlace” teachers evaluate the program overall?
23. In your opinion, how do the “Aulas de Enlace” students evaluate the program overall?
24. What is the future of the “Aulas de Enlace” and the “Welcome Schools” program?

#### **IV. FUTURE PLANS**

1. Imagine your students in three years time, how do you think their future will be like?
2. How many of your students do you think will go on to post compulsory education?
3. In what ways do you think your “Aula de Enlace” students’ future plans condition their motivation to learn Spanish?
4. How do you think their education level will help your students achieve their future plans? How will their Spanish proficiency level?

#### **V. PARENTS**

1. What is the role of parents in the “Aulas de Enlace” program?
2. How useful / necessary / positive can be parent involvement in the program?
3. How close / far are students and their parents’ expectations for the future?
4. According to your experience with students’ parents, how do they rate the existence of this specific program for their children?

**APPENDIX J**

**TEACHER ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' SPANISH PROFICIENCY LEVEL**

Please take some time to complete the following chart about your students' Spanish proficiency level. Read the following guidelines carefully to help your assessment

¡Thank you very much!

#### 4. Excellent

- Student can *speak* Spanish to teachers and peers fluently, with no or very few grammar mistakes, which do not affect the communication flow. Student is able to keep a coherent conversation about any given topic, and to express opinions, ideas and feelings clearly and convincingly. He/She can use a wide variety of vocabulary that makes his/her speech sound native-like.
- Student can *read* any type of document (newspaper articles, magazines, novels, the Spanish textbook, Spanish comics) with little or no help from the teacher, peers or a bilingual dictionary. The comprehension level is very high and the student is able to capture the meaning of their reading very accurately.
- Student *writing* skills are well developed. Student uses complete sentences, embedded in complex structures. His/her text is always well organized and coherent, with very few or no grammar mistakes. Student makes frequent use of connectors and uses a wide variety of grammatical structures.
- Student's *aural* skills are native-like. He/she is perfectly able to understand the teacher's discourse in full in the Spanish class. Teacher and peers rarely have to recast or reformulate their sentences to make them understandable to the non-Spanish-speaking student.

#### 3. Very Good

- Student can *speak* Spanish with a high degree of fluency to teachers and peers. He/she makes some mistakes that do not hinder communication. His/Her discourse is coherent and clear, using a variety of grammatical resources and complex sentences. Student is able to maintain a fluent conversation about most topics raised in the Spanish class. However, he/she lacks some of the vocabulary necessary to conduct more in-depth discussions in class.
- Student can *read* almost any type of document (newspaper articles, magazines, novels, the Spanish textbook, Spanish comics), but requires help from the teacher, peers or a bilingual dictionary. Their comprehension level is high, although some structures and words may require assistance. Student is able to capture the meaning of the text pretty accurately, but requires a pre-reading and post-reading activity to do so.
- Student *writing* skills are fairly developed. He/she makes use of complete sentences, a fair amount of connectors, and a variety of grammatical structures. His/her texts are usually well organized and coherent, with some grammar mistakes.
- Student is able to *understand* the teacher's discourse in the Spanish class, but needs sporadic reformulations of the original sentence to fully understand the intended meaning. Teacher and peers have to recast or reformulate their sentences to make them understandable to the non-Spanish-speaking student occasionally. Many of these reformulations are related to cultural differences or contrasting communicative styles.

## 2. Good

- Student struggles to keep a fluent conversation, and not every topic can be covered, finding certain topics especially difficult to talk about (ideas and feelings). The vocabulary is limited to the words and expressions learned in class, and some that they pick up from peers. Student's speaking skills lack fluency and frequent grammatical mistakes are found in his/her discourse.
- Student is not able to *read* every type of document (newspaper articles, magazines, novels, the Spanish textbook, Spanish comics). On the contrary, he/she is limited to adapted texts that simplify both grammatical structures and content. Student often needs help from the teacher, peers or a bilingual dictionary to make sense of their reading. Their comprehension level is fair, and needs multiple clarifications to fully capture the accurate meaning of the text. This happens even after a pre-reading and post-reading activity.
- Student *writing* skills are slightly developed. He/she usually uses incomplete sentences, an insufficient amount of connectors, and a limited variety of simple grammatical structures. His/her texts are rarely well organized, with frequent grammatical mistakes that affect coherence.
- Student is able to *understand* the teacher's discourse in the Spanish class, but needs frequent reformulations of the original sentence to fully understand the intended meaning. Teacher and peers frequently have to recast or reformulate their sentences to make them understandable to the non-Spanish-speaking student. Many of these reformulations are related to cultural differences or contrasting communicative styles.

