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# Let's Talk: Increasing Communication in the Dual-Immersion Setting

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Let's Talk: Increasing Communication in the Dual-Immersion Setting

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**Abstract**

In 2016, California passed Proposition 58, which repealed Proposition 227. The latter

proposition, passed in 1998, prohibited the use of non- English instruction in public

schools across California. Since then, bilingual education programs such as dual-

immersion, or two-way immersion programs have seen a rise in enrollment. Due to its

novelty, parental involvement is crucial for the success of the program. This Capstone

project focuses on understanding the obstacles that parents of second language learner

students, specifically those in dual-immersion programs face when it comes to their

involvement. Several factors such as language barriers, parent/teacher

misunderstanding, and time restraints, can impact  the level of involvement from

parents. The primary stakeholder perspectives obtained were two teachers and an

administrator, due to their direct experiences with the focus issue. Based on an analysis

of the data, three action options emerged as possible ways to build relationships and

promote the involvement of dual-immersion parents.

Let's Talk: Increasing Communication with Dual-Immersion Parents

Many children are not as fortunate as I was in elementary school, because they did not have their parents involved. Thankfully, I was fortunate to have my mother involved in my schooling. In elementary was when I noticed my mother was involved because my first language was Spanish, not English. So, I was placed in different programs as I was growing up. Each time that I was placed in the group that was all Spanish I understood too much. The teacher then placed me the English group, which caused me to panic and feel uncomfortable during my time at school. I cried and did not want to go to school. I felt scared and alone when I was placed in the English group, because I did not know how to speak it or understand it. It was a horrible experience because the teachers said, "I knew too much Spanish to be in an only Spanish class but I did not understand nor speak English to be in that group." This meant when testing in Spanish, my scores were above average, but in English test scores were below basic. My mother was aware of this and disliked how the teachers would just move me around as they pleased, not even carrying how that made me feel. That all changed the day I cried to my mother and refused to go back to first grade.

My mother thought a classmate was picking on me or was hurting me at school, because I was nervous and scared to go to school. My mother decided to take a day from work, even though, that would set us back financially. That did not bother her; my well-being was more important to her that day. My mother went to the main office to talk to the principal and asked if she could talk to my teacher and the principal said, "of course just to sign in and go to my classroom." My mother was holding my hand while we both entered the classroom. I can remember, my mother speaking to the teacher in her broken English. "Mmmmmm. Can I speak to you?" my mother said to the teacher.

That day my mother told the teacher that she did not want me in the English group

because that caused a lot of stress and it was hard for me to finish my homework. I was

not getting the lessons that were being taught and turning my homework was a

challenge. My mother told her that math was no issue for me, because she was able to

understand it and explain it to me. The issue was the sentences and the reading that

was given to me. The teacher insisted that it was the best thing to do because I knew

too much Spanish and was scoring too high for them to keep me in that group. My

mother did not care if I was scoring higher. My mother was not okay that my

psychological well-being was being tormented. So, the teacher let me stay in the

Spanish group the rest of the year and that allowed me to understand my native

language more and I was able to grow as a student at my own pace. That experience

allowed me to feel confident and try to learn the new language that was being forced on

me at that time.

  The Spanish program that I was placed in first grade helped me in various ways,

like being able to communicate with my mother in Spanish and also being able to

translate for some teachers who needed help. My mother used me as her translator

during my schooling years since she was very involved. Furthermore, even though she

did not know English very well, she was still involved in my school activities with school

meetings, field trips, homework, and in class assignments. By having my mother use

me has her translator she was able to communicate with my teachers throughout

elementary school and be the parent who was involved.

  Not every teacher has the same way of communicating with the students'

parents. Some of my teachers had a good way of communicating with students'

parents; for example, one of my teachers would leave a green (meant there was no concern at that time) or red paper (meant the teacher had to speak to my mother about an issue or various issues) inside my homework folder. Another good idea that a different teacher had was a composition book that allowed my mother to write notes or any concerns she had and the teacher would write back. This way of communication was good because it kept track of the exact day of the event and it was easier to track than the green and red papers. When you have a mother that is involved in your schooling, it is a blessing. I was confident during my elementary years because I had my mother's support and this motivated me to do well and get good grades. My achievements were not left unnoticed and I was awarded certificates and it was my time to show them off to my family.

