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English Only?: Enriching the Education of English Language Learners

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Abstract

Due to pressures to acquire the English language, English Language Learners (ELL) have school schedules inundated with English Development and other English acquisition classes. This means most ELL students have few opportunities to take elective courses. Furthermore, ELL students at the basic proficiency level have Science and Social Studies excluded from their schedules. Additional challenges for ELL students include being segregated from their English only (EO) peers and inadequate development and training of teachers serving ELL students. Interviews were conducted with Administration, the English Language (EL) Specialist, and ELL Students at Wakefield Middle School, to better understand ELL students' educational experiences and how to improve them. Emergent themes indicate the importance of structural changes to the school day and additional teacher professional development. Based on the findings, action was undertaken to enrich the educational opportunities of ELL students.

Keywords: English Language Learners, After-School Program, English Only.

English Only?: Enriching the Education of English Language Learners

As I entered the room, I noticed the area was well lit and that chatter filled the air. There were twenty students in the room, all holding guitars, while an instructor was standing at the front of the room speaking in low tones giving directions to a student close by. During the regular school day, this class would be filled with mostly native English speaking students. Right now, the class is Basic Guitar, and the students within the class are English Language Learners who participate in an after-school enrichment program. The classroom was big, with three rows of chairs. There were approximately 30 seats and all but ten were full. The instructor started the class by demoing current songs that the students were familiar with. You could see the students' eyes light up as they recognized the tunes he was playing and they whispered the name of the song to each other. The instructor has the students' attention and took requests from them. Instantly, they requested Spanish music and the instructor granted the students' requests. The students sang along in their native language as the teacher played the guitar. The students were smiling, laughing, and moving to the beat in their chairs. The instructor seemed to understand the importance of teaching to his students' culture and using their experiences to engage them. These students were fortunate that at this particular middle school, they were able to attend an after-school program that provided opportunities and access to take elective courses like this one.

After class, I spoke to a few of the students who attended classes that day. "Adrian¹," a thirteen-old boy and an 8th grader at Wakefield Middle School, looked down and kicked the floor with his shoe, as I asked him questions about the class. "It's fun, I get to play the guitar, and I like music, so I like the class" (Adrian, personal communication, March 13, 2017), he

¹ All names of people, geographic places and institutions have been given pseudonyms

stated with a wryly smile. I asked him if he had music as an elective on his class schedule, and he immediately responded, “No, I don’t have those” (Adrian, personal communication, March 13, 2017). Adrian, like many English Language Learners (ELLs) at Wakefield Middle School (WMS) does not have electives included in his school schedule. The reason for this is Salta Union High School District policymakers believe that ELL students need to be fully immersed in English. Therefore, all of their electives have been replaced with English Language Development classes. Because this can be disheartening for young students, the Principal at WMS, Anthony Harris, and his EL Specialist, Samantha Baxter, devised an After-School Enrichment Program, designed to provide electives for ELL students. One of these classes is the Basic Guitar class that “Adrian” attends on Monday.

Literature Review

Currently, in America, English Language Learners (ELL) comprise 4.85 million students in schools; this is nearly 10% of the student population in the United States public school system (Ruiz Soto, Hooker, & Batalova, 2015). While the general student population has only grown by 7% in the last decade, the ELL student population has grown by over 60%, making it one of the fastest growing populations of students (Grantmakers for Education, 2013).