## 1. Poor

- Student is not able to maintain a simple conversation with the teacher and/or peers. He/she is not able to construct complete simple sentences, and when he/she does so, these have multiple mistakes or include words in their first language. Their Spanish vocabulary is very limited, and this definitely limits their ability to communicate.
- Student is not able to *read* in Spanish at a regular pace. He/she usually has a hard time trying to extract the meaning of a text, and always needs the teacher's assistance. He/she makes frequent pronunciation mistakes, which affect the proper understanding of the text when read aloud. Their comprehension level is pretty low, and needs multiple clarifications just to grasp the meaning of the text accurately. This happens even after a pre-reading and post-reading activity.
- Student *writing* skills are hardly developed. He/she always uses incomplete sentences, an insufficient amount of connectors, and a very limited variety of simple grammatical structures. His/her texts are hardly ever well organized, with very frequent grammatical mistakes that affect coherence and cohesion.
- Student is not able to *understand* the teacher's discourse in the Spanish class, and needs the help of non-verbal communication patterns and other resources to understand a sentence formulated by the teacher or his/her peers. Student needs constant reformulations and recasts of the original sentence to slightly capture the intended meaning.

**(R) (M) (C) – Age – Time – Yes/No**

1.	_____	4	3	2	1
2.	_____	4	3	2	1
3.	_____	4	3	2	1
4.	_____	4	3	2	1
5.	_____	4	3	2	1
6.	_____	4	3	2	1
7.	_____	4	3	2	1
8.	_____	4	3	2	1
9.	_____	4	3	2	1
10.	_____	4	3	2	1
11.	_____	4	3	2	1
12.	_____	4	3	2	1
13.	_____	4	3	2	1
14.	_____	4	3	2	1
15.	_____	4	3	2	1

**Descriptors:**

**(R):** Romanian; **(M):** Moroccan; **(C):** Chinese

**Time:** time in the “Aula de Enlace” (in months)

**Yes/No:** Answer to the following question: “In your opinion, will this student be able to succeed once he/she incorporates to their “Aula de Referencia” (mainstream class)?

**APPENDIX K**

**OFFICIAL POLICY DOCUMENT: “INSTRUCCIONES”**

## **INSTRUCCIONES DE LA VICECONSEJERÍA DE EDUCACIÓN DE LA COMUNIDAD DE MADRID POR LAS QUE SE REGULAN LAS AULAS DE ENLACE DEL PROGRAMA “ESCUELAS DE BIENVENIDA” PARA LA INCORPORACIÓN DEL ALUMNADO EXTRANJERO AL SISTEMA EDUCATIVO. CURSO 2005-2006**

El creciente número de alumnado extranjero que, tanto en período ordinario como extraordinario, viene siendo escolarizado a lo largo de los últimos cursos escolares en los centros educativos sostenidos con fondos públicos de la Comunidad de Madrid, requiere la adopción de medidas que favorezcan su incorporación al sistema educativo, especialmente en aquellos casos en los que dicho alumnado presenta un elevado grado de desconocimiento de la lengua española o un grave desfase curricular como consecuencia de su falta de escolarización previa en el país de origen.