There are times when parents are not as involved as my mother was and this affects those students in a negative way. Some parents were not able to have good communication with their children's teacher because they did not want to. The parents had various reasons why they could not be there for their children.  Some could not attend or meet the teachers because they were the main source of income and had to stay long hours at work in order to make ends meet. Some parents are not able to meet their children's teachers because they are ashamed to meet someone who has a higher education than they do. This is why some parents skip collaborating with their children's teachers. Even though, my mother was embarrassed to speak to my teachers with her broken English; she understood the only way to keep me on a good path to success was to be involved in my schooling regardless of her not being able to speak the language. The reason why my mother felt okay to speak up and be heard was because

mostly all of my teachers made her feel welcomed and heard. The acceptance, my

mother felt with some of my teachers allowed my mother to be involved. Without this,

perhaps my mother would have not been involved in my schooling and it would have

affected me in a negative. Parent involvement is key to a child's success and motivation

to keep pursuing their schooling. That is why I am very grateful for my mother's

involvement in my education because now I will be first generation to graduate at a

university level. That is why parent involvement is important to me.

Children are developing unusual habits that are not fitting the norms of life which is alarming and needs to be addressed on time. For example, some children; for example: join gangs, have behavior problems, poor achievement, drop out out of school, to name a few. Their behavior is not being addressed which can be seen as an issue, but what can be done to fix this issue? Finding the factors that are causing these unusual characteristics in a child can start off at home. Domina (2005) found that parent involvement activities like homework help and school volunteering predicted lower levels of future behavior problems for elementary school children, relative to parents who did not engage in these activities. Some children will begin to have bad habits if their parents are not involved in their schooling or if the parent is not present while the child is doing their homework. When the child's parents are engaged with his/her activities, the child will have a better and promising future. Research done by Kohl, Lengua, McMahon, & CPPRG (2000) has proven when parents are involved, a child will have a more positive behavior, higher achievement, and better social skills than if the parent is not involved.

**What is the problem?**

Parent involvement, both within the classroom and outside, has diminished in regular schools and also in Second Language Learner (Dual Immersion) schools once Proposition 227 came into effect. This Proposition 227 mandated California public schools to teach Limited English Proficient (LEP) students in special classes that are taught nearly all in English. This provision had the effect of eliminating "bilingual" classes in most cases and also shortening the time most LEP students stayed in special classes, but Proposition 58 repealed bilingual education restrictions enacted by

Proposition 227 in 1998 (Ee, 2017). Due to the previous proposition many parents did not feel comfortable being involved in their children's education because they did not feel welcomed. Each children deserves parent involvement and not only is one specific group affected, but children of all races are affected by this issue. A child's well-being should be a priority in school and at home. If a child is not receiving parent involvement the child will act out and do things that will affect him/her in the long run. According to Epstein (2004), parent involvement is crucial in a child's development, so schools should build a connection between the school, home and the community. There are six types of involvement that can be built: parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaboration with the community (Epstein, 2002). When teachers use all six types of involvement they will be able to improve the students' success in school and allow them to build up their confidence.

Dual Immersion parents have less chance of being involved in their child's education than a Caucasian parent due to the fact that a parent with low resources or education will not have access to information that can benefit them and their child. According to Delgado-Gaitan (2004), Caucasian parents of higher social and economic backgrounds participate regularly in the schools due to familiarity with the school system unlike Latino parents. Since Latino parents and California schools often define parental involvement differently, there appears to be a great difference between Caucasian and Latino parental involvement in schools which is alarming because this causes various issues. Some of the issue include students' success, well-being and their behaviors inside and outside of the classroom. That is why parent involvement is as crucial as a child develops and is attending school. As Epstein and Rodriguez-

Jansorn (2004) stated, students who succeeded in school were almost always supported by their families and the students who had no support usually struggled in their schooling. Parent involvement can be done in various ways but the teacher needs to educate the parent in order to build a strong bond together.

**Why is it an issue?**

Past research on parent involvement has identified a generally positive association between parents' engagement in their children's education and students' outcomes (Fan & Chen, 2001; Hill & Tyson, 2009). Parent involvement in a children's education is crucial and the parent's income or their background should not be an issue when it comes to what is best for the student. The students who do not have parent involvement have a higher chance of becoming emotionally distressed, consider or attempt suicide at one point in their life, have unhealthy eating habits, or feel no connection to school.

Parent involvement has diminished as a child begins to grow up. Usually parents are more involved during elementary but begin to decline as the students enter middle school. It is said by studies that parent involvement benefits a child but why does it declines as children complete elementary school (Zill & Nord, 1994; Epstein, 1990). There are various reasons why parents do not participate in their child's school, which include not understanding nontraditional families that are affected by various facts; for instance, time shortage due to working parents, divorced parents, unexpected deaths in the family, homelessness, financial issues, etc. The families could be ashamed and even embarrassed to attend school events because the parents could believe the school will not accept them how they are.

