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A Message from the Editor

In This Issue...
A Message from the Editor

The theme of the 2022 INTESOL conference is *The Power of Story*. Our keynote speaker is Nahid Sharifi, who taught English language for 10 years and is currently a graduate student at Indiana University. Sharifi's story covers her experience as a refugee in Iran, her efforts for women's rights in Afghanistan, and her arrival and life in Indiana. Sharifi's story is a window into the experiences of many multilingual students in Indiana, and an example of the power of voice and action in making positive change in the world. Concurrent sessions at the conference will look at the stories of English language teachers and learners, as well as presenting on the latest teaching practices, research, and contextual conditions in Indiana and beyond.

In our 2022 Fall issue features two feature articles and three peer-reviewed articles. First, this issue introduces two new feature non-refereed articles that are meant to advance the accessibility and relevance of the INTESOL Journal. We are committed to providing space for annual INTESOL keynote speakers moving forward. We inaugurate this with text of Nahid Sharifi's 2022 keynote speech. The second new feature is "Voices from the Field", which will highlight perspectives from Indiana English language teaching professionals. The first instance of this ongoing series features a discussion between Rachel Sever, ENL Coordinator for MSD Washington Township, and Susan Adams.

The issue also features three peer reviewed articles. In the first article, Kyongson Park explores the co-teaching collaboration of university multilingual learner graduate students and local K-12 teachers. Park highlights the ways in which this collaboration benefitted the teachers, students, and graduate students, particularly in terms of cultural diversity. Second, Xin Chen presents a case study of the writing practice and learning transfer of international undergraduate multilingual learners. Chen's study provides insight and new perspectives on the writing

development of international multilingual learners. Finally, Trish Morita Mullaney provides a discussion of the history and policy environment surrounding the legal requirements dictating multilingual learner support in Indiana, particularly policies around ENL Specialist licensure and Teachers of Record. The Editors of the INTESOL Journal and the INTESOL Board would like to thank all our authors and reviewers for their contributions to the 2022 issue.

This issue is the first under Editor-in-Chief Brandon Sherman and Associate Editor Dr. Beth Samuelson. We thank outgoing Editor-in-Chief Trish Morita Mullaney for her years of stewardship of the journal. Dr. Morita Mullaney will stay involved with the journal as a member of the newly convened Editorial Board. She is joined by Susan Adams, Huseyin Uysal, and Haiyan Li. The Editorial Board will aid in the endeavors of the journal, including oversight, publicity, and direction. The INTESOL advisory board will continue providing oversight.

We remind readers that INTESOL Journal accepts manuscripts year-round. Manuscripts may be pertinent to the Indiana context specifically, or may be about language teaching and learning in general. We accept both research and practitioner-focused pieces. Individuals presenting at the annual conference are strongly encouraged to reach out about publishing a manuscript based on their presentation. We also invite author organized special issues.

This issue of the INTESOL journal features the artwork of Natalie Nevarez. Natalie is originally from Mexico, and is currently a 10th grader at Portage High School. She was nominated by her teacher, Allison Mendez-Morphis.

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A Message from the Editor

Voices from the Field

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ANDREA CRAMER

Neighbor to Neighbor, South Bend, Indiana

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

The purpose of this annual feature is to spotlight practitioners from the Indiana education community who are serving English learners of all ages and purposes. In addition to providing insights into current practices, challenges, and opportunities, this column also serves as an archive of current challenges, opportunities, promising practices, advocacy activity, and responses to policies as they change over time.

In this article, we introduce Andrea Cramer. Andrea is the founder and executive director of Neighbor to Neighbor, a grassroots nonprofit located in South Bend, Indiana. Prior to establishing Neighbor to Neighbor, Andrea earned a degree in ESL from Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. While studying in Chicago, Andrea also taught ESL courses at Malcom X. College and tutored in the church basement of a Polish immigrant community. She has also taught at a community college and middle school ESL in Indiana and Texas.

The move from the Midwest to Texas was disorienting for Andrea. A fellow Midwesterner in Waco kindly took Andrea under her wing and helped her adjust to an unfamiliar culture and lifestyle. While in Waco in 2014, Andrea experienced some of the upheaval of the arrival of Syrian refugees and increased arrivals of immigrants and refugees entering the United States at the Mexican border. But it was a question from her then five-year-old son about

refugees that caused her to realize how little she knew about refugees and what causes the “push and pull” of people moving around the world in response to world events. Andrea began a self-organized crash course on refugees and their experiences entering the United States.

A turning event in this exploration was a weekend of the family volunteering with Catholic Charities at the Mexican border. Here Andrea observed the loneliness and isolation of many refugees. She also discovered the intersection of her teacher identity with her desire to provide relational supports for newly arrived refugees as they seek to build new lives in a new country. When her husband, David, took a new position at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) and a local church in South Bend, Keller Park Church, Andrea noticed a significant gap in services for refugees, migrants and immigrants, and asylum seekers in South Bend and the idea of establishing Neighbor to Neighbor was born. Andrea says the organization exists to “offer mutual friendship to people be a bridge between community longtime community members and newcomers. and to mitigate the isolation that newcomers face”. The nonprofit addresses this goal through three main categories of focus: relationships, advocacy, and education.

Andrea and Susan met recently to find out more about her perspectives on her role and on current opportunities and challenges. The interview questions will be presented in **bold**, and Andrea’s responses are presented in *italics*.

What opportunities are you discovering in your role? What has surprised you most about these opportunities? Where do these opportunities seem to be leading right now?

For the first four years, it was only me. And last year we were able to hire someone as our volunteer and community coordinator. We also found someone to handle our media and other

communications, as well as some case management. It is good to have people helping now to fill in the gaps. Next we hope to hire someone with development experience who can help us find case managers, educators, and advocacy specialists. But I have been surprised to discover that the advocacy piece is my favorite part of my role. It has inspired me to pursue a peace studies degree at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary where my husband teaches.

What challenges are you discovering in your role?

I don't want the organization to be personality-driven, so I don't want to be the executive director forever. I think it needs to be led by someone with lived experience as an immigrant at some point, so I'm trying to do some succession planning for the organization to position us well for the future. We are part of a national network called Hello, Neighbor that connects us to organizations throughout the US. These connections have helped us find grant opportunities. For example, we were able to get a national grant to support us as Afghans were being evacuated to the US and moving to our region. It is surprisingly challenging to get local funding because St. Joseph County has per capita one of the largest numbers of nonprofits in the country. So local funding is very competitive. There is another organization called La Casa de Amistad which has been serving now for fifty years in the community. La Casa serves primarily Latino youth and offers a legal clinic we send clients to on referral. We have a great partner relationship with La Casa.

What trends or patterns have you observed in Neighbor to Neighbor in the past six months?

Currently ESL and literacy development are high priorities. But finding experienced folks who can tutor is challenging, so we are also training new people to do this tutoring.

What state and/or federal policies are uppermost on your mind these days?

The work of refugee resettlement is such a precarious thing. Each new administration has its own policies, caps on immigration numbers, and where refugees will actually end up gets changed every time a new administration takes office. Whatever systems or programs were in place get dismantled and are being rebuilt. Meanwhile there is a new crisis somewhere as we currently see with Afghans, Ukrainians, Venezuelans, and others. At this time in history, more people are on the move than ever before due to conflict, our government systems are in a shambles.

In addition, we see an increasingly suspicious American population who have consumed rhetoric and untrustworthy news sources. So this work can be dangerous. This work is about caring for refugees, but also about educating the public on who their neighbors are, how they are already contributing to our community, and that their kids are going to school with our kids. It is also about developing cultural competency and combating racial biases. Most US citizens believe being undocumented is a criminal offense, but in reality, it is a civil offense. There is a lot of misinformation out there. Once we connect people to new neighbors and these new neighbors have a face, it is amazing how perspectives can change.

Do you sometimes feel like you are drowning? How do you decide where to put today's energy?

Yes, this can be difficult. I am thankful to work closely with my board president. He reminds me regularly that Neighbor to Neighbor can only do a sliver of the work. We have to trust and hope and believe that our public schools are doing their parts and that other community partners are doing their parts, too. Trying to be all things to all people would be a disservice to folks.

We have to let them try and fail. It often takes painful failures for people to eventually learn and to have the dignity of doing things on their own. We in the US are a very individualistic culture, but many refugees come from a community or collective culture, so adjusting is really hard. I think this gets lost sometimes amid all the work. I sometimes find myself frustrated when after working with someone for more than a year, they still want one of us to accompany them to the grocery store. I think they ought to be able to go on their own, but then I realize they want to do it in community.

I have also learned from someone in the network that if someone comes in to complain about the free couch that we gave them and moved for them, it might not really be about the couch. 9 times out of 10, it has nothing to do with the couch. It is that they have lost control of almost everything in their lives, but the couch is something they can control, and it becomes a symbol. My colleague says, "Instead of playing it down and telling them not to worry about it, mirror their frustration and agree with them that this couch really is terrible. Let's think together: where else can we get you a couch? What kind of couch do you want?" And my colleague says that 9 times out of 10, the person says, "Oh, no. Really the couch is fine." We have to be able to decode what is really going on underneath this complaint? Most Americans expect refugees to just be permanently grateful. Being permanently grateful is exhausting, unreasonable, and unfair.

One strategy I have is to give myself permission to leave unscheduled time on my calendar each day for the unexpected. And then if by the grace of God, there is unscheduled time, I can think about succession planning or whatever is needed.

What kind of adult programming does Neighbor to Neighbor provide?

We have an Afghan women's group. We call it a Craft and Chat, but it's more than that. We meet at our local downtown library, which is gorgeous. We have a private room. It's really dignifying. The preschool age kids that aren't in Head Start come with their moms. So we've got infants to 4 year olds in there with us in the library. We have our own private story hour.

So originally, we thought, maybe this will be a time that the kids will be distracted enough that the mothers can really focus on a concentrated ESL lesson. We quickly realized these women have never been read to themselves. And we know that most adults really enjoy being read to.

The women love our story time. which is so beautiful. So that's part of the learning, too, through the interaction between the moms and their kids. That's different than what they normally have at home. And then we do have a concentrated 30-minute ESL lesson. It's very driven by the women's interests and goals. Some want to learn professional tailoring. Some of them want to get their food handler's license. They're really wanting to figure out ways to make some income. So, when we know what they want, that helps us build a curriculum that is meaningful to them.

Honestly, they would probably come just to see each other, anyway, right? And in South Bend you have to have a car really to get anywhere. It's not a walking town. Transportation is not readily available and they do not all live close to each other. A lot of them had never met each other, even though they have similar stories of how they arrived here. There are 2 or 3 different languages spoken among the Afghan women, so they really are motivated to learn English so they can communicate with each other.

If you could wave a magic wand, what would you wish for refugees?

For Afghans, because Congress can't figure out how to pass legislation, they are just giving Afghans temporary two-year humanitarian parole status. Afghan refugees must file for this again while they are waiting for their asylum cases to be heard. And all those cases are pending. The system is impossible to navigate even for a native English speaker, even someone who has several degrees. The process is very expensive, and it is not intuitive. If this complexity were not part of their daily stress, it would really be a game changer for the ways they interact with our community. They could just live their lives in a little more peace.

To learn more about Neighbor to Neighbor, please visit <https://n2nsb.com/>

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Susan R. Adams, PhD., is Faculty Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Associate Professor for the College of Education, Butler University. A former ESL teacher and instructional coach, her work is featured in such publications as *Theory into Practice*, *English Journal*, *The New Educator*, and the *Currere Exchange Journal*.

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Ms. Andrea Cramer is founder and executive director of Neighbor to Neighbor in South Bend, Indiana. With a background in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), she has lived and worked in Illinois, Indiana, Texas, and Michigan, where she taught English as a new language (ENL) at Malcolm X College, McLennan Community College, and in public schools. Having experienced the gift of welcome across the country, Andrea is passionate about passing on that gift of welcome in South Bend, where she lives with her husband, David, and their two children.

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Teachers' Perception of Over-Identification of English learners in Special Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

This study surveyed teachers' perceptions of English learners (ELs) and their referrals to special education during the COVID-19 pandemic. Limited social interaction during the pandemic greatly affected ELs' language and social development. Using an online survey, the study identified how teachers perceived the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on ELs, particularly changes in their areas of struggle before and after the pandemic, and the connection between their struggling due to the lockdown and special education referrals. This survey was distributed to Indiana public schools and targeted K–3 teachers. The results indicated that almost 25% of the teachers perceived an increase in ELs' referral to special education referrals after the school lockdown. Further, the teachers indicated an increase in reports of ELs with behavior issues and emotional struggles compared to the pre-pandemic period.

Keywords: English Learners, COVID-19 pandemic, Special Education Referrals, Teachers' Perspectives

According to the US Census Bureau's 2021 American Community Survey, 5 million English Learners (EL) were enrolled in public K–12 schools, and this accounts for 10.3% of the total K–12 student population in public schools in 2020 (Migration Policy Institute, 2023). Given that a large proportion of school-aged ELs come from various home language environments, schools must provide more culturally responsive instructions to meet student needs, including overcoming language barriers, cultural differences, and academic challenges (Ortiz & Dynda, 2008). According to the 2019 Nation's Report Card: Reading, EL performance in reading was below the proficiency level (Council of Great City Schools, 2020), and reading difficulties were tightly connected to struggling in other academic areas (Sun et al., 2010).

A rich linguistic classroom experience can enhance student outcomes (Bauer & Arazi, 2011). Yet, ELs have still struggled in school and needed more supports, and the lack of environmental support eventually leads to ELs' overrepresentation in special education settings (Ortiz & Dynda, 2008). The overrepresentation of ELs has been an ongoing concern in special education (Sanatullova-Allison & Robinson-Young, 2016). The COVID-19 pandemic and the sudden lockdown of all schools for virtual instruction resulted in many children suffering from isolation. The situation could have been more severe for ELs, who risked losing all linguistic experiences other than interacting with their teachers and peers online (Matthews, 2021). However, how ELs have been affected by the lockdown, particularly in relation to special education referrals, has yet to be closely investigated. Thus, this study aimed to determine the relationship between the COVID-19 lockdown and special education referrals for ELs and the major changes in ELs' struggles before and after the pandemic.

Literature Review

ELs have unique needs in multiple aspects of their schooling due to being from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Ortiz & Dynda, 2008). However, they have fewer opportunities to experience high-quality educational environments, which eventually leads to overall learning difficulties in schools. For example, language and communication barriers are prevalent among ELs. ELs who typically use limited vocabularies are at a significant disadvantage in academic learning, and this lack of a rich vocabulary base too often is the main barrier to their comprehension of texts and lectures (Newton et al., 2008).

EL Areas of Struggle in Schools

Reading comprehension is the most difficult area for ELs (Hall et al., 2019). As the simple view of reading (Hoover & Gough, 1990) indicates, the level of reading comprehension depends on the product of children's decoding and listening comprehension. Scarborough's Reading Rope indicates that the level of skilled reading comprehension involves multiple factors, including word recognition (e.g., phonological awareness, decoding, and spelling) and language comprehension (e.g., background knowledge, vocabulary, and language structures) (Scarborough, 2001); however, ELs struggle with these factors, eventually leading to poor reading comprehension. Lin (2015) also reported ELs' writing difficulties, such as frequent pauses to think, selecting accurate words or idioms, and organizing their writings.

Due to these academic struggles, ELs also present behavior and/or emotional issues at schools. Castro-Olivo et al. (2011) assessed secondary Latino students' socio-emotional resiliency. The results indicated a positive correlation with academic progress, as the students' socio-emotional resiliency score was lower with lower academic performance. Communication is another area in which ELs struggle due to language barriers. Derwing and Rossiter (2002)

stated that ELs are developing their communication skills, while various pronunciation nuances, unique accents, or the occasional use of segmented sentences may present challenges. ELs often actively adopt and employ creative communication strategies to navigate these challenges toward better communication; however, not all strategies are equally effective, and some may lead to misunderstandings.

Effective Instructional Strategies for ELs

In addition, to teach diverse ELs more effectively, Gay (2002) recommended that teachers use the cultural characteristics and experiences of the students themselves. Culturally responsive models require teachers and administrators to understand their students' communicative styles and literary experiences (Klingner & Edwards, 2006) and to have specific knowledge of cultural similarities and differences. Hamayan et al. (2007) suggested that teachers should assess ELs' abilities to function within the school culture to recommend appropriate culturally responsive interventions for those experiencing learning difficulties. Effective teaching practices for ELs are best implemented by teachers who acquire additional linguistic and cultural knowledge and skills and learn to apply these to curriculum planning, pedagogy, and six assessments for ELs (de Jong & Harper, 2005). Additionally, as Nieto (2000) noted, successful teaching for ELs is about changing teachers' attitudes about ELs and their families and communities. Besides working on cultural aspects of student and family cultures, teachers also use various pedagogical methods, including explicit teaching, individualizing, creating a positive climate, and collaboration and support (Cho et al., 2017).

EL Overrepresentation in Special Education Prior the COVID-19 Pandemic

Despite research suggestions to meet ELs' needs, multiple studies still report ELs' struggles at school, evidenced by EL misrepresentation issues in special education (Sanatullova-

Allison & Robinson-Young, 2016). ELs are one of the major groups reported as either underrepresented or overrepresented in special education classrooms (Counts et al., 2018). Whitford et al. (2019) also reported that ELs are significantly underrepresented in gifted education. According to 2020–2021 US Department of Education data, school-age ELs account for 13.74% of the special education population, whereas only 10% of ELs were enrolled in public schools in 2022 (Migration Policy Institute, 2021). Among ELs who received special education services in 2020–2021, almost three-fourths of ELs with special needs were served under specific learning disabilities (44.69%), speech or language impairment (18.93%), and autism (9.75%). These data indicate that ELs were referred to special education due to academic, communication, or behavior issues.

EL Struggles During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Without a doubt, for ELs, school is the place for receiving considerable input in social and English language areas. During the COVID-19 pandemic, however, the shift to online learning created inequitable learning opportunities for ELs and widened achievement gaps (e.g., Pier et al., 2021). Further, ELs need specialized instruction, active engagement, and instructional and linguistic accommodations to maximize their learning. However, school shutdowns during the pandemic cost social interactions that influence language and communication development for ELs (Sugarman & Lazarin, 2020). Notably, social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic may have limited more on ELs' English development because ELs typically use their native languages at home (Zhang et al., 2012). Many teachers missed direct in-person communication with ELs during the pandemic, making it challenging to keep students motivated (Sugarman & Lazarin, 2020). This change had a critical effect on ELs' English language development, as they lacked input in terms of speaking, writing, and reading in English, which is foundational to their

educational success.

Furthermore, beyond academic achievement, the transitions in instructional formats from in-person to online during the COVID-19 pandemic affected ELs' engagement in and access to learning. Teachers found it especially difficult to meet the needs of ELs when there was no shared classroom time (Marshall et al., 2020). Huck and Zhang (2021) showed that full access to content and hands-on activities during class time helped EL's learning; however, limited assistance in full participation and the lack of access to content resulted in learning and achievement lags. For example, in California, ELs demonstrated 3.8 months of learning lags in ELA and math from Fall 2019 through Winter 2020–2021 compared to the growth in their non-EL peers (Pier et al., 2021).

Lacking equitable access to resources and support has resulted in more challenges for ELs adjusting to schools. ELs may face more challenges upon returning to school, which could result in higher numbers of special education referrals (Ortogero & Ray, 2021). While their study was not directly related to ELs, Hammerstein, et al. (2021) reported that the Covid-19 had clearly negative impact on student achievement in both elementary and secondary schools in their meta-analysis literature review study.

Based on preceding discussion, we argue that social isolation during the pandemic would have resulted in referring more ELs to special education services. Thus, it is crucial to identify and discuss how ELs were affected by social isolation during the pandemic and how their struggles could have resulted in more over-referrals for special education services. Our research questions are as follows:

- (1) Do teachers perceive any changes in major difficulty areas of schooling for ELs compared to the pre-pandemic period?
- (2) Do teachers believe that the lack of an English language environment during the COVID-19 pandemic affected ELs' in-person school adjustments?

(3) How do teachers describe special education referrals of ELs compared to the pre-pandemic period?

Methods

This study used an online survey that targeted in-service teachers in K-3 classrooms in Indiana. The survey included questions for demographic information and teachers' perspectives on ELs during and after Covid-19. The authors sent emails to the principals of Indiana public schools and asked them to distribute the survey to their K-3 teachers. Once the survey responses were collected, the authors conducted a descriptive analysis to identify the results of the research questions. The next sections include more details of the process.

Participants

As mentioned above, this study's target participants were in-service teachers who worked in K-3 classrooms throughout Indiana. K-3 teachers were mainly selected for the study because their students started schooling during the pandemic; thus, they had yet to have previous schooling experience or minimal school experience. Thus, the authors considered K-3 classrooms as having a much more substantial impact by the lockdown and having more difficulties adjusting to the school environment after the lockdown. The K-3 curriculum covers early literacy which develops essential and foundational skills for all academic achievement. During the Covid-19 pandemic, K-3 teachers expressed their difficulty implementing effective literacy instruction virtually (Wright, et al. 2023). More importantly, studies on K-3 grade reading achievement test outcomes in 2019 (before the pandemic) and 2021 (after the pandemic) show decrease of student achievement in all grades after the pandemic (Stoneberg, 2023). One notable finding of the study was that Hispanic students had greater decreases than Caucasian students. This supports the hypothesis of this study that ELs in K-3 classrooms could have been impacted harder during the pandemic. The first author retrieved the lists of the public schools

and the names of principals from the Indiana Department of Education website and contacted principals to distribute our survey to their K–3 teachers. Table 1 shows the demographic information of the participants. Most participants were European/White females with over five years of teaching experience.