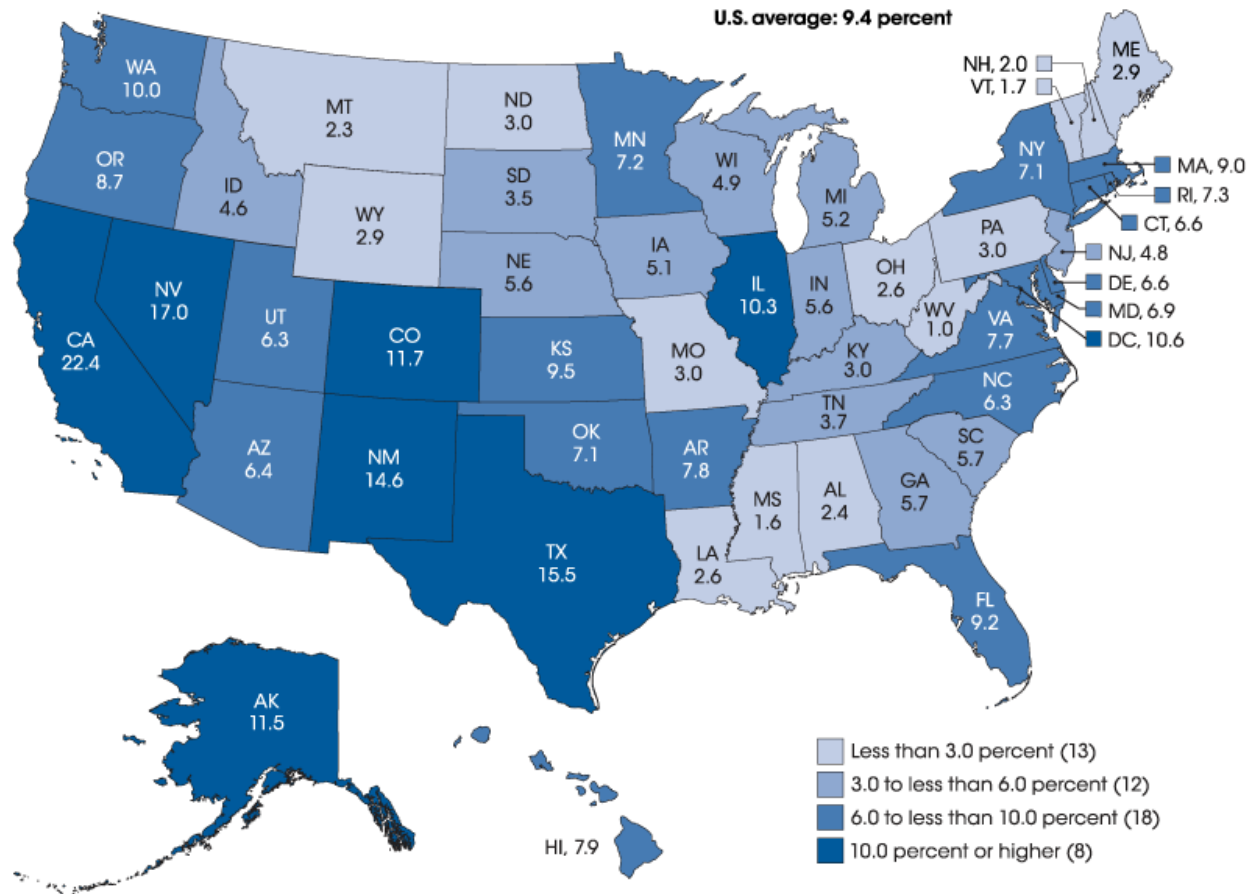


Figure 1. Percentage of public school students who were English language learners, by state: School year 2014–15. Adapted from NCES. (2017). English Language Learners in Public Schools . Retrieved May 10, 2017, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgf.asp

In the U.S., California has the highest number of ELL students by state (see *Figure 1*). During the 2015–16 school year, there were approximately 1.4 million ELL students enrolled in public schools, constituting 22.4% (see *Figure 1*) of the total enrollment in California public schools (CDE, 2016). In Monterey County, over 40% of its student population are ELL students. The growth of Latinos is rising in all seven school districts in the county(see *Figure 2*), while the other demographic of students are decreasing (Argueza & Rahaim, 2017). This is significant because in Monterey county, ELL students are the highest growing population, yet they are the

lowest performing academically. Therein lies the issue, as an education system the number of ELL students is growing, but their needs are not being meet academically.

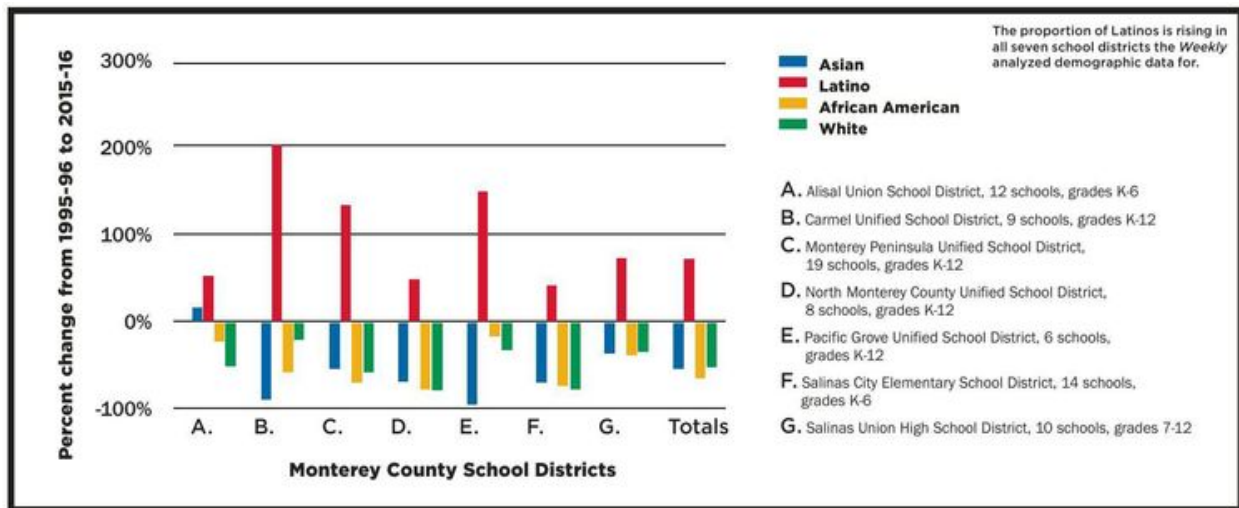


Figure 2- Demographic data on Monterey County School Districts. Adapted from Argueza, M., & Rahaim, N. (2017). Data shows public schools are resegregating. Here's why that's a problem for the next generation. Retrieved May 10, 2017, from http://www.montereycountyweekly.com/news/cover/data-shows-public-schools-are-resegregating-here-s-why-that/article_98b59be6-0442-11e7-a331-cb9091f40130.html

Social Segregation in the Classroom

Unlike their English Only peers, ELLs often are segregated in classrooms and their schools. ELL students are placed at particularly high risk for educational failure because of their segregation (see *Figure 3*). Research conducted on desegregation shows that students who are educated in desegregated settings tend to have better opportunities to achieve success (Crain & Strauss, 1985; Wells & Crain, 1994). This phenomenon is explained by sociologists as the positive impact of social capital, or access to important social networks (Stanton-Salazar, 1997). Therefore, one reason to be concerned about racial, ethnic, or linguistic segregation is it limits

ELL students access to their English only (EO) peers who can serve as models. Segregation reduces opportunities for ELLs to hear and interact with the English language, and develop an understanding of how language is used in both academic and social settings (August & Hakuta, 1997). These features are instrumental in the development of the English language.