Many schools should and must try to understand that not every family is the same and not everyone is able to participate in the same ways. For example, some parents work long hours, do not have transportation, are single parents, and there are many other reasons why some parents have different ways of showing their involvement. Each family is different and some work long hours and that does not mean the parent is neglecting their responsibilities. Perhaps they do not have the resources needed to make the time or even know how to help their child in school. That is when the parent might feel unappreciated or unwanted with the help they could give. The parent needs to feel welcomed and if the teacher does not encourage a welcoming approach it can break the connection the parent will have with the educator.

There are issues why parents will not participate in school involvement because the parents had their fair share of uncomfortable or negative events in their school experiences that caused them to have a bad idea of schools. Another reason can be they are just not aware of the culture of the school and they do not feel welcomed by the teacher or administration on site. Some parents might also feel the language (non-English speaking families) they are speaking will build a barrier between the teachers. Which brings the topic of the teacher not having adequate training or resources given to them to help parents communicate with them better.
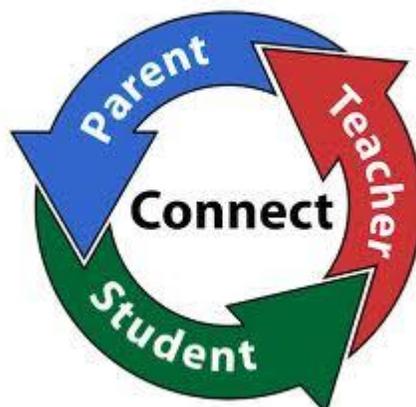
**What should be done?**



Figure 1: William Penn:Bakersfield City School District

**Homework Assignment:** Creating some homework assignments for the parents

and students to work together can be another way for parents to get involved. The

teacher can create a worksheet or have the students create a family tree that will allow

the student to learn about their upbringing. Allowing parents to put their input on a

homework assignment will allow children to boost their confidence and want their

classmates to learn about their history. With this simple assignment, a teacher and

parent can both see the student being successful with a blend of learning approach that

can be both used inside the classroom, as well as outside the classroom. The parents

will build a home environment that will promote their child's learning and reinforce what

the teacher is showing the student during school.

**Newsletter:** Parent involvement in Second Language Learning (Dual Immersion)

and in regular school classes can benefit from communication on a regular basis

because this makes a line of communication between the teacher and the parents

regarding their child's behavior (good or bad). Having the parents communicate with the

teacher allows the parents to get involved because the parents will want to know how

their child is doing throughout the day. The teacher can also create a newsletter once a month to inform the parent what is going to be done in the month; for instance, what the students will be working on and what materials will be needed or if the teacher needs a parent's help to tackle down a project that the students need to do. The newsletter should also include the contact information of the teacher and of the school just in case the parent needs a clarification.

**Parent Workshops and Meetings**

Educators need to provide parents with a welcoming and supportive school environment where they receive appropriate language support (Ee, 2017). Parents would be able to receive language support in workshops or classes that will help them acquire valuable knowledge. Each parent who participates in these workshops will interact with other parents. Interacting is beneficial because successful dual-immersion programs allow parents to be engaged with various types of networks, thus helping parents connect and create school communities, further increasing participation (Ee, 2017). In one of Maldonado-Higle (2014) studies provides parents of dual-immersion children with various opportunities to create networks with others through a series of workshops and social gatherings to support each other. Maldonado-Higle also equips the parents with research and strategies to help and support their children. Parents ask questions and get answers to concerns they have. Furthermore, with these workshops can have their voices heard since some parents are embarrassed to express themselves because some have a diverse background (culture is different from other parents).

**Decision Making:** There are many parents that want to get involved, but want to impact the decision making at the school. The parent wants to be heard on what policies they agree on or dislike and what practices can benefit the school. A good example of this is Parent Teacher Association (PTA) which facilitates parent participation in schools and also facilitate the school's needs. Not only do the schools provide PTA groups they also have committees, councils, and other teams that meet community needs and also school needs by having parents involved.

Parent Involvement is important as a child is growing up and should be taken into consideration during a child's development and until the child is in high school. Children need to feel accepted and wanted by parents, because it allows their child to develop their abilities to express themselves in a positive way and accomplish more than what is expected of them. This will allow children to be more positive with their health and what they accomplish during their schooling than those parents who are not involved in their child's education. The actions that are mentioned can provide an idea of what can be done to motivate teachers to keep parents involved, as well as engage them in activities with their children. As seen on Figure #1, the tripod (parent, schools, and communities) all need to collaborate in order to create the adequate environment that will promote a healthy development for future generations to come.