Table 1. Participating Teachers' Demographics

Category	N = 34	%
Gender		
<i>Female</i>	33	97%
<i>Male</i>	1	3%
Ethnicity		
<i>European/White</i>	31	91%
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	3	9%
Educational level		
<i>Bachelor</i>	19	56%
<i>Master's</i>	13	38%
<i>Doctorate</i>	2	6%
Areas of teaching license		
<i>Elementary</i>	26	76%
<i>Early Childhood</i>	2	6%
<i>Special Ed</i>	1	3%
<i>Others</i> (<i>multi-grade, Elementary & ELL, Elementary & Special Ed</i>)	5	15%
Teaching Grade Level		
<i>Pre/K</i>	8	23%
<i>1st</i>	6	18%
<i>2nd</i>	3	9%

<i>3rd</i>	5	15%
<i>Others</i>	12	35%
<hr/>		
Years of elementary teaching		
<i>1 year</i>	5	15%
<i>2 years</i>	2	6%
<i>3 years</i>	1	3%
<i>4 years</i>	0	0
<i>5 years</i>	3	9%
<i>Over 5 years</i>	23	67%

Measures

The study collected data from an online survey using Qualtrics. The survey questions included demographic information and ELs' schooling before and after THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. The demographic information collected was gender, teaching grades, ethnicity, teaching experiences, teachers' education level, license area, teaching experience with ELs, and their home languages. For the home language survey questions, the researchers used the top 10 languages spoken by Els in the United States in the 2016–2017 school year data from the Office of English Language Acquisition. Although it was the most recent data available at the time of creating the survey, the researchers were aware that the data needed to be updated. Thus, at the time the survey results were analyzed, the data on the same site were reviewed again. The most current data are the 2019–2020 data, and the differences between the 2016–2017 data and the 2019–2020 data are presented in Table 2. Although the order of the languages is somewhat different in the two datasets, only two languages are different: Somali and Russian in 2016–2017 were replaced by Hmong and Cushitic languages in 2019–2020.

Table 2. Top 10 Languages Spoken by English Learners in the United States Between 2016–2017 Versus 2019–2020 (From the Office of English Language Acquisition)

2016–2017 Home Languages	2019–2020 Home Languages
Spanish	Spanish, Castilian
Arabic	Arabic
Chinese	Chinese
Haitian	Vietnamese
Tagalog	Portuguese
Vietnamese	Haitian; Haitian Creole
Somali	Hmong
Portuguese	Cushitic (Other)
Russian	Tagalog

The second part of the survey included six questions; (1) common struggling areas of ELs in pre-pandemic, (2) common struggling areas of ELs during the school year of 2021–2022, (3) the major factors that influenced struggling during the pandemic, (4) the change in ELs referral for special education services after the lockdown, (5) common reasons for ELs’ referral for special education prior to the pandemic, (6) common reasons for ELs’ referral for special education during 2021–2022. For the first three questions, the first author conducted a literature review to draft pre-selected items so that each participant could select the two most common items from the given options. The common struggling areas were pre-selected as academic (Calderon et al., 2011), behavior/emotional (Rogers-Adkinson et al., 2012), social (Winseler et al., 2014), and communication (Haneda, 2014) areas. Regarding factors that challenged ELs’ experience (2nd and 3rd questions) during the pandemic, the four major factors identified from the literature review include lack of English language environment, lack of educational opportunities

such as daycares, schools, or other outside community activities, limited social interactions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and lack of family support (Council of Great City Schools, 2020). However, the literature review for this area was quite limited because the survey was developed immediately after the schools returned to in-person instruction from the COVID-19 lockdown. This question also included the ‘Others’ section so that the participants could give a written answer if they found different factors.

The fourth question asked whether the teachers found EL’s referrals to special education to be increased, decreased, or unchanged after the lockdown. The participants were asked to rank their responses to the fifth and sixth questions of the common reasons for EL’s special education referrals before and during the pandemic using four options: learning difficulties, emotional/behavior issues, communication issues. The first three options are typical reasons for students to be referred for special education evaluations (Norlander, 2018). For ‘others,’ the participants were also asked to provide a short written answer.

Data Collection and Analysis

As described in the participants’ section, the target participants were K–3 in-service teachers in Indiana. Initially, the researchers retrieved approximately 1000 public school lists and principals’ email information from the Indiana Department of Education website so the random samples well represent the entire state. After receiving IRB approval, two emails were sent to all school principals on the list (approximately 1,000 schools). The first email included the purpose of this study and asked them to forward our study information to their K–3 teachers. In the second email, the principals were asked to forward the email directly to their K–3 teachers, including the study information and survey links for the teachers. Due to the low response rate during the first round of survey dissemination, the researchers had to send a second round of

emails to all the schools on the lists again. After the second round of emails, 34 participants completed the entire part of the survey. The Qualtrics report of each response received was analyzed.

Results

Here, some of the findings of the study are discussed. The first study result was the linguistic background of ELs in the survey participants' classrooms. Table 3 documents teachers' responses to the survey questions on ELs' home language use. This question item had 10 preselected home languages that they could select all that apply. The findings show diverse home languages of ELs. All 34 participants selected Spanish as their most used language at home. Ten participants selected Arabic, Chinese, and Haitian. The third frequency tier was Tagalog ($n = 7$) and Vietnamese ($n = 5$). Overall, 16 participants chose 'Others' and mentioned the home languages that were not from the given 10 choices. Among them, 10 teachers wrote India-related dialects (e.g., Pashto, Hindi, Urdu, Oriya, and Punjabi) as their students' home languages.

Table 3
Home Languages of ELs

Home Language	n
Spanish	34
Arabic	10
Chinese	10
Haitian	10
Tagalog	7
Vietnamese	5
Somali	3
Portuguese	2

Russian	1
Others	16

The next finding was about the struggling areas of ELs before the pandemic and post-pandemic in 2021–2022. Table 4 presents the results of the struggling areas. The areas were divided into academic, behavior/emotional, social, and communication areas, and the participants were asked to choose two areas in which their students struggled the most. For both questions (pre- and post-pandemic), the ELs struggled most in academics (97%, n = 33; 94%, n = 32), followed by communication (79%, n = 27; 73%, n = 25). Although the orders of the areas of struggle did not change pre- and post-pandemic, it is notable that more participants indicated that ELs struggled the most in the behavior/emotional and social areas during the 2021–2022 school year (combined n = 13 in pre-pandemic compared to combined n = 17 in 2021–2022). This means that 12% of the participants (n = 4) found more behavior/emotional and social struggles after the students returned from the pandemic lockdown.

Table 4. Comparison Between Pre- and Post-pandemic Areas of Struggles Among ELs

Struggling areas	Pre-pandemic	2021 – 2022
Academic	97% (n = 33) 1st	94% (n = 32) 1st
Communication	79% (n = 27) 2nd	73% (n = 25) 2nd
Behavior/Emotional	20% (n = 7)	29% (n = 10)
Social	18% (n = 6)	21% (n = 7)

The participants were asked to select two major factors impacting challenges ELs experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the results are presented in Table 5. The lack of an English language environment was chosen by most participants (76.47%, n = 26). The lack of educational opportunities (44.12%, n = 15) and limited social interactions due to the Covid-19

pandemic (44.12%, n = 15) were the second tier of challenging factors. A lack of family support was selected by 12 participants (35.30%). Further, the responses of six participants (17.65%) who selected ‘Others’ described limited access to technology and the lack of parents’ communication.

Table 5. Major Factors that Contributed to Els’ Struggle During the Pandemic

Factors impacting ELs’ challenging experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic	Responses: n (%)
Lack of English language environment	26 (76.47 %)
Lack of educational opportunities	15 (44.12 %)
Limited social interactions due to THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC	15 (44.12 %)
Lack of family support	12 (35.30 %)
Others	6 (17.65 %)

In terms of the referral changes, 26 participants (75 %) responded that they did not see any significant changes in the special education referrals for ELs between pre-pandemic and post-pandemic. However, nine participants (25%) responded that they saw an increase in referrals after the pandemic. Notably, this means that one of every four participants observed a referral increase after ELs returned from the COVID-19 lockdown.

Lastly, we assessed the main reasons ELs were referred for special education services. Table 4 shows the areas of struggle of ELs. These results focus more on the actual reasons for special education referrals. The participants were asked to rank four reasons for ELs’ referral:

learning difficulties, communication difficulties, emotional/behavior issues, and others. Figure 1 shows the rankings and the numbers of participants who chose each option and comparison in both pre-pandemic rankings and post-pandemic (2021–2022 school year) rankings.

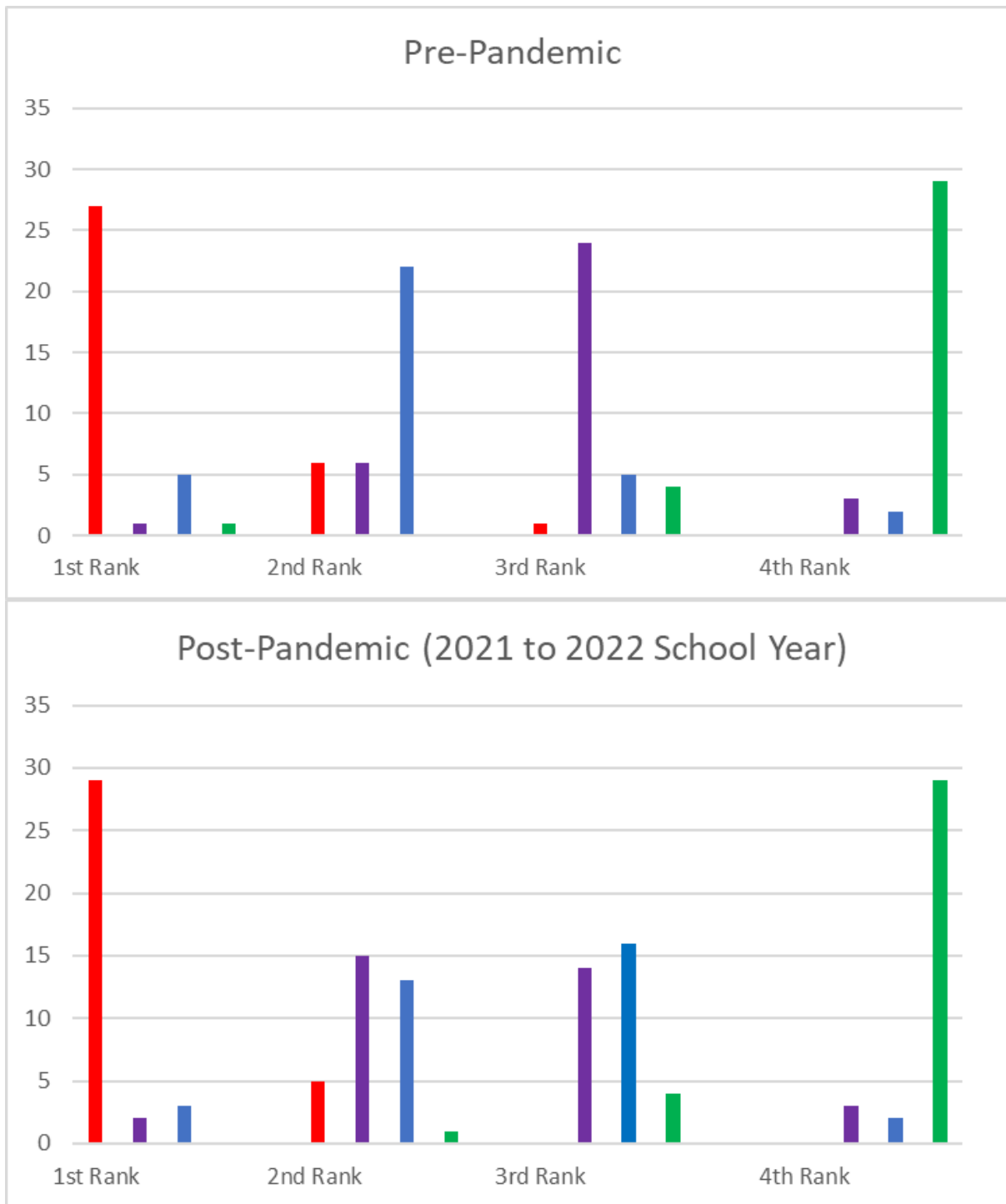
Before the pandemic, the majority of participants ranked learning difficulties as the first ($n = 27$), communication difficulties as the second ($n = 22$), emotional/behavior issues as the third ($n = 24$), and ‘Others’ as the fourth ($n = 29$). Importantly, the majority of choices for the second rank (communication) and the third rank (emotional/behavior) were very distinctive. These results indicate that communication issues were more significant issues than emotional/behavior issues for ELs during the pre-pandemic period. During the 2021–2022 school years, when most students returned from the COVID-19 lockdown, the rankings changed compared to the pre-pandemic period. Learning difficulties remained the top reason for ELs’ referrals ($n = 29$). However, unlike the pre-pandemic data, emotional/behavior issues ($n = 15$) became more significant in 2021–2022 than communication issues ($n = 13$). These results indicate that ELs presented more emotional/behavior issues after the pandemic lockdown, and those behaviors were significant enough to yield more special education referrals for ELs.

Finally, ‘others’ remained in the fourth rank both pre- and post-pandemic, with a very high proportion of participants choosing the option. However, this was only because the participants were asked to place the ‘Others’ category in any ranks. This indicates that the participants chose this category as the least important reason for special education referrals. Further, the results of ‘others’ actually indicate that few issues were presented for special education referrals other than learning, communication and emotional/behavior issues. In their elaboration on ‘others’, no participants offered the reasons for ‘others’.

Figure 1. Rankings of Common Reasons for ELs’ Referral (Pre-pandemic vs. 2021–2022 School

Year)

- Learning difficulties
- Emotional/behavior issues
- Communication issues
- Others



Discussion

The purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' perspectives on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on ELs' special education referral. According to the results above, the K-3 teachers perceived that the COVID-19 pandemic certainly affected how ELs learn in schools. The following sections address the study's findings in light of the research questions.

Increase in Referrals

As mentioned earlier, the overrepresentation of ELs in special education has been reported over the last decade (Zhang et al., 2014). One of the primary interests of this study was how the teachers perceive in terms of whether the special education referral was changed for ELs after the pandemic, and the results indicated that 25% of participants reported that the referral increased after the pandemic. The schools are where ELs receive considerable input for social and language areas. However, the school shutdown during the pandemic could have resulted in the loss of social interactions, which influenced ELs' English language and communication development (Sugarman & Lazarin, 2020). Lacking equitable access to resources and support would also have resulted in more challenges for ELs adjusting to schools. Thus, ELs may have more challenges when returning to school, which can result in higher numbers of special education referrals (Ortogero & Ray, 2021). After the pandemic, multiple studies indicated that school closure affected ELs, but the evidence was lacking. While the results of our study were from teachers' perspectives, this study would provide more indication that ELs had more significant struggling during the COVID-19 and eventually may be connected to special education referrals.

Factors for Struggles During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The lockdown during the pandemic heavily influenced the ELs' learning experiences.

Based on the participants' reports, this study showed that the teachers perceived that a limited English language environment was a major factor that contributed to ELs' struggles. However, the lack of social interactions and educational opportunities also could have resulted in EL's struggles in schools after they returned to school based on teachers' perspectives. In addition, during the lockdown, teachers also identified that ELs had limited family support for learning experiences, as most ELs' family members were non-native English speakers. Sugarman and Larazin (2020) stated that many immigrant families struggle to help their children with schoolwork because of their limited English or education. According to the 2018 US census, 18 percent of ELs lived in families where all members had limited English. Thus, ELs may have received limited support from their families during the lockdown. Previous EL studies have identified that prior social interactions in English environments reduce EL's struggles at school (Facella et al., 2010). Our study also indicated similarly that the teachers saw the lack of social interactions during the lockdown as an important factor that could have contributed more to ELs' struggles.

Increased Emotional/Behavior Issues of ELs

This study also examined how the teachers perceive the comparison of the major factors for struggling before and after the pandemic and found one common result. More emotional/behavior issues were reported by the teachers after the pandemic. Teachers perceived that more students exhibited emotional/behavioral issues, and more special education referrals were made regarding these issues. Hukkelberg et al. (2019) reported a correlation between behavior issues and social competence. When children have lower social competence, they exhibit more behavioral issues. However, when children increase their social competence, they can reduce their behavioral issues. The participants of this study reported that ELs lacked social

interaction during the pandemic lockdown. This would have caused a lack of social competence, resulting in more behavioral issues upon sudden exposure to social interactions with a large group after being isolated with only their family members. More importantly, teachers perceived that these behavioral issues were significant enough to become a reason for special education referrals.

Implications

This study presents some implications for EL studies. Our study shows that the teachers perceived that the pandemic lockdown had a significant impact on ELs. Remarkably, the teachers identified the limited social interaction and lack of English environments as severe impact factors that eventually yielded more special education referrals. Thus, the results of this study indicate the need for future studies to identify more statistical data on actual referral cases for ELs for pre- and post-pandemic comparisons. This study also shows that ELs emotional/behavioral issues need to be reviewed from multiple perspectives, particularly how limited social interaction influences ELs' school behaviors. Furthermore, teachers need to be informed and trained in understanding the effects of the pandemic lockdown on ELs and finding proper resources and support for ELs' adjustment to school settings. School administrators and teachers should intensify support for social and behavioral/emotional issues along with academic support, given the minimal social interactions ELs had during the COVID-19 lockdown. Finally, teacher educators in higher education settings need to address how the pandemic has affected ELs and correspondingly train pre-service teachers on remediating the impact.

Limitations and Future Studies

Although this study provides several important results that can be used in the EL study field, it also has some limitations. The sample size was too small; thus, the results are not

generalizable. The authors found that the survey distribution method limited the sample size. Instead of relying on principals to distribute the surveys to their teachers, more participants could have been recruited if the survey had been sent directly to the teachers through several teacher organizations. Also, due to the anonymous nature of the survey, the authors were unable to identify if the participants are widely spread out through the state or localized. Further, the data were collected in one state; thus, the results may not be applicable to other states. Future studies need to include a larger population with multiple states to identify the connection between ELs and special education referrals after the pandemic. Further, the survey measured the teachers' perspectives only, which may provide limited perspectives on how ELs struggled during the pandemic. Future studies should study parents' perspectives on this issue or use direct observation methods. Also, due to the small sample size, the comparison of the impact by the grade levels or the years of teachers' experience with ELs was not able. This comparison could have yielded richer data to analyze.

The survey could be developed with a more robust theoretical framework, as limited research on the impact of the pandemic was available at the time of initiating this study. However, more EL studies during the COVID-19 pandemic are now available. Therefore, future studies should design their surveys based on the literature reports of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on ELs. Also, this study only identified the factors for ELs' struggling areas. Yet, future studies need to focus on more specific reasons that caused those struggles like communication difficulties. Finally, this study only found that special education referrals increased immediately after the pandemic. However, it has been over two years since the students fully returned to in-person instruction settings. Thus, future studies need to follow up on ELs who were referred for special education after the pandemic and how much, if any, they have

recovered from the struggle or whether they are still receiving special education services.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic affected many aspects of education, and ELs were not free from its impact. The overrepresentation of ELs in special education is an ongoing issue that was worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, EL studies need to make more effort to clearly measure the exact impact and provide appropriate services to remediate ELs' struggling from the pandemic lockdown. While this study focused on special education referrals, it also provides a good rationale for why providing a linguistically rich environment and active social interaction opportunities are crucial for ELs' success in schools. When those experiences were forfeited, the consequence was severe, leading ELs to special education services. However, providing remediation for ELs to catch up with what they have missed cannot be done only by teachers. All stakeholders, including school administrators and parents, need to work together to prevent inappropriate referrals of ELs to special education.

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Translanguaging: A Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

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ABSTRACT

Translanguaging empowers non-native English speakers in the use and maintenance of their first language. Using their entire linguistic repertoire, English language learners (ELLs) will be able to express themselves better in speech and writing. Support for their home language will increase overall linguistic ability but will also help them maintain connections to their heritage and families and allow them to continue to identify with and be proud of their cultural roots. Opposition and prejudice against the use of languages other than English should be examined and rooted out for the racist ideology it is.

Keywords: Translanguaging, Assimilation Approach, Subtractive Bilingualism, Deficit-based Approach, African American Vernacular English (AAVE), Black Vernacular English (BVE)

Translanguaging is the concept of allowing and even encouraging multilingual students to use their entire linguistic repertoire, not only in the classroom but in life. It is not limited to the use of named languages and would therefore also include African American or Black Vernacular English (AAVE or BVE) (Kinloch, 2010). Translanguaging empowers students by fostering an atmosphere of respect for their language wellsprings and a positive attitude toward their origins. The word translanguaging actually came from the Welsh term “Trawsieithu,” coined by Cen Williams in 1994, which indicated strategic use of two languages for learning, in the bilingual classroom (Williams, 1996; Lewis, et al., 2012, Conteh, 2018). Instead of a narrow focus on a single language, it supports the maintenance of the language that they currently have and builds

on what they already know, meeting students where they are and then giving them the tools to be successful in life.

Purpose

The primary goal of this paper is to explain the evidence that supporting ELLs in their L1 leads to positive educational outcomes and detailing the necessary steps for that support. To understand the issues facing our language learners this research inquired, how can we, as teachers, respect and honor our student's linguistic backgrounds while encouraging the acquisition of Standard American English (SAE)? Using a pluralistic framework and a critical language policy lens in reviewing the literature, I would like to present a culturally responsive manner for support of linguistic minorities in the United States with a goal toward cultivating flourishing lives (Grant, 2012).

The Importance of Multilingualism

As a teacher of world languages, I encourage everyone to be multilingual. So often, when I am talking about being able to speak four languages, and working on a fifth, or even wanting to know more languages, people are amazed at my "abilities." Those conversations only happen in the United States because we have created a monolingual society, one in which some would proclaim that everything in our country should be English-only. Most other countries are multilingual. In Luxembourg, for example, there are 3 national languages (Luxembourgish, German, and French) and then they also learn "foreign languages" in school such as English, Portuguese, and Spanish.

The development of different pluralistic approaches has helped to break the monolingual disposition...either by inviting a plurality of languages and cultures in the classroom, or by encouraging curiosity vis-à-vis other languages and comparison of their similarities

and differences...language awareness starts to be seen as being almost as important as knowledge of a language itself (Piccardo & Payre, 2022, p. 23).

