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NARRATIVE INQUIRY:

A FOCUS ON HAITIAN IMMIGRANT ENGLISH LEARNERS IN THE MAINSTREAM

CLASSROOMS

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To: Dean Michael R. Heithaus
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This dissertation, written by Emma Caris François, and entitled Narrative Inquiry: A Focus on Haitian Immigrant English Learners in the Mainstream Classrooms, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgement.

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DEDICATION

This narrative inquiry dissertation is devoted to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Caris; my husband, Mr. Jean Rony François; and my two daughters, Ronylda Lyss François, and Kimney Glynn François. I am thankful for your understanding, your patience, your confidence, and your assistance throughout this process. This dissertation would not have happened without your assistance and all your great advice.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION
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Florida International University, 2022

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This study sought to understand the engagement and/or disengagement of English Learners (ELs) of Haitian descent in mainstream classrooms in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS). Haitian students comprise the second largest group of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) students in M-DCPS after Hispanic Students (Statistical Highlights: MDCPS, 2020-2021, ELLevation, 2022). Mainstream classrooms are filled with ELs whose learning styles and needs differ from those of other students (Mooij, 2008). Haitian ELs face particular challenges as they are minoritized on the basis of language, race, and culture, and many be unprepared for secondary education in the United States (Pierre, 2018; Prichard, 2006). Though numerous research studies have been conducted regarding the experiences and engagement of ELs in general, very few have examined the particular experiences of Haitian ELs. The study was guided by the following research question: What do the stories of Haitian immigrants learning English in the mainstream classrooms reveal about their experiences of engagement and/or disengagement with their education?

Participants for this narrative inquiry study included six high school English Learners of Haitian descent in 11th and 12th grade in three high schools. I conducted three interviews with each participant via Zoom. I conducted the interviews in Haitian Creole, which allowed the opportunity to express themselves fully. Based on the interview data, I constructed two major themes (Transition Shocks and Causes of Disengagement) and six sub-themes: a) Registration Process, Block Schedule, and Cross-cultural Differences – subthemes of Transition Shocks), and b) Language Barrier, Marginalization and Lack of Resources – subthemes of Causes of Disengagement.

The findings of this study could help teachers in the mainstream classrooms use various approaches to assist their ELs of Haitian descent in M-DCPS become more engaged in school and increase their likelihood of success. For examples, teachers might publicly recognize students' efforts, work differently with parents to encourage students' participation in class, and more deliberately engage ELs in classroom conversation. I also provide recommendations for school principals and district leaders.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CELLA	Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment
EL	English Learners
ELP	English Language Proficiency
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ESSA	Every Student Succeed Act
HLS	Home Language Survey
LEP	Limited Language Proficiency
M-DCPS	Miami-Dade County Public Schools
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
OLPS-R	Oral Language Proficiency Scale Revised

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

This study aimed to understand the engagement and/or disengagement of English Learners (ELs) of Haitian descent in the mainstream classrooms in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS). ELs are students who are in a program called English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). M-DCPS is one of many districts across the United States that offers ESOL (English as a Second Language Directory, 2019-2020). According to McDonald (2004), many immigrant groups have resettled to the United States from places where English is either not their primary language or not studied at all and this creates an increased need for public schools to educating students who are not fluent in English. Based on home language surveys, Haitian students comprise the second largest group of ESOL students in M-DCPS after Hispanic Students (Statistical Highlights: MDCPS, 2020-2021, ELLevation, 2022).

ELs are the fastest growing subgroup of students in the nation (National Education Association, 2018). According to Florida Department of Education (2021), among all states, Florida is ranked 3rd in EL population. Relatedly, there are large differences in the percentage of people living in poverty by ethnic group in Florida (8% of White, 11% of Asians, 22% of Hispanics, and 25% of both Black and Native Americans (U.S. Census (2012))). M-DCPS is ranked as the fourth largest school district in the United States and the largest one in the state of Florida with a student enrollment of 347,307 as of December 2021 (Statistical Highlights: M-DCPS, 2020-2021). The district has 66,909 students who are in the ESOL program (ELLevation, 2022). Of these students

3,428 ELs (levels 1-4) are of Haitian descent and of these students, 824 students are at the High school level (ELLevation, 2021).

Some laws and policies have enacted regarding EL's education based on different cases, but those laws do not provide details about how to provide assistance to ELs.

According to Zehr (2007) as cited in Augustin (2016):

The decision on the Lau v. Nichols Case 1974 relied on the Section 601 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It assures that no students be deny the same possibilities to get an education generally acquired by other pupils in the same education program because of their origin, the color of their skin, or nationality. In 1970, students with language deficiencies were added to this rule so that they were provided with the tools necessary to rectify the deficiency, but the ruling does not indicate what kind of method schools should apply to help English Learners. Even over 30 years after Lau, there are still large numbers of students who, because of no fault of their own, suffer in classes where delivery of instruction may not be understood.

(p.17)

Furthermore, both Goals 2000, which was implemented in 1996, and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, which succeeded Goals 2000 in 2000, targeted ELs. Goals 2000 was implemented to get rid of the "gap in high school graduation rates between American students from minority backgrounds and their nonminority counterparts" (Goal 2000: Educate America, p. 3). The main objective of NCLB, its replacement, was to examine the discrepancy in students' performance "between high-and-low performing students, especially the achievement gaps between minority and nonminority students,

and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers” along with “the educational needs of low-achieving children in our Nation’s highest poverty schools, limited English proficiency children, migratory children, children in need of reading assistance” (NCLB of 2000, p.1) In order to certify that students met the yearly academic standards, and that the discrepancy in scholastic performance diminished, NCLB also set liability measures, stating that “states that do not meet their performance objectives for the LEP student could lose up to ten percent of the administrative portion of their funding for all ESEA state administrative formula grant programs” (Canas Baenas, 2016, p. 3) . However, the achievement gap between Goals 2000 and NCLB has widened under both Goals 2000 and NCLB (Canas Baenas, 2016). Both NCLB and Goal 2000 were accountable for elaborating the achievement gap by precipitating English Language acquisition, ameliorating a culture to assess different approaches, and encouraging standardized exams to graduate high school (Canas Baenas, 2016).

The “Every Student Succeeds Act” (ESSA) that succeeded the NCLB in 2015 leaves significantly more power to the states and districts in term of deciding the acceptable standards of the students (Saultz et al., 2019, p. 18). With ESSA, “states might have additional freedom to, for example, choose their accountability goals, but it does not significantly change how school performance is measured or how the public talks about educational quality” (Saultz et al., 2019, p. 18). Under these acts, many students, most importantly the English Learners (ELs), often find themselves disengaged based on the type of experiences they have endured in schools with teachers, peers and even administrators (Saultz et al., 2019).

NCELA acknowledges that ELs focus should not solely be on studying another language, but it should also be on acquiring everything having to do with the culture and the values of the new language (National Council of Teachers of English, 2008, p. 2). Currently, schools offer several different programs for ELs. Often these students do not spend their days in separate ESOL classrooms due to political and economic situations (Clair, 2021). ELs spend part of the day in ESOL classrooms and the remaining portion of their daily instructional time in the mainstream classroom, which is a typically content-area classroom consisting of a variety of learners. The subject areas being taught in mainstreaming classes included science, math, social studies, or other electives courses (Mills, 2022). Mainstreaming insists that students with special needs adjust to the full rigors and the severities of the general education classroom (Mills, 2022). Although, ELs are often included in the mainstream classrooms along with their native-speaking peers, some of them may have just recently settled in the United States and speak little or no English at all (Mills, 2022). Yet, teachers in the mainstream classroom are generally not prepared to include ELs with other students who are fluent in English (Clair, 1993). Very often, mainstream teachers consider students who have language barrier as inferior (Brandon et al., 2009). The main objective of mainstreaming is to integrate ELs within the regular classrooms in order for these students to receive equal opportunities as they gain experience, build knowledge, develop their intelligence, grow as individuals, and become familiar with the environment and to feel as they have the choice to be part of any academic and socializing programs at their schools (Bright Hub Education, 2010). While some ELs can participate in the same curricula as their native-speaking peers, others may not be able to keep up with the work because of their language barrier

and as a result they can feel left out (Bright Hub Education, 2010). While ELs in the mainstream classrooms will have pull-outs, in which they leave the classroom to go and get assistance in their native language from a para-professional (a person with at least an associate degree) or sit in a corner in the same room with another teacher whereas instruction is going on or they may have some other kinds of self-directed coaching, any movement that slows down the pace of instruction is a concern for the mainstream teacher (Whiting, 2019). During pull out times, an EL's learning suffers because they never get to really engage with the mainstream teacher's lesson plan alongside their peers who are not in the ESOL program (Bright Hub Education, 2010). Often times they miss grade-level content that is being taught in their mainstream classrooms, due to being in their pull-out classes; this leads to the EL students to have difficulties trying to discuss the fundamental components of the curriculum as well as their peers who are fluent in the English language and have not missed any classroom discussions (Whiting, 2019). According to Whiting (2019), "Furthermore, ELs experience discomfort when leaving and returning to mainstream classrooms, in part because they do not want their friends to see that they have these pull-outs (p. 1).

Mainstream classroom teachers are generally encouraged to use differentiated instruction (DI) with their students (Valiandes, 2015). DI is an approach that teachers use during their instructional time to help individual student meet their needs (Pegram, 2019; p. 18). DI is not just a single approach, but it is instead a framework that teachers can use to implement several approaches that are research-based (Pegram, 2019). "This approach allows the teacher to alter learning activities that will guide success in academic growth for ELs" (Pegram, 2019, p 18). Its practice in the mainstream classroom helps students

make considerable progress throughout their learning and provided them with a chance to achieve their goal (Scigliano & Hipsky, 2010). Even though instructional differentiation is being used in the mainstream classrooms, it appears that many ELs are not getting enough assistance to stay engaged in the learning process (Scigliano & Hipsky, 2010).

Teachers in mainstream classrooms use DI to help students learn and to help every student have equal access in the same content area. According to Valiandes (2015), DI is for teachers to accommodate the needs of specific students, assist them as they are facing challenges and give them the necessary support to help them achieve their educational goals. According to Tran (2015), the content of the curriculum is a huge challenge for ELs; therefore, the support of DI should facilitate their involvement in all types of learning activities. Although differentiated instruction has positive outcomes, ELs in the mainstream classrooms at the secondary level need special attention to stay engaged and to keep up with their education (Scigliano & Hipsky, 2010).

Problem Statement

The challenges of learning a new language are overwhelming factors that can dishearten ELs at the secondary level and often create a sense of disengagement (Breiseth, 2015). ELs are usually students who live in residences where English is not fully spoken; they are a very distinct group of students who are dealing not only with different language needs, but who also require academic and social-emotional support (Breiseth, 2015). Because they are not fluent like native speakers, they frequently face injustice based on their language competence, their fluency and most especially their accent (Liggett, 2013). Due to a language barrier, ELs in the mainstream classrooms tend to feel that they are not

being treated equally as their native speaking peers, and they feel that they are being marginalized by their teachers as well as their English-speaking peers (Guerrero, 2021). Moreover, according to Guerrero (2021, their difficulty in speaking English can cause division among ELs. Separation among them prohibits a physical space that is comfortable; ELs feel lonely when there is no harmony between them and their peers (Guerrero, 2021).

Compared to other groups of students in the ESOL program, Haitian ELs confront more distinct challenges than any other groups of non-English groups attending M-DCPS. “They are not English speakers, and they are more poorly prepared than most foreign teenagers for the challenges and rigors of the Florida secondary education standards leading to the high school diploma” (Pichard, 2006, p. 2). Nevertheless, as Pierre (2018) stated, “ELs of Haitian descent have mixed expectations about their academic success and environmental adjustment” (p. 21). They are aware that if they are not provided with enough assistance to navigate through the American educational system, this could lead to discouragement and could also affect their success.

According to Pichard (2006), studying in the educational system in Haiti is a long-term “anarchy” (p.72). The Haitian educational system has linguistic problems between Haitian Creole which the language of the entire population and French, the adopted language for academic purposes (Pichard, 2006). These students who already had language barrier issues while in Haiti continue to face language barriers in the U.S.; they are now only being taught in English, a totally divergent language. Due to this language barrier, it is a challenge for them to participate actively in class. According to Hilliker (2018), many ELs are hesitant to address their teachers; they are afraid to express

themselves and afraid to make their teachers aware when they do not comprehend something. Even when their teachers have stopped to ask for questions, many Haitian ELs will remain muted because they do not want the focus to be on them (Hilliker, 2018). Moreover, some ELs might not have sufficient English to formulate the questions to ask their teachers when they do not quite understand an explanation (Hilliker, 2018).

When English Learners are only being taught in English, they might not be able to stay focused to keep up with all the information. They will become frustrated and disengaged when they realize that they cannot understand their English-speaking teachers and their classmates. In general, mainstream teachers generally are not too familiar with approaches that are designed to effectively teach ELs (De Jong & Happer 2005). “While working with native English speakers, teachers will not encounter bilingual phenomena such as native language transfer or communication strategies such as code switching” (Meyers-Scotton & Jake, 2001, p.9). Teachers could mistakenly draw their conclusion by thinking that the first language (L1) of the ELs reflects their performance in the target language and conclude that L1 interferes with the students’ academic performance (De Jong & Happer, 2005).

ELs often experience challenges in the mainstream classrooms and because of that they cannot concentrate as much as their native speaking classmates (De Jong & Happer, 2005). When ELs do not get the opportunity to stop and relax their minds for a few minutes in between lessons, their learning process might slow down (Pendergast et al., 2018). Therefore, with the slowing down of the learning process they cannot communicate what they already know, and they become extremely disappointed (Meyers-Scotton & Jake, 2001). “Listening to a new language demands high

concentration. It is tiring, with a constant pressure to think about the form of the language and less time to think about curriculum content” (Piller, 2014, p 1). An EL has double responsibility, not only do they have to absorb all content areas from different curricula, but they must also master the target language at the same time. As ELs of Haitian descent are going through these cycles, they may experience significant stress, lack of self-esteem, disappointment, and indifference. This frustration could lead to disengagement in a sense that they fail to participate in the classroom. It also affects the ELs’ academic success when the teachers do not have any cultural background knowledge to effectively provide them with assistance. Samuel (2021) stated that ELs do not easily get engaged when they are only reading texts that do not represent a variety of cultures. “Students who are at risk of disengaging from learning and schooling may experience lower levels of sense of belonging at school” (Pendergast, et al, 2018, p. 3).

ELs at the secondary level develop a sense of disengagement when they do not receive instruction of sufficient quality to enable them to make academic progress (Pendergast et al., 2018). Most of the time, secondary ELs in the mainstream classrooms feel like they are being rejected by native speaking peers and their teachers; they often must work in isolation during group activities (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2018). There is not enough communication, if any at all, between them, their teachers, and their peers. According to National Council of Teachers of English (2008), ELs are often hesitant to voice their opinions or provide individual answers voluntarily during class discussion. Somé-Guiébré (2015) stated that interaction between ELs and their mainstream teachers at the secondary is very limited, and it is often conditioned by the level of fluency of the

ELs. More investigations are needed to understand factors that are affecting secondary marginalized ELs (Pendergast et al., 2018).

Many ELs, and especially Haitian ELs, live in poor neighborhoods; therefore, they often frequent overcrowded institutions or inner-city schools whose budget does not allow them to have enough resources to assist the students, nor do they have the necessary earnings to provide satisfactory instructional services are not considered as priorities (Schnepf, 2007). In addition, most ELs of Haitian descent at the high school level not only have to go to school, but very often they also have to go to work to support other family members in Haiti (Augustin, 2016). The frustration of learning a third language while also not having anybody to help them at home can also cause Haitian ELs to fall behind in their studies.

Haitian ELs in M-DCPS face many challenges that may lead to discouragement in their learning. One difficulty in addressing the challenges that Haitian ELs face is that their experiences of engagement and/or disengagement in the mainstream classrooms are understudied. In particular, there is a lack of research about Haitian ELs' experiences from these students' perspective. There is no previous research conducted in M-DCPS in which ELs of Haitian descent at the high school level had the opportunity to voice their experience in their own words, and in their native language. It is important for them to express themselves about their experiences in the mainstream classrooms in their own language; they need to feel comfortable with their choice of words and expressions and use of correct terminology to share their frustration without hesitation with someone that could clearly understand them. It becomes a problem if they must struggle to come up with the right vocabulary words to share their educational experiences; what they want to

communicate might not be translated correctly because there are qualitative differences in ideas and what can be expressed in another language.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this narrative inquiry is to understand how ELs of Haitian descent at the high school level think about their engagement and/or disengagement of their education in the mainstream classrooms. As described by Clandinin and Huber (2010), “Narrative inquiry is a qualitative methodology that explores the life experience of individuals; it focuses not only on individuals’ experiences but also on the social, cultural, and institutional narratives within which individuals’ experiences are constituted, shaped, expressed, and enacted” (pp. 42-43).

Attention to the participants’ native language was central to this narrative inquiry. All the participants spoke Haitian Creole and they were not fluent yet in English. Since Haitian Creole is also my native language, I wanted the participants to be comfortable sharing their stories. When they spoke in their mother tongue, they conveyed extensive and accurate information. I was able to understand and interpret all their expressions or proverbs that they used during the interviews. They were able to communicate their information without hesitation and they did not make excessive effort to respond with their answers.

Research Question

This study was directed by the following research question: What do the stories of Haitian immigrants learning English in the mainstream classrooms reveal about their experiences of engagement and/or disengagement with their education?

Statement of Significance

In this research, I examined the lived experiences of ELs of Haitian descent in the mainstream classrooms from all three regions in M-DCPS. I investigated factors that are related to their engagements and/or disengagements throughout their studies. I discovered two main themes and six sub-themes. The participants discussed transition shocks in which they elaborated on the registration process, block schedule, cross-cultural differences, and hesitation. They also talked about causes that led to their disengagement such as language barriers, marginalization, and lack of resources.

Unlike previous qualitative studies on ELs, this study was notable because it provided ELs of Haitian descent the ability to express themselves about their engagement and/or disengagement in the mainstream classrooms in their home language. They also shared their past and present experiences about their life at school, at home, and in their communities. They shared cultural information that is related to education and how it influences their social interaction with their peers and their teachers. The cultural aspect could be significant because it is crucial for teachers to be well-informed of the cultures and certain traditions of their ELs so that they are fully capable of embracing all of them in their classrooms (Guerrero, 2021). By listening to their stories, teachers may hopefully become better equipped to assist them with their educational needs.

The voices of ELs of Haitian descent might lead to more adequate teaching formalities that could be profitable to all ELs and especially in communities where they continue to feel marginalized. This research could also drive to other considerable studies. Based on the problems explained above, findings from this research have the

potential to benefit ELs of Haitian descent in the mainstream classrooms. It could also provide information that could benefit the ELs themselves, their peers, teachers of ELs in general, and counselors. Furthermore, this research could open the door for more studies of ELs of Haitian descent in the mainstream classroom. The findings could provide a base line for mainstream classroom teachers, especially those of Haitian descent, to better prepare themselves for differentiated instruction and to come up with better procedures for intervention to apply with their Haitian ELs so that that they could overcome the academic challenges of the classrooms throughout their studies.

Situating Self: Positionality

I was born in Haiti, and I entered the United States in 1986 after I completed seventh grade. Even though I came to the U.S. at a very young age, I always remained connected with the Haitian community; therefore, I always get to hear similar stories from different groups of Haitians regarding their experiences throughout the education systems in both Haiti and in the United States. As a Curriculum Support Specialist (CSS) for the Department of Bilingual Education and World Languages, a former teacher of ELs in one of the school districts in South Florida and as a former EL in M-DCPS, constructivism shapes my approach to comprehension and enlightenment.

“Constructivism is a learning theory which holds that knowledge is best gained through a process of reflection and active construction in the mind” (Mascolo & Fisher, 2005, as cited in Brau, 2018, p. 1). By considering the constructivism approach for the study, I get to examine my past experiences, my personal views, and my cultural background (Brau, 2018). Based on my personal experiences, and the passion that I have for ELs, I decided

to conduct this study to allow ELs of Haitian descent to voice their experiences. My passion for ELs is provoked by both individualistic and professional reasons.

During the period of my lifework as an educator and a CSS, I have had the privilege to observe mainstream classrooms with ELs at different level across M-DCPS from the point of view of a leader. Based on diverse types of behaviors that I observe among the ELs, I become interested in the causes of engagement and /or disengagement of English Learners of Haitian Descent. I observed that ELs in the mainstream classes are being placed in the back of the classrooms so that they can be invisible or forgotten. These types of settings lead them to feel as though they do not feel like they belong in school. When students feel welcome in a school environment, they become confident about themselves, and they have a better chance to succeed (Meier, 2017). These negative experiences make students understand that they are being excluded from the broad population of students (Liggett, 2010, p. 226).

Assumptions and Delimitations

A major assumption of this research is that all the participants would collaborate to share their stories with honesty concerning their educational adventures in both Haiti as well as the United States. I also assumed that the stories that they told me about their lives would meaningfully answer my research question.

Delimitations identify how research studies will be narrowed in scope, or simply put, identifies the boundaries (Pajares, 2006). They are the perimeters the researcher sets in terms of the extension of the study, the size of the population as well as the type of participants (Pajares, 2006). This study was delimited to a group of high school ELs of

Haitian descent in mainstream classrooms from M-DCPS, a large school district for the ESOL population in South Florida.

The participants were chosen from three schools, one from each region of M-DCPS based on this criterion. I needed to rely on my professional network to support recruitment of the participants. It was very challenging because the recruitment process was at the beginning of the school year, the time that the ESOL chairs were administering initial placement tests to their newcomers. As an employee of the district and as an independent researcher, I had to stay in close communication with the ESOL contact persons to get the participants in a timely manner. Even though I regularly communicated with the teachers, the process took longer than expected because at that time they were not really seeing the targeted students for the study. This study relies on a small sample size of six participants of Haitian descent, purposefully chosen, and narrative inquiry does not seek to generalize results of a larger population.

Definition of Terms

In the past, numerous terms were used to characterize students who start school with a language that is different from English. Students in the ESOL program have been called by the following names: “English as a Second Language (ESL), Second Language Learners (SLL), Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and Students and Language Minority Students (LMS)” (Gersten et al. 2007, p. 1). English Learner (EL) is now the new term (National Council of Teachers of English, 2008). Throughout the study, I use special terms of essential words and terminologies that are associated with ELs. This section presents their meanings.

Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA): An examination that has the following four different components: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. It was created under contract by Educational Testing Service (ETS) (FLDOE, 2008). CELLA was developed to provide proof of program accountability which corresponds with Title III of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (FLDOE, 2008). It is administered for placement of ELs in the ESOL program, for progress monitoring as well as exiting purposes (FLDOE, 2008).

Demotivation: Precise pressures from the outside that lessen the motivational basis of a behavioral intention or a continuing activity (Dörnyei, 1998 as cited Falout, Elwood & Hood 2009).

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): A program that is designed for English Learners (ELs) who seek proficiency in social and academic language; it generally teaches basic grammar, vocabulary and colloquial terms and phrases to ELs (English as a Second Language Directory, 2019-2020).

English Learner (EL): “An individual who was not born in the United States and whose native language is a language other than English; an individual who comes from a home environment where a language other than English is spoken; or an individual who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on his or her level of English language proficiency; and who has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or listening” (Fla. Stat. 1003.56(2), 2011).

Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA): The nation's main education law for all elementary and secondary public schools; the law holds schools accountable for the learning and achievement of all students (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). The main objective of

ESSA is to furnish an adequate opportunity for every student regardless of race, income, disability, home language, or background (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Home Language Survey (HLS): A questionnaire given to parents or guardians that helps schools identify which students are potential ELs and who will require assessment of their English language proficiency (ELP) to determine whether they are eligible for language assistance services; the HLS is written in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole (M-DCPS District Language Learners Plan, 2019-2022). The three yes or no questions are as follow: “1) Is a language other than English used in the home? 2) Did the student have a first language other than English? 3) Does the student most frequently speak a language other than English?” (Education Commission of the States, 2020). The questions on the survey are in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. If one of the answers is a “yes,” according to the Education Commission of the State 2020, students entering first through twelve grades will be tested with the Online Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA) and kindergarteners with the Oral Language Proficiency Scale Revised (OLPS-R). Those who attain a score within the limited English proficient range are considered as ELs and are being placed in the ESOL program (Education Commission of the States, 2020).

Lau vs. Nichols Discrimination Case: “Case in which the U.S. Supreme Court on January 21, 1974, ruled (9–0) that, under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a California school district receiving federal funds must provide non-English-speaking students with instruction in the English Language to ensure that they receive an equal education” (Bon, 2008).

Mainstream Classroom: The practice of including students in grades K-12 with special education services as well as English Learners in a general education classroom during specific time of the school day (Lippert, 2017).

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB): This law was effective from 2002-2015; it was designed to provide accountabilities for all and to attempt to reduce the gap between majority and minority students including students with Limited English Proficiency (Lee, 2014)

Oral Language Proficiency Scale Revised (OLPS-R): An assessment that is administered to kindergarten students whose parents answer yes to one more question of the language survey to determine student's Oral Proficiency (MDCPS-Division of Bilingual Education, 2020)

Summary

Chapter One presented the introduction of the study which focused on the engagement and/or disengagement of English Learners (ELs) of Haitian descent in the mainstream classrooms in M-DCPS and the lack of research related to the experiences of this unique group of ELs. The study was guided by the following research question: What do the stories of Haitian immigrants learning English in the mainstream classrooms reveal about their experiences of engagement and/or disengagement with their education?

The participants' native language played an essential role for the purpose of this narrative inquiry. The fact that I too am a native speaker of Haitian Creole, allowed the participants to feel comfortable as they discussed their experiences without hesitation. The study was significant because there was no previous study that was conducted with high school ELs of Haitian descent in Haitian Creole in M-DCPS. It was important for

Haitian ELs in M-DCPS to voice their experiences because they face many challenges that may lead to disengagement in their learning; their experiences of engagement and/or disengagement in the mainstream classrooms are understudied.

Chapter Two presents the literature review where the focus will remain on the engagement and/or disengagement of ELs in the mainstream classrooms. It will provide an overview of the different waves of Haitian immigrants in the U.S., immigration policies toward Haitian immigrants, the conceptual framework of the study, ELs in the mainstream classrooms, adjustment of ELs of Haitian descent in the U.S., the education system of both Haiti and in the United States, laws and policies regarding ELs, educational challenges of ELs, and sense of engagement and disengagement of ELs.

Chapter Three explains in depth the methodology of the study. Chapter Four presents the data analysis and the findings. Chapter Five is the summary of the findings, discussion, implications, and recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Background

Literature on the education of ELs has greatly focused on investigating their engagement and/or disengagement in the mainstream classrooms. According to an analysis from the Washington-based Migration Policy Institute, the birthplace of the majority of ELs was in the United States (Mitchell, 2012). Most ELs are not immigrants; while some ELs are foreigners to this nation, most of them were born in the U.S. by immigrant parents: over 75% of ELs in elementary grades are either second or third generation Americans, and about 57% of secondary ELs were basically born in the United States (Zong & Batalova, 2015 as cited in Breiseth, 2015). According to The Glossary of Education Reform, 2013, not only the population of ELs is the most rapid growing population in grades K-12 in the U.S., but it is also an incredibly diversified group representing many languages, unique cultures, different ethnicities, nationalities, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Even though the majority of ELs were born in the U.S., their parents and other ancestors are immigrants who communicate in their native languages at home (Glossary of Education Reform, 2013). Additionally, ELs might encounter a range of defiance that could discouragingly alter the improvement of their education and their academic performance, such as economic status, cultural shock, immigration status, and many more (Glossary of Education Reform, 2013). According to the Glossary of Education Reform 2013, many ELs are also recently arrived immigrants in the United States, and they may have experienced different circumstances, such warfare, nonstop strikes, political persecution, social turmoil, insecurity, and significant periods of educational interruption.

In this study, I needed to examine the sense of engagement and/or disengagement that exists among different ELs of Haitian descent in the mainstream classroom. I was particularly interested in different challenges that promote or hinder the academic achievement of ELs of Haitian descent. This literature review begins with an overview of the waves of Haitian Immigrants in the United States and U.S. immigration policies toward Haitians. Next, I discuss factors related to English Learners and English Learners in the mainstream classrooms. Then, I focus on Haitian students, first discussing the adjustment of Haitian students in the U.S., then providing an overview of the Haitian education system, followed by an overview of the American Education system in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, educational challenges in Haiti, educational challenges in the U.S., and the sense of engagement and/or disengagement of Haitian English Learners in M-DCPS.

Waves of Haitian Immigrants in the United States

Throughout history, foreigners have been coming to the U.S. to find a better life. Haitians are one of many groups that have been immigrated to the U.S. Most of the Haitians that are living in the U.S. are settled in South Florida (Kepley, 2011). According to the *Negro Educational Review* (2004), Haitian immigration to the United States is associated with waves that are tied to oppressive and harsh conditions of living in Haiti. The very first round of Haitian immigrants to the U.S., for example, started in 1957 when François Duvalier, “*Papa Doc*,” became president of the country (Negro Educational Review, 2004). According to Stepick (1998), most of these immigrants were the well-grounded political and economic *bourgeois* who had plans to return to Haiti when Duvalier was no longer in power. Furthermore, Zephir (1996) found that amid 1960s and

1990s the second wave of Haitian immigrants were the middle class consisting of many skilled laborers. Subsequently, the third wave of immigrants coming from Haiti since 1990 were mostly lower-class laborers (Chierici, 1991). Many members of the lower class left Haiti due to lack of jobs and resources, believing their children could benefit from living in the United States with freedom from political and economic turmoil (Augustin, 2016).

According to Zephir (2001), the third wave of Haitians has faced ostracism, as well as verbal and physical offenses from members of other diverse cultures and ethnicities. Many of the cultural misunderstandings and differences have led to negative stereotypes about Haitian immigrants. Cultural diversity has been found to be traumatic to Haitian adolescents in another word their own culture is often considered inferior, some of whom have reacted by putting aside their own culture to associate themselves with the culture of the dominant group (Vilme & Butler, 2004). To gain acceptance from other ethnic groups, immigrants from Haiti have make themselves known at various times as Africans, Caribbeans, or any other group they might fit in; many of them faced repeated situations that affect their ability to learn in the ESOL program and to function well in different social environments (Vilme & Butler, 2004). Furthermore, according to Stepick (2000) and Zephir (2001), adult Haitian immigrants continue to develop their ethnic identity while their children distance themselves from their cultural ethos.

ELs in the third waive have encountered difficulties and challenges in navigating through the system. Some of their challenges may include elevated level of mobility in moving between schools, limited practice developing and using scholastic vocabulary terminology – the verbiage that is essential to use in school while completing

assignments (Almon, 2015). They may also encounter challenges like other obligations, like going to work to support other family members back home, that take up a lot of their time while they are in school, insufficient access to regular lessons that are related to language and effective interaction with teachers and peers (Almon, 2015). Despite many challenges affecting students' academic achievement, Haitians continue to consider education as their number priority, and they carry with them the same behavior everywhere they go (Vanderkooy, 2011).

Farmer (2011) and Savard, Sael and Clormeus (2020) described a fourth waive of Haitian immigrants that is considered the most current one. The fourth waive of Haitian immigrants began in 2010 when a massive 7.2 magnitude earthquake killed a vast number of the population (Farmer, 2011, Savard et al., 2020). "The country, which was already experiencing a lack of infrastructure, was massively devastated by earthquake and a series of tropical storms" (Savard et al., 2020, p. 3). Due to the earthquake, according to Farmer (2011), an enormous number became homeless; they either lost their home entirely or their homes were damaged (Savard et al., 2020; University of the People, 2020). Besides the turmoil of national disasters, the country has been suffering from insecure governances over the last few years (Savard et al., 2020). "These have significantly weakened the central administration, which then has little capacity to manage and control the country's territory" (Savard et al. 2020 p. 1). Due to all the natural disasters, political instability and poor economic conditions, many Haitians have decided to leave the country to migrate to the United States, which they believe is the land of great opportunities (University of the People, 2022).

U.S. Immigration Policies toward Haitians

U.S. Immigration has rules and policies for all undocumented immigrants to follow in order to become legal residents in the country. These laws do not favor of Haitian immigrants; the steps that they must go through are very demanding and costly. “Many Haitians see United States immigration policy as historically racist and anti-Black, pointing to the U.S. occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934, including the support of a brutal dictatorship” (Penaloza, 2021, paragraph 1, second section). The U.S. supported Duvalier when he took power in 1957 with the vote of the Haitian people, very few would imagine how dictatorial his governance would become (Coleman, 2004). According to Coleman (2004), When Papa Doc was in power, the United States did not exercise any action to help establish a program that could aid the economics of the country; they rather amicably supported his dictatorial governance (Coleman, 2004). Duvalier used his brutality to suppress all the opponents of his regimen, so the U.S. did not trust anyone, either in the country or outside of the country, to succeed him. The U.S. thought replacing him could put the country to chaos; therefore, they preferred to support him and keep him in power (Coleman, 2004).

According to Cineas (2021), during early to mid-1970s some working-class Haitians could not resist under the brutal dictatorship of Papa Doc, and they decided to risk their lives by taking a boat to come to the United States of America. Undocumented Haitian immigrants attempted to apply for asylum when they began to be detected by U.S. authorities; when that began it provoked racist retaliation, mainly in South Florida, because it was at the time of the human rights movement when there was already racist retaliation (Cineas, 2021, p. 1). “Haiti is the country with the highest rate of asylum

denial in the United States; from October 2018 through June 2021, of 4,202 applications, only 194 were granted during this period” (Pinaloza, 2021, p. 3). According to Cineas (2021), Haitian immigrants have been seeking for legal status for years at U.S. boundaries, but all political administrations since the 1970s have handled their claims differently than those of all other immigrant groups. Their requests for legal status to stay in the U.S. have often been rejected, and they are detained for longer periods of time in detention centers (Cineas, 2021). At the beginning of 1990, for instance, when the U.S. apprehended over 12,000 refugees of Haitian descent at Guantanamo Bay for a long time, Immigration and Naturalization Services rejected most of their requests for asylum (Cineas, 2021). According to Cineas, certain immigration rules were purposely invented to detain Haitian immigrants from entering the United States (Cineas, 2021). “These policies became the prototype for what became a global system of migrant incarceration; what Haitians are experiencing is the kind of calamity that asylum was designed for in the period following World War II” (Lindskkoog, 2020, as cited Cineas, 2021, p. 2). The most recent group of Haitian immigrants is getting away from a country that has been suffering with non-stop and awful catastrophes (Cineas 2021).

As Seraphin (2011) stated, “Haitian immigrants, as a growing ethnic group in the U.S., endure more prejudice and discrimination from U.S. government than all other immigrant groups (p. 17). They were labeled as criminals rather than refugees (Seraphin, 2011). Dow (2008) postulates that “what these policies have in common in their justifying the mistreatment of disfavored groups by applying certain labels to them” (p. 30). Dow (2008) continued to explain this movement of racialism by declaring “if you categorize a person in a certain way, that person’s right and protection are gone, you can

do anything to that person” (p. 36). According to Seraphin (2011), besides encountering discrimination on immigration policies, students of Haitian descent keep on struggling to perform as well as other immigrant students.

Factors Related to English Learners

There are different factors that influence the success of ELs, and they are related to their engagement and/or disengagement in the mainstream classrooms. To better understand those factors, the problems that interrupt ELs studies and keep them from becoming successful need to be identified. As part of this examination, it is important to look at surroundings contextual factors that are related to ELs. Framing and supporting this research are three approaches that are essential to understanding the life experiences of ELs: Language as cultural resource, identity, and voices and/or narratives of immigrants.

Language as Cultural Resource

Language cannot be just communication alone. There is also a cultural aspect of language, and it is everything that the society reproduces (Duranti, 1997). Language facilitates social interactions, and it also creates cordial relationships among people (Duranti, 1997). Languages always carry significances and inquiries: the significances of a specific language characterize the culture and the values of a special group within a community (Slide, 2021). Interacting with a language usually embraces everything that it is surrounded by and especially its culture that is the associating intersection; the two are inseparable because communication encodes culture and implements ideas that consequently continue to repeat (Slide, 2021). According to Goodwin and Duranti (1992), language contributes to the way that people think and how they interact with each

other; it also relates to their social identities. When people stop using their native language, this could cause the depletion of their culture and the language could lose its value and its cultural characteristics (Kassulke, 2022). Language contributes to the achievement of the multiculturalism of the American society because it is not only an asset for the group of people that speaks it, but it serves the entire community they live in, and it also forms part of the cultural integration (Kassulke, 2022).

Moreover, translanguaging is also important for ELs. According to Garcia (2009) as stated in Herrera, 2017, “translanguaging is not only a linguistic practice of bilinguals and a pedagogical practice, but it is also a philosophical approach, which can be utilized not only to maximize the learning of emergent bilingual students, but to also empower learners by validating and celebrating their identities and cultures” (p.28). Educationally, it enables learners and teachers to take advantage of fundamental linguistic materials in order to be practical and reasonable of educating and learning (Garcia, 2009).

Translanguaging permits flexibility when using languages in order to teach and promote bilingualism (Herrera, 2017); it also permits writers to improve the difficulty and profoundness of written communication and enhances the commitment of readers who speak only one language (Canagarajah, 2011b). Garcia (2009) insists that we need to stay away from monoglossic conceptions of language patterns of education and try to follow effective patterns of bilingual in the twenty-first century. According to Herrera (2017), “Using students’ bilingualism as a resource should be the norm in the classroom to help mitigate inequalities in learning and instruction. Equity in education is typically examined through the lens of the curriculum; for instance, in making sure that a curriculum is multicultural and culturally relevant to its students” (p.33).

Identity

Identity is another lens to understanding the lived experiences of ELs in the mainstream classrooms. It establishes a framework to understand each participant's voice. Identity attributes to the specific person's attitude; it influences his or her own way of living. When investigating lived stories of immigrant students, it is important to consider their identity because it plays an essential role throughout their lived experience.

According to Martin and Duiate (2013),

Identity channels where the stories originate as well as how they formulate, and why they are told. When examining immigrants' lives, such an approach is useful in recognizing the sources of immigrants' identity. From a socio-cultural point of view, identity is relationally constructed in social contexts rather than an individual property or trait. It will be critical to comprehend the standpoint of the participants and knowing where they come from is also important. Acknowledging the participants' journey will allow the stories to be told with a real sense of fairness (pp. 121-122).

Voices and/or Narratives of immigrants

Listening to the voices of ELs of Haitian descent is one of the important steps that teachers in the mainstream classrooms can take to help their students with their academic progress. According to Becker, 2011, "Stories and voices of adolescent migrants are vital to comprehend; they help improve instructional strategies that are related to ELs' cultures as well as promoting full participation" (p. 25). Mainstream classroom teachers could provide possibilities with activities that could help bring the target language to life in

authentic circumstances. The students' produced narratives that could help identified through their identity (Martin & Daiute, 2013). As Brandon et al. (2009) spoke of, language is not just solely a simple form of communication, it is the basis that identifies the cultural identification, the feelings, and the beliefs of a group of people.

English Learners in the Mainstream Classrooms

There are several situations that affect the education of ELs in the mainstream classroom. Mainstreaming, which is having all students in the general population, has become a regular practice (Almon, 2010). In this instructional model all types of learners are placed into general classrooms instead of separating them; this approach includes ELs as they are often assigned to general classrooms to be mainstreamed along with indigenous speakers. In mainstream classrooms, instruction is presented to ELs as native speakers (Augustin, 2016). However, ELs have expressed their concerns about how they are struggling to interact with their classmates or even to voice their ideas while doing collaborative work in their general classes (Almon, 2010). They talked about challenges regarding their main confrontations, their hard time about learning domain specific vocabulary, limited time to take exams and tough time they are enduring with reading comprehension and insufficient vocabulary for writing (Almon, 2015, p 467). Often, teachers find ELs to be challenging in mainstream classrooms, especially teachers who are still utilizing long-established instructional approaches that do not meet the needs of diverse learners.