**Method**

For this capstone project, the researchers investigated how teachers viewed

parental involvement both within and out of the classroom setting, and what they

thought could be done to improve it. Based on an analysis of the data and the relevant

research literature, the researchers utilized the new knowledge to formulate an action

that responded to the focus issue in a way that inspired, informed, and involved

teachers and parents.

**Context**

The site was an elementary school in Sunny City,[1] Sunny City has a population of

155,000, with its population being predominantly Latino/ Hispanic (Data USA, 2017).

This was a school where the majority of its student population was also from a Latino/

Hispanic background (SARC, 2017). The school's name was West Sunny City

Elementary School, which served students from kindergarten to sixth grade. It was a

newer school, as it had been built in 2005, on the west side of Sunny City. As of Spring

2017, this school had an enrollment of 804 students (EdData, 2017). Of these students,

63 percent were second language learners, and 93 percent were considered

socioeconomically disadvantaged. The majority, 92.9 percent of the students were

Latino/ Hispanic. West Sunny City Elementary offered a dual- immersion program for

students in grades kindergarten through sixth. Due to its structure, the program had

parallel instruction in both English and in Spanish, which gave students the opportunity

to learn both languages. For those who need it, additional language support in English

is offered after school. In 2008, West Sunny City Elementary's dual-immersion program

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[1] Pseudonym was used in place of city name and school name.

won the School of Excellence Award through California Association for Bilingual

Education, CABE (Sunny City Elementary School District, 2016).

**Participants and Participant Selection**

   We invited three educators; a school administrator, classroom teacher, and college

professor, to participate in this study. This group of prospective participants were invited

to participate based on their experience, knowledge, and membership, which was

relevant to the focus issue. Among these three participants, two were male, and one

was female. All of the participants had a similar ethnicity and cultural background;

namely, all came from a Spanish speaking background.

        **Victor M**. A Latino/Hispanic male administrator of an elementary school in Sunny

City (Not Sunny City Elementary). He had been an administrator for three years, and

was an alumnus of CSUMB.

        **Claudia R.** A Latina/Hispanic female, and a second grade teacher at Sunny City

Elementary. She had been a teacher at this site for 10 years, and was an alumnus of

CSUMB.

        **Antonio G.**  A Latino/Hispanic college professor, who had a diverse background

in working with students of various grade levels.

**Researchers**

     Both researchers came together based on a common interest for finding

opportunities that allowed dual- immersion parents to become more active in the

education of their students. Their bilingual education backgrounds and experiences in

the school system were relevant to the focus issue, and allowed them to conduct this

study.

**Carmina T.** This concern was personally meaningful to me as I was a second language learner myself, and I recall the lack of involvement of my parents when it came to school related activities. I also had experience in working with students from second language backgrounds, and communicating with Spanish speaking families. My experiences both personally, and work related qualified me to carry out this project because I could relate with the students I worked with and I could communicate effectively with families when necessary. I thought that I would be different from the "informants" and "influentials" because not one second language learner student or family could relate to all of my experiences, but there would be some common ground. My experiences such as my educational level, and work experience stood out as differences between informants, influentials, and myself. Such differences could impact my perspectives and work on the concern because I might overlook, or dismiss certain details due to my knowledge and personal experiences.

**Iliana I.** This concern was significant to me because I was a also a second language learner. Contrary to some students, my mother was involved when it came to my schooling and extracurricular activities. My experiences in the workplace and in service learning, allowed me to notice that the parents of children who had second language backgrounds seemed less involved than parents in other demographic groups. My background and experiences in the workplace have qualified me to carry out this project. My partner and I collaborated to find ideas that could better promote the parental involvement of dual immersion parents. Both Carmina and myself, used our experiences to find some common ground. Our contributions led us to find ways to help

dual immersion parents be more involved in their children's education.

**Semi-Structured Interview and Survey Questions**

1. Tell me about parental involvement at your school.What do you see as the challenge with parental involvement from second language learner parents? What are you concerned about when it comes to the parental involvement of this specific group?

2. What is currently being done to raise the level of involvement from parents of second language learner students? By whom? and what do you think of these efforts? Why?

3. What do you think should be done to improve the parental involvement of parents of second language learners in school related activities? What are some possible methods to improve the involvement of parents in activities both within and outside the classroom?

4. What do you think are the obstacles/drawbacks/disadvantages to seeking more involvement from parents?

5. Is there anything else that you would like to say about the parental involvement of parents of second language learners in your classroom?