La Ley Orgánica 10/2002, de 23 de diciembre (BOE del 24) dedica el artículo 42 del capítulo VII a la incorporación al sistema educativo de los alumnos extranjeros, determinando que “para los alumnos que desconozcan la lengua y cultura españolas, o que presenten graves carencias en conocimientos básicos, las Administraciones educativas desarrollarán programas específicos de aprendizaje con la finalidad de facilitar su integración en el nivel correspondiente”. Igualmente, especifica que estos programas “se podrán impartir, de acuerdo con la planificación de las Administraciones educativas, en aulas específicas establecidas en centros que impartan enseñanzas de régimen ordinario. El desarrollo de estos programas será simultáneo a la escolarización de los alumnos en los grupos ordinarios, conforme al nivel y evolución de su aprendizaje”. La citada Ley afirma, en ese mismo artículo, apartado 4, que “los alumnos extranjeros tendrán los mismos derechos y deberes que los alumnos españoles”.

Por su parte, la Ley Orgánica 4/2000, de 11 de enero sobre derechos y libertades de los extranjeros en España y su integración social (modificada por la Ley Orgánica 8/2000, de 22 de diciembre, BOE del 23), establece en su artículo 9 el derecho a la educación, en lo concerniente a la enseñanza básica, en los siguientes términos:

1. “Todos los extranjeros menores de 18 años tienen derecho y deber a la educación en las mismas condiciones que los españoles, derecho que comprende el acceso a la enseñanza básica, gratuita y obligatoria, a la obtención de la titulación académica correspondiente y al acceso al sistema público de becas y ayudas”.

4. “Los poderes públicos promoverán que los extranjeros residentes que lo necesiten puedan recibir una enseñanza para su mejor integración social, con reconocimiento y respeto a su identidad cultural”.

De acuerdo con los principios anteriores, se emiten las presentes Instrucciones que tienen por objeto establecer las condiciones de aplicación de las Aulas de Enlace para el curso 2005-2006:

### **PRIMERA: Denominación y Tipos.**

1. Dentro del Programa Escuelas de Bienvenida, las aulas objeto de estas Instrucciones se denominarán “Aulas de Enlace”

2. Estas Aulas están concebidas para atender a dos perfiles de alumnado:

- Alumnos con desconocimiento de la lengua española.
- Alumnos con graves carencias en conocimientos básicos como consecuencia de su escolarización irregular en el país de origen.

### **SEGUNDA: Objetivos.**

A) Posibilitar atención específica al alumnado extranjero con desconocimiento del idioma español o con el grave desfase curricular referido anteriormente, que se incorpora a lo largo del curso escolar, apoyando la adquisición de competencias lingüísticas y comunicativas, y desarrollando el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje mediante las oportunas adaptaciones curriculares.

- B) Facilitar la incorporación y acortar el periodo de integración de este alumnado al sistema educativo español.
- C) Favorecer el desarrollo de la identidad personal y cultural del alumno.
- D) Lograr que el alumnado se incorpore al entorno escolar y social en el menor tiempo y en las mejores condiciones posibles.

### **TERCERA: Destinatarios.**

Los destinatarios de este programa son los alumnos y alumnas del segundo y tercer ciclo de Educación Primaria y los de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria que se escolaricen en centros sostenidos con fondos públicos y que cumplan los requisitos del apartado 2 de la instrucción primera.

### **CUARTA: Centros Educativos donde se implantarán.**

A) Este Programa se implantará en Centros públicos y privados sostenidos con fondos públicos. En ningún caso, la autorización del funcionamiento de Aulas de Enlace supondrá una modificación del número de unidades jurídicas del Centro.

B) Los Centros Educativos que participen en este Programa serán propuestos, de forma justificada, por las Direcciones de Área Territorial, considerando preferentemente los siguientes criterios:

1. Aceptación del Programa por el Centro.
2. Centros con disponibilidad de espacios adecuados.
3. Aceptación del Centro para escolarizar de modo ordinario al alumnado del Aula de Enlace cuando finalice su permanencia en la misma, siempre que exista disponibilidad de plazas.
4. Ubicación del Centro en zonas con alta concentración de población extranjera.
5. Experiencia previa en la atención educativa del alumnado extranjero con desconocimiento del idioma español.
6. Centros que ofrezcan servicio de comedor, programas de Aulas Abiertas, planes locales de extensión de actividades extraescolares y uso de instalaciones en periodos no lectivos y vacacionales.
7. Proporcionalidad entre zonas urbanas y rurales y niveles de enseñanza.