Requirements for Teaching ELLs

It is beneficial to have a bilingual teacher in the classroom who can compare the two languages to initiate metalinguistic awareness. Although some states in the U.S. require teachers to be bilingual, the majority are unable to converse in a language other than English. Due to this deficit, “many teachers lament their inability to teach linguistically diverse students” (Kinloch, 2010, p. 104), but they may just need to reconsider their attitude and pedagogical approach to working with those students. There are many monolingual teachers of ELLs. I am not proposing that they all lose their jobs because they cannot speak another language. I am proposing that all teachers who work with ELLs reevaluate their potential linguistic biases and learn how to better support their students. Teachers in the U.S are predominately White females of the middle-class, a group to which I also belong. Those demographics are significantly different from that of their students, and with their differing social-class, cultural, racial, and even linguistic differences, teachers tend to see their “students through a deficit lens that positions them as less intelligent, talented, qualified, and deserving” (Bartolomé, 2004, p. 265). Teacher education needs to address conscious and unconscious attitudes and beliefs of pre-service teachers toward language caused by the dominant ideologies in our society. In translanguaging, for the teacher “the focus moves from how many languages an individual may have at their disposal to how they use all their language resources to achieve their purposes” (Conteh, 2018, p. 446). For monolingual teachers, that can also include incorporating both body language and Google Translate to their linguistic repertoire to bridge the communication gaps.

The Path to Linguistic Marginalization

Although monolingualism has shaped our education system, we have not always been a monolingual-dominant society. In the precolonial land now known as the United States, Native Americans spoke around 300 different languages (McCarty, 2008). Original European Colonists spoke Spanish, French, German, Dutch, and English, as well as several other northern European languages. In 1664, 18 different European languages were still being utilized. Fishman & Garcia (2002) said, “There’s evidence that after 1664, the heterogeneity in language, ethnicity and religion actually increased” (pp. 20-21). By 1900, at least 600,000 children in the United States were receiving part or all of their instruction in German (Ovando, 2003). Public schools in Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, Iowa, North and South Dakota, and Washington were teaching in Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish. Dutch was used in Michigan, Polish and Italian were used in Wisconsin, and New Mexico was seen as a bilingual society as the majority spoke Spanish. Although “America” has a history of being multilingual (de Jong, 2011), colonization in the United State ultimately produced a Euro-American race and language. The Native Indigenous population was effectively reduced, subjugated, and confined to reservations. They were judged as “lesser” for their speech and way of living. “Repressive Indian language policy was part of a cultural genocide campaign designed to “civilize” Indians and contain them on reservations – part of a military strategy” (Ovando, 2003, pp. 4-5). In the 1868 Report of the Indian Peace Commissioners, they wrote “In the difference of language to-day lies two thirds of our trouble...Schools should be established, which children should be required to attend; their barbarous dialect should be blotted out and the English language substituted” (de Jong, 2011, p. 130). Slavery also contributed to language extinction of African natives as families were separated and individuals sold away from their own people so that they could not converse with

other slaves. Segregation, after slavery was abolished, continued to perpetuate the linguistic deficit due to restrictions on education (Mufwene, 2002).

Racism in Language Policy

In her seminal work, “Introducing LangCrit,” Alison Crump (2014) asks us to consider where “race, racism, and racialization intersect with issues of language, belonging, and identity” (pp. 207-208). The United States of America does not have an official language. In 1981 the first proposal to make English the official language of the United States came from California Senator Hayakawa, a Canadian born, English professor of Japanese ancestry. One of his proposals in the amendment was to do away with bilingual education (Marshall, 1986). The 1990s saw the dismantling of bilingual education (de Jong, 2011). Politicians complained about signs in other languages making English monolinguals feel like they weren’t in their “own country.” Legal battles were being fought against discrimination in hiring practices for just having an accent (Crump, 2014). These racist ideologies, implicit biases, and internal colonization within a region by dominant political, economic, social, racial/ethnic, or linguistic groups also affected race and language policy (Wei & Garcia, 2022). Our language policy has been to enforce a homogenized, monolingual society. Refugees, immigrants, or minority groups have been expected to conform to these Anglicized norms.

Confronting Societal Racism

Raciolinguistic ideologies are prevalent in our society and in our schools. These pedagogies include but are not limited to the following. 1) Standard and Academic Language or Standard American English (SAE): Claims one standard for speech and automatically “others” anyone not

following the rules of this language. This is the language of power within the United States, the language of the hegemony. 2) Linguistic Purism: Labels one variety of a language as being “purer” (more perfect) or of an intrinsically higher quality. 3) Language Hierarchies: Similarly, this ideology views certain languages as better than others or, within a language, varying registers contain levels of superiority. 4) Global English: Everyone around the globe knows English, so it is therefore the only language we need to know. 5) Having a Common Language is the Social “Glue” that will hold our nation together: The only way we can become truly “united” is if we all speak English, and one is not truly “American” or “One of Us” if they don’t speak it. 6) Native Speakerism: a neo-racist concept that English teachers must be native English speakers because they are the only ones who can speak it “right” (Wiley & Lukes, 1996). As a teacher of languages other than English (and as a native English speaker) I feel that this racist ideology also presents itself in teaching other languages: a friend from Kazakhstan teaches Japanese, a student from Romania teaches French, an American teaches Spanish...and they are looked on as “lacking” no matter how fluent they are. These racist ideologies and assimilationist rhetoric actually only perpetuate racial discord and reinforce the hegemony. As Crump (2014) said, “the practice of defining languages has had more to do with defining people and creating boundaries and hierarchies than the definition of linguistic facts” (p. 209).

In “Me and White Supremacy,” Saad (2020) speaks about tone policing as “a tactic used by those who have white privilege to silence those who do not, by focusing on the *tone* of what is being said rather than the actual *content*. Tone policing does not only have to be spoken out loud publicly. People with white privilege often tone police BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) in their thoughts or behind closed doors” (p. 229). I would propose that “Language Policing,” which Saad does not address, is similarly toxic. Judging BIPOC to be inferior based

on their ability, or inability, to use SAE is harmful. Dismissing what they say because it was not in an “appropriate register” minimalizes the input from that person. Stein et al. (2018) stated, “Most students of color continue to be treated as receptors of information, as opposed to co-constructors of knowledge through pedagogies that value their beliefs and experiences” (p. 104). Virginia Lea (2010), in her chapter on “Empowering preservice teachers, students, and families through critical multiculturalism” said,

Critical multicultural literacy helps us to focus on the multiple ways in which we inhabit hegemonic narratives of culture, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, gender, language, sexual orientation, and ability, and how these narratives inhabit us. It asks us to look for ways of contesting power and oppression as they play out in current society” (p.37).

All of these narratives feed linguistic marginalization. It can also cause internalized racism, when the marginalized group cannot see the source of a stereotype that has been imposed upon them by a white majority but begins to believe the narrative, that whites are superior and the BIPOC student will always be inferior (Huber, et al., 2006). “White supremacy is arguably the most complex social system of the last several hundred years” (Saad, 2020).

The Benefits of Bilingualism

Since the 1980s, researchers have shown that English Language Learners (ELLs) are more successful in school when they have a strong background in their home language. Maintaining their home language will not only help support their cultural identity, but literacy in the L1 has academic benefits along with increasing the students’ self-concept and metalinguistic abilities (Halle, et al., 2012). Schools and communities should support students’ bilingualism, supporting translanguaging. Vaish’s (2019) research in Singapore studied native speaking Chinese and Malay students who were learning English. The school system in Singapore has become English

dominant, using English as the medium of instruction, but English is not spoken at home and children just starting school do not come into the system with a background in English. In his conceptual paper Vaish found that translanguaging promoted metalinguistic awareness of grammar in both languages that had previously gone unnoticed.

Advocating for Change

One of the first steps in ameliorating the classroom situation is to focus on early intervention within the students' homes. Oracy and literacy at home should be encouraged. Many parents, especially those that are not fluent in SAE, feel that they are not educated enough to help their child be successful in school, but talking with a child and reading with them in their L1 on a regular basis is one of the most effective ways to help a child in their educational achievement. Those parents, who feel that they have so little to give, are actually endowed with "funds of knowledge" (González, et al., 2006) that will benefit their child's cognitive development and provide a strong base for them to build on. Many parents of emergent bilinguals also discourage their child from using their L1 at home, knowing that English is the language of power in the United States, but "teaching a child to read in a language in which the child already has a knowledge base of sounds (phonemic awareness) and word meanings (vocabulary) is more efficient than attempting to teach that child to read in a language she does not know and has no knowledge base to call on" (Gándara, 2010, p. 3).

Teachers and preservice teachers, communities, and parents should be educated in the importance of sustaining and improving first languages (L1) while a student is learning a second language (L2). Within schools in the U.S., use of languages other than English is still seen as problematic. "Although students of color are holders and creators of knowledge, they often feel

as if their histories, experiences, cultures, and languages are devalued, misinterpreted, or omitted within formal educational settings (Bernal, 2002).

Lea (2010) begins her chapter with

The primary goals of public schools have been to socialize students through an organizational process Gramsci termed “hegemony” into becoming docile, patriotic citizens who would serve the nation-state, and to prepare young people to fit in to the corporate global economy (p.33).

This hegemony encourages us to follow the dominant ideas, values, or beliefs of our society, but Ladson-Billings (1995) would remind us, following the philosophy of Paulo Freire’s conscientização, that “If school is about preparing students for active citizenship, what better citizenship tool than the ability to critically analyze the society” (p. 162)?

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Often, teachers in childcare programs do not have the preparation they need to work with children from non-English speaking families, because we have trained them for the “majority” of the students. Most research on how to best serve students who are culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) focuses on school-aged children, and predominately those from Spanish-speaking migrant families. This doesn’t help those serving refugee communities, pre-school aged children, or other linguistic minorities. Children who are CLD have statistically been less successful in school and are labeled “at risk” (Hurley, et al., 2011). Training for teaching linguistically diverse populations has consisted of “best practical strategies to ensure the academic and linguistic development” of those students without first examining their own values, beliefs, and assumptions (Bartolomé, 2004, p. 263). That “linguistic development” only applied to English. Like racism, language prejudices are so enmeshed in our society that they go unnoticed. It is only

after one has examined one's own implicit biases that they can begin to develop a culturally sensitive classroom approach to languages and provide the language resources the students need for success on exams and other assessments. Ladson-Billings (2021) studied the classrooms of exemplary teachers of African-American students and noticed that each of the teachers had 5 philosophies in common. 1) They believed all students capable of academic success, 2) believed that teaching was an art, 3) considered themselves as part of the student's community, 4) felt that teaching was a way to give back to the community, and 5) followed the Brazilian philosopher Paulo Freire's idea of teaching, such as pulling knowledge out of students. The most important resource in any classroom in any school is the teacher. They must recognize how important translanguaging is to building relationships with their students. Unconscious negative attitudes toward a student's home language will have a negative effect on student learning (Kinloch, 2010). Teachers also need to be recruited from the students' communities, so they are more likely to be willing to stay in the school corporation and so they have a similar linguistic background to the student base (Gándara, 2010).

Garcia and Kleifgen's (2019) design for translanguaging classrooms situates the teacher as a co-learner, requiring them to be "open to multiple ways of knowing, languaging, and experiencing" (p. 566). Teachers provide "extended" resources, including translanguaged texts written not only by authors, but by families and communities too. They encourage collaborative work making sure everyone has a voice. They encourage and use speech, writing, gestures, etc. to leverage translanguaging. They redesign assessments, encouraging students to express their knowledge with whatever semiotic means they have at their disposal. Their design also incorporates critical multilingual awareness, so the students can reflect on their biliteracy or bilingualism.

“The doing of language is intricately intertwined with the performativity of identity” (Crump, 2014, p. 210). ELL students want to maintain their roots, culturally and linguistically. They need to preserve them to retain their cultural identity. According to Crump it is important to emphasize individual experiences and counter stories to expose the mythoi in the dominant narrative (2014). One individual’s experience as an English language learner is found in the book, *Stealing Buddha’s Dinner*. In this memoir, Bich Nguyen (2007), a Vietnamese refugee, wanted to be able to communicate with the grandmother who had helped raise her.

I didn't know what kinds of questions I could ask her, and with no formal training in Vietnamese to bolster what I learned at home, my grasp of the language began slipping away. Large chunks of syntax dissolved overnight. It was as though the more English I read and took in from the TV and radio, the less space I had for Vietnamese. By third grade, I could actually feel the words hovering out of reach. I hoped I could learn from Noi by being near her. That if I had an affinity for Buddhism it would happen here... So I watched and followed and jotted notes as she murmured the prayer songs and bowed to the floor (p. 226).

The assimilationist, subtractive bilingualism, or deficit approaches, that for decades dominated classrooms in the United States, viewed foreign language as a problem. Paris (2012) noted a change in the 1970s and 80s where

difference approaches marked a progression to viewing the languages, literacies, and cultural ways of being of students and communities of color as equal to, but different from, the ways demanded and legitimated in school teaching and learning. Still, the goal here was to bridge toward the dominant with little attention to maintaining the heritage and community practices of students and families” (p. 94).

Through “false generosity,” teachers believed and therefore perpetuated that students from low-income families, who are of color, who are indigenous or immigrant, whose first language is not English, or who speak a dialect of English, have no cultural knowledge and practices of value, and are therefore best served by being taught to replace their existing norms and values with those of the white middle class” (Lea, 2010, p. 36).

These raciolinguistic ideologies made students feel ashamed of their roots and punished them for speaking in any language other than English in school (Wei & Garcia, 2022). It marginalized any non-White, non-English-speaking students by devaluing and almost criminalizing their home languages. Gándara & Contreras (2009) tell us that “Such negative perceptions and stereotypes can be highly detrimental for Latina/o youth, and others’ perceptions of what it means to be a Latina/o may lead Latina/o youth to reject their ethnic identities or academic achievement, either of which could negatively affect their overall well-being” (Stein et al., 2018, p. 104). Many times, bilingual students are judged based on what they are able to do in just one language or the other and deemed to have an incomplete linguistic system. When we look at the students’ abilities through a translanguaging lens, across both languages, we can get a more complete view of their abilities and knowledge. They need to be given opportunities to read and write, drawing from their own experience, knowledge base, and family histories (Hornberger & Link, 2012). English language learners don’t just come from other countries. In the movie CODA, which stands for Child of Deaf Adults, a girl who can hear, Ruby, is growing up in a family that cannot. Ruby joins the high school choir and, in a discussion with the choir director, Señor Villalobos, she is asked why she wants to sing. “How do you feel when you sing?” he wants to know. To express herself, Ruby signs. It is the language she has used to express herself since infancy. It

was the one she needed to draw upon to best convey what she wanted to say, when English words failed her. Did the teacher know sign language? No. But did he understand what she was trying to say? Absolutely. So, he didn't stop her and ask her to now put what she had signed into English; he instead immediately offered to coach and train her for auditioning to get into the prestigious Berklee College of Music (Heder, 2021).

Stein, et al. (2018) said, "the primary responsibility of educators is to ensure that all students are treated equitably" (p. 103). Nguyen (2007), in *Stealing Buddha's Dinner*, again talks about her "Americanization." She says, "In a way it makes sense that I would become enamored with a literature so symbolic of manifest destiny and white entitlement. I didn't have any nonwhite literature, anyway, to know what else I could become" (p. 196). The absence of reading materials that depicted Vietnamese children shaped who Bich would become. Her classroom lacked equity. Some believe that the American "melting pot" means we should all become homogenized (Rumbaut, 2015; Berray, 2019), but is that really what ends up happening when a child loses their cultural roots? In reality they just lose themselves as they try to fit the white mold into which they are being forced. Ladson-Billings (1995) stated that "Culturally relevant teaching requires that students maintain some cultural integrity as well as academic excellence" (p. 160).

The Education System

Educational achievement in the U.S. focuses on standardized test scores. Teachers, out of pressure from administration and community, are spending too much time focusing on test taking instead of creating effective Tier 1, researched-based, core instruction. Best practice in an effective translinguaging classroom would include general instruction, modeling, group work,

and reading, writing, and oracy in both languages. Abedi (2010) also proposes that English language learners should be tested for proficiency in their first language to assess if it would be better for them to be tested in school in their native language or in English.

Low performance of ELL students on content-based assessments may be due to a lack of understanding of the language of the test rather than a lack of content knowledge.

Researchers focusing on the assessment of ELLs believe that performance outcomes in content-based areas such as math and science are confounded with students' proficiency in English. Standardized achievement tests that have been constructed for mainstream students, but do not take into account the special needs of English learners, can present a further challenge for these students and may not provide a good indication of what they know and can accomplish (p. 50).

When visiting relatives in Vietnam as a young adult, Nguyen (2007) also says,

She and my aunt knew almost no English and I knew only rudimentary Vietnamese so we couldn't say much... I could not have prepared myself for the feeling of being a tourist in the country where I was supposed to have grown up, of being a foreigner among people who were supposed to be mine. Every girl I passed on the street was my theoretical double, a person I might have been, a life I might have had. Sitting with my aunt and grandmother, I did not feel a rush of love. I felt regret, exhaustion. I felt like an outsider, and I knew I would always be just that... I walked away from their house feeling a profound sense of failure" (p. 297).

When a student leaves a language classroom no longer proficient in their native tongue, it is not the child who has failed. It is the system who has failed them. Becoming monolingual didn't

make her more accepted in American society and, stripped of her culture, she could now no longer connect with family she ought to have been able to love.

Making Improvements in Policy

These rules of assimilation did not stem from individual school policy but from state and national legislatures, and common sentiment. Despite efforts of school desegregation, minority rights, and support of more multicultural societies (partially due to increases in global mobility and migration), we are still expecting people to give up their L1 and cultural traditions just to please a demographic that seems unable to respect those who are different from them and that cause negative self-perception in connection to their L1 (Kinloch, 2010).

In 1974, the Conference on College Composition and Communication passed the Students' Right to Their Own Language resolution which affirmed not only students' home language, but also home dialects. (Kinloch, 2010). In that same year, the Supreme Court case *Lau vs. Nichols*, a class action suit against the school system in California, began a rebirth of bilingual education, but because it did not specify the changes that needed to be made to meet the needs of the Chinese students that were being underserved, some saw it as a call to assimilate the students as quickly as possible (Ovando, 2003). With the Indigenous Languages Act (1990) and the more recent Declaration of Indigenous Language Rights (2008), Indigenous language speakers are formally, legally supported in maintaining their native language (Hornberger, 1998). These positive steps seemed to show that we were making progress. During the Obama administration, the Elementary and Secondary Education (ESEA) Act's Reauthorization allotted grants for high-quality language programs including dual-language programs and ELL support programs. Obama's focus was on aiding multilingualism. Dual-language programs provide instruction on all content areas, as the new language is taught to English speakers and native speakers of the L2

are learning English. There are currently over 3,600 Dual Language Immersion (DLI) programs in the U.S., again cause to give one hope, but a concept originally created and promoted to meet the needs of minorities has now become a function of “white property.” Schools that should have a demographic of native speakers have instead “mainstreamed” the concept, pushed out the English Learners, and now cater to a wealthy, White, majority (Valdez, et al., 2016).

Language and Identity

Language is an integral part of one’s identity, whether that language is imposed, assumed, or negotiated. Language gives us cultural ties, familial ties, and facilitates communication.

Kinloch (2010) said “one’s choice in language use, conscious or unconscious, can either allow or restrict entrance into certain conversations and communities” (p. 106). As educators we should not be making those decisions for children that will ultimately alienate them from their home culture, but we *are* responsible to teach them the language that will allow them entrance into “certain conversations and communities.” In *Stealing Buddha’s Dinner*, Bich takes that responsibility upon herself. “It occurred to me that I had always had choices: to go to parties or not. To call my friend Loan or not. To keep up my Vietnamese or not.” ((Nguyen, 2007, p. 144) In reality, a child is not capable of understanding the ramifications of losing their native tongue, or deciding not to learn English in a monolingual country. They cannot easily negotiate their self-identity, especially in a society who is very eager to tell them who they are or who they should become.

Conclusion

I had a conversation recently with a graduate student from Sweden. She asked me what my area of study was and when I told her “World Language Education” she asked me to explain what that means. After telling her that it was to educate future teachers of world languages, she

clarified. “But what does “world languages” mean, and why do you call it that?” What it means is any language other than English. We also refer to them as “foreign” languages, but it is thought that the more politically correct version should not include the word “foreign.” She told me that in Sweden they just call them “languages,” and I realized once more how English-centric we still are by “othering” any language that is not English, no matter what we call it.

English is the only language of power in our country (Thomas, 1996); that is an unfortunate reality. Being able to use it effectively might help marginalized minorities navigate our white supremacist landscape but that should not happen at the expense of losing their native tongue. Racism is an “institutional force that maintains and perpetuates racist ideologies rooted in white supremacy” (Huber, et al., 2006, p. 185). Raciolinguistic ideologies are also part of the White hegemony. Encouraging translanguaging is encouraging multilingualism. In my opinion, all citizens of the United States should be (at least) bilingual. Students who could have the opportunity to be fully bilingual because they have a home language other than English, should not be inhibited by governmental legislation, administrative policy, or classroom suppression. Students who have a home language of English should not be inhibited from becoming fully bilingual by not offering opportunities for language learning in the classroom (but not to the extent that those linguistic opportunities are appropriated to only benefit the White majority). If we are going to be responsive to the needs of our students, we must encourage, even fight for, the valuing of our multiethnic, multilingual society.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Melinda White has an affinity for learning languages, teaching, and working with children. After benefitting from White privilege, she feels it is important to serve and advocate for marginalized populations and for those in need. A veteran teacher of Spanish and French, for

13 years at the high school level, she is now pursuing her PhD in World Language Education. She is also the program coordinator for Purdue's teacher education program in World Languages. Melinda received her B.A. in Spanish Secondary Education and her M.A. in Applied Linguistics and SLA.

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Service-Learning in an Increasingly Global Context

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ABSTRACT

Service-learning (S-L), or community-engaged learning, refers to a project-based pedagogical approach that addresses community needs through coursework tied to academic, social/civic and personally impactful learning objectives. Originally emerging from research and practice in U.S. higher education, its inclusion in K-12 education in the US and international contexts has gained traction in recent years. Nevertheless, reports of implementation and effectiveness in international education are lacking. This article presents the impact of a two-week US Department of State-funded service-learning exchange program for 25 EFL teachers from 24 countries spanning the globe. Through academic sessions, site visits, and cultural activities led by an interdisciplinary team at a major Midwestern research university, participants were equipped to use S-L in contextually appropriate ways for the teaching of both English and vital 21st-century life skills. The authors begin with an overview of S-L and a research-based account of its benefits for holistic learning, and especially for its application in English education. Following a description of the exchange program, the piece demonstrates program impact by highlighting post-evaluation participant reflections on selected aspects of S-L in English language education. The authors suggest implications for the future of S-L in a global context.

