

Increasing ELL Inclusion by Developing a Community of Practice that Creates Equitable
Opportunities for ELLs within the School Community

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2020

A capstone project submitted to the Department of Education and Human Development of
The College at Brockport, State University of New York in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education

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Abstract

ELLs are marginalized and isolated within their school communities. This marginalization has negative effects on linguistic, academic, and socioemotional development of ELLs. To mitigate this problem, schools should create a community of practice that promotes and creates opportunities for inclusion and equitable opportunities for ELLs and their families. A professional development session will be outlined after a thorough literature review. The professional development session will help teachers, club leaders, coaches, and administrators reflect on the marginalization of ELLs within their building. Through this capstone and professional development, educators will begin to plan their own community of practice and begin the process of knocking down the barriers that prevent ELLs from being a bigger part of the school community. Future research on this topic must be conducted and focus on extracurricular participation of ELLs, the rate of participation, the barriers preventing participation, and the benefits of participation.

Keywords: community of practice, inclusion, extracurricular activities, equity, ELLs, marginalization, isolation, school community

Chapter 1: Introduction

Problem

I went into the field of education because I want to help students develop the pieces need to build their puzzle of success. As a social studies teacher, I set out each day to educate students on the world around them and offer them ways to help advance the world and create a more equitable society. My path to become a certified English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher began when I developed a successful co-teaching relationship with an ESOL teacher at a diverse school district in the Rochester area. Her knowledge, compassion, and relationships with students are something I still marvel at three years later. The English Language Learners (ELLs) we taught together during first period have gone on to influence my teaching and societal outlook to this day. When I took a job at a different district after that year, a suburban school with a high population of upper-middle class and upper class families, the things I learned from my ELLs came with me. When I got to my new district, I reflected back over my years of teaching, my time as a student, and the rest of my educational journey and noticed a pattern regarding the treatment of ESOL teachers and ELLs in their local educational communities.

Throughout my educational journey, I have noticed that ELLs and ESOL teachers are often isolated from the rest of the school community. When I look back at my middle school and high school education, I cannot even begin to visualize where the ESOL classroom was located, who the ESOL teachers were, or who the ELLs were (my school taught ELLs in a self-contained classroom). Now as both an educator and graduate student, I have observed the continued trend that ELLs and ESOL teachers are often isolated from the rest of the school community. I have not seen many ELLs on sports teams, in music or art programs outside of the

state mandated classes, in clubs, or other school extracurricular activities. There could be many explanations to this. For example, families may not be aware of programs offered due to ineffective or inequitable district communication; factors in the students' personal lives that require them to be home when school is over; students may not feel comfortable enough in school to want to extend their time there. Districts and school buildings could also suffer from racism, which would push ELLs to self-isolate to their ESOL classrooms. Additionally, schools might not be offering programs that are culturally or linguistically compatible with ELLs.

I have also noted, in my own experience and through prior readings, that many ESOL teachers feel isolated from the rest of the educators. Many find their own classrooms tucked away from the others and lack valuable co-teaching relationships. Many ESOL teachers expressed to me that they are viewed as more of a teacher's aide than as a teacher/co-teacher. To help mitigate this isolation, this capstone will perform a literature review and create a professional development session to help find answers to one overarching question: How can schools help to promote an increased sense of community among ELLs, ESOL teachers, and mainstream students and teachers? While one capstone will not solve this problem, the information presented can help mitigate the problem that ELLs and ESOL teachers face. Through the exploration of this problem, this capstone will offer a professional development session that offers educators and opportunity to start a community of practice (CoP): a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (Wenger, 2016). A shared passion for education and children will bring educators together as they develop plans to create a more inclusive and equitable school community. ESOL and mainstream teachers will work together in this CoP and work towards assisting ELLs in having a more equitable school experience. If collaboration does not take

place, there is a high chance that the academic, linguistic, and social emotional needs of ELLs in the classroom will not be met.

Significance of the Problem

When ELLs are not supported or encouraged to become part of the larger school community, they can begin to feel marginalized and remain stuck in a bubble that keeps them from branching out far beyond the ESOL classroom (Przymus, 2016). Additionally, if ELLs do not feel comfortable enough to branch out or if they are stuck in tracked classes, they are denied chances to take part in opportunities that they may be interested in. Furthermore, ELLs may not be able to gain valuable experiences that can help them to be successful in a post-high school world (Wenger, 1998). Core classes like math, science, English, and social studies give students the basic tools needed to be successful upon graduation. Core classes are great because they teach different ways to think in addition to new information we did not know when we woke up that day. With that said, going beyond those classes is where students can find additional tools and experiences needed in order to have a fulfilling educational experience and develop even more skills that will help students during their life after high school. Sports can teach teamwork, art and music can enhance creativity and allow students to explore different mediums of expression, clubs allow for social interactions among peers with shared interests, business clubs and internships offer real world experience that can put a resume at the top of the pile. This is not to say that core classes do not develop these skills, but rather, that these skills can be further developed and improved through extracurricular activities. Creating barriers between these opportunities and ELLs can only hurt them in the end.