Traditional strategies are a set of procedures utilized previously in the earlier years by educators for both English Learners and non-English Learners, some of which are no longer considered effective (Institute of Teacher Aide Courses, 2021). In

traditional teaching strategies the curriculum is not differentiated; this means that teachers mostly consider whole group instructions and do not pay much attention to students' individual needs; students who are struggling do not make any progress because the strategies that those teachers use do not satisfy their needs (ITAC, 2021). With traditional classroom strategies, there are no allowances for individual abilities; the teachers do not spend time to check for comprehension, basic competence, previously learned information, incitements, dreams, temperament, different approach to learn, and special needs (ITAC, 2021). In classrooms where teachers continue to use traditional strategies, the ELs do not usually feel that they are welcome (ITAC, 2021; Spangenberg-Urbschat & Pritchard, 1994). It is more likely to be an environment where they may feel isolated and struggle to belong resulting in academic challenges (Spangenberg-Urbschat & Pritchard, 1994). Traditional classroom uses the teacher-centered approach instead on concentrating on student-centered strategies. In practice, ELs give better performance with teachers that adopt a mixture of teacher and student-centered exercises during their instructions all year round (ITAC, 2021); "the student-centered classroom involves changes in the roles and responsibilities of learners and instructors, in the delivery of instructional strategies, and in learning itself" (TEAL, 2010, p. 1).

School leaders must develop strategies to overcome the sizeable challenges faced by ELs in the mainstream classroom (Harper et al., 2007). "Mainstream teachers who are not certified in ESOL or who are not ESOL endorsed may be culturally and linguistically unprepared if they have not received prior training explicitly directed towards working with ELs, which in turn may inhibit student learning" (Lippert, 2017, p. 23). When teachers understand their students' background, they get to plan efficiently as they pay

close attention to the cultural and syntactic needs of their students (McCann, Miles, & Michell, 2010); therefore, effective curriculum planning is needed to prepare ELs to succeed in the target language (Brisk, 2006). Lippert (2017) stated that “teachers who are unaware of cultural backgrounds may unintentionally create barriers between themselves and the ELs, thus students may perceive that their cultural background is not accepted in the mainstream. Ultimately, this may create barriers to learning for the ELs (p. 23).” ELs must cope to familiarize themselves with a language that is different from theirs, adapting a new entourage, and dealing with several factors such as socioeconomic status (SES) that impede learning (Canadian Council for Learning, 2010). The students might be going through their early learning phase in which they are not too verbal, an instinctive element that is associated with language acquisition (Krashen, 1988). Regardless of their differences, they must spend extra time to catch up with native English Speakers (Rawe, 2020).

Motivation

Motivation is an essential factor in learning a new language. “Teachers and researchers have extensively accepted motivation/demotivation as one of the most essential elements in second language/foreign language (L2) learning” (Ekiz & Kulmetov, 2016, p. 19). Without enough motivation, according to Ekiz and Kulmetov (2016), “even adults with the most extraordinary skills cannot achieve long-term goals, and neither are suitable curricula and good teaching sufficiently on their own to guarantee student accomplishment” (19). According to Masgoret and Gardner (2003), an inspired learner always wants to perform well in school, takes education seriously, is very skillful, has positive plans, and is very enthusiastic about studying. As pointed out by Oxford and

Shearin (1996), “motivation is a critical, vital aspect of which learners are fully involved in learning process” (p.5).

According to Ekiz and Kulmetov (2016), when it comes to the essence of motivation on second language, only the confident side of it is being considered. Regrettably, throughout the educational process students may become negatively influenced as well; certain negative influences might have significant effects on motivation” (Ekiz & Kulmetov, 2016, p. 20). Beginning second language learners might run through adventures that are associated with learning (such as embarrassment in public, subpar performance) or sociable educational interactions (like temperament and/or behavior of teacher, the learning center environment) (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2011). The negative part of this inspiration, according to Dornyei and Ushioda (2011) is called demotivation.

Demotivation

Demotivation is described as certain extrinsic forces that minimize the motivational basis of a behavioral intention or an everlasting action (Dornyei, 1994 as cited by Cankaya, 2018, p. 2). Demotivation learners do not demonstrate interest in the second language or the community culture of the second language, they are hesitant to engage in any class activities, and they have no intimate connection with their teachers and/or classmates; consequently, ever-growing diffidence is manifested in them in the classroom environment (Ekiz & Kulmetov, 2016). Ultimately, according to Ekiz and Kulmetov (2016), these students terminate with horrible learning results which, consequently, disturb the rest of the motivation. A crucial factor in the motivation to learn a second language is the socio-functional validity (Ekiz & Kulmetov, 2016). Based on the

learner's point of view, absorbing an additional language could or could not be very helping; it all depends on how the student's general life is (Ekiz & Kulmetov 2016). "Students can be affected by their learning environment and physical conditions of their classroom as their friends or peers do" (Ekiz & Kulmetov, 2016).

In mainstream classrooms, ELs with monolingual teachers are in situations where they must use English only with their teachers and even with their peers that might be able to help them in their home language. The language of ELs may be considered as inferior and the students may also consider as inferior as well (Nelson & Davis-Wiley, 2017). English-only policies marginalize all ELs by prohibiting them from showing achievement in their respective class; it serves a barricade for second language learners (Nelson & Davis-Wiley, 2017). Students may realize that their culture is not acknowledged in the mainstream classroom; ultimately, this could cause obstacles to the learning process for the ELs (Lippert, 2017).

English Learners Sense of Engagement and/or Disengagement

Educators in mainstream classrooms agree that ELs become engaged when their culture is embraced throughout lessons and their language is considered as a foundation of who they are (Kaplan, 2019 as cited in Baker, 2016). ELs become engaged when the classroom is cultivating an appreciation of diversity. Kaplan (2019) stated that it is very important that the curriculum as well as the midst of the classrooms appreciate and consider the lives of all learners. It stimulates belongingness for Haitian ELs to encounter information about Haiti in classroom curriculum in the United States (Seraphin, 2011). "Not only that could create a sense of engagement among ELs of Haitian descent, they have a better grasp of their stance as members of the American society; their peers will

also learn to break the stigmatization of Haitians as illegal immigrants who lack the agency to save themselves” (Seraphin, 2011, p. 7).

ELs often become disengaged when they are unable to communicate with their teachers and peers. When they cannot interact in class, they feel isolated and that can cause other students to make fun of them. As Gándara and Hopkins (2010) argued, this could cause long-term effects on their own confidence and capability to assimilate in general public. Due to language barrier, ELs could become frustrated, demoralized, and disengaged when they cannot understand most of what other people say. Sometimes it is difficult for ELs to communicate their knowledge because they lack certain academic vocabulary (Gandara & Hopkins, 2010). The basic vocabulary that they know is insufficient for them to do well in the core subjects, to pass standardized test that are meant for native speakers and to even compete with their native speaking peers in the classrooms (Gandara & Hopkins, 2010).

When ELs cannot function the way, they supposed to, they will be disengaged and that will lead to failure (Gandara & Hopkins, 2010). Because of educational disturbance that exists in Haiti, students in Haiti never get to spend a whole full year in school; therefore, the success of ELs of Haitian descent does not only depend on the assistance they get in learning the target language, but it is also depends in learning their academic subjects (Augustin, 2016).

Adjustment of ELs of Haitian Descent in the U.S.

Adapting to another environment with a different educational system requires time and effort. According to Pierre (2018), adapting to a new culture cannot happen suddenly; this is a lifelong procedure. Harlow (2019) stated that acculturation is to know

how to maintain your own distinct culture while integrating efficiently within different cultures. It continues to happen when immigrants encounter circumstances that are new to them (Diakanva, 2011). “The process of acculturation is most commonly discussed regarding a minority culture adopting elements of the majority culture, as it typically the case with immigrant groups that are culturally ethnically distinct from the majority in the place to which they have immigrated” (Cole, 2019, p. 1). It takes a great deal of effort for immigrants from Haiti and many other countries that do not speak English to adopt the tongue of the new society (Lakey, 2001).

According to Pierre (2018), Haitian immigrants have experienced many obstacles which include racial, familial, social, and language complexities in their process of acculturation. Immigrants arriving from Haiti to the United States are very different from other immigrant groups. Researchers have noted that immigrants of Haitian descent come to the United States with exceptional learning needs, which are disregarded and very often neglected by teachers, other school personnel in low-income communities (Lakey, 2001; Pierre 2018). This lack, according to Desir (2007), affects learners’ capability to achieve their education in the U.S. (p.73). ELs of Haitian descent face diverse types of discrimination that could affect their study. ELs’ accents, their biological features, their cultural uniqueness, and their activities, their resistance and their quietness can all be justifications for racial discrimination as well as rejection and exclusion in the classroom (Mudhaffer, 2013). Facing challenges on multiple fronts, “ELs of Haitian descent have many obstacles to overcome in the process of gaining an education in the United States” (Augustin, 2016, p. 74). According to different scholars, their challenges may consist of

learning a third language, adapting to a new educational style, familiarizing themselves to the American system, and handling other family issues (Elie, 2011).

The United States of America is a melting pot; immigrant students must adapt themselves to everything that is related to the American society including all its cultivating standards (Golden Beacon USA, 2020). They are also inspired profoundly by both their native culture and the variety of different cultural traditions they observe in the United States of America (Gelin, 2012). People immigrate to the United States for varied reasons. Based on a study that was done by Desir (2020), Haitian students moved to the U.S. to flee insecurity, political instability that leads the country to poverty; these conditions of living affect them emotionally and they have profound influence on their education success. It is not easy to live in a country where people cannot plan for their future. Haitian immigrant students enter the United States because they are looking for a better life; they want to experience a different mode of living (Vanderkooy, 2011). Nevertheless, life has not been easy for Haitian immigrant adolescents in the U.S.; throughout their journeys, they have encountered many obstacles that often discourage them (Fawzi et al., 2009).

Gelin (2010) noted that unlike other ethnic groups, Haitian immigrant students in the United States have no other classification besides economic refugees; even though Haiti has been suffering with political instability. Haitian immigrants are not seeing as political refugees no matter what their social rank or class may have been in Haiti. Immigrants from Haiti experience major obstacles to get accepted and incorporated into United States (Gelin, 2010). Haitian immigrants are treated differently than any other migrant groups (Kaur, 2021). “They have been misunderstood and placed under scrutiny

for national security due to racial profiling” (Vanderkooy, 2011). Transitioning from Haiti to the United States is not an effortless process for Haitian immigrants. They have faced many obstacles throughout their journey. In the American society, they affronted issues like aggression, injustice, intolerance, favoritism, and preferentiality by official U.S. policies (Vanderkooy, 2011). When immigrant students experience these obstacles, their educational life is affected, they get discouraged throughout their studies and they have extraordinarily little chance to succeed (Elie, 2011). Besides these barriers, their study could also be affected the fact that their parents or guardians might have insufficient educational competence to assist them (Pierre, 2018); however, regardless of all kinds of challenges, Haitian students are always willing to learn. “Many studies have shown that Haitian students have been taught that education is the key to prosperity and dignity, which motivates and instills in them the willingness to learn” (Elie 2011; Pierre, 2018).

Different scholars are considering ELs of Haitian descent as a threefold low-class group (Gelin, 2010; Vanderkooy, 2011). “They consider them as immigrants or foreigners; as black, which subjects them to prejudice; and as non-English and non-Spanish speakers” (Vanderkooy, 2011, p. 10). Throughout their transitioning process, Haitian immigrant students encounter school personnel that do not comprehend their ways of interacting socially and their cultural backgrounds; therefore, they ended up experiencing a lack of trust throughout their adjustment in the new system (Desir 2007). Based on all those findings, ELs of Haitian descent demonstrate stress and traumatic emotions through tedious compartments which have effect on their educational achievement as well as their relationships with their peers, (Desir 2007). “Trauma has

been defined as events that overwhelm the ordinary systems of care that give people a sense of control, connection, and meaning ... they confront human beings with the extremities of helplessness and terror and evoke the responses of catastrophe” (Herman, 1997, p. 34).

Since trauma is described by how someone or a group of people responds to certain situations, it is evident that each person’s trauma is different from another one. According to a study done by Pierre (2018), a few ELs of Haitian descent have achieved their goals, but many of them did not prosper because of emotional and unrevealed defiance like interruption in their studies, communication barrier, and most importantly cultural adaptation. Besides studying, a considerable number of ELs of Haitian descent are also dealing with some other family issues that could also affect their academic success; very often, the ones that are newly arrived endure economic difficulties. According to Giles (1990) and Nicholas (2008) as cited in Pierre 2018, Many of the young adult ELs of Haitian descent have the obligation to take care of other family members that they still have in Haiti, specifically those who took part in contributing to their migration to the United States; if they could not afford to help those relatives, the stresses of the family reunification might cause distress, fear, disagreement, and subdivision. In circumstances like this, they are living under pressure; their cultural adaptation and educational success could significantly be affected (Pierre, 2018).

An Overview of the Haitian Education System

For this study, it is important to give an overview of the Haitian educational system to better understand the educational cycle of ELs of Haitian descent and to better understand their experiences throughout their studies. For this overview, I share some of

the important articles in the constitution that talk about education. The Haitian Constitution that was amended in 1987 covers the people's right about education. The *Constitution de la République d'Haïti (1987)* and United Haitian Home Page (2005) declared in the following articles:

Article 32- The State guarantees the right to education. It sees to the physical, intellectual, moral, professional, social, and civic training of the population.

Article 32.1- Education is the responsibility of the State and its divisions. They must make schooling available to all, free of charge, and ensure that public and private sector teachers are trained.

Article 32.2- The first responsibility of the State is education of the masses, which is the only way the country can be developed. The State shall encourage and facilitate private enterprise in this field.

Article 32.3- The Primary school is compulsory under penalties to be prescribed by law. Classroom facilities and teaching materials shall be provided by the State to elementary school students free of charge.

Article 32.9- The State has the duty to make all necessary provisions to intensify the literacy campaign for the masses.

Article 33- There shall be freedom of education at all levels. This freedom shall be exercised under the control of State.

The educational system in Haiti is divided between public and private sectors. "More than 80% of the primary schools are private, and a quantity resulting in a great divide between the quality of education that students receive in the different types of institutions" (University of the People 2020, p. 2). Education in Haiti in private schools is in French, but it is in French and Creole in the public institutions (Fleming, 2019). Four out of five schools are private (University of the People, 2022 & Fleming, 2019).

Primary education in Haiti is mandatory for aged children between 6 and 11 years old, but it is not mandatory for children who are entering pre-schools (Haiti Educational

System, 2012; University of the People, 2021). Fundamental education is divided into three sections of three years each; the third section is finalized in elementary or secondary schools (Haiti Education System 2012). According to Haiti Educational System (2012), 81.5% of students in the third cycle, grades 7th through 9th, attend private institutions due to the limited availability of public institutions; at that level, the students study a range of general education subjects (Haiti Educational System, 2012). “After completing primary Fundamental Education, the student must pass an official national exam written in French at the end of 9th grade, in order to earn a certificate of completion and advance to the secondary level” (Haiti Educational System, 2012, p.1). Because the national exams are written in French, they create a language barrier for students; most of the population could only express themselves in Haitian Creole (Haiti Educational System, 2012). According to Haiti Educational System (2012), the number of students that could speak French is very minimal and those students are mostly from the elite families.

Promotion to the next grade is not on how the students master the subjects, but it is rather on memorization of lines and long chapters in French and often they do not understand the content of what they are memorizing (Lawless, 1992). Memorization is the most essential element for instructing the students as well evaluating them (Lawless, 1992, p. 148). For the last two years of secondary school, *Rhétô* and *Philo*, the students are done with general education courses and choose a focused curriculum based on their area of interests and their main objectives (Haiti Educational System, 2012). The students are obligated to take another official examination in French after *Rhétô* and must have a passing score to be accepted in *Philo – Classe Terminale* (Haiti Educational System, 2012). That exam is known as the first Baccalauréat – *Baccalauréat Première Partie*

(Haiti Educational System, 2012; Pichard ,2006). After Philo, the students sit for another official national state exam – Second Baccalauréat (Haiti Educational System, 2012; Pichard, 2006). These exams can be exceedingly difficult for many of the candidates, and the students need a lot of time to prepare themselves (Haiti Educational System, 2012). There is no guarantee that all the candidates who take the exam will acquire the necessary skills to pass the official national state exams (Pichard, 2006).

The curriculum for secondary education is very heavy based on the number of subjects that are taught each year in grades 9-10 (Pichard 2006). Every year, five subject areas are selected by a lottery system for the second *Baccalauréat* exam (Haiti Educational System, 2012; Pichard, 2006). During the years in secondary schools, the students receive fluctuating amounts of instruction; there is general similarity that exists between the public and the private institutions and this is with respect to the curriculum being taught, how it is dictated by the department of education and more specifically the section that handles the *Baccalauréat* exams (Pichard, 2006). The percentage of students that pass these exams annually is always around 20% and 40% (Pichard, 2006). Once the students earn their high school diploma, after passing Philo and the last official state test, they are able to enter a university or a professional school, depends on the student economic status (Haiti Educational System, 2012). In Haiti, students must satisfy the competencies according to the benchmarks per grade-level to move to the next class. For students to be promoted to the next grade level they must master all the competencies and pass the state exams; it does not matter how they are (Pichard, 2006). According to Pichard (2006), in Haiti, there are students who are in their late teens, and they are still in

elementary schools and there are some others who are in their late twenties and early thirties that are still in secondary schools.

Students are being forced to express themselves in French in the classroom and there are major consequences in case they violate the rules. Pichard (2006) and Desir (2007) explain: Numerous teachers in the country use a similar classroom-management called *Tenez le Symbole (Hold the Symbol)* with all students, no matter how old the student is; this technique forces the students to speak French only in the classrooms so that they could have them ready for the official national exams. If, in any circumstances, the teacher hears the student expressing himself or herself in Haitian Creole, the teacher would give the student the *symbole* which could be anything that the teacher wishes to use for that day to represent the *symbole* and that the student know what is using for the *symbole* on that day Pichard (2006) and Desir (2007). Whoever has the *symbole* on his or her desk has to listen to another student speaking Haitian Creole to pass it on and so on; therefore, the student with the *symbole* at the end of the day will have to stay on detention for one hour after school and will be get beaten with what is *rigwaz* – a special belt that used by the teachers (Desir, 2007; Pierre, 2018). Students usually feel ashamed when they are being caught talking in Haitian Creole instead of French, which is for the most part a broken French; for this reason, they rather stay with their mouth close for the entire school day rather than taking any risk to talk (Desir, 2007; Pierre, 2018). Most of the students do not get to fully practice French, they end up not earning a high school diploma because they cannot pass the official national state exam that is all in French (Desir, 2007; Pierre, 2018).

An Overview of the American Education System in M-DCPS

The educational system of the United States possesses structures that are established at state level (Wise, 2017). “In Miami-Dade County Public schools, a school district in the state of Florida, compulsory schooling starts at the age of six and runs for 12 consecutive years” (Florida Education Laws, 2020, p.1). Most schools that are financed by public funds provide location sites according to the residency of the actual student, in favor of those living nearby (Wise, 2017). This section will focus on the registration procedure, programmatic assessments, high school graduation requirements, and laws and policies regarding English learners.

Registration Procedure

All students entering M-DCPS register according to the address of the parents or their immediate legal guardians (FLDOE - District Plan, 2018). If their proof of address is not in the neighboring school, they will be directed to the school that matches their address (FLDOE - District Plan, 2018). At the time of registration, each parent /guardian has to complete a Home Language Survey (HLS) that addresses the following three questions: “a) Is a language other than English used in the home? B) Did the student have a first language other than English? And c) Does the student most frequently speak a language other than English? The HLS is written in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole” (FLDOE - District Plan, 2018, p. 3). Littlejohn (1998) stated that “HLS criticism extends back some time, with researchers arguing that HLS questions, administration, and results are inconsistent across and within states; he gave the specific example that a student who mostly spoke English but who have a Spanish-speaking relative stay in home would be tested” (p. 5). According to Abedi (2008) bilingual parents sometimes answer negatively

to all questions so that their children do not go through ESOL. Abedi (2008) reported that “parents might give inconsistent information of HLS for several reasons beyond question comprehension, including concerns about citizenship or opportunities for their children.” Some families have reported that they provide false information when completing the HLS to avoid identify their children as ESOL student (Taxin, 2014); this is associated to a stigmatization of being perceived as not competent in English (Monzo & Rueda, 2009).

Regardless of discrepancies, the registrar at the school submits the completed HLS forms that has at least one positive answer to ESOL liaison person responsible for language assessment at the site (FLDOE - District Plan, 2018). “The Oral Language Proficiency Scale Revised (OLPS-R) should administer to Kindergarteners and the Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA) to first through twelve graders; schools are required to complete the assessment and placement process prior to finalize the student’s schedule” (FLDOE-District Plan, 2018, p. 3). Students are considered to be ESOL based on the established score scale that is set by the publisher; the test generators determine students’ eligibility for the ESOL program and their needs for support (FLDOE - District Plan, 2018).

Health and Immunization Requirements

At M-DCPS, all parents of students must provide evidence of a health examination performed within 12 months by a medical provider before the students enter school (M-DCPS Health and Immunization Requirements, 2021). The proof of immunization must include a tuberculosis clinical screening; if, for any reason, the screening specifies that a follow-up skin examination is required, the student may enroll only with a statement from a medical provider that allows permission to attend school

(M-DCPS Health and Immunization Requirements, 2021). Students who are transferring from schools within the state of Florida or within other states in the county are not required to be examined again; however, all students' initially entering M-DCPS health screening must include a tuberculosis clinical screening, and proof of appropriate follow-up if necessary (M-DCPS Health and Immunization Requirements, 2021).

According to M-DCPS Health and Immunization requirements (2021), the students who are entering school for the first time or who are transferring into M-DCPS from out-of-State must present one of the followings:

1. **Florida Certificate of Immunization Form:** Complete Florida Certificate of Immunization form should be marked only when all kindergarten or seventh grade immunization requirements are met.
2. **Temporary Medical Exemption:** Temporary Medical Exemptions should only be marked when a medical provider indicates that the child has received as many immunizations as are medically indicated at this time. An additional Florida Certificate of Immunization form **MUST** be presented on or before the expiration date. If the additional certificate is not presented on or before the expiration date, the student must be excluded from school.
3. **Permanent Medical Exemption:** A Permanent Medical Exemption is provided when a child cannot receive one or more vaccines due to medical reasons. The medical provider **MUST** list the vaccine(s) that are contraindicated on the Florida Certificate of Immunization form.
4. **Religious Exemption:** A request for a religious exemption from immunization requirements is issued **ONLY** by the Florida Department of

Health in Miami-Dade County for a child who is not immunized because of his/her family's religious tenets or practices. The Religious Exemption from Immunization form (DH-681) must be kept on file at the school to facilitate identification of unimmunized/susceptible children needing exclusion during an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease.

Programmatic Assessment

The Programmatic Assessment, which is in the student home language, describes the methods that were established for determining students' prior education background and capacities as well as their prior pedagogical experiences as they were identified as ELs through the English Language Proficiency (ELP) assessments (FLDOE - District Plan, 2018). According to FLDOE – District Plan, 2018,

The programmatic assessment of out-of-state or out-of-country students takes place at the school, with staff seeking to document what prior school experiences each new student possesses, by using the student's school records, transcripts, and other evidence of educational experiences to determine grade level placement.

The M-DCPS District ELL Plan (2008-2009) describes appropriate steps that administrators need to follow regarding the Programmatic Assessment. The M-DCPS District Plan 2008-2009 stated that:

Principals shall take appropriate steps, in cooperation with faculty, to assess the student's level of learning in the core content areas and recommend the most appropriate placement for the student. Principals will use testing, faculty interviews, and/or the advice given by the Foreign

Records Department at Attendance Services to determine proper placement (p.2).

Furthermore, the M-DCPS District ELL Plan (2008-2009) stated that:

Students new to the district should be immediately assessed for reading and mathematics proficiency to determine if remediation is appropriate. Teacher-developed tests or the district's placement test for Algebra and Geometry in Spanish and Haitian-Creole may be used to determine the most appropriate placement for students at the secondary level (P.2).

Placing ELs of Haitian descent in the right class using the result of programmatic assessments could be a challenge (Augustin, 2016). The confidence of the results for the programmatic assessment is incredibly low. According to Augustin (2016), very often these exams are not even graded because the assessor might not be a speaker of the student's language and most of those test results are not being placed in the students' Limited English Proficiency (LEP) folders. The programmatic assessments that are created in the students' home language may not be appropriate; it is important to note that successful performance on these exams is often precluded by test-specific preparation that can include learning the format of the exam and how to answer specific question types (Augustin, 2016).

Requirements for High School Graduation

For students to graduate high school in M-DCPS, they must fulfill the requirements. According to M-DCPS Curriculum Bulletin Office of Academics and Transformation (2022-2023), "High school graduation requirements for Miami-Dade County Public Schools are established by the Florida legislature, the Florida Board of

Education, and school Board of Miami-Dade County” (p. 7). It further explains in M-DCPS Curriculum Bulletin Office of Academics and Transformation (2022-2023) that students must complete a total of 24 credits, a combination of 16 academic credits and 8 electives, to earn a high school diploma.

Besides earning the 24 required credit hours, a student who wishes to graduate must take and achieve a passing score in any statewide, standardized assessment that is recommended to earn a standard high school diploma or earn identified concordant scores or similar scores, as applicable, for the contingent year in which they started ninth grade (M-DCPS Curriculum Bulletin, 2022-2023). As per Florida Statute 1002.3105, a student who completes the required 24 credits, but did not obtain the passing scores on the state-approved graduation exam or earn a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) shall receive a certificate of completion in a form prescribed by the Florida Board of Education (M-DCPS Curriculum Bulletin, 2022-2023). Nonetheless, a student who is otherwise qualified to receive a certificate of completion may choose to stay in high school either as a full-time student or a part-time student for an extra year to receive special instruction through intensive classes that are designed to help improve his or her identified needs (M-DCPS Curriculum Bulletin, 2022-2023).

Based on the results of the most recent Florida Standards Assessments (FSA), ELs are not as successful as their native speakers’ peers. “Students who possess the socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic capital of the dominant class come to school with a ‘head start’ and stand to benefit from standardized tests” (Ayre, 2012, p.2). Certain students, such as ELs, face standardized tests that restrict them from showing their ability in the core subject areas, “simply because they had not participated in a cultural

experience common to the dominant social class” (Ayre, 2012, p. 44). “Oftentimes the students understand the reading passages and would be able of figuring out the answers to the questions that being asked by using their own words, but they are confused by the complexity of advanced and cultured vocabulary words that represent the different choices for the answers” (Ayre, 2012).

Laws and Policies Regarding English Learners

School districts must follow rules and policies when they have to implement programs to assist their ELs. They are required to ensure school and district level personnel comply with all the requirements and provisions set forth in significant laws, rules, regulations, and federal court orders. This section covers the following laws and policies by which they must abide: Title VI of the Civil Acts of 1964, *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), *Castañeda v. Pickard* (1981), Florida Consent Decree (1990) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) 2001.

Title VI of the Civil Acts of 1964

Title VI of the Civil Acts is important for ELs because it forbids discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in any plan of action that awards funding (USDOE, 2011). The Federal government has the power to consider the necessities of ELs and require states and districts to follow the act (USDOE, 2011). “School districts are required to develop a plan to assist ELs and help them overcome language barriers and to ensure that they can participate in the districts educational programs and succeed” (USDOE, 2011, p. 1). ELs must receive appropriate and available funding and must be provided an admissible education.

***Lau v. Nichols* (1974)**

The *Lau v. Nichols* found that if states require ELs to pass high stakes tests to be promoted or to graduate, the state must ensure those students have access to the appropriate curriculum. This law requires that students receive English language instruction and be treated with equality. As stated in the *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) “There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English and effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education” (p. 566).

***Castañeda v. Pickard* (1981)**

The case of *Castañeda v. Pickard* (1981) established three criteria when evaluating a district’s program for EL Students: (a) Is the program based on an educational theory recognized as sound by some experts in the field or is considered by experts as a legitimate experimental strategy? (b) Are the programs and practices, including resources and personnel reasonably calculated to implement this theory effectively? And (c) Does the school district evaluate its programs and make adjustments where needed to ensure language barriers are being overcome.

Florida Consent Decree (1990)

In August 1990, a judge of the United States District Court, Southern District of Florida, signed a Consent Decree giving the court power to enforce an agreement between the Florida State Board of Education and a coalition of eight groups represented by Multicultural Education, Training and advocacy, Inc. (META) and Florida legal services attorneys regarding the identification and provision of services to students whose native language is other than English. The plaintiff organizations involved in the case represent a broad spectrum of the civil rights/educational community. They are:

- League of the United Latin American Citizens
- ASPIRA of Florida
- The Farmworkers' Association of Central Florida
- Florida State conference of NAACP Branches
- Haitian Refugee Center
- Spanish American League Against Discrimination (SALAD)
- American Hispanic Educators' Association of Dade (AHEAD)
- Haitian Educators' Association

The Consent Decree that is also known as the META or ESOL Consent Decree of 1990 is the structure of Florida for conformity with federal and state laws and requirement regarding the education of ELs (Govoni & Palaez, 2011). As stated Govoni and Palaez (2011) "The Florida ESOL Consent Decree came about when League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), along with other civil rights/ educational community organizations, decided to sue the Florida State Board of Education" (p. 1). The organizations wanted the same educational rights for every student, despite of the individual's native tongue (Govoni & Palaez, 2011). Students in the ESOL program were not acquiring an adequate education that truly met their cognitive level because teachers in most schools were not properly coached to give ELs a significant and suitable education; those teachers lacked the coaching to provide assistance with equal opportunity to the ELs (Govoni & Palaez, 2011).

The Consent Decree of Florida opened the way to improve teaching for all ELs. "The monitoring part of the Consent Decree was created to make sure the program is running as it should. Monitoring includes a periodic review of program compliance, equal access under the Florida Educational Equity Act, and review of program effectiveness" (The Florida Consent Decree, 1990, p. 1). Schools are required to have files of students in place so that they could show that the program is working the way it supposes to in case they are being interrogated about a specific student (The Florida Consent Decree, 1990).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) 2001

The objective of the NCLB of 2001 was to provide accountabilities for all and to attempt to reduce the gap between majority and minority students (Gitomer et al. 2005). The NCLB Act of 2001 added a component for ELs which stipulates that EL students, during the initial year in schools in the United States, would take the state's mathematics and science assessments, and schools could choose to give either the reading or language arts content assessment (Gitomer et al. 2005). States are not mandated to combine results from mathematics and science or if given, the reading/language arts content assessment in the computations of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) calculations, which are component of the accountability prerequisites under NCLB (Gitomer 2005, p. 7). According to Devoe (2007), ELs have no opportunity to show proficiency because not only they are recent arrivals, but they do also not have sufficient vocabulary. To meet the demands of NCLB, states and local schools are mandated to ensure the English domains of ELs are evaluated; however, NCLB does not specify how each state ought to measure these skills (Gitomer et al. 2005). Additionally, the NCLB provides states the right to come up with the best approaches of schooling and does not enforce a specific approach of instruction for acquiring English and other academic subjects (Maryland Department of Education [MSDE], 2009).

Educational Challenges in Haiti

After discussing both Haitian and U.S. educational systems, I am now turning to the challenges of each for Haitian students. Haitian students face enormous defiance in both the Haitian and the United States scholarly systems. Some of the challenges in Haiti, according to Cone et Al (2013), are related to “numerous systemic problems, which

include limited financial support, inadequate resources, and antiquated curricula, which have been contributed to inadequate schooling experiences” (p. 265). Haitian students, from secondary school to university, have been suffered a lot from political confrontations (Desir, 2007). They were seen noticed as menaces to the existed dictatorship government from 1957 through 1986 and were thus restrained and incarcerated (Desir, 2007). According to Seraphin (2011) and Nicholas et al. (2009), Aristide continued with the same custom when he was in power in the 1990s. Adversaries of Aristide’s Lavalas Movement intimidated educational institutions and obliged them to demobilize under the threat of brutal force (Seraphin, 2011 & Nicholas et al, 2009). Haitian immigrant students have experienced brutality that eventually impacts their performances and attitudes and that also develops discrepancy that prevents them to adjust. (Pierre, 2018). “Students attended school sporadically and under constant threat. Pressure was exerted on institutions where there were children to frighten, to paralyze and to pressure the population” (Desir, 2007, p. 30).

In addition to instability politics, financial problems, insecurity, and all types of natural disasters, Haitian students also face linguistic barriers. The two officially recognized languages of Haiti are French and Haitian Creole, but French is considered as superior because it is mainly used in all private institutions even though most of the Haitian population only speaks Haitian Creole. Luzincourt and Gulbrandson (2010) pointed out the fact that French is the main written and administrative language of Haiti, it is recommended for any person wishing to commit as a full citizen of Haiti; the practice of using French rather than Haitian Creole in the classroom, especially in all private

institutions, disfavor the lower socioeconomic classes). As stated Luzincourt & Gulbrandson (2010),

Education has not only served to prevent, mitigate, and resolve conflict, it has also functioned as an underlying cause of, contributor to, and trigger for violent conflict in Haiti. Many elements of the education sector have also suffered because of social and political unrest. The multifaceted links between Haitian education and conflict, including those found in the current period of insecurity, are rooted in events that occurred long before independence (p. 6).

Throughout the years, political destabilization and general disturbance have had a diversity of negative consequences on Haitian education (Heinl & Heinl, 1996 as cited in Luzincourt & Gulbrandson, 2010, p. 6). Luzincourt and Gulbrandson (2010) and Heinl and Heinl (1996) stated amid François “Papa Doc” Duvalier’s regime, for instance, Duvalier’s *Tonton Macoutes* (a Haitian militia) incarcerated students who stood behind protestations of high school educators in 1959 (p. 6-7). In 2003, pro-President Aristide gangs, such as the *chimères* (ghosts), and officers struck several high schools and universities in the country, where students were holding antigovernment protests (Background Paper on Haiti, 2006). They plundered buildings, ravaged several departments, and hurt many around the country students (Background Paper on Haiti, 2006).

Students who go to school in Haiti do not have a safe journey; they suffer every day from a general lack of security, nonstop instability, and extensive violence (Background Paper on Haiti, 2006). Even when students reach their destination safely, they become distracted by widespread feeling of insecurity; therefore, they lose the

ability to concentrate on school matters (Luzincourt & Gulbrandson, 2010). Due to the increase of insecurity and political instability, many Haitian students have emigrated from the country (Luzincourt & Gulbrandson, 2010). The results of a study of immigrant students from Harvard suggest that 85% of the students experience a detachment from one or both parents during the migratory process (Pichard, 2006). Pichard's study (2006) discovered as well that 35% of immigrant students experienced detachment from their fathers for over five consecutive years; when separation from the father occurs during migration, it is usually very long one and might become permanent. These lengthy disconnections were specifically common among the Haitian students (Pichard, 2006).

Educational Challenges in the United States

Haitian students who have settled in the United States during the past ten years came with a history of extensive and prolonged exposure to insecurity, political instability, natural disasters, hunger, separation from one or both parents, violence, and linguistic issues (Desir, 2007 & Pierre 2018). Separation from one or both parents is quite common among Haitian students. According to research that was conducted in 2003 by HERN- Marcelin and was cited later by Pichard (2006), "Only 16% of Haitian students in South Florida live with both of their parents, 46% live with mom alone, 22% live with dad alone, and 16% live with other guardians. Many Haitian teenagers come to join parents that they have never lived with previously or have not seen in many years" (p. 127). Furthermore, this creates obstacles in connections or interrelations among family members, has entanglements for the mental health of immigrants, and often contributes to school abandonment or under-performance; parent and teenager may have been detached for an extremely long period of time and the parent does not associate well with the child

(Pichard, 2006). According to Pichard (2006), students who have left their parents in their countries of origin to unite with other relatives, or who entered the U.S. with just one parent (where the other one is staying behind) reported higher level of distressing disorders. Students often experience migratory separations as painful, and complications in family relationships and family dynamics often occur; school personnel may not be aware of the family situation, separation, or reunification issues; they may make judgements about these issues once they become aware (Suarez-Orozco, 2006 as cited Herrera, 2017).

According to Pichard (2006), besides all the mentioned challenges that students of Haitian descent face throughout their educational life in Haiti, they also encounter many other defiance in the process of adjusting themselves in U.S. schools. Pichard (2006) further explained, “While in Haiti, variables like education, wealth and income, and family background are linked together in defining class and status position, in the United States these variables do not operate on the same dynamics” (p.73-74). Like other immigrants from the Caribbean, immigrants from Haiti endure anonymity not just as immigrants but as Black immigrants: Blacks for white people and as foreigners for native-born Black Americans (Pichard, 2006). Moreover, Haitian immigrants frequently endure the stigma of being under suspicion as illegal foreigners - even if they possess the legal documents – as well as coming from the worse, unfortunate, and poorest country in the western hemisphere (Pichard, 2006). Both racism and prejudice in America strike Haitian immigrants extremely hard (Pichard, 2006). According to Pichard (2006), the fact that Haiti is basically an entire black country, many members of the Haitian middle classes have never encountered racism or prejudice in their entire lives; in Haiti,

foreigners are generally welcomed, appreciated, and embraced. Haitian students face school culture challenges. Pichard (2006) stated, “Most of the school culture devalues what Haitians value or accomplish. Speaking more than one language (Haitian Creole and French) is inconsequential if one cannot speak English” (p. 132), whereas strict separation of languages can be problematic as it prohibits learners from using resources they have formerly acquired in other languages.

Translanguaging contributes a lot to students’ knowledge gain in acquiring new content (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011) “and sociocultural as well as socioemotional development” (Gort & Sembiente, 2015, p. 10). According to Baker, 2011, as quoted in Herrera 2017, “Translanguaging is the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, and gaining understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages, although it can involve more than two languages as well” (p.23). According to Farrell (2021), Translanguaging refers to the act of multilingual people who are using their completely entire language repertory to converse, or more specifically to learn in an educational environment; in addition, it has been shown to contribute to learners’ identity development (Garrity et al., 2015; Velasco & Fialais, 2018). Translanguaging establishes a cultural area for the polyglot or the multilingual person by joining together inconsistent proportions of their life history, involvement and surroundings, their behavior, beliefs and ethics, their analytical and critical ability into one interconnected and significant implementation and making it into a lived experienced (Wei, 2011, as quoted Herrera 2017).

Cultural differences could lead to academic difficulties. Cultural differences in communication styles, for instance, create misunderstandings and misinterpretations

between Haitian students and their teachers and that impede student learning (Lynch 2008; Nicholas 2008). Eye contact can be different for every culture. Students from Haiti are very respectful, and they manifest their appreciation to people that are in position of superiority (Schwab & Schwab, GreatSchools Staff, 2009). As Schwab & Schwab (2009), “A teacher who is not familiar with the Haitian cultural norm, however, might consider the lack of eye contact as a disrespectful sign” (p. 1).