C) El funcionamiento de estas Aulas de Enlace será autorizado por la Dirección General de Promoción Educativa, a propuesta de las Direcciones de Área Territorial y la Dirección General de Centros Docentes.

### **QUINTA: Número de alumnos por Aula de Enlace**

Cada Aula de Enlace contará con un número máximo de 12 alumnos.

### **SEXTA: Incorporación al Aula de Enlace y periodo de permanencia en la misma.**

A) Al asignar la plaza escolar, la Comisión de Escolarización ofertará a la familia la posibilidad de escolarizar al alumno en un centro que disponga de Aula de Enlace, para su incorporación a la misma.

B) La incorporación a un Aula de Enlace se realizará una sola vez durante el periodo de escolaridad obligatoria del alumno, en el momento en que acceda al sistema educativo.

C) Los padres o tutores legales del alumno, a propuesta de la Comisión, manifestarán su conformidad para la incorporación del mismo a un Aula de Enlace, según modelo que figura en el Anexo I de estas Instrucciones. En caso contrario deberán cumplimentar el modelo que figura en el Anexo II.

D) La permanencia en el Aula de Enlace se prolongará durante un periodo máximo de seis meses de asistencia efectiva, a lo largo de uno o dos cursos académicos, desde la incorporación del alumno al Aula. En el caso de que un alumno se traslade de zona o localidad durante el curso escolar, se podrá trasladar igualmente a otra Aula de Enlace. Cuando las circunstancias específicas de un alumno aconsejen la ampliación excepcional de este período, se solicitará la autorización correspondiente a la Dirección General de Promoción Educativa, a través de la Dirección de Área Territorial. Para ello, se justificará la necesidad de ampliación cumplimentando el Anexo III de las presentes Instrucciones. En el Anexo IV (Modelo A o B, en función del nivel educativo) se expondrá el plan de trabajo que se propone para que el alumno alcance los objetivos previstos, centrado en los contenidos que se desarrollarán y el horario que cumplirá en el Aula de Enlace y en el aula ordinaria. En el Anexo V, a la vista de la documentación presentada por el Centro, la Inspección de Educación emitirá el informe que considere oportuno. Para proceder a la tramitación pertinente, el Centro remitirá los Anexos III y IV a la Dirección de Área Territorial, que, junto con el Anexo V, los trasladará a la Dirección General de Promoción Educativa, que procederá a emitir la resolución oportuna.

E) Una vez concluido el periodo de permanencia del alumno en el Aula de Enlace, éste se incorporará al grupo ordinario, a tiempo completo, en función de las dos posibilidades previstas:

- a) En el centro donde ha estado escolarizado en el Aula de Enlace, si existe plaza vacante en el mismo.
- b) En el centro que le asigne la Comisión de Escolarización, de acuerdo con su residencia habitual.

#### **SÉPTIMA: Participación en actividades complementarias de ocio y tiempo libre.**

A) Con objeto de favorecer un ambiente de intercambio, potenciando el sentido de la solidaridad y fomentando actitudes de cooperación, se ofrecerá, a través de la Dirección General de la Juventud, una serie de actividades de ocio y tiempo libre donde los alumnos de las Aulas de Enlace convivan con otros alumnos del centro.

B) Las actividades irán dirigidas al alumnado del segundo y tercer ciclos de Educación Primaria y al de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria, y se realizarán de forma conjunta con el alumnado de los centros donde se ubican las Aulas de Enlace (preferentemente con los de su grupo de referencia), pudiendo realizarse en el propio centro escolar o durante los fines de semana y periodos de vacaciones.

C) Asimismo, se llevarán a cabo actividades extraescolares o complementarias de ocio y tiempo libre, a propuesta de otras Direcciones Generales de la Consejería de Educación.

D) Todas las actividades de ocio y tiempo libre dirigidas al alumnado, tanto las que se realizan en el propio centro escolar como las que se desarrollan en fin de semana o en periodo de vacaciones, estarán cubiertas por el Seguro Escolar

#### **OCTAVA: Profesorado**

A) Para el funcionamiento de estas aulas se dotará a los centros educativos del profesorado necesario, hasta dos por aula, siendo uno de ellos correspondiente al profesor tutor del aula. Se facilitará la continuidad en el programa de los profesores que hubiesen trabajado en un Aula de Enlace. Se fomentará la implicación del profesorado del Centro en el programa pudiéndosele asignar horas de dedicación al Aula de Enlace.