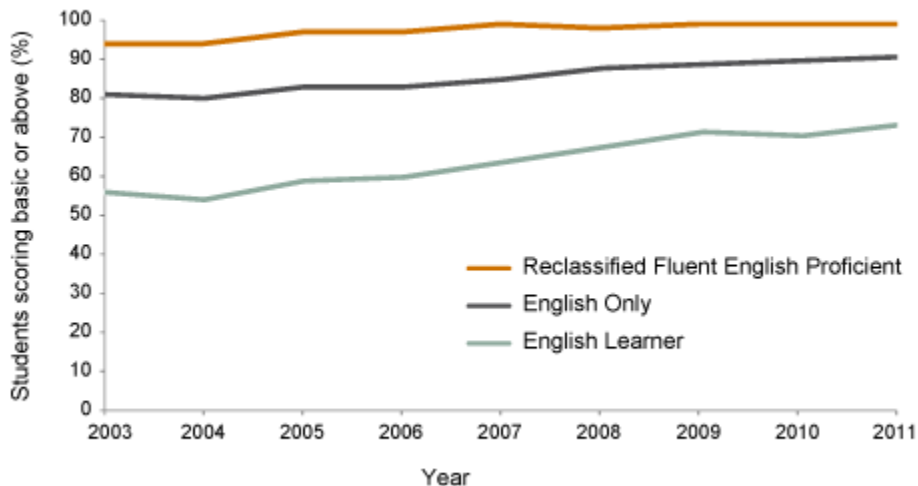


Figure 3: ELL Students are Less Likely to Score Basic and Above on California Standards Test. Adapted from Hill, L. (2012, September). California's English Learner Students. Retrieved April 5, 2017, from http://www.ppic.org/main/publication_quick.asp?i=1031.

This problem seems to be further compounded by the fact that local schools are highly segregated. Segregation itself is the first source of inequity because ELLs are attending classes and schools surrounded by other students who are acquiring English as well. This can inhibit an ELL's ability to acquire the language because it has been said that ELLs and their English only peers do not have the opportunity to interact in the classroom which can be helpful in the acquisition of a second language (Hornberger, 1990; Wong Fillmore, 1991). Additionally, in a study conducted in California found that the rates of reading development was lowered due to the higher concentrations of ELLs in schools (Rumberger & Arellano, 2003). ELLs academic

success is also affected by segregation because they are less likely to be surrounded by peers who perform well in school. There has been research conducted that shows the benefit of putting students who are academically successful with their peers because they learn from each other and influence each others to attain academic success (Epstein & Karweit, 1983; Hanushek, Kain, Markman, & Rivkin, 2001; Mounts & Steinberg, 1995). Due to California's high concentration of ELLs in schools and classrooms, it makes it difficult for these students to acquire the english language as well as achieve success in the classroom. This issue of social segregation reduces ELLs opportunities to interact with their English only peers and places them at a higher risk of failing academically (Harklau, 1994; Olsen, 2008). Being immersed within the language throughout the school day would increase the ELLs ability to acquire the language, and would benefit them both socially and academically.

Teachers and Their Effectiveness

Because of the increase of ELL students in the United States, the chances of having an ELL student in the classroom is high. ELL students are first classified when the child is registered for school for the first time. The parent or guardian will indicate whether or not the child uses a different language in the home and when this is true, the students will be identified as learning the English language. The instruction for ELLs in the classroom varies depending upon the school district and the county office's expectations on how to educate ELLs. Variations of the instruction could be where all ELL students receive bilingual/dual-language instruction, structured or sheltered English immersion, or the ELL student will be mainstreamed into the general education classroom where the content instruction is supported by an ESL teacher working with individual students (Samson & Collins, 2012). Teachers with ELL students must understand the importance of language development, and use best practices while supporting the

needs of these students (Samson & Collins, 2012). Unfortunately, in addition to segregation, there are few experienced teachers that are qualified to teach ELL students.

While research indicates that teachers need to modify instruction for ELLs, many teachers do not receive the training necessary to educate ELLs. Arizona, California, Florida, and New York, required that all prospective teachers have the competency in teaching ELLs (Ballantyne, Sanderman, Levy, 2008). Out of the 70% of teachers who taught at an elementary school or in core subjects like English and math at the secondary level, only 12% participated in more than 24 hours of professional development over that school year (Department of Education, 2011).