Keywords: *service-learning, community-engaged learning, intercultural, international, global education, pedagogical approaches, sustainability, exchange programs*

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We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there is such a thing as being too late. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action. (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

Martin Luther King, Jr., spoke these words at a time of great civil unrest in the ongoing quest for true equality in American society (King, Jr., 1967). As we read these words, we may find ourselves drawn to our present time, and to the present struggle humanity faces against, for example, a changing climate and a resistance by so many to spring to action. We use climate

change here to point to just one of the many challenges humanity faces if we wish to sustain our world. In 2015, the United Nations established 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are considered to be a “universal call-to-action to end poverty, protect the planet, and improve the lives and prospects of humankind, and it is only by working cooperatively that we can make any headway” (“Sustainable Development Goals”).

It is in this spirit that the SDGs were incorporated into a United States Department of State-funded exchange program on the topic of service-learning (S-L) for international teachers of English held this spring on the campus of Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). Through two weeks of academic sessions, site visits, and cultural activities led by an interdisciplinary team at IUPUI, and administered by the International Center for Intercultural Communication (ICIC) in the IU School of Liberal Arts, 25 teachers from 24 countries spanning the globe learned the basics of teaching 21st-century skills of critical thinking, collaboration, and global awareness, through S-L. This article is co-authored by the Lead Instructor on the exchange program and a participant from Kolkata, India, with an appendix of participant reflections from seven other participants who have already begun to implement S-L in their own contexts, including K-12 and higher education. This collaborative piece demonstrates the potential that a S-L approach, one founded in U.S. university settings, has for making a strong impact in teaching and serving our local and global communities.

As teachers, we understand that sitting still is never a solution. Throughout history, educators have been at the forefront of societal change, and today, even while certain political factions attempt to strip teachers of their valuable influence in young lives, the call remains for ENL/TESOL/EFL educators in Indiana, across the United States, and around the world, to remain strong in our commitment to building a knowledgeable and skilled next generation with

the motivation to work towards the change we need in the world. How, though, can teachers who must use a standardized or mandated English curriculum, or with test requirements staring them in the face, infuse classroom learning with projects that hold real-world implications and encourage motivation and passion in students? Introducing students to the power they hold to effect lasting change through a service-learning approach may hold an answer.

Literature Review

What Is Service-Learning and What Are Its Benefits?

Service-learning (S-L), also referred to as community-engaged learning in literature and curricula, refers to a project-based pedagogical approach that addresses community needs through coursework tied to socially and personally impactful learning objectives. Bringle and Clayton (2012) define S-L as:

a course or competency-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in mutually identified service activities that benefit the community, and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility. (p. 105)

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACCC) describes S-L as “combining community service with academic instruction, focusing on critical, reflective thinking and personal and civic responsibility” (Prentice & Robinson, 2010, p. 1). Serving community needs and student reflection upon the action, leading to desired outcomes, is at the heart of these and other definitions. The beauty of S-L for the authors of this article and many instructors, though, is that it provides students with an opportunity to learn while they make a real difference in their world. McLeod (2017) emphasizes the reciprocal structure of S-L, describing it as students

applying “classroom-acquired skills in a real community, taking real responsibility for a real product with real consequences” (p. 20).

S-L has most often been encountered in university education, appearing alongside other common high-impact practices (HIPs), such as collaborative assignments, internships, and various forms of community-based learning. Still, it has made inroads in K-12 education, with the potential to effect strong learning outcomes and positive attitudes towards community engagement. Specifically, S-L is well suited for helping students at any age, in any discipline, and in a variety of educational contexts, to develop strong 21st century skills, for example, the 4Cs of critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity; cultural and global awareness; social and emotional learning; and other so-called “soft skills” that students need now and in their future employment.

In short, a considerable body of literature surrounding S-L points to its threefold benefits (Bringle & Clayton, 2021):

1. **Academic learning.** Course learning objectives that lead to a deepening knowledge of the subject are met.
2. **Personal growth.** Students develop their identity and sense of self, along with 21st century skills and social/emotional skills, as they reflect on coursework and S-L activities.
3. **Civic learning:** Students develop knowledge and skills for being informed, active members of their society.

Prentice & Robinson (2010) present evidence of S-L’s effect on achieving specific learning outcomes, across categories of academic learning, personal growth, and civic learning, in higher education. Their team studied student (n=2,317) and faculty (n=68) experiences with

and attitudes towards S-L in surveys and focus groups across multiple higher education institutions in various contexts across the United States. The study compared six categories of learning outcomes (critical thinking; communication; career and teamwork; civic responsibility; global understanding and citizenship; and academic development and educational success) in a group of students who participated in S-L versus a group who took comparable classes with no S-L component. Across all outcomes, those who participated in S-L scored statistically higher than those who did not receive instruction via S-L. Results of focus groups with students and faculty were equally in favor of a S-L approach. Students and faculty alike reported that SL aids students in learning the required curriculum and that it teaches students how to react critically and logically in real-life situations. In other words, Prentice & Robinson's work shows the power of S-L to increase both academic and 21st century skills.

Striking results have also been found in K-12 settings. In a research study funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service, and described in Newman, Dantzler, and Coleman (2015), more than 6,000 at-risk middle school students in 20 schools in Alabama and Georgia engaged in S-L projects that were integrated into their STEM coursework. One middle school, for example, served the community and met 7th grade science standards by working with community partners to prepare, construct, and contribute plants to a community greenhouse. In a participating junior high school, 420 students developed partnerships with the local Water Board and County Health Department to test wells, city water systems, creeks, rivers, and ponds to bring awareness to water quality and provide information to residents in a county plagued by high cancer rates attributed in part to contaminated water. In terms of student outcomes, data from surveys and a variety of qualitative sources showed notable gains in academic achievement and engagement, civic responsibility, and resiliency. Newman, Dantzler, and Coleman report of

two schools in the study who showed 20% increases in one year's time on standardized tests of science and reading.

Service-Learning in English Education

While the multifold benefits of S-L in general may seem clear now, the question may remain as to why S-L should be so well-suited to the English language classroom. In teaching English as a second or foreign language, perennial issues arise surrounding authentic language for communication, student motivation for learning, and skills integration. When students are faced with real-world problems, as is the case with S-L, the language that students need to communicate with each other in the classroom and with community partners becomes central to the purpose of problem solving. Language no longer comes out of textbooks or appears as “noticing exercises” on the board or shared virtually. Instead, language has tangible meaning, and students are motivated to learn because they become invested in the project through preparation, action, discussion, and iterative reflection. The integration of English communication skills with the “nonacademic” skills required for successful administration and completion of a service project, and the use of English for real-world applications, makes S-L attractive to many English educators and to students alike. In learning to communicate and collaborate, and even to get creative and become critical thinkers in English, language learning takes on a deeper meaning for those involved (McLeod, 2017).

In a university context, Ene and Orlando (2022) conducted a study of international students of English in an IUPUI course, “Academic English Reading: Perspectives on Culture/Society.” As the course name implies, goals included developing students’ English for Academic Purposes (EAP) reading skills, increasing cultural understanding, and developing greater civic-mindedness, goals that fold in well to the integration of a S-L approach. In the

course, students engaged in readings, participated in discussions, conducted research, presented, and reflected upon the course's service-oriented themes. At the midpoint of the semester, they conducted short-term S-L, providing a real-world connection to their course readings.

Community service was conducted at urban gardens, a local food pantry, refugee relief organizations, and an autism training and resource center. As a capstone project to the course, students were required to perform a critical reading of a 2000-word article on the course topic, perform reading-related tasks, prepare presentations, and blend S-L experience and reflections into discussions and presentations.

In the study, Ene and Orlando compare learning outcomes of 143 international students over 8 semesters. Specifically, the researchers sought to understand the differences in outcomes between students whose projects were instructor-directed and those students who were fully autonomous in choosing their project and conducting service. The study found between-group differences in terms of learning about the theme; attitude towards service; understanding connections between social issues, service, and the community; developing an ability to work with others; and making gains in language skills. The most notable finding of this study, in terms of the current paper, is that regardless of whether S-L was "other-directed" or "self-directed," students made gains across all categories. As McLeod (2017) contends:

no service-learning project is ever truly a failure, especially if it is an English-focused project, because already the effort by the students to understand a community need and formulate a project plan to address it consolidates their language skills in practical ways... (p. 21)

In Ene and Orlando, regardless of the approach, S-L benefitted these learners of EAP.

Over the past two decades, interest in the S-L approach has been growing in international settings. Clayton, Bringle, and Hatcher (2013) point to S-L organizational networks in Australia, Canada, and Latin America, as well as an increasing literature of regional case studies (Annette, 2005; Badat, 2004; McIlrath, Farrel, Hughes, Lillis, & Lyons, 2007) and cross-cultural comparisons (Hatcher & Erasmus, 2008; Iverson & Espenschied-Relly, 2010; Thomson, Smith-Tolken, Naidoo, & Bringle, 2011). International educators of English have also recognized S-L as an opportunity to teach English language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) while drawing students' attention and action to the particular needs of specific communities and contexts.

A Service-Learning Exchange at IUPUI

Context and Setting

In March 2023, the International Center for Intercultural Communication (ICIC) at IUPUI was chosen as one of five U.S. universities to host a two-week international teacher exchange, "Using Service-Learning to Teach 21st Century Skills to English Language Learners." The program's primary objective was to strengthen the capacity of international EFL teachers to use S-L as an approach to teaching language and developing a variety of interpersonal, social-emotional, and civic awareness skills in their students. The program was funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Office of English Language Programs (ECA/A/L) and administered by FHI 360 (a Washington, D.C.-based NGO) through a cooperative agreement for the English Access Microscholarship Program (EAMP). The EAMP, or Access, is a Department of State program that creates opportunities for promising, economically disadvantaged students, aged 13 to 20, to receive English language skills in their home countries. In this S-L exchange, program participants were alumni of one or more

ECA/A/L educational exchanges, and many were teachers in Access programs. They were selected for the exchange by the Department of State Regional English Language Officer in their world region.

Program Participants

Participants were a group of 25 EFL teachers (17 female, 8 male) from 24 countries. Regions represented include Central and South America; Northern and Central Europe; Africa; the Middle East; Central, South, and Southeast Asia; and Oceania. Participant years of teaching EFL ranged from 0-5 years (n=2), 6-10 years (n=11), 11-15 years (n=6), 16-20 years (n=2), and >20 years (n=4). The majority (n=13) of participants taught in K-12 settings; others taught in private language schools (n=6), in university settings (n=4), and in the national ministry of education (n=1). One was self-employed. Most had basic familiarity with the topic of service-learning, and 5 had recently participated in a Department of State S-L themed virtual exchange.

Program Description

Program Design and Objectives

The academic program consisted of 36 hours of classroom-based training, over three thematic modules designed around aspects of S-L, development and assessment of such programs, and incorporation of the 4Cs of 21st century skills within service projects. Led by an Academic Director and Lead Instructor from ICIC, participants gained insights from an interdisciplinary group of IUPUI faculty, including from the School of Liberal Arts, Institute for Engaged Learning, Office of International Affairs, and the School of Education's Urban Education Department.

Adhering to the funder's requirements, the program was designed primarily to strengthen international EFL teachers' knowledge of using S-L to teach 21st century skills in the English

classroom. Beyond this, the program leaders sought to have participants examine the humanistic potential of service-based learning, particularly as related to UN SDGs, including gender equality and climate sustainability, and examining its application in both K-12 and higher education, and in-person and virtual environments. The importance of developing 21st century skills, including global awareness and citizenship, the 4Cs, and technology, were emphasized throughout the program. By presenting these topics through the academic program and creating opportunities for observation of S-L and community-engaged learning in practice at schools and community organizations in the metropolitan area, the program was designed for participants to develop strategies to introduce S-L in their classrooms to effect local and global change.

With the aim of preparing participants to implement S-L projects in their contexts, the IUPUI team used a four-stage approach to S-L project development, one rooted in backward course design, from the National Youth Leadership Council (National Youth Leadership Council, 2021). The stages include: 1) identifying desired youth learning outcomes (academic standards, civic growth, and 21st century skills); 2) determining evidence of learning (artifacts and assessments); 3) facilitating the learner project experience (through the “IPARD” sub-framework: Investigation, Planning and Preparation, Action, Reflection, and Demonstration); and 4) self-assessing the project (e.g., what outcomes were achieved, what worked and what needs to be improved, and what opportunities came out of the experience).

The program additionally emphasized the importance of critical reflective practice in S-L. According to Hatcher & Bringle (1997), “critical reflection” provides students with a way to examine a service experience through guided questions and to make meaning of that experience, drawing connections between the service and the desired course outcomes. The team incorporated the DEAL model into program curriculum (Ash & Clayton, 2009). In short, DEAL

provides guidance for teachers in developing reflective prompts for students to *describe* the experience, to *examine* the experience in terms of learning objectives, and to *articulate learning* for each objective (Center for Service and Learning, 2020).

Program Implementation

Exchange participants arrived on March 3 with varying familiarity with S-L, as determined by a pre-arrival needs analysis. Over the course of the first two academic modules, they developed a common understanding of 21st century skills and global competency and an understanding of what S-L is and how it can benefit both the acquisition of English and development of students' critical thinking and interpersonal skills. The third module turned to the design and implementation of S-L opportunities. To facilitate exchange participant transition from S-L "in theory" to S-L "in practice," the Lead Instructor relied on a combination of readings and discussions, guest presentations from IUPUI faculty, and site visits to a variety of educational sites that use S-L in their coursework. Examples of program elements are described in the following section.

Sample Workshops and Activities. A highly beneficial session for exchange participants, in terms of starting S-L from scratch, developing partnerships, developing a syllabus, and assessing student learning, was a presentation from Dr. Keiko Kuriyama, Professor of Japanese in the Department of World Languages and Cultures at IUPUI. In her presentation, she shared the development of an undergraduate course, "Japanese Service Learning." The course was designed to provide students with the opportunity to work with the Indianapolis Japanese community by tutoring local Japanese children, assisting them with English and homework, and volunteering in English-conversation programs for Japanese people in the city. By sharing the course syllabus, logistics for running the course, and examples of reflective

assignments, the presenter equipped exchange participants with a clear example of how one teacher can implement service-learning from the ground up.

In another workshop, presented by faculty in Urban Teacher Education at IUPUI's School of Education, the value of community partners in developing S-L initiatives was emphasized and valued by exchange participants. In her presentation, "Critical Service Learning: A Social Justice Approach for Change," Associate Professor Cristina Santamaría Graff expanded the scope of the Bringle & Clayton (2012) definition by introducing participants to a critical service-learning approach put forth by Mitchell (2008). Mitchell defines critical S-L as an approach to S-L that aims to redistribute power, develop authentic relationships in the classroom and community, and adopt a social change perspective. Santamaría Graff went on to describe how such an approach was developed as a response to traditional S-L, which is viewed succinctly as "learning to serve" and "serving to learn," and how critical S-L positions social justice at the heart of interactions between students and community members when service is conducted. It goes on to question S-L projects where the positionality, power, and privilege of the "serving" party is not examined.

An example that resonated deeply with exchange participants questioned the critical position of a didactic example of S-L from National Youth Leadership Council's (2021, p. 8)

"Getting Started in Service-Learning":

Planting flowers at a local park is service.

Studying erosion is learning.

Researching native grasses and working with master gardeners to control erosion at a local park is service-learning.

Santamaría Graff led participants to think on this example from a critical S-L perspective by asking such questions as:

- Whose land is considered “native,” and if this land belongs to a historically marginalized community, are they in full agreement with the actions being taken?
- How has the partnership been established? Is it mutually beneficial? Have agreements that are transparent been made before the “service” begins?
- What plans are in place to maintain and sustain what is needed for the native grasses to continue to thrive?
- Do all parties involved leave with a sense of fulfillment, or do some feel exploited or taken advantage of?

In one program activity, exchange participants saw an example of S-L in the community through a site visit to ProAct Indy, an Indianapolis nonprofit serving diverse and at-risk youth. Founder and CEO Derrin Slack led an interactive session that introduced participants to the ways ProAct Indy crosses social, racial, and economic boundaries through meaningful service projects and social equity training. During the second week of the exchange, exchange participants visited the Indiana Statehouse for ProAct’s “Power Up! Youth Symposium,” where they heard presentations from ProAct youth, who shared their service projects around a social issue impacting their communities with a wider audience. Through this experience, participants saw with their own eyes the impact that S-L has on communities and young learners. Further, following the IPARD framework, they saw a clear example of how S-L projects and learning can be “demonstrated” and celebrated.

Final Project. A motto that emerged over the course of the program was to “start small and keep dreaming big dreams,” and for their final projects, participants were asked to flesh out

their emerging dreams for using S-L in their contexts. They were asked to provide a description of the course in which they would implement S-L; learning objectives for the course, e.g., academic skills, personal growth, civic learning, 21st century skills, global awareness, technological skills; a plan for student assessment; a description of the S-L component, following the IPARD model; a sample lesson plan embedded within the IPARD model; and a plan for dissemination of knowledge learned in the exchange program. In the final days of the program, each participant presented their project, involving the instructors and other participants as evaluators.

Program Evaluation

Did the participants grow in knowledge and depart IUPUI confident in their ability to implement S-L in their contexts? One participant described her experience in the post-program evaluation:

It is amazing how the program led me from a very vague and confused understanding of service-learning into preparing a well-structured project plan in just two weeks thanks to the rich academic program and the daily workshops, presentations and panels facilitated by great scholars and highly qualified experts. I learned from different departments of IUPUI, ranging from language and culture to computer science. This has allowed me personally to look at service learning from different perspectives and helped me get a better grasp of the concept.

In the weeks and months that followed, the WhatsApp group that had connected participants, instructors, and program facilitators throughout the two-week exchange continued to bubble with excitement as one by one, participants began putting their dreams for S-L into action. In October 2023, five participants presented at the 9th Intercultural Rhetoric and

Discourse Conference, held at IUPUI, to report on the progress they had made in implementing S-L in their own classrooms as a result of the exchange. Three participants will join the Lead Instructor on the exchange to share their experiences and successes in implementation at the 2024 TESOL International Convention and Expo in Tampa, FL.

Participant Reflections on the Global Potential of Service-Learning

As part of the post-program evaluation process, participants were asked to reflect on various aspects of S-L that had emerged during the exchange program. Eight exchange participants, including the participating co-author, submitted reflective pieces. (These are included in their entirety in the Appendix.) In this section, brief commentary will be presented on the reflection themes, and selected excerpts from the contributors will be included.

Convincing Students and Administration of Service-Learning's Value

Ayna Atakishiyeva teaches English to high school students from several schools in her region near Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan. She does this as leader of the Green Club at the Baku American Centre, where she uses S-L as an approach to addressing ecological issues and empowering 13- to 16-year-old students from different parts of the city of Baku to become environmentally conscious and engaged citizens. In reflecting upon the challenge of convincing students and administrators of the value of S-L, Ayna says that she “‘sold’ the S-L approach to [her] students by explaining its tangible benefits to their community and themselves.” She explained to them that S-L can translate textbook theories into real-world impact, and she did all she could to connect S-L to their passions, showing them “how it offers a meaningful way to be aware of their community’s problems and how to help them.” Ayna’s administration was already onboard with the idea of S-L, she says, offering strong support for her project, “Earth Is Our Home,” which spread awareness and action related to water conservation throughout the capital

city. Ayna comments on the “profound effect” that S-L has in “empowering students to become active, empathic contributors to their community while acquiring invaluable skills for their future endeavors.”

The Value of Community Partnerships

Michael Sihombing is a Lecturer in the English Language Education Study Program at the University of Pelita Harapan in Jakarta, Indonesia. In his reflection, he describes a S-L partnership between his department and the local police authorities to provide English education to children at a regional orphanage. He focuses on the mutual benefit that this service provides, both to the student teachers who gain “valuable teaching experience, honing their skills in a real-world setting,” and to the Sector Police, who benefit in terms of public image by being a “caring and active community partner.” The partnership’s greatest benefit to community, however, is the “positive impact on the orphanage and the children it serves” through the English language education they receive. Michael suggests that these classes “broaden their future opportunities and also allow them to engage more meaningfully in the global community.”

The Power of Reflection in Service-Learning

Karen Zamora, an English teacher in Costa Rica, teaches students in vulnerable conditions through a program called +Empleo. Through her teaching, these students gain access to better education and work conditions through the English they learn, in addition to the soft and technical skills acquired. In her post-program submission, she discusses the impact of reflection on S-L educational outcomes. She quotes Rodgers (2002), who defines reflection as “a meaning-making process that moves a learner from one experience into the next with deeper understanding of its relationships with and connections to other experiences and ideas” (p. 3). In terms of language skills, Karen highlights the impact that reflection has on developing

vocabulary, grammar, and overall language proficiency through descriptions and analysis of students' service experiences. As they discuss their reflections in class, students learn to “articulate ideas clearly, engage in meaningful conversations, and build their confidence in speaking the language.”

Olivia Mondal teaches at a private girls' school in Kolkata, India, and she also wrote about the power of reflection in S-L, especially in terms of increased cultural understanding. Her students include high schoolers, mature learners, first-generation scholars, and marginalized communities, and she says that they all “benefit from her use of S-L and storytelling to enhance language acquisition.” The S-L project she discusses in her reflection is an “Eco-Yoddha,” or “Eco Warriors” initiative, a three-month program with the “primary objective of fostering awareness regarding littering and effective waste management within their respective communities.” Through the program and through reflection upon the service work, Olivia points to student growth in vocabulary enrichment, critical thought and composition, oratory competence, and global awareness. She comments that the “inclusion of student leaders from marginalized backgrounds in such projects promoted cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding,” and that “reflecting upon their experiences and interactions enabled the students to...appreciate the cultural nuances inherent within their community.”

Service-Learning and Community Transformation

Kateryna (Kate) Filatova, a freelance instructor of English from Ukraine, and Augusto Wah-Lung, who has taught many years through the Access program in Honduras, both spoke to the power of S-L in terms of its potential for transformation. Augusto believes S-L to be an educational means to transforming lives, noting that “skill-centered projects have opened [student] minds to experience real situations outside their classrooms.” In one of these projects,

Augusto's students volunteered as bilingual translators for U.S. medical brigades providing assistance in small mountain towns near their city. He says that his students see more successful outcomes because "they have experienced the humanistic part of education," and with this understanding they have the potential to "transform their institution, their homes, their communities, and even their country."