B) Debido a la especificidad de las funciones que se han de desarrollar en estas Aulas, se considera como perfil más adecuado el de profesorado que cuente con formación o experiencia en enseñanza del español como segunda lengua, o español como lengua materna; en todo caso, con experiencia en atención al alumnado extranjero o con necesidades de compensación educativa, o en su defecto, especializado en lengua extranjera. Si bien estos requisitos generales se podrán adaptar al Proyecto del Centro y a las necesidades del alumnado que se deba atender.

C) Los profesores del Aula de Enlace de los I.E.S. o Centros de Educación Secundaria Concertada estarán adscritos al Departamento de Orientación del Centro y se integrarán en los equipos de profesores de los grupos de referencia de los alumnos del Aula de Enlace. En los Centros Concertados de Educación Secundaria, los profesores del Aula de Enlace estarán adscritos al órgano que, a tenor de su estructura, ejerza las funciones de orientación, incorporándose, asimismo, al equipo de profesores de los grupos de referencia de su alumnado. El profesorado de las Aulas de Enlace podrá contar con el asesoramiento del Servicio de Apoyo Itinerante para el Alumnado Inmigrante (SAI). El horario de los profesores del aula de enlace será el mismo que corresponda al resto del profesorado.

#### **NOVENA: Funciones del profesorado.**

A) Serán funciones del profesorado de las Aulas de Enlace, con carácter general, las relacionadas con la docencia, tutoría, seguimiento y evaluación del alumnado adscrito a ellas. Se incluyen entre otros los siguientes aspectos:

1. Elaborar la programación del Aula, adecuándola a las características de los alumnos y a las necesidades del Centro. Dicha programación formará parte de la Programación General Anual.
2. Planificar en colaboración con la Jefatura de Estudios la organización horaria del tiempo escolar de los alumnos del Aula de Enlace a través de sus diferentes periodos, así como en los tiempos de coordinación con el profesorado (Anexos VI y VII).
3. Atender a las dificultades de aprendizaje de los alumnos.
4. Coordinarse con los tutores y los profesores de los grupos de referencia de los alumnos del Aula de Enlace.
5. Facilitar la integración del alumnado en el grupo, el centro, y la sociedad, potenciando sus habilidades y fomentando su participación en las actividades del Centro y la comunidad.
6. Promover la participación del alumnado en las actividades de ocio y tiempo libre.
7. Mantener la comunicación con las familias de los alumnos del Aula de Enlace, informándoles acerca del progreso de sus hijos y facilitando su participación activa en su proceso educativo. Las familias recibirán, al menos, un informe trimestral de evaluación durante el periodo de permanencia del alumnado en el Aula de Enlace. Para facilitar la comunicación con las familias, los centros podrán contar con la colaboración del Servicio de Traductores e Intérpretes (SETI), a través de la Dirección General de Promoción Educativa.
8. Llevar a cabo la evaluación continua de los aprendizajes y progresos realizados con el fin de disponer de información que permita determinar el momento oportuno en que cada alumno pueda incorporarse, a tiempo completo, al grupo ordinario.
9. Realizar un informe individualizado de cada uno de los alumnos del Aula de Enlace, que formará parte de su expediente académico, previo a su derivación al grupo ordinario, en el que conste el resultado del proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje, los conocimientos adquiridos y, en su caso, las orientaciones educativas que se estimen oportunas.
10. Elaborar una Memoria al finalizar el curso escolar, que será incluida en la Memoria del Centro, en la que se recogerá el número de alumnos atendidos, la valoración del cumplimiento de los objetivos previstos y la evaluación de las actuaciones desarrolladas.