Farbman (2016) argues that the best way to serve ELLs in school is to ensure teachers employ practices that differentiate the instruction to meet the needs of any student. The National Literacy Panel on Literacy Minority Children and Youth (2008) concluded that programs that are the most effective promoting achievement among ELL students are programs that are effective with every student. Effective classroom practices incorporates a structured classroom that maximizes time on task, and focuses the attention of the students on what they should be learning; continuously increasing the rigor of the content, making relevant and challenging; valuing the student's voice and encouraging student individuality, and making them accountable for their own learning (Farbman, 2016). With the addition of these practices in the classroom, ELL students are more likely to demonstrate academic success (Farbman, 2016).

Improving and Expanding Time in School

The great irony is that our nation's public school system has, by its rigid adherence to the conventional calendar of 180 six-and-a-half-hour days for roughly 100

years, essentially disregarded the fundamental connection between time and learning.
(Farbman, 2016, p.1).

One of the most unconsidered things in education is time. Any student, whether s/he be an EO student or an ELL student, cannot succeed academically without dedicating a certain amount of time to obtain and practice the skills necessary to understand and use the content. Once the content is understood, that knowledge is used to achieve specific goals. The school calendar is very similar to how it look over a century ago, yet the expectations for how schools prepare the next generation of American citizens has risen. While the policies and practices of the education system have not been updated to meet these expectations, learning time needs to be considered when meeting the demands for the next generations (Farbman, 2016).

According to the National Education Commission on Time and Learning (1994), to expect students to be capable of a higher learning, there needs to be additional time given to students to understand the content and develop the skills needed to be successful. Farbman (2016) states, that adding time to the school day can have a favorable impact not just on a student's mastery of the content, but their entire educational experience. This is especially consequential for ELL students, who are already at a disadvantage from their English only peers because of their limited knowledge of the language, and have fewer opportunities outside of school for learning (Farbman, 2016). For ELL students, more time in school could be a path to equity. Expanding the school day, if planned and implemented well, can provide three interdependent benefits to both students and teachers: 1) increased engagement in academic classes, allowing for a deeper understanding of curriculum, as well as individualized learning support; 2) dedicated time for teacher collaboration and embedded professional development that enable educators to strengthen instruction and develop a shared commitment to upholding high expectations; and 3)

more time devoted to enrichment classes and activities that expand students' educational experiences and boost engagement in school (Farbman, 2016).

Mitchell (2015) identified four best practices from three different school that expanded the school day to provide extra support for ELLs. First, schools increased literacy blocks to 2 and a half hours a day to focus on writing and reading comprehension (Mitchell, 2015). Second, data was used to determine areas where students struggle, then the students were divided into small groups so that the teachers could better address the issues the students had (Mitchell, 2015). Next, for fluent-speaking ELL students who were in need of advancing their academic English skills, the three schools maintained support and services (Mitchell, 2015). Lastly, teachers collaborated often align their lesson plans and to identify ways to address the needs of their ELL students (Mitchell, 2015). Increasing time within the school day could be both beneficial to ELL students as well as their English only peers.

After School Program Alternatives

To have an effective afterschool program, students need to be provided various activities that are engaging and build self-confidence, while still reinforcing what was learned during the school-day (DYCD, 2014). After school programs can also help struggling ELL students by providing one-on-one instruction in the areas of most need; reinforcing the school day instruction through a tutorial process; and finally practicing newly learned skills in a supportive setting. The setting becomes a safe place for ELLs to study, explore the arts, and to socialize by establishing relationships with both teachers and peers. In recent years, after-school programs are designed to accommodate both social and emotional development, as well as academic achievement (DCYD, 2014). According to Durlak and Weisberg (2011), after-school programs that are well designed,

and offer both social and emotional learning components can increase academic success. This can be achieved by focusing attention on time and skill development, establishing explicit instruction of course materials, and well planned activities (Durlak & Weisberg, 2011).

After School programs see the most success when offer homework support or tutorials, which are structured to correspond to the school curriculum; employ teachers who come from the same cultural backgrounds, and share the language with the students; and include parents of the ELL students or their family members into the program (Huang & Cho, 2009; Wong, 2010; Rodriguez-Valls, 2011). These features must be designed to improve the acquisition of the English language for ELL students. This can be achieved by directly tying the students cultural backgrounds and interest to intrinsically motivate to ELL students to learn (Weisburd, 2008; Wong, 2010; Rodriguez-Valls, 2011). After School programs can help ELL students keep up with the school curriculum while still acquiring the English language; this reduces the achievement gap between ELLs and their English only peers (Litke, 2009). Litke (2009) conducted a survey and interviewed ELL students who attended after school programs and found that the students valued having the extra time after school to complete homework assignments, work with teachers on a one-on-one basis, and having a structured review of homework (tutorial).

Method

The English Language Learner (ELL) student population, due to language acquisition needs, have school schedules inundated with English Development and other English acquisition classes. This leads to the elimination of elective courses, and in some cases the removal of courses like Science and Social Studies from their school schedules. This Capstone Project will

investigate how Wakefield Middle School in the Salta Union High School District, is taking an unique approach to providing these students with enrichment courses, and taking steps to help this population of student to achieve academic success.