When it comes to ESOL teachers and their isolation from the mainstream teachers and the rest of the school community, there can be a multitude of factors at play. At the middle

school and high school levels, the departmentalization of the school limits the contact between mainstream teachers and ESOL teachers (Bell & Baecher, 2012). Beyond this example at the secondary level, isolation felt by the ESOL teachers can also stem from the lack of shared planning time, the lack of support from administration, co-teaching with an underprepared teacher, the method of ESOL instruction (push in or pull out), among others. According the study done by Bell and Baecher (2012), 85% of surveyed ESOL instructors stated that their collaboration with mainstream teachers was either mostly informal or somewhat informal and that 83% reported that they infrequently planned lessons with mainstream teachers. Without formal planning time to collaborate on effective lessons, ESOL teachers will continue to feel isolated from the learning community and ELLs will feel the negative effects. The community of practice that will be developed during chapter 3 will offer sessions of collaboration between ESOL and mainstream teachers.

During this capstone, many terms will be used that must be defined at the start in order to help us further our understandings of the topics presented. I will be using the terms *ELLs* to refer to English language learners, or students that are in in the process of developing their English. *ESOL/TESOL* will refer to the teachers that teach English as a second language. The second group of teachers discussed in this study will be *mainstream teachers*, which are teachers that teach specific content usually found in core classes such as math, science, English, and social studies. *Extracurricular activities* will be used as an umbrella term for any school or community sponsored activity that takes place outside of the hours class is in session. Examples of extracurricular activities include, but are not limited to, sports, musicals, art shows, clubs, community service, student government, and internships. Finally, the theoretical framework that will anchor the literature review and professional development is *communities of practice*,

groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (Wenger, 2016). The goal of the accompanying professional development involved a CoP coming together to help mitigate the isolation felt by ELLs in the school community.

The problem for many ELLs and ESOL teachers today is isolation; isolation from peers, opportunities, interactions, and support. In order to create a greater overall community within a school building and district, ESOL teachers need to receive more of an equal role in the planning, instructing, assessing, and evaluating of students. To help ELLs break free of isolation and become a bigger part of their school community, schools need to establish equitable opportunities for participation in extracurricular activities. Throughout my life as both a student and educator, I can only recall a handful of ELLs that actively participated in extracurricular activities. I noticed, in real time and through reflections that ELLs that participated in athletics or clubs were much more confident with interacting with their peers and with their learning of language and content when compared to their ELLs peers that did not.

I feel that educators must address this problem because if students do not know how to access additional educational opportunities outside of their class schedule, they will not be able to take full advantage of all the educational system has to offer. At a classroom level, if ELLs become more welcomed and involved in their school community, their self-esteem and confidence in their learning could see positive changes (Kort-Butler and Hagewen, 2010). The monolingual peers of ELLs would receive a greater opportunity to interact with ELLs and have the additional opportunity to become a bigger part of a globalized, interconnected, and diverse world. At the school level, addressing this problem would mean greater school outreach to ELLs and their families to notify them of things like the opportunities available outside of the hours

class is in session and how students can go about becoming part of them. This would allow a school and a district to reflect on their communications with their ELL population and begin to improve it, if necessary.

According to Broh (2002) participating in high school sports benefits a student both academically and socially. Students that participate in high school sports are more likely to have increased levels of self-esteem, focus more time on their studies/homework, surround themselves with friends that are more academically oriented, and create stronger relationships with students, parents, and the school (Broh, 2002). If schools are able to promote extracurricular activities like sports for ELLs, it is possible that positive cultural and linguistic adjustments are made through interactions with peers in this different context.

Collegiality is an important part to a successful educational system. If a group of teachers within a district or school building feel that they are isolated from other staff members, looked at as less than a mainstream teacher, or not given the opportunity to work with others, their ability to be successful with their students could be limited (Knackendoffel, 2007). If proper co-teaching relationships are not developed, the culture of the school could suffer and students will feel the negative impacts as their learning needs will not be met (Knackendoffel, 2007). Establishing successful and meaningful co-teaching relationships, shared planning time, and shared responsibilities will benefit both ELLs and their monolingual peers tremendously. While the CoP created through this capstone will not focus directly on co-teaching, it will allow ESOL and mainstream teachers frequent opportunities to interact with each other in a professional manner.

Isolation can certainly increase the challenge of language learning. If mainstream and ESOL teachers do not receive the proper resources and encouragement to develop successful co-

teaching relationships, it will be the ELLs that ultimately suffer. Many of the challenges ELLs face with language learning will not be met if ESOL teachers and mainstream teachers do not work well together. Additionally, if mainstream and ESOL teachers are not adequately working together to create and modify assessments and then interpret the results of the assessments, ELLs can see a continued myriad of challenges surrounding learning, assessment, and feedback. Improved relationships between staff members will not only help ELLs with their language development, but it will also assist ESOL teachers in becoming a bigger part of the school community. Becoming a larger part of the school community is a great way to improve self-esteem. As stated earlier, I have noticed throughout my journey as an educator that ELLs are very often missing from extracurricular activities. To help ELLs overcome challenges associated with becoming a bigger part of the school culture, helping to provide ELLs with equitable opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities, thus helping to overcome some sociocultural challenges that isolation may cause.