Guarnaccia et al., (2013) pointed out that there is a much better chance for immigrant students to succeed when family tie together; that could also help the students to deal with many different factors of acculturation, and to empower their educational aspirations (p. 2). One main obligation of most young Haitian ELs is that they must provide to their family members that they left in Haiti, and they also must take care of their own selves while they are studying. “Family relationships are central in their transition to American society, which demands more autonomy than their previous way of life in the homeland” (Guarnaccia et al., 2013). Family obligation in Haiti comes with sensible responsibilities (Pierre, 2018). Family members feel obligated, most of the time, to help or assist each other; they look after one another by taking commitment with fidelity for family members’ needs (Pierre, 2018). Some family members in Haiti have chosen to discontinue their own education and consecrate themselves to giving immediate assistance to siblings and relatives (Pierre, 2018). In U.S. society, the lives of families are quite different – there are less responsibilities in term of providing support and reach out long distance family members and relatives (Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002). Young adult Haitian immigrant students could feel overwhelmed because of so many financial responsibilities that they must deal. Gelin (2012) affirmed that “Haitian parents

depend on their children for survival due to low socio-economic opportunities. Therefore, a lack of family support could be a critical element in the young adult Haitian immigrant ELs' educational success."

Furthermore, Haitian students have consistently high aspiration for themselves. Seraphin (2011) argued that difficulties for students to attend school in Haiti influence their performances in the U.S. educational system. Seraphin 2011 continued by arguing, because education mostly belongs to the private sector in Haiti and has the affluence to maintain a system of class, there are circumstances where a lot of Haitian students did not have the chance to attend school in Haiti or their attendance was very little due to financial distress and ongoing misery in their family. These students not only they must get used to a completely different system, but also must adjust to their brand-new surroundings. As Seraphin (2011) stated, "Without proper intervention strategies, academic hardships are a bleak reality for newly immigrated Haitian students. These new students are hampered with limited content vocabularies and that create difficulties with standardized testing requirements that they must face" (p. 28).

Summary

The literature review for this study focused on the four different waves of Haitians in the U.S., immigration policies toward Haitians living in the U.S., factors related to English learners, English learners in the mainstream classroom, English learners sense of engagement and disengagement, adjustment of ELs of Haitian descent in the U.S., an overview of the Haitian education system, an overview of the American education system, , laws and policies regarding English learners, educational challenges in Haiti, and educational challenges in the United States.

According to the *Negro Educational Review* (2004), Haitian immigration to the United States is associated with waves that are tied to oppressive and harsh conditions of living in Haiti. “The first wave, for example, began in 1957 following François ‘Papa Doc’ Duvalier's rise to power” (Catanese, 1998). The second wave came between the 1960s and the 1990s (Stepick, 1998; Zephir, 1996). Subsequently, the third wave of immigrants began in 1990; immigrants from that wave were mostly lower-class laborers (Chierici, 1991). Augustin, (2016) stated that many of the lower class left Haiti due to lack of jobs, resources, and believe their children could benefit from living in the United States with freedom from political and economic turmoil.

The fourth wave of Haitian immigrants began in 2010 when a massive 7.2 magnitude earthquake took the lives of hundreds of thousands of the population (Farmer, 2011, Savard et al., 2020). ELs in the last wave encounter difficulties and many challenges to navigate through the system. Their education is affected by several factors. ELs go through challenging time to converse with their classmates or to be part of ongoing conversations the regular classrooms (Almon, 2010).

There are different factors that influence the success of ELs of Haitian descent, and they are related to their engagement and/or disengagement in the mainstream classrooms. This literature review covers three approaches that are essential to understanding the life experiences of ELs: Language as cultural resource, identity, and voices and/or narratives of immigrants. Language contributes to the achievement of the multiculturalism of the American society because it is not only an asset for the group of people that speaks it, but it serves the entire community they live in, and it also forms part of the cultural integration (Kassulke, 2022). Identity establishes a framework to

understand each participant's voice and it attributes to the specific person's attitude; it influences his or her own way of living. Listening to the voices of ELs of Haitian descent is one of the important steps that teachers in the mainstream classrooms can take to help their students with their academic progress. According to Becker, 2011, "Voices of adolescent migrants are vital to comprehend; they help improve instructional strategies that are related to ELs' cultures as well as promoting full participation" (p. 25).

Mainstream classroom teachers could provide possibilities with activities that could help bring the target language to life in authentic circumstances. The students' produced narratives that could help identified through their identity (Martin & Daiute, 2013). As Brandon et al. (2009) spoke of, language is not just solely a simple form of communication, it is the basis that identifies the cultural identification, the feelings, and the beliefs of a group of people. Motivation is an essential factor in learning a new language. Without enough motivation, according to Ekiz and Kulmetov (2016), "even adults with the most extraordinary skills cannot achieve long-term goals, and neither are suitable curricula and good teaching sufficiently on their own to guarantee student accomplishment" (19). Demotivation learners, in the other hand, do not demonstrate interest in the second language or the community culture of the second language, they are hesitant to engage in any class activities, and they have no intimate connection with their teachers and/or classmates; consequently, ever-growing diffidence is manifested in them in the classroom environment (Ekiz & Kulmetov, 2016).

Educators in mainstream classrooms agree that ELs become engaged when their culture is embraced throughout lessons and their language is considered as a foundation of who they are (Kaplan, 2019 as cited in Baker, 2016). ELs become engaged when the

classroom is cultivating an appreciation of diversity. ELs often become disengaged when they are unable to communicate with their teachers and peers. When they cannot interact in class, they feel isolated and that can cause other students to make fun of them. As Gándara and Hopkins (2010) argued, this could cause long-term effects on their own confidence and capability to assimilate in general public. According to Pierre (2018), Haitian immigrants have experienced many obstacles which include racial, familial, social, and language complexities in their process of acculturation. Immigrants arriving from Haiti to the United States are very different from other immigrant groups. Researchers have noted that immigrants of Haitian descent come to the United States with exceptional learning needs, which are disregarded and very often neglected by teachers, other school personnel in low-income communities (Lakey, 2001; Pierre 2018). This lack, according to Desir (2007), affects learners' capability to achieve their education in the U.S. (p.73).

An overview of the Haitian and the American Educational system was shared in the literature review. For this study, it is important to give an overview of the Haitian educational system to better understand the educational cycle of ELs of Haitian descent and to better understand their experiences throughout their studies. It is important to note that the educational system in Haiti is divided between public and private sectors. Education in Haiti in private schools is in French, but it is in French and Creole in the public institutions (Fleming, 2019). Four out of five schools are private (University of the People, 2022 & Fleming, 2019). All Haitian students must take national exams that are written in French. Those exams create a language barrier for students because most of the population could only express themselves in Haitian Creole (Haiti Educational System,

2012). The overview of the American educational system covers the registration procedure, health and immunization requirements, programmatic assessment, and requirements for school graduation. Following the American educational system is the section that discussed laws and policies regarding English learners. The following laws and policies were considered: Title VI of the Civil Acts of 1964, Lau v. Nichols 1974, Castañeda v. Pickard 1981, Florida Consent Decree 1990, and No Child Left Behind 2001.

Following the laws and policies regarding English Learners are the sections on educational challenges in Haiti and in the U.S. Haitian students face enormous defiance in both the Haitian and the United States scholarly systems. Some of the challenges in Haiti, according to Cone et Al (2013), are related to “numerous systemic problems, which include limited financial support, inadequate resources, and antiquated curricula, which have been contributed to inadequate schooling experiences” (p. 265). In addition to instability politics, financial problems, insecurity, and all types of natural disasters, Haitian students also face linguistic barriers. In the United States, both racism and prejudice strike Haitian immigrants extremely hard (Pichard, 2006). According to Pichard (2006), the fact that Haiti is basically an entire black country, many members of the Haitian middle classes have never encountered racism or prejudice in their entire lives; in Haiti, foreigners are generally welcomed, appreciated, and embraced. Haitian students face school culture challenges. In addition, Pichard (2006) stated, “Most of the school culture devalues what Haitians value or accomplish. Speaking more than one language (Haitian Creole and French) is inconsequential if one cannot speak English” (p. 132), whereas strict separation of languages can be problematic as it prohibits learners from

using resources they have formerly acquired in other languages. Furthermore, translanguaging contributes a lot to students' knowledge gain in acquiring new content (Garcia & Sylvan, 2011). Following the literature review, I describe the methods of the study in chapter 3.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Overview

The objective of this narrative inquiry was to understand how ELs of Haitian descent who are taught in the mainstream classrooms describe their experiences within the American education system. The study was guided by the following research: What do the stories of Haitian immigrants learning English in mainstream classrooms reveal about their experiences of engagement and/or disengagement of their education?

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research design, interview process, and the data analysis of the study. As mentioned earlier, I conducted the interviews in Haitian Creole, the participants' home language. It is easier for non-English speakers to articulate their experiences when being interviewed in their home language, so potential misunderstanding during the interview was reduced for both the interviewer and the participant (Welch & Piekkari, 2006). Welch and Piekkari (2006) argue that participants share countless truthful stories when they have the possibility to articulate in their own language.

As an immigrant, I have been living in the United States since 1986. Having born in a different country and traveled to many other countries outside the United States, I view the world from different perspectives. I see the United States through the eyesight of immigrants. When I travel to different countries, I get the chance to appreciate diversity and understand the similarities and differences that exist among different cultures. Such acceptance could help examine and embrace cultural diversification as well as accepting what makes particularities on the point of views of each group of people. As a Haitian immigrant, I played the role of both a former EL and a teacher of

ELs. As a former EL, a former teacher of ELs, and a bilingual Curriculum Support Specialist (CSS), I know how one can feel the tension by having another culture, dealing with educational expectations, insensitivity, and unfamiliar attitudes. As a researcher, I chose to conduct this narrative inquiry in M-DCPS due to my past experiences as a former EL of Haitian descent and my current position as a Haitian Creole Home Language Arts (HCLA) CSS. Every day I listen to ELs, especially the ones who are of Haitian descent and share related stories and needs. My experiences allowed me to open minded while conducting this research with Haitians that are living in the U.S. I concluded this study from a constructivist perspective, relying on the way that the participants have articulated their stories and the way they have interpreted their reality.

In this qualitative research study, I used a narrative design to learn about the engagement and/or disengagement of ELs of Haitian descent in mainstream classrooms. This section of the study illustrates the research design that was selected as well as the rationale for its specification. I provided information about the sources of the data. In addition, I give a summary of the sites along with a description of the considered population and information about the sources of the data that was provided. I included an explanation of the data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness, data integrity and the method I utilized throughout the process. Finally, this chapter will end with me discussing the ethical considerations.

Research Design and Rationale

I used a narrative research design to collect data from ELs of Haitian descent who are being taught in the mainstream classrooms. Narrative inquiry is a study of discovering lived experiences through stories; It is an alliance between investigator and members of a

study over time, in a specific location or set of locations, and in social interference with environments (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The process of a narrative inquiry is repetitive and spontaneous; it starts from points of experience of living “stories to field texts, to interim and then the final research text” (Clandinin & Huber, 2010, p. 11). This method allowed the participants’ stories to profoundly reveal their cultural and social experiences throughout their study. Narrative inquiries can also identify unique experiences of a particular participant, as well as common experiences. When sharing stories, participants focus on things that are functional, emotional, and meaningful to them.

For this narrative inquiry, I interviewed Haitian immigrant students about their lived experiences in mainstream classroom. I used open-ended questions to facilitate the participants when telling their stories; giving them the opportunity to expand their answers. As a researcher, open-ended questions allowed me to get a better understanding of the participants’ feelings about their educational experiences in the mainstream classroom. As stated by Allen (2017), open-ended questions aided all the participants to voluntarily talk about their individual experiences, especially if the question that was being asked was sensitive or had to do with cultural differences. I made sure I chose the right open-ended questions to provide a good beginning point for narratives to emerge. According to Riessman (2008), “Certain kinds of open-ended questions are more likely than others to provide others narrative opportunities” (p. 24). During the interviews, I prompted to expand on various sections of their stories.

The data for this study mainly involved personal stories, life stories or situations, and remarkable events. The collection of data for this study included 1) an abstract of

stories, 2) the orientation, time, place, and character, 3) a sequence of events, 4) a storyteller's reflection, 5) the outcome of story, and 6) the story ending. I used a thematic analysis to interpret the collected data (Riessman, 2008). It was important to do this because "All narrative inquiry is, of course, concerned with content – 'what' is said, written, or visually shown – but in thematic analysis, content is the exclusive focus" (Riessman, 2008, p. 53). Stories collected during interviews can help establish thematic analysis (Riessman, 2008). Data analysis of this study identified nonverbal expressions, pauses, filler words (e.g., Uhh, Umm), all nonverbal signs and gestures. Participants' nonverbal expressions help me with the answers that I was getting from them, and those expressions were also connected with the participants' real emotions.

Description of Site, Setting and Population

Site and Setting

The chosen site for this narrative study was M-DCPS, a school district with three different regions: North, Central and South. To collect data for the study, I used a school that has ELs of Haitian descent from each region. The regions with the most Haitian ELs are the North and the Central; therefore, the school chosen in the North and Central Regions had a large population of ELs of Haitian descent, but the one in the south had a very small population of ELs of Haitian descent. Participants were recruited from all the three regions with the permission of the schools' principals and the collaborations of the ESOL Compliance Liaison (ECL) person from each school.

The district of M-DCPS is comprised of 415 institutions which includes, regular K-8 schools, magnet, charter, vocational, alternative, and special education centers. As previously stated in the introduction, the population of ELs, is 59,752 and 7.8% and 7.8%

of that population are Haitian Creole speakers (ELLevation Education, 2021). “The district is the second-largest minority-majority public school system in the country” (Statistical Highlights, 2020-2021). During the 1980s, MDCPS was acknowledged for skillfully incorporating separate groups of newcomers, especially from Nicaragua, Haiti, and Cuba (Statistical Highlights, 2020-2021). According to ELLevation (2020-2021), the platform that is used to identify ELs in M-DCPS, each region has a group of ELs of Haitian Descent, and it is likely that most of them are being placed in mainstream classrooms. The participants were recruited with the support and collaboration of the ESOL liaison person at each school site and all the interviews were conducted virtually via Zoom.

Population

In M-DCPS, ELs are identified based on their responses in the Home Language Survey (HLS) and on their results from the placement tests (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). The use of an HLS to identify ELs was implemented in 1975, after the Supreme Court ruling in the *Lau v. Nichols* discrimination case (Bailey & Kelly, 2010, p. 1). “Under federal law, school systems are not required to use an HLS, but Title III requires states to identify students that might benefit from language support services; those students are identified based on where they are coming from, for instance, an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the student’s level of English language proficiency” (Bailey & Kelly, 2010, p. 1). According to the information shared by the teachers that helped with the recruitment, all the participants were placed in the ESOL program not only based on their responses from their HLS, but also on the scores of their initial placement exams.

The HLS is very brief and direct; it usually contains three questions regarding the language that a student first learned to speak, the language that he or she speaks constantly at home, and the language that others speak in the home. Parents of all students entering from PreK to 12th grade in M-DCPS must also complete the HLS (Tools and Resources for Identifying all English Learners, 2016). The three questions on the survey are as follow: “a. Is a language other than English used in the home? b. Does the student have a first language other than English? c. Does the student most frequently speak a language other than English?” (Tools and Resources for Identifying all English Learners, 2016, p.3). To identify the student English proficiency, he or she will be assessed if the parent or guardian answers yes to at least one of the questions on the HLS (Tools and Resources for Identifying all English Learners, 2016; Consent Decree, 1990). M-DCPS administers the Oral Language Proficiency Scale Revised (OLPS-R) test to students entering kindergarten and the Online Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA) to students entering grades 1-12 (Florida Department of Education, 2021). The only purpose of the use of the HLS is to provide appropriate educational services to students that are identified as ELs; it is not for determining the student’s legal status or for immigration and other purposes (Tools and Resources for Identifying all English Learners, 2016).

Based on the result of the HLS and results of initial placement tests, ELs of Haitian descent are the second largest ethnic group after Hispanics in M-DCPS (Statistical Highlights, 2019-2020; ELLevation Education 2021). In M-DPCS, ELs of Haitian descent are found in all the three regions of the school district (ELLevation Education, 2021). The study had representation of ELs of Haitian descent, of at least 18

and 19 years of age at the high school level, from all the three regions of M-DCPS. The participants had the possibility to talk about their lived experiences in the mainstream classrooms.

Research Methods

Recruitment of Participants

To start conducting the study, it had to be first approved by Florida International University (FIU) Institutional Review Board (IRB - Appendix A) and then by Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) Research Review Committee (RRC - Appendix B). After the approvals from both FIU and M-DCPS, I selected three different schools in the district. I selected one from each region, so that I could compare the participants' stories. I contacted the schools' principals to get permission to use their schools as one of the sites to conduct the study and to contact their appointed ESOL liaison teacher for the school. After receiving permission from the principals, I contacted the three teachers, and explained the objective of the study to them. I let them know that I was going to need their support to recruit two participants who are current ESOL students of Haitian descent at their schools.

Upon agreeing, I shared the recruitment script (Appendix C) and the English and Haitian Creole consent forms (Appendices D and F) with the ESOL Liaison teachers. The teachers explained the objective of the study to several ELs of Haitian Descent in the mainstream classrooms. Two participants from each school returned the signed consent forms. The forms were signed by both the students and their parents, and they returned them to the ESOL Liaison teachers. The teachers scanned them and emailed them to me with the participants' contact information. Once I received the information, I contacted

all the participants and scheduled each for our first one-on-one interview via Zoom. During each live video chat, I got to introduce myself, re-explain the objective of the study and get to know the participants.

Profile of Participants

Participants for this Narrative inquiry study included high school English Learners of Haitian Descent, ages 18 and 19, ranging from grades eleventh to twelfth. As I was collecting the data, I noticed that the participants were very enthusiastic to talk about their experiences. They were interested in speaking on matters that affected them in school. The sample size for the study was six participants. They were from three different high schools in the three different regions in M-DCPS and one mainstream classroom in each school was considered. From each mainstream classroom I found two students that returned the consent forms. For this study, more female participants were interested to be part of the study. The same number of participants for both males and females received the consent forms and explanation about the study, but the females were enthusiastic about sharing stories than the males. As observed by researchers, females perform better than males on verbal tasks; their language abilities surpassed males and they are always eager to voice their concerns (Reilly et al. 2018). The demographics of the participants, using their pseudonyms, are described in the following table:

Table 1: Participant Demographics

Name	Age	Occupation	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Grade Level	ESOL Level	Number of Years in ESOL
Greg	18	Student	Male	Black/Haitian	12	4	1 Year
Sophia	18	Student	Female	Black/Haitian	11	2	1 Year
Lyce	18	Student	Female	Black/Haitian	11	2	5 Years
Yodna	18	Student	Female	Black/Haitian	11	1	8 Months
Nedjie	18	Student	Female	Black/Haitian	11	1	3 Years
Guerdnie	19	Student	Female	Black/Haitian	12	3	5 Years

Description of Method Used

I collected data through interviews. Creswell (1998) stated that “interviews prove valuable for uncovering the range of perceptions” (p. 327). “Interviews are most efficient for qualitative study because they facilitate researchers interpret, better comprehend, and investigate research subjects’ point of views, attitude and experiences” (Davis, 2010, p.7). I conducted three interviews with each participant. All interviews were scheduled one week prior to the date of the interviews and open-ended questions were used during all interviews. The interview protocol is found in Appendix K.

To begin the interviews, I started chatting with the interviewees. “Many interviewers begin with conversation to remove the tension and effort to construct commonalities, understanding and confidence” (Dejonckheere & Vaughn, 2018, p. 3). During the interviews, I kept it calm and maintained with a soft and relaxed tonality; it was more a conversation rather than of a straight questions and answer modality. As stated Dejonckheere and Vaughn (2018) emphasized, “conveying a sense of being in the interview together and that you as the interviewer are a person just like the interviewee

can help ease any discomfort” (p. 4). Throughout the interviews, I encouraged participants to expand on details regarding their experiences with education in the mainstream classrooms.

Interview Protocol

I interviewed participants using open-ended questions to gain an understanding of how they describe their experiences of education in the mainstream classrooms. All interviews began with a conversation to help create a normal and moderate ambiance (Moustakas, 1994). To begin the interviews, I started sharing information about myself that was not related to the investigation in order to facilitate a relaxed environment for the students. I made sure I paid close attention to the participants and took significant notes while conducting all the interviews. All interviews were recorded and were transcribed verbatim immediately after. I stored field notes and transcriptions in a secure place in my personal office.

As described by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), “Narrative is a way of understanding experience. It is a collaboration between researcher and participants over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus” (p. 20). To allow participant time to think about their experiences within the M-DCPS education system, the questions were arranged into three groups for the three interviews: a) Getting to Know the Participants, b) The Participants’ Overall Experience of Education and (c) Concluding Conversation with Participants.

Data Collection

To collect data, I provided each participant with a consent form. Interviews were scheduled after the consent forms were signed by both the participants and their parents.

Each interview took 60-90 minutes, and they were all recorded. Due to my native language being the same as the participants and believing that I would get more information from them if the interviews were conducted in their home language, I proceeded with them all in Haitian Creole. Probing questions were posed to allow elaboration on the answers whenever necessary. I also made sure that I listened very closely to their answers and always acknowledged what they said by using verbal affirmation. I embraced pauses and asked for clarification. I tried not to interrupt the participants while they were sharing their answers. I repeated the question whenever it was necessary, otherwise I kept it as normal conversation.

Data Analysis Procedures

According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), “Stories direct the reader to what happened earlier, what will happen in the future, then return to the present-day, while moving in and out in terms of location” (p. 17). Following each interview, I first transcribed them myself, then had the transcriptions reviewed by a professional transcriptionist. It was important to have a professional translator review the transcripts because it is necessary to provide translations that make sense to the reader; the professional translator could also understand nuances. Besides that, I cleaned up and coded the data and then patterned it manually. I patterned the data to categorize it and to find differences and similarities. After pattern it, I identified two main themes. To recognize the themes, I highlighted repeated and similar information from the participants. No software was used to help organize the themes because the data was collected in Haitian Creole which is both my and the participants native language. I condensed the codes to produce the patterns. “Pattern codes pull together a lot of material

into a more meaningful and parsimonious unit of analysis ... pattern coding is a way of grouping summaries into a smaller number of sets, themes, or constructs” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 69).

The narrative analysis for this study provided me with detailed information about engagement and/or disengagement of ELs of Haitian descent in the mainstream classrooms. As per Creswell and Poth (2018), to analyze the data, I read the transcriptions multiple times. As I was reading them, I referred to the research question which is “What do the stories of Haitian immigrants learning English in the mainstream classrooms reveal about their experiences of engagement and/or disengagement with their education?” I also paid close attention to valuable information that was shared by all the participants. By doing so, I was able to sort and code the data. I organized the data, read and memoed the ideas, classified codes into themes, and developed and assessed interpretations. I grouped the data by categories, and I came up with two main themes based on information that I gathered from the participants during each of the three interviews that I conducted with them separately. The two themes emerged from powerful experiences shared by all the participants. Theme one covered three sub-themes and theme two covered three sub-themes as well. The themes and the sub-themes were as follow: 1) Transition Shocks – registration process, block schedule and cross-cultural differences 2) Causes of Disengagement – language barrier, marginalization, and lack of resources. These two themes meet the requirements for the structure of the sets of directing questions which were created for the interviews. As for theme two, the findings only revealed information about the participants’ causes of disengagement in the mainstream classroom; no information was revealed on their sense of engagement even

though the questions asked focused on their sense of both engagement and/or disengagement in the mainstream classrooms.

Data Integrity: Trustworthiness

According to Clandinin and Connelly (1994), “Narrative names the structured quality of experience to be studied, and it names the patterns of inquiry for its study” (p. 416). Clandinin and Connelly (1994) also explain: “Researcher relationships to ongoing participant stories shape the nature of field texts and establish the epistemological status of them” (p.419). When collecting data, a sense of trustworthiness must be established because this is an essential component of qualitative research. Research is only as strong as it is rigorous, and by employing trustworthiness strategies in the research design, the research is strengthened (Lietz, Langer, & Furman, 2006).

Within narrative research, there are many opportunities to bolster trustworthiness using written tools that are natural to narrative work (Flynn, 2022). Reflexive journaling, field notes, and memos are all trustworthiness strategies that are conducted in the field to increase credibility, confirmability, and authenticity (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Hays & Wood, 2011). Member checking or checking in with the participant to make sure that what is transcribed or written about the participant matches their experience, is a fundamental element of the narrative research procedure, and is a strategy of conformability, authenticity, and dependability (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Thick description is another component of narrative research that is also a trustworthiness strategy for all the criteria of trustworthiness (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, Hays & Singh 2012). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness is determined when the participants’ explanations are demonstrated in the findings. To

improve loyalty of the findings for this study, I followed four established criteria which involve: credibility, dependability, transferability, and conformability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Credibility

Credibility relates to the reality of the data or the participated members' perspectives and the examination and description of them by the researcher (Polit & Beck, 2012). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), Credibility relates to the authenticity of the fact being identified. To ensure credibility of the study, I used triangulation. Triangulation occurs when multiple data sources, data methods, or researchers are used to corroborate their findings; it is a strategy that can also facilitate investigators to improve the sustainability and credibility of their findings (Bhandari, 2022). "It is imperative that researchers triangulate data collection, since it increases the probability of the findings and interpretations will be found credible" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 305). To ensure credibility, I triangulated the data by conducting interviews, utilizing member checks and peer reviews. Creswell and Poth (2018) stated "when qualitative researchers locate evidence to document a code or theme in different sources of data, they are triangulating information and providing validity to their findings" (p. 260). For this research, I interviewed students from three different schools of M-DCPS. Each school was in a different region and the population of ELs of Haitian descent is different in each region of the district. Attention was paid to the voices of the chosen group for the research (Beck, 1993; Richardson, 2000; Tracy, 2010). Using students from all the three regions in the district aid to make my research more credible.

As for member checks, I first read the transcripts several times and the participants of the study were offered the opportunity to read them as well to obtain their point of view of the credibility and interpretations of the findings. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), “member checking is considered to be the most critical technique for establishing credibility” (Cited in Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 261). All the participants agreed to read their transcripts and I also had an external reader looked through the final report. The strategy to allow the participants to revise the exactitude of the findings for the purpose of the study reduced threat of bias (Lietz, Langer, & Furman, 2006) and the procedure of having an external reader furnished a spirit of inter-observer reliability to the study (Guba, 1985). The six participants agreed to receive the verbatim paper transcripts of their audio recording electronically. By reading the transcripts, they had the possibility to verify the accuracy of the information that they shared throughout all the three interviews.

Feedback of participants

Greg, Guerdnie, Sophia, Yodna, Lyce, Nedjie (using pseudonyms) were the six participants. Each of them provided an e-mail address, where they all received their own transcript and I asked them to provide me their feedback, but I did not give any explanation as to what kinds of feedback they were supposed to give, and five out of the six participants shared their feedback with me.

Greg

Greg was the third person that I interviewed, and he was the first one that replied to me. He was an enthusiastic participant. Greg told me that he first read the transcripts of the three interviews and realized that he often repeated himself and used some English

words as shared his answers. Based on what he observed, he decided to listen to the recordings. After listening to them, he made sure that everything matched with the verbatim transcript. He selected two questions on the second interview and elaborated more on them. The questions were as follows: How do your teachers affect your school performance? How do your peers affect your school performance? According to Greg, these two questions were particularly important for him because he kept on thinking about the answers that he gave and felt that he had a lot more to say. He was incredibly happy to check the transcripts because he had the chance to elaborate more on what he said before. Greg said, “*Moman entèvyou sa yo se te yon bèl eksperyans pou mwen. M ta swete sa a kontinye fèt pou plizyè elèv kapab jwenn opòtinite pou defoule yo sou pakou eksperyans yo konsènan edikasyon yo.* These moments of interviews were great experiences for me. I hope we continue to have studies like that so that students of Haitian descent could have the opportunity to talk about their paths of their educational experiences.”

Guerdnie

Guerdnie was the last participant that I interviewed, and she was the second person to provide me with her feedback. She attends one of the schools in the south region and she was very excited about the interviews. Even though it was not easy for her to find time in her schedule due to her part time job after school, she found a way to participate. For the second interview, she even gave up her break time to participate. Guerdnie was incredibly happy to listen to the audio and to read the transcripts. Guerdnie said that she was happy that the interview was in Haitian Creole because she was able to answer the questions with confidence. She said that she repeated herself, but she said

what was essential. She also said that she really liked the third interview because she had the opportunity to add anything that was missing during the first two interviews. She spent some additional time elaborating on the following question: What is the single most memorable moment of your educational experiences?

Sophia

“Se premye fwa m santi m kontan konsa nan vi m paske m gen chans pou m ap tande tèt mwen k ap pale, kote m ap eksplike eksperyans mwen sou pakou edikasyon mwen Haiti ak Etazini. This is the first time I feel so happy in my life because I have the chance to listen to myself talking about the paths of my educational experiences in Haiti and in the United States,” Sophia said. During the interviews, Sophia conveyed several personal life stories and the way that she perceives education in both countries. She was extremely excited when I told her that I was going to share the transcripts with her. After receiving the transcripts, Sophia said that she listened to the audio and read the transcripts but did not have any comments. She sent me a friendly note saying that what she said the first time was exactly what she meant to say. She said even though I used a lot of *‘um um’ throughout the interview*, the message came out clear. She said she hopes what she said about her experiences contributes to the study.

Yodna

Yodna was the participant that was having connection problems during all the interviews. For the first interview, she had no signal to join me via Zoom. We ended up having the interview over the phone and I tried my absolute best to record the interview by putting her on speaker and used another device. During the second interview she joined me via Zoom but claimed that she could only give me 30 minutes because she had

to go out with her mom. Even though she said that we had a good fifty-minute interview. Yodna said that she was very happy to participate in this project. She said that it was an opportunity for her to share her frustration with someone who works for the system. She said that she was also happy because no one was translating for her, allowing it to feel like a normal conversation.

Lyce

Lyce was incredibly happy to participate in the study. She was very excited during the first interview. During the second interview, I had to probe her a lot to get full response from her. Lyce said that she was happy to be part of the study, but she realized that she was not too comfortable sharing some of her experiences. She said that she would like to participate in a project like this again after she graduates from high school. She even said that she hopes to be an author of a book about educational experiences, but right now she is a little bit reserved about some of her experiences. She believes this is a great study and hope that there are follow-ups.

Peer Review

To further establish credibility, other experts checked my work. Peer review, according to Creswell (2013), helps to keep the honesty of the investigator by interrogating the difficult questions about the collection of the data collection and the analysis. My dissertation committee members reviewed my transcripts and compared them to my analysis. My mates and a Haitian Creole expert also reviewed my transcripts. I also got to debrief with my dissertation chair periodically. When peers are allowed to examine the analysis of the information, the impacts of receptiveness and biased could be decreased (Lietz, Langer & Furman, 2006).

The objective of the research was to obtain information related to the participants' experiences of engagement and/or disengagement in the mainstream classroom. Credibility requires the researcher to explicitly connect the findings of the study with certitude to determine the accuracy of the findings (Beck, 1993). Credibility verifications were incorporated as a component of the research design, as a structured procedure through all phases of the research, and it should be maintained within story writing after the accomplishment of the investigation (Creswell, 2009). Overall, to achieve the goal of this study, the three major mentioned features of credibility were taken into consideration.

Dependability

“Dependability is significant to trustworthiness because it determines consistently and repeatably the findings of the study (Tobin & Begley, 2004). Dependability relates gradually and conditionally to the consistency of the data (Guba, 1981). Based on the data that I collected, the findings were consistent; even though the participants were from different regions in the district, the data revealed a lot of similarities about their stories. For instance, they all expressed language barrier being a concern and due to lack of vocabulary, they cannot perform as well as their native speaker peers. They all talked about how they are being treated inferior in front of their peers; they are being ignored when they raised their hands to participate.

Furthermore, to achieve dependability, Tobin and Begley (2004) stated that “researchers can ensure that the research process is logical, traceable, and clearly documented.” According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), When readers are capable to analyze the inquiry procedure, they are better to evaluate dependability of the research.

Triangulation of data also helped establishing trustworthiness for this study. The participant set of questions for the interviews, member checks, and peer review served to triangulate the data.

Transferability

“One way to ensure transferability is through purposive sampling” (Guba, 1981, p. 86). The fact that I was searching for a precise group of participants, my representative was determined. Another way to ensure transferability, according to Guba (1981), is by “collecting thick descriptive data that permitted comparison of this context to other possible contexts” (p. 86). This was done in the study by furnishing precise details about my process and integrating the stories of lived experiences collected from the participants. I provided the readers with long paragraphs and specific quotes that are directly from the participants.

Confirmability

Shelton (2004) stated, “The concept of confirmability is the qualitative investigator’s comparable concern to objectivity; researchers must take step to ensure that the work’s findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher” (p. 72). As I was collecting the data, I wrote memos so that I could reminded of my commitment with the data (Tufford & Newman, 2010). By writing the memos, my main concern was about what was essential to the study. I paid close attention to what was happening with the data. I discovered similarities and differences among the participants, and I furnished a substantial number of quotes from the participants to attain confirmability.

Ethical Considerations

The purpose of this study was to learn about the educational experiences of ELs of Haitian descent in the mainstream classrooms in MDCPS. “For any research investigation involving human subjects, there must be careful consideration of ethical issues that may arise in the planning, conduct, and reporting of the study” (Edwards, Braunholtz, Lilford, & Stevens, 1999). The information gained from this study will be only used for educational purposes.

There are various ethical and behavioral considerations that were communicated throughout this study. I obtained written consent from the participants and for the protection of the participants, all consent forms were translated into Haitian Creole. A pseudonym was given to each participant because of the feasible delicate essence of the narratives. All notes and physically collected material were kept in a passcode secure box in my personal office. All electronically collected data was retained on an exterior hard drive that will be obstructed in a strongbox when I am not using it. After three years, all audios will be destroyed.

The participants were informed about their rights and district board policies in case they mention that they encounter discrimination from their teachers due to their fluency or their accent. Confidentiality was particularly important. Even though I mentioned the name of the school district, none of the participant’s names were mentioned. Each story shared was handled with utmost care to protect each participant’s privacy.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the research design and data analysis of the study. The research question that was used for this study is as follow: What do the stories of Haitian immigrants learning English in the mainstream classrooms reveal about their experiences of engagement and/or disengagement of their education? The chosen research design and the rationale for its selection were described in depth in the chapter and information about the sources of the data was also provided.

To collect data, I utilized a narrative research design from ELs of Haitian descent in the mainstream classrooms. The four types of patterns identified by Daiute (2014) were considered: similarities, differences, change, or coherence. Open-ended questions were used to facilitate the participants when telling their stories, and I used thematic analysis to interpret the data.

Participants were recruited from three different schools, one from each region of M-DCPS with the permission of the schools' principals and the collaborations of the ESOL Liaison Contact (ELC) person from each school. All interviews took place via Zoom, except of one interview conducted by telephone. Six participants, ages 18 and 19, from three different high schools were interviewed for the study. Only Haitian Creole students that are in the ESOL program were considered for this study. Three interviews were conducted with each participant in their home language.

To improve the trustworthiness of the findings for this study, I followed four established criteria: credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). There are various ethical and behavioral considerations that were communicated throughout this study, and I made sure to receive consent from the

participants. For the protection of the participants, all consent forms were translated into Haitian Creole. A pseudonym was given to each participant because of the feasible delicate essence of the narratives. All notes and physically collected material will be kept in a passcode secure box in my personal office. All electronically collected data will be retained on an exterior hard drive that will be obstructed in a strongbox when I am not using it. After three years, all audios will be destroyed.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this narrative inquiry study was to explore the stories of English Learners of Haitian descent in the mainstream classrooms. The study was guided by the following research question: What do the stories of Haitian immigrants learning English in the mainstream classrooms reveal about their experiences of engagement and/or disengagement of their education? Data from this narrative study revealed stories that explained the participants' educational experiences of six English Learners of Haitian descent. All participants were ELs levels between 1 and 4 and they could communicate fluently in Haitian Creole. Each interview was recorded, and ample notes were also taken to fully comprehend the stories of the participants.

In this chapter I introduce the participants who were interviewed and analyze the findings. I first introduce each participant and tell their individual stories, then I discuss the themes and subthemes related to their experiences of engagement and disengagement in the mainstream classrooms in M-DCPS. The findings revealed two main themes and six sub-themes that were formed through stories collected from the participants. The chapter concludes with interpretation of the findings laying the fundamental part for seeing each participant's reasonings and certainties of their reflections and the way they see their sense of engagement and/or disengagement as ELs in the mainstream classrooms. To safeguard the integrity of the participants, each one had the opportunity to use a pseudonym and they were used in the following sections of the research. The first section of the chapter will give an overview about each participant, the next part will the findings based on the stories collected from each participant.

Getting to Know the Participants

During the first interviews, I had a conversation with the participants to get to know each one of them. The participants shared stories about the time they spent in Haiti with their parents, their grandparents, or other relatives. They shared stories about their infancy, their ways of living, their religious beliefs, schools they attended, neighborhood in which they live, and their feelings about transitioning to the United States. The participants' pseudonyms were as follow: Greg, Sophia, Lyce, Yodna, Nedjie and Guerdnie.

Participant 1: Greg

Greg is 18 years old, and he is from Port-au-Prince, Haiti. He used to live in Petionville, a residential-prestigious-touristic area in Port-au-Prince. He lived with both of his parents and his two sisters. He is the oldest in his family. When Greg was in middle school, he used to travel to the United States with his parents during his summer vacation time. He really enjoyed traveling to the U.S. so that he could meet new people and learn about a different culture, and he always took pleasure in telling his friends and his teachers about his trips. Greg shared the following story:

Vwayaje Ozetazini epi retounen...re...retounen lakay mwen Ayiti ... 'like' ... pou m al fè ti chèlbè mwen se te pi...pi... bèl bagay pou mwen. Tankou... Chak fwa m soti Ozetazini, m toujou pran plezi m pou m chita ak zanmi m pou m eksplike yo tout sa m viv Ozetazini. M rakonte yo anpil bagay m wè ki ...diferan... diferan ak kilti Ayisyèn nan... tankou ... 'like' ... m di yo moun yo renmen kondui gwo 'SUV' anpil. M pale yo sou manje tou; tankou 'hamburger' ak French Fries' popilè anpil. Moun yo toujou prese, yo pa vrèman gen tan pou manje yon dine fòmèl ansanm ak fanmi yo.

Traveling to the United States and then ...re... return home ... 'like'... to show off in front of my friends was the most beautiful thing for me. Like... Every time I leave the United States, I always enjoy sitting down with my friends to explain to them everything I experience in the United States. I tell them a lot of things that I see that are different ... different...from the Haitian culture... like ... I tell them

people like to drive big SUVs a lot. I talk to them about the most popular American food such as hamburgers and French Fries. People are always in a hurry; they don't really have time to have a formal dinner with their family.

Due to political instability in Haiti, Greg's parents have decided to let him stay in the United States to continue his studies. He has been living in the U.S. for about a year and a half. He lives with his aunt and uncle in a predominantly Haitian community in North Miami, Florida. He is a religious person and attends a Haitian Baptist congregation church every Sunday which is not too far from where he lives. To him, that church is his second home. He is a member of the youth group in his church, with which he enjoys doing humanitarian work. "*Se gwoup Lajenès la ki toujou kenbe m okipe espesyalman ... 'like' ... nan wikenn yo lè n ale nan 'Missionaries of Charity' pou nou kapab sèvi moun san zabri yo. It is the Youth Group that always keeps me busy especially in the weekend ... like... when we go to Missionaries of Charity to serve the homeless,"* Greg said. Since his parents are not in the U.S. with him, he often sits with his pastor for advice. He wishes his parents were living here in the U.S. with him because he misses them a lot. Greg explained,

Mwen ta swete wè hum... hum... yon jou manman m k ap viv ansanm avè m nan Etazini. Prezans manman...mmm ... manke m anpil. M sonje fason li te konn toujou ap rete tann mwen devan pòt kay la lè m ap sot lekòl pou mande m kòman jounen m te ye...e...e...e...epi tout konsèy li te konn toujou ap ban mwen sou zafè zanmi. Li konn toujou di m pa kite zanmi pran tèt mwen pou m fè sa k pa sa.