Context

Salta, California also known as "The Salad Bowl of the World," is known for its fresh produce, and it is renowned for its flowers and vineyards. In recent years, the region has emerged as a world hub of agricultural technology, or agtech. The population of Salta as of 2016 was 161,042 people within the city limits, with 64.14% of the population being Hispanic, and 45.3% White (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). According to the Department of Commerce (2010), the most common jobs in Salta, California by number of employees, are farming, fishing and forestry with administration; and sales.

From the outside of the building, Wakefield Middle School is quite large, spanning what looks to be a football field length. The building is long white rectangular shape, with many windows. When entering through the double doors of the entrance of Wakefield Middle School, you are greeted by an older man who is manning the desk; directing parents to either the attendance or the main office. While walking down the halls, you can't help but notice how the wooden floors shine like brand new pennies, and gleam like glass; sounds of children talking, and laughing within the classrooms fill the air from the open doors. Despite the school's age, the walls are newly painted, enhancing the nostalgia of its years.

Similar to the city's current demographics, Wakefield Middle School serves a student population that is 84% Hispanic, 9.6% White, and the last 6.4% is divided into other categories, including Filipino, African American, Pacific Islander, Asian, and American Indian. According to Wakefield Middle School's 2014-2015 School Accountability Report Card (SARC) the

current ELL population at this school is 24.2%, with Spanish being the primary home language (SARC, 2016).

Participants and Participant Selection

Participants in the study include Wakefield Middle School Principal, Anthony Harris, and his EL Specialists, April Baxter. Four randomly selected ELL students were also asked to participate in the study. The Principal and EL Specialist were invited to participate because of their knowledge about the ELL students, and their understanding of the academic needs of ELL students. Also, both are responsible for the establishment of an After-School Enrichment Program at Wakefield Middle School, that was created to encourage ELL students' academic success. This information was used to determine the challenges that ELLs faced when it comes to English language acquisition. Extensive interviews were conducted with WMS administration, teachers and four ELL students that attended the after-school program.

Mr. Harris has been the Principal of Wakefield Middle School for two years. Before his appointment to principal, he was an Assistant Principal at Evergreen High School. Prior to his appointment to administration, Mr. Harris served as an Instructional Coach, History and AVID teacher at Salta High School for four years. Previously, Mr. Harris worked as a History Teacher at a high school in Southern California, for five years. He currently holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from California State University San Bernardino, and a Master's degree in Education from Brandman University. He holds both a teaching credential, as well as an Administration credential, both valid in the state of California.

Ms. Baxter is the EL Specialist at Wakefield Middle School. Her job is to provide leadership, offering professional development, and facilitating communication to develop partnerships with other schools within the district. She is responsible for problem solving, and the development of strategies that involve both administration and the teaching staff at her school, to impact the success of ELL students. Ms. Baxter has been with the Salta Union High School District for 15 years, serving as a middle school English teacher, as well as an Instructional Coach and EL Specialist. She has been the EL specialist at Wakefield Middle School for 4 years, and she oversees the English Learner programs at the school, as well as offers support for teachers who teach and serve ELL students.

Adrian Sanchez is a thirteen-year-old eighth grader from WMS. He is an ELL student, and his primary language in the home is Spanish. Adrian, his parents and siblings are immigrants. I met Adrian in the Basic Guitar class, where he was learning how to play the guitar. I could see from his abilities with the guitar that Adrian was not a beginner, he was a novice, and could play everything the teacher was asking the students to play. He was a little nervous and shy when the interview began, but he fully comprehended and answered all of the questions I asked of him.

Jackie Perez is a thirteen-year-old female, and an 8th grade student at WMS. Jackie is an immigrant to this country, and has been here since she was 9 years old. When she arrived in America, she did not speak English at all. Since arriving, Jackie has had the opportunity to go to school, and she has developed the language gradually. Jackie stated that “I learn in class how to speak English, but I watch a lot of TV too, so it helps” (Jackie, personal communication, March 13, 2017). Unlike the other participant students interviewed, Jackie was extremely talkative, and she was excited to talk about the program.

Susan Lopez is a twelve-year-old female, and a seventh grader at WMS. Susan is an ELL student, and is a newcomer to the United States. She would be considered a level one beginner, due to her score on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT). Susan knows very little English, and it is difficult to communicate with her without a Spanish interpreter. Susan is very timid, and was afraid to speak about certain topics, due to her immigration status. Because of her limited knowledge of the English language, Susan's school schedule is integrated with multiple English classes, and she does not have elective courses and classes like Social Studies and Science. Susan attends tutorial 3 days a week during the After-School Enrichment program at WMS, and one day at an elective of her choice.

Researcher

I was fortunate enough to do my service learning at a local middle school, Wakefield Middle School, in Salta, California. While doing my service learning in an AVID class, I stumbled upon a program offered after school. This program was an After School Enrichment program offered to ELL students. I was interested in what "Enrichment" was, and why the program was offered to these students. Because the Principal of Wakefield Middle School is my husband, I was able to attend one of the after school classes; basic guitar. After attending the music class, I questioned my husband on why classes like this one existed. He explained that because an ELL student's school schedules are often inundated with English development classes, they are not given the opportunity to take electives, and in some extreme cases, they are excluded from Science and Social Studies classes as well. While I was impressed with how my husband established a program to meet the academic needs of his ELL student population, as a future educator, I was dismayed by the ELL students unequal access to education. Like my

husband, I believe that all children should have equal access to education, and this should be done during the school day. I believe that every child can be successful in school, if the school provides equitable education. With our current social environment, an equitable education is an important subject, and I believe that ELL students will achieve academic success through enrichment education.