Kate teaches Ukrainian high schoolers through the Access program and another Department of State-funded program, "Learning English, Overcoming Stress." In this program, she teaches, virtually, by current necessity, a group of internally and externally displaced teenagers from occupied Ukrainian territories. She aims to transform her students by equipping them with social and emotional learning, with resilience in stressful times, and with confidence through language learning. As part of the course, she asks students to "tell stories about their life during the war" and to interview friends and parents "to better understand their mental state, exhibit empathy, and plan post-war recovery." Kate knows that this approach to S-L improves communication and interpersonal skills as her students listen to other narratives, and both she and her students believe that the project will have a positive impact on their communities and perhaps even the world. Kate says that the stories her students are telling "might change the perception of the war by foreigners, helping them to see that the people in them are real witnesses of war and not mere strangers in the news."

Suitability of Service-Learning for Environments with Limited Resources

Mwanaidy Mwacha teaches in the Department of Language Studies in Kichangachui Secondary School in Kigoma, Tanzania. She reflects on S-L as both pedagogically and cost-effective. For example, she has observed that teachers who have implemented S-L at her school have found the approach to be "user-friendly and very inexpensive." She believes that it is a

“great tool for under-resourced environments” and that her school can “use [the] community as a resource for learning.” Mwanaidy encourages other educators in Tanzania, and throughout Africa, to integrate S-L into public school curriculum.

Service-Learning and Sustainability

Jalel Marmouri is an EFL instructor at Taif University in Tunisia. One theme running through the IUPUI exchange was the potential for S-L to confront one or more United Nations Sustainable Development Goals at a local level to support global sustainability concerns. Jalel believes S-L to be an ideal approach for integrating SDGs in education and that teachers can use it to encourage students to be “active global citizens, who care about finding sustainable solutions to the issues in their society.” He goes further to say that through S-L, students have the power to “raise awareness of community members vis-à-vis the SDGs and promote a positive attitude toward achieving these goals.” In his own culture, he encourages schools to work with community members and local organizations to battle such issues as “gender discrimination and stereotypes, or women’s participation in political life.”

Conclusion

As participant reflections suggest, and as research increasingly notes, S-L is a powerful force that transcends borders, cultures, and languages. S-L has the potential in any region to ignite a transformative flame that can change the world while simultaneously nurturing the flames of English language learning.

In its essence, S-L intertwines the values of compassion and education, creating a symbiotic relationship between learners and communities in need. As students engage in meaningful service projects, they not only offer their time and skills but also gain a profound understanding of the world's multifaceted issues. This immersion in real-world challenges fosters

empathy, humility, and a genuine desire to drive positive change, while at the same time building such highly needed skills as critical thinking and collaboration.

In the realm of English language learning, S-L acts as a bridge connecting the classroom to the wider global stage. It serves as a living laboratory where learners are compelled to communicate, understand, and empathize with diverse communities. Language is no longer a mere tool for self-expression; it becomes the conduit for building bridges and dismantling barriers. Learners are pushed to go beyond textbooks, as they navigate the complexities of real-life situations, further honing their language skills in the process. They see an authentic need for English language use, and they understand the power it has to effect change.

Imagine a world where S-L is seamlessly integrated into the curriculum of schools and universities worldwide. Every student, regardless of their background, will engage in meaningful service experiences that transcend borders. This global network of empowered learners will collaborate on projects that address our most pressing challenges: climate change, poverty, healthcare disparities, and beyond.

In this future, S-L will be amplified by technology, connecting learners with peers from different corners of the world, transcending language barriers and fostering a deeper sense of global citizenship. English language learning, in this context, will become a vehicle for creating a common language of understanding, empathy, and collaboration among a diverse tapestry of individuals.

Service-learning is not merely a concept; it's a catalyst for positive change in our world, a beacon of hope for a brighter future. It reminds us that our interconnectedness is a source of strength and that learning is most powerful when it is purposeful. As we embark on this journey

towards a future where S-L is the standard, we envision a world where every act of service is a step towards a more harmonious, inclusive, and linguistically diverse planet.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Ms. Olivia Mondal is an English language educator at St. John's Diocesan Girls' School in Kolkata, India, and she is active in the U.S. Department of State's English Access Microscholarship Program as both a teacher and mentor. She was one of 25 international teachers on this service-learning exchange program.

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Appendix

Convincing Students and Administration of Service-Learning's Value (Ayna Atakishiyeva, Azerbaijan)

After completing a 2-week intensive professional development program at IUPUI, applying service-learning (S-L), poorly known in our education system, to my teaching has been a fulfilling and enlightening journey. Relying on my experience and knowledge that I gained at IUPUI, I guided my Green Club members, 13–16-year-old students from diverse schools in my city, through a S-L project, and I witnessed remarkable growth in their 21st century skills as they collaborated on real community issues. Through hands-on engagement with a local environmental concern, they improved their critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills—essential 21st century competencies. I realized that traditional classroom settings sometimes fall short of imparting practical skills and real-world awareness. Thus, integrating S-L has become a natural progression. This experience is a testament to the profound effect of S-L in empowering students to become active, empathic contributors to their community while acquiring invaluable skills for their future endeavors.

I “sold” the S-L approach to my students by explaining its tangible benefits to their community and themselves. Also, I highlighted how it translates textbook theories into real-world impact, enhancing their 5Cs (communication, collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and culture). Moreover, I connected S-L to their passions, demonstrating how it offers a meaningful way to be aware of their community’s problems and how to help them. Showing S-L as a way to understand others, get involved, and, most importantly, positively impact their community.

Convincing my institution's administration to embrace S-L in my teaching was not overly challenging. The administrative team of the Baku American Centre, where I lead the Green Club, offered strong support for the S-L project and my other club activities. They even collaborated with the US Embassy to arrange a workshop. During this workshop, I had the opportunity to cascade my experience and knowledge with educators from different parts of the country, contributing to the broader advancement of S-L practices in our education system.

The Value of Community Partnerships (Michael Sihombing, Indonesia)

In the bustling metropolis of Jakarta, Indonesia, a unique partnership has formed between one of the Sector Police units and a local orphanage, bringing forth a multitude of benefits for all parties involved. This collaborative effort has not only bridged the gap between the police force and the community but has also improved the education and English language skills of the orphans and children nearby.

For university students studying education, this partnership is a golden opportunity to put theory into practice. Through volunteering at the orphanage, they gain valuable teaching experience, honing their skills in a real-world setting. This hands-on approach enhances their understanding of pedagogical concepts, making them more effective educators in the future. It's a win-win, as the students contribute to the community while refining their own capabilities.

The Sector Police also reap rewards from this initiative. By supporting these educational endeavors, they invest in the development of human resources within their jurisdiction. Their involvement fosters a positive image of the police force as a caring and active community partner, strengthening the bond between law enforcement and the people they serve.

Furthermore, the skills acquired by these students may one day benefit the police force itself, as some of these individuals may choose to pursue careers in law enforcement.

Perhaps the most heartening outcome of this partnership is the positive impact on the orphanage and the children it serves. English proficiency is a highly sought-after skill in the modern world, and the collaboration enables orphans and children in the area to improve their language skills. This not only broadens their future opportunities but also allows them to engage more meaningfully in the global community. It's a life-changing opportunity for these young learners, opening doors they may never have dreamed of.

In conclusion, the partnership between the Sector Police and the local orphanage in Jakarta illustrates the power of community collaboration. It transforms the lives of university students, enhances the capabilities of the police force, and empowers underprivileged children with valuable skills. This story stands as a testament to the transformative potential of partnerships in even the most unexpected places, showcasing the far-reaching benefits of community engagement and cooperation.

The Power of Reflection in Service-Learning (Karen Zamora, Costa Rica)

The whole process of service-learning brings a variety of experiences to the participants, and both the students and the members of the community become aware of the cooperation that can bring benefits and learning through the project or projects involved. These experiences can only be recognized by reflecting on all the steps carried out, the skills developed, and the learning obtained. Rodgers (2002) defines reflection as “a meaning-making process that moves a learner from one experience into the next with deeper understanding of its relationships with and connections to other experiences and ideas. It is the thread that makes continuity of learning possible, and ensures the progress of the individual and, ultimately, society. It is a means to essentially moral ends” (p.3). Reflective activities encourage students to articulate their thoughts, experiences, and insights in English.

As for English language and critical skills, reflection enhances students' vocabulary, grammar, and overall language proficiency as they describe, analyze, and interpret their service experiences. They learn to articulate ideas clearly, engage in meaningful conversations, and build their confidence in speaking the language. Reflective processes encourage students to analyze their service experiences, connect them to theoretical concepts studied before, and synthesize their understanding of the topic and context. This cultivates critical thinking as students evaluate the impact of their actions and relate them to broader social and cultural contexts.

Rodgers (2002) also highlights that "reflection needs to happen in community, in interaction with others, and requires attitudes that value the personal and intellectual growth of oneself and of others" (p.4). This statement brings out the importance of community in the reflection process. There is no reflection if there is no community to share with or to learn from. Considering this, service-learning itself is a reflective process in which the members involved become one in the sense of constructing new reflective experiences. English language programs worldwide are opening a world of self-awareness through service-learning projects.

The Power of Reflection in Service-Learning (Olivia Mondal, India)

The student leaders engaged in the "Eco-Yoddha" (Eco Warriors) initiative for a duration of three months, with the primary objective of fostering awareness regarding littering and effective waste management within their respective communities. This project afforded them the opportunity to forge collaborative partnerships with other local entities and orchestrate a series of impactful activities. These activities encompassed the revitalization of a weathered community wall through the medium of graffiti art, the cultivation of trees within the community, spearheading a comprehensive cleanliness campaign, and culminating in the organization of an Eco Art Fair. At the Eco Art Fair, these student leaders assumed the role of entrepreneurs,

establishing stalls wherein they showcased and vended an array of art products meticulously crafted from reclaimed waste materials through the practices of upcycling and recycling.

The reflective process embedded within Eco-Yoddha served as a pivotal means to support English language education in a formal context. This multifaceted project offered an array of opportunities to reinforce English language skills.

- *Vocabulary Enrichment*: By immersing themselves in research endeavors and eco-conscious activities, students encountered an extensive lexicon specific to environmental concerns. Through the process of reflection, they consolidated and expanded their grasp of these specialized terms, thereby augmenting their English language proficiency.
- *Critical Thought and Composition Skills*: The reflective process stimulated the student leaders to engage in critical contemplation of their involvement in the project. It encouraged them to articulate their thoughts, analyze the consequences of their actions, and establish connections between their service-oriented endeavors and the broader community issues. This practice nurtured their analytical faculties and fostered adeptness in English composition.
- *Effective Communication Proficiency*: Service-learning initiatives frequently necessitate collaboration and discourse with diverse segments of the community. Reflection upon these interactions provides students with opportunities to enhance their English language communication skills, including listening, oral expression, and comprehension of varying perspectives within their community.
- *Oratory Competence*: Participation in activities such as the Eco Art Fair required the student leaders to present their work or convey their ideas to a wider audience.

- Reflection on those presentation experiences fostered the honing of English language presentation skills, encompassing public speaking, eloquence, and compelling narrative delivery.
- *Cultural Insight*: The inclusion of student leaders from marginalized backgrounds in such projects promoted cultural diversity and cross-cultural understanding. Reflecting upon their experiences and interactions enabled the students to delve into and appreciate the cultural nuances inherent within their community, thereby enriching their linguistic skills through exposure to diverse cultural expressions.
 - *Global Awareness*: Engagement in environmentally conscious endeavors and the acquisition of knowledge regarding the ecological repercussions of waste materials align with global concerns. Reflecting on their role in addressing these issues inculcated a heightened sense of global awareness among students, motivating them to explore English-language resources and materials pertaining to international environmental initiatives.
 - *Personal Development and Expressiveness*: The reflective process empowered the student leaders to introspect and chart their personal growth during the project. This self-awareness was effectively articulated in English, enabling students to convey their evolving perspectives, values, and aspirations, thereby strengthening their capacity for effective self-expression in the language.

In sum, the reflective dimension inherent in a service-learning project centered on waste materials and littering not only contributed to environmental consciousness and community betterment but also offered a myriad of avenues for advancing English language education. This holistic educational experience facilitated vocabulary enhancement, critical thinking,

communication proficiency, presentation skills, cultural awareness, global consciousness, and personal expression in English, rendering it an invaluable facet of formal language education.

Figure 1

Eco Warriors in Action on a S-L Project



Service-Learning and Community Transformation (Kateryna Filatova, Ukraine)

The e-Service-Learning project “Remember.Live.Dream” was the summative stage of the course to accumulate all the knowledge and skills students acquired. The project followed the IPARD process, during which students were able to tell stories about their life during the war as well as interview their parents and friends on the same topic to better understand their mental state, exhibit empathy, and plan post-war recovery. After acquiring skills in interviewing, recording, collecting, and selecting information, students were able to organize everything into various digital artifacts (PPT presentations, videos, comics, etc.).

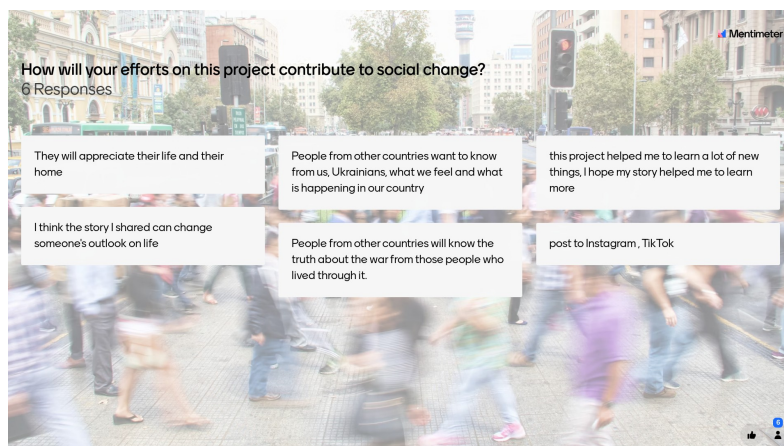
Students’ reflections after the project, following the DEAL format (describe, examine, articulate learning), showed that they improved their communication and interpersonal skills while listening to other people’s stories. Students applied critical thinking in the analysis of the

interview material and further used their creativity in the final presentation of the project. They were fully involved in the process of learning and peer teaching new tools and programs so that the difficulties they encountered, for example, fear to conjure up sad and painful memories, low English level, or problems with digital tools seemed unimportant compared to the civic engagement experience they had.

The majority of students believe that this eS-L project will have a great impact both for their communities and the world as the stories they presented might change the perception of the war by foreigners, helping them to see that the people in them are real witnesses of war and not mere strangers in the news. In posting their interviews, students also aim to break myths and misconceptions about Ukraine and get support and a better understanding of the experience of being in the middle of the war. The project might be expanded to the local and national levels by starting a promotional campaign on social media or publishing stories in books and magazines.

Figure 2

Results of Students' DEAL Reflection on Menti (www.menti.com)





Service-Learning and Community Transformation (Augusto Wah-Lung, Honduras)

Service-learning has helped our students find themselves and understand the world from a different point of view through critical-thinking activities and the acquisition of 21st century skills. They have been exposed to situations where they must take advantage of their competencies and solve real life problems. Our students have taken part in holistic activities such as our new program that includes Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math, and Humanities (STEAMH). Through their projects, they can transform first their institution, then compete in local, regional and even national or international Math and Science Olympics and set an example for their community.

We believe S-L is a way to transform lives through education. Through S-L, our students have benefited from a new way to learn English as a second language, which includes the acquisition of 21st century skills. Such skill-centered projects have opened their minds to experience real situations outside their classrooms through cultural activities and presentations; through volunteering programs in which they help translate for U.S. medical brigades in small mountain towns near the city; and through museum visits for artistic appreciation.

Our students are successful because through S-L lessons they have experienced the humanistic part of education and by understanding this they are able to transform their institution, their homes, their communities and in the near future, their country.

Suitability for Limited Resources (Mwanaidy Mwacha, Tanzania)

In some of the schools such as Kichangachui, Kigoma Ujiji, Access Microscholarship class, and St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT) in Mwanza, teachers implemented S-L to help students integrate what they learned in the classroom and the community they belong to. These teachers' experience with S-L changed their perspectives, as they had assumed it would be difficult to implement, when in fact the approach turned out to be user-friendly and very inexpensive.

This study adopted a survey and questionnaires to gather relevant data from students, teachers, and other educational stakeholders who have already been implementing S-L in their teaching and learning activities/curriculum. All agreed that S-L is a great tool for under-resourced environments and that we can use our community as a resource for learning. My students have access to a number of non-profit organizations such as Roots and Shoots, KIVIDEA, Family Mission for Women and Children Welfare, NextGen Solawazi and others from government-owned sectors. Through these organizations, they participated in projects such as "Under the same sky cleaning campaign," "Greening Kigoma," "Lake Tanganyika free garbage area campaign," "Each school, one incinerator fundraising," and "Climate change awareness—Global-warming-free generation: Change begins with you." The local university has run many successful projects, which in turn help the community, such as BATIKI making (clothing line) made in collaboration with the community.

It is evident that these students and graduates will benefit greatly, not only while in school, but in the near future also. S-L enables students to integrate 21st century skills in their daily life to solve problems, explore opportunities, and to become global citizens who can compete in the world. Through S-L, they learned about the 4 Cs – how to communicate, collaborate, think critically and be creative in everything they do. These skills empower them to serve their community.

Here in Kigoma, thanks to S-L, we were able to network 5 schools in the TAG – Taking Action Global program run by a non-profit in the US, where they provide 6 weeks of online sessions to raise awareness about climate change and solutions. This is truly the best thing that can happen to students aged 15-17, at an early age where they learn and explore their career paths and how to become advocates.

In a nutshell, S-L has many benefits. I would love to take this chance to plead with other educational stakeholders in Tanzania and Africa in general to integrate S-L in our public school's curriculum. Through it, we will be building a better community in the near future.

Service-Learning and Sustainability (Jalel Marmouri, Tunisia)

One of the conditions for a service-learning (S-L) project to be successful is that it should leave a sustainable impact both on the participating students and on the community being served. This resonates with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations in 2015.

Even though Tunisia, a developing North African country with twelve-million inhabitants, is committed to implementing the SDGs, the UN Resident Coordinator in Tunisia has recently reported that the country's 2022 SDG points "have not recorded the development

needed to meet the aspirations of Tunisians.” <https://www.tap.info.tn/en/Portal-Economy/16583044-sdgs-index-tunisia>

Schools have an important role to play in the nation’s efforts to reach the targeted goals. In this respect, S-L is the most appropriate approach to integrate SDGs in education. By merging SDGs into S-L projects, the engaged students will have a better knowledge and more awareness of these goals and their importance through the community needs analysis part, and their reflection before, while and at the end of the project. This will push our students to become active global citizens, who care about finding sustainable solutions to the issues in their society as well as the whole world.

Since S-L projects engage the community in the different stages of the project, they will raise the awareness of the community members vis-à-vis the SDGs and promote a positive attitude towards achieving these goals. This impact will be clearer in developing countries like Tunisia, marked by illiteracy and lack of information.

Depending on the community needs, the students’ levels, and the available resources, S-L can be applied to achieve any of the 17 SDGs. For instance, in communities suffering from gender inequality, the students will work on an S-L project focusing on SDG 5. Working with the community members and local organizations they can aim at one aspect of the issue, like gender discrimination and stereotypes or women’s participation in political life. The project actions will take different shapes from workshops to advocacy campaigns, depending on the objectives.

Hence, as a hands-on education approach that combines learning with community service, S-L projects seem to be the best choice to integrate SDGs in our curriculum.

Community Engaged Research as Relationship Building: Multilingual Parent Funds of Knowledge Stories

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the cultural and linguistic *funds of knowledge* (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992; Moll, 2019) of multilingual families shared by parent authors in bilingual children's books integrated into culturally responsive pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014) shared in formal and informal learning contexts -- including elementary schools, public libraries and parks, teacher education university courses, and digital platforms. This study practices community-engaged research in which the experiences and perspectives of participants and researchers shaped how data was collected, understood, and shared with others (Bay & Swacha, 2020). Parent authors were invited to partner in generating, reflecting on, and sharing stories as educational community experiences, and as part of a study focused on fostering appreciation, understanding, and preservation of cultural and linguistic heritages as a significant aim in our multicultural, multilingual world. As part of this, the study supports teachers, schools, and community stakeholders in including diverse languaging features (García, 2009) in curricula and instruction. Community engaged research highlights the complexities of the human experience and results in a valuable outcome beyond quantifiable data: community *relationships*. This collaborative inquiry into the development and sharing of multilingual parent books revealed relationship building as an artistic, authentic, and humanizing practice of bridge-building.

Keywords: community engaged research, funds of knowledge, family-school partnerships, multilingual learners, art-based inquiry

Introduction

This study examines the cultural and linguistic *funds of knowledge* (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & González, 1992; Moll, 2019) of multilingual families shared by parent authors of bilingual children's books integrated into culturally responsive pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014) shared in formal and informal learning contexts -- including K-12 classroom settings, in-person and online public library story times and community events, and public park story walks. In this community-engaged research, the lived experiences of participants and researchers intersect and shape how data is collected, understood, and shared with others (Bay & Swacha, 2020). Parents as participants partner in generating, reflecting on, and sharing community-engaged products in partnership spaces at and beyond the university. In this, research outcomes aim to benefit directly participants and their communities. Community engaged research welcomes the complexities of the human experience and results in a shared outcome beyond quantifiable data: *relationship*.

This study places at the center identities bridging cultures and languages, identifies that are navigating cultural and linguistic margins in public settings in a largely rural Midwestern state. This centering process has required the university researcher to move to the side at key moments, so participants have opportunity to lead their narration and sharing of stories with meaningful audiences. This community-engaged scholarship generates findings involving both content and process. Key findings include insights shared in the stories (*content*) and how the stories are shared among communities (*process*). The findings include author reflections on what they hope audiences to glean from their stories (*content*), and how they hope their stories might be shared in future formal and informal learning settings (*process*). This emphasis on content and

process within the findings is part of a community-engaged scholarship approach. The university's *data imperative* (Bay & Swacha, 2020) favoring traditional research methods producing quantifiable data as results, is resisted through this art-based, community-engaged inquiry. This collaborative work recognizes and honors the centrality of participant experiences and voices.