**Procedure**

Researchers communicated through email with potential participants. Once the participants agreed to be part of this project, the participants were interviewed. All interviews were done individually. When it was not possible to interview participants in

person, they were invited to complete a survey of the same questions, either through

email or paper and pencil.  Face-to-Face interviews were audio-recorded (with

participant consent) and took place at the school site. A semi-structured interview

format was used for face-to-face interviews, to allow for follow-up questions to unclear,

interesting or unexpected responses. All interviews/surveys were scheduled at the

convenience of the interviewee and took approximately 20 minutes to complete.

**Data Analysis**

   Transcribed interviews were coded and analyzed for emergent themes.

## Results

For this capstone project, teachers and school administrators were interviewed to see what they think could be done to improve parental involvement both within the classroom and outside. This is important because both researchers were second language learners, and they believe in the important role parental involvement plays in a student's education. As more dual-immersion programs emerge, it is essential to continue to seek opportunities that involve parents. Based on an analysis of the data and the relevant research literature three themes emerged (see Table 1). Evidence-based decision making required evaluating each potential Action Option by the following criteria: time, impact, and reach. Based on the evaluation of each Action Option an action will be recommended and justified. Each section option is seen below (see Figure
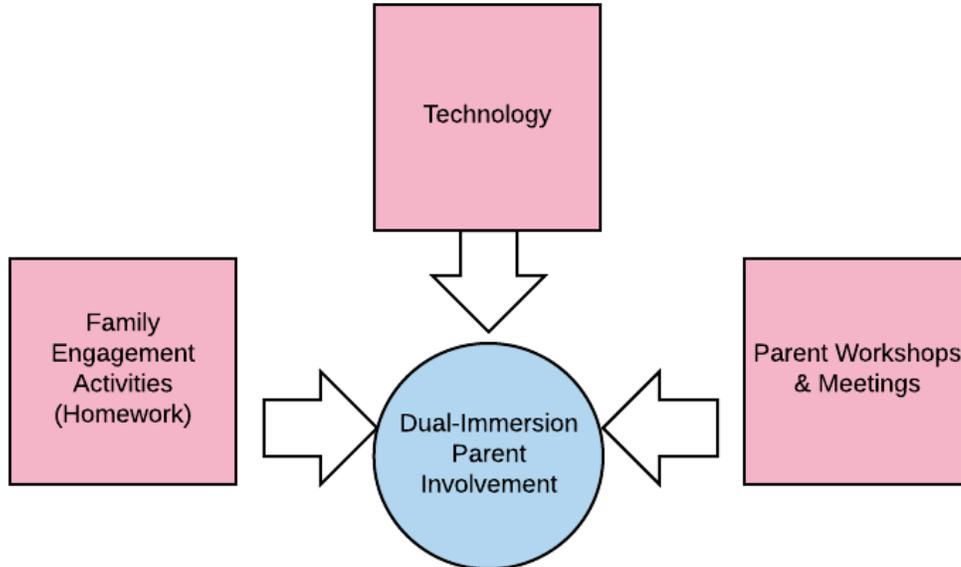


2).

Figure 2:

Table 1

*Evaluation Of Action Options*

|  | Time Constraints | Probability of Impact | Reach |
|---|---|---|---|
| Family Engagement Activities that parents and students can work on together | Medium | High | High |
| Parent Workshops/ Meeting | High | Medium | Low |
| The use of applications and other forms of technology to keep parents in the know | Low | Medium | Medium |

**Family Engagement Activities**

Parents of second language learner students can be involved through school activities given by their child's teacher. Claudia R. (Personal communication, 2017) stated, "I am considering assigning activities where my students can work at home with their parents but I have never acted on it." She added that "it might be a good way to promote collaboration between students and their parents." Margaret Spellings (2005) states that homework can help create greater understanding between families and teachers, and can provide opportunity for increased communication. She also mentions that homework allows families to be informed about what their children are learning as well as the policies and programs of the school.  Additionally, Antonio G. (Personal

communication, 2017) suggested that "parents of dual-immersion children have a better opportunity to communicate with their children's teacher through paper based methods, since most parents are usually working long hours of the day and there are times when they cannot use technology or attend meetings." Epstein (2016) stated that TIPS (Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork) is a good way for parents to participate in their children's activities. One of the methods used in TIPS involves Home-to-School Communication. In this method, the teacher sends out a form where parents are required to give the teacher feedback on the given activity, their child's work, and to provide any questions or comments. The parent then signs the form to document the child's completion of the assignment and the parent's engagement.