Semi-Structured Interview and Survey Questions

Questions for Principal of Wakefield Middle School

- What types of services does your school offer your English Language Learner student population?
- What does a typical day at school look like for an ELL student on your campus?
- Does your ELL students have access to elective classes during the regular school day?
- Do any of your ELL population lose access to Social Studies and/or Science classes due to English Language Development classes?
- Do you have after-school program for your ELL population at your school? If yes, what does the program offer? Do you feel that it is a successful program, why or why not?
- If you answered yes to the previous question, how many ELL students participate in the program? Is there a referral process to go to the program and is there a cost to the student's family for attendance?

Questions for EL Specialist

- What do you do at Wakefield Middle School? How long?
- What does your school do to improve the academic performance of English Learners?
- What is the After School Enrichment Program?

- What is the reasoning behind the program? What are you trying to accomplish?
- Do you feel the program has been successful? Why or why not?

Questions for Students

- What is your name? And how old are you?
- What grade are you in at Wakefield Middle School?
- What classes do you take during the school day? Do you have electives? Do you have Social Studies and Science?
- How many of your classes are English Development classes?
- How long have you been coming to the after-school program?
- Do you feel that you have benefited from coming to this program?
- What class do you like the best?

Procedure

There was a less than minimal risk associated with participation in this study. The possible risk was that answers to the questions may show that the After-School Program was not beneficial to EL student's academic needs. All volunteer participants had the choice whether to participate in this research project. Each participant was told that if they felt uncomfortable with any of the questions, they did not have to answer. The interview with the Principal was conducted in his office on multiple occasions. The interview with the EL Specialist was conducted in her classroom, and a Google form was sent by Gmail, where she could write her responses as well. In all four of the interviews with the students, the students were assured of their anonymity, and that the information they were providing will only be used for the purpose of research. All the student interviews took place in a classroom, where the participant was made

comfortable, where there was no interruptions and distractions to the participant.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed for emergent themes.

Description and Justification of Action

Identification & Evaluation of Action Options

Meeting the diverse needs of English Language Learner (ELL) students can be challenging for schools, particularly those with limited resources. In America, schools are responsible for meeting the educational needs of their ELL student populations. Based on interviews with stakeholders at a middle school with an innovative way of providing enrichment opportunities for ELL students, several themes emerged that provided insight on how to further improve opportunities and access. The first option would be the support for an expanded school day, to allow for the addition of electives and other core classes that are denied ELL students. Option 2 is to provide teachers with professional development to teach English across the curriculum. Finally, option 3 is to address the needs of ELL students by developing a stronger After-School program.

Option 1: Support for expanded school day, to enables schools to allocate adequate time for electives and other courses for ELL students.

The Principal and the EL specialist both agreed that increasing time during the school to accommodate an extra period of school, would be beneficial to ELL students' education. For example, most of the students I interviewed enjoyed the afterschool program, because of the

opportunity to take elective courses. Jackie stated that “being in the program, my grades are going up and I get to take guitar class” (Jackie, personal communication, March 13, 2017). With additional time and class periods, these students would benefit not only from the opportunity to take elective courses, this would also create the opportunity for ELL students to interact with their English only peers. A consistent point, made by Mr. Harris and Ms. Baxter is that an additional period and or time at school could be leveraged in ways to provide students with a more rigorous and well-rounded education. Ms. Baxter stated that ELL students need the additional time and support to develop their language acquisition, and an expanded schedule can open opportunities to essential learning.

While both Mr. Harris and Ms. Baxter believe that with an increased workday teachers will have more time for collaboration and professional development, both also stated that most teachers would not agree to the additional time. Mr Harris also explained that the cost for expanding school period schedules could be funded with federal funding; such as Title I allocations, School Improvement Grants, local, district and state funding, but the district allocates the funding to each school. The burden to hire more teachers to accommodate the expanded school day would fall to the district.

Option 2: Provide professional development, so teachers can teach English across the curriculum.

Mr. Harris was adamant about teaching language across the curriculum and eliminating the need for separate English Language Development classes. He spoke about how ELL students are often segregated from their EO peers, because of the state’s directive of a designated period of English, as well as an integrated class for the acquisition of the English Language. Wells and Crain (1994) stated that students who are segregated in school tend to have less of a chance to

achieve success in the classroom. Due to the social segregated that ELLs endure in school, because of their need to be in multiple English language development classes, one way to assist in the introduction of language is to teach English across the curriculum. This means that explicit instruction of language would be used in not only English courses, but other courses such as Math, Science and Social Studies. The incorporation of language would eliminate the need for additional classes for English Development, thus integrating ELL students into the classrooms with their EO peers. This would immerse the student in the language, helping them to acquire the language quicker.

Farbman (2016) explains that for most school districts, professional development funding is provided for district-wide or outside workshops that do not always coordinate with the instructional priorities of individual schools or students. Mr. Harris and Ms. Baxter explained more professional development opportunities can align educators on how to use English across the curriculum. Currently, Salta Union High School District, provides their teachers with professional development, but Ms. Baxter believes that “more is needed to help teachers understand the importance of teaching to the needs of ELL students (Baxter, Personal Communication, March 30, 2017).”