I wish to see.... hum... hum... my mother living with me one day in the United States. I miss ... mmm... the presence of my mother a lot. I remember how she used to wait for me in front of the house after school to ask me about my day... and...and...and...all the advice that she used to give to me about having friends. She always tells me not to take any advice from friends that will make me do what I am not supposed to be doing.

Educational Background

When Greg was in Haiti, he completed his elementary school in Saint Trinity and part of his secondary education at Saint Martin de Tours, two well-known top schools in Port-au-Prince. He studied in both French and Haitian Creole. Greg likes to explore new things especially when it comes to technology. His favorite subjects in school are math and computer science. In school, he likes to work in small groups so that he could share his ideas with his friends and his classmates. Greg left Haiti after he completed 10th grade. He was a very bright student and always made the honor roll every year. Greg said,

Lè m te lekòl Ayiti ... 'like' ...se te toujou mwayèn 8 ak 9 sou 10 m te konn fè. M p at janm vle kite lòt elèv pase devan m. Se te yon fyète li te ye pou mwen nan fen ane eskolè a lè m ap resevwa sètifika...ak meday... ak...ak jwèt poutèt bon travay mwen ak bon konpòtman mwen. M te konn toujou prè pou m ede lòt elèv. M konn ... M konn pase tan aprè lekòl ak yo pou nou travay ansanm sou matematik, istwa, sivik ak syans. Nou konn pase ti tan tou ap jwe foutbòl ansanm paske ...hum ... hum...se youn nan espò m pi renmen. Manman m konn toujou di m, ... 'like' ... li fyè anpil de mwen. Li toujou fè m konnen m se vrèman yon modèl pou fanmi lan espesyalman pou ti sè mwen yo. Mwen...Mwen toujou vle kenbe tèt mwen 'so'... konsa lekòl paske m pa vle fè manman m ak papa m wont, epitou m vle trase yon bon egzanp pou ti sè mwen yo.

When I was in school in Haiti... like... I always had an average score of 8 or 9 over 10. I never wanted to let other students to score higher than me. I was always proud of myself at the end of the school year when I had to receive certificates ...and... medals and ...and games for excellent academic work and good behavior. I was always ready to help other students. I used... I used to spend time after school with them to work on math, history, civics, and science. We also spent a little time playing soccer together. Hum ...hum...Soccer is one of my favorite sports. My mother always tells me ... like ... she is enormously proud of me. She always lets me know that I am truly a role model for the family especially for my little sisters. I ... I always want to keep doing well in school because I don't want to embarrass my mother and father, and I want to set a good example for my little sisters.

Greg's parents were incredibly supportive throughout his school years in Haiti.

He always enjoyed when his parents accompany him to attend end-of-year activities in

his elementary school. When Greg was in elementary school, he used to receive free passes to go on field trips for his good performances in class. “*M te toujou ... ‘like’ ... bat pou m fè bon nòt lekòl mwen poutèt pou m te kapab resevwa ... like... tankou... biyè gratis nan men pwofesè mwen pou m te ka ale nan bèl pwomnad nan fen ane a.* I always try... like... to get good grades throughout the school year so that I could receive passes to attend end-of-year field trips.” When Greg was in secondary school, he felt that he was very responsible and did not really depend on his parents when he had to complete his home learning, to study and to memorize his lessons. Greg is extremely ambitious and always wants to be in the top rank of his class. Greg said,

Chak ane konn toujou genyen konkou entèskolè nan vil la; konsa m ... m... te konn toujou patisipe nan konkou pwojè syans ak matematik lè m te nan klas sètifika. Se de sijè m renmen anpil paske rèv mwen se pou m ale nan lekòl medsin pou m kapab vini yon doktè ... yon doktè ... ‘like’ doktè medikal pou fanmi. Epitou lè m patisipe nan konkou yo, ‘mind’ mwen... tankou m ta ka di lespri mwen devlope anpil...hum... hum... li travay ... tankou... pi byen... pi vit ...ak plis entèlijans. Mwen gen chans pou m fè anpil rechèch konsa tou m dekouvri bagay m pa t janm konnen.

Every year there were always competitions among the schools in the town; I ... I ... always participated in science fair project and mathematics competitions. Those are my two favorite subjects because my dream is to go to medical school to become a physician... a physician ... like a family medical physician. And when I participate in competitions, my mind works better... faster ... and smarter. I have the chance to conduct research, and I discover information about things that I have never known before.

Greg is now in 12th grade. Based on his age, he was placed in one grade level higher than what he was supposed to be. He likes the American Education system and feels like he could have been among the top students if it were not for the language barrier. Even though Greg experiences some language barrier, he believes that the American education system is easier than the one in Haiti. According to Greg:

Nan sistèm edikasyon Ozetazini an, ... hum ... hum...hum... 'like' mwen pa genyen pou m etidye epi memorize yon pakèt chapit leson pa kè,an ... an...anplis mwen pa genyen pou m al resite chapit sa yo devan pwofesè kote anpil fwa mwen konn entimide lè m ap resite paske mm kapab di ... m se yon moun ki timid anpil. Nan sistèm edikasyon Ameriken an, pwofesè yo bay elèv yo ... m ka di... chans pou remèt devwa yo anreta; konsa, m santi lè m fin byen metrize lang lan pa genyen moun k ap kapab kenbe m paske m renmen lekòl anpil.

In the American education system, ... hum ... hum...hum... like... I do not have to memorize long chapters of lessons, ... andand to recite them in front of the teachers. I get intimidated when I must recite lessons because I... I... am a very shy person. In the American education system, the teachers give the students... I can say... the chance to turn in late assignments; therefore, I feel like when I master the language no one will be able to stop me from performing well because I really like school.

The United States: A Land of Opportunity

Greg believes that the United States is a country that offers great opportunities for students who dream of having a brilliant tomorrow that could have not been possible for them in their homeland. Greg explained,

Ayiti genyen anpil timoun ki genyen volonte pou yo aprann, 'but' men peyi a pa ofri yo opòtinite pou y al lekòl. Pandan m ap... m ap viv Ozetazini la m sonje zanmi m ki te entèlijan anpil. Si ... si... 'like' ... yo ta jwenn opòtinite peyi Etazini ofri, yo t ap kontan anpil.

Haiti has a lot of kids that would love to go to school to learn, but ... but the country does not offer them the opportunity. While I am ... I am living in the United States, I think about my friends that are still living in Haiti. They are super smart. If ... If... like ... they had the opportunity that they United States offers, they would have been very happy.

As Greg is continuing his education in a language that is different from his native language, he hopes that he does not let a feeling of disengagement stops him from achieving his goal. “*M ap pwofite opòtinite sa. – I am taking advantage of this opportunity,*” Greg said. Greg likes English. “*Anglè se yon lang m te renmen depi lè m te Ayiti. I used to like English since I was in Haiti.*” He is a level 4 English Learner in one of

the schools in the North Region in M-DCPS and hopes to exit the program before he graduates high school. Greg insisted,

Entansyon m se pou m fini ak...ak pwogram ESOL la anvan m gradye 'high school' paske m pa ... m pa vle genyen okenn reta lè m rive nan kolèj. M vle byen metrize lang lan pou m kapab byen entregre m nan kolèj, menm...menm lè m konnen m poko fin byen ranpli tout fòmalitye legal yo pou m... pou m te resevwa asistans finansyè. M ap priye Bondye pou yo kapab ...eu ...eu ... tankou 'like' ... bay tout moun ki genyen estati tanporè yo rezidans pèmanan yon fason pou m ta kapab kontinye etid mwen aprè fin gradye high school.

My intention is to exit...the... the ESOL program before I graduate high school because I don't ... don't... want any delay when I must start college. I want to master the English language so that I can integrate myself well in college, even though ... even... even though I have not yet fulfilled all the formalities to receive financial aid to continue my education. I pray that one day the U.S. Government will grant ... eu...eu... permanent status to the people with temporary legal status in the country.

Participant 2: Sophia

Sophia is 18 years old and is from Port-au-Prince, the capital city of Haiti. Sophia used to live with her parents in Belleville, a high-class zone in Port-au-Prince. She visited the United States twice with both of her parents while she was in Middle school. She is the only child in her family and considers herself to be a spoiled child. In Haiti she had two servants to take care of her. She never imagined seeing herself living in the United States. Sophia explained,

Etazini se yon bèl peyi. Mwen te toujou kontan pou m vin vizite li, men mwen pa t wè tèt mwen k ap viv ladan l ...hum ... hum... hum... pèmanan.... paske m wè... m wè ... tankou m ka di moun yo travay twò di. Yo leve bonè chak jou pou y al travay 'and then' ...epi ...yo antre ta lakay yo. Lè m te konn vin vizite se lakay yon tant mwen m te konn toujou fè desann mwen, kote mwen abite koulye a. Li pa... pa...kòman m ka di sa...pa janmen genyen yon ti tan pou l al fè yon ti flannen avè m, ni pou chita sou tab ansanm pou yon bon dine. Depi l sot travay li toujou fatige epi ankò se li menm ki pou ak fè manje. Mis... hum...M pa wè sa a se yon vi nòmal.

The United States is a beautiful country. I was always happy when I had to come to visit, but I didn't see myself living here... hum...hum...hum... permanently....

because I see that people work too hard. They get up early every day to go to workand then.... and ...come back home extremely late. When I used to visit, I spent my days at my aunt's house where I am living now. She never has time... how can I say that.... to hang out with me or sit down with the family for a nice dinner. Every time she gets home from work, she is always tired, and she must cook on top of it. Miss... hum...I don't see this as a normal life.

Sometimes Sophia feels like she would go back to Haiti if it was her choice. She is living with her aunt and her parents are still in Haiti. She hopes one day her parents will be in the U.S. with her. One thing she misses a lot is going to the supermarket and walking around the neighborhood with her dad. *“Youn nan bagay m te renmen fè,”* Sophia di, *“se lè m te konn ale nan makèt ak papa m epi pou m ap chwazi tout sa m te renmen.”* “One of the things that I really liked,” Sophia said, “is when I used to go to the supermarket with my dad and I had to choose everything that I liked.”

Educational Background

Sophia completed her elementary and middle school in Port-au-Prince. She attended Saint Trinity Elementary school and part of her secondary school at Saint Martin de Tours. Due to political instability, her parents sent her to the United States to continue her studies when she was about to start 10th grade. She started school in 11th grade in M-DCPS. Currently, Sophia is a level two ESOL student in one of the schools in the North Region. Sophia does not like the fact that she is going to graduate high school with a group of students with whom she is not too familiar. Sophia explained:

Rèv mwen se te pou m te gradye lekòl segondè mwen ansanm ak tout ti zanmi mwen. Depi.... Depi... m ka di... nan lekòl elemantè nou te konn toujou ap planifye kòman n ap selebre gran jou sa a. Nou te deja wè n ap selebre pandan tout...tout yon wikenn... nèl.... nèl ale.... Nou te wè premye jou a, ki vle di nan vandredi, pou nou remèt kado bay pwofesè prefere nou. Nou t ap ba yo bèl kat ak bèl kado peyi ki fèt alamen, e ... e... e...epi ki pèsonalize. Dezyèm jou a... nan... nan samdi, nou t ap prale nan plaj. Epi... epi...konsa... ‘then’ ... twazyèm jou a pou nou fè yon bèl fèt kiltirèl kote nou t ap genyen mizik, mmmm ...manje ... epi akdevinèt, blag ... epitou pataje tout bon moman nou te pase ansanm.

My dream was to graduate from high school with all my friends. Since... Since... I can say... elementary school, we have always been planning on how to celebrate this big day. We have already planned on how we want to celebrate that day. We thought of celebrating it for... for ... an entire weekend. We said that we will take Friday to thank our teachers. We will give them custom made and personalized gifts and nice cards. The second day, on ... on Saturday, we planned to have a pool party. And... and... so... then...the third day, we would have a nice cultural party where we would play our favorite music, mmm ... food ... riddles... puzzles, and jokes... and share our good times that we had together.

Studying in the United States is a whole new life for Sophia. She talked about how hard it is for her to make new friends. Sophie is not too comfortable with the behavior of some of the students, and he realizes that they are not too friendly. According to Sophia,

Anpil nan elèv yo pa janti ditou ...mmm.... M kapab di ni ak pwofesè, ni ak elèv parèy yo, espesyalman ak timoun ki fenk antre lekòl la ki nan pwogram ESOL la. Yo pa 'care' menm ... yo...yo di nenpòt betiz sou pwofesè a. Yo pran plezi pou yo fè blag sou mwen.... M... mmm... konn kriye wi, 'Miss.' Sa k fè m pi mal la, gen nan yo ki se Ayisyen parèy mwen. Yo rele m tout kalite non, tankou 'ESOL', 'Kreyòl', 'Just Come', 'Tranblemanntè Goudougoudou. Yo menm ...yo menm rele m 'Haitian' tankou nasyonlite m se yon jouman.

Many of the students are not polite at all... mmm.... I can say with the teachers and their classmates, especially with the newcomers. They don't even care ... they... they curse in front of the teachers. They take the pleasure to make fun of me I ... I ... sometimes cry, Miss. The worst of it is that some of them are Haitians just like me. I find students that call me all kinds of names, like ESOL, Creole, Just Come, 'Goudougoudou' Earthquake. They even call me Haitian as if calling me by my nationality is an insult.

Sophia does not like the fact that the students are placed in grade levels according to their age. Instead, she thinks that the system should have separate schools for middle and high school aged students that were never in school in their home country. She says that these students are wasting their time because they cannot read, and no one is really teaching them how to read. Sophia thinks that those students sometimes are very arrogant, and they behave very badly. Sophia explained,

Gen yon elèv m te konnen ... 'like' ... depi lè m te Ayiti. Mwen ak elèv sa a te frekante menm lekòl. Mwen te kite l dèyè depi.... M kwè.... depi nan 2yèm ane. M te vin devan l pou 2 ane, 2 ane.... koulye a elèv sa vin tonbe nan menm ane lekòl avè m akòz nou genyen menm laj. M pa renmen sa menm. Elèv sa a toujou ap pale m mal ak lòt timoun yo. Li te isi anvan m, konsa li pale on ti Anglè; li ... li zanmi ak timoun ki pale Anglè yo epi l ap fè tripotaj sou mwen; li di yo m te ekspozan lè m te Ayiti. Epi lòt timoun yo menm pran koze l epi... epi... epi... y ap fè move jan avè m. M panse l ap fè sa a se paske li konnen m konnen l te gen difikilte pou l aprann lè l te Ayiti ...eu...eu...eu...epi li pa ta sipoze nan menm ane lekòl avè m si nou te Ayiti.

There is a student I knew ... 'like'...since I was in Haiti. We attended the same school, but I left her behind.... 'I think like'... since I was in second grade. I was ahead of her for 2 years...2 years... and now we are again in the same school and because we are the same age, we end up being in the same grade level. I don't like that at all. That student is always talking badly about me with the other students. She was in the U.S. before me; therefore, she speaks a little more English than me and ... and she is friends with the students that speak English. She gossips all the time about me with the kids that speak English. She tells them that I thought I was all that when I was in Haiti. And the other kids believe her and... and... and... they make more kids talk bad about me. I think she is doing that because she knows that I knew she was having a tough time to learn when she was in Haiti... eu...eu...eu... and she also knew that we could not be in the same grade level if we were in Haiti.

Cultural and Social Identities

Even though Sophia believes that the United States is a land of opportunity where she can have a career and start working at an incredibly youthful age, she feels more comfortable with the Haitian culture. She believes that the Haitian culture is vibrant and misses the distinct cultural celebrations like the carnival and “rara” (street bands) during Easter season. She misses going up the hills and playing in the waterfalls and going up to the mountainside of the country to ride horses with her grandparents was her passion. She used to enjoy the rivers, the sugarcane, and the sweet mangoes. According to Sophia the Haitian culture is incomparable. Sophia said,

Lè m te Ayiti m konn renmen ale nan kanpay omwen... omwen yon fwa chak m ka di chak mwa. M renmen ale nan kanpay paske m renmen benyen anpil nan rivyè ak zanmi m. Se pa toutan m renmen benyen nan pisin. Dlo rivyè a natirèl,

epi... epi, 'Miss,' li dous. M renmen jwe ... hum...hum... ak dlo a lè l ap soti anlè l ap tonbe. Li amizan anpil lè nou youn ap voye dlo sou lòt; lè n ap jwe paya, noble ak plonje. Lè m ale nan rivyè ak zanmi m se tankou... tankou yon piknik. Se yon moman detant kote m kapab manje bon jan kann anana, bwè bon dlo kokoye dous...ak... manje bon jan mango delisye ...epi ... chante tout bèl ti chanson nou te aprann nan... nan lekòl elemantè; 'Miss'... ou ... ou pa sonje bagay sa yo? M sonje tou kòman nou konn ap jwe deyò lèswa lè lalin klè, gran paran konn mete mwen menm ansanm lòt timoun ki nan katye a chita pou tire kont epitou pou rakonte nou bèl istwa Bouki ak malis... ak ... anpil lòt ankò.... M pa sonje non yo, Miss. Nan fen istwa yo toujou genyen yon leson pou aprann. M pa kapab bliye bagay sa yo. Pa bò isit, m santi m pou kont mwen. M ap viv ak matant mwen; li...li se yon moun ki prèske pa janm gen tan menm pou pale, m ... m pa ta di w se pou w bay blag. Bagay sa yo vrèman manke m, 'Miss.'

When I was in Haiti, I used to go to the countryside at least... at least once every.... I can say every month. I like to go to the countryside because I like to bathe a lot in the rivers with my friends. I don't always like the swimming pools. The river water is...like... natural and... and..., 'Miss,' it's sweet. I like to play... hum... hum... in the water when it's falling on me. It's very fun when my friends and I are throwing water on each other -- when we are playing 'paya', 'noble' and diving. Going to rivers with my friends is like...like a picnic. It is a relaxing time where I can eat good sugar cane...and... drink sweet coconut water ... and delicious mango... and ... sing all the beautiful songs we learned in elementary school... Miss, don't you remember these things? I also remember how we used to play outside in the evening when the moon was clear; my grandparents used to have... like... story time hum... for the kids in the neighborhood. He told beautiful tales about the characters Bouki and Malice...and ... and ... many more... I do not remember their names, Miss. At the end of the stories there is always a lesson to learn. I cannot forget these things. I feel lonely here. I live with my aunt; she... she is someone that do not even have time to talk; I ... I do not even need to mention giving jokes. I really miss these things, Miss.

Participant 3: Lyce

Lyce is 18 years old. She was born in Les Cayes, Haiti, but moved to Port-au-Prince when she was five years old. She used to live in Delmas, a commune and an urban continuation of the capital city. Delmas is also a commercial and industrial enterprise area, where she lived with her mother and her two little sisters, since her father was already living in the United States. Lyce was able to enter the United States because her father was granted visas for the rest of the family. She is now living in Little Haiti, a

neighborhood in the city of Miami, Florida. Together with her family, she practices Catholicism. Lyce is happy to be with her family in the United States, but she misses her friends and always wants to go back to visit them. She misses the fun times that she used to have with them after school, in the weekends and during vacation time. Lyce explained,

Mwen genyen anpil zanmi mwen kite Ayiti epi ... epi m...m sonje yo anpil. M santi fòk yo ta ka la ansanm avè m tou. Nou te konn fè anpil bèl bagay ansanm, tankou ale lekòl, ... ak ak legliz, ... ak... ak... nan mache, ak... nan piknik ak anpil Anpil lòt aktivite ankò. Li pa t fasil pou m te vire do ba yo san m pa menm gen espwa kilè m ap kapab wè yo ankò. Sa m ap plis sonje ... eu...eu... ankò se gwoup KIRO m te konn patisipe ladan l lan. Nou te konn toujou genyen anpil aktivite kominotè, tankou al vizite ... 'like' ...moun ki malad... ak... montre timoun ki... ki pa gen mwayen pou al lekòl li ak ekri. Bagay sa yo se pa bagay m ka vrèman ... m ka di vrèman fè Ozetazini. Bagay sa yo manke m anpil. M ta renmen ale vizite zanmi m yo, eu...eu... men paran m pa dakò akòz pwoblèm ensekirite ki genyen nan peyi a.

I left a lot of friends in Haiti and ... I ... I really miss them. I feel like they should be here with me. We used to do a lot of wonderful things together, like going to school, ... and and...church, and ... and... and... go to the flea market, ... and and... and having picnics ... and... and lots more. It was not easy for me to turn back away from them without even knowing when I will be able to see them again. What I will remember...eu ...eu.... the most is the KIRO group I used to participate in. We used to do a lot of community activities, such as visiting... like... sick people, ... and.... teach children who could not afford to go to school how to read and write. These are not things I can really... I can say really... do in the United States. I really miss those social activities. I would like to go back to visit them, eu...eu ...but my parents do not want me to because of the level of insecurity in Haiti.

Educational Background and Hope for Less Fortunate Kids

Lyce attended an all-girls Catholic school in Haiti where she was an average student, but never failed any grade. She never got to participate in extracurricular activities because she was always busy studying after school or doing some humanitarian work with some less fortunate children in her neighborhood. In Haiti, her mother used to hire private tutors to help her with her homework. Lyce is now an 11th grader in one of

the schools in the Central Region in M-DCPS. She has been living in the United States for four years and she is a level 2 ESOL student. She is having difficulties with reading comprehension, but she believes that the U.S. education system is easier than the one in Haiti. Her dream is to go to medical school to become a physician. Lyce said:

M ap travay di lekòl pou m...pou m kapab vini yon medsen yon jou. Rèv mwen ... mwen...se pou m louvri yon ôfelina Ayiti, kote m kapab bay kèk timoun ki nan bezwen swen ki nesesè. Akoz ...Akoz peyi m pa genyen ...eu ...eu...bon lidè, sa lakoz anpil timoun pa ... pa...ale lekòl, yo soufri ak malnutrisyon epi ensekirite ap vale teren. Anpil timoun lage nan... 'like' ... 'like' delenkans nan lari a. M wè gen ...gen...tankou gen... timoun ki te konn al lekòl epi ki pa ka kontinye paske paran yo pa gen lajan pou kontinye peye pou yo. M reyalize gen... gen timoun k ap fè nenpòt aksyon pou yon adòken. Delmas, kote m te abite, gen ... gen... gen anpil timoun ki pa janmen mete pye lekòl; etan yon manm KIRO m te konn pran tan pou m montre yo...eu...eu...li ak ekri non yo epitou ... ak...epitou ede yo aprann alfabè a. Rèv mwen se wè tout timoun Ayiti gen chans pou al lekòl menm jan sa fèt nan tout gran peyi; konsa va genyen mwens delenkans jivenil.

I am working hard in school so...so that I can become a physician one day. My...My dream is to open an orphanage in Haiti, where I can provide some care to some needy children. My country does not have... hum...hum... good leaders, and therefore many children do not go to school. They suffer from malnutrition. The problem of insecurity rises every day. Many children are being involved in serious like... like... delinquent behaviors in the streets. When I was in Haiti, I used to see...see.... Like... children that stopped going to school because their parents did not...did not have money to pay for them. I realized that... that kids would do any action for just a few coins. Delmas, where I lived, has... has ... has a lot of kids who never attend school; as a member of KIRO, I used to help them ...eu...eu... read and print their names and ...and ...and teach them the alphabet. My dream is for all kids in Haiti to have the chance to go to school so that the country would have less juvenile delinquency.

The United States: A Land of Opportunity

Lyce believes that the United States is a land of opportunity, but due to the language barrier things are sometimes not easy for her. Her favorite subjects are math and science, but sometimes she finds them exceedingly difficult because she does not have sufficient vocabulary to understand certain terms. Lyce says that she will do whatever it

takes to succeed because her parents always tell her that she must take her education seriously if she wants to achieve her dream. Lyce explained:

Anpil fwa m al dòmi byen ta epi m ... hum ...hum leve byen bonè pou m kapab konplete devwa mwen. M konn vrèman estrese lè m pa kapab konprann yon devwa. Li konn... li konn difisil pou m konprann yon seri mo vokabilè. Menm lè m genyen diksyonè Kreyòl-Anglè oswa Fransè-Anglè, eu...eu...eu... se pa tout mo m konn rive jwenn. Epi tou gendelè m jwenn mo a, men m konn toujou pa konprann li. Si ...Si...mo a pa kouran, li konn difisil pou m konprann sans li. Anpil fwa se pou m ta jwenn yon moun ki pou...ki pou... 'like' ...tankou... eksplike m li, men pwofesè m genyen pou klas matematik mwen ak klas syans mwen yo pa pale Kreyòl. Klas sa yo se klas regilye yo ye epi yo pa genyen anpil timoun ki nan ESOL. Se toujou ... toujou ...toujou timoun yo m konn ap mande pou ede m. M twouve pwofesè yo yo... manke pasyans epi tou yo pale twò vit. Menm lè m ta fè efò pou m konprann m pa kapab paske yo toujou sou twòp vitès. M remake menm elèv ki pa nan pwogram ESOL la eu ...eu...eu... konn ap mande pwofesè matematik la pou l fè yon ti ralanti sou vitès li. Yo menm tou konn ... 'like' ... rive pa konprann sa k ap pase nan klas la ale wè pou mwen menm ki poko menm metrize lang lan.

I often go to bed late and get up... hum... hum...early to complete my home learning. I get really stressed when I can't understand a home learning assignment. It can... It can be difficult for me to understand some vocabulary words. Even though I have a Creole-English and a French-English dictionary, eu...eu...eu ...I still cannot find all the words I need. Sometimes I find the word that I am looking for, but I still don't understand its meaning. If ... If ...the word is not common, it is difficult to understand it. Many times, I must find someone to ... to... like ... explain to me the meaning of some academic words because my math and science teachers do not speak Haitian Creole. Those are regular classes and very few students are in ESOL. I often ...often ... often ask some Haitian Creole speakers that are not in ESOL for their assistance. I realize that the teachers... in the regular classes are very impatient and...and ...and... they often speak too fast. Even when I would try to understand I can't because they are always in a hurry. I have noticed that even students that are in the regular program ...eu...eu ...eu ...sometimes ask our math teacher to slow down. They also sometimes fail...like... to understand what is going on in the classroom; as for me who has not yet mastered the language, it is worse.

Lyce also believes that the United States is a great country that offers immigrants at all age opportunities to achieve their dreams. Lyce shared her observation as she was telling her story,

Pandan ti tan m ap viv nan peyi Etazini la m...m...m... fè anpil obsèvasyon. Youn ... youn nan obsèvasyon yo se lekòl gratis k ap montre granmoun li ak ekri yo. Tonton m toujou di m si l konn li ak ekri jounen jodi a se paske li te antrè Ozetazini. Pou mwen...pou mwen... menm tout moun k ap viv nan peyi sa a ta dwe konn li ak ekri paske...eu...eu opòtinite a la. Lòt opòtinite, dapre konvèsasyon m ak konseye mwen nan lekòl mwen, se mwayen gouvènman itilize pou ede elèv ki pa gen gwo mwayen yo peye kolèj yo. Lè m pale ak... ak... konseye mwen nan lekòl mwen, ki se yon Ayisyen, li ... li...eksplike m tout opòtinite sa yo, men li di m fò m genyen bon nòt nan tout klas mwen. Malgre opòtinite yo la, ...hum...eu...men m santi genyen moun ki pa reyisi se paske yo... yo... yo rive ... 'like' ...yo... yo dekouraje akòz sipò ak bon konsèy yo pa jwenn. Lè m ap suiv konpòtman pwofesè klas regilye yo anvè elèv k ap aprann pale Anglè yo se bagay ki kapab dekouraje yon moun. Mwen menm m p ap dekouraje paske ...paske m ...eu... m konn sa m vle.

During my period in the United States, I ...I...I have made some observations. One ...One... of the observations that I made is the opportunities for free schooling for adults to learn how to read and write. My uncle always tells me that if he can read and write today, it is because he entered the United States of America. For me... For me... everyone who is living in this country should be able to know how to read and write because ...eu...eu ...the opportunity is there. Another fantastic opportunity, ... like...eu... according to my conversation with... with... my school counselor, is the possibility for low-income families to receive grants from the government to help pay for their colleges. When I talk to my counselor, who is Haitian at my school, he ...he... lets me know about all these opportunities, but he tells me that I must have good grades in all of my classes. Even though these opportunities exist, hum...hum...eu... there are people who fail to succeed because they get ...like... they... they get discouraged on the way because of lack of support and they probably did not have good advisors to guide them. By observing the personalities of some of those regular teachers toward the students that are learning English, it could be very discouraging. All I know, I will not get discouraged because ...because...eu... I know what I want.

Participant 4: Yodna

Yodna is 18 years old, and she is from Port-au-Prince. Both of her parents emigrated to the United States when she was six years old. She lived with her grandparents in Pétion-Ville after both of her parents left the country. Pétion-Ville, a residential and touristic area, is a commune and a suburb of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. When Yodna turned 14 years old, she lost both of her grandparents; and because of that she had

to live in Delmas with her aunt. Yodna's life changed completely after she lost her grandparents.

Lè m...Lè m t ap viv ap granparan mwen m te ... like ... alèz anpil paske yo te trete m tankou yon ti prensès. Yo pa t janm te konn kite m fè gwo travay. Se te sou etid mwen sèlman m te konn konsantre. Te toujou genyen ... tankou ... moun k ap travay lakay la. Granmè m te konn toujou pran tan pou l jwe avè m. Granpè m te toujou gen...gen abitud ban m blag epitou ban m ... eu... eu ... bon ti konsèy ki kapab ede m nan lavni. Li konn toujou di m se pou m toujou pran tan pou m di Bondye mèsi, se pou m renmen lekòl, epitou respekte tout moun. Depi...depi ...eu...eu... m granparan m yo fin mouri ...so...so ...tout bagay vin chanje pou mwen. M...M... te vin abite ansanm ak yon tant mwen pou yon ti tan. Tant mwen sa a se te yon komèsant, konsa li pa t janm ... 'like' ...pa t janm genyen tan menm pou pitit pa li, se pa pou mwen li...li t ap jwenn tan. Non sèlman m te konn al lekòl, se mwen menm ki te oblije ap prepare manje pou m manje lè m sot lekòl. M te konn toujou genyen ... 'so' anpil leson pou m etidye. Anpil fwa li konn twò ta ... e...e... epi m pa ka etidye akòz kouran yo pa konn bay. Hum... hum... hum se gras ak prensip gran paran m yo te ban m ki te ede m siviv moman sa a paske m te vin tounen granmoun tèt mwen.

When I ...When I... was living with my grandparents, I was ...like... extremely comfortable because I was treated like a princess. They never let me do any arduous work. I used to focus only on my studies. We always had maids in the house. Grandma used to take time to play with me. My grandfather always used ... used...to tell me jokes and give me ... eu... eu good advice that could help me in the future. He always tells me to take time to thank God, to love school, and to respect everyone. Since...Since ...eu...eu... my grandparents died, ...so... so...everything has changed for me. I lived with my aunt for a while. My aunt was a merchant, so she never... like...never had time for her own children, imagine her having time for me. I always had to prepare my own meal when I got home after school, and I had to study ...so... and memorize my lessons. Sometimes when it got too late at night, I could not study because of lack of electricity. Hum...Hum...I could say that I am thankful for the advice and the good manners that I received from my grandparents. Their advice really helped me survive the time that I had to spend at my aunt's house.

Educational Background and Religious Faith

Yodna completed her elementary school at Saint François d'Assise, one of the best Catholic schools in Port-au-Prince. She was incredibly involved with her church activities and was a member of the Eucharistic Youth Movement (EYM). As an EYM

and a student in a catholic school, her passion was to proclaim the word of God during the masses and to mime during offertory. Yodna explained:

M te toujou kontan lè m ap pwoklame pawòl Bondye a. Chak fwa m...m ap prepare lekti yo, m te konn toujou ... 'like' ...eu ...eu ... pran tan m pou m konprann yo yon fason pou m kapab byen pataje yo ak pasyon epitou ak fidelite avèk elèv lekòl yo pandan reyinyon Mouvman Ekaristik Jen yo. Sa a te...te konn ede m tou pou m ...m vle di.... ede m memorize anpil vèsè nan Bib la, se konsa tou m pa t...pa t konn genyen difikilte pou memorize leson mwen. M...M te toujou santi m genyen yon relasyon entim ak Bondye. M te santi relasyon m ak Bondye baze sou kwayans ...ak ...ak... ak lanmou ...ak ... respè, charite ... ak kominikasyon. M...M kwe epi m aksepte Bondye epi ni Bib la tou. M konsidere yo eu...eu ... kòm yon pati nan vi m nan tout bagay m...m ap fè ni lakay mwen ni nan lekòl mwen. M santi pawòl ki nan Bib la ede m pou m fè sa ki byen, epitou evite fè sa ki mal toutotan m kapab. M ... M...M rete kwè tou fè byen se pi bon bagay. Se poutèt sa a m te toujou renmen ede timoun ak devwa yo anvan klas kòmanse menm lè tan te difisil pou mwen.

I was always happy when I had to proclaim the word of God. Every time I...I had to prepare the readings, I always ...like...eu ...eu... took time to understand them so that I could share them with passion and fidelity with the students during the meetings of the Eucharistic Youth Movement. This also helped me I mean ... helped me... to memorize many Biblical verses, and ...and... I also had no difficulty memorizing my lessons for school. I...I always felt that I had an intimacy with God. I felt that my relationship with God was based on belief ...and...and...and love, respect and charity, and ... communication. I...I... believe and accept God as well as the Bible. I consider ...eu ...eu ... them as a part of my life in everything that I do at home and at school. I feel that the scriptures in the Bible help me do what is right and avoid doing what is wrong as much as I can. I ... I... I believe that doing the right is always good and that is why I always like to help other students with their homework before class starts even when time was exceedingly difficult for me.

After Yodna completed her elementary school at Saint François d'Assise, she was transferred to the Institution of Saint Louis de Gonzague, another excellent school Port-au-Prince. There, she continued to live her Catholic faith; she became the president of EYM and a catechism teacher. Her passion was to work with children to help them build their faith and trust in God. Yodna felt proud to explain:

Se te toujou ... hum... hum... yon plezi li te ye pou mwen pou m travay ak timoun espesyalman lè m ap ede yo konprann pawòl Bondye a. Kòm pwofesè katechèz, m

te ... m te genyen privilèj ...eu...eu...hum...hum...pou m te obsève konvèsasyon elèv yo youn ak lòt. Nan sa m te konn tandè atravè konvèsasyon yo, m santi m te ede yo viv nan renmen ...ak ...ak respè... ak... ak lacharite. M...M renmen trete tout moun ak respè epitou m konn toujou renmen pataje nan ti sa paran m konn voye pou mwen ansanm ak lòt timoun. M pa renmen ...tankou...tankou 'like' 'so' ... sèlman pataje moso pen ak moun, men m renmen viv byen ak tout moun. Nan moman m te...te pase lakay matant mwen, m te konn toujou ap ede ti kouzen ak ti kouzin mwen yo nan devwa yo. M te...te pi gran pase yo; m te viv ak yo tankou ti frè m ak ti sè m. M konn toujou renmen ede timoun ... hum ...hum... nan katye kote m t ap viv la tou. Katye sa a te ...te diferan pa rapò ak katye kote m te konn ap viv ak gran paran mwen yo. Nan katye kote ...eu...eu... 'like' ... gran paran m yo, timoun pa t konn vrèman nan bezwen, men lè m vi n abite ak matant mwen se te yon lòt mond. Timoun yo te konn toujou nan lari ap chèche swa èd pou yo manje oswa moun ki pou ede yo ak devwa yo. M te toujou santi m ... like tankou... alèz pou m ap ede lòt timoun.

It has always...hum ...hum... been a pleasure for me to work with children, especially when I help them to understand the Word of God. As a catechetical teacher, I have had...I have... have had the privilege ...eu ...eu. Hum... hum...of observing my students' conversations with one another. From what I heard throughout their conversations, I felt that I had helped them to live in love ...and...and respect... and charity. I ...I love to treat everyone with respect, and I always like to share what I have from what my parents send me with other children. Not only... like...like... I enjoyed sharing food with the other kids, I also enjoyed living in harmony with everyone. During my time at my aunt's house, I was always helping my cousins with their homework. I was ... I was older than them; I considered them as my little brothers and sisters. I have always loved helping children ...hum ...hum... in the neighborhood where I used to live. The neighborhood where I used to live with my aunt was ...was different from the neighborhood where I used to live with my grandparents. The children in the neighborhood where ...eu...eu...like... my grandparents used to stay inside their house, but when I moved in with my aunt, it was a totally different world. Children were always on the street looking to see if they could find something to eat, and sometimes they needed help with their homework. It was always ... like a pleasure for me to work with some of them.

Yodna completed her ninth grade at Saint Louis de Gonzague and then moved to Miami to reunite with both of her parents. Yodna is now in 11th grade and attends a high school in the North Region in the district of M-DCPS, where she is a level 1 ESOL student. She has been living in the U.S. for about eight months. Yodna believes that the American education system is not too difficult but learning in a completely new language

is somewhat hard. Throughout her studies in Haiti, Yodna used both French and Haitian Creole, but when she was in eighth grade, she started taking some English classes. Yodna Explained:

Lè m te Ayiti, m te fè tout etid mwen an Fransè ak Kreyòl, kon...kon...konsa m pat genyen okenn difikilte pou m te konprann tout sa ki te konn ap pase nan klas mwen. M te vin enterese pou m aprann Anglè paske m.... paske m ... 'like' ... m ka di ...m te toujou konnen yon jou m t ap vin abite Etazini; epi m te toujou konnen aprann nan yon ... yon lang etranjè pa t ap fasil. Toude paran m...hum... 'so'... 'like' ... te deja ap viv Ozetazini, konsa m te ...m ...te deja konnen pa t genyen okenn enterè pou m te rete Ayiti pou kont mwen. Etan m t ap ...m t ap etidye Anglè...eu ...eu... m te renmen lang lan anpil; m te konn pratike ak pitit vwazin nan ki ...ki t ap viv Ozetazini epi ki konn vin fè vakans Ayiti. Pandan m t ap pratike ak yo, m t ap priye ...hum ...hum... pou m te ka te retwouve paran m yo, men anmenm tan m te kòmanse genyen ...genyen... anpil...an...anpil chagren nan kè m paske m te wè yon jou mwen t apral separe ak tout zanmi danfans mwen yo ki pa genyen okenn espwa pou kite Ayiti nan lavni pou yon vi meyè.

When I was in Haiti, I studied in both Creole and French; therefore...therefore.... it was not too hard for me to understand what was happening in my classes. I became interested in learning English because I...because I...like...I can say.... I knew that one day I will be living in the United States, and I knew learning in a ...a foreign language will not be easy for me. Both of my parents ...hum... so...like were already living in the United States, so I ... I had no interest to continue to live alone in Haiti. As I studied English, ...eu...eu... I loved the language; I used to practice with the children of my neighbor who used to live in the United States and always come to Haiti for vacation. As I was practicing with them, I was praying...hum ...hum... to be reunited with my parents, but at the same time I was thinking...thinking... about how I was going to leave my childhood friends behind who have no hope of leaving Haiti for a better life somewhere else.