Purpose

With the proper education and community discussion within the school building, this problem can be mitigated to hopefully increase the sense of community ELLs and ESOL teachers feel in their local buildings and district. The purpose of this capstone and professional development session is to have staff members begin to create a CoP that encourages teachers (mainstream and ESOL) and administrators to reflect on what they have done in the past to either encourage or discourage (passively or actively) ELL participation in extracurricular activities. Another main goal will be for staff members to create plans and materials that improve equitable opportunities for ELLs. A major effect of the CoP will be that ESOL teachers will be the experts in the CoP and will strengthen their relationships with staff members and teachers work together

towards a shared goal. A focus of this study will be to assist teachers and administrators in developing ways to promote the inclusion ELLs in extracurricular activities by informing ELLs and their families of the opportunities available at the school.

The professional development session will be open to ESOL teachers, mainstream teachers, and administrators. While the session will not directly cover co-teaching strategies, the session will assist in the school community becoming more inclusive as ESOL teachers, mainstream teachers, and administrators set out to reflect on what the school/district has done to serve ELLs in the past. Through reflections, teachers and administrators will work together to create plans and materials that can allow for greater integration of ELLs and their families into the school community. Educators will eventually be able to work together to create a calendar of important dates and events that ELLs and their families should be aware of, in addition to planning culturally relevant school events and community trips. Events can include, but are not limited to, dates of sporting events, musicals, or art shows, when physicals for athletic participation are due by, how to join clubs, musicals, and other organizations. The calendar should be designed to be easily accessible to ELLs and their families. Additionally, educators will begin to brainstorm events and/or organization that can be created to highlight ELLs, their backgrounds, and their cultures.

Administrators and ESOL teachers will be tasked with building a partnership to develop successful means of communication to ELLs and their families. This will include the design and language used on the calendar developed in the PD, the development of an equitable webpage on the school districts website, and the development of a social media account that will keep ELLs and their families up to date with important information that will help mitigate the isolation they may feel from the school community. When the CoP is created later on in the year, parents will

be invited and welcomed to participate in creation of materials, open discussion, and community building in order to help foster equitable opportunities within the school community.

Conclusion

The problem is that ELLs and ESOL teachers are both isolated from the larger context of the school community. This isolation can prevent ELLs from having an equitable experience to that of their monolingual peers and set them up for disadvantages upon graduation if they are not given an equal opportunity to develop themselves further through the skills and information gained through extracurriculars. Isolating ESOL teachers is ultimately a disservice to ELLs because if ESOL teachers are treated as an aide rather than a fully certified teacher. If they are not given the opportunities or encouragement to be equal in co-planning and co-teaching, ELLs will be negatively impacted in the classroom and the overall climate of the school could suffer.

Chapter 2 will contain a review of the scholarly literature on the benefits of inclusion and equity, as well as the benefits of forming a CoP. Chapter 3 will offer a description of the professional development session that is designed to help mitigate the problem by creating a CoP. The professional development session will require teachers and administrators to assess how inclusive the school community is and how equitable the many extracurricular opportunities are for ELLs. Upon completion of the professional development, teachers and administrators will be ready to invite students and parents into the CoP. Together, all members will work together to create materials, opportunities, and propose changes that can help assist ELLs in gaining more equitable opportunities in the greater-educational experience. Finally, Chapter 4 will discuss the key takeaways and implications of both the research and professional development for students and teachers. Chapter 4 will also future recommendations on the

future research of the marginalization of ELLs in their school community. Materials used as part of the professional development session will be attached in the appendix.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

There is a plentiful amount of scholarly literature that connects to the problem presented in this capstone: how can schools help to promote an increased sense of community among ELLs, ESOL teachers, and mainstream students and teachers? However, much of the previously completed research focused mainly on purely academic methods, rather than extracurricular activities, to mitigate the marginalization felt by ELLs in the context of their school community. One of the most consistent and meaningful theories present throughout multiple articles involves Lave and Wenger's (1991) communities of practice, or CoP, which is defined as groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (Wenger, 2016). The CoP itself relies on three layers that come together to solve a problem: identifying the problem/establishing a domain, creating a community with members working towards a common goal, and then creating new practices that lead to change. A key part of CoP is the continued interaction between group members and the community, which includes people who are already aware of the problem and experts that can help to lead a discussion (Martin-Beltran et al., 2019). Another main aspect of CoP is that all members have a mutual commitment to the goal of the group (Wenger et al., 2002). This is vital to the mitigation of the problem identified as part of the overarching question as one meeting, one discussion, or one professional development session will not be enough to overcome the marginalization faced by ELLs in many school communities.

Collaboration between ELLs, monolingual students, teachers, administrators, and parents in CoP could benefit the entire learning community. The goal of creating plans and materials during a CoP exists to help ELLs overcome their marginalized school experiences, and promote

equity and greater achievement in regards to both their linguistic and socioemotional needs. If ELLs continue to feel marginalized from their peers, they could experience a plateauing of their English language development (Przymus, 2016). Students that are able to achieve higher academic targets, or have a higher perception of their own academic capabilities and learning outcomes, see a positive impact in their self-esteem (Rodriguez et al., 2009). Additionally, by creating a CoP during the connected professional development, ESOL teachers to become a valued part of the school community as they work as leaders and alongside their mainstream colleagues.