**Keeping Parents in the Know Through Technology**

Advances in technology over the past few years have allowed teachers to communicate with parents without ever having to meet face to face. This has made it convenient for those parents who have restricting work schedules and cannot make it to school functions.  Victor M. (Vice Principal of Sunny City School, expressed his concern on parental involvement and suggested that technology is a good method to have parents participate in their children's schooling. Victor M. stated that  "he hopes to have an application called 'ParentSquare' up and running by the end of the year as it is a great tool to increase communication with parents."According to Graham-Clay (2004), a study in 1995 showed that the use of videos to communicate with parents allowed parents to have better communication with teachers and a better understanding of their child's school program (Graham- Clay, 2004, as cited in Alberto et al, 1995). In recent

years, applications such as ClassDojo, have facilitated video communication with

parents. Claudia R., teacher of West Sunny City Elementary, personally "found

ClassDojo helpful as she got the most involvement from parents in that application."

Additionally, she "believed that using technology can help her student's parents be in

the know of classroom activities regardless of their schedules."  According to Ho (2013,

as cited in Blau, 2016) mobile devices are a convenient tool for increasing parent-

teacher communication. Allowing parents to be involved through the use of technology

can increase the involvement of parents who otherwise would not be able to.

**Parent Workshops and Meetings**

Educators need to provide parents with a welcoming and supportive school

environment where they receive appropriate language support (Ee, 2017). According to

Victor M., "Spanish speaking parents get language support through programs like ELAC

and making sure all school handouts are in both English and Spanish." The language

support given to the parents could also come from a series of workshops or classes.

During these workshops, parents could gain valuable knowledge while participating in

school related activities. Parents could also benefit from interaction with other parents

while they participate in the workshops. Claudia R. stated "In West Sunny City

Elementary, we have workshops that are done once a month with the school

psychologist who gives advice on how parents can improve their children's academics

by being involved. These workshops benefit the parents allowing them to interact with

teachers, psychologist and other parents." The parent workshops and meetings are

successful because dual-immersion programs allow parents to be engaged with various

types of networks, thus helping parents connect and create school communities, which further increase participation (Ee, 2017). In her study, Maldonado- Higle (2014) provides parents of dual-immersion students with various opportunities to create networks with other parents through a series of workshops. Some examples of these workshops include dual-immersion workshops, and family social gatherings. During the Dual-immersion workshops, parents are equipped with research and strategies that assist them in providing support to their students (Maldonado-Higle, 2014). Parents also have an open opportunity to ask and get answers to questions they could not express in the classroom setting. Additionally, while attending these workshops and meetings, parents can make their voices heard by making suggestions for future meetings. Maldonado-Higle (2014) identified that parents who participate in the family social gatherings, have the opportunity to share their own language, and cultural aspects. Opportunities such as these, help create communities where parents can learn from each other and find common ground.

**Conclusion**

  Considering all of the scholarly research, the interviewees perspectives and criteria. We came to the conclusion, that family engagement activities were a better option. The reach for this option was high because parents and children would be able to complete the assignment on their own time; regardless of their busy work schedules or language barriers. Although, technology is widely available many parents still have no access to it, in which the reach would be less successful. Furthermore, workshops would require a time frame and most parents would not be able to meet that frame.

Further recommendations for this project are to have an increase in the opportunities that allow for the involvement of parents of second language learner students. Regardless of the availability of technology, it is important to continue to make communication available through traditional methods such as handouts and workshops. One way to ensure that these methods are successful would be to provide parents with the necessary language support. Having this support, will create an inviting environment where parents will feel that their input is needed and important.

As in many studies, there will be limitations. In the case of parental involvement of second language learner parents, access to technology might vary. These variations in accessibility might make it easier or difficult for parents to use these tools in order to communicate with the teacher. Another possible limitation is that the interviewees were so limited. With more time, this project could add more influentials in the topic of parental involvement to identify more ideas that can promote the involvement of the discussed group.

In conclusion, if this project were to be reproduced by others, it is essential that these recommendations are considered. Parental involvement of parents of second language learners can be improved through various ways, but it is important to consider the possibility for limitations. Factors such as work schedules, language, and limited access to communication tools can act as impediments for involvement. Nevertheless, providing an environment where all those obstacles are addressed can ensure that parents and teachers can create lines of communication where relationships between both parts can flourish.