#### **DÉCIMA: Organización del Aula de Enlace.**

A) Agrupamientos y organización horaria:

1. Se determinará en el centro donde se ubica el Aula de Enlace un grupo de referencia en cada ciclo de Educación Primaria y en cada curso de 1º, 2º, 3º y 4º de la ESO para los alumnos que asisten a la misma, compensando en los agrupamientos el número de alumnos de los grupos de referencia, si fuera posible.

2. El horario del tutor del Aula de Enlace se organizará de modo que coincida en una hora, al menos quincenalmente, con cada uno de los tutores de los grupos de referencia, para facilitar su coordinación.

3. Se establecerán reuniones semanales de los profesores del Aula de Enlace, en horario no lectivo, para facilitar su coordinación.

#### B) Periodos de integración escolar de los alumnos del Aula de Enlace

El alumnado recibirá enseñanza en el Centro educativo durante los mismos periodos de tiempo que el resto del alumnado que curse la misma etapa educativa. El alumnado se integrará lo antes posible en su grupo de referencia en aquellas asignaturas o áreas que faciliten su integración: Educación Física, Educación Plástica y Visual, Tecnología, Música, Tutoría u otras de mayor interés para el alumnado que le motiven en su rápida incorporación. El tiempo escolar se distribuirá de tal manera que, según los recursos del centro, se favorezca la máxima integración del alumnado dentro de los grupos de referencia. A estos efectos se tendrán en consideración los siguientes periodos, en relación con el proceso que, progresivamente, desarrollará cada alumno en su incorporación al sistema educativo:

- periodo de acogida
- periodo de aprendizaje intensivo de la lengua vehicular
- y periodo de incorporación al grupo de referencia

Las actuaciones de los tres periodos resultan, en muchos casos y especialmente en los primeros momentos, simultáneas, por lo que todas ellas se procurarán mantener a lo largo de la escolarización del alumno en el Aula de Enlace.

#### C) Actividades extraescolares de ocio y tiempo libre:

1. Para participar en cualquier actividad de inserción en el entorno, a través de la Dirección General de la Juventud, es condición indispensable que el alumnado del Aula de Enlace forme parte del grupo que el centro proponga para realizar la actividad. Las actividades del centro se realizarán en horario extraescolar, dentro del aula o espacio habilitado para ello. Las de fin de semana tendrán lugar en albergues juveniles dependientes de la Dirección General de la Juventud.

2. Las actividades se realizarán en grupos de edades homogéneas. La duración de los talleres de centro será de 20 horas y los de fin de semana se desarrollarán desde las 18 horas del viernes, hasta las 17 horas del domingo.

3. Cada Aula de Enlace podrá solicitar un solo taller para realizar en el centro o durante el fin de semana. La adjudicación se hará por orden de recepción, hasta agotar los talleres ofertados. La Dirección General de la Juventud se hará cargo del pago de monitores y material fungible, incluyendo para los fines de semana el transporte, alojamiento y manutención.

4. En caso de llevarse a cabo otro tipo de actividades extraescolares o complementarias de ocio y tiempo libre, cada Dirección General establecerá los procedimientos oportunos para su difusión y participación en las mismas.

5. Todas las actividades de ocio y tiempo libre dirigidas al alumnado, tanto las que se realizan en el propio centro escolar como las que se desarrollan en fin de semana o en periodo de vacaciones, estarán cubiertas por el Seguro Escolar.

## **UNDÉCIMA. Incorporación al grupo ordinario.**

1. Se producirá a propuesta del equipo docente del Aula de Enlace y del grupo de referencia, una vez que el alumno haya adquirido suficientes competencias lingüísticas o instrumentales, según los casos, o finalizado el periodo máximo de permanencia en dicha Aula. El Servicio de Inspección Educativa dará el visto bueno a dicha incorporación. En las páginas del Libro de Escolaridad de la Enseñanza Básica destinadas a observaciones sobre la escolaridad en la

Educación Primaria o en la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria, según corresponda, se extenderá diligencia haciendo constar el período en que el alumno ha permanecido en el Aula de Enlace y la fecha en que se ha decidido su incorporación, a tiempo completo, al grupo ordinario.