Literature Review

This research builds on foundational work by Moll, et al., (1992) developed initially with Latinx communities at the University of Arizona in the early 1990s. Moll et al.'s (1992) work brings together “ethnographic analysis of household dynamics,” classroom practices, and teacher study groups to establish “joint household research between classroom teachers and university-based researchers” leading to “ethnographically informed classroom practices” (p. 132). This work concluded that there is tremendous value in home-visits during which teachers “assume the role of the learner” and “help establish a fundamentally new, more symmetrical relationship with the parents of the students” (Moll et al., 1992, p. 139). The authors highlighted in the 1992 study that the concept, *funds of knowledge*, does not “replace the concept of culture,” but emphasizes more specifically the “strategic knowledge and related activities essential in households’ functioning, development, and well-being,” and the “social, economic, and productive activities of people in a local region” that teachers might integrate meaningfully in classrooms (Moll et al., 1992, p. 139). More recently, Moll (2019) has described *funds of knowledge* as including the “social history of families and their productive or labor activities,” which may include “farming, construction, gardening, household maintenance, or secretarial work,” and take place in the

“primary and secondary sectors of the economy” (p. 131). Moll (2019) also has described a process for teachers to engage family funds of knowledge in classroom life. This process is to:

(a) initiate relations of trust with families to enable discussion of their practices and funds of knowledge, (b) document these lived experiences and knowledge that may prove useful in defining households, individually and collectively, as having ample resources or assets that may be valuable for instruction, and (c) establish discursive settings with teachers to prepare them theoretically, methodologically, and analytically to do the research and to assess the utility of the findings for classroom practice. (132)

A number of studies since Moll et al.’s (1992) foundational work have taken up the call to integrate funds of knowledge into classroom and school environments. Wang, Bernas, and Eberhard (2005) examined mothers’ teaching styles across four cultural communities as important parental funds of knowledge for teachers to consider and integrate into classroom curricula and instruction. Specifically, the researchers examined Chinese middle class (Nanjing, China), American white middle class (Chicago, USA), Hutterite (South Dakota, USA), and Native American (South Dakota, USA) parent distancing strategies observed in mother-child interactions and aligned cognitive benefits. A key finding was parents across all four contexts utilized teaching strategies in different ways to maximize learning for their own child. This led to four important conclusions. First, teachers need to take time to learn about the complex parental teaching approaches used in their students’ homes and incorporate these *funds of knowledge* into their classroom curricula, instruction, and environment. Second, teachers need to draw on their students’ cognitive strengths, as it “takes years for a child to form his/her learning style” and time to “adapt to a new one” (Wang, et al., 2005, p. 284-285). A third conclusion is that teachers

need to become familiar with diverse cultural beliefs and practices regarding child rearing and education, and to integrate this knowledge into their teaching practices. Finally, it is vital for teachers to recognize that the “diversity our children bring to early childhood settings enriches the learning environment, both for the teachers and the children” (Wang, et al., 2005, p. 285).

Sugarman (2010) is a second-grade teacher serving a student population of 90% language learners and 95% of students on free and reduced-price lunch. She challenges “deficit-laden descriptors” used in education settings, including *limited English proficient*, *underprepared*, and *resource deprived* (p. 96) and contends that such terms contribute to problematized views of students, families and communities as lacking assets and having many “problems which must be addressed and gaps which must be filled” (p. 96-97). Sugarman (2010) conducted an inquiry into one student’s funds of knowledge to replace her own deficit thinking. She concluded that deficit thinking does not recognize the valuable funds of knowledge, or “bodies of knowledge and skills derived from household and community life,” that can support student learning when integrated meaningfully into classroom settings (p. 97). Sugarman (2010) drew upon Friere’s (1998) call to bridge students’ *reading of the world* with their *reading of the word* as an ongoing dialectic by learning to “use ‘what they can do’ – what they have learned from reading the world – to support ‘what I need to have them do’ – what they need to do to read the word” (p. 108). Similarly, Vardanyan, Ernest, and Perkins (2018) recognized in their case study of a Syrian immigrant student’s language acquisition process that immigrant children learn a new language most effectively when utilizing both the home and new language in a social context involving both native and immigrant peers. The researchers’ observations at school and during home visits recognized supports and challenges in becoming bilingual and in adapting culturally to a new national school setting. Vardanyan et al. (2018) encourage teachers and parents to use a context-

based, naturalistic, whole language approach to language learning, and to engage home and new languages in formal, informal, and digital learning settings – findings applicable to this study.

Fewer studies have engaged the parents of K-12 learners as the focus of funds of knowledge studies. Larrotta and Serrano (2012) engage 35 Spanish-speaking parents of middle school students in central Texas in a similar context-based whole language approach to language learning by inviting the parents to develop story books sharing funds of knowledge rooted in their home cultures. Akin to the work of Sugarman (2010) in a second-grade classroom, Larrotta and Serrano (2012) observed parents establish “connection between what they were learning in class (vocabulary, language functions, and grammar) to what was happening in their real lives” by integrating their “funds of knowledge in the classroom” (p. 323). This study concluded the book assignment supported parent learners in practicing communication skills by writing about their “neighborhoods, families, pets, and children,” and that sharing stories in class helped to “connect as learners and as people” by promoting an atmosphere of collaboration and ownership (p. 323). This current study addresses two limitations noted in Larrotta and Serrano’s (2012) work. While their study engaged the parents of multilingual learners, it focused on the parents’ English language development, rather than engaging their full linguistic repertoire. Moreover, parent funds of knowledge observed in the study reflected the more specific concept of learning assets – “learning motivation and goals; perseverance and resilience in learning the language; extracurricular activities and strategies they used to learn and communicate in English” (Larrotta & Serrano, 2012, p. 323) -- in contrast to Moll et al.’s (1992) conceptualization of *funds of knowledge* infused with sociocultural, linguistic, professional, historical components. This current study builds on their work by engaging bilingual parents in developing bilingual stories sharing cultural, linguistic, etc. funds of knowledge to build connections and understandings.

Summary

Building on Moll et al.'s (1992) research, this study collaborates with parents, teachers, librarians, and other community members to articulate and integrate multilingual family funds of knowledge into school, library, park and other community settings. As parental approaches to teaching will vary across home settings (Wang et al., 2005), this study recognizes the importance of bridging learner *reading of the world* with their *reading of the word* in the classroom (Friere, 1998; Sugarman, 2010), for K-12 and adult learners. This study builds on the work of Larrotta and Serrano (2012) by engaging parents in story creation and sharing that connects the content and process of learning at home to the content and process of learning in the classroom. This study also seeks to model community-engaged research that engages art-based inquiry, and thereby promote alternative modes for knowledge production beyond traditional measures.

Methods

Purpose

This study contributes to growing practices in qualitative research of art-based and community-engaged inquiry. While these practices result in publishable findings for academic communities, these practices prioritize transformative aims. This study aims to co-construct innovative approaches to community transformation, with the participants and researchers learning from and working together in collaboration. Methods for data collection, interpretation, and presentation of the findings, have required imagining alternative approaches to inquiry and what research can and might mean. This art-based, community engaged inquiry specifically invites parents within multicultural, multilingual families, including parents of

English/multilingual learners to develop bilingual *funds of knowledge* stories to share in formal and informal learning spaces. This study seeks to understand and learn from the cultural and linguistic insights shared in the stories.

Research Questions

The key questions guiding this study include the following:

What funds of knowledge stories do parent authors choose to share in their books?

What cultural, linguistic insights are shared through these funds of knowledge stories?

What community settings do the parents share these stories in? Who is the audience?

What reflections do parents share on the significance of their stories and their impact?

What is the broader value of authentic story development and sharing in a community?

Community-Engaged Research

This study is conducted amidst a global academic climate growing in understanding and appreciation for art-based inquiry prioritizing community aims. Berman (2008) conducts community-engaged research in South Africa and describes this work as committed to “local, trans-local, and contextual analysis” as well as to “social and institutional transformation” requiring a “new approach to knowledge seeking” and “new tools for evaluating research outputs (p. 516). She describes community-engaged research as emphasizing the political and pragmatic impact of research that regards and strengthens the agency of participants and their communities.

This study practices community-engaged research that “approaches communities as living meshworks of embodied human beings, material circumstances, and affective environments,” within which the lived experiences of participants and researchers intersect and affect how data is collected and understood (Bay & Swacha, 2020, p. 136). In contrast to the university’s “data imperative” for researchers to provide evidence of the impact of their work (Bay & Swacha, 2020, p. 122), community engaged research seeks to “make visible the affective and material complexities of the human experience,” which may or may not lead to “measurable, quantifiable data” (p. 136). Rather, community engaged research tends toward a mutually sustaining and valuable outcome for participants and researchers alike: *relationships*. This study practices Bay and Swacha’s (2020) described methods by inviting participants and researchers to partner collaboratively in generating, understanding, and sharing community-engaged products also serving as data. This approach steers away from viewing participants as data collection sources, but rather attends to “the human dignity of research participants and see their lives ... as rich, vibrant intersections that provide openings for moments of connection and social justice” (Bay & Swacha, 2020, p. 136). Participants are collaborators to be regarded with great respect.

Researcher Subjectivity & Study Limitations

In community engaged research, the subjectivity of the researcher is critical to consider throughout the entire process of study formation, study implementation, data analysis, and development of the findings and implications for future practice, research, and policy. The researcher for this study had lived herself in an international setting while raising children in school settings with a dominant culture and language that their family was learning together. In this complex space, the researcher developed her own funds of knowledge story as a way to stay

connected with and as a discovery of her home culture to share in the form of a children's book. The formation of this current study evolved in relationship with multilingual parents navigating American, English-speaking cultures of U.S. schools while parenting youth in this journey. The researcher appreciated the overlap across their experiences, while also noting unique challenges the parent authors navigated in U.S. school systems after recently immigrating to the U.S.

Community engaged research offers unique benefits in the authentic, community-impacting insights it offers, while also presenting limitations. If authentic inquiry led by participants is based in a particular locality, it is more challenging to attain generalizable findings. However, there is potential for a similarly inquiry process to be transferable to other community settings. Another limitation is the inherent researcher subjectivity, while also recognizing that this very subjectivity is what enables and supports community relationships to be a research outcome.

Data Sources

This study takes place in a mid-sized Midwestern urban town, a nexus of rural-urban, local-global communities. Data sources include ten parents' bilingual children's books sharing cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge, parent reflections on the books' messages and how they hope their stories might be integrated into funds of knowledge lesson plans designed for formal and informal educational settings. Data sources also include the presentations of the parent books in formal and informal settings, including K-12 and university classrooms, virtual and in-person public library story times, park story walks, and community events. Parent stories and voices are the central data source driving the findings. Following suggestions made in the foundational work of Moll et al. (1992), this study includes parents as collaborators, who may

initiate or be invited to take on leadership roles as the project progresses. This includes imagining and implementing presentations of stories in formal and informal learning spaces, and supporting fellow parents in developing their own bilingual paper and digital children's books,

Data Collection

Developing and sharing the 10 books and interviewing the authors in this study lasted roughly 18 months. Parents were invited to participate in a four-session bilingual children's book workshop, including three online sessions (1.5 hours each) and one final in-person session of 3-5 hours in length. The first online session introduced the project and supported parents in identifying a funds of knowledge topic. In the second session, parents developed a story plotline and story board (Appendix A) offered in multiple languages. In the third session, parents shared drafts of their stories and received feedback from other parents in the group. In the final in-person session, parents created their books using paper scrapbook materials and/or digital tools (e.g., Adobe Illustrator). All paper books were scanned to create a digital version. If more time was needed, the researcher met with the parents and/or loaned materials to support completion of the books. In a follow-up session online (1.5 hours), parents shared their final stories with one another and participated in a focus-group dialogue about the funds of knowledge themes in their stories and if/how they might like to see their stories integrated into formal or informal learning settings. The faculty researcher recorded anonymous parent responses during this focus-group dialogue.

Data collection also has involved gathering lesson plan designs around the parent stories. However, future analysis will explore this component of the study upon further progress. The researcher gradually is connecting parent participants with teachers interested in designing

lesson/unit plan or learning activities around the stories. To identify interested teachers, the researcher contacted previous university teacher education students who had earned their licensure for supporting multilingual learners in schools. In addition, a few of the parent authors have expressed interest in designing curricula around their own stories. In this case, the faculty researcher or another teacher will be able to provide a supportive role. The researcher also worked with public librarians and staff members of organizations in the community who played a role in the design of learning activities implemented in informal learning settings.

Data Analysis

In this art-based, community engaged inquiry, constant comparative analysis, as defined by Merriam and Tisdell (20105), seeks to identify convergent and divergent themes across stories and story-sharing events. Data recorded in an Excel chart included book titles, author linguistic and cultural backgrounds, funds of knowledge topics/themes, book presentation audiences and contexts, lesson design approaches, author interview insights on the book topic and how they might like to see their books integrated into formal or informal learning settings. Any parent reflections on societal impact also were noted to highlight the broader community impact of the stories. A multicolored highlighting tool was used in the Excel chart to identify themes and sub-themes noted in the data. Similarities and differences that emerged across the data were noted, including any transformational change resulting from the project in the authors, the community, the researcher, and others involved in the project (e.g., librarians, teacher candidates).

Results

Funds of Knowledge Stories & Insights

This study includes ten bilingual children's books with collected data on the book titles, cultural and linguistic background, funds of knowledge themes, presentation contexts, and instructional approaches (Appendix B). The findings learning from and celebrate the complex cultural, linguistic, sociopolitical, and other funds of knowledge practiced by parent authors and their communities. Funds of knowledge identified included immigration journeys, heritage culture celebrations and traditions, navigating dominant vs. heritage cultures/languages, stereotypes and strengths, bridging cultures and languages. Funds of knowledge identified in the stories included protagonists learning to navigate sociocultural political tensions experienced by hybrid identities that are bridging cultures, languages, and nationalities, and insights gleaned through this identity work. The stories involved supporting youth in learning new cultures and languages, while fostering connections with and instilling values from their home cultures and languages. A key theme across stories is learning to courageously and proudly identify with one's heritage.

The funds of knowledge topics and themes across the stories included:

- a. Stories of immigration
 - a. courageous journeys from youth and parent perspectives
 - b. recognition of within group diversity of heritage cultures/languages
 - c. recognition of an American culture experienced by immigrant families
 - d. support strategies upon arrival in a new cultural home
- b. Heritage cultural celebrations, traditions and meanings
 - a. understand meaning of heritage celebrations, traditions, foods, symbols, songs

- b. engage in celebrations across generations to celebrate life and grieve loss
- c. Popular vs. heritage culture/language
 - a. participating in new culture/language while holding onto heritage culture/language
 - b. appreciating heritage foods, including nutrition and traditions
 - c. heritage foods connecting generations
- d. Stereotypes and strengths
 - a. Discussing stereotypes with culturally and linguistically diverse youth
 - b. Navigating stereotypes as a parent in a new culture/language
 - c. Forging new cultural/linguistic identities in response to stereotypes
- e. Bridging cultures/languages
 - a. Learning to appreciate/bridge 2+ cultures/languages shared by parents
 - b. Guiding elementary youth to learn to become cultural/linguistic bridges

Funds of Knowledge Presentations & Contexts

Presentations sharing eight bilingual books demonstrate enriching cultural, linguistic, and sociopolitical *funds of knowledge* shared by the parents in their home communities and beyond. Presentation contexts included formal settings, such as an elementary classroom, and informal learning settings, such as a public park story walk. Presentations involved in-person and virtual formats and reached audiences from pre-school to university course settings. The purposes for presentations were to celebrate, connect, educate, and forge shared global-local identities.

Specific presentations aligned with story themes are included below:

- a. Stories of immigration
 - a. Public library park story walk display
 - b. Public library Spanish bilingual story time reading
 - c. Elementary school multicultural festival booth
 - d. 6th grade class reading
 - e. University teacher preparation course
 - f. Self-publication of children's book
 - g. Community event reading
 - h. Parent English class
- b. Heritage cultural celebrations, traditions and meanings connecting generations, celebrating life, grieving loss
 - a. *Día de los Muertos* bilingual Spanish story time with public library, second implementation part of university state-wide *Spirit & Place Festival*.
 - b. University teacher preparation course
- c. Popular culture vs. heritage culture
 - a. Bilingual virtual Chinese public library story time
- d. Stereotypes and strengths
 - a. 6th grade class reading
 - b. University teacher preparation course
 - c. Community event reading
- e. Bridging cultures/languages
 - a. 6th grade class reading
 - b. University teacher preparation course

c. Community event reading

Author Reflections on Stories & Impact

Focus-group interviews invited parent authors to reflect on the meanings within their funds of knowledge stories and the impact the stories might have on K-12 students, teachers, and broader communities. Analysis of parent responses revealed foundational work involved in bridging home and new cultures as *fostering new connections while honoring family heritage*. This work involved the practices of *maintaining heritage connections while balancing new and home cultures, navigating difference by teaching and learning about culture, and encouraging inclusion and correcting misconceptions*. In their stories and shared reflections, parent authors emphasized different practices in fostering new connections while honoring heritage.

Maintaining Heritage while Balancing Cultures

Parent reflections expressed hope and practices for maintaining heritage connections while balancing cultures. The author of *Makeup or No Makeup? 化妆还是不化妆?* described this work as challenging, and observed, “sometimes we can blend the cultural traditions and thinking, to blend the cultures together and to make things balanced and to settle the conflict” (Fall 2021). This author described her approach to this balancing act: “When there is an issue that arises from different traditions, cultures, and values, then you will put yourself into others’ shoes to rethink about it, which is the best way to balance.” (Fall 2021). She explained that she was not “against makeup,” but that in her home culture, students use makeup “sometimes, but not every day,” as the purpose of school is to focus on studying (Fall 2021). Yet, this parent also recognized that wearing make-up for her daughter was part of developing personal expression.

Together, they reached a middle ground. Her daughter wore make-up but did not spend a lot of time on it. This resolution is expressed in the final page of the children’s book (Figure A).



Figure A. 化妆还是不化妆? *Makeup or No Makeup?* by Yan Chen

Two parents emphasized maintaining cultural connections by remaining connected to one’s heritage foods, as well as teaching others to not criticize another’s heritage foods. In *Food for Thought*, one parent reflects on her daughter’s journey to becoming an expert in preparing her own heritage cuisine as a young adult, after weathering seasons of disdain toward home prepared lunches in elementary and middle school. Her mom persisted in preparing culturally infused meals at home (Figure B) while sending American style lunches with her daughter to school. Another parent expressed hope youth might “try different tastes and foods from different cultures” and “not be negative to other people’s special food,” including classmates (Fall 2021).



Figure B. *Food for Thought* by Ming Chu Wang

Both parents encouraged teachers to teach youth about different foods through books and sharing ingredients in class, like ginger and green onion, to expose students to different tastes and to help students “compare different smells” between spices, such as “cinnamon and barley” (Fall 2021). This parent expressed hope her children and other youth would not “close the door on trying new things” from heritage cultures (Fall 2021). Author of *Hasta que te vuelva a ver* (*Until We Meet Again*), similarly advocates for learning from and “leaning on” one’s heritage culture, specifically to process grief in losing a family member (Fall 2021). This parent writes about coming together as a family for *Día de los Muertos*, and how this holiday was helpful across generations to process grief, particularly for her teenage son growing up in the U.S. She shows through her book how “practicing Mexican traditions” provided her son with tools to “commemorate his grandfather” and replicate his cultural legacy” (Fall 2021) (Figure C).

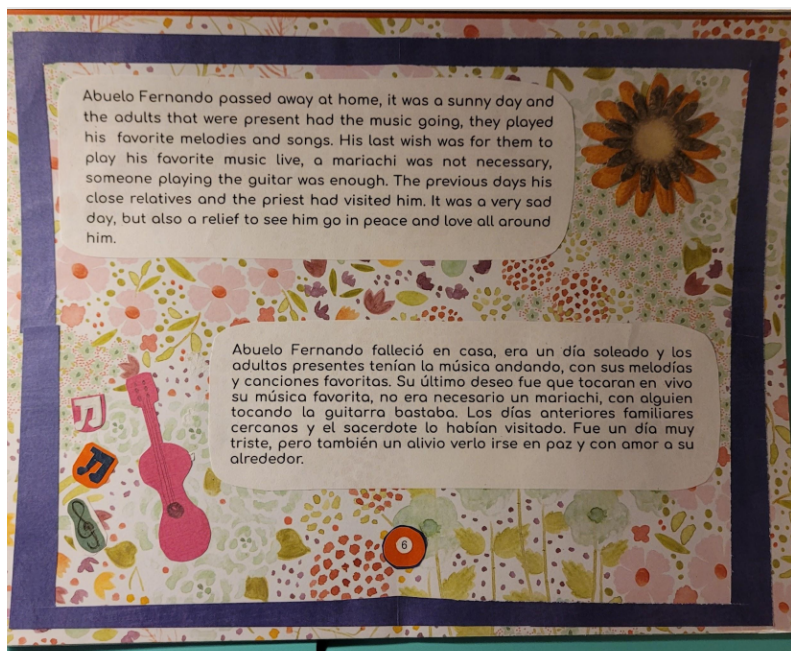


Figure C. *Hasta que te vuelva a ver (Until We Meet Again)* by Verónica Wong-Tovar

The author of *La Gran Aventura de Gabriel* highlighted the beauty of friendship forged across national lines, while maintaining connection to one's national and cultural heritage, as seen in the flags on t-shirts worn by youth holding arms (Figure D). This visual depicts the diversity present across Spanish speaking cultures, through the flags representing different Latin American countries. The parent author reflected on her difficulty when younger "to appreciate her own culture" while simultaneously trying "to integrate and be part of this one" (Fall 2021). The final image in her book depicts the beauty found in forging friendship across lines of difference. She reflected on "the need more acceptance in this world," and expressed hope her book might help readers "accept each other" and "learn to love and appreciate" those from different cultures.