The purpose of the professional development in chapter 3 is to help teachers and administrators recognize that ELLs are isolated and marginalized from the school community. During the professional development session, plans and materials can be made to encourage inclusion and meet linguistic and socioemotional needs of ELLs. Martin-Beltran et al. (2019) suggests that this isolation is real and that linguistically diverse students receive inequitable experiences and opportunities throughout their education. This marginalization can be the effects of either limitation or flat-out denial to resources or programs that are regularly available and accessible to monolingual students (Martin-Beltran et al., 2019). The focus of this professional development is to help teachers assess how they, as the heads of extracurricular activities, may be unconsciously limiting ELL participation. For example, if the English language is viewed as the only acceptable language of the extracurricular, ELLs may feel unwelcome (Martin-Beltran et al., 2019). Supervisors, coaches, and teacher leaders must begin to consider ways to establish a more inclusive extracurricular environment if ELLs are to have increased participation.

Building a Foundation That Meets the Linguistic and Socioemotional Needs of the Community

The study completed by Martin-Beltran et al. (2019) took place at a diverse high school in an urban area on the east coast of the United States. The study attempted to uncover the benefits of creating a CoP within the school. Through interviews, recordings, and data analysis, the researchers were able to determine that the continued presence of ELLs in the CoP was key to the development of new learning opportunities. One of the major aspects highlighted as the key question and key result of the study was the acceptance of multiple languages within the CoP. Martin-Beltran et al. successfully argue that greater ELL integration into the school community takes place when language learning is encouraged for all participants of the CoP. This inclusivity has the potential to branch out to the rest of the school community. To prevent language from being a barrier to equitable opportunities, teachers, administrators, and extracurricular participants need to begin to assess their organization's accessibility.

According to Martin-Beltran et al. (2019) and Przymus (2016) a Language Ambassador/ELL Ambassadors program is beneficial in promoting language learning and assisting in mitigating the marginalization felt by many ELLs. Martin-Beltran et al. (2019) states that the Language Ambassador program is a dual-language extracurricular program that encourages students from all backgrounds to come together and be active in each other's language learning. Przymus (2016) designed the ELL Ambassadors program quite similarly, with the goal to offer ELLs opportunities to be part of an extracurricular activity and to assist in meeting their socioemotional and linguistic needs. Przymus drew data from a three-year research project while he was an ESOL teacher at a school in the Midwest, analyzed participant surveys and interviews, and examined additional data from the participants' academic records.

The main question in Przymus's research is quite similar to the one that this capstone is currently undertaking. The study sets out to see how schools can facilitate ELL participation in extracurricular activities and what the positive outcomes of participation would be. The ELL Ambassador program, along with the equivalent mentioned in the Martin-Beltran et al. study would be key to a section in the professional development discussed in chapter 3.

Przymus supports the problem mentioned in chapter 1 in part that ELLs do often feel isolated in school for many reasons. Przymus (2016) argues that ELLs when school communities disenfranchise ELLs, they are pushed into what he calls the "ELL bubble". Combine this "bubble" with what Przymus argues is an increase in ELL placement in tracked classes that lock them out of opportunities to become a bigger part of the school community, and the isolation grows. This is exactly what the professional development session will attempt to mitigate. The claim Przymus shares is a key reason why students, teachers, and administrators need to be part of a CoP as this is a challenge that must be faced on all fronts. One teacher or a few students attempting to make positive changes will not be enough. There are inherent structural and systemic changes that need must change in order to assist ELLs in breaking out of the bubble so that equitable opportunities are shared, while student linguistic and socioemotional needs are met.

Being stuck in the ELL bubble could also lead to the plateauing of L2 development (Przymus, 2016). This linguistic issue directly connects to a socioemotional issue. Przymus defends that if ELLs are not afforded equitable opportunities to socialize with the school community and become part of the greater academic experience, some ELLs may stop doing their schoolwork and begin to rule out a path to college. Ahmed Hersi et al. (2016) takes this problem one-step further and addresses the skills and knowledge most students need to be

successful in the modern economy are accessible only when academic achievement comes first. To break out of this bubble, Przymus (2016) suggests that a CoP can be the method to bring students of different backgrounds that have shared goals and mutual interests together. A CoP has the potential to offer ELLs different opportunities throughout the school as they discuss their interests and goals in a safe community with their monolingual peers.

Participants of the Przymus study were all previously his students and completed the survey after graduation. All surveyed students stated that their participation in communities of practice outside of the ESOL classroom positively affected their English language development and overall academic success. One survey question asked: To what extent did participating in school groups, clubs, or teams impact your English language learning? Students answered:

When you are in a class, most of the times it is not required that you speak, you only write or do the exercises, but the most difficult part about learning a different language is to speak it, write it and read it is easier. When you participate in a club, it is more than likely that you will have to talk. Talking English in the team was not mandatory, but it was nice to talk and learn in a funny way. It helped me because it gave me the opportunity of socialize with people from different countries and different cultures, being involved in school groups, clubs, and teams give you confidence in what you do and what you'll be doing . . . joining on team helped me to improve my English. (p. 277)

A second question on the survey asked: To what extent did participating in school groups, clubs, or teams impact how you did in your classes? Students answered:

Somehow it gave me knowledge of language and it made it easy to me to be communicating with teachers and students, the way I'd be learning how to improve in

classes and be participating on those. Since I was practicing my English while participating in clubs, I learned to speak English somewhat fast, which, in consequence, helped me to get better grades in my classes because the language barrier was not a problem anymore. Sometimes I was required to do well in classes so I could be on the team. (p. 277)

While empirical data is important, the primary source quotes Przymus includes to follow up the research data are just as important. It is clear how important extracurricular activities are for linguistic and socioemotional needs from the individuals who receive the equitable opportunities during their L2 development. To assist ELLs further in their linguistic and socioemotional needs, it is important to assist ESOL teachers in becoming a larger and more valued part of the school community. Creating a CoP through the accompanying professional development where ESOL teachers and mainstream teachers work towards a mutual goal can help mitigate the marginalization felt by both ESOL teachers and ELLs.