**Action Documentation and Reflection**

As the population of second language learning students increases in California. Spanish has become the most common language spoken by students, making up 83.5 percent of the state's english language population (Hopkinson, 2017). Although the percentage of students is high, this is not reflected in the percentage of parental involvement of this given group. According to a study by Turney and Kao (2009), many parents of Latino students are less likely to be involved than non minority parents, due to economic and accessibility barriers (Turney & Kao, as cited in Alexander et al., 2017). Lack of transportation, inflexible work schedules, language differences, and feeling unwelcome by school communities, are among some of the barriers (Alexander et al, 2017). Another obstacle can arise when levels of parental involvement are interpreted differently. According to Gerena (2011), some parents might think their involvement is sufficient, while in the teachers' eyes it can be seen as indifference. Such beliefs can act as barriers for a good parent-teacher relationship. Taking into consideration all of these obstacles, it is important to create opportunities where parents feel welcome and parent teacher relationships can flourish, as this can invite parents to participate more actively in their student's academics.

Given the issue, it was important to reach out to stakeholders who were knowledgeable in the matter, who could provide possible action options. We interviewed two educators; Claudia R., an elementary school teacher, and Antonio G., a professor at CSUMB. The third interviewee, Victor M. who is an elementary school vice principal, also shared his knowledge on the matter, and added both an educator perspective and an administrator perspective.

From each of the interviews, we gained knowledge about the involvement of parents of second language learner students, such as those in dual- immersion programs. After taking into account all perspectives, as well as scholarly research, three action options emerged. These were:1) family engagement activities (homework); 2) using technology to keep parents in the know, and 3) parent workshops and meetings. As the options were narrowed down based on our criteria, we concluded that implementing family engagement activities would be the best option for our sample parents. Both Iliana and I, chose to implement family engagement activities that parents and students could complete together as homework, as this would allow parents and students to work together in order to complete the assignment. We also saw it as a way for the teacher to get to know her students' parents better. Parents could complete the homework assignment at the comfort of their home without having to attend a meeting and technology would not be a limitation.

Artifact 1



Artifact 1: An image of our worksheet. This worksheet is double sided, one side in in English, and the other is in Spanish. Text has been translated to be identical.

For our action option we decided to create an activity that parents and students could complete together, in the form of a homework assignment. Claudia R. welcomed us into her classroom, and allowed us to implement our action option with the classroom parents. The assignment was titled "Meet My Family" or " Conociendo A Mi Familia" and offered the opportunity for students to get to know their backgrounds. Additionally, it gave Claudia R. the opportunity to get to know family backgrounds, without ever having

to physically ask them anything. This was very important as Claudia expressed that many of the parents worked long hours. To further meet the needs of parents, our worksheet was created in both English and Spanish. The worksheet can be be found above (Artifact 1).

After conducting our interview and sharing our ideas with Claudia R., we were greeted with a positive response. She also offered her full support and agreed to work with us to find suitable options that would allow parents to be more involved in their student's education. One unexpected surprise was that not every student in Claudia R.'s class speaks Spanish or English. More than five students speak Mixteco, a dialect spoken in Oaxaca, Mexico. This was unexpected because ideally, we would have wanted to create a worksheet that would cater to all the languages represented within Claudia R.'s classroom. This is something we regret not knowing from the start. With more time, we would have searched for someone knowledgeable in Mixteco who could help us create an additional worksheet in that dialect. Due to this, our next step would be to work towards getting the Mixteco population represented in Claudia R.'s classroom, by creating a worksheet that meets their needs.

**Critical Reflection**

On Lessons learned

From this project, what did you learn about:

Yourself: In this project I learned different things that I was not aware I was capable of doing. Since I am first generation graduating from a university, I was scared on how to begin this project. I did not have the capabilities of completing this project, but my capstone partner and family encouraging me to keep going has allowed me to get this far. One thing I learned about myself was not to give up on dreams because of anything that comes your way, good or bad. I am able to come this far by my motivation and my drive to finish because one day I want to motivate other students to finish school because they can also be successful in completing their higher education. Working toward change: There is always a chance for change in this time in society. In my project we still need to reach out to have parents get involved in their children's education because it is key for students to have the support from their parents.

Synthesis and Integration

o   How have the themes of the Liberal Studies department (i.e., MLOs) and the required coursework impacted your professional development?

Fall 2014, I started my first semester at California State University of Monterey Bay. Not knowing what to expect, I was afraid to even begin my schooling at this university. CSUMB has given me different opportunities that have helped me be the best I can be in my future career. The courses I have taken at this university has

impacted my professional development in a positive way. The Liberal Studies

department MLOs have been interesting to complete these past years.