Option 3: Continue to Develop a Stronger After School Program

The program at WMS works well for their ELL and both the Ms. Baxter and Mr. Harris have seen the success of their students. Ms. Baxter stated, “Our EL's love the program, and many work harder to access the full elective schedule” (Baxter, Personal Communication, March 30, 2017). Without the ability to increase the school day, or change the bell schedule, the After School program is an excellent alternative, to help ELL students to achieve their goals. Mr.

Harris explained that how he and Ms. Baxter saw that his ELL student population were not achieving academic success. Their reasoning for the program was because ELL students actually lose the opportunity to take an elective course and the After School program was a way of giving them a course that they are interested in and enjoy. Ms. Baxter stressed how the program structured academic talk into each of the elective options, giving ELL students additional opportunities to learn their English. ELL students also have an incentive to participate in academic support, because they know they can do the fun classes if they are on track and doing well. Ms. Baxter stated,

“ We do a lot of goal setting with the kids as well. We talk to them about college and careers. We have taken them to 4 different field trips to universities this year. The purpose is help them academically, but also give them a connection to school” (Baxter, Personal Communication, March 30, 2017).

To improve the After-School program, Mr. Harris had decided to open the program next year to English only students as well. The reason for this is because he believes the best way to help ELL acquire the language is by immersion. According to August and Hakuta (1997), ELL students will acquire the language because their English only peers will be role models of the expected language in both a social and academic setting. Jackie stated that “being in the program, my grades are going up” (Jackie, personal communication, March 13, 2017). When asked about how she was doing before attending the after-school program, and she said she was embarrassed of her grades, but Ms. Baxter helps her to learn English. Jackie continued to explain how she loved coming to class, especially on Mondays, because she is learning to play the guitar. When asked if that fuels her to do better in class, Jackie stated “yeah...” (Jackie, Personal Communication, March 13, 2017).

Evaluation of Action Options:

Options	Cost/Budget	Access for ELL students	Reasonableness
Option 1- Expanded school day	*	***	*
Option 2- Provide professional development to teach English across the curriculum	***	*	**
Option 3- Further development of After-School program	***	**	***
More * equals greater advantage.			

When it comes to the educational needs of ELL students, each option has pros and cons. In option 1, increasing the school day would be an excellent way to accommodate the academic needs of ELL students, by providing the students with an extra period to meet their english acquisition needs, but still allow them access to elective classes. On the other hand, this option is

not cost effective, and it would be costly for districts to implement. When it comes to the reasonableness of this option, it is not reasonable as an immediate solution. There would need to be negotiations with teacher's unions to increase the school day, and the district would need to hire more teachers to accommodate for the extra time at school. As we know hiring more teachers is a difficult task, due to current shortages in the profession.

In option 2, providing professional development and teaching English across the curriculum would be beneficial to ELL students, because they would be immersed in the language by attending classes with their English only peers. ELLs would still have their English development classes required by the state, but they would be exposed to English throughout the school day. Cost for this option is not an issue, due to schools receiving funding for professional development. Reasonableness is where we see the issues with this option. With teachers there is a learning and doing gap within the profession. In some districts, teachers are provided professional development, but not all of them utilize the knowledge given during the classes and this can create issues within the classroom.

Lastly, option 3 is to further develop and After-School program. This option is the best overall, because it is cost efficient, it is reasonable, and easy access for ELL students. The issues with this option is that despite the good that it does for ELL students, they are still segregated from their English only peers. Also, not all the ELL students participate in the program, even though the program is available for all ELLs. While this option is reasonable, it does not provide ELL students with equal access to education, because they still have to attend classes after school.

Recommendation

After extensive interviews with administration, teachers, and ELL students, I believe the

best way to serve the ELL student population would be to increase the school day. By increasing the time in the school day, the ability to take electives, Science and Social Studies classes would be more accessible. Currently, the guidance from the state is that ELLs must have a period for designated English learning, which inhibits the ability to provide elective within the regular school day. Farbman (2016) suggests that expanded the school day will benefit ELL students' educational experiences and boost engagement in school. Mr. Harris suggested a block schedule that incorporates eight school periods, but the students would attend class 4 periods each day. This would benefit ELL students because they will have the option of having an elective and the two general education classes. This would still give the ELL student time for the state required English language development class as well.

To advocate this idea of an extended school day, I attended a site council meeting at WMS. I spoke to staff, council members, and ELL parents in the hopes of bringing awareness of ELL education. I showed the parents school schedules of ELL students and compared it to those of regular students. I wanted the parents to understand the inequality of the education being received by ELL students. I promoted advocacy of the extended school day, and asked parents to go to the school district, or the school board to ask for a change in the school schedule. While this option is not the easiest to implement, I still believe that it is the best option for ELL students.

Option 2 and 3 are both valuable options, and I believe that option 3 is the most reasonable of the three options, because it is already in use at WMS, but it can be approved upon. Option 2 is already in use within the district, but the option comes with issues with learning and doing gap. Option 1 is not reasonable when it comes to how many different actions that would be required of the school and district to incorporate an extended school day. While I believe this

would be the best option, there would still need to be extensive work done to accommodate for ELL education.