A study done by Vera et al. (2018) compiled data from 57 alumni of language support programs. The goal of the study was to uncover the socioemotional experiences the students and the effects their language support program had on them. The study was designed so that alumni could provide feedback as they reflected back on their experiences. Participants in the study were all at least 18 years old, experienced a language support program, and could read and write in English. Each participant completed a survey that asked about inclusion and marginalization. The data presented by the study depicts the isolation and marginalization felt by ELLs in their school community. Over half of the surveyed students in the Vera et al. study listed at least one negative experience they had in school that was directly related to being an ELL. Such experiences included exclusion, being bullied, or being harassed.

The Vera et al. study also included some qualitative data that shared common narratives of the 57 alumni. Nearly half of the alumni expressed that their old school districts need multicultural sensitivity training for staff. Many of the alumni shared that their socioemotional issues as a student stemmed from feeling devalued by school staff that were not trained to meet their needs or who made culturally insensitive comments. Additional socioemotional problems came from barriers that prevented the ELLs from interacting with their mainstream classmates. The data expressed in the Vera et al. study shows that most of the 57 alumni had more negative than positive experiences while in school. However, there were variables at play that led to positive experiences.

The data from the Vera et al. study suggests that feeling of belonging and inclusion of ELLs went up the more they encountered supportive adults in the school building. This supports the call for a CoP to be developed to assist in promoting inclusion and equitable experiences for ELLs in the school community. The more adults that come together to learn about the needs of ELLs, while setting out to create more opportunities for ELLs, the more inclusive and supportive the school community will become.

Creating a CoP will offer diverse students diverse opportunities to become a larger part of the school community. If the CoP is able to produce materials and opportunities that allow ELLs equitable opportunities to experience extracurricular activities and other educational opportunities outside of their core classes, schools would be able to better meet their socioemotional and linguistic needs. Martin-Beltran et al. (2016) explained the value in having diversity in within the CoP and how promoting multilingual use in a smaller setting could create a positive ripple effect in the general school community. This is why it will be key for participants in the professional development session to create plans to promote ELL participation

in the CoP. Przymus showed how extracurricular activities and getting ELLs to have experiences beyond their ESOL classroom is valuable to their linguistic and socioemotional development. For this reason, a main goal of the CoP will be to develop equitable materials that advertise the opportunities the school has to offer for ELLs and their families, as well as creating new opportunities that welcome ELL participation and membership. Finally, Vera et al. showed just how important it is for adults in the school community to be supportive of ELLs.

Discrimination will only lead to additional isolation and marginalization. The professional development session discussed in chapter 3 will encourage the development of a CoP that includes many school staff members from many different departments. The role of ESOL teachers within the CoP will be crucial to the positive growth of the school community.

ELL and ESOL Teacher Participation in the School Community

Through a deep literature review of ten case studies, Carley-Rizzuto (2017) was able to confirm that many mainstream teachers have negative and pessimistic views towards ELLs' potential, compared to monolingual students in U.S. public schools. Part of Carley-Rizzuto's literature review featured a study done by Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) that found many mainstream teachers view the failures of immigrant students as personal failures, failures made because of the student's poor choices, or that the student was even deserving of the failure because of their immigrant status. If mainstream teachers are to provide equitable educational opportunities for ELLs in the classroom and through extracurricular activities, professional development must be made available. Carley-Rizzuto review of prominent literature points to culturally relevant teaching strategies to help foster linguistic and socioemotional development of ELLs.

The first step assisting ELLs in their linguistic needs is to create a learning environment that is safe to the point where it meets the socioemotional needs for each student. The professional development opportunity that accompanies this capstone will offer mainstream teachers the first step towards working with ESOL teachers and furthering their understanding on what is required in a mainstream classroom in order to foster respect and equitable learning for all students. Carley-Rizzuto claims that mainstream teachers must be made aware of how new languages are acquired in order to meet the needs of the ELLs in their classroom. While teachers may not opt to take additional course work to gain this valuable information, professional development offered by the district can be invaluable when it comes to supporting teachers in gaining the knowledge needed to support their ELLs.

These professional development sessions, led by ESOL teachers or administrators, would offer ESOL teachers the opportunities to build stronger relationships with mainstream teachers while also providing the key bits of information needed to support ELLs. By building these relationships, ESOL teachers and mainstream teachers can continue to work in continued professional development sessions, which will have a large effect on student achievement (Carley-Rizzuto, 2017). In addition to higher student achievement, professional development sessions that promote ESOL teachers and mainstream teachers and equals could help to mitigate the marginalization felt by many ESOL teachers. The CoP that sets out to achieve mutual goals based from mutual interests will require teachers to work collaboratively as equals.