Yodna was one of the top students in all her classes when she was in Haiti, but due to language barrier she is now struggling in her regular classes. Yodna said, “*Lè m te Ayiti m te konn ...eu ...eu ... toujou fè gwo mwayèn nan tout klas mwen. M te fò anpil nan redaksyon ak...ak... ak nan òtograf.* When I was in Haiti, I always had ...eu...eu... good grades in all my classes especially in my essays and... and... in dictation.” Yona is incredibly happy to live in the U.S. even though learning in a foreign language is a

challenge for her. Being with her family was her priority. “*M te kontan anpil pou m...pou m te rejwenn fanmi mwen, paske yo te manke m anpil.* I was very happy to be ...to be reunited with my family because I really missed them,” Yodna said. She enjoys the opportunity of going to school and hopes to become successful in the future. Yona shared the following:

Rèv mwen se pou m vini yon edikatris ... ‘so’...pou m kapab ede moun aprann li ak ekri paske sa genyen anpil ...eu ... m kapab di...enpòtans nan sosyete a. Pwoblèm politik ak ekonomi lakòz anpil moun nan peyi m pa konn ni li ni ekri. Nan lavni, ...eu...eu...m vle louvri yon fondasyon kote m ka montre granmoun ki pa t janm gen chans ale lekòl li ak ekri. M wè peyi etazini ofri opòtinite sa a kote granmoun kapab ale ...ale lekòl gratis pou yo aprann li ak ekri. Epitou m santi li...li ...li enpòtan pou moun konn li ak ekri espesyalman nan mond teknoloji sa a. Prèske ... Prèske tout...prèske tout enfòmasyon koulye a se sou entènèt yo ye. Si yon moun pa konn li ...li ak ekri, l ap difisil pou l fonksyone nan ... nan ... mond teknolojik sa a. M kapab pran egzanp sou tèt mwen; si m pa t deja konn li ak ekri li t ap pi difisil pou...pou... mwen pou m te fonksyone nan klas regilye mwen yo. Anpil fwa se ‘Google translate’ ki ede m. Malgre m te deja kòmanse fè ti pratik Anglè lè m te Ayiti, lè m vin antre Ozetazini se e e...se tankou m pa t janmen konnen anyen nan lang lan. Imajine pou tout pratik m te konn ap fè Ayiti epi lè m pran egzamen ESOL la m tonbe nan nivo en; sa a te pote anpil ...anpil...eu... dekourajman lakay mwen. Se sa ki fè m ... fè m twouve aprann konn li ak ekri enpòtan anpil. M pa pale Anglè, ‘but’ ... men m ka li ak ekri, epi m ka itilize bon sans mwen pou m konprann kèk bagay. M ap priye Bondye pou rèv sa a m genyen an ka tounen yon reyalite paske ...eu...eu m vle fè yon diferans nan lavi kèk moun.

My dream is to become an educator so...so ... that I could help people learn how to read and write because ...eu... I can say... it is so important for the society. Due to political and economic problems, so many people in my country do not know how to read and write. In the future, ...eu ...eu...I want to open a foundation where adults who never had the chance to go ... go... to school could come to learn how to read ...read and write. I see the United States offers that opportunity to adults. They get the chance to a free education where they can learn how to read...read and write. In ... In ... this world of technology, it is very important for people to be able to read and write. Almost all information is now available online. If one cannot read and write, it will be difficult to ...to... function. I can take myself as an example; if I did not already know how to read and write, it would have been harder for...for... me to function in my regular classes. Google Translate often helps me. Although I started practicing English when I was in Haiti, when I came to the United States it was ... it was... like I never knew anything about the language. Imagine all the practice I was doing in

Haiti and when I took the ESOL test, I was identified as a level one. I was very ...very...eu... discouraged. That is why I find ... I find that learning how to read and write is very important. I don't speak English, ... but ... but I can read and write, and I can use my common sense to understand certain things. I pray God so that my dream comes true because ... eu...eu... I want to have influence in people's lives.

Participant 5: Nedjie

Nedjie is 18 years old, and she was born in Cap-Haitian, the main city in the North Department of Haiti. Nedjie moved to Port-au-Prince with her mom when she was two years old after her dad left the country to go to the United States. Prior coming to the United States, she used to live in Fontamara, a town in Port-au-Prince, with her mom and then with her stepfather and her two other siblings. She misses the time that she and her mom lived together before her stepfather came in the picture. Nedjie really missed the presence of her dad, and Nedjie shared the following story:

Youn nan bagay ki te manke m anpil se te prezans papa m. Lè m te vin antre Port-au-Prince, eu...eu...eu... manman m te vin rekòmanse vi li ak yon lòt moun paske li te aprann papa m te deja gen afè ak ...ak ... ak yon lòt moun pandan l te Etazini; konsa lavi m te kòmanse boulvèse. M te vin genyen de lòt ti sè. M vin ap viv ak ... ak yon bopè ki pa t fin si tèlman renmen m, men ... 'but' ... men m te oblije rele l papa daprè lòd manman m te pase m. Se mwen menm ki te konn fè prèske tout ...tout ... travay nan kay la, tankou bale, ...eee... ranje kabann, ... hum...hum...asiste nan fè manje, ale nan mache...eu eee... elatriye. M ...M te konn pran anpil pinisyon nan men bopè m si ... si... yon jou m ta manke fè yon travay pou m te... pou m te kapab pran yon ti tan pou m etidye leson mwen. Sa k te mal la, m pa t... m pa t janm vrèman te konn tandè vwa papa m paske li...li pa t vrèman te genyen yon bon kominikasyon ak manman m. Sèl ... Sèl... Sèl espwa m te genyen sèke m te konnen ... m te konnen yon jou m t ap gen pou m antre Etazini pou m te kapab rejwenn papa m.

One of the things I missed a lot was my father's presence. When I entered in Port-au-Prince, eu ...eu... eu ... my mother started a new life with someone else because she learned that my father had ... had an affair with ... with ...with someone else while he was in the United States. As a result of that, my life began to change. I ended up having two other little sisters. I was living with ...with a stepfather who did not really like me, but... but...but I had to call him father according to my mother's commands. I used to do almost all ...all ... the housework, such as sweeping, ... eee... bedding, ...hum...hum cooking, going to

the flea market, ...eu...eee... and so on. My ...My stepfather used to punish me if ...if ... one day I missed to do one thing so that I could take a moment to study. The worse thing out of all of that was the fact that I did not...did not ... get to communicate too often with my dad because he decided not to talk to my mom. My only hope was to be reunited one day with my dad in the United States.

Educational background and Comfort Zone

Nedjie completed her elementary school at Kindergarten Collège Marie André in Fontamara. The school was about fifteen minutes from her house and every morning, she had to walk to school – and this is something that she enjoyed doing that because she did not like to be at home. She really liked going to school because she felt comfortable when she was with her friends and some of her teachers. Nedjie shared the following story:

Chak maten m te konn toujou leve bonè pou m ale lekòl. Se ... Se te toujou yon plezi li te ye pou mwen lè m te ...te konn ... te konn nan wout la ansanm ak ti zanmi m yo. Lè n ap mache, ...hum...hum...nou te konn toujou ap bay blag ...eee ...epitou resite leson nou. Anpil fwa m konn pa ...pa... pa t konnen leson mwen paske m pa t konn gen ase tan pou m etidye lakay la. Ti zanmi m yo te konn ... te konn fè leson pou nou memorize yo tounen chante ...eu ...eu ...yon fason pou m te kapab aprann yo pi vit, ... 'but' ...men se pa tout lè m te kapab rive kenbe yo nan tèt mwen. Nan...Nan... moman resitasyon, atravè ane eskolè mwen yo, m konn jwenn pwofesè ki senpa, se konsa tou konn genyen ki vrèman mechan. Hum...Hum... Sa m te konn pi rayi se lè yo fin pini m pou ...pou... pou leson an m konn pa fin konnen, epitou yo mete manman m oswa bòpè m okouran tou. Bòpè m konn... konn retounen kale m ankò malgre li ...li... toujou konnen m pa t janm gen ase tan pou m etidye. Ti...Ti zanmi m yo te toujou gen pitye pou mwen paske yo te konnen ki tray m t ap pase. Pwofesè ki te finalman konprann mwen se te...se te sa a klas sètifika, m kapab di klas 5yèm ane a. M te gen chans pou l te koute m, konsa li te kreye mwayen pou l te ede m anvan klas kòmanse epitou ban m kèk ti konsèy sou enpòtans lekòl genyen. Li ...Li te konn toujou itilize pwovèb sa: Soufri jodi, reyisi demen. M pa gen dwa janm bliye ti zanmi m yo ansanm ak pwofesè sa a.

I used to get up early every morning to go to school. It ... It ... was always a pleasure for me to take ... to ...to take the road with my little friends. As we walked, ...hum ... hum we used to give jokes and... eee ... recite our lessons. I often did not ...did not know my lesson because I never had enough time to study at home. My friends used to ... used to turn the lessons that we needed to memorize into songs ...eu...eu...so that I could memorize them quickly; that was a good strategy, ... but ...but...it did not always work for me. Throughout my school years, some of my teachers were nice during ... during... recitation time,

but some others were very mean. What I hated the most was when the teacher punished me... for... for not knowing my lesson, and then the teacher informed my mother or my stepfather about that. My stepfather used to ...used to...punish me again, even though he ...he ...knew that I never had enough time to study. My ...my...friends used to feel pity for me because they knew what I was going through. My fifth-grade teacher was ...was the one that finally understood my situation because she took time to listen to me. She created a way to help me before class and gave me some tips about the importance of school. She ...She always used this proverb: Suffer today, succeed tomorrow. I will never forget my little friends and that specific teacher.

After completing her fifth grade, Nedjie moved to Miami to live with her father. Because she was 15 years old, she was placed in eighth grade. Nedjie has been living in the U.S. for 3 years, is now 18 years old, and is in 11th grade. Nedjie is now living with her father, her stepmother and her two siblings (a brother and a sister). Her mom lives in Haiti. Nedjie said, "*Mwen antre nan yon pi bon peyi, men sitiyasyon lavi m pa chanje.* I am now in a better country, but my life situation does not change." Nedjie found herself in a situation where she would prefer to go back to Haiti. "*Ti sè ak ti frè mwen yo ...eu...eu pa t genyen okenn respè pou mwen. Yo souvan fè anpil manti sou mwen. Yo ...Yo ...chire pwòp liv yo epi yo di se mwen menm ki fè l.* My two younger siblings ...eu ...eu...do not have any respect for me. They ...They... lie on me. They tore up their own books and they blamed it on me," Nedjie explained in an incredibly soft voice. She used this expression to share her frustration:

"Mwen soti nan larivyè epi m tonbe nan lanmè,"
"I came out of the river and fell into the sea,"

Even though Nedjie was having some difficulties with her schooling in Haiti, she always did well in math. "*Matematik se matyè prefere m. M ...M...M...te konn toujou fè A ak B ladan lè m te Ayiti, men akòz m ap fonksyone nan yon lang etranjè bagay yo vin pa ...pa ... pa twò fasil pou mwen.* My favorite subject is Math. I ... I always had As and

But in it when I was in Haiti, but the fact that I am now learning in a foreign language, things are not too ...not too... easy for me,” Nedjie said.

The United States: A Land of Opportunity

Nedjie believes that the United States is a land of opportunity. “*Nan Etazini tout moun gen posibilite pou aprann nenpòt sa yo ta vle aprann.* In the United States, everyone has the possibility to learn any profession that they want,” Nedjie said. Nedjie would like to go to medical school. She hopes to be proficient in English so that she will be able to do well in all her classes. She is a very shy person; therefore, she does not question a lot. “*Timidite mwen... Timidite mwen rann mwen pa aprann Anglè a jan pou m ta aprann li a. M plis konprann pase m pale.* My shyness... My shyness slows me down from learning the language as fast as I wanted to,” Nedjie explained. She hopes that one day she will be able to accomplish her dream. Nedjie said “*Mwen vrèman ta renmen vin youn Fizisyen ... ‘cause’ ...paské ...paské se tout rèv mwen sa. Se youn nan opòtinite m pa ta vle rate.* I would like to be a physician ... cause...because... this is my biggest dream. I do not want to miss that opportunity.”

Participant 6: Guerdnie

Guerdnie was born in the “Nippes” department in Haiti, but she moved to Port-au-Prince after she completed her kindergarten to live with her grandparents when both of her parent emigrated to the United States in search of a better life. With her grandparents, Guerdnie used to live specifically in Delmas, a residential and commercial area in the Port-au-Prince Arrondissement. She enjoyed living with her grandparents. “*M te toujou kontan lè m t ap viv ak granparan m yo paske yo te pran swen mwen trè byen. Sa m te pi renmen an se tout prensip yo te konn aplike yo. Yo te toujou trè estrik nan lè pou nou*

manje. I was always happy when I was living with my grandparents because they took incredibly diligent care of me. What I really liked was their discipline about the time for every meal,” Guerdnie said.

“*Kilti jwe yon wòl enpòtan nan lavi tout moun. Kilti bay moun yon sans apatenans, espesyalman lè tout moun pale menm lang lan*. Culture plays a significant role in the lives of everyone in the society. Culture gives a sense of belonging especially when everyone speaks the same language,” Guerdnie explained. Guerdnie is extremely attached to the Haitian culture. “*Mwen genyen anpil bagay mwen valorize nan kilti Ayisyèn nan. Lè m pran ‘like’ ... hum ...hum ...manje yo, mizik yo ak dans yo.... se tout yon bagay eksepsyonèl epi inik. Kilti Ayisyèn nan rich ak anpil tradisyon*. I have a lot of things that I value in the Haitian culture. When I take, for instance, ‘like’ ... hum... hum ... the food, the music, and the dancing... they are all exceptional and pretty unique. The Haitian culture is rich with many traditions.” Guerdnie explains.

Educational Background:

Guerdnie attended Ecole Chretienne Adventiste and that is where she completed kindergarten through sixth grade. Guerdie was an average student who always earned either a B or a C in all her subjects. “*Mwen pa t yon elèv ki te twò fò, ni m pa t kreten nonplis. M te konn toujou etidye leson mwen epitou fè ...eueu ...eu ... devwa mwen pou m pa t janm rive double okenn klas*. I was not a super smart student, and I was not dumb either. I always took time to memorize any assigned lines or chapters and complete ...eu...eu...eu...any additional homework so that I did not fail any grade,” Guerdnie shared. Her favorite subject was science. “*Pou mwen menm syans se pi fasil epi pi bèl matyè ki te kapab egziste espesyalman lè... lè ... m ap travay sou pwòje yo ansanm ...*

ak...ak gwoup etidyan. M renmen ... eks...eks... eksperimante anpil. For me science is the easiest and most beautiful subject that could ever exist especially when ...when... I am working in groups to do some ...ex...ex...experiments,” Guerdnie explained.

When Guerdnie was in school in Haiti she participated in several extracurricular activities. She was even at her school every Saturday to get herself involved in certain youth clubs.

Pou mwen menm li enpòtan anpil pou m patisipe nan aktivite lekòl mwen; ‘like’ aktivite ki ... ki...ki pa gen pou wè ak etidye long chapit leson... tankou ...m kapab di... ‘like’ ... klib sosyal yo ki reyini aprè lekòl yo. M ...M pa telman renmen etidye long chapit yo ... kote pwofesè ap mande pou m memorize a ‘because’ ... paske anpil fwa m konn pa ... pa menm konprann sa m ap memorize a. Se nan aktivite aprè lekòl yo m kapab sosyalize ak lòt kamarad klas mwen, se ... se la tou m kapab pataje fistrasyon mwen sou kèk matyè m konn pa fin konprann. Aktivite sosyal yo ede ...ede m ...eu ...eu...eu konprann fistrasyon lòt elèv yo tou, epitou ... ‘like’... yo ede konesans mwen louvri plis nan viv ak moun. Se nan patisipe nan...nan aktivite aprè yo lekòl m dekouvri matyè prefere mwen ki se syans; se poutèt sa klib prefere mwen se te Syans Lavi. Non sèlman li te yon klib, li te ... ‘like’... yon sipò tou pou elèv ki ta renmen kon ... kon...kontinye etid yo nan branch medikal. Apa Klib Syans Lavi, m te renmen jwe ‘like’ volebòl epitou patisipe nan ...nan etid Biblik.

It is particularly important for me to get involved in activities in my school; ‘Like’... activities that ...that ...that are not related to studying and memorizing long chapters... as I can say... extracurricular activities, ‘like’ such as clubs that meet after school. I ...I did not like studying the long chapters ... that the teachers always assigned to the students to memorize because ... because I often did not ... didn’t even understand what I was memorizing. In the after-school activities I could socialize with my friends and other students in the school, and I could ... I could... I could share my ...my frustration with others about some subjects that I ...I often did not understand. Social activities also helped...helped me ...eu ...eu ...eu... to understand the frustrations of other students as well, and ‘like’ ... they also helped open my mind and my knowledge about other people. Participating in ... in ... in after school activities helped me discover my favorite subject, which is now science; and that's why my favorite club was Life Sciences. Not only it was a club, buy also a ... ‘like’... support for students who would like to continue their career in medical school. Besides Life Science Club, I enjoyed playing volleyball and participating in ...in Bible studies.

When Guerdnie was about to start seventh grade she entered the United States. She was incredibly happy because her grandparents were also granted U.S. visas and they were able to travel with her. Guerdnie was placed in eighth grade because of her age. She attended a middle school in the South region in M-DCPS. She is now 19 years and is in 12th grade. Guerdnie has remained an average student, and she is receiving Cs more than Bs in her classes. *“Menm lè m genyen difikilte ak lang lan, m fè tout efò ki posib pou m pase tout klas mwen.* Even though I have some difficulties with the language, I am doing whatever it takes to pass all my classes. Guerdnie could not continue participating in extracurricular activities like she used to when she was in Haiti. Guerdnie shares this in her story:

Genyen anpil barye lè w ap fonksyone nan yon lang etranjè. M ta renmen ... pa egzanp...eu...eu...eu...patisipe nan klib kote elèv yo ...elèv yo gen chans pou yo bay anons yo le maten, ‘but’ ...men mwen pa pa kapab. Gen ...Genyen yon timidite ki vin devlope lakay mwen, m santi ki pa nan mwen lè m ap fonksyone an Kreyòl. ‘And’ ... E...E...Epi anpil fwa lòt elèv entimide m. Lè m eseye antre nan ...nan klib m renmen an yo toujou fè m konnen klib sa pa pou mwen. M vin ap rive tèmine ‘high school’ san m pa janm ...eu ...eu ...patisipe vrèman ... ‘like’ tankou nan yon klib m renmen.

There are many barriers when you are functioning in a foreign language. For example, eu... eu...eu...I would like to participate in the club that allow the students ... students to give the morning and the afternoon announcements, but ...but I cannot. There ... There is a shyness that develops in me when it comes to speaking in English, I do not feel it when I am speaking in Creole. And ... E... E...E... And I feel like I get intimidated by the other students. When I try to join the ...the clubs that I like, the Hispanic students always tell me that this club is not for me. I am going by ending up graduating high school without ... eu ... eu ... really participating ...like... like ...in a club that I really like.

Guerdnie likes the U.S. education system because she is not spanked by her teachers, but she misses her friends in Haiti. In the U.S., she believes that the technology is very advanced; she gets the chance to turn in her assignments late if she communicates with the teacher. She likes the fact that she can turn in her work online. Guerdnie’s dream

is to become a registered nurse. *“Mwen ta renmen antre nan pwogram enfimyè ki genyen nan Miami-Dade College petèt yon jou m kapab ede timoun ki nan bezwen. I would like one day to get admitted in the nursing program at Miami-Dade College so that I can become a registered nurse and one day I hope to assist some less fortunate kids,”* Guerdnie said.

Going to school is Guerdnie’s passion, but sometimes she feels discouraged because her limited language proficiency stops her from making the friends that she would like to make. Sometimes when she is in her regular classes, she feels like she cannot ask the question or participate the way that she would love to. *“Mwen pa fin alèz nan ...nan klas regilye yo ... ‘cause’ ... paske m santi m pa fè vwa m... pase ase epitou pwofesè yo konn manke pasyans. Elèv m santi ki ta kapab ede m yo, m ...m pa zanmi avèk yo ... ‘and’ ...epitou se baryè lang lan ki koz sa. I am not that comfortable in ... in the regular classes ...cause ... because I don’t feel like my voice is being heard enough. I ...I am not friends with the students that could possibly help me, and. ...and it is because of the language barrier,”* Guerdnie explained.

The United States: A Land of Opportunity

Guerdnie believes that the U.S. is a land of opportunity. All students receive a free education, at least up to 12th grade. When they get to college, they can also get grant and scholarships if they apply and qualify for them. They can start working at 16 years old, whereas in Haiti people can be 40, 50, or even older and never get a job; and they must know someone to get employed somewhere. Guerdnie shared, *“M genyen tant mwen ki fini etid klasik li, ‘she study nurse’ ... li te etidye enfimyè epi li pa janm... ‘never’ ...pa janm ka jwenn yon ti travay Ayiti. Pou li ka siviv, ‘she’ ... li oblije tounen yon*

komèsan. Li ...Li t ap jwenn yon travay kan menm si li t ap viv Ozetazini. I have my aunt ... 'she study' ... that studied nursing after she completed her high school and could never ... never find a job. With a nursing degree, she became a merchant to survive; she ... she would have found a job if she was living in the United States.” Even though the U.S. is a land of opportunities, Guerdnie thinks that people that are living here have too many bills to pay. “Nan peyi Etazini lajan antre, men lajan pa rete. Ou ...Ou ... poko menm touche chèk la te gentan genyen yon pakèt bil k ap tann ou. M ap ... M ap travay se vre, men m poko kapab fè okenn ekonomi ... cause... paske fò m ede paran m yo ak 'bill' yo. In the United States, you make the money, but it does not stay. Even though you ... you could work, but you never really see the money. I ...I have a job, but I cannot save a dime ... cause...because I must help my parents with the bills,” Guerdie said.

Findings

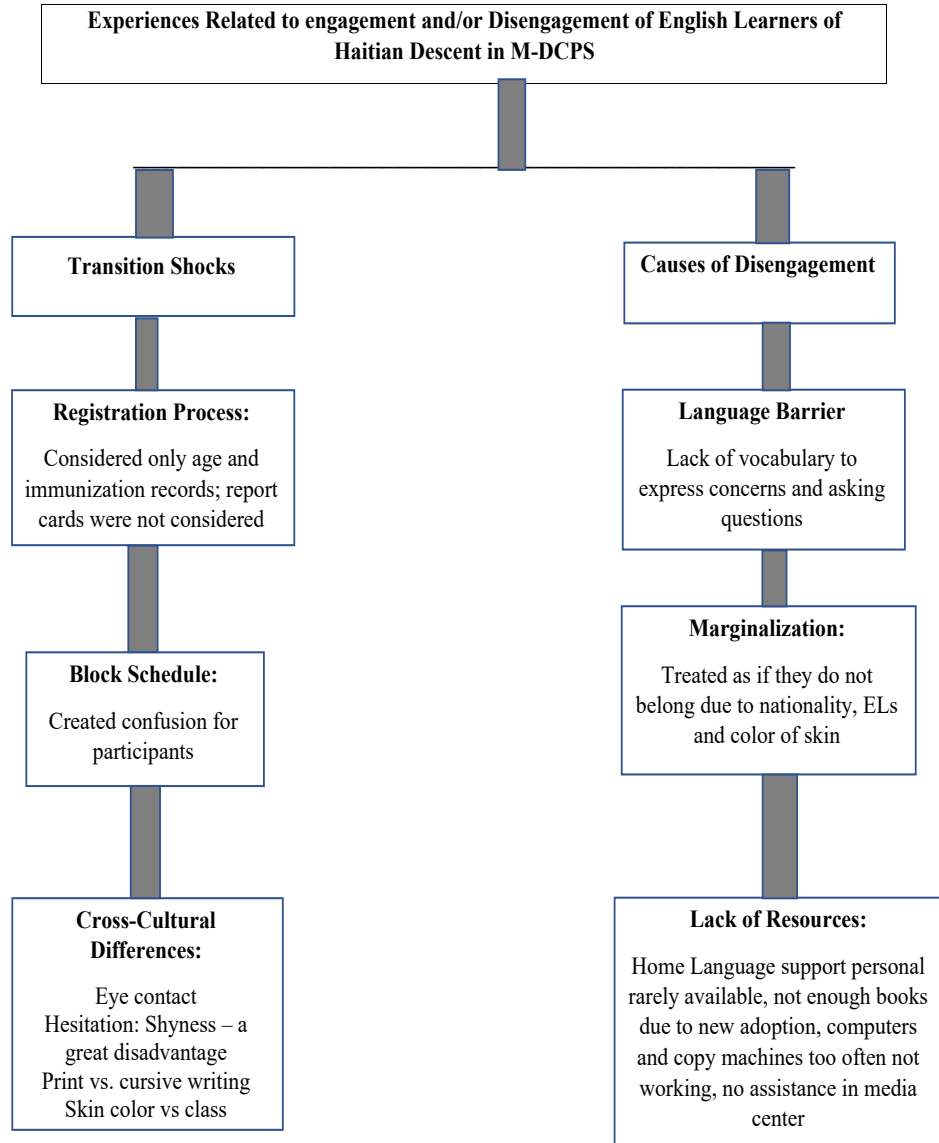
The stories collected from each participant about their educational experiences in the mainstream classrooms are at the core of this narrative inquiry. I created good intimacy with the participants to reveal their stories. The participants’ stories were relevant to the main research question driving this study. They covered differences in time they studied in Haiti and in the United States, and they described their personal and social interaction.

The participants described their lived experiences of education in the United States. “*Etidye nan yon lang etranjè se yon bagay ki difisil anpil. Menm hum...hum...lè ou konnen yon bagay, ou pa kapab...mmm ...kòman m ta ka di sa...ou pa kapab vrèman bay opinyon w sou li paske ou pa genyen ase vokabilè -- Studying in a foreign language is something that is exceedingly difficult. Even if you know something, hum... how I*

could I say that...you cannot elaborate on it because of lack of vocabulary,” Greg explained. Yodna and Guerdnie had the same reaction. The participants elaborated on their answers based on probing questions asked throughout the interviews. In qualitative research, coding is a “word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (Saldana, 2013, P.3).

From the data that I gathered, I created the following two themes and the six sub-themes: Transition Shocks with these three sub-themes – (Registration Process, Block Schedule, and Cross-Cultural Differences) and Causes of Disengagement which covers Language Barrier, Marginalization and Lack of Resources. The figure in the next page illustrates the mentioned themes and sub-themes that are related to the participants’ stories.

Figure 1: English Learners of Haitian Descent



First Theme: Transition Shock

The first theme, “Transition shock,” incorporates culture shock and stress among the participants. “Transition shock can negatively influence academic and social learning” (Yaafouri, 2018). The transition shock that the participants experienced is processed and retained within their mind and it is difficult for them to get over it. The stories the participants shared tell how they identify themselves as English Learners within the environment of the schools they attend. They all struggled to discover themselves throughout the transition process because every day they had to deal with differences in culture. Guerdnie explained, “*Tranzisyon ...eu...eu...se pi gwo estrès ki ta kapab egziste nan lavi yon moun. Nan zafè tranzisyon sa a, m...mm... m vi n twouve m nan yon sitiyasyon kote m oblije adapte m ak anpil bagay, menm lè...lè yo pa rann mwen alèz. Transition ...eu...eu...is the greatest stress that could exist in a person's life. During this transition, I ...I...I found myself in a situation where I had to adapt to so many things, even when ... when I was not too comfortable with them.*” When talking about transition shock throughout their stories, the participants elaborated on the process of registration, block schedule system and cross-cultural differences.

Registration Process

There are differences and similarities that exist among cultures. Throughout this study, all the participants encountered transition shock. They were extremely vocal when they were sharing their experiences about the registration process. Based on their stories, they all felt very stressed about it. Yona commented by saying, “*Lè m te fenk antre Ozetazini, m...m...mwen te fè prèske yon mwa mwen pa t al lekòl.* When I first came to the United States, I ... I didn't go to school for almost a month.” She continued by

elaborating on why she made that statement, “*Lefèt...m....m... mwen pa t antre ak kanè mwen, manman m te fè m oblije ap tann kanè a pou m...pou m...pou m te kapab al enskri. Lè m te finalman jwenn kanè a, mwen te ale nan yon lekòl pou enskripsyon; biwo...biwo... eu...eu... eu anrejistreman pa t vrèman konsène sou zafè kanè, se te plis sou zafè dokiman ki pwouve laj mwen...mwen ...mwen... ak adrès kote mwen abite. The fact that I...I ... I did not have my report card with me, my mom made me wait for ...for ...for ... for it before going to a school for registration. When I finally got my report card, my mom took me to the school for eu...eu... eu... registration; the office of registration was not really concerned about my report card. They were more concerned about a document that could prove my ...my... my...age and a utility bill to prove the address where I live.”*

The sad part about this, Yodna explained:

Yo pa t aksepte m nan lekòl la ‘cause’... paske adrès ki te sou ‘bill’ m te pote a pa t ... matche ak zòn ... anviwònman lekòl la. Mwen ...Mwen vin soti ale nan yon lekòl manman m pa t vle pou mwen. Bagay sa a te choke m ...te choke m anpil ...pa ... paske nan kilti pa m mwen kapab ale nan nenpòt lekòl... nan nenpòt ki lekòl mwen vle. Yo pa janm prete okenn atansyon ... sou ... sou distans lakay elèv la ak lekòl la. Lekòl yon elèv frekante se toujou ... toujou chwa paran li, pèfòmans li nan ...eg...eg... egzamen d antre a ak nòt li nan lekòl li te ye anvan.

I was not accepted to the school ... cause ... because the address on the bill wasn’t wasn’t in the same zone... same neighborhood of the school that my mom took me to register. I ... I ended up going to a school that my mother didn’t want for me. This shocked me ... shocked me ... a lot ... be...because in my culture I can go to any ... any school I want. They never pay attention from... from the distance of your house to the school. The school that you go to is always ... always your parents’ choice, your performance on the entrance ...ex...ex... exam and your grades from your previous school.

Sophia went on by saying, “*Nan pwosesis anrejistreman, moun yo pa menm ... hum ...*

Hum... pa mande m pou kanè; yo jis pran m yo ... yo ...eu...yo mete m nan yon klas daprè laj mwen. Lakay pa m bagay yo pa fèt konsa. Se pa laj ki... ki detèmine nan ki ane lekòl w ap antre, men se dènye klas ou konplete a ... epi ...epitou ak yon mwayèn lekòl la akspte. During the registration process, the people didn't didn't ask me ...hum ... for my report cards; they ... eu... they just put me in a class according to my age. In my country things are not done that way. It is not your age ...that ... that determines the school year you are going to enter; they go rather by the last grade you successfully completed, ...and ... and those grades must be acceptable to the school that you want to go to.” As she continued sharing her story, she said, “Bagay laj sa a fè ou tonbe... hum ... ja ja ja... nan menm ane lekòl ak ... ak moun ki pa menm genyen nivo klas segondè Haiti oswa... oswa... nenpòt ... m ka di nenpòt lòt peyi yo soti a. Lekòl yo plis estrik sou ... sou zafè adrès olye nivo edikasyon ou. Kit ou konn li, kit ou... pa konn... pa konn li se degaje w pou naje pou w sòti. The system of placing students by age made me feel ... hum ... ja ja ja ... into the same grade level with ... with students that were not even at the high school level in Haiti... or ... or whatever ... whatever I can say.... Whatever other country they came from. The office of registration is stricter ... about ... about identifying your neighboring school rather than your level of education. Whether you know how to read or ... not ... not, you need to find your way out because you end up in a sink or swim situation.”

If their report cards were not considered, it is clear that the credit hours that they completed in Haiti were not going to count either. For students to graduate high school in M-DCPS, they must earn 24 credit hours (M-DCPS Curriculum Bulletin 2021-2022, Office Academics and Transformation, p. 9). Based on the participants’ stories, they were

all admitted one grade level higher than the one they completed in Haiti, and it was according to their age, but the ones that started in high school were still responsible to complete the required 24 total credit hours to earn their high school diplomas. This creates frustration for English learners; not only they have to learn the language, but they also must repeat courses that they have already completed in their countries. Greg, one of the participants in the North Region of M-DCPS, shared the following story:

Mwen te reyalize hum... hum... mwen twouve pwosesis pou m ... pou m te enskri a pa t mande twòp egzijans. Mwen te mache ak ... ak kanè m paske m te konprann yo t a pral konsidere nòt mwen pou yo ... te mete m ... te mete m nan klas mwen, men men sa m te panse a se pa t sa ditou. Moun ki t ap fè ...fè enskripsyon an te plis konsantrè sou ...sou laj mwen olye klas mwen te konplete Ayiti. Lè tout demach yo te fini, yo te di mwen pral ... hum ... hum ... antre nan 11yèm ane. M te sezi paske m ta sipoze antre nan 10yèm ane si se te Ayiti mwen te ye. Sa k te vin yon chòk pou mwen pi devan, AYAYAY BONDYE.... se kantite kredi m sipoze konplete pou m ... pou m kapab gradye a.

I realize Hum ... hum I found that the requirements for ... for the registration process were not too complicated. I carried my report card with ... with me because I thought that they were going to consider my grades in order... in order to place me ... to place me... in a specific grade level, but ... but what I had in my mind was not the case. The registrar focused ... focused more on documents to prove ... to prove my age instead of the grade level that I completed in Haiti. When the registration process was finalized, I was told ... hum ... hum ... that I was placed in 11th grade. I was surprised because I was supposed to start 10th grade if I was in Haiti. What came as a shock to me ... AYAYAY my GOD... later was the number of credits that I had to have in order... in order to graduate.

Greg and Yodna are very frustrated about the number of required credit hours to graduate. They both feel that during the registration process they were supposed to give them an entry test in their home language so that they could fulfill some of the credit requirements. Yodna said, “*M panse si yo pa t konsidere nòt nou antre ak yo a, yo te ka omwen... tankou... ban mwen yon egzamen nan lang mwen ki ta kapab ede m antre enpe kredi.* I think if they didn’t consider my credits from home, they should have at least ...

like... giving me a test in my native language so that I could have earned some credit hours.”

Yodna entered in 10th grade, which means she must complete six extra credit hours in either night school, Florida Virtual School, or Summer School. Greg, on the other hand, started in 11th grade; therefore, he needs to complete 12 extra credit hours in either night school, summer school or Florida Virtual School. Greg said:

Kredi m te konplete Ayiti yo pa t konsidere, konsa Like... konsa mwen oblije ale nan ... ‘night school’ ... lekòl aswè ... epi ... epitou pran klas ak “Florida Virtual” pou m kapab pran rès kredi yo; tandike kanè m ... ‘already’...pwouve m te deja konplete klas yo fè m ap re pran yo. Sa a ... franchman Madam... vin fè m santi tankou m pa t janm ... janm lekòl lakay mwen, epitou edikasyon nan peyi m pa genyen okenn valè.

The credits I completed in Haiti were not considered, so Like.... so... I must go to night school ... night school and... and take classes with Florida Virtual School to complete the rest of the credits when my report card ... already proves I have already completed the classes they are having me taking over. This ... frankly Madam ... This makes me feel like I was never never in school in my home country, and education in my country has no value.

Throughout the registration process, the participants encountered difficulties that delayed them from starting school right away and they were shocked about all of them. Not only Guerdnie, Lyce and Nedjie talked about being placed in a grade level without considering their report cards, they also talked about how they could not start school right away because they needed to show proof of immunization. Guerdnie said, “*Pandan pwosesis ... enskripsyon an... anrejistreman an, yo ban mwen yon ... a a a a... tankou ... ‘like’ Yo ban mwen yon pakè ki genyen lis ... tankou... lis enfòmasyon yo ki te ekri an Anglè ak an Panyòl; konsa mwen pa t fin konprann ... pa t fin konprann tout sa m te bezwen pou m ... pou m kòmanse lekòl. Prè vaksinasyon ... WOY PROBLÈM... se yonn nan bagay m pa t fin konprann. When I got to enrollment ... registration, I was*

given a package ... aaaa ... like ... like I was given a package with a list of ... like ... information that was written in English and Spanish; therefore, I didn't really understand didn't understand everything that I needed in order ... to start school. Proof of immunization ... 'WOY' PROBLEM was one of the things that I didn't understand on that list." Guerdnie continue by saying, "*Aprè fin enskri ... m...m tepanse m t ap kòmanse lekòl nan demen, ... but... men ... men sa pa t rive fèt ... 'cause' ... paske yon kouzen mwen te revize lis enfòmasyon ki te nan pakè a, se konsa li te fè m ... fè m konnen m te bezwen pran vaksen. Li te pran mwen ... ban m wè... li te pran mwen yon lòt ... yon lòt semèn edmi pou m ... pou m te kòmanse lekòl.* After enrolling, I ... I thought I was going to start school the next day, ... but ... but that wasn't the case. When I got home, one of my cousins reviewed the list from registration and told me ... told me that I needed to get vaccinated. To go through that process, it took me ... let me see ... it took me another ... another week and a half before I could ... I could start school."

It could be incredibly stressful for English Learners when they think they are ready to start school and then find out they must get immunized. Lyce explained, "*Aprè m te fin ranpli tout fòmalitye nan ... nan ... eu ... eu... nan biwo enskripsyon an, yo te vin fè m konnen m sipoze al pran vaksen. Demach vaksen an te fè m pase yon ... yon lòt semèn lakay anvan m te ... m te resi ale lekòl. Si m te konnen m t ap bezwen prè vaksen m t ap ... m t ap vwayaje ak ... ak ... kat vaksinasyon mwen.* After completing all the formalities at ... at ... eu ... eu ... at the registration office, I was told that I had to show proof of immunization. Due to the vaccination process, it took me another ... another week to start school. If I knew that I was going ... I was going to need to show proof of

immunization I would have traveled with ... with my immunization card.” Nedjie shared the following story:

Bagay vaksen sa a ... woy son lòt istwa... bagay vaksen sa a... fè m pase prèske de semèn m pa t ka ale lekòl. Non sèlman m pran vaksen, men ... men yo te ban mwen yon 'TB' test, tou, pou tcheke si ... si ... si m pa gen tibèkiloz. Mwen te gen pou m ... pou m retounen nan klinik lan aprè... aprè twa jou pou yo ... pou yo te kapab tcheke ponyèt mwen. Lè m retounen nan randevou a, yo tcheke l epi se konsa yo mande ... eu ... eu ... eu ... pou m fè yon radyografi pou lestomak mwen. Mwen te gen pou m te tann yon lòt... yon lòt twa jou pou rezilta. Nan tout mache sa yo, de semèn pase anvan m ... anvan m te kapab kòmanse lekòl ofisyèlman.

Because of the vaccination process ... ‘woy’ another story, Because of the vaccination process ... I lost almost two weeks of school. Not only I got vaccinated, but ... but I was also given a TB test to check to see if ... if ... if I do not have tuberculosis. I had to return to ... to ... to the clinic after three days ... so that... so that they could check my wrist. When I returned to the appointment, they checked it and then I was told to do ... eu... eu ... eu ... a chest X-Ray. I had to wait another... another.... three days for the result of that test before ... before I could officially start school.”

Although it may be something that was not considered at the school sites, the participants felt that the transition process would have been easier if they were able to communicate with someone that could speak their native language during the process or at least get the written information in their native language. Guerdnie, a participant in the south region, explained, “*Tout bagay te ... te parèt difisil pou mwen nan... nan moman anrejistreman ... ‘cause’ ... paske pa t ... pa t genyen okenn moun ki te kapab ... ‘like’ ... vrèman eksplike m tout sa m te bezwen nan lang pa m nan; tandike ... m t ap obsève ... m te wè timoun ki pale Panyòl yo te ... te jwenn tout èd yo te bezwen byen vit, kit se ... kit se aloral oswa alekri.* Everything appeared difficult for me ... for me during the registration process ... cause ... because there was no ... there was no one ... like ... to assist me in my native language; however, ... I was observing I saw that the Spanish-speaking

students got ... got ... all the help they needed quickly, whether ... whether orally or in writing.”