### MLO 1: Developing Educator

The first learning outcome requires us to think, write, and speak critically

about the general knowledge, skills, dispositions, and responsibilities of

California public educator in classroom, school, community, State, and National

contexts. We must obtain introductory pedagogical skills and apply them. The

class that allowed me to get this knowledge was LS 277: Schooling of Modern

Society, where I learned the main concepts of the schooling system in the United

States and other countries. This class allowed me to see that California was just

a simple micro state compared to the world. I was able to understand the

education in other countries and compare it to California and write and speak

critically about it. This class allowed us to do service learning. This was an eye

opener since it has allowed me to experience different things with a new set of

students on which I was not used to since they were younger (2nd grade) than

other children I had previously worked with. I was able to use technology with this

grade level and I used one of the Four C's which was creativity. The group were

creative in this activity by drawing themselves on a cell phone paper that looked

like an IPhone. Each of student drew themselves on the paper about their most

memorable moment that made them happy. At the end of the lesson each

student was amazed on how they were able to draw themselves.

### MLO 2: Diversity and Multicultural Scholar

The second learning outcome allowed us to evaluate our own and others'

experiences as influenced by social identities, socialization practices, and

societal institutions from both historical and contemporary perspectives. We had

to critically examine the value of diversity and multiculturalism. We will be able to

inform our educational practices and perspectives by applying concepts and

theories of diversity and multiculturalism. LS 394: Multicultural Literature for

Children and Young Adults and LS 391:Diversity in Educational Settings have

impacted me in a good way because without the power of understanding others,

we cannot understand ourselves as individuals. Both of these classes allowed

me to see the world in a different way imaginable. One of the important events

that happened in LS 394 was the literature books we had to read and analyze

and try to see how we were able to be better individuals when confronted by

taboo issues or events. In LS 391 was by far the most interesting because we

had to learn about each and everyone's schooling and what caused them to be

how they are as individuals. Each one of us were able to see we all had our

struggles since we all came from diverse societies, but with that each and one of

us were able to work together and find ways to allow those to be successful in

their schooling as well.

**MLO 3: Innovative Technology Practitioner**

The third learning outcome allowed us to use technology effectively for

investigation, expression, design, and collaboration. We reflect on the role of

technologies for innovative teaching and learning, and effective instruction. The

classes that fulfill this criteria were LS 300: Major ProSeminar and LS 400:

Capstone. Both classes taught me how to use technology in ways that I was not

able to use before. I was not aware that WordPress can be used as a way of communicating your thoughts and can be used as a blog type of communication. I was also introduced to Google Doc which in my LS400 class we are able to upload our papers or simply type it in the document and we are able to collaborate with our instructor and also with our partner for Capstone. Technology is my favorite way of teaching because we are able to learn new things and later show our future students new ways but we also have to accommodate those students who are not able to purchase the adequate technology.

### MLO 4: Social Justice Collaborator

The fourth learning outcome we combined disciplinary knowledge, community experiences, and reflective practices to become ethically and socially responsible educators working toward a just and sustainable world. We identify and pursue paths for social change and collaborate with stakeholders to advocate for access, equity, and justice in public education and other societal institutions. In LS 380: Teaching for Social Change, we did various assignments that were interesting to me but my Midterm was an eye opener because I spoke about my schooling that did not give me training in seeing myself as an oppressor, but kept putting me in just by the color of my skin. That Midterm was intense to write but I was able to express myself and collaborate with other on their social justice in education.

### MLO 5: Subject Matter Generalist

I have demonstrated competency in LS 400: Capstone because I have

competency in a subject area which is Liberal Studies. This class has engaged

me in a focus issue in education and has allowed me to demonstrate the ability to

synthesize and utilize acquired knowledge and skills. This will allow me to

articulate and understand the issue and advocate an ethical response. In order to

fulfill this section I had to go through all the MLOs because it is intensive

research, reading, writing, oral communication, and collaboration with professor

and partner. It also allows you to analyze the action and reflect on it. One of the

hardest MLOs I have ever experienced.

- o   What do you see as the necessary next steps that you need to take in order to

     become the professional that you envision being?

The necessary steps that I need to take in order to become the professional I

envision is keep going to school do not stop on just Bachelor's degree. I must obtain my

Masters' degree with credentials in order to be able to earn more money, so that I can

be able to support my parents and help my sister with her three kids. That has to be my

vision of becoming the professional I want to be. Without the support of my family, I

would not have come this far in completing my degree. My sister was my hero because

she was the first to graduate and receive her Associate's Degree. She was the one who

set the path for me from the beginning, until I receive my Masters I will not feel

professionally fulfilled.

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