Liggett (2010) argues that professional development sessions can offer valuable collaboration time for ESOL teachers and mainstream teachers, which ultimately benefits the students. Liggett interviewed ESOL teachers from both rural and urban school settings to see how they interacted professionally with their mainstream colleagues. The interviews showed

that the ESOL teachers did not have adequate collaboration time with mainstream teachers and many of the ESOL teachers stated that the lack of even informal collaboration was due to the placement of the ESOL classrooms, which are found tucked away from mainstream classrooms. Some of interviewed ESOL teachers claimed that the needs of ELLs and ESOL teachers were not met because the principals of their buildings did not have the support structures or appropriate levels of advocacy to support the linguistic and socioemotional needs of ELLs.

Claims made by Carley-Rizzuto and Liggett acknowledge that promoting successful collegial relationships among teachers will positively affect ELL achievement as mainstream teachers become more aware of the language learning process and the socioemotional needs of the ELLs in their classroom. A CoP that includes students, ESOL teachers, mainstream teachers, and administrators could help mitigate both the isolation felt by ESOL teachers and promote supports needed to assist ELLs with their linguistic and socioemotional goals.

One of the goals of the CoP that corresponds with the professional development of this capstone is to help address the marginalization felt by ESOL teachers. A study conducted by Trickett et al. (2012) supports the claim of marginalization made by many ESOL teachers. Identifying the marginalization felt by ESOL teachers is critical because if mainstream teachers and administrators are not aware of the issue, it will most likely never be mitigated. Through interviews and data analysis Trickett et al. shows that ESOL teachers often find their relationships with mainstream teachers to be one of the biggest workplace stressors. ESOL teachers expressed that this stress comes from their marginalization in the school community as many ESOL teachers are given fewer and less equitable educational resources, have inferior classrooms and classroom locations, are excluded from educational decisions that affect ELLs, and a severe lack of collegiality from mainstream teachers. According to the researchers, more

than half of the interviewed teachers stated that they feel ignored by the mainstream teachers and administration all together. It will ultimately be the students that suffer if ESOL teachers do not receive the support or are not viewed as equals to the other staff members in the building.

A large component of the Trickett et al. study centered on the interviewed ESOL teachers voicing their concerns over the lack of opportunities afforded to the parents of ELLs by the school district. The CoP that this capstone is hoping to offer has the potential to include parents of ELLs and monolingual students as a way to promote equity among all the families in the school community. The ESOL teachers that participated in the study shared that many of the parents they interacted with were not educated on the U.S. school system, how to apply to college, scholarships, or loans, and undocumented parents even expressed fears of coming to campus and facing legal issues. The root of the professional development of this capstone is to create a more equitable educational experience for ELLs through promoting adequate materials that help ELLs and their families become more knowledgeable about the school, the extracurricular opportunities offered. Through participation in the CoP, school staff will continue to be educated on the linguistic, socioemotional, and sociocultural needs of the diverse members of the community. Bringing parents into a safe and comfortable environment that the CoP will provide could allow for a greater and more equitable exchange of information among all members of the school community.

Each of these three studies emphasizes the need for increased involvement of ESOL teachers within their school community. To be clear, the studies show that the lack of involvement stems from the marginalization and isolation felt by the ESOL teachers themselves. This can be due to lack of support from administrators, lack of co-planning time, physical isolation of the ESOL classroom, or lack of support from mainstream teachers. The CoP that

will be discussed and developed in chapter 3 will offer mainstream and ESOL teachers shared to learn from each other, thus increasing the ESOL teachers' impact and involvement in the school community. When mainstream teachers and ESOL teachers work together successfully to meet shared goals, the ELLs will be the one that receive the greatest benefits.

The Value in Increasing Parent Involvement

Through a study of two culturally and linguistically diverse families, Panferov (2010) dives deeper to uncover the effects of parental involvement in their children's school experience. The role of the parents in language learning is crucial to the linguistic development of the child. Panferov suggests that access to books, organized study time, and consistent reading time are the main items language learners need in order to see improvements in literacy. If schools do not support all parents through equitable communication and opportunities, children from diverse backgrounds may be unfairly affected. Panferov offers multiple strategies to increase equitable communication to families of ELLs such as pairing parents of ELLs with buddy parents of monolingual students that could help with questions about their child's schooling, using multilingual forms of media/communication, and multilingual blogs that are developed by students and staff members. By incorporating these ideas into the CoP, parents of ELLs are given a more equitable access to school communications and can make informed decision on the educational experience of their child.

Other notable programs that Panferov (2010) discusses that could be included in the CoP are bilingual parent workshops that discuss the opportunities available to students and open discussions on where parents can obtain supplementary educational materials such as books at the community library. Again, it is all about increasing equity among the families that live in the district. One final suggestion that Panferov makes is to encourage the parents of ELLs to

volunteer to visit classes or other school events. The goal of these visits should be for the parents to share information about their language and culture to ultimately promote bilingualism, the linguistic development of their child, and the assist in improving the overall school climate (Panferov, 2012). Obtaining an equitable access to educational opportunities and materials is important to the overall development of the individual child. When parents are able to visit the classroom or school to promote positivity, the school climate moves in a positive direction and creates a learning environment that benefits all.