Figure D. *La Gran Aventura de Gabriel* (Gabriel's Great Adventure) by Anakarina Hurtado

The parent author of *Two cousins, two games, a church, and a temple* reflected on the many gifts of being raised by her African-American father and Japanese mother. She also noted challenges faced by her mom in moving to the U.S. as an immigrant immersed in a second language while raising children in a cross-cultural family. This author reflected on growing up in a bilingual, cross-cultural home and how this experience broadened her life experiences and perspectives, and positively shaped her identify formation. She shared that a key message in her book is to be open to seeing commonalities across cultural differences, as “the world now is such a blend of so many different cultures, with moms and dads from different cultures” (FA22). She reflected that her cousins in Japan and the U.S. always accepted her for who she was, and that it was not until elementary school when she noted, “I do not look like a lot of the other kids,” and now, through her book, she would like all students “to be aware that love conquers all” (FA22). The final image of the author’s book depicts bridging love across cultures beautifully (Figure E).



Figure E. *Two cousins, two games, a church, and a temple.* by Nancy Boatner

Navigating Difference by Teaching and Learning

A shared emphasis across parents was navigating difference by teaching and learning. As noted above, one parent described make-up as “inappropriate” and time-consuming for teenagers: “In my culture, we did not have makeup accessories” because “as a student, your main focus is to study” (Fall 2021). She expressed that makeup takes “more time” and can “distract others in the classroom,” and that “chemicals in makeup is not good for the skin” (Fall 2021). Another parent author expressed dismay that her children always wanted her to make Mac & Cheese and were not interested in the traditional Chinese noodles she prepared and loved as a child. These authors navigated these differences by learning a new culture and trying to find a middle ground with their children. The author of *Makeup or No Makeup?* 化妆还是不化妆? reflected that she and her daughter “were born and raised on different cultural traditions and

values” and that this led to “different perspectives” and ways of “thinking” (Fall 2021). She hoped teachers might support students in learning about and respecting one another’s different cultures and languages, including different “mindsets,” to “help students appreciate different ways of thinking” (Fall 2021).

The author of *La Gran Aventura de Gabriel* hoped that teachers might support families in sharing their diverse cultures and languages, specifically with the next generation. She noted, “we are all immigrants and have different stories, so mine is different from my husband’s” and it is important to pass on to our children and others “how we migrated from a different country, to understand each of our cultures ... our journeys” (Fall 2021). Her book shared her husband’s journey as a 5-year-old, immigrating from Cuba to the U.S. on a boat. An image of a 5-year-old steering a big ship emphasizes the great burden carried by children making this transition, as well as the great courage demonstrated (Figure F). This author hoped teachers might recognize that children who have recently immigrated are carrying “a lot more weight on their shoulders” in learning a new language and culture, while also learning academic content knowledge that all students are learning (Fall 2021). She encouraged class activities inclusive of quiet students who may feel like they “do not have a voice” or “speak differently than others” (Fall 2022).

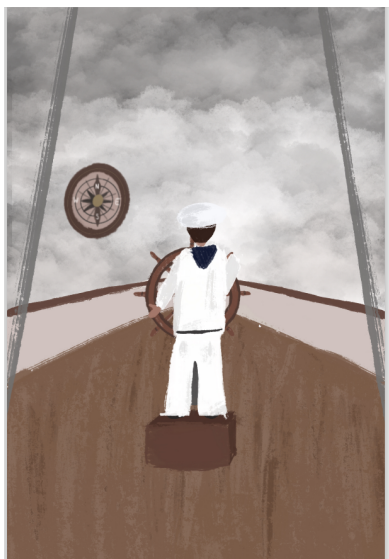


Figure F. La Gran Aventura de Gabriel (Gabriel's Great Adventure) by Anakarina Hurtado

In *4 Seasons*, a parent author from Brazil shares about the courage also required by parents immigrating to a new nation. Her book shares about her culture shock through both her literal and metaphorical experience of seasonal change (Appendix E). She encourages teachers to gain greater understanding of families by inviting them into the classroom, and to be patient in noting that language learning is hard for students and “much harder for the parents” (Fall 2022). She shared her experience in a parent-teacher meeting without an interpreter and noted the need for schools to provide interpreters to support effective communication with families. She also described a positive experience when teachers took time to ask questions and learn about differences across education systems in Brazil and the U.S. She hoped teachers might realize that American schools have a culture distinct from the school cultures of immigrating families, and to teach immigrating families about American school culture while learning about their cultures.

Encouraging Inclusion and Correcting Misconceptions

Parent authors reflected on their roles in the community to encourage inclusion and correct misconceptions, which often was a challenging role to play. One author encouraged families to be mindful that “if we are in a multicultural environment or family, then conflict exists,” and that “we cannot ignore it to resolve the conflict” (Fall 2021). Another parent sharing about Mexican traditions in *Día de los Muertos* hoped her book might help correct the misconception that the holiday is about celebrating the dead, as the holiday is about celebrating the lives of loved ones who have passed away (Fall 2021) (Figure G).

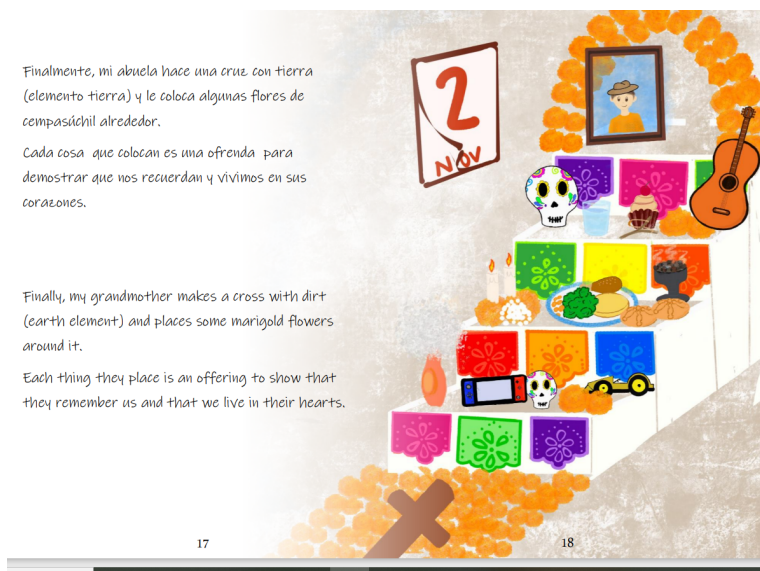


Figure G. *El esqueleto que ama bailar* (The Skeleton that Loves to Dance) by Selene Dávila

Another parent author noted misconceptions may be corrected most effectively through building relationships with families. She encouraged teachers to invite multilingual families to school meetings and events, and when parents do attend, to “be curious ... ask questions,” and have an interpreter to help with communication (Fall 2022). She hoped teachers might help multilingual families “feel heard and valued” (Fall 2022). The author of *4 Seasons* reflected on her first year as a recent immigrant and mom of two elementary children to share that “the first

day of school was terrible,” as she “cried a lot every single day” (Fall 2022) (Figure H). She encouraged her children to “not worry, be calm, and ask for help.” She reflected on the great difficulty of this first year for her entire family, and now encourages teachers to use gestures, visuals, and colors to communicate with students learning English.



Figure H. 4 Seasons by Fabiana Costa

The author of *Coiores* described her own preschool teacher as inclusive. This teacher shared M&Ms with the class and encouraged students to learn from each other as this will “color you so strong that you will never forget that person” (Spring 2022). This author encouraged teachers to “make your classroom safe where [students who have recently immigrated] can learn as they try to assimilate to the American way” (Fall 2022). She coached teachers to encourage students to “not let it go, but “to celebrate [their heritage cultures] so they will hold on to and be

proud of who they are” (Fall 2022). This parent shared *Colores* with three 6th grade classes and reflected, “some people are not ready to have uncomfortable discussions about difficult topics” (Fall 2022). She would like to see her book shared with teachers for professional development training and encouraged teachers to know “what the policies are, wherever you teach” because “we are living in a time when parents will message you and tell you they did not appreciate that lesson, and you have to cover yourself as an educator, if education is your passion” (Fall 2022). This parent encouraged teachers to “advocate for [all] children,” including and particularly for any youth who may be navigating the stress of a difficult immigration status. She highlighted the value of home visits with an interpreter, as school open houses can be intimidating (Fall 2022).

Discussion

Community-Engaged Inquiry as Artistic

This community-engaged study inquired into the cultural and linguistic *funds of knowledge* (Moll, et al., 1992; Moll, 2019) shared by parent authors of bilingual children’s books as culturally responsive pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014) in formal and informal learning settings. Throughout this study, the experiences and perspectives of participants and researchers intersected and shaped how the data was collected, understood, and presented so the study might directly benefit participants and their communities (Bay & Swacha, 2020). Art-based community-engaged inquiry supported a key outcome extending beyond traditional research: relationship. New relationships developed across participating parents, across parents and university teacher education students/faculty, and across parents and community members and organizations where stories were shared. Connecting over stories supported the formation of community relationships bridging cultural and linguistic identifications. The school district’s

literacy taskforce volunteered to fund a publication of all parent authored stories in one collection to share with schools and libraries in the region and beyond. The community-engaged study took on a life of its own, as parents reached out to organizations and schools to share their stories. One parent author self-published her book. Another parent author shared her story with three 6th grade classes where she worked. Three parents shared their stories with teacher candidates in the researcher's university course. One of the parents shared her story with an English class for adults who immigrated to the region. The researcher connected parents and teachers who designed lessons around the stories, with plans to initiate a website where posed lessons might benefit teachers within the region and beyond.

Bilingual Stories as Authentic

This study aimed to support parents in developing bilingual children's books as authentic community stories, then bring these stories into classroom and community spaces, where the students might develop greater understanding of, appreciation for, and connection with the families, cultures, and languages in their region and beyond. This study builds on the work of Larrotta and Serrano (2012) who engaged 35 Spanish-speaking parents of middle school students in developing story books sharing cultural funds of knowledge. These stories were written in English with English development as a main goal of the project. In contrast, this study centers heritage languages as critical funds of knowledge included in *bilingual* books fostering culturally *and linguistically* globally-minded student-citizens. During this study, parents presented stories in formal and informal learning settings. Home languages were *integral to – not marginalized from* – the contexts and relationships built through the story sharing process. Audience members adjusted as needed by reading English subtitles or waiting for provided translation. This

experience supported greater understanding for what it might feel like to be a language learner in a new linguistic context, for audience members who had not experienced this. The authenticity of the stories also increased audience engagement with and regard for stories shared.

Bridge-Building Practices as Humanizing

Sharing stories builds bridges between the storyteller and the audience by fostering new understandings, connections, and identifications – a humanizing process. Ravitch (2020) further highlights in her research on *flux* pedagogies that “lived problems” can serve as “radical learning towards informed action,” and that stories of “global, national, and local struggles” can become “texts of critical inclusivity that support humanistic and equitable schooling, teaching, learning, leading, policy-making, and professional development” (p. 2). In this study, parent reflections on authored stories and their impact in the community were recorded and coded for convergent and divergent themes. This analysis revealed key practices involved in fostering new connections while honoring family heritage, specifically: *maintaining heritage connections while balancing new and home cultures, navigating difference by teaching and learning about culture, and encouraging inclusion and correcting misconceptions*. This study goes beyond the work of Wang et al. (2005) in that it evidences unique homelife practices, and emphasizes *skills generated by families who are navigating two cultures and languages as part of an identity integration process*. Park (2013) describes the emergence of hyphenated identities resulting from the immigration process. She reflects that “narrating my own story was a difficult task but it was a task I had to start” to begin sharing “my experiences and identity constructions” while “navigating the web of relationships interconnected by race, gender, social class, and language

ideologies” (Park, 2013, p. 16). She noted this journey *humanized* (Hanauer, 2012) her teaching practice and classroom as a welcoming space for multilingual learners and families.

As authors and audience members connect with their own struggles, they are able to appreciate and empathize more effectively with the struggles of others. In this study, authors resonated with their shared struggles of maintaining heritage connections while identifying with a new cultural home and language, as well as feeling pressure to correct assumptions about one’s home culture while in the new context. This role can feel like serving as a constant political ambassador who builds peace by maintaining and establishing new connections. Navigating identities that often ‘mean against’ one another (Gee, 2017) is a theme that bridged author-audience identities, a shared struggle that in itself became a point of shared humanity.

Conclusion

This community-engaged inquiry on the development and sharing of bilingual parent books revealed relationship building as an *artistic, authentic, humanizing* (Hanauer, 2012) practice. This community-engaged research regards and honors participants, their stories and sociocultural contexts. This study resists university *data imperatives* favoring traditional research methods leading to quantified results (Bay & Swacha, 2020). This study encourages community-engaged research that fosters connective relationships and helps community members to see and value all identities, including hyphenated (Park, 2013) and marginalized identities facing unique sociopolitical challenges. This study encourages future research to learn from the insights of such community members, including elementary students building bridges among peers in K-12 settings. Such research might explore the unique burdens felt by community members bridging two or more cultures and conflicting identities, and to highlight the greater regard and support

needed by these community members for their vital civic roles. Such research might explore how community members bridging two or more sociopolitical identities can help others recognize how diverse cultures and languages are a *shared societal strength*. Appreciation, understanding, and preservation of cultural and linguistic diversity are vital aims in research, practice, and policy. Teachers need to foster these qualities in K-12 learners as global citizens in our multicultural, multilingual world. Moreover, teachers, schools, and community stakeholders need to include “features of people’s languaging in policy, curriculum, and instructional planning” (García, 2009, p. 39). Diverse cultures and languages must be recognized as valuable and vital resources for all. Art-based community-engaged inquiry supports this recognition.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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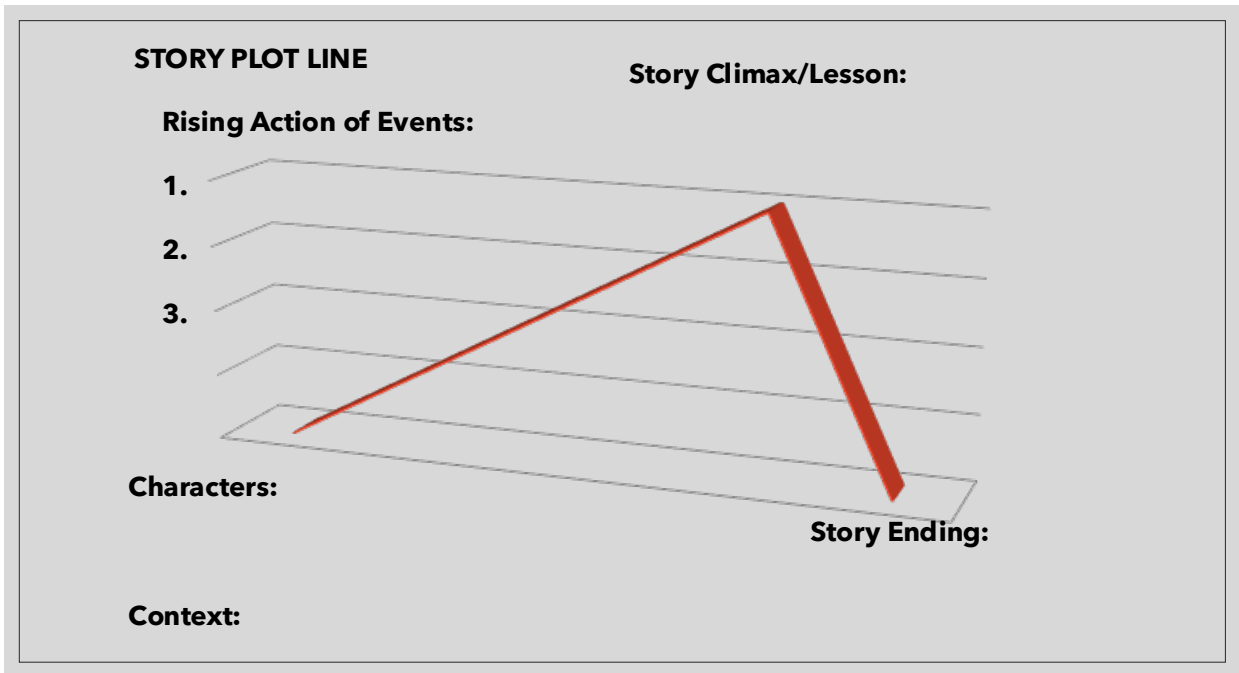
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Appendix A Story Plotline and Storyboard



PLAN YOUR STORY! 😊

<p>Page 1 Introduce Characters</p>	<p>Page 2 Introduce Challenge</p>	<p>Page 3 Rising Action</p>
<p>Page 4 Rising Action</p>	<p>Page 5 Story Climax/Lesson</p>	<p>Page 6 Story Ending</p>

Appendix B
Book Themes & Presentations

Title	Language & Nationality	Topics/Themes	Presentation Context	Teaching Strategies
<i>Colores, Colors</i>	Spanish & English, Mexico & U.S.	Engaging youth in learning from each other's diverse backgrounds	Three 6 th grade class lessons; Community literacy festival; University class reading	Invite students to draw images for and finish the story
<i>El esqueleto que ama bailar, The Skeleton that Loves to Dance</i>	Spanish, Mexico	Traditional practices of <i>Día de los Muertos</i> to celebrate the lives of loved ones	<i>Día de los Muertos</i> library bilingual story time; University <i>spirit & place</i> festival; University course reading	Library audience creates a felt altar and draws individual altars in memory of loved ones
<i>Food for Thought</i>	Chinese, Taiwan	Valuing and learning from diverse heritage cuisines	University course reading	Share book to teach youth to appreciate diverse foods of classmates
<i>Hasta que te vuelva a ver; Until We Meet Again</i>	Spanish, Mexico	Family gatherings connecting generations and helping members to grieve loss	<i>Día de los Muertos</i> bilingual story time at public library	Parents reflect in a journal about loss of loved ones and coping strategies
化妆还是不化妆? <i>Huasheng haishi bu huasheng? Makeup or No Makeup?</i>	Chinese, China	Cross-cultural, intergenerational views on wearing makeup to school	Lunar New Year public library bilingual virtual story time	Introduce Lunar New Year concepts, phrases, traditions in English and Chinese
<i>La Gran Aventura de Gabriel. Gabriel's Great Adventure</i>	Spanish, Venezuela & Cuba	Journey from Cuba to America by boat, through the lens of 5-year old boy	Self-publication; Public park story walk; Public library bilingual story time; 6 th grade class reading; Literacy taskforce	Participants create books imagining immigrating to another country to empathize with classmates who have immigrated

			presentation; Elementary school multicultural festival; University course reading; Community literacy festival; TESOL state conference	
娜娜和爷爷奶奶, <i>Nana he yeye nainai, Nana & Her Grandparents</i>	Chinese, China	Appreciating heritage cuisine across generations	[None yet]	Students create class family recipe book
<i>Picture Day</i>	English & Yoruba, U.S. & Nigeria	Being proud of and sharing cultural heritage with classmates	University course reading	Students draw what might wear for picture day to share culture/self.
<i>Two cousins, two games, a church and a temple.</i>	English & Japanese, U.S. & Japan	Bridging two cultural heritages of parents	Community literacy festival; University course reading	Students create origami and consider folds as identity layers
<i>4 Seasons</i>	Portuguese, Brazil	Enduring seasonal change of immigration	Community literacy festival; University class reading; TESOL state conference	Parents share immigration journeys as seasons.

Total word count: 7635 (including References and Appendices)

Using Mind Maps to Evaluate Preservice Teachers' Growth in Teaching English Language Learners

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to examine the use of mind-mapping as a classroom strategy for identifying and assessing the knowledge base of pre-service teachers as they prepare to work with English Learners (ELs) in mainstream classrooms. Using mind maps, the study identified the pre-service teachers' knowledge base on ELs at the beginning of a 3-week service-learning course and in what areas they were able to grow. Using an action research framework and thematic analysis of the phrases written on mind maps, researchers were able to identify eleven themes prioritized by the pre-service teachers. Analysis of the mind maps revealed that pre-service teachers grew in ways that developed their knowledge of 1) supporting ELs through specific classroom strategies, 2) building awareness of and appreciating cultural diversity, 3) approaching language learning with an asset-oriented mindset, and 4) gaining a basic understanding of second language acquisition. The study found that mind maps are a helpful tool for identifying what pre-service teachers find meaningful about working with ELs as well as a source for data to inform teacher educators as they design and implement curriculum and experiences in teacher preparation that focus on ELs.

Key Words: Mind Maps, Teacher Preparation, English Learners

Introduction

Over five million students in the United States are considered English Learners (EL) (NCES, 2020). Despite this being ten percent of all school-aged children, there is a lack of training on this unique population among mainstream pre-service teachers (Education Commission of the States, 2014; Gándara & Santibañez, 2016; Leider et al., 2021). The mainstream pre-service teachers' training on ELs varies greatly from state to state (Lopez et al., 2013; Samson & Collins, 2012) and uses a variety of strategies to help pre-service teachers gain the knowledge and skills needed in this area, ranging from instruction on English linguistics (Lucas et al., 2008; Gándara & Santibañez, 2016; Okhremtchouk & Sellu, 2019), the use of field experiences in classrooms or communities (Hildenbrand, 2015; Bollin et al., 2007; Tinkler, 2019; Lindahl, 2022), to specific classroom assignments like guided reflection (Markos, 2012; Sugimoto et al. 2017).

With a variety of ways to design, implement, and assess instruction on ELs, teacher educators must consider what they are required to do based on their state standards for teacher preparation and how they can do so within the constraints of their preparation programs. This study considers what background knowledge general education pre-service teachers had about ELs, as well as what they found meaningful and memorable after participating in a course on ELs. With this goal in mind, the authors developed an action research project to explore the use of mind maps as a tool in identifying and assessing pre-service teachers' knowledge about ELs after participating in a three-week intensive service-learning course on ELs. This article is part of a larger study that investigated how pre-service teachers learn to serve ELs in mainstream classrooms.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to address the use of mind-mapping as a classroom strategy for evaluating the knowledge base of pre-service teachers as they prepare to work with ELs in general education classrooms. The study considers the strategy of mind mapping and what it tells teacher educators about pre-service teachers' growth of EL knowledge during teacher preparation coursework.

Background

Mind mapping (Arulselvi, 2017), also referred to as *group process mapping* (Rouech et al., 202) or *concept mapping* (Golightly & Norris, 2017), is a strategy used by teachers to help students visualize their knowledge. When creating maps, students are instructed to write the information that they know on paper and use keywords, symbols, and lines to simplify the drawing and form a map (Arulselvi, 2017). Studies have been conducted to measure the benefits of using mind maps in educational settings of different disciplines and grade levels. Mind maps have been used in both STEM and non-STEM fields, independent work, and all grade levels (Schroeder et al., 2018; Arulselvi, 2017). Arulselvi (2017) lists several ways educators can use mind maps, including taking notes in lectures, showing relationship between concepts, brainstorming, planning for writing tasks like essays, organizing ideas, creative problem solving, and reviewing/evaluating key learning (ps. 61-62).