ELs often get affected by transition shocks throughout their studies. The participants in the study shared their experiences during the process of registration. Based on their stories, they encountered difficulties that could have discouraged them right away, but they resisted all situations because they had to adapt themselves to the new culture and they wanted to achieve their goal in the American culture. They were all very happy about being placed in one grade higher than the one they completed in Haiti, but they were also very frustrated the fact that they did not evaluate the courses that they have already completed in their home country in order to give them some credits. Yodna said, “*Li te vrèman difisil pou m te rive aksepte yon bagay m konnen ki pa jis, men akòz sityasyon lavi a m oblije bouche nen m pou m bwè dlo santi jan pwovèb Kreyòl la di l la.* It was exceedingly difficult for me to accept something that I knew that was unjust, but I had to do whatever it took to get what I wanted even when it might not be the best situation.” Some of the participants were extremely disappointed about not receiving a registration packet in Haitian Creole but what they were given was in English and in Spanish. Guerdnie explained, “*Si m te genyen enfòmasyon pou anrejistreman yo nan lang mwen, m pa t ap pèdi yon pakèt tan pou m te kòmanse lekòl, sa a se yon bagay pou tout lekòl nan distri a ta konsidere.* If I had received the registration information in my language, I wouldn’t have wasted so much time to start school. This is something for all the schools in the district to consider.”

Block Schedule

“Block scheduling is a system for scheduling junior high and high school days, by replacing the historical scheduling method of six or seven 40-50-minute class periods that are longer in duration and meet fewer times during the week” (Lynch, 2021, p. 1). The participants in the study refer to the block schedule system when they talk about the process of their transition. Their stories revealed that they came from a school system in which they follow the traditional schedule system and the teachers used to come to their class at the end of each block. The adaptation of a new schedule system without explanation was not easy for them.

The participants felt very discouraged during their first few weeks of school because it was hard for them to adapt themselves with the block scheduling and they did not receive an explanation on how to follow the schedule during the registration process. Greg said, “*Nan chanje klas m te konn ... ‘always’ ... toujou ap pèdi epi sa konn lakoz m pa janm rive ... ‘on time’ ...alè nan klas yo. M te konn santi m jennen lè m rive ... ‘late’... anreta. Gen elèv ki konn ri sou mwen. Sa a te konn ... tankou... ‘like’... tankou deranje m anpil epi ... epitou pote yon sans dekourajman lakay ... lakay ... mwen ... ‘cause’... paske m se yon moun ki timid anpil.* By changing classrooms, I ... always ... always used to get lost in the hallways and because of that I was always late ...always late for class. Some of the students used to laugh at me and ... like ... so... and I felt embarrassed. This really bothered me, and ... and it created a sense of discouragement on my part ... on my part because I am a very shy person.”

The participants sometimes felt confused about the A-Day and B-Day. Sophia said. “*Gen kèk jou, m konn chita nan klas m pa t dwe ye, epi... epi pwofesè a pa menm*

reyalize mwen pa dwe nan klas li. Pafwa se kèk elèv ki ... ki konn ede m, men...men se pa toutan yo te konn vle fè sa a. M konn jwenn elèv ki janti, mm ... men se konsa tou gen kèk ki konn fè m ... fè m mechanste. Some days I sat in classrooms that I should not be in, and ... and the teachers did not even realize that I was in the wrong class. Sometimes some students ... helped me, but ... but they did not always want to do that. Some students were kind, ... b...but... but some others were very ... were very mean to me.” Sophia continued by saying,

Akoz orè a mwen pa t ka ... eu ...eu fin byen konprann, Jou A ak Jou B, mwen konn di moun lakay mwen ... tankou... m di yo ... m malad pou m pa ale lekòl la. Konn gen timoun ki pale Anglè sèlman ki konn ... ki konn toujou prèt pou ede m paske kè yo te konn fè yo mal pou mwen, men ...men akoz m pa pale Anglè mwen konn vin rive pa konprann sa y ap eksplike mwen. Nan twa ... Nan twa premye semèn yo, m te ... m te preske pa t genyen yon jou dlo pa t nan je m. Se vre wi, Miss. Sa a te vrèman dekourajan.

The fact that I couldn't ... eu ...eu... fully understand the schedule, the A-Days and the B-Days, I often told my family ... like... I said... that I was sick so that they would not force me to go to school. There ... There were some English-speaking students that always wanted... that always wanted to help me because ... because they felt pity for me. I could not really use their assistance because I didn't understand what they were telling me. During ... during the first three weeks, I had ... I had tears in my eyes every day... and this is true, Miss. That was really discouraging.

“*Mwen te tankou yon ti egare nan premye semèn lekòl yo. I was like a dummy on the first few days of school,*” Lyce said. “*M sonje nan... nan premye jou mwen, nan ... nan fen premyè sesyon an ... tankou m ka di ... premye peryòd mwen, klòch la te sonnen pou nou te chanje klas; tout elèv te leve epi y ale, men m te ... m te rete chita paske m pa t konn ... konnen kisa pou m te fè epi pwofesè a pa t di anyen. I remember on ... I remember on... my first day, everyone left the class at ... at the end of the first session... like I can say the first period ... when the bell rang, but I ... I stayed seated because I did not ... did not know what I was supposed to do, and the teacher did not say a thing.” It*

could be very embarrassing for ELs when they feel like they are being ignored. Lyce continued to share her story:

Pandan m te toujou chita nan klas la, lòt ... lòt gwoup elèv yo t ap antre; se konsa youn nan elèv yo te pran 'schedule' mwen ... tankou orè mwen ki te sou biwo mwen epi l te gade l. Li ... li te ... li te mande pwofesè a pou l t al mennen m nan klas mwen. Pandan yo t ap pale, yo di yon bagay ... 'and then' ...epi yo ri. M te santi m te jennen ... jennen... anpil epitou sa te kontrarye m pandan tout jounen an.

While I was still sitting in the class, the other ... the other groups of students were entering; so, one of the students took my schedule ... like ... my schedule from my desk and looked at it. She ...She ... She asked the teacher if she could take me to my class. As they were talking, they said something ... and ... and then laughed. I felt very embarrassed... embarrassed and that ruined my entire day.

"Li vrèman difisil pou moun ap pale avè w ... epi... epi ou pa konprann sa l ap di, ... epi...epitou l ap ri w mete sou li. It is exceedingly difficult when someone is talking to you ... and ... and you do not understand what the person is saying, ... and ... and on top of it the person is laughing," Yona said.

The participants in the study really like the block scheduling system, but it created frustration for them during their first few weeks. They felt very lonely and at the same time very discouraged when they could not adjust themselves with a scheduling system that is totally different from theirs. Lyce said, *"Mwen panse li t ap bon si tout pwofesè yo te bay nouvo etidyan ki pa konn pale Anglè yo bon jan akèy. I think it would have been great if all the teachers had welcomed the newcomers nicely."* The participants felt ignored in some of the mainstreamed classroom; they did not feel like there was an urgency to assist them when they were most needed. Guerdnie said, *"M panse si lekòl yo te genyen yon ti eksplikasyon sou zafè 'block schedule' la nan lang ki an majorite yo, sa t ap ede elèv yo k ap aprann pale Anglè yo anpil. I think if they have had a little*

explanation of the block schedule in the languages that are spoken the most in the schools, it would have been extremely helpful for the newcomers.”

Cross-Cultural Differences

Every country in the society has its own unique cultural traditions that identify its values, its beliefs, and its way of thinking. Transitioning from one country to another could be incredibly challenging when facing cultural differences, but it could also be a great learning experience. Cross-cultural learning is considered an important aspect of the participants’ education. The interviews revealed that the participants were not comfortable with some of the aspects of the American Culture throughout their studies.

The participants talked about how they were being forced to look at their teachers in their eyes during a conversation. Guerdnie said, “*Lè yon moun gade yon ... yon granmoun nan je nan kilti pa m sa montre ... ‘like’ ... ou pa gen respè pou li. Lè m antre lekòl Ozetazini, m te vrèman choke pou m te wè ... ‘how’ ... kòman elèv t ap kale grenn je yo sou pwofesè pou ... pou replike ak yo. Looking at an ... an adult straight in the eyes is a sign of disrespect in my culture. When I first started school in the United States, I was shocked to see ... how ... how students would stare at their teachers and ... and argue back and forth with them.*” Guerdnie stated, “*Li te vrèman difisil pou ... pou mwen pou m te ka ... pou m te kapab adapte m ak sistèm gade pwofesè ... oswa ... oswa granmoun nan je sa. It was really hard for ... for me to to adapt myself with the system looking at my teachers ... or or adults in the eyes when they were talking to me.*”

Cultural differences can create confusion for foreigners. Nedjie felt that she was completely lost. She said that,

Lè m... Lè m lakay mwen bèlmè m pa janm vle kite m ... kite m gade l nan je lè l ap pale avè m. Si m ta eseye fè sa a, li ... li ta menm vle fè konnen se manman m... manman m pou m al fikse konsa lè l ap pale avè m. Li ... li menm mande m si m vle bat li. Lè m ... lè m lekòl la menm, pwofesè yo toujou ap fòse m pou m ... pou m gade yo nan je lè y ap pale avè m. Miss ... mmm... mwen te twouve m nan yon konfizyon total.

When ... when I'm at home, my stepmother never wants ... never wants to let me look at her in the eyes when she is talking to me. If I were to try to do that, she ... she would tell me that I need to find my mom ... my mom to look at her in the eyes like that when she is talking to me. She ... she would even tell me if I wanted to beat her up. When ... When I'm in school it's a different story; the teachers always force me to ... to look at them in the eyes when they are talking to me. Miss... mmm I really found myself in a total confusion.

When teachers have no understanding of the culture of their students, they could consider them rude if they behave in a way that is perceived as impolite in the American culture. “Gen... *Genyen yon pwofesè ... e e e... ki ...ki deside rele paran m paske m pa t vle gade l nan... nan je lè l t ap pale ak mwen... avè m. Se manman m ki ...ki te oblije fè l ... konn sa... konnen sa konsidere maledve nan... nan kilti Ayisyèn nan si yon timoun gade ... gade granmoun nan je lè l ap eu ... eu... eu ... pale avè l. Manman m te oblije mande l ... hum ... hum ... pou l pran pasyans ak ... avè m pou jiskaske m vin adapte m ak ... avèk kilti Amerikèn nan.* One of my teachers ... e e... decided ... to call my parents because I did not want to look at her in... in the eyes when she was talking to me. My mother had to tell her ... to tell her that this is considered impolite in ... in the Haitian culture if a child looks at ... looks at an adult in ... in the eyes ... eu ... eu ... eu ... when addressing him or her. My mother had to ask ... hum ... hum ... the teacher to be patient with me until I got used to ... to the American culture,” shared Lyce.

Nedjie and Guerdnie also talked about how shy they were during their first few weeks of school. Nedjie said, “*Timidite mwen pa t ... pa t pèmèt mwen dyaloge ak elèv ki te konn... te konn ... te konn pale Kreyòl yo pou m te kapab ... te kapab mande yo èd yo.*

Pafwa yo te konn... yo te konn ede m san m pa mande, men ... men pafwa tou yo fè ... yo fè tankou yo pa wè m petèt ... mmm.... petèt yo panse li te pran m twòp tan pou m ... pou m ... te konprann orè a. My shyness didn't ... did not allow me to ask the Creole-speaking students for their help. Sometimes they helped ... they helped me without asking, but...but sometimes they pretended ... they pretended not seeing me. I think, maybe, they thought it took me too long to... to understand the schedule.” Furthermore, she said, “Lè m vin finalman konprann, mwen ...mwen kapab ... mwen kapab di aprè yon bon mwa, mwen te fè... hum ... hum...hum... dis o non di pè. Se poutèt sa a m toujou... m toujou prèt pou m ... pou m ede nouvo etidyan ki pale Kreyòl yo; m pa ta renmen yo.... tankou m ka di ... fè menm eksperyans ... eu ... eu ... m te fè a. When I finally got to understand it, I ... I can ... I can say... say after a good month, I did ... hum ... hum ... hum... about ten signs of the cross to thank the Lord. Because of that, I'm ...always ready to... always ready to help new Creole-speaking students. I wouldn't want them ... like, I can say... to have the same experience ... eu ... eu ... that I had.”

Shyness could affect communication and could develop in people based on the environment. Guerdnie, a participant in the South Region, explains:

Mwen te nan yon sitiyou ki te vrèman... like... difisil; li te pran m yon bon ti tan, m ka di apeprè yon mwa, pou m te... pou m te adapte m ak orè lekòl la. Non sèlman m te timid, m te nan ... m te nan yon lekòl kote se plis Panyòl m t ap tande; konsa m pa t ... 'always' ... vrèman jwenn èd ki te nesesè. M pa t ... M pa t vrèman jwenn yon karaktè pozitif bò kote elèv yo pou m te kapab menm abòde yo ak yon ... m kapab di... yon Anglè oswa yon Panyòl degrengole. Anpil fwa, elèv yo ... 'pafwa' ...pafwa vire figi yo lè yo remake m ta vle kesyone yo sou zafè orè a. Plizyè fwa, m konn rive chita ... 'LOL' ... nan lòt klas pou tout yon peryòd 'and nobody said anything', menm pwofesè a pa di anyen... 'funny' pou mwen, 'Miss'.

I was in a really ... 'like'... difficult situation; it took me a long time, I can say about a month, to ... to adjust myself to the school schedule. Not only I was shy, but I was also in... I was also in in a school where Spanish was mostly spoken; therefore, I did not ... always...really get the help that I needed. I did

not... I did not really get positive attitudes from the students in order for me to approach them ... I can say... with my broken English or Spanish. The students ... often... often turned their head away when they noticed that I wanted to approach them regarding the schedule. Many times, I sat in the wrong class... LOL... for the whole period and nobody said anything, not even the teacher.... Funny for me, Miss.

When it comes to handwriting every culture has its own style. Handwriting was another cultural shock that the participants experienced. “*Chak fwa mwen ekri yon devwa, pwofesè a ekri anba l, hum hum... ‘next time print.’ Sa k pi rèd la m pa t janm konnen sa l t ap pale a hum... hum ... hum ... jous aprè m te vin montre yon lòt elèv kòmantè pwofesè a ... e e epi li te eksplike m kisa ‘print’ lan te vle di... te siyifi, e ... e... epi li te montre m kòman pou m fè l. Akoz m pa t konnen pou m te...pou m te ‘print’, yon mòd ekriti ki... ki pa pratike nan peyi m, pwofesè a pa t janm ban m pwen pou...pou... travay mwen te fè. Sa a te vrèman dekouraje mwen.* Each time I turned in an assignment, the teacher wrote on it hum...hum... ‘next time print.’ What’s worse is that I did not know what she was talking ... hum ... hum ... hum about until I showed her comments ... e... e ... e.... to another student that spoke my language and she explained and demonstrated it to me. Because I didn’t know that I had ... had to print, a writing style that they do not practice in my country, the teacher never gave me grades for ... for ... my work. This really discouraged me,” shared participant Lyce.

Sometimes teachers in the mainstream classrooms do not realize that every culture is different, and they do not take time to model or share certain information with their ELs. Yodna said,

Mmm.... Paskè m te konn toujou ap ekri an ‘cursive,’ pwofesè syans sosyal mwen an ... eu ... eu ... eu ...toujou ap di m pou m ... pou m travay sou ekriti mwen. Hum ... hum ...Pou m te kapab safisfè l, hum... hum...m te toujou ap bat pou m ranje janm te konn ... te konn ekri a pi bèl, men li menm se pa t sa li t ap chèche.

Li te vle pou m te 'print,' men m pa t ka konprann paske m pa t gen...genyen abitud ekri an 'print' lakay mwen.

Mmm...Because I was always writing in cursive, my social studies teacher ... eu ... eu ... eu... always told me to ... to work on my handwriting. Hum... hum...To satisfy him ... hum ... hum ...hum ... I always tried to write in a way that might ... might consider prettier to him, but that was not what he was looking for. He wanted me to print my letters, but I couldn't understand because I didn't ... I never used that style of writing back home.

According to the participants, teachers in the mainstream classrooms were giving them hard time because of their handwriting. This created discomfort for the students because they came from a culture where only writing in cursive was acceptable. Participants did not feel comfortable with the teachers were telling them to fix their handwriting.

The participants were also shocked by the way that they were treated because of the color of their skins whereas in Haiti people are treated superior or inferior based on their class or their economic status. Guerdnie said, "*Mwen te vle ... eu ... eu ... eu ...patisipe nan klib ki bay ... 'morning announcements' ... anons chak maten ak chak aprèmidi yo pou lekòl la, ... 'but' ...men elèv ki te prezidant klib la pa t aksepte m ... nan ... nan 'club' la. Li te fè m konnen fò m ta ... ta genyen menm koulè ak ... ak lòt timoun yo. Sa a te vrèman choke m. I wanted ... eu ... eu ...eu ...to join the club that gives the morning ... the morning and afternoon announcements for the school, but ...but the student who was president of the club ... club did not want to accept me in the club.... club. She told me that I needed ... needed to be the same color as the other students. This really shocked me," Guerdnie said.*

Two other participants shared stories that are similar to the one shared by Guerdie. Yona explained, "*Nan selebrasyon fèt eritaj Panyòl yo, te gen ... te genyen yon*

*elèv ki te trete m 'nigger', epi l di m fèt sa a pa pou mwen. Malgre koulè m prèske menm jan ... menm jan ak pa l, li te toujou konsidere m enferyè a li menm. One day, during a Spanish heritage month celebration, there was ... there was a student treated me 'nigger' and told me that I do not belong in the festivity. Even though my skin color is almost the same ... same as his, he still considered me as inferior.” Nedjie said, “*Youn nan bagay ki te choke m se ... eu ... eu ... eu... fason pwofesè blan klas syans sosyal mwen an te trete m ... trete m pa rapò ak timoun Panyòl yo. Li ... Li toujou ba yo opòtinite pou yo kanpe devan klas la pou li ... eu ... eu ... eu... rezime yo prepare sou sa k ap fè aktyalite nan ... nan semèn nan, men... men mwen menm li pa janm ... pa janm ban mwen chans sa a. Menm lè m leve men m pou m... pou m patisipe, li ... li inyore m konplètman. Epi tou gen ... gen lòt elèv nwa menm jan ak ... avè m ki plenyen sou sa a. One of the things that shocked me was ... eu ... eu... eu the way that I was treated ... treated by my white social studies teacher in comparison to the Hispanic students. He ... He always gives the Hispanic students the opportunity to stand in front of the class to read ... read the summary of their current events, but ... but he never gives me that chance. Even if I raised my hand to ... to participate, he ... he completely ignored me. Several other black students like ... like me complained about that.”**

The participants of the study faced challenges of cross-cultural differences. They talked about rules for eye contact, their shyness throughout their studies, reprimanding for their cursive handwriting, and discrimination based on their skin color. The negative treatments that they often receive from their teachers and their peers, based on their explanation, could have caused them to stop going to school, but they stayed focus because their main goal is to earn a high school diploma so that they could continue their

post-secondary studies. Greg said, *pa gen anyen ki kapab kanpe m sou wout mwen nan etid mwen; lè Bondye delivre w, pa gen moun ki ka anpeche w avanse*. Nothing can stop me from achieving my goal; When God saves you, nothing can stop you from moving forward.

Second Theme: Causes of Disengagement

Stories collected from the participants for this narrative inquiry reveal that the teachers in the mainstream classrooms are most of the time monolingual. Most of those teachers only speak English. The participants in the study felt extremely frustrated when they could not understand most of what the teachers said in their regular classrooms. In the mainstream classrooms, they are in situations where they must use only English with their teachers and even if they might be able to help them in their home language. “Being put into a classroom where they constantly struggle to keep up with their English-speaking teachers can cause even the most dedicated ELs to become frustrated and lose interest” (College of English Language, 2021). The participants of the study gave voice to their shared experience with factors, such as language barrier, marginalization, and lack of resources, which led to disengagement in their mainstream classrooms. As I was categorizing the data, I found that some of the sub-themes overlap and relate to one another; therefore, the sub-themes marginalization and language barrier are not fully distinct. As mentioned earlier in the previous chapter, no data was collected on the participants’ sense of engagement even though the questions that were asked focused on both engagement and disengagement. The followings are stories in which the participants explain their frustrations.

Language Barrier

“Pi gwo defi mwen te kapab jwenn nan ... nan lavi m se chita nan yon klas ap... ap koute yon moun k ap pale nan yon lang m pa ... m pa konprann. The biggest challenge I could face in ... in my life is to sit in a classroom to ... to listen to someone speaking to me in a language that I don't ... don't understand.” Yodna

All English Learners, no matter the level of their language acquisition, enter school with some types of acquaintance (Samuels, 2021). Even though they have some knowledge, language barrier often causes a considerable hurdle to them. They get very frustrated when they cannot understand what the teacher is trying to communicate with them. Yodna explained, *“Anpil fwa pwofesè klas regilye mwen yo pale vit, e ... e... epi ... epi yo pa ban m chans pou m ta menm kesyone yon ... yon elèv ki pale lang pa m nan pou... pou yon ti eksplikasyon oswa pou... pou tradui pou mwen. Sa konn lakoz mwen ... mwen fistre anpil. The regular classroom teachers often talk too fast ... e... e... and ... and they do not give any chance to even ask a ... a ... student that speaks my language for... for explanations or to translate for ... for me. When these happen, I ... I really get frustrated.”*

ELs often get frustrated when they cannot find the necessary help while completing their work in the regular classroom. Sophia said, *“Mwen jwenn tout kalite defi nan... nan klas regilye yo. Anpil fwa mwen pa jwenn èd nan men pwofesè yo. Pafwa m ... hum ... hum ...hum ... itilize tradiksyon ‘Google’ pou m kapab ... konprann kèk mo vokabilè. M konn twouve m nan ... nan sityasyon kote m ap ... m ap ... m ap mande elèv ki pale Anglè ak Kreyòl pou ... pou sipò yo, men se pa ... se pa toutan yo vle ede m paske yo genyen pou ... pou fè travay pa yo, tou. In ... In the regular classes I encounter all kinds of challenges. I often ... hum ... hum ... hum ...do not get any help from the teachers. Sometimes ... hum ... hum...hum... I used Google translate to to*

understand some key vocabulary words. I find myself in ... in situations where I must ... I must ask the English and Creole speaking students for ... for assistance, but they don't ... they don't always want to help me because they must ... do their work as well."

Due to this language barrier, ELs spend extra hours in school for additional help from teachers or students that speak their native language. Lyce shared her frustration about how she spends additional time in school:

Lè m te fenk kòmanse lekòl, mwen te ... mwen te twouve m nan yon sitiyasyon ki te difisil anpil paske m ... paske m pa t kapab rive konprann sa k ... sa k t ap pase nan klas regilye yo. Pou m te ka angaje ... e... e...e... epitou konprann sa k t ap pase nan klas regilye yo, m te konn oblije rete nan ... nan pwogram aprè lekòl kote m te kapab jwenn ... jwenn pwofesè Ayisyen ki kapab eksplike m devwa yo. Pafwa ... eu ... eu ... eu... mwen konn grangou, men ... men mwen oblije rete paske lè mwen ... lè mwen rive lakay la, mwen p ap jwenn okenn moun ki pou ... ki pou ede m. Dayè paran m yo pa... pa pale Anglè, se ti Anglè m gen...genyen m toujou itilize pou m tradui pou yo lè yo nan bezwen.

When I first started school, I ... I found myself in an exceedingly inconvenient situation because ... because I was not able to understand what ... what was happening in my mainstream classes. In order to get engaged ... e ... e ...e... and understand what was happening in the regular classrooms, I had to stay in ... in after-school programs where I could find Haitian teachers who could explain the homework to me. Sometimes ... eu ... eu... eu I got very hungry, but ... but I had to stay because when I ... when I got home, I would not find anyone to ... to help me. My parents do not ... do not speak English; I always use the little English that I have ... I have to translate for them when they are in need.

Besides coming to school early or staying late in an after-school program, the participants also spend time with classmates during lunchtime for assistance. Nedjie shared, "*Lè m pa fin konprann devwa yo, m konn ... m konn mande kèk ... kèk kamarad klas mwen pou eksplike mwen lè nou nan ... nou nan rekreyasyon. Pafwa ... hum ... hum ... hum... sa a mache, pafwa ... hum ... hum ... hum ... sa a pa mache tou paske se lè pou yo manje. Gen delè tou m konn ... m konn oblije itilize lajan manje ... lajan manje mwen pou m achte manje pou yo ... e ...e ... e ... epi m konn rete konsa san m pa manje.* When I

do not quite understand the work in the regular classes, I ask ... I ask some ... some of my classmates if they could help me during... during lunchtime. Sometimes ... hum ... hum ... hum ... it works and sometimes hum ... hum... hum ... it does not work because they have to eat. Sometimes ... hum ... hum ... hum ... I also use my lunch money ...to buy them lunch ... e ... e... e ... and I stay without eating.”

The participants also talked about how they cannot participate in class conversation because they have limited vocabulary. Greg explained, “*Anpil fwa m pa ka patisipe jan m ta vle nan konvèsasyon yo nan klas regilye yo epitou anpil fwa gen pwofesè ki pa ban m chans pou m patisipe paske m konn pran twòp tan pou m bay repons lan. M konn leve menm pafwa epi yo pa gade m menm. M konn santi m imilye epi rejte lè pwofesè yo fè sa.* I often cannot participate in class discussion in my mainstream classes and some teachers do not give me the chance to do so because they feel like I take too much time to give the answer. Sometimes I raise my hand to participate, and they ignore me completely. When the teachers act like that, I feel humiliated and rejected at the same time.”

Guerdnie shared the following story about her inability to participate in class in the way that she would like.

Nan lekòl kote m ye a pa gen Ayisyen prèske; majorite elèv yo pale Panyòl ... ‘and’ ... e... e... epi genyen enpe Ameriken ki ... ki pale Anglè sèlman. Prèske ... ‘almost’ ... prèske tout klas regilye yo se pwofesè Panyòl mwen gen genyen; konsa patisipe nan klas yo vrèman difisil pou mwen. Anpil fwa pwofesè yo pase plis ... plis tan ap pale Panyòl olye yo pale Anglè ... ‘cause’ ... paske yo vle asire yo timoun ki pale Panyòl yo konprann sa... sa k ap fèt. Menm pou m ta mande eksplikasyon sou ... sou yon bagay m pa... m pa konprann li konn difisil pou mwen. M konn ... M konn eseye kole pyese kèk mo pou m patisipe nan... nan klas regilye yo. Pafwa ... ‘Sometimes’ ... Pafwa elèv yo ak pwofesè yo konn ri Anglè tèt anba mwen yo, men ... men m pa okipe yo menm... ‘cause’ ... paske objektif mwen se pou m reyisi nan sistèm edikatif Ameriken an.

The majority of the students in the school that I attend are mostly Hispanics ... and ... e... e... and a few Americans that speak English only. Almost ... Almost all the classes have ... have teachers that speak Spanish and participating in class happens to be difficult for me. The teachers often spend more ... more time speaking in Spanish instead of English ... 'cause' ... because they want to make sure that the Spanish-speaking students understand what ... what is going on. Even if I need to ask for explanations about ... about something I don't understand, it would be difficult for me. I try ... I try to put a few words together in English so that I could participate. Sometimes... Sometimes... sometimes the students and the teachers laugh at me, but ... but ... I don't really care ... 'cause' ... because my goal is to succeed in the American education system.

Language barrier is the most substantial challenge that ELs encounter throughout their studies. It causes misunderstanding among the participants, their teachers, and their peers. The scope of language barrier goes beyond simple communication. Greg explained, "*Pafwa m te kapab konprann yon konvèsasyon, men konn genyen kèk jagon oswa kèk ekspresyon m pa konn fin konprann.* Sometimes I could have understood a conversation, but there are some jargons or expressions that are being used in the conversations and I don't quite understand them." Guerdnie said, "*Li pran m yon bon ti tan pou m te kapab konprann ekspresyon 'never mind' la. It took me time to understand the expression 'never mind.* Yodna said, "*Lè m premye tande youn nan pwofesè m yo itilize ekspresyon 'It's raining cats and dogs' la m te vrèman twouble paske m te konprann tout mo yo, men pa t konprann egzakteman poukisa li te itilize fraz la paske nou pa t ap pale sou zafè zannimo.* When I first heard one of my teachers use the expression 'It's raining cats and dogs' I was really confused because I understood all the words, but I didn't know why she said it because we were not talking about animals."

The participants feel like their teachers should be mindful of different expressions when they are interacting with their ELs. Not understanding an expression that is being used by a teacher or perhaps the rapidity of a conversation could ruin the entire day of an

EL. The participants think that sometimes the use of gestures, visuals and diagrams would benefit them, and their teachers would not waste too much time while explaining a lesson or using different expressions.

Marginalization

The participants explained in their stories that they were being marginalized; they confronted challenging issues that caused it arduous for them to access anything they wanted to function well in the regular classrooms, and they also limited their ability to learn and to collaborate with their peers and to communicate effectively with their teachers in the mainstream classrooms. Guerdnie shared her experience of marginalization as she was telling her story:

Nan ... Nan lekòl kote m ye a, majorite elèv yo se Panyòl; konsa menm lè anpil nan yo se elèv k ap aprann pale Anglè menm jan avè m, yo ... yo ... yo toujou jwenn anpil konsiderasyon nan tout bagay espesyalman nan klas ... nan klas regilye yo. Anpil nan ... nan pwofesè yo pale Panyòl; konsa, yo ... yo fè plis tan ap bay tout eksplikasyon yo an Panyòl. Sa k fè m mal la ... gen ... genyen yon pwofesè ki pa ... ki pa janm vle eksplike an Anglè. Lè m mande l yon eksplikasyon, li... li fè m konnen m sipoze pale Panyòl si m nan lekòl sa a. 'Cause'... Paske m pa pale panyòl li ekskli mwen nan travay an gwoup yo.

Most of the students at ... at my school are Spanish speakers; even though many of them are English language learners just like me they... they... they get a lot of consideration in everything, especially in the regular classes. Many of ... of the teachers speak Spanish and they ... they spend more time giving their explanations in Spanish. What hurts me is the fact that ... the fact that one of my teachers never ... never wants to explain in English. When I asked her for an explanation, she ... she told me that I am supposed to speak Spanish if I am attending that school. 'Cause'... Because I am not Hispanic, she always excludes me in every group activity.

Sometimes the participants feel humiliated when their teachers keep a conversation in Spanish to satisfy a group of students. Greg explained, *m vrèman konn santi mwen imilye nan klas istwa mwen an kote anpil nan elèv yo ansanm pwofesè a konn kenbe yon konvèsasyon an Panyòl pou plis pase 30 minit nan yon klas kote se pa tout*

moun ki pale Panyòl. I really feel humiliated in my history class when the Spanish speaking teacher and the Hispanic students hold a conversation in Spanish for 30 minutes or more. Greg continued to say, *gen kèk lòt elèv ki pa pale Panyòl ki plenyen sou menm bagay la*. There are other non-Spanish students just like me that complain about that.

Sophia had to deal with the same situation in her journalism class where most of the students were Hispanics. Sophia said,

Youn nan klas m pa renmen al ladan l se klas jounalis mwen an. Majorite elèv yo se Panyòl, men prèske nou tout se elèv ki nan program ESOL la. Pwofesè a toujou kite elèv Panyòl yo pale ... hum Espanyòl antre yo, men lè se nou menm Ayisyen k ap bat pou diskite yon devwa antre nou, li ... li... toujou separe nou youn ak lòt epi li di 'English only.' M santi sa a se diskriminasyon paske li favorize yon lang sou yon lòt. Lè elèv Espanyòl yo ap pale, li toujou antre nan konvèsasyon an, menm lè sa y ap pale a pa gen anyen pou wè ak klas la. Anpil fwa ... anpil fwa genyen youn nan elèv Panyòl yo ki konn reprimande pwofesè a sou fason li trete nou menm elèv Ayisyen yo nan klas la. Repons li bay elèv la se toujou an Espanyòl, konsa m pa janm konprann egzakteman sa l di li, men m konnen li pa di yon bagay pozitif konsènan nou paske tout lòt elèv yo toujou tonbe ri pa rapò; epi ekspresyon negativ ki sou vizaj li deja di anpil. Yon sèl bagay elèv ki kanpe pou defann nou an toujou di li 'that's not fair.'

One of the classes that I do not like to go to is my journalism class. Most of the students are Hispanics, but almost all of us are ESOL students. The teacher always lets the Spanish-speaking students speak... hum.... Spanish among themselves, but when we, the Haitian students, are trying to discuss an assignment among us, she... she... always separates us from each other and says, 'English only.' I feel that this is discrimination because she favors one language over another one. When the Spanish students are speaking, she always wants to be part of the conversation, even when what they are saying is not related to the class. Many times ... Many times, one of the Spanish students reprimands the teacher about the way that she treats us in the class. Her response to the student is always in Spanish. I never understand exactly what she is saying, but I know that she is not saying anything positive about us because all the other students always laugh about her comments and her negative facial expression tells a lot. The student that stands for us always tell her 'That's not fair.'

According to the participants, learning in a foreign language is the most awkward thing, especially when you encounter humiliation, discrimination, marginalization throughout your study. Nedjie said, "*Nan klas regilye mwen yo, gen ...genyen pwofesè ki*

konsidere m m m ...eu...eu...eu ... m ta ka di tankou yon moun ki pa egziste. Nan klas syans mwen an, pa... pa a a ... pa egzanzp, m pa t janm gen chans tande pwofesè a k ap... k ap ekspoze kou li. Depi m parèt li di 'ESOL – No English – Imagine Learning' epi li ri; konsa m te toujou genyen yon... yon... yon kas nan tèt mwen nan klas sa a kote m te toujou ap travay ... nan... nan yon sèl pwogram. In my mainstream classes, there are ... there are teachers who consider ... m ... m... m... eu ... eu ...eu consider me like I am not existed. In my science class, for ... for for example, I have never had the chance to ... to hear the teacher presenting his course. Once I entered his class, he said ESOL - No English - Imagine Learning and then laughed; therefore, I always had a ... a... a headset on in that class to work in that program.” Imaging Learning is an adaptive literacy program that is comprised of playing games and short lessons. M-DCPS uses it for all level one ELs in grades Pre-Kindergarten through 12th, regardless of the numbers of years they have in the ESOL program (M-DCPS Portal, 2022). It is only supposed to be used during the Reading/Language Arts block three times a week for 20-30 minute (M-DCPS Portal, 2022).

According to Nedjie’s observation, sometimes the teachers cause the students to mistreat each other. Nedjie continued by saying, *“epi... ‘and then’ ... epi elèv yo menm te vin pran sa a kòm yon abitud. Yo te trete m menm jan ak pwofesè syans lan. Yo te menm pran... pran... pawòl la pote nan lòt klas m te genyen, se ... se konsa pwofesè matematik mwen te vin adapte menm... menm sistèm nan. M vin soti pase prèske tout ... tout yon ane lekòl chita devan yon òdinatè ak yon kas nan tèt mwen ap itilize ‘Imagine Learning’ nan klas matematik mwen ak klas syans mwen. And... and then... and the students took that like a habit. They treated me just like the science teacher. They even ... even ... even*

follow me with that teacher's routine to my other classes and as a... because of that, my math teacher adapted the same ... same system. I ended up spending almost the entire ... the entire school year sitting in front of a computer with a headset working on that Imagine Learning program in my science and mathematics classes.”

The same frustration is shared by Lyce. She told the following story:

Nan klas syans mwen, pwofesè a te sèlman ... sèlman ... hum...pale Anglè. Depi nan ... nan premye ... nan premye jou mwen, li fè ... hum ... hum ... yon elèv Ayisyen montre m kòman pou m... pou m itilize yon pwogram ki rele “Imagine Learning”. Se konsa chak jou... chak ... chak jou depi m rive nan klas la li pwente ... pwente dwèt li sou òdinatè a epi l di mwen ‘Imagine Learning – you don’t speak English’ e... e... epi li ri; tout lòt elèv yo ri tou. Nan ... Nan klas sa a mwen pa janm gen ... gen ... genyen chans pou m tandè pwofesè a k ap ekspoze kou li; mwen toujou genyen yon... gen yon kas nan tèt mwen devan yon Konpi òdinatè, men mwen toujou genyen menm... menm.... menm devwa tout lòt elèv genyen. Sèl moman mwen pa sou òdinatè se ... se lè pwofesè a ap bay egzamen. Bagay sa a te pote yon... yon dezangajman total kapital nan... nan mwen epi li te mete dlo nan je mwen... Miss ... pou tout yon ane lekòl.

In my science class, the teacher only ... only ... hum ... hum...spoke English. From day one ... day one, he told ... hum ... hum... a Haitian Creole speaking student to show me how to... to... use a program called Imagine Learning. So, from that day, every time... every time I got to class, he pointed ... pointed his finger to the computer and said: Imagine Learning - you don't speak English ... e ...e... and laughed; all the other students also laughed. In ... In this class I have... have... have never had the chance to hear the teacher instructing his course; I always had ... had on some headphones and sit in front of a ... compu...computer. Even though I was not allowed to follow his instruction while teaching, I always had the same ... same... same homework as everybody else. I was not on the computer only during the time he was ... was administering an exam to the class. I was totally discouraged and disengaged at ... at the same time. The treatment that I received from that teacher brought tears into my eyes ... Miss ... for an entire school year.

English Learners tend to discourage when they encounter teachers in the mainstream classrooms that hold negative attitudes towards them (Walker, Shafer & Liam, 2004). Sophia explained her negative experience with one of her teachers. She said, “*Youn nan pwofesè klas regilye mwen yo te deside rele m... mmm... ‘Creole’ olye*

non mwen, e... e... epi depi lè sa a tout elèv yo ki pa Ayisyen yo kòmanse rele m 'The Creole girl'. One of my teachers in my mainstream classes decided to call me mmm... 'Creole' instead of my name, ... e... e...and since then all students that were not Haitians started calling me 'The Creole girl'." The teachers are the role models, and the students follow them. Sophie was terribly upset about the fact that the students never called her by her real name and it was all the teacher's fault. Sophie said, "Chak fwa elèv yo rele m konsa, pwofesè a souri. Pou ... pou bagay sa a te kapab sispann mwen... hum ... hum... hum ... te oblije mennen matant mwen nan ... nan lekòl la pou pale ak pwofesè a sou sa. Malgre sa a, elèv yo pa t janm ...janm ... sis... sispann jiskaskè matant mwen te oblije al ran rankontre ak direktè lekòl la sou sa pou l te kapab pale ansanm ak pwofesè a ... epi ... epi tou elèv yo pou bagay sa te kapab sispann. Every time the students called me like that, the teacher smiled. To... To stop that... hum ...hum ... hum ..., I had to bring my aunt to... to the school to talk to the teacher about it. Even though I did that, the students never... never stopped until my aunt decided to meet with the principal in order to talk to the teacher and ... and to the students so that they could stop."

Generally, teachers in the mainstream classroom feel very frustrated whenever a new EL walks into their room (Walker et al.,2004). According to Byrnes and Kiger (1994) mainstream teacher's personalities can encourage or be a barricade for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students. Throughout this research, the participants talk about how they were always at the bottom of the ladder in certain situations and that really frustrated them. Yodna explained,

Nan fason kèk pwofesè nan ... nan klas regilye yo aji se tankou ... hum ... hum... hum...yo pa anvè ... gen...genyen elèv ki pa pale Anglè nan klas yo. Nan minit m

te antre nan... nan youn nan klas regilye mwen yo, pwofesè a te fè yon ... fè yon soupi tankou ... 'like' ... li ta vle menm tchipe, epi li fè yon lòt ... lòt ... hum ... hum ... lòt elèv ki pale Kreyòl montre m yon ti kwen jis pa dèyè pou... pou mwen chita; Mwen reyalize ...te gen... te genyen anpil lòt plas nan mitan klas la kote m ... m... mwen te ka chita. Nan landmen te genyen yon nouvo elèv ki pa t ESOL ki te vini nan klas la, li ... li te jwenn plas li nan mitan. Mwen rete nan ti kwen an, mwen pa ... m pa... pa janm gen chans patisipe nan anyen. Pwofesè sa a te bliye m konplètman nan... nan klas la.