Through a thorough literature review, Araujo (2009) is able to offer some successful strategies to increase ELL parent involvement in the school community. A few of these strategies will be a focus of the professional development session in chapter 3. With the main goal of the CoP being to increase the amount of extracurricular opportunities for ELLs, it will be key to have equitable means of communications home to the parents of multilingual learners. Araujo suggests that schools can promote successful communications home by organizing school system orientations or workshops where parents are given the opportunities to see how the U.S. school system and their local school functions. Additionally, Araujo suggests that translated letters and newsletters must be sent frequently throughout the year in order to keep multilingual families informed. Constant positive and informative communication is key to promoting parent involvement in the school community.

Araujo (2009) sites a study conducted by Jasis and Ordoñez-Jasis (2006) that shows just how important this constant and positive communication is. The Jasis and Ordoñez-Jasis study showed that in many surveyed teachers viewed a lack of parent involvement as a reason for ELL underachievement, whereas the surveyed parents of the ELLs stated that they tried hard to become participants in the school community, but were often mistreated. The parents also

shared that they thought staff members were too quick to communicate only the bad news and never put in the effort to learn about their diverse students. This supports one of the goals of the professional development and CoP in that the members of the CoP must seek to create equitable communication and opportunities for all school community members.

Panferov (2010) and Araujo (2009) both show the importance of parent involvement and the positive effects it has on student achievement. The CoP developed through the professional development in chapter 3 will promote increased parent involvement. Materials and opportunities for inclusion will be developed and shared with the community so that ELLs and their families are able to take part in the same educational experiences as their monolingual peers and families.

Improving School Climate and Student Inclusion

Sanders et al. (2018) uses a sample of math and reading scores and school climate survey data from 26,000 students from 100 elementary and high schools to display how a positive school climate can benefit the academic achievements of ELLs. Through a literature review, it is clear that ELLs find their schools to be less safe and supportive when compared to the views shared by their monolingual peers (Sanders et al., 2018). Additional results from the data show that ELLs and their monolingual peers almost equally feel that a positive school climate leads to higher levels of academic achievement (Sanders et al., 2018). This same notion is confirmed by a study done by Rodriguez et al. (2009) in which 123 students (including 66 ELLs) were asked about their perception of school climate.

After first completing a literature review, Rodriguez et al. (2009) explains that a reason some ELLs may have a low perception of their school environment may stem from the fact that

their teachers have low expectations for ELLs. This is important to note since more of the research conducted by Rodriguez et al. suggests that teacher expectations for ELLs contribute directly to the overall academic success of the student. Teachers hold one of the many keys to improving school climate. The relationships they build with students, along with the clear and specific expectations they set, can often steer the climate of the classroom and even the school building. The Rodriguez et al. study supports the Sanders et al. (2018) study as it finds positive correlations between enhanced school climate and student achievement. By promoting the socioemotional needs of all students, the potential linguistic achievements of ELLs grow.

Review of the data proves that perceptions of a positive school climate not only increases academic achievement levels, but when students have positive perceptions of their academic abilities, students see positive impacts on their self-esteem (Rodriguez et al., 2009). Creating a CoP where members come together to help mitigate a shared problem will only help to improve school climate. Building a strong sense of community and togetherness are just two ways to help improve a school climate, which will then have positive impacts on student achievement and socioemotional needs. Part of the goal of the CoP is to build a stronger sense of community by creating equitable materials that offer ELLs and their families a greater opportunity to join school extracurricular. Being part of extracurricular activities is something that all students should have access too, regardless of linguistic or cultural background, as they are part of the greater educational experience and can offer additional paths to academic achievement.

The Socioemotional and Academic Benefits of Extracurricular Activities

One of the major goals of the professional development tied to this capstone is to have staff members create greater equity among extracurricular opportunities for ELLs. According to Broh (2002), extracurricular activities helps to improve academic achievement among

participants. Upon analyzing data and performing a literature review, Broh is able to support the fact that participation in sports can improve student grades and participation in other extracurricular activities such as drama, art, and music can also lead to higher academic achievement, bigger educational goals, increased college enrollment, and reduced absences. Connecting back to other scholars, participating in sports benefits not only grades, but also improves self-esteem and time spent on homework. Other benefits of extracurricular activities include stronger relationships between students and parents, students and the school, parents and the school, and parents and parents (Broh 2002). According to this study, participation in extracurricular activities is beneficial to the academic and social success of students. This is why one of the clear goals of the professional development session and CoP is to improve equity in participation of extracurricular activities. Many of the benefits of participation would assist ELLs in their linguistic and socioemotional development. Finally, by assisting in building stronger relationships among many parties, extracurricular activities are a great way to improve the social needs of ELLs and build a comfortable relationship between parents and the school.

One of the biggest benefits to participation in extracurricular activities is the interactions ELLs have with their monolingual peers. In line with the above-mentioned study, an extensive literature review by Ribeiro and Jiang (2020) defends that the real-life interactions ELLs are exposed to outside of the classroom are valuable in developing their L2, regardless of their backgrounds. The interactions ELLs have with English in an outside setting promote second language acquisition as ELLs negotiate their way through the language by receiving fixes through their trials and errors as they receive feedback from the persons they are interacting with in that setting. As a result of the literature review, Ribeiro and Jiang conclude that the real-life interactions ELLs get outside of the classroom, where they can practice English, lead to higher

levels of linguistic confidence and development. These real-life interactions with the English language can be found in the extracurricular activities offered by the school. The professional development session and eventual CoP will push for equity in access to these activities for ELLs.