Mind maps can be helpful in evaluating knowledge that students had before a course and after a course (Rouech et al., 2021; Arulselvi, 2017; Williams, 2004). These maps assist in measuring the growth of students (Rouech et al., 2021) as well as measuring their understanding of course concepts (Arulselvi, 2017; Golightly & Norris, 2017; Subramaniam, 2022). The effectiveness of mind maps was tested in a business and economics statistics course in which the researcher found that the process of building the mind map itself provided students with skills

such as analyzing data, organizing information, etc., which encouraged the students to think deeply about connections between different ideas (Chiou, 2009).

Mind maps can address what learning or concepts are most memorable about a course, reveal gaps of information in student learning, allow students to analyze their own knowledge, and help students form links between old and new knowledge. Therefore, mind mapping was used as a strategy for this study to evaluate the knowledge base of pre-service teachers as they prepare to work with ELs in general education classrooms. By asking pre-service teachers to make mind maps on the most memorable concepts from their experiences working with ELs, researchers were able to examine their knowledge base and use this information to plan future curriculum and supports for pre-service teachers.

Research Questions

This study was an action research project (Mills, 2018) that occurred in a three-week intensive service-learning course on ELs that occurred during a May term at a small, private, liberal arts university located in the Midwest of the United States. This study was guided by the following research questions:

- 1) What do mainstream pre-service teachers find meaningful and/or memorable from their experiences working and learning with ELs?
- 2) How can mind maps inform teacher preparation curriculum on supporting ELs?

Methodology

The study used action research (Mills, 2018) to discover what pre-service teachers know about ELs and what they retained after taking a three-week intensive service-learning course.

Context

The study and data collection occurred in an elective class on service-learning and ELs that was offered during the university's three-week intensive May term. The course was delivered at *Midwest Elementary School* (names in italics are pseudonyms), an elementary school near the university campus in which over 50 percent of learners are classified as EL (IDOE). The course met for three hours per day, five days per week, for three weeks during May. Pre-service teachers enrolled in the course spent two hours each day participating in service-learning activities that involved supporting ELs in a general education elementary classroom. Then students attended a one-hour class where they debriefed and reflected on their daily classroom experience as well as learned about various topics regarding supporting ELs, such as EL diversity, knowledge of English linguistics and second language acquisition, classroom strategies, etc.

Participants

Participants enrolled in the course who were pre-service teachers were eligible for the study (n=12). Ten participants were elementary education majors and two were studying secondary education. All participants were undergraduate students at the end of their freshman or sophomore year of university studies. Two pre-service teachers identified as African American, three as Latinx, and seven as Caucasian. All participants identified as female. Each pre-service teacher consented to be part of the study. One participant was excluded from the study because she did not complete the second mind map, so the final participants were n=11.

Data Collection

Participants completed their first mind map (MM1) on the first day of the course. Participants were given poster-sized paper and makers and asked to create a mind map of everything they knew or thought they knew about ELs. Their instructor provided samples of

Data Analysis

The researchers took a qualitative approach to data analysis, using thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006) to identify salient themes that appeared in the mind map data sets. Each mind map was transcribed into a database that listed the wording/concepts each participant wrote on their mind map. Researchers then used open coding to code each item listed on the mind maps. These initial codes were then reviewed for a second round of coding in which researchers combined codes, modified codes, deleted codes, and re-classified ideas. During this time, the researchers conferred with each other about the classification of each code into broader categories and subcategories.

Findings & Discussion

The findings and discussion for this study are organized around the two research questions: 1) What do mainstream pre-service teachers find meaningful and/or memorable from their experiences working and learning with ELs? 2) How can mind maps inform teacher preparation curriculum on supporting ELs?

Capturing the memorable with mind maps

By collecting mind maps at the beginning of the course and again at the end, researchers were able to identify the knowledge base of pre-service teachers as they began the course as well as what concepts were memorable to pre-service teachers at the end. From the analysis of MM1, 95 items were written across eleven participant mind maps (8.6 item average per map). These 95 items were then condensed into 10 different categories/themes.

MM2 revealed an expanding and deepening of knowledge regarding working with ELs. After participating in the three-week course, participants wrote 173 phrases versus 95 on MM1, showing an increase of 78 phrases (an 82.1 percent increase of items mentioned overall between

MM1 and MM2). Additionally, the phrases were often more detailed, specific, and elaborate than in MM1. Figure 2 shows the 11 themes that emerged from the coding of MM2. Ten themes were found in MM1, plus an additional theme that emerged *Language Levels*. See Table 1.

Table 1: Themes, Definitions, and Examples

Theme	Definitions	Examples
ELs Needs	Phrases that capture general or specific learning needs of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need different approaches to learning • Need extra resources • Students often need modified instruction to meet their academic and social-emotional needs
Diverse group	Phrases that address diversity, culture, nationality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come from all over the world • Don't all speak the same language • Different cultures
Environment	Phrases that address the classroom/learning environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create good classroom environment/climate • Supportive environment • make it inclusive
Strategies	Phrases that address general or specific strategies that educators can use to meet EL needs (may focus on literacy strategies geared toward reading, writing, listening, speaking or more general pedagogical strategies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often benefit from visuals when given explanations + content • One-on-one with students • Build off what they know to add more concepts/more ideas
Language barrier	Phrases that address ability to students to communicate in English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students sometimes hold back in the classroom due to communication barriers • Language Barrier • Inability to communicate
Definitions	Phrases that simply define what EL is, stands for, and/or how students are classified as EL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English is their second language • Students have to take ELL classes
Models	Phrases that address educational models commonly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pull out + push in methods • Bilingual education

	found in schools to provide EL supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sheltered instruction
Family	Phrases that address specifically the parents, families, or home lives of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents sometimes need help May speak a different language at home Parent involvement is sometimes tough with ELL's due to communication barriers and different cultural environments
Testing	Phrases that address WIDA testing, EL standards and/or standardized testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WIDA, Standardized testing (Used to meet same standards) WIDA There is a test that determines if the student needs ELL
Linguistics/ SLA	Phrases that address stages of language acquisition or English language characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Morphology - students leave out ending words sometimes (dog-dogs) Silent period is common Lexicon
Language Levels	Phrases that address the levels of language acquisition, typically as understood through WIDA's proficiency levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 different levels Proficiency levels

Before beginning the course, pre-service teachers had basic background knowledge of working with ELs as demonstrated by MM1. In their current teacher preparation program, there is little instruction on ELs, so it is not surprising that they would have general or vague knowledge of ELs. On MM1 participants often wrote one word or shorter phrases and then in MM2, expanded their thoughts. For example, on MM1 there was the phrase “language barrier” but in MM2, participants were more expressive, focusing on the idea that, due to the language barrier, ELs “need help learning English + applying it to the content they are learning.” Another example from MMI was the idea of “need more support” which on MM2 looked like phrases such as “build off what they know to add more concepts/more ideas” or “balance of reading, writing, speaking, listening”.

Pre-service teachers were also early in their preparation coursework when they completed this supplemental course. However, throughout the course, they were able to grow substantially in their knowledge and experience working with ELs as evidenced by the mind maps. Analyzing pre- and post-mind maps allowed teacher preparator educators to see growth in various areas, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Comparison of MM1 and MM2 Themes

Theme	MM1 Codes	MM2 Codes	Theme	MM1 Codes	MM2 Codes
ELs Needs	24	23	Models	6	11
Diverse group	16	37	Family	6	5
Environment	12	8	Testing	3	6
Strategies	12	52	Linguistics/SLA	1	13
Language barrier	9	2	Language Levels	0	13
Definitions	6	3	Totals	95	173

Exploring the Themes

To address the research question, *What do mainstream pre-service teachers find meaningful and/or memorable from their experiences working and learning with ELs?*, we explored in more detail the most common themes and/or the themes with the most growth, including *EL Needs*, *Diverse Group*, *Strategies*, *Language Barrier & Language Levels*, and *Linguistics/SLA*.

EL Needs

The most prominent theme found in the MM1 data *EL Needs*, which focused on the idea that ELs need extra time and support in the classroom. This theme was mentioned 24 times by nine participants. Before they started their course, these participants identified that ELs benefit

from modified instructions, additional time and resources, and more support from teachers.

Examples of phrases from the participants included:

- *Need extra help and guidance in order to succeed*
- *Need different approaches to learning*
- *Students often need modified instruction to meet their academic and social-emotional needs*

On MM2 *EL Needs* was mentioned 23 times. Subcategories in this theme included: From the Teacher (11 mentions), Social-Emotional (7 mentions), Support, Resources, Help (5 mentions). Key phrases in the *EL Needs* category included:

- *Do not limit students to resources. Give everything they need to succeed*
- *Need more support emotionally + academically*

The theme of EL needs showed little growth between MM1 and MM2 in terms of quantity of times mentions as well as sophistication of language used to describe needs. This shows teacher educators that the pre-service teachers had basic awareness of EL needs in the classroom going into the course and this stayed consistent throughout the course.

Diverse Group

Another theme from the MM1 data is that ELs are typically considered a diverse group. Participants mentioned the theme of *Diverse Group* 14 times before starting the EL course. Common subcategories under *Diverse Groups* included: ELs speak multiple languages, most ELs speak Spanish, and ELs can be born both in and out of the United States. Examples of phrases from the participants included:

- *Come from different ethnicity/race*
- *Come from all over the world*

- *Culturally unique vocabulary*

In the MM2 data, *Diverse Group* had 37 mentions. Again, subcategories emerged as well for *Diverse Group*, such as Individuals (20 mentions), Culture (5 mentions), Place (5 mentions), Language (4 mentions), and Diversity (3 mentions). Some phrases in the *Diverse Group* category were as follows:

- *Come from many different cultures + backgrounds*
- *Speak many different languages*

The growth in this theme points to the role of the 3-week intensive field experience working hands-on with an actual group of ELs, which showcased the diversity that ELs have among themselves. Pre-service teachers need practical experience working with ELs, and when three-week teacher programs provide instruction on cultural competency purely in a classroom and theoretical setting, it does not suffice (Scott & Scott, 2015). In this case, having participants work with culturally and linguistically diverse students, they were able to grow their cultural competence, and this awareness was reflected in their MM2s.

Strategies

In MM1, participants mentioned *Strategies* to support/accommodate ELs 12 times. Visuals were a very common subcategory for *Strategies* along with one-on-one teaching and smooth transitions. The importance of strategies for support and accommodation was indicated through the following phrases:

- *Often learn better with visuals such as pictures to learn what words mean*
- *Give directions in more than just one way*

In the MM2 data was *Strategies* was the most prominent theme with 52 mentions. Sub-themes also emerged within the categories and included: Writing (12 mentions), General (10

mentions), Speaking (9 mentions), Visuals (8 mentions), Reading (6 mentions), Variety (4 mentions), Modified Instructions & Directions (2 mentions), and One-on-One (1 mention).

Examples of key phrases from the participants were:

- *Build off what they know to add more concepts/more ideas*
- *Don't make them read things above their reading level*
- *Balance of reading, writing, speaking, listening*

In this study, the theme with the biggest growth between MM1 and MM2 was *Strategies* for working with ELs. The participants worked in an elementary school for two hours a day for the three-week duration of the course, therefore it was not surprising that strategies were at the forefront of the pre-service teachers' minds. Field experiences are known to play a key role in the preparation of teachers to work with ELs (Sugimoto, 2017; Huerta, 2022; Schultz, 2020). During this field experience, participants were learning strategies from both the course content and their host elementary host teachers and then actively applying them on a day-to-day basis. The marrying of course content and application that happens during purposeful field experiences helped the participants to both recall and prioritize strategies they learned when completing MM2. The participants' ability to make meaning during their experience was connected to serving ELs in an authentic classroom and in authentic ways.

Language Barrier & Language Levels

Language Barrier which was mentioned nine times. Most participants highlighted that ELs typically do not know, and struggle with English. Phrases that indicated a language barrier for ELs included:

- *Inability to communicate*
- *Students sometimes hold back in the classroom due to communication barriers*

- *Students may be unfamiliar with English*

MM2 showed that in addition to being aware of the diversity of ELs, participants were also shifting to approaching teaching ELs with a more asset-oriented mindset. For example, on MM1, *Language Barrier* was mentioned nine times, and then on MM2 there were only two mentions. This change represents moving pre-service teachers from the deficit perspective of seeing ELs as lacking language and having problems/barriers to an asset-oriented approach of knowing at what level ELs start, how they can grow, and seeing opportunities. This move to a more asset-oriented mindset is reflected not only in the decrease of seeing lack of English as a barrier but also in the increase on MM2 with the emergence of the theme of *Language Levels* with 13 mentions. A basic understanding of language levels allowed participants to accept and honor the students' current levels and what they can do at those levels. Instead of seeing language as a barrier, they saw their various levels as assets and a starting point from which to grow. This moved them toward a more asset-oriented perspective and a more culturally sustaining view of the students.

Linguistics/SLA

Linguistics/SLA was another theme in the MM2 data with 13 mentions, growing from only 1 mention of MM1. This theme did not have any subcategories. Key terms for

Linguistics/SLA include:

- *Silent period + wait time*
- *Lexicon*
- *Morphology - students leave out ending words sometimes (dog-dogs)*

An increase from one to 13 mentions reflected that pre-service teachers had little prior knowledge of the role of second language acquisition before the course, but that the information

they learned was relevant and memorable to them at the end of the course. This growth is important because Standard 2 of the *Indiana Content Standards for Educators: English Learners* requires that teachers of ELs “have a broad and comprehensive understanding of principles of first- and second-language acquisition and development as applied to EL instruction and assessment” (IDOE, 2010).

In summary, through the exploration of these prominent themes, we found that between MM1 and MM2, pre-service teachers prioritized and grew in ways that developed their knowledge of 1) supporting ELs through specific classroom strategies, 2) building awareness of and appreciating diversity, 3) approaching language learning with an asset-oriented mindset, and 4) gaining a basic understanding of second language acquisition.

Informing teacher preparation curriculum on supporting ELs

Using mind maps, this study identified what the pre-service teachers’ knowledge base on ELs consisted of at the beginning of a 3-week service-learning course and in what areas they were able to grow. By doing mind maps from memory and within a 15-minute time frame, pre-service teachers ultimately listed items/concepts that they identified as most relevant and/or memorable. Pre-service teachers mentioned 10 different themes at the beginning of the course on MM1 and those same themes were found again on MM2, with the addition of only one theme, *Language Levels*. This indicated to teacher educators that pre-service teachers had basic knowledge of many of the themes that would be covered in the course when it began. As a survey course which only consisted of 15 hours of content instruction (30 hours were a service-learning field experience), pre-service teachers were not able to go in depth on many topics during the course. Instead, they received instruction on many different themes including second language acquisition theories, historical and legal considerations, models of EL education, etc.

Despite the limited contact with each theme, the MM2 showed increased growth of knowledge in most themes.

Using mind maps as a tool to capture the learning of pre-service teachers allowed teacher educators to identify what themes pre-service teachers prioritized and then use this information to modify curriculum and advocate for more coursework on working with ELs. For example, the mind maps showed that from MM1 to MM2 pre-service teachers prioritized and grew in ways that developed their knowledge of 1) supporting ELs through specific classroom strategies, 2) building awareness of and appreciating diversity, 3) approaching language learning with an asset-oriented mindset, and 4) gaining a basic understanding of second language acquisition. This information was then used to see what teacher educator standards were captured effectively through the course and what areas needed improved or increased instruction. The mind maps provided information that was used to both modify the course for future semesters and inform teacher educators what content knowledge and skills on working with ELs could be integrated in other teacher preparation coursework. Also, the growth of pre-service teacher knowledge that was reflected on the mind maps after participating in a targeted course on ELs showed the benefit of including a stand-alone course on ELs into teacher preparation curriculum, which is advocated for by the Indiana affiliate chapter of the professional organization Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (INTESOL). In 2017, INTESOL produced a white paper titled *English Language Learner (ELL) Preparation for Indiana School Educators: A White Paper* in which they proposed that all pre-service teachers complete a basic research-based ESL methods class as a K-12 licensing requirement in Indiana (INTESOL, 2017, p. 4).

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to address the use of mind-mapping as a classroom

strategy for identifying and assessing the knowledge base of pre-service teachers as they prepare to work with ELs in mainstream classrooms. Analysis of the mind maps revealed that pre-service teachers grew in ways that developed their knowledge of 1) supporting ELs through specific classroom strategies, 2) building awareness of and appreciating cultural diversity, 3) approaching language learning with an asset-oriented mindset, and 4) gaining a basic understanding of second language acquisition. This information was then used to modify curriculum and supports for pre-service teachers who are learning to work with ELs in mainstream classrooms.

Moving forward, teacher educators who are looking to include more preparation in working with ELs into their programs may use mind maps as a starting point to measure what pre-service teachers already know as well as what they find memorable after participating in an experience with ELs. As with this study, the information gleaned from mind maps could help teacher educators evaluate pre-service teacher learning, adjust the curriculum and experiences in their programs, and advocate for a stand-alone course or more contact hours working with ELs in their preparation programs.

Future research may seek to repeat this research across multiple cohorts of pre-service teachers to see if and how similar themes emerge. Other next steps could include asking participants to complete a third mind map after they have been teaching for several years to see what knowledge is retained or expanded upon and how that varies depending on whether they work in a school with a high EL population or not. Ultimately using mind maps in teacher preparation of pre-service teachers to work with ELs can provide insight into what pre-service teachers are retaining from their experiences and provide teacher educators with data to make informed decisions and changes in curriculum.

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Information for Contributors

INTESOL JOURNAL

The INTESOL Journal, a professional, refereed journal, encourages submission of previously unpublished articles on topics of significance to individuals concerned with language teaching and learning. Although the INTESOL Journal was formerly published as a print journal, beginning in 2014, the INTESOL Journal will be an open-access journal published exclusively online. As a publication that represents a variety of cross-disciplinary interests, both theoretical and practical, the INTESOL Journal invites manuscripts on a wide range of topics, including:

- psychology and sociology of language learning and teaching;
- issues in research and research methodology;
- testing and evaluation;
- professional participation;
- curriculum design and development;
- instructional methods, materials, and techniques; and
- language planning professional standards.

Because the INTESOL Journal is committed to publishing manuscripts that contribute to bridging theory and practice in our profession, it particularly welcomes submissions that address the implications and applications of research in, for example,

- anthropology;
- applied and theoretical linguistics;
- communication;
- education;
- English education, including reading and writing theory;

- psycholinguistics;
- psychology;
- first and second language acquisition;
- sociolinguistics; and
- sociology.

The INTESOL Journal prefers that all submissions be written in a style that is accessible to a broad readership, including those individuals who may not be familiar with the subject matter.

GENERAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Contributors are strongly encouraged to submit manuscripts of no more than 15-20 double spaced pages or 7,000 words (including references, notes, and tables). Submit one copy plus an informative abstract of not more than 200 words. If possible, indicate the number of words at the end of the article. To facilitate the blind review process, authors' names should appear only on a cover sheet, not on the title page; do not use running heads. INTESOL Journal prefers online submissions through the journal's online submission system. Please visit <https://journals.iupui.edu/index.php/intesol/user/register> to create a user name and password prior to submitting a manuscript.

When evaluating a manuscript for publication in the INTESOL Journal, reviewers consider the following factors:

1. The manuscript appeals to the general interests of INTESOL's readership;
2. The manuscript strengthens the relationship between theory and practice: Practical articles must be anchored in theory, and theoretical articles and reports of research must contain a discussion of implications or applications for practice;
3. The content of the manuscript is accessible to the broad readership of the INTESOL

4. Membership;
5. The manuscript offers a new, original insight or interpretation and not just a restatement of others' ideas and views;
6. The manuscript makes a significant practical, useful, plausible contribution to the field;
7. The manuscript is likely to arouse readers' interest;
8. The manuscript reflects sound scholarship and research design with appropriate, correctly interpreted references to other authors and works; and
9. The manuscript is well written and organized and conforms to the specifications of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.).

All submissions to INTESOL Journal should be accompanied by a cover letter that includes a full mailing address and both a daytime and an evening telephone number. Where available, authors should include an email address and fax number. Authors of articles should include a very brief biographical statement (in sentence form, maximum 50 words), plus any special notations or acknowledgments that they would like to have included. Double spacing should be used throughout.

Manuscripts submitted to INTESOL Journal cannot be returned to authors. Authors should be sure to keep a copy for themselves. It is understood that manuscripts submitted to INTESOL Journal have not been previously published and are not under consideration for publication elsewhere. It is the responsibility of the author(s) of a manuscript submitted to an INTESOL Journal to indicate to the Editor the existence of any work already published (or under consideration for publication elsewhere) by the author(s) that is similar in content to that of the manuscript.

The Editor and Associate Editor of INTESOL Journal reserves the right to make editorial changes in any manuscript accepted for publication to enhance clarity, concision, or style. The author will be consulted only if the editing has been substantial. The Editor's decisions are final. The views expressed by contributors to INTESOL Journal do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor, the Editorial Advisory Board, Editorial Review Team or INTESOL. Material published in the INTESOL Journal should not be construed to have the endorsement of INTESOL.

Special Topics Issues

The INTESOL Journal is an annual publication; however, one additional issue per volume may be devoted to a special topic. Topics are approved by the INTESOL Journal's Editorial Advisory Board. Those wishing to suggest topics or serve as guest editors should contact the editor. Issues will generally contain both invited articles designed to survey and illuminate central themes as well as articles solicited through a call for papers.

These guidelines are largely adopted from the TESOL Quarterly guidelines (09/2004).



INTESOL MISSION

INTESOL's mission is to strengthen the effective teaching and learning of English as a Second Language in the State of Indiana while respecting individual's language and cultural backgrounds. To this end, INTESOL, as a statewide professional association, supports and seeks to inspire those involved in English language teaching, teacher education, administration and management, curriculum and materials design, and research; provides leadership and direction through the dissemination and exchange of information and resources; encourages access to, and standards for English language instruction, professional preparation, and employment; and supports the initiatives of its international parent organization, TESOL International.



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Indiana Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

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