The way some teachers in ... in the regular classes act is like hum ... hum ... hum... they do not want to have ... to have the non-English speaking students in their class. The minute I entered one of my... one of my regular classes, the teacher sighed in a way ... like ... she wanted to twist her mouth, and she made another... another ... hum... hum Creole-speaking student show me a seat in the back corner of the ... of the... class and that was my assigned seat. I figured that there were ... there ... there were lots of empty seats in the middle of the class where I... I... I could have been seated. A new non ESOL student walked in the following day in the class and she ... she had the chance to sit in one of the seats in the middle. I got to stay in the little corner and never ... never ... got any chance to participate in class. I was totally forgotten by that teacher in ... in the class.

Treating inferior in front of peers, unfortunately, make the participants feel that they are being excluded as students in their mainstream classrooms. “*Lè m te fenk antre lekòl la te gen ... genyen ... te gen pwofesè ki te fè m santi mwen te fè pati klas la; yo ... yo te akeyi m ak de bra ouvè, men ... men se konsa tou te gen kèk nan yo ki te ... hum ... hum...hum ... inyore mwen konplètman.* When I first entered the school, there were ... there ... there were teachers who made me feel that I was part of the class; they ... they welcomed me with open arms, but ... but there were some of them that ... hum ... hum hum ... ignored me completely,” Greg said. “*Akoz m te gen on ti Anglè m konn ... 'like' ... vle patisipe nan ... nan klas matematik mwen, pa egzanp; menm lè m leve men m pou m ... pou m ta reponn yon kesyon, pwofesè a fè tankou li pa wè m; kan se yon timoun ... eu ...eu ... panyòl parèy li, li ba li lapawòl menm lè sa l ap di a pa fè sans.* The fact that I spoke a little English I always ... ‘like’ ... wanted to participate in my math

class, for example. When I raised my hand to ... to ... answer a question, the teacher pretended that she did not see me, but if it is a Hispanic student, ... eu ... eu ... just like her, she gave him or her the privilege to talk even if what that student was saying made no sense,” Greg explained. “*Anpil fwa tou... ‘like’ ... kèk pwofesè klas regilye, ki pale sèlman Anglè, konn ... konn pran plezi sou aksan mwen ak fason m konn pwononse kèk mo.* Very often, ... like ... some teachers in the regular classes that only speak English laugh at ... at my accent and the ways that I pronounce certain words,” Greg said.

The participants shared stories in which they felt like some of their teachers wanted to set them up for failure. Greg said, “*Nan ... nan klas matematik mwen an, pa egzanp, plen diksyonè Kreyòl-Anglè, ... ‘but’ ... men... men pwofesè a pa vle m itilize yo; li ... li pa vle pou m mande yon elèv ki pale lang mwen pou ta tradwi yon mo pou mwen, ni li pa vle m... li pa ... li pa vle m itilize telefòn mwen pou m chèche konprann yon mo.* In ... In my math class, for example, there is a lot of Creole-English dictionaries, but ...but ... but the teacher never wants me to use them. She ... she doesn’t want me to ask a student who speaks my language to translate a word for me or use my phone to look for the translation of a word that I do not understand.” Greg, who was extremely upset by the tone of his voice, added to the story by saying, “*Li fè m konnen diksyonè yo se pou ... se pou itilize nan moman egzamen leta yo... ‘like’ ... tankou ‘FSA’. Mwen vin soti fè yon ... yon ‘C’ nan matematik, sijè prefere mwen. Sa pa fè m byen ditou ‘cause’... paske ... paske se matyè m pi renmen ... ‘and’ ...epi... epi akòz nòt ba sa a mwen p ap kapab ... ‘like’ ... ‘take’ ... pran klas matematik onè.* She tells me that the dictionaries are for ... are for students to use during official exams ... ‘like’ ... like FSA. I ended up having a ... a ‘C’ in math, my favorite subject. I did not like that at all ... cause...because I really like

math and ... and I knew with that low grade I will not be able ... like ...to take honor math.”

“*Rèv mwen se pou m vini yon enfimyè, ... ‘but’ ... men pwofesè chimi mwen an pa panse m kapab, my dream is to become a Registered Nurse, but ... but my chemistry teacher does not think I can,*” Guerdnie said with emotion. Guerdnie continued by saying, “*Pwofesè chimi mwen an panse klas li a pa ... pa pou mwen. Li fè m konnen se plis timoun panyòl ki ... ki ale nan branch medikal ki bezwen chimi; konsa li ... li neglije m lè m leve men m... men m pou m poze yon kesyon oswa pou m ... pou m ta reponn yon kesyon. Sa k pi rèd la li mande konseye mwen pou mete m nan ... nan...nan yon lòt klas syans, men ... men, mèsè Bondye, sa a pa t mache. My chemistry teacher thinks his class isn’t ... isn’t for me. He tells me that ... that Hispanic students, most likely, go to the medical fields and they are required to take chemistry; so ... so ...he ...he neglected me when I raised my hand ... my hand to ask a question or answer a question. The worse about this is that he even asked my counselor to put me in ... in ... in a different science class, but, thanks God, which did not work.*”

Yodna shares the following story:

Mwen te santi m eu ... eu ... nan ...nan yon anvwonman ki pa t ankadre m ... ankadre mwen ditou. Nan klas regilye yo, mwen santi gen pwofesè ki sanble ki pa konnen ... pa konnen ... gen ... genyen elèv ki pa pale Anglè nan klas yo. Pwofesè sa yo pa janm ba mwen mwayen pou m ta menmn ... eu... eu... eu... fè yon ti pale ak kamarad klas mwen pou m ta poze yon kesyon sou ... sou yon bagay mwen pa konprann. Anpil fwa se ... se elèv yo k ap raple yo mwen pa pale Anglè. Nan ... Nan fason yo aji, pa ... pa pale ...hum ... hum... Anglè mwen an pa ... pa siyifi anyen pou yo. Anpil fwa yo mete m chita nan... nan yon ti kwen pou kont mwen lè yo remake m ap poze elèv ki pale lang mwen an kèk kesyon sou...eu... eu ... devwa yo. Pwofesè yo toujou panse mwen gen ... gen entansyon kopye, men ... men entansyon m se te pou m te kapab konprann devwa yo. Mwen te soufri anpil paske mwen pa t ... pa t ka eksprime tèt mwen an Anglè.

I felt like ... eu ... eu ... I was in ... in an environment that did not welcome me ... me at all. In the regular classes, I felt like there were teachers who didn't know... didn't know that there were ... were... were students that didn't ... didn't speak English in their classrooms. Those teachers never gave me the chance ... eu ... eu ...eu... to talk to my Haitian Creole speaking classmates about ... about something I did not understand. The students often reminded the teachers that I don't ... don't speak hum ... hum ... hum English. The way some of those teachers acted proved that they did not really care about the students that did not speak English in their class. I was often placed in ... in a corner by myself when I tried to find help to complete ... eu ... eu....my...my assignments. The teacher thought that ... that I needed to cheat, but ... but my intention was to find help to understand the work so that I could do it independently. I suffered a lot because I couldn't ... express myself in English.

Not all ELs learn at the same pace; therefore, there are students that spend more time in the ESOL program than others. Sometimes mainstreamed teachers are very frustrated about having ELs in their classroom; they often do not have enough patient to assist their ELs. They talk to them in a way to discourage them and they even place them in the workplace. Nedjie said,

Pwofesè syans mwen an dekouraje anpil ansanm avè m paske anpil fwa li difisil pou m patisipe nan klas la. Li fè m konnen pou dat m nan peyi a kilè m ap konn pale yon bon Anglè. Li menm di mwen m pa bezwen konn pale yon bon Anglè paske m p ap bezwen sa pou McDonald ak Burger King. Pawòl sa a pa gen dwa soti nan tèt mwen paske m pa ka konprann kouman yon pwofesè kapab di yon elèv gwosè pawòl sa a. Li deja categorize mwen kòm yon moun ki p ap reyisi nan lavi.

My science teacher is very discouraged with me because it is difficult for me to participate in class discussion. He told me that I have been in the country for a while and when I'm doing to speak some good English. What hurts me is when he told me that I don't need to speak good English because I won't need it for McDonald's and Burger King. I couldn't believe that a teacher had the courage to tell his own student such a thing. What he told me will never erase in my mind. He already sets me for failure; he categorized me as someone that will not succeed in life.

Participants in the study feel that they are being marginalized throughout their studies. Teachers have humiliated them as well as some of their peers. They feel that their

language is considered inferior and that certain teachers are not welcomed to diversity; even learning their students' name is an issue; they rather call the students by their nationality in a sense to make fun of them. The participants shared stories in which they are being set for failure and teachers do not hesitate to label them in the marketplace. It is important to them that they are considered the same as any other student and that they receive the necessary support to succeed.

Lack of Resources

Participants in this study explain how they often struggle to complete their assignments due to lack of resources in the schools that they attend. “The lack of resources affects students in unusual ways; it means they are not getting out the most of their education” (Mafae, 2020, p.2). In term of lack of resources, two of the participants – Greg and Yodna – have similar experiences. They talked about the Home Language Assistance Personal (HLAP) that is almost never available to provide services to them. Greg said, “*Gen anpil fwa mwen ... mwen ale nan klas kote parapwofesyonèl la ye a pou èd nan lè ... ‘like’ ... mwen sipoze wè li a, li konn pa disponib. ‘sometimes’ ... Pafwa ... pafwa li konn ap ede lòt timoun oswa l ap teste timoun ki nan ... ki nan pwogram ESOL la, ousinon l ap kouvri klas pou ... pou pwofesè ki absan. Lè bagay sa yo rive konsa, li ... li pa nan avantaj elèv ki bezwen sipò yo. Several times when I ... I go to see the paraprofessional for assistance ... ‘like’... on my scheduled time, he is usually not available. Sometimes ... Sometimes ... Sometimes he is helping other students, testing ESOL students, or covering classes for ... for absent teachers. When this happens, it ... it is not in the advantage of students who need support.” Greg continued to say, *Lè m nan sityasyon sa yo, mwen konn vle ... tankou... dekouraje espesyalman lè m pa jwenn yon**

lòt altènativ ki pou ... pou eksplike m yon leson mwen pa ... 'you know'... mwen pa konprann. In situations like that, I often want ... 'like' ...to get discouraged, especially when I cannot find another alternative to ... to explain to me something that I don't ... don't you know... understand."

"M wè moun... moun yo di ki HLAP nan lekòl la se jis yon moun ... tankou yon moun ... ki la konsa konsa nan lekòl la pou... pou fè tout travay eksepte pou sèvi elèv ki nan pwogram ESOL la. I see that the person ... the person... they called the HLAP is just a body ... like a body... in the school that is just there to do all other work except servicing the ELs," according to Yodna. She stated, "Gen kèk fwa 'I don't understand nothing' mwen pa ... pa konprann anyen ... anyen... k ap pase epi moun mwen sipoze al wè ki pou ta ede m nan pa janm vrèman... pa janm vrèman disponib majorite fwa yo. Lè ou wè l nan koulwa lekòl la li di w, ah... nou p ap ka wè jodi a non. Humm.... M pa janm mande l poukisa, men m ... men m toujou wè l ap kouvri klas pou pwofesè ki absan. Very often I don't ... don't understand nothing ... nothing... I don' t understand what's going on and the person I'm supposed to go to for help is never really ... never really available most of the time. When I see him in the school hallway, he tells me... ah... I will not be able to see you today. Humm.... I never ask him why, but ... but I always see him covering classes for absent teachers." Guerdnie on her side stated that,

Mwen nan yon lekòl, janm te di sa nan ... hum ... hum ... hum entèvyou anvan..., ki pa genyen anpil Ayisyen ki nan ESOL pwogram nan. Sa koz tou mwen soufri anpil. Majorite elèv yo 'speak Spanish' pale Panyòl konsa yo toujou jwenn sèvis nan tout kwen lekòl la, kit se nan men pwofesè, parapwofesyonèl, lòt ... lòt elèv parèy yo, elatriye. M panse lekòl la ta kapab anplwaye yon moun pou menm ... 'like' ... yon mwaye jounen pou bay elèv Ayisyen yo k ap aprann pale Anglè yo sèvis menm jan ... tankou m ka di 'like' ... sa a fèt pou elèv Panyòl yo. Menm si moun sa te vini nan lekòl la yon fwa ... 'just one time' pandan semèm nan, mwen t ap satisfè. Lè mwen pa jwenn asistans ditou, sa a rann mwen dekouraje ...

'and' ... epi mwen pa ... pa prèske angaje nan klas regilye yo jan pou m ta angaje m.

I'm in a school, as I mentioned before in ... hum ... hum ... hum ... one of the previous interviews, where there aren't ... there aren't too many Haitian students in the ESOL program. Because of that I suffer a lot. Most of the students ... speak Spanish ... speak Spanish, so they always get services in all corners of the school, whether from teachers, paraprofessionals, other ... other fellow students etc. I think the school could have hired a part-time paraprofessional ... like ... to provide services to the non-English-speaking Haitian students just like.... like I can say...they do for the Hispanic students. Even if that person was just there once a week, ... just one time... I would have been satisfied. When I don't get any support at all, it discourages me, and ... and I don't get to participate as much as I would love to in the regular classes.

The participants stated that they suffer during their science lab time. They mainly talked about the computers that often do not work in the lab. Lyce expressed herself on this issue by sharing the following story: *“Si ta gen... genyen ... genyen... tankou ... genyen bagay ki toujou pote dekourajman ousinon dezangajman lakay mwen, m kapab ... m kapab di premyèman, nou pa gen ... nou pa genyen ... pa genyen ase òdinatè pou nou itilize nan lab yo. Menm lè sal la ta ranpli ak òdinatè, majorite nan ... nan yo konn pa travay. Teknisyen an mèt fin ranje yo koulye a, nan ... nan demen yo pa fonksyone ankò.* If there are ... there are.... Are... like ... things that always bring discouragement or disengagement on my part, I would first talk about insufficient ... not enough computers for the students to use in the labs. Even though the labs are filled with computers, the majority of ... of them ... of them usually do not work. Sometimes the technician comes to fix them and and they next day they don't work again.” Lyce continued by saying,

Pou mwen menm òdinatè yo twò ansyen, yo ta sipoze chanje pou... pou fasilite tout etidyan. Òdinatè yo mache twò dousman. Genyen devwa pou nou konplete nan ... nan moman lab yo nan klas syans nou ki se yon klas regilye. Si m pa ta jwenn yon òdinatè ki fonksyone, mwen oblije ... m ka di tankou chita ap gade san mwen ... san mwen p ap fè anyen. Pafwa m konn... m konn jwenn yon òdinatè

ki fonksyone, pwofesè a konn fè m ... hum ... hum ... bay lòt elèv ki pale Anglè li paske l di mwen p ap mwen p ap konprann. Mwen panse fò pwofesè a te ka kite m eseye. Mwen panse tou tankou...si mwen pa janm eseye, mwen p ap janmen ... tankou janmen... konnen pwen fò mwen ak pwen fèb mwen.

It seems like the computers are too old; they need to be replaced by new ones to ... to facilitate all students. The computers are too ... too slow. We all have work to complete during ... during the lab time for our regular science class. If I could not find a working computer, I would have to sit down ... I can say ... without doing anything. Sometimes I find I find a computer that works, and the teacher tells me ... hum ... humto give it to an English-speaking student because he says I don't I don't understand English. I think ... like ... the teacher could have at least let me try. I think if I never try, ... like never...I will never know my strengths and my weaknesses.

Yodna also shared a similar story. She said, “*Gendelè tou nan ... nan klas pwofesè regilye yo, konpitè yo pa konn travay ... e e e ... epi epitou yo egzije w pou konplete devwa lakay ou; tandike m pa menm ... m pa ...hum ... hum ... hum ... pa menm gen konpitè lakay mwen. M mande lekòl la prete yon ...yon laptop yo pa okipe mwen menm. Hum...hum... anpil dekourajman, Madam...; men m ap degaje m ak defi yo.* Sometimes the computers don't work in ... in the regular classrooms ... and ... and ... and I am required to complete my work and then submit it the same day. The teacher sometimes tells me to complete it at home and I don't ... I... I don't even ... hum ... hum ... have a computer at home. I ask the school to borrow a ... a laptop; they do not pay any attention to me. Hum... hum... lots of discouragement, Miss...; but I will deal with the challenges.”

Najumba (2013) in his study of school achievement discovered that “schools which are well equipped with relevant educational facilities which comprise instructional materials such as textbooks, libraires and even laboratories do much better in standardized examination than those which do not have resources” (p.128). Participants in this study complained about how not enough textbooks in their classes having affected

their progress. Nedjie explains, “*Genyen yon afè manke liv nan ... nan... nan klas byoloji mwen ki koz anpilan an ... anpil fwa se tablo elektwonik lan pwofesè a itilize. Nan itilize tablo sa a, pwofesè a bliye ... hum ... hum... eu ... eu ... si genyen elèv ki pa fin maton nan lang Anglè a. Li ... li pale nèt ale anpil; si m te genyen liv, menm lè li t ap pale vit, m t ap kapab omwen swiv kou a.* There is a lack of textbooks in ... in ... in my biology class that causes the teacher to use the promethean board very ...very ...very often. By using this promethean board, the teacher, most of the times, forgets ... hum Hum... eu ... eu ... if there are students that are not fluent in English in his class. He ... He speaks without stopping along the whole class session. If I had a textbook, I would have been able to follow through.

“*Nan moman m te antre lekòl la yo ... yo te fenk chanje tout liv nan klas aljèb mwen an. Pwofesè a pa t gen... pa t genyen ase liv pou l te ban mwen youn; pa...pafwa ... pafwa se nan men pwofesè ki akote ... ki akote klas li a li konn.... Tankou... mande prete youn pou mwen yon fason pou m te kapab suiv kou a oswa ... oswa li...li fè m suiv ak yon lòt elèv pou m ka ... pou m kapab patisitpe nan kou a.* At the time that I entered the school, they ... they had just changed the algebra books in my math class; therefore, the teacher didn’t ... did not have any additional books. I ended up staying without a book. Some ... Sometimes ... eu ... eu ... sometimes she must borrow one from the teacher ... like ...next ... next door for me or ... or she ... she makes me follow with another student so that I can ... I can participate in the class,” Sophia said. Students often need their textbooks to do some independent studies and to complete their home learning. Sophia continued by saying, “*Akoz m pa t gen liv, anpil fwa m pa t konn ka fè devwa mwen. Pafwa ... pafwa m konn oblije ale lekòl la bonè pou m ... pou m ka ... pou m*

kapab prete liv nan ... nan men lòt elèv yo pou m fè devwa mwen. Paske m pa t ... m pa t genyen liv, sa a te vin lakòz m ... m... manke konsantrè lakay mwen pou m ... pou m konplete devwa mwen ... epi ... epitou sa a te lakòz m soti fè yon 'D' nan klas la. Because I did not have a book, I often failed to do my homework. Sometimes ... Sometimes I must go to school early so that ... so that ... so that ... I can borrow a book from ... from one of the students to complete my homework. Because of lack of lack of concentration at home to complete my homework and and to fully understand the class I ended up having a 'D' in the class.”

Besides the lack of textbooks, Greg also talks about how his school media center is never available for students to use. He said, *“Bibliyotèk lekòl la prèske pa janm ... pa janm ouvè malgre se la ki genyen tout ... tout ... bon òdinatè yo. Pafwa ... 'like sometimes'm ... m bezwen fè yon rechèch m pa ka fè li. M ta kapab itilize telefòn mwen, ... but men prèske pa gen ... pa genyen siyal andedan lekòl la. Bibliyotekè lekòl la transfere nan ... nan yon lòt lekòl, konsa lekòl la pase tout yon ane ... san ...san yon ranplasan. The school library is almost never ... never open, although all ... all the good computers are sitting in there. Sometimes ... like sometimes ...I need to do some research and I can't find any device to do it. Even if ... even if I ... I try to use my phone I can't because there is no ... there... there is no signal inside the school building. The school librarian was transferred to ... to another school, so the school spends the entire year without ... without a replacement.”*

Participants in the study voiced their experiences about how lack of resources affect their studies. They talked about not receiving enough assistance from the HLAP at their schools if there is any. Students feel very frustrated about not having enough

working computers in their science labs and sometimes their teachers always put them on the side to let the English-speaking students use the computers that could work. Not having enough books in the classrooms is another defeat for the participants. During standardized testing time, according to the participants, the instructions are often given in Spanish, and nothing is being said in Haitian Creole. They all think that they could have done better in their tests if their schools had the necessary resources available when they are most needed.

Summary

The purpose of this narrative inquiry study was to explore the stories of English Learners of Haitian descent in the mainstream classrooms. The research question that was used to conduct the study was as follow: What do the stories of Haitian immigrants learning English in the mainstream classrooms reveal about their experiences of engagement and/or disengagement of their education? To conduct the study, I interviewed the following six participants in M-DCPS: Greg, Sophia, Lyce, Yodna, Nedjie and Guerdnie. They were ELs, levels 1-4, and they could communicate fluently in Haitian Creole.

The findings include stories from each participant offering profound reflections with respect to their experiences of engagement and disengagement as English Learners in the mainstream classrooms in M-DCPS and they revealed two main themes and six sub-themes that were formed through stories collected from the participants. The themes and the sub-themes were as follow: 1) Transition Shock (registration process, block schedule and cross-cultural differences) and 2) Causes of Disengagement (language barrier, marginalization, and lack of resources). Each theme is examined individually to provide

considerable evidence to harmonize the literature review and the research question. The evidence from the findings showed that all the participants have stories that related to their disengagement in the mainstream classrooms. The findings and analysis shared in this chapter are used for the recommendations of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONSS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this narrative inquiry is to understand how some selected ELs of Haitian descent at the high school level think about their engagement and/or disengagement of their education in the mainstream classrooms. The final product of the study is divided into five chapters.

- Chapter One provided a description of the purpose of the study and its relevance.
- Chapter Two gave an overview of the review of the literature and the conceptual framework.
- Chapter Three presented the methodology of the research.
- Chapter Four shared the lived stories collected from participants.
- And this last chapter provides a summary of the findings, discussions, implications, and recommendations for further studies.

Summary of Findings

This narrative inquiry qualitative study reveals stories from English learners of Haitian descent in the mainstream classrooms. The participants shared stories about their lived experiences of education in the United States; they had the chance to talk about their engagement and/or disengagement throughout their time of schooling in the regular classrooms. The findings revealed information about their identity in which they talked about their transition shocks which include the registration process, the block scheduling system, and cross-cultural differences. While sharing their stories they revealed information that often causes some sense of engagement and/or disengagement among

themselves. They talked about how it was hard for them to communicate their concerns and to participate in class due to language barrier. Based on stories shared, both teachers and peers marginalized them. In some situations, they felt like they did not belong in certain classes. Participants also talked about the lack of resources that often-caused delays on assignments that they had to complete and specific help that they needed.

Although the participants were from different schools and different regions from M-DCPS, “similarities emerged which communicated the essence of their shared experience” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 31). The participants, in sharing their stories, provided a clear voice for why they struggle to get engaged in the mainstream classroom and difficulties they encountered that often lead to disengagement. The participants shared stories about the challenges with vocabulary that impacted their engagement in the mainstream classrooms. Below is one example that Yodna shared:

Mwen toujou vle patisipe nan klas regilye yo, men ... men mwen manke vokabilè pou m kapab bay repons ki nesèsè a. Pafwa pwofesè a poze yon kesyon epi m di repons lan tou ba an Kreyòl ... e e e ... epi elèv ki chita bò kote m nan, ... e e e ... epi ki pale Kreyòl ak Anglè a, tandè sa m di a; konsa li ... li repete repons pa m nan byen fò an Anglè ... e e e ... epi se elèv sa a ki jwenn kredi a pou repons pa m nan.

I always want to participate in my regular classes, but ... but due to lack of vocabulary I am unable to give to give the necessary answer. Sometimes the teacher asks a question and I say the answer very softly in Haitian Creole; ... e e e the student sitting next to me, ... e e e...that speaks both Creole and English, hears me and she ... she repeats what I say aloud ... eu...eu ... eu in English. ... e e e ... And that student gets to receive the credit for my answer.

Language barrier and marginalization were the most difficult challenges that the participants encountered throughout their studies in the mainstream classrooms. ELs of Haitian descent appreciated the fact that they had the chance to participate in a study in which they could share their concerns about issues they are facing in the regular

classrooms. As Rogers (2005) stated, “Student voice refer to the active involvement of students who are able to make decisions regarding potential areas of study, products and collaborative efforts on their educational journey” (p. 2). The participants became disengaged easily when they felt like they lack a voice in their own education. They discussed how the negative attitude of certain teachers and students affected the way they would like to engage in class. For example, Guerdnie said,

Hum...hum...Nan klas matematik mwen m toujou vle patisipe paske m renmen sijè sa a anpil. Chak fwa m leve men m pou m patisipe, pwofesè a ... hum...m ka di...inyore m konplètman. Si ... si yon fwa li ta ban m chans pou m pale tout elèv yo kòmanse ri m poutèt aksan mwen. Menm lè yo konprann sa m ap di, yo toujou ... toujou fè ekspres pou y ap di “what,” “what did she say”? epi yo tonbe pale antre yo. Pwofesè a pa janm fè yo okenn obsèvasyon; konsa, yo toujou twouve li nòmral pou yo imilye m.

Hum... hum...In my math class I always wanted to participate because I really like the subject. Every time I raised my hand to participate, ...hum...I can say ... the teacher ignored me completely. If ... If he ever gave me the chance to speak, all the students would start laughing at me because of my accent. Even if they understood what I was saying, the minute that I open my mouth, they always ... always started saying “what”, “what did she say”? and they began to speak among themselves. The teacher never reprimanded them; so, they always find it normal to humiliate me.

The participants, in sharing their stories, identified peer relationships as an essential element in either their engagement and/or disengagement in the mainstream classrooms. All of them discussed some types of adverse relations with classmates and that conducted to their sense of disengagement. Sophia, for instance, shared this, “*Gen elèv Ayisyen parèy mwen ki konn ... ki konn...pretann yo pa pale Kreyòl jis pou yo pa ede m. Anpil fwa m konn wont ... ou konnen ... mande yo pou ... pou eksplikasyon ... paske ... paske m pa ... m pa konnen ki reyaksyon yo ka fè.* Some of my fellow Haitian classmates sometimes ... pretended... pretended that they don’t speak Creole so that I don’t bother them for help. I often felt felt ... you know ... embarrassed to ask them

for ... for explanations because ... because I do not ... I do not know what their reactions might be.” The participants explained how they felt lonely when they were being ignored by their own peers that were also in the ESOL program in the mainstream classroom. Guerdnie explained, “*Gen timoun ... ki nan... ki nan pwogram ESOL la menm jan avè m, ... ‘but’ ... men ... men ki pa janm vle chita bò kote m nan klas regilye yo ... ‘cause’ ... paske m pa gen menm koulè po ak yo. Yo konn rive fè sa a pa rapò ... ak ... ak fason yo wè pwofesè klas regilye yo trete m. Si ... Si yo mete m chita nan yon ti kwen pou kont mwen, se nòmal pou ... pou elèv yo santi yo siperyè pase m.* There are students ... that are in that are in the ESOL program just like me, ... but ... but they never wanted to sit next by me in the regular classes just ... cause... because of the color of my skin. I realize they behaved differently with me because ... of the ... of the way they saw that I was treated by some of the regular teachers. If ... If they put me in a seat in the corner, it is normal for ... for the students to think that they are more superior than me.”

As I was categorizing the findings by themes, I discovered some distinctions among three of the participants. In addition to similar barriers that they shared stories that are unique to them, and they also interfere with their schooling. Guerdnie for instance shared this, “*Mwen pa janm genyen ase tan pou m konplete devwa mwen paske fòk mwen al travay pou m kapab ede paran m peye enpe nan dèt li ye.* I never have enough time to complete my homework because I must go to work to help my parents with the bills.” She continued by saying, “*Epitou m genyen ti fanmi m kite Ayiti, m toujou vle ede yo peye lekòl yo.* Besides that, I also have some relatives that I left in Haiti, I always want to help them pay for their school.”

Immigration issues is always a problem for ELs of Haitian descent. “Concerns related to finances, fear of deportation and a sense of isolation weigh heavily on undocumented ELs; It’s not just stressful but also depressing for any human not being able or motivated to think, dream and plan a future” (Mulhere, 2015). Undocumented ELs of Haitian descent at the high school level are genuinely concerned about their postsecondary education. Greg, for instance, is very worried. He shared the following story:

Malgre entelijans mwen, mwen pa kapab byen konsantrè lekòl. Mwen te antrè Ozetazini ak yon visa touris epi paran m te deside fè rete Ozetazini akòz pwoblèm enskirite ki genyen Haiti. Viza mwen ekspire aktyèlman. Matant mwen te oblije fè m aplike pou “TPS”, yo poko menm reponn mwen. Se toujou yon tèt fè mal li ye pou mwen chak fwa ti zanmi m yo ap pale sou zafè kolèj oswa inivèsite yo prale. M pa vrèman kapab entèvni nan konvèsasyon yo paske m poko genyen dokiman legal epitou menm lè m ta apwouve pou TPS la, m p ap vrèman genyen mwayen pou m kontinye etid mwen. Ni paran mwen yo ni matant mwen p ap genyen mwayen pou yo peye lekòl pou mwen. Konseye lekòl mwen di m yo pa bay elèv ki pa genyen yon kat rezidans pèmanan. Lè tout bagay sa yo monte nan tèt mwen yo ban mwen tèt fè mal; m vi n pa kapab konsantrè lekòl.

Despite my intelligence, I cannot really concentrate in school. I entered the United States with a tourist visa and my parents decided for to stay in the US because of political instability and insecurity problems that we have in Haiti. My visa is actually expired. My aunt applied for TPS for me, but they have not yet answered me. It's always a headache for me every time my friends are talking about colleges or universities that they are going to go to after graduating their high school. I can't really intervene in these conversations because I do not have legal documents yet and even if I get approved for the TPS, I will not be able to continue my studies. Neither my parents nor my aunt can afford to pay for my school tuition. My advisor told me that I must be a permanent alien to receive financial aid. I get severe headaches when I think about my future. I can't concentrate in school.

Nedjie also shared some stories that are unique to her. She is living with her stepmother and her half-sisters. She is being treated differently than the other kids by both her own father and her stepmother. Nedjie shared this, “*Chak samdi m sipoze ale nan ‘laundry’ pou m al lave rad tout moun; malgre m toujou genyen devwa pa janm gen*

moun ki pran sa a an konsiderasyon. Every Saturday, I always must go to the laundromat to wash everyone's clothes; even though I had homework to complete, no one ever takes that into consideration.”

In summary, the findings from the study came from the stories collected from the participants. The research question for the study focused on the experience of the engagement and/or disengagement of English Learners of Haitian descents in the mainstream classrooms.

Two main themes were revealed: Transition Shock and Causes of Disengagement. Each theme had three sub-themes. The first theme, Transition shock, included the following sub-themes: a) Registration process - participants talked about how proof of their ages and immunization records were in the front line during the procedure, but credits that they completed in their previous schools were not considered; b) Block Schedule – students explained how they were confused during their first weeks and they did not find enough help to navigate through the system. They were, most of the time, ignored by the mainstream teachers. And c) Cross-Cultural Differences – The main issues there, according to the participants, were about how they were forced to look at the teachers in their eyes when they were being addressed to and they were also being reprimanded about their handwriting the fact that they were not used with the print system, but they used to write in cursive back home.

The second theme, Causes of Disengagement, included these sub-themes: a) Language Barrier – due to lack of vocabulary, participants find it very difficult to express themselves in the regular classes; b) Marginalization – In some situations, participants felt like they were not being treated fairly; they were treated as if they were not belonged

in certain classes or some special cultural school events. They were marginalized due to the color of their skin, their accents, and the fact that they are Haitians. And c) Lack of Resources – The participants talked about how they were neglected due to lack of resources. Their non-English speaking status placed them in the back of the line whenever there are not enough materials to give to the students; it is the same thing in the computer labs. They also talked about the Home Language Assistant Person (HLAP) that is almost never available to assist them. The two themes and sub-themes mirror the nature of ELs of Haitian descent' experiences regarding their engagement and/or disengagement in the mainstream classrooms.

Discussions

The findings from this narrative study relate to the literature that I have reviewed. Based on the stories shared by the participants, two main themes with sub-themes were discovered: Transition Shocks and Causes of Engagement and/or disengagement. The participants were in shock throughout their registration process. The idea of neighboring school and immunization records created delay for them to start school on time. The system of rotating schedule created confusion; ELs of Haitian descent are not used to this kind of system. They did not receive a clear explanation on how to follow the block schedule, therefore they were confused during their first few days and the confusion led to discouragement. As for cross-cultural differences, they were really shocked when they found out that they had to look at an adult in the eye during a conversation. They also experienced discrimination due to the color of their skin whereas skin color is not an issue in their country; it is rather about class.

Besides the transition shocks, all the participants consider their sense of engagement and/or disengagement is due to language barrier, marginalization, and lack of resources. They felt like they would have done better in school if they had enough vocabulary to participate during class discussions. They needed to understand academic vocabulary to absorb information and do well on exams. Due to lack of vocabulary, they felt like they were being marginalized; they were treated as if they do not belong in the mainstream classrooms. According to researchers, ELs in a regular classroom environment feel neglected due to the language barrier that they have; teachers often have an apprehension of marginalization (Cochran-Smith, 2009; Fraser, 2008; North, 2008). Home language assistance would have been a great support. According to the participants' stories, they rarely receive help from the HLAP.

In addition to what has been already discussed, M-DCPS is a district where many different languages are spoken because of the migration of people from many different countries. Non-English Speakers that immigrate from other countries to the United States are placed in ESOL Program to teach them English based on the result of their HLS and the result of ESOL placement tests (Online CELLA for grades 1-12 or the OLPS-R for Kindergarteners). Besides being placed in the ESOL program these students also have mainstreamed classroom with native English speakers. The problem is that, according to Guerrero (2021), it could create division among ELs and native English-speaking students when they are placed together in the same classroom; and when situation like this arise, it affects the learning of the ELs. For example, Yodna shared, "*Timoun Ameriken yo toujou ap entimide elèv ESOL yo. Yo toujou ap pran plezi sou nou lè nou vle eseye patispe epi pwofesè yo pa janm eseye sispann sa a.* The American kids always

make fun of the ESOL students. They always try to make fun of us when we try to participate, and the teachers never try to stop that.” ELs tend to feel as if they do not belong in mainstream classrooms when there are situations that cause division among them and the native English speakers (Fraser, 2008). “*Nan klas matematik mwen,*” Nedjie said, “*Eu ... Eu...Pwofesè a toujou mete m travay pou kont mwen; li fè m santi plas mwen pa la epi sa konn koz timoun yo imilye m tou. Eu...Eu...* In my math class, the teacher always put me in a corner to work on my own; she makes me feel that I do not belong here and because of that the other students choose to humiliate me.” Situation like this could make ELs feel uncomfortable and could also discourage them from participating in class activities. This could also lower their self-esteem and they might get to the point where they would not want to be part of any other school activities. These types of issues do not stay only in in the mainstream classrooms; the same strategies and different programs that help satisfy the demands of ELs in the regular classrooms must apply in other social activities in the schools as well. Diverse cultural programs should be considered as part of the school culture to embrace all students and that will also reduce stress from them.

As Powers (2008) stated, “Student voice is an integral part of their motivation and inspiration to achieve” (p. 5). When ELs can voice their educational experiences about their time in the mainstream classroom, they also spend time talking about their cultural difference and how they are being affected. It is essential that teachers are knowledgeable about the culture of their ELs; they need to assure that their culture is included in their planning and make sure that it is implemented in the delivery of their daily lessons. ELs’ culture must be embraced in the classrooms so that they feel welcome and not feeling less

important than others. Farren (2016) stated that by embracing the culture of the ELs, teachers create an environment in which students get to understand and appreciate one another with passion. Lyce said, “*Anpil fwa se pwofesè klas regilye yo ki konn koz lòt timoun yo ban nou move tretman paske yo pa fin konpran bezwen nou, epi yo panse se lè nou izole n ap travay pou kont nou se sa ki solisyon an. Yo pa fin renmen lè n ap mande èd; yo menm konn panse se mal n ap pale yo.* Very often, the teachers in the regular classrooms are the ones that caused the other kids to treat us badly because they do not really understand our needs, and they think the solution is to put us in isolation to complete our work. They don’t like when we are asking for help; they even think that we are talking bad about them.”

Delimitations and Limitations

As it is with all investigations, this narrative inquiry had its own limitations. This research was limited to ELs of Haitian descent at the high school level who were enrolled in M-DCPS. To collect data, I was supposed to first recruit participants from three different schools in the district. Due to COVID-19 Pandemic, entering the schools was not allowed to do the recruitment; therefore, the process to contact the administrators took longer than expected. When I finally got permission from the administrators to use their sites to conduct the study, I could not contact the ESOL liaison person right away because it was the beginning of the school year, and they were all testing new students and those who have been in the program for three years or more. I was obliged to wait a whole month until I could reach out to them. When I finally contacted the teachers and for them to help me get the participants it was another lengthy process for them to turn in the consent forms.

For this narrative study, all interviews were limited to be conducted via zoom. Reaching out to the participants was incredibly challenging. Not all of them had a cellular telephone. I had to first contact some of the parents, who were always at work, and they had to transfer the message to the students when they got home. They all had email addresses, but it was not something that they checked daily. During the interviews, the participants encountered technical difficulties with their internet to join the Zoom meetings. Sometimes they could not express themselves the way that they would like to because they were surrounded by other family members amid the dialogues. Open-ended queries during the interview process asked the participants to ponder on their engagement and/or disengagement about their educational experiences in the mainstream classroom. Due to political instability and insecurity that exist in Haiti, the participants were often hesitant to share certain information. At times, probing questions were often asked so that participants could elaborate on their responses. The fact that they were not too comfortable on sharing all information, findings for the study were extremely limited.

Recommendations

At M-DCPS, teachers in the mainstream classrooms are always faced with ELs throughout the day. ELs in the mainstream classrooms often talk about the causes of their engagement and/or disengagement in the regular classrooms. Based on the findings collected for this research, the participants explain that they get disengaged because of unfair treatments that they receive from their teachers in the mainstream classes. It is critical that educators of ELs validate the effects their daily interferences with learners have on individual learner. Every learner who participated in this study shared how they were negatively impacted by a teacher, or teachers which led to disengagement.

Mainstream teachers need to be aware that English Learners can recognize when they are caring. Based on the voices of the participants, this study suggests recommendations for further studies, recommendations for practice and recommendations for policy.

Recommendations for Further Studies

The participants in this study voiced their stories by sharing their sense of engagement and/or disengagement in the mainstream classrooms. After analyzing in-depth the data that focused on the voice of the participants, it is recommended that future research include more about how ELs of Haitian descent express their emotion about marginalization and causes of their engagement and/or disengagement in the mainstream classrooms.