2. Cuando la finalización del período de permanencia máxima en el Aula de Enlace coincida con el final del curso en el mes de junio –a estos efectos, en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria no se tendrá en cuenta la convocatoria extraordinaria de septiembre– el curso al que se incorporará en el grupo ordinario al año siguiente será determinado por el equipo docente del Aula de Enlace en colaboración con el Orientador del Equipo de Orientación Educativa y Psicopedagógica en los Centros de Educación Primaria, con el Departamento de Orientación en los Centros de Educación Secundaria, y con el órgano que ejerza las funciones de Orientación en el caso de los Centros concertados, siempre ajustándose a la normativa vigente en Educación Primaria y en Educación Secundaria Obligatoria respectivamente. En las páginas destinadas a observaciones sobre la escolaridad en la Educación Primaria o en la Educación Secundaria Obligatoria, según corresponda, se extenderá diligencia haciendo constar, junto con las fechas en que se ha desarrollado el período en el que el alumno ha permanecido en el Aula de Enlace, que la finalización del mismo ha coincidido con el final del curso académico. Se hará constar asimismo la decisión sobre el curso al que el alumno se incorporará en el grupo ordinario el curso siguiente y la fecha en que se ha tomado esa decisión. Para los alumnos que hayan estado adscritos a un grupo de referencia de 4º curso de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria, se tendrán en cuenta las siguientes consideraciones:

- a) En ningún caso se podrá proponer su incorporación a un nivel de estudios post-obligatorios.
- b) Si fuesen menores de 18 años, se podrá proponer su incorporación a 4º curso.
- c) Los alumnos de 16 y 17 años tienen la posibilidad de incorporarse a un Programa de Garantía Social y, de modo excepcional, solicitar su matriculación en un Centro de Educación de Personas Adultas.
- d) Los alumnos de 18 ó más años que deseen proseguir sus estudios deberán hacerlo por la vía de educación de personas adultas.
- e) En el caso del alumnado que finalice su escolaridad obligatoria en el Aula de Enlace, el centro cumplimentará las páginas 26 y 28 del Libro de Escolaridad de la Enseñanza Básica, indicando en la página 19, mediante diligencia, las circunstancias que concurren.

3. En el caso de que el alumno cambie de Centro, participará como cualquier otro en el proceso de escolarización ordinaria o mediante su solicitud a la Comisión de Escolarización que corresponda.

## **DUODÉCIMA. Formación del profesorado.**

A) Las Direcciones de Área Territorial, a instancia de la Dirección General de Ordenación Académica, organizarán las actividades de formación, de acuerdo con los siguientes principios:

- 1. El profesorado adscrito a estas aulas recibirá la formación oportuna y diferenciada, en atención a la adecuación de su perfil profesional para la tarea encomendada y a la experiencia previa en la misma.
- 2. Igualmente, se organizarán actividades de formación dirigidas a los equipos directivos y a los Departamentos de Orientación y orientadores de los centros que tengan Aulas de Enlace.
- 3. El plan de formación comprenderá una fase inicial, previa a la puesta en marcha del curso y una fase de seguimiento, refuerzo y profundización, con sesiones de periodicidad establecida.

B) Se podrán organizar estancias e intercambios con otras Comunidades Autónomas y con países de mayor tradición en el desarrollo de acciones educativas de integración de extranjeros, de forma que el Programa Escuelas de Bienvenida pueda enriquecerse con estas experiencias.

**DECIMOTERCERA: Coordinación y seguimiento.**

A) La dirección y evaluación de este Programa se realizará por parte de una Comisión presidida por la Viceconsejera de Educación o persona en quien delegue, en la que participarán las Direcciones Generales afectadas, la Inspección de Educación, el Presidente del Consejo Escolar de Madrid y el Director de Área Territorial de Madrid Capital, en representación de las Áreas Territoriales. Dicha Comisión velará por el adecuado desarrollo del Programa.

B) Por otra parte, una Comisión de Desarrollo del Programa, presidida por la Directora General de Promoción Educativa, realizará las funciones de impulso y seguimiento del mismo. En ella estarán representadas las Direcciones Generales implicadas en el Programa, las Direcciones de Área Territorial, la Inspección de Educación y el Consejo Escolar.