Conclusion

Ultimately, ELL students should not lose out on valuable enrichment because of their status as English Learners. The challenge is that ELL students have to socialize and attend school in a language foreign to them, but at the same time, acquire that language. By narrowing the curriculum, and socially segregating ELL students, the education system is not providing these students to equal access to education. As educators, we need to understand the importance of providing equitable solutions to help ELL students academically. With awareness, teachers can become advocates for serving ELL students by providing enrichment in their education.

Synthesis Integration
<p>When I began my educational journey at California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB), never did I imagine that I would be exposed to a vast array of information and lessons that would open my mind, and prepare me to become the type of educator I now believe I will be. In the short time that I have been at CSUMB, I have had the opportunity to learn about different practices in education dealing with environment, society, diversity, culture, and community. I have also had the unique opportunity to take three credentialing courses; these courses increased my knowledge of the conceptual perspective of education. CSUMB has prepared me for my future as a teacher because the school has succeeded in helping me achieve its Main Learning Outcomes (MLO) which will, in turn, make me a well informed and well prepared professional educator.</p>
<p>The first learning outcome is the student is required to be able to understand and to think</p>

critically about ideals on educational foundations. This is acquired by gaining knowledge about pedagogical practices, and how they relate to your students. In my LS 277 class, I was introduced to some of the main concepts of education, and this class helped me to establish how and why I want to become a teacher. One assignment that challenged my views on education was the lesson on education in socio-economic disadvantaged areas, and damage done when teachers don't adjust the curriculum to meet the needs of the student. During the week, the professor had us read our assigned reading from the book *To Teach*, by William Ayers, and write a reflection on the chapter. On the second day, the professor showed us a film about the La Raza program in Tucson, Arizona called *Precious Knowledge*. The story opened my eyes to how teaching can transform students, and how the teacher I was working with was making a huge impact on her students, because she was being a culturally responsive teacher. The teachers in the film developed a curriculum that meet the needs of the student, and established lessons that focused the students on creating a healthy self-image. The students became more involved with their education, and developed a sense of that helped students were already at a disadvantage, but helped to elevate their student's self-esteem. This lesson resonated with me because I was doing my service learning in a classroom where my service learning teacher was using strategies that were similar to the Tucson teachers. I was so impressed by my service learning teacher's pedagogy in the classroom, I wanted to learn more about the being a culturally responsive teacher. Since LS 277, this idea of being a culturally responsive teacher has driven me in my studies in my other classes.

My education at CSUMB has provided me an opportunity for intrinsic growth. An integral part of my intrinsic growth is partly due to the service learning portion of several LS and ED classes. When I went into the classroom, I didn't think of service learning as volunteer work.

I didn't go into the classrooms because it was a requirement of the class to complete for a grade. Instead, I took the opportunity to see service learning as an experience to interact and create connections with not only the students but the teachers and the schools. I was fortunate enough to work with teachers that combined traditional aspects of teaching to new and creative educational practices. In each of these classrooms, the teachers shared three essential principles.

First, each teacher understood what learning is and how to build bridges with their students to construct knowledge. They built bridges with their students by getting to know their students in and out of the classroom, and respecting the diversity in the classroom. Second, each teacher had a proactive classroom environment that promoted their student's learning in a healthy and safe environment. Each of these teachers had set routines, engaging lessons, and disciplinary strategies that taught students the importance of self-control. Finally, each teacher had an inviting classroom environment that was inclusive and showed respect for the individual. This environment promoted learning for all things and all people. These principals coincided with Main Learning Outcome 2, because these service learning classes applied diversity and multicultural practices and policies to influence the student's education.

Teaching and Learning ED 611, was one of the credentialing courses that I completed in my undergraduate education. This class focused on public schools by examining the connection between human development learning strategies, cultural context, and the psychological principles underlying culturally relevant pedagogy. This class pushed me deeper into social justice aspect of education, and I applied my conceptual thinking to the subject I explored through my educational experiences. I created a social justice lesson plan that I designed for the 1st grade classroom in which I was doing my service learning. The lesson was about teaching young children about discrimination and privilege using the story *The Sneetches*, by Dr. Seuss.

The professor was instrumental in helping me to see my potential and helping me to learn the skills necessary to become a teacher. She helped us to create lessons by modeling the expected behavior, and showing us how to craft the lesson to the needs of the students. Because of her exceptional teaching strategies, I created a lesson that was engaging and memorable. The students from my service learning classroom really enjoyed the lesson, and the students helped to create a list to make social change. The students wrote down ways to stop discrimination from happening at school and in their communities. This class in addition to my other Liberal Studies classes, tied everything together for me, and gave me the inspiration to research English Language learner education.

Each course at CSUMB was designed to provide the prospective school teacher with foundations of educational experiences that are useful for teaching and essential practices of instructional planning. My classes included principles of teaching, learning and assessment; curriculum and curriculum theory; instructional planning, and child development. In my time, here, I was able to learn to create an inclusive environment for my future students, and to develop a pedagogy that is culturally relevant to all of my students. I feel that my educational experiences at CSUMB have prepared me for my future as an educator.

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