Teranishi, R.T., Martin, M.D., and Suarez-Orozco S.C. (2013) stated, “There is insufficient research to inform a comprehensive understanding of the experiences and outcomes of immigrant students, including their demography and unique challenge they face” (p. 3). As a researcher, I recommend that a similar study to administer in schools that do not have a large population of ELs of Haitian descents as well as in inner-city schools. The findings from the stories divulged that the contributors of the study felt like they do not belong in several situations. They do not feel comfortable when teachers assign them seats in the back corner in their rooms; most of the time, they feel forgotten because they never get to participate fully in the class activities. ELs of Haitian descent suffer a lot back home from political instability, insecurity, natural disaster, hunger, poverty and so forth. They are from a country where no one is secured, not even the chief head of the country. On July 7th, 2021, the commander in chief of Haiti, Jovenel Moise, was executed in his private habitation in Port-au-Prince, the capital city of Haiti. When

ELs of Haitian descent enter the classrooms, they should not be rejected. They should receive the necessary support from their teachers and their peers to help them breathe fresh air and take a break from all the traumatic events that are happening in Haiti.

A similar study could be conducted so that teachers of the mainstream classrooms could have a better understanding of their ELs of Haitian descent, and they could also get familiarized with some of the cultural differences. Both students and teachers should be aware of the differences that exist when conducting eye contact. Strategies to welcome new ELs of Haitian descent should also apply as soon as they enter a mainstream classroom. Future studies should also include information on how the participants felt disengaged due to lack of resources in the schools that they attend, limited chances to participate in small group activities and lack of communication between them and their mainstream teachers. Besides qualitative, a mixed method is also recommended to be conducted; it could reveal information that could be beneficial to all ELs. Additional research could also include elementary and middle school students. Different levels of students could support developing an overall image of the elements furnishing to the engagement and/or disengagement of ELs of Haitian descent in the regular classroom.

Recommendation for Practice

There are many practices that teachers and administrators can use to help satisfy the needs of ELs of Haitian descent. There are also practices that ELs and parents of ELs can use to become successful in the American education system.

According to scholars, sustainable student/teacher connections influence involvement and success (Watters, 2010). While a teacher might not acknowledge the importance of individual interaction along with ELs, the learners of English on the other

end, consider those moments and appreciate them. Consequently, it is imperative that teachers listen to the collective voice of these English Learners that participated in this study. The engagement of ELs in the mainstream classroom depends on positive and meaningful relationship the teachers have with them. Educators could use large numbers of approaches to help their ELs succeed. They could, publicly, recognize the effort of their students, contact their parents about their participation in class, engage them in classroom conversation even if they struggle to share their ideas; all these could motivate the ELs to make tremendous effort in the class, the parents could feel proud and that might encourage them to get involved in the education of their children. “ELs perceive a supportive environment when teachers demonstrate that they care whether it is through personalization of practice problems, use of humor, playing music, attendance of sporting events, or integration of different cultures” (Siegle et al. 2014). ELs are always interested in knowing their teachers’ feelings about them; it is essential that teachers who service ELs have the envy to sentimentalize significant and considerable connections with their students.

As for administrators, they could make sure that students and parents are well informed about the registration process so that the students do not encounter any surprises throughout their studies. They could also find out about the most popular Haitian radio and television shows in the Haitian community to share important information with parents. Information about the registration process and graduation requirements should be clear to all parents and students. They should be aware graduation requirement up front so that it does not create any stress for them when they are getting close to graduate. Counselors should conduct one on one meetings with their ELs as soon

as they enter their schools so that they do not miss any valuable information. Important information should always be available in Haitian Creole as ELs of Haitian descent is the second largest ethnic group in M-DCPS.

Teachers could use strategies to always include their ELs in their vigorous daily lessons without diminishing them in front of their peers. Participants in the study talk about how they feel lonely when they always have to work in isolation in their mainstream classrooms when other students get to work in small groups. Considering this, teachers in the mainstream classrooms are being prompted to respectively satisfy the demand of ELs by integrating them in their daily lessons as well as small group activities (Siegle et al. 2014; Waters, 2010). The teacher could apply different ESOL strategies in their daily lesson by using the ESOL strategies matrix (M-DCPS Bilingual Education). Mainstream teachers that provide services to ELs could also participate in professional developments that are offered by the Department of Bilingual Education and World Languages. Educators could also establish a partnership of learning with ELs, which could lead to a sense of self-efficacy and learner empowerment (Powers, 2008; Scigliano & Hipsky, 2010). ELs in the mainstream classrooms need to always be given the opportunity to work in small groups so that they could learn from their peers so that they do not get discouraged. By allowing students to work in small group, they will have the possibility to share their ideas, and the chance to stay connected with their classmates throughout their years in school.

Additionally, ELs should feel that their culture is part of the daily lessons so that they could become very engaged in their mainstream classroom. If the dynamic of the classroom environment leads to a sense of a community that embraces and accepts

diverse cultures, ELs will not feel excluded, and they will feel the motivation and the encouragement to participate in class activities (Guerrero 2021). Rance-Roney (2008) suggested a “Culture Share Club” in the schools to help resolve this situation (cited in Guerrero, 2021). The purpose of creating such a club is to offer scaffolding for ELs to acquire English (Adams, 2022). It is a club for students to let each other know about their culture; Those that volunteer to be participants will have the possibility to talk about their own culture and write journals about what they learn from others (Rance-Roney, 2008 as cited in Guerrero, 2021). Being part of this club, Rance-Roney (2008) said, would help reduce anxiety among ELs and they could become verbal when expressing themselves; ELs would feel more comfortable to share information about their cultures. One of the things that cause ELs to struggle is language barrier; because of language difficulty they struggle to communicate with others, and it is hard for them to succeed. The “Culture Share Club” could help native speakers understand how difficult it is ELs to become successful (Rance-Roney, 2008).

There are also projects that teachers can have their students make to get them illustrate their culture without hesitation in front of other students. With such projects, ELs will have the opportunity to educate others about the value of diversity and they would also help them appreciate each other (Guerrero, 2021). Certain projects about culture could include special food, traditional attire, dance, different holidays, languages and many more. According to researchers, the development of the English language for ELs is based on the importance of three specific respectful conditions: distributive, participative and relational (Cochran-Smith, 2009; North, 2008; Fraser, 2008). Schools could encourage these aspects by inventing an annual multicultural day in their end-of-

year activities. This could help other students make ELs feel more comfortable and less anxious in the mainstream classrooms; such activity could also build strong relationships among students of different culture, and it would also open the path for more participation of ELs in the mainstream classrooms.

When ELs are being placed in the regular classroom, it is essential that they are taken into consideration because due to language barrier they often tend to become marginalized. Implementation of diverse cultural activities would help ELs integrate faster in the system and that will also motivate them to engage in class as well as social events and extracurricular activities in their building. Cultural events also could create harmony among students, no one will feel less important than the other. According to Farren (2016), cultural activities within the schools and in the classrooms help ELs recognize themselves and they also feel connected with the other students that are non-ELs. Culture plays a very important role when learning a language; it is more than just reading, writing, or speaking the language. Schools could have mini-professional developments to inform administrators, teachers, parents and students about cultural differences. Students who are while integrating themselves in the American culture as well as studying English as a new language want to feel that their own culture is being valued by their teachers and their native English-speaking peers. With the experience of cultural activities, they will feel that they are being considered and they will feel comfortable to be part of any classroom conversation or social activities within the school. Besides language barrier, ELs are not any different than others; therefore, just like native speakers, mainstream teachers should familiarize themselves with ESOL strategies so that they could include their ELs in their daily classroom conversations.

Recommendations for Policy

Participants of this research express their concerns about their pedagogical trajectory. They shared their experience about their sense of belongingness in the mainstream classroom and their frustration to understand their monolingual teachers that often leads to disengagement. As for policy, it is recommended that there is a team of Haitian Creole paraprofessionals that could go to the schools that do not have a large Haitian population of ELs to assist those students at least once a week. ELs who receive assistance in their home language feel very confident in understanding the use of grammar, academic vocabular as well as instructions (Ferlazzo, 2017). Students who receive assistance in their native language also feel more confident to approach their teachers, converse with their peers, and feel comfortable participate in class discussion (Ferlazzo, 2017).

Furthermore, students should receive important information in Haitian Creole during their registration process. During informational assemblies for seniors, they could have bilingual interpreters to translate important information to the students so that they are not misled. ELs of Haitian descent need to be well informed about important required standardized exams that they need to pass to graduate as well as other options that they might have. They came from an educational system that is completely different from the American system; therefore, they need guidance in their home language so that they could succeed in the system and hopefully realize their dreams.

To ensure that ELs of Haitian descent are getting effective assistance around the district, this study also recommends that instruction is going on in English in the core subject areas instead of in Spanish to satisfy the needs of just a group of students.

Administrators are encouraged to conduct regular walk-throughs and remind the teachers during faculty meetings that it is important that they give equal learning opportunity to all students. It is also recommended that more assistant principals of Haitian descent are promoted to principals and more teachers with leadership are promoted to assistant principals. Recommendation of qualified candidates for these positions must be taken into considerations. Schools with a large number of Haitian populations should at least have one administrator that can communicate with the students in their native language just like it is done in the Hispanic communities. The communication in the home language is important and that will also encourage ELs of Haitian descent to become successful in the system when they see the success of one of their own kin.

Summary

The purpose of this narrative inquiry was to understand how ELs of Haitian descent describe their experiences of education in the mainstream classrooms. This study focused on the stories and voices of six high school participants in M-DCPS from three different schools, one from each region of the school district: North, South, and Central. Each participant was given a pseudonym to protect their identities and the names of schools were not mentioned in the study.

To collect data, the following research question was used: What do the stories of Haitian immigrants learning English in the mainstream classrooms reveal about their experiences of engagement and/or disengagement of their education? Participants were interviewed using open-ended questions. To allow participant time to think about their experiences of education, the interviewed questions were arranged into three groups: a) Getting to Know the Participants, b) The Participants' Overall Experience of Education

and (c) Concluding Conversation with Participants. Data collected from the interviews were divided into two themes and three different sub-themes for each. The themes and the sub-themes were as follow: 1) Transition Shock with sub-themes registration process, block schedule and cross-cultural differences and 2) Causes of Disengagement with the following sub-themes - language barrier, marginalization, and lack of resources. Based on findings, this study recommends further studies to be conducted with elementary and middle school students and a mixed method is strongly recommended, recommendations for practice such as cultural professional developments, and recommendations for policy that focus on equal learning opportunity for all students.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: IRB Approval Form

Appendix B: Research Review Committee

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APPENDIX A: IRB Approval Letter



Office of Research Integrity
Research Compliance, MARC 414

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Ethan Kolek
CC: Emma Francois

From: Maria Melendez-Vargas, MIBA, IRB Coordinator 

Date: June 16, 2021

Protocol Title: "Narrative Inquiry: A Focus on the Engagement and/or Disengagement of Haitian Immigrant English Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom"

The Florida International University Office of Research Integrity has reviewed your research study for the use of human subjects and deemed it Exempt via the **Exempt Review** process.

IRB Protocol Exemption #: IRB-21-0242 **IRB Exemption Date:** 06/16/21
TOPAZ Reference #: 110265

As a requirement of IRB Exemption you are required to:

- 1) Submit an IRB Exempt Amendment Form for all proposed additions or changes in the procedures involving human subjects. All additions and changes must be reviewed and approved prior to implementation.
- 2) Promptly submit an IRB Exempt Event Report Form for every serious or unusual or unanticipated adverse event, problems with the rights or welfare of the human subjects, and/or deviations from the approved protocol.
- 3) Submit an IRB Exempt Project Completion Report Form when the study is finished or discontinued.

Special Conditions: (M-DCPS RRC Agreement – Miami-Dade County Public Schools)
In conducting research in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools System (M-DCPS), upon receiving this FIU IRB Approval, the Investigator must submit her application to the M-DCPS Research Review Committee which must include a copy of the FIU IRB Approval letter. This application complies with the School Board rule 2605 which states that "Any request from people outside the public school system, or from employees seeking university degrees, must be submitted to the Research Review Committee (RRC)." The application forms and contact information can be found at <http://oer.dadeschools.net>.

Upon approval from M-DCPS RRC, the investigator must submit a copy of the M-DCPS RRC approval letter to the FIU IRB Office (Office of Research Integrity) to complete the process.

APPENDIX B: Research Review Committee



Miami-Dade County Public Schools

giving our students the world

Superintendent of Schools

Alberto M. Carvalho

Assessment, Research, and Data Analysis

Miami-Dade County School Board

Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair

Dr. Steve Gallon III, Vice Chair

Lucia Baez-Geller

Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall

Christi Fraga

Dr. Lubby Navarro

Dr. Marta Pérez

Mari Tere Rojas

Luisa Santos

District Support (revised)

July 19, 2021

Mrs. Emma Francois
8252 NW 198th Street
Hialeah, FL 33015

Dear Mrs. Francois:

I am pleased to inform you that the Research Review Committee (RRC) of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) has granted you approval for your request to conduct the study: "Narrative Inquiry: A Focus about the Engagement and/or Disengagement on English Learners of Haitian Descent in the Mainstream Classroom." in order to fulfill the requirements of your dissertation at Florida International University.

The approval is granted with the following conditions:

1. Participation is at **the discretion of the administrator of the targeted school**. Please note that even with the approval of the RRC, it is still the responsibility of the principal as the gatekeeper of the school to decide whether to participate or not. As stated in the Board rule, "... the principal of the individual school has the privilege of deciding if RRC - approved research will be conducted within his/her school." A copy of this approval letter must be presented/and or shared with the administrator of each targeted site.
2. Before conducting any research and/or collecting any data in any M-DCPS site, a researcher who **does not** have a valid Level 2 security clearance from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, must obtain a level 2 background security clearance from the M-DCPS Fingerprinting Office. The application for District security clearance can be found at:
<http://oer.dadeschools.net/ResearchReviewRequest/ResearchReviewRequest.asp>
3. The participation of all subjects (such as students, faculty, or staff) is voluntary.
4. The anonymity and/or confidentiality of all subjects must be assured. All necessary adult consent and/or student assent forms must be collected before the researcher can administer surveys and/or collect any data.
5. The purpose of this study is to understand how some selected Els of Haitian descents at the high school level think about their engagement and/or disengagement of their experiences of education in the mainstream classrooms.

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Assessment, Research, and Data Analysis • 305-995-7091 • www.dadeschools.net*

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6. The study will involve approximately six (6) high school students at one M-DCPS high school. The data collection will consist mainly of interviews conducted through ZOOM and not lasting more than 60 minutes.

It should be emphasized that the approval of the Research Review Committee does not constitute an endorsement of the study. It is simply a permission to request the voluntary cooperation in the study of individuals associated with M-DCPS.

It is your responsibility to ensure that appropriate procedures are followed in requesting an individual's cooperation, and that all aspects of the study are conducted in a professional manner. With regard to the latter, make certain that all documents and instruments distributed within MDCPS as a part of the study are carefully edited.

The approval number for your study is **2451**. This number should be used in all communications to clearly identify the study as approved by the Research Review Committee. The approval expires on **06/30/2022**. During the approval period, the study must adhere to the design, procedures and instruments which were submitted to the Research Review Committee.

Finally, please submit to the RRC an abstract of the research findings and/or preliminary finding by **July 2022**.

If there are any changes in the study as it relates to M-DCPS, the RRC must be notified in writing. Substantial changes may necessitate resubmission of the request. Failure to notify me of such a change may result in the cancellation of the approval.

If you have any questions, please call me at 305-995-7091. On behalf of the Research Review Committee, I want to wish you every success with your study.

Sincerely,



Tarek Chebbi, Ed. D.
Chairperson, Research Review Committee

APPROVAL NUMBER: **2451**

APPROVAL EXPIRES: **06/30/2022 (*)**

(*): Florida International University IRB # 21-0242 approved June 16, 2021.

Note: The researcher named in this letter of approval will be solely responsible and strictly accountable for any failure to follow the research study as approved by the RRC. M-DCPS will NOT be held responsible for any damage resulting from this study. The researcher and his/her institution must protect the rights, safety, and welfare of subjects involved in the above-named study.

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APPENDIX C: Recruiting Script

Recruiting Script

(I am an employee at M-DCPS, but this study is not part of my job.)

Dear Participant,

My name is Emma Caris François. I am a doctoral student at Florida International University in the College of Arts, Sciences and Education. I have been involved in this work for a long time, and I am hoping to learn about your experiences as an English Learner in the regular classrooms.

Participation in this research includes for you to complete a consent form and agree to be interviewed and for information to be recorded and transcribed verbatim. There will be three virtual interviews. You will also be asked to share journals, photos and assignments that are related to your experiences at school. Each interview will take approximately 60-90 minutes and they will be in Haitian Creole.

If you are interested in participating in this study and/or if you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me at 786-493-6095 or at efran038@fiu.edu.

Senaryo pou rekritman

(Mwen se yon anplwaye pou M-DCPS, men etid la pa fè pati travay mwen.)

Chè Patisipan,

Mwen rele Emma Caris Francois. Mwen se yon etidyan nan pwogram doktora nan "Florida International University" nan "College of Arts, Sciences and Education". Mwen angaje lontan nan travay sa a, epi mwen espere aprann sou eksperyans elèv ki genyen orijin Ayisyen k ap aprann pale Angle epi k ap fonsksyone nan klas regilye yo.

Patisipasyon w nan rechèch sa a ap mande w pou konplete yon fòmilè konsantman epitou dakò pou w bay entèvyou ak pou enfòmasyon yo anrejistre epitou pou m ekri sa ou di a literalman. Ap genyen twa entèvyou vityèlman, pataje redaksyon, foto, ak jounal ki genyen rapò ak eksperyans sou edikasyon ou. Chak entèvyou kapab dire apeprè 60-90 minit epi y ap fèt an Kreyòl.

Si ou enterese pou w patisipe nan etid sa a oswa si w ta genyen nenpòt kesyon ou kapab rele m nan 786-493-6095 oswa ekri m sou efran038@fiu.edu.

APPENDIX D: ENGLISH CONSENT FORM



ADULT CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

Narrative Inquiry: A Focus on the Engagement and/or Disengagement of English Learners of Haitian Descent in the Mainstream classrooms

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Things you should know about this study:

- **Purpose:** The purpose of the study is to understand how English Learners of Haitian descent describe their experiences about their engagement and/or disengagement of education in the mainstream classrooms.
- **Procedures:** If you choose to participate, you will be asked to share your experiences about your engagement and/or disengagement of education as an English Learner in the regular classroom.
- **Duration:** This will take about three different interviews, 60-90 minutes each over a period of three months.
- **Risks:** No risk is anticipated for participating in this study. You may feel emotional as you talk about your educational experiences as an English Learner in the regular classrooms.
- **Benefits:** The main benefit to you from this research is that you will provide the opportunity to express yourself about your experiences regarding your engagement and/or disengagement of education in the regular classrooms.
- **Alternatives:** There are no known alternatives available to you other than not taking part in this study.
- **Participation:** Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please carefully read the entire document before agreeing to participate.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to understand how English Learners of Haitian descent describe their experience about their engagement and/or disengagement of education in the regular classrooms.

NUMBER OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS

If you decide to be in this study, you will be one of 6 or 8 people in this research study.

DURATION OF THE STUDY

Your participation will involve you in three different interviews with the researcher in which you will have the possibility to share your experiences of education in Haiti and in the United States. You will be sharing your engagement and/or disengagement as an English Learner in the regular classrooms. Each interview will be taken approximately 60-90 minutes over a period of three months.

PROCEDURES

If you agree to be in the study, we will ask you to do the following things:

1. Participate in three virtual interviews or face to face if allowed by MDCPS and FIU over a period of three months and each interview will take approximately 60-90 minutes.
2. Request to participate in zoom interviews if face-to-face interviews are not allowed.
3. Agree for the interviewer to record everything you share during all three interviews.
4. Share journals, photos, and/or other documents that relate to your engagement or disengagement about your educational experiences in the ESOL program.

RISKS AND/OR DISCOMFORTS

This study has no risk that is anticipated for participating in it. You may feel emotional or may have some potential discomfort in discussing your engagement and/or disengagement about your educational experiences as an English Learner in the regular classrooms.

BENEFITS

This study will be beneficial to you because it will provide you the opportunity to express yourself about your experiences of education in Haiti and in the United States. It also will be beneficial because it will engage you in a conversation in which you will talk about your engagement and/or disengagement as an English Learner in the regular classroom environment.

ALTERNATIVES

There are no known alternatives available to you other than not taking part in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The records of this study will be kept private and will be protected to the fullest extent provided by law. In any sort of report, we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher team will have access to the records. However, your records may be inspected by authorized University or other agents who will also keep the information confidential.

COMPENSATION & COSTS

You will not receive a payment for your participation and there are no costs to you for participating in this study.

RIGHT TO DECLINE OR WITHDRAW

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to participate in the study or withdraw your consent at any time during the study. You will not lose any benefits if you decide not to participate or if you quit the study early. The investigator reserves the right to remove you without your consent at such time that he/she feels it is in the best interest.

RESEARCHER CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions about the purpose, procedures, or any other issues relating to this research study you may contact Dr. Ethan Kolek, the principal investigator at (305) 348-4034 or via email at ekolek@fiu.edu or Emma Caris François at 786-493-6095 or by email at efran038@fiu.edu.

IRB CONTACT INFORMATION

If you would like to talk with someone about your rights of being a subject in this research study or about ethical issues with this research study, you may contact the FIU Office of Research Integrity by phone at 305-348-2494 or by email at ori@fiu.edu.

PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT

I have read the information in this consent form and agree (or allow my child) to participate in this study. I have had a chance to ask any questions I have about this study, and they have been answered for me. I understand that I will be given a copy of this form for my records.

_____	_____
Printed Name of Participant	Date
_____	_____
Signature of Participant	Date
_____	_____
Printed Name of Parent/Guardian (if applicable)	Date
_____	_____
Signature of Parent/Guardian (if applicable)	Date
_____	_____
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent	Date

APPENDIX E: CONSENT DOCUMENT TRANSLATION AFFIRMATION FORM



Institutional Review Board
Consent Document Translation Affirmation Form

Principle Investigator Name: Dr. Ethan Kolek
Project Title: Narrative Inquiry: A Focus on the Engagement and/or Disengagement of English Learners of Haitian Descent in the Mainstream classrooms

Language of Translated Consent (e.g. Spanish): Haitian Creole

This submission is for approval of:

- The initial submission of a consent document
- A modification to an already approved consent document dated _____

The FIU IRB requires that all consent documents be submitted in English for review and approval. In addition, any consent documents that will be translated into another language must be back-translated to English to assure clarity of the translated information. Different individuals **MUST** perform the translation and back-translation of the consent document. The back-translator cannot be affiliated with the research protocol. The back-translator must perform the back-translation without first seeing the original English version of the consent document.

You are required to submit:

- ✓ The English version of the consent document in distribution-ready format (FIU letterhead)
- ✓ The translated version of the consent document in distribution-ready format (FIU letterhead)
- ✓ The back-translated version of the consent document (indicate "Back-translation" at the top of page)
- ✓ This signed form with the signatures of both translators

Step 1: Initial Translation:

I affirm that I have performed the initial translation of the consent document for the referenced project.

Printed Name of Translator: Andris Saint-Cyr

Signature of Translator _____
Date

Step 2: Back-Translation:

I affirm that I have performed the back-translation of the attached consent document for the referenced project.

Printed Name of Back-Translator: Jean-Claude Borgella

Signature of Back-Translator _____
Date

APPENDIX F: HAITIAN CREOLE CONSENT FORM



KONSANTMAN GRANMOUN POU PATISIPE NAN YON ETID RECHÈCH
Ankèt Narativ: Yon Konsantrasyon sou Angajman ak/oswa Dezangajman Elèv k ap Aprann
Pale Anglè ki gen desandan Ayisyen nan Klas Regilye yo

REZIME ENFÒMASYON YO

Bagay ou d we konnen konsènan etid sa:

- **Objektif:** Objektif etid la se pou konprann kijan elèv k ap aprann Anglè ki gen desandan ayisyen yo dekri eksperyans yo sou angajman yo ak /oswa dezangajman yo sou edikasyon nan klas regilye yo.
- **Pwosedi yo:** Si w chwazi patisipe, yo pral mande w pou pataje eksperyans ou sou angajman ou ak /oswa dezangajman sou edikasyon etan kòm yon elèv k ap aprann angle nan klas regilye yo.
- **Dire:** Sa ap pran apeprè twa entèvyou diferan, 60 minit chak.
- **Risk yo:** Pa gen okenn risk ki antisipe pou patisipe nan etid sa a. Ou kapab santi ou emosyonèl pandan w ap pale sou eksperyans edikasyonèl ou nan klas regilye yo.
- **Benefis yo:** Benefis prensipal ou nan rechèch sa a sèke ou pral bay opòtinite pou ekspriye tèt ou sou eksperyans ou konsènan angajman ou ak /oswa dezangajman ou sou edikasyon nan klas regilye yo.
- **Alternativ yo:** Pa gen okenn lòt alternativ ki disponib pou ou pase patisipe nan etid sa a.
- **Patisipasyon:** Patrisipe nan pwojè sou rechèch sa a volontè.

Tanpri, li avèk atansyon tout dokiman an anvan ou dakò pou patisipe.

OBJEKTIF ETID LA

Objektif etid la se pou konprann kijan elèv k ap aprann anglè ki gen desandan ayisyen yo dekri eksperyans yo sou angajman yo ak /oswa dezangajman yo sou edikasyon nan klas regilye yo.

KANTITE PATISIPAN POU ETID LA

Si ou deside patisipe nan nan etid sa a, w ap youn nan 6 oswa patisipan nan etid rechèch sa a.

DIRE ETID LA

Patisipasyon ou ap enlike ou nan yon entèvyou avèk rechèchè a kote ou pral pataje eksperyans ou sou edikasyon ou nan peyi d Ayiti ak nan Etazini. W ap genyen pou w pataje angajman ou ak/oswa desengajman ou kòm yon Elèv k ap Aprann Pale Anglè nan klas regilye yo. Chak entèvyou ap pran apeprè 60 minit epi yo pral konvoke pandan yon peryòd twa mwa.

PWOSEDI YO

Si ou dakò patisipe nan etid la, nou pral mande w pou fè bagay sa yo:

1. Patisipe nan twa entèvyou fasafas si Lekòl Piblik Miami Dade ak Inivèsite Entènasyonal Florid la bay pèmisyon pou sa a fèt nan yon peryòd twa mwa; epitou chak entèvyou yo ap dire apeprè 60 minit.
2. Demann pou w patisipe nan entèvyou atravè zoom si li pa pèmi pou entèvyou fasafas.
3. Dakò pou moun k ap entèvyou w la anrejistre tout bagay ou pataje pandan toutletwa entèvyou yo.
4. Pataje journal, foto, ak/oswa lòt dokiman ki gen pou wè ak angajman ak/oswa dezangajman ou konsènan eksperyans edikasyonèl ou nan pwogram Elèv k ap Aprann Pale Anglè yo.

RISK YO AK/OSWA MALÈZ YO

Etid sa a pa gen okenn risk ki antisipe pou patisipe ladan li. Ou kapab santi w emosyonèl oswa ou ka gen kèk malèz lè w ap pataje eksperyans ou sou edikasyon ou kòm yon Elèv k ap Aprann Angle nan klas regilye yo.

BENEFIS YO

Etid sa a ap benefisye ou paske li pral ba ou opòtinite pou ekspriye tèt ou sou eksperyans edikasyon ou nan peyi d Ayiti ak Ozetazini. L ap benefisye ou paske li pral angaje w nan yon konvèsasyon kote w pral pale sou angajman ou ak/oswa dezengajman ou kòm yon Elèv k ap Aprann Angle nan anviwònman klas regilye yo.

ALTÈNATIF YO

Pa gen okenn lòt altènativ ki disponib pou ou pase patisipe nan etid sa a.

KONFIDANSYALITE

Dosye etid sa yo ap rete konfidansyèl epi y ap pwoteje nan tout limit lalwa prevwa. Nan nenpòt rapò nou ta kapab genyen pou nibliye, nou p ap mete enfòmasyon ki kapab rann li posib pou idantifye ou. Dosye rechèch yo ap byen sekirize, epi se sèlman ekip chèchè a k ap genyen aksè ak dosye yo. Sepandan, moun ki otorize nan inivèsite a oswa lòt ajan k ap kenbe enfòmasyon yo konfidansyèl kapab enspekte dosye ou yo tou.

KONPANSASYON AK FRÈ YO

Ou p ap resevwa yon okenn peman pou patisipasyon ou epitou pa gen okenn frè pou bay pou patisipe nan etid sa a.

DWA POU REFIZE OSWA FÈ RETRÈ

Patisipasyon ou nan etid sa a volontè. Ou lib pou patisipe nan etid la oswa retire konsantman ou nenpòt ki lè pandan etid la. Ou pap pèdi okenn benefis si ou deside pa patisipe oswa si ou ta kite

etid la bonè. Anketè a rezève dwa pou li retire ou san konsantman ou nan nenpòt moman li santi li nan pi bon enterè a.

ENFÒMASYON SOU KOWÒDONE RECHÈCHÈ A

Si ou gen nenpòt kesyon sou bi, pwosedi yo, oswa nenpòt lòt pwoblèm ki gen rapò ak etid rechèch sa a ou kapab Doktè Ethan Kolek, envestgate prensipal la, nan (305) 348-4034 oswa pa kourye elektwonik sou ekolek@fiu.edu oswa Emma Caris François, rechèchè a, nan 786-493-6095 oswa pa kourye elektwonik sou efran038@fiu.edu.

ENFÒMASYON KONTAK IRB

Si ou ta renmen pale ak yon moun konsènan dwa pou yon sijè nan etid rechèch sa a oswa sou pwoblèm etid rechèch sa a, ou kapab kontakte Biwo Entegrite Rechèch FIU a nan telefòn sa a 305-348-2494 oswa sou imèl sa ori@fiu.edu.

APWOBASYON PATISIPAN

Mwen li enfòmasyon ki nan fòm konsantman sa a epi mwen dakò pou m patisipe nan etid sa a. Mwen te gen yon chans poze nenpòt kesyon mwen genyen sou etid sa a, epi yo te reponn yo pou mwen. Mwen konprann y ap ban mwen yon kopi fòm sa a pou dosye mwen.

Non Patrisipan

Dat

Siyati Patrisipan

Dat

Non Paran /Gadyen Patrisipan (si sa aplikab)

Dat

Siyati paran/gadyen patrisipan (si sa aplikab)

Dat

Siyati Moun k ap Jwenn Konsantman

Dat

APPENDIX G: BACK-TRANSLATED CONSENT FORM



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

A Focus on the Engagement and/or Disengagement of English Learners of Haitian Descent in the Mainstream classrooms

Back-Translation

SUMMARY INFORMATION

Things you should know about this study:

- **Purpose:** The purpose of the study is to comprehend how English Learners (ELs) of Haitian descent describe their experiences about their engagement and/or disengagement of education in the mainstream classrooms.
- **Procedures:** If you choose to participate, you will be asked to share your experiences about your engagement and/or disengagement of education as an English Learner in the regular classroom.
- **Duration:** This will take about three different interviews, and each will be 60-90 minutes over a period of three months.
- **Risks:** No risk is anticipated for participating in this study. You may feel emotional as you share your story about your educational experiences as an EL in the regular classrooms.
- **Benefits:** The main benefit to you from this study is that you will provide the opportunity to express yourself about your experiences regarding your engagement and/or disengagement of education in the regular classrooms.
- **Alternatives:** There are no known alternatives available to you other than not taking part in this study.
- **Participation:** Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please read the entire document carefully before agreeing to participate.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to understand how English Learners (ELs) of Haitian descent describe their experience about their engagement and/or disengagement of education in the regular classrooms.

NUMBER OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS

If you decide to be in this study, you will be one of 6 or 8 people in this research study.

DURATION OF THE STUDY

Your participation will involve you in three different interviews with the researcher in which you will have the possibility to share your experiences of education in Haiti and in the United States. You will be sharing your engagement and/or disengagement as an English Learner in the regular classrooms. Each interview will be taken approximately 60-90 minutes over a period of three months.

PROCEDURES

If you agree to be in the study, we will ask you to do the following things:

1. Participate in three virtual interviews or face to face if allowed by MDCPS and FIU over a period of three months and each interview will take approximately 60-90 minutes.
2. Request to participate in zoom interviews if face to face interviews are not allowed.
3. Agree for the interviewer to record everything you share during all three interviews.
4. Share journals, photos, and/or other documents that relate to your engagement or disengagement about your educational experiences in the ESOL program.

RISKS AND/OR DISCOMFORTS

This study has no risk that is anticipated for participating in it. You may feel emotional or may have some potential discomfort in discussing your engagement and/or disengagement about your educational experiences as an English Learner in the regular classrooms.

BENEFITS

This study will be beneficial to you because it will provide you the opportunity to express yourself about your experiences of education in Haiti and in the United States. It also will be beneficial because it will engage you in a conversation in which you will talk about your engagement and/or disengagement as an English Learner in the regular classroom environment.

ALTERNATIVES

There are no known alternatives available to you other than not taking part in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The records of this study will be kept private and will be protected to the fullest extent provided by law. In any sort of report, we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher team will have access to the records. However, your records may be inspected by authorized University or other agents who will also keep the information confidential.

COMPENSATION & COSTS

You will not receive a payment for your participation and there are no costs to you for participating in this study.

RIGHT TO DECLINE OR WITHDRAW

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to participate in the study or withdraw your consent at any time during the study. You will not lose any benefits if you decide not to participate or if you quit the study early. The investigator reserves the right to remove you without your consent at such time that he/she feels it is in the best interest.

RESEARCHER CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions about the purpose, procedures, or any other issues relating to this research study you may contact Dr. Ethan Kolek, the principal investigator at (305) 348-4034 or via email at ekolek@fiu.edu or Emma Caris François at 786-493-6095 or by email at efran038@fiu.edu.

IRB CONTACT INFORMATION

If you would like to talk with someone about your rights of being a subject in this research study or about ethical issues with this research study, you may contact the FIU Office of Research Integrity by phone at 305-348-2494 or by email at ori@fiu.edu.

PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT

I have read the information in this consent form and agree (or allow my child) to participate in this study. I have had a chance to ask any questions I have about this study, and they have been answered for me. I understand that I will be given a copy of this form for my records.

Printed Name of Participant

Date

Signature of Participant

Date

Printed Name of Parent/Guardien (if applicable)

Date

Signature of Parent/ Gardien (if applicable)

Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date

APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol

First Interview: Getting to Know the Participants

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Tell me about your experiences coming to the United States.
3. What do you like the most/least about living in the United States?
4. Tell me about something you miss from your country.
5. What was your education experience like before you begin school in the United States?

Table 2: Participant Open-Ended Interview Questions

Second Interview: The Participants' Overall Experiences of Education in the United States

1. Tell me about your experiences of education in the United States.
2. How did you feel when you first started school in the United States? Explain any sense of disengagement that you encounter throughout your studies.
3. How do your teachers affect your school performance?
4. How do your peers affect your school performance?
5. When do you feel you need the most help?

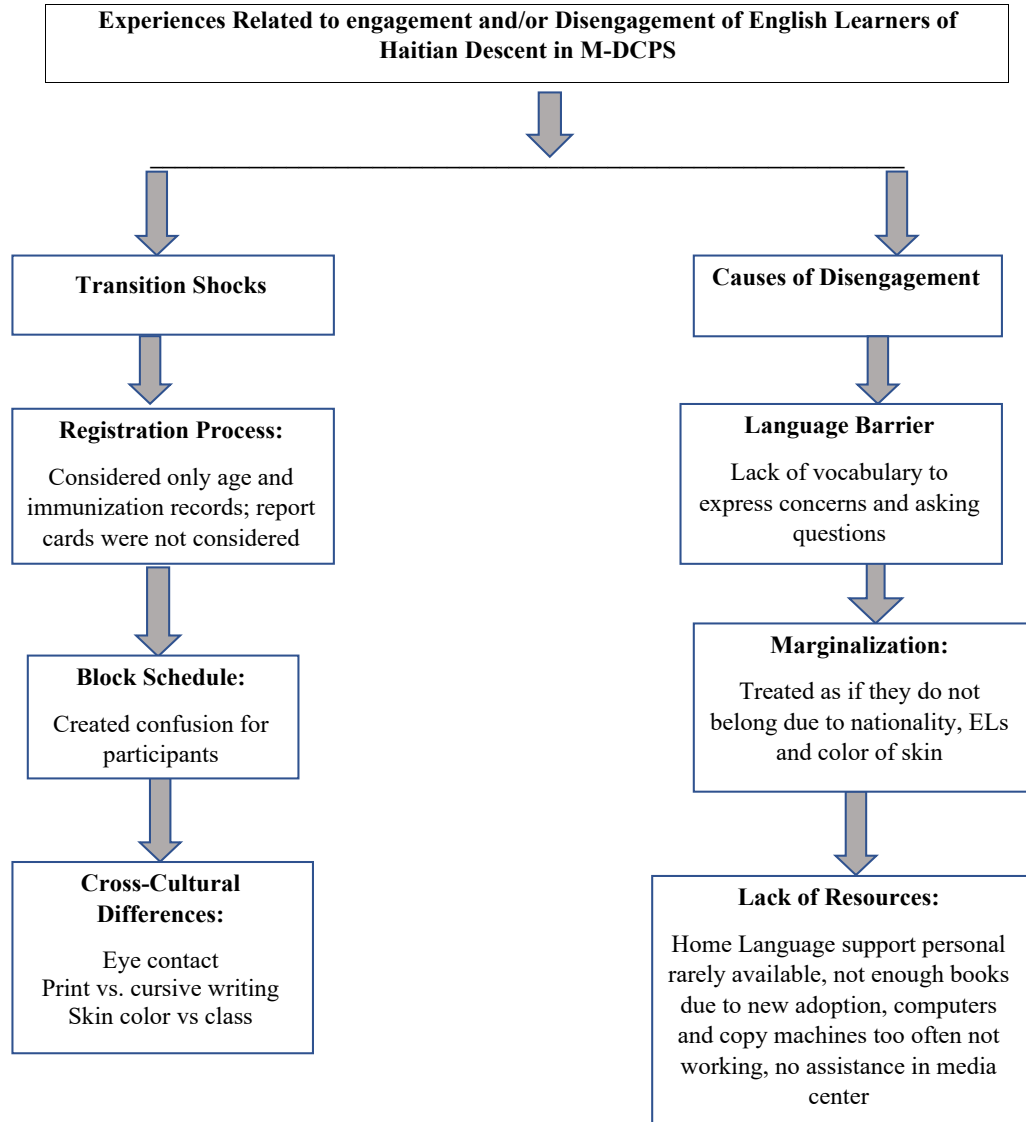
Table 3: Participant Open-Ended Interview Questions

Third Interview: Concluding Conversation with Participants

1. Tell me how you feel about learning in a language different from yours.
2. How do you describe yourself as a student in a mainstream classroom?
3. What motivates you to do well in school?
4. What is the most amazing thing that has ever happened to you as a student?
5. What is the single most memorable moment of your educational experiences?

APPENDIX I: THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

Figure 1: English Learners of Haitian Descent



VITA

EMMA CARIS FRANÇOIS

Born, Saint-Louis du Nord, Haiti

1991 – 1995	B.A., French Florida International University
1996 – 1998	M.S., TESOL Florida International University
1995 – 1996	Public Speaking Adjunct Professor Miami-Dade College, Wolfson, and Hialeah Campuses
1996 – 2003	ESOL Teacher Lindsey Hopkins, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
1998 – 2004	Developmental Language Arts and Language Arts through ESOL Teacher, Miami-Dade County Public Schools Richmond Heights Middle School, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
2004 – 2011	Reading/Language Arts through EOL and French Teacher William Jennings Bryan Elementary, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
2004 – 2011	ESOL Teacher North Miami Adult Education Center, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
2007 – 2009	Certificate, Educational Leadership Florida Atlantic University
2011 – Present	Curriculum Support Specialist Department of Bilingual Education and World Languages Miami-Dade County Public Schools
2021- Present	Haitian Creole Adjunct Professor Miami-Dade College North Campus and Florida Memorial University
2019 – 2022	Ed.D., Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Florida International University