C) La supervisión de estas Aulas será realizada por el Servicio de Inspección Educativa a través del Inspector del centro donde se ubique el Aula de Enlace. La puesta en funcionamiento y coordinación permanente del Programa será competencia del Servicio de Inspección Educativa y del Servicio de las Unidades de Programas que actuarán coordinadamente en cada Dirección de Área Territorial.

D) Las Direcciones Generales de la Consejería de Educación, en el ámbito de sus competencias, impulsarán la puesta en marcha y el desarrollo de este Programa, pudiendo crear las subcomisiones técnicas que estimen oportunas.

Madrid, 24 de junio de 2005

La Viceconsejera de Educación

Carmen González Fernández

ILMAS. SRAS. DIRECTORAS GENERALES DE PROMOCIÓN EDUCATIVA Y DE ORDENACIÓN ACADÉMICA, ILMOS. SRS. DIRECTORES GENERALES DE CENTROS DOCENTES Y DE JUVENTUD, ILMA. SRA. DIRECTORA DEL ÁREA TERRITORIAL MADRID ESTE E ILMOS. SRS. DIRECTORES DE LAS ÁREAS TERRITORIALES DE MADRID CAPITAL, DE MADRID NORTE, DE MADRID SUR Y DE MADRID OESTE.

**APPENDIX L**

**STUDENT FINAL REPORT SAMPLE**

## **INFORME DE EVALUACIÓN FINAL DE ALUMNOS/AS DEL AULA DE ENLACE**

### **DATOS DE IDENTIFICACIÓN**

NOMBRE Y APELLIDOS:	
NACIONALIDAD:	China
FECHA DE NACIMIENTO:	12 julio 1989
CENTRO DE ESCOLARIZACIÓN	
CURSO:	3º ESO
CENTRO DEL AULA DE ENLACE:	
FECHA DE INCORPORACIÓN AL AULA:	26 abril 2004
FECHA DE EVALUACIÓN:	1 abril 2005

## NIVEL DE COMPETENCIA LINGÜÍSTICA Y COMUNICATIVA

<b>COMPREENSIÓN Y EXPRESIÓN ORAL</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>EP</b>	<b>C</b>
Comprende mensajes sencillos dentro y fuera del aula.			X
Produce y utiliza expresiones de relación social: saludos, despedidas, presentaciones, pedir permiso, expresar necesidades...			X
Produce breves mensajes orales.			X
Reconoce y reproduce los sonidos de la lengua española.		X	
Utiliza recursos para controlar la comunicación ("¿puede repetir?", "más alto", "más despacio, por favor").			X
Entiende y ejecuta indicaciones sencillas en clase ("siéntate", "escribe", "lee", etc).			X
Expresa y pide opinión sobre algo o alguien.			X
Expresa cantidades (números).			X
Localiza objetos/personas en el espacio (delante, encima, detrás, debajo, etc.).			X
Describe situaciones, objetos y personas.			X
Narra acontecimientos o cuenta historias.		X	
Expresa y pregunta por sensaciones físicas, estados de ánimo, gustos y preferencias.			X
Se expresa con coherencia y claridad.		X	
Maneja el vocabulario básico para desenvolverse en las distintas áreas curriculares.	X		
Reconoce y utiliza el vocabulario básico de su entorno más cercano.		X	
Comprende y utiliza giros lingüísticos propios del idioma.	X		

<b>COMPREENSIÓN Y EXPRESIÓN ORAL</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>EP</b>	<b>C</b>
Conoce el alfabeto español.			X
Asocia los sonidos de la lengua española con su grafía.		X	
Sigue instrucciones escritas.		X	
Ordena dibujos de acuerdo con un texto escrito.			X
Hace frases que resumen el contenido de un texto escrito.		X	
Comprende el sentido global de un texto sencillo y breve.			X
Contesta a preguntas de comprensión.			X
Contesta a preguntas utilizando el lenguaje de manera clara, coherente y correcta.		X	
Usa el lenguaje de forma creativa	X		

### Claves

I: Iniciado  
 EP: En proceso  
 C: Conseguido

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