The professional development session discussed in chapter 3 will lead the development of a CoP that values inclusion among the diverse learners in the school community. Broh and Ribeiro and Jiang both share the academic and socioemotional benefits of student participation in extracurricular activities. Unfortunately, if ELLs continue to be marginalized from the school community and are not given equitable opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities, they will not be able to gain the aforementioned benefits of such participation. The CoP will set out to create equitable materials and opportunities that promote such inclusion that is already offered to monolingual student body.

Conclusion

Creating a CoP will offer ELLs and their families a more equitable educational experience. By creating materials and opportunities that promote ELLs involvement in extracurricular activities and parent involvement in the school community, ELLs could see higher academic and linguistic achievement and begin to be less marginalized in the school building. The inclusion seen in increased ELL participation will also assist in meeting the socioemotional needs of ELLs. The CoP will need to develop materials that advertise all extracurricular opportunities, while also creating new opportunities that increase ELL and parent involvement with the school and staff members.

The CoP will offer mainstream teachers more opportunities to work collaboratively with ESOL teachers. This collaboration will promote the value and inclusion of the ESOL teachers

while also allowing for more chances for mainstream teachers to learn valuable strategies from the ESOL teachers. Through this collaboration, ELLs should see more strategies in the classroom that are used to meet their linguistic and socioemotional needs. During this collaboration, ESOL teachers will begin to become less marginalized in the school community. The partnership between teachers, administrators, and other staff members in the CoP will create more equitable opportunities for all students in the school building. After the foundation of the CoP is established, both monolingual students and ELLs will be invited to join and offer insights into ways the school can become more inclusive.

Chapter 3 will offer an outline of a professional development session that will seek to share the benefits of a CoP. The end goal of the professional development session is for a school to have the foundation of a CoP set up with some members and materials. Additionally, chapter 3 will contain many materials that are shared during the professional development session.

Chapter 3

Introduction

Chapter 2 discussed key literature that describes the reasons why ELLs deserve equitable extracurricular opportunities, the academic and linguistic benefits of participation in such opportunities, and how a CoP can be used to develop equitable opportunities and materials. Equitable opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities are key to improving the linguistic and socioemotional development of ELLs (Przymus, 2016). This professional development session will provide a school community with the opportunity to create a community of practice, which is defined by Lave and Wenger (2016) as groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. After this definition is provided to participants, educators will join groups and begin to map out ways to make the school extracurricular opportunities more inclusive for ELLs, outline additional materials and opportunities that the school should provide in order to promote equitable opportunities for ELLs, and plan on how to include students and parents into the CoP.

Description and Components

This professional development session will be conducted in one single 90-minute session. Any necessary follow-up sessions should be at the discretion of the district or CoP. The agenda for the session will outline the main components (see Appendix, Figure 1). The professional development session will be open to teachers and administrators. ESOL teachers are highly encouraged to attend as they will serve as group leaders as the session progresses. A key part of this professional development session is to get ESOL teachers working collaboratively with

mainstream teachers in order to meet the needs of ELLs and promote equal relationships between teachers, which will benefit the academics of ELLs (Liggett, 2010).

Introductions and Hook

The first component of the professional development involves a quick introduction that should only last a couple of minutes. The leader should introduce themselves and share their educational background. It is key that the leader of this professional development session has a background in ESOL and teaching diverse and multilingual learners. The agenda will be projected up on the board (see Appendix, Figure 1). The session will begin with an extended warmup to get the participants comfortable and engaged, while at the same time smoothly transitioning them towards the main activity of the day. The first step in the warmup will involve a worksheet asking participants to reflect back on their high school experiences (see Appendix, Figure 2). Participants will fill out both columns and consider questions like: What was your high school experience like? What extracurricular activities were you apart of? Why did you join those extracurricular activities? What do you think those activities taught you? After two minutes, participants are asked to share their responses with their elbow partner. The purpose of this activity is to get participants to have an emotional connection to their extracurricular participation. This will hopefully help to fuel a purpose for the CoP, which will be discussed shortly.

Discovering Discrepancies in Extracurricular Participation Activity

The next portion of the warmup will have participations compete in a series of four games. The first game involves participants using the worksheet attached as (see Appendix, Figure 3). In the left column, participants will have two minutes to list as many students as they

know that do extracurricular activities. Teachers take great pride in their relationship building, and knowing what their students are involved in and passionate about outside of the classroom is key to those strong relationships. Participants will list student initials and the name of their extracurricular activity immediately after the initials. After two minutes, participants will share their total and the leader of the professional development will see who was able to name the most. Using the same handout, participants will be asked to do the same thing in the right column, but this time the list should only include ELLs and their extracurricular activities. It should be noted that any ELL mentioned in the left column will count towards the total in the second game. After two minutes, participants will compare lists and the session leader will see who had the highest total. The purpose of this activity is to highlight the discrepancy between extracurricular participation of monolingual students and ELLs. Przyums (2016) describes an “ELL bubble”, which exists because of an environment of marginalization that exists within the school community. This marginalization should become quite clear to the participants when they compare their two lists.

Locating the ESOL Classroom Activity

The final part of the warmup will involve two more quick games where teachers attempt to provide step-by-step directions to a parent that is new to the school district. There will be two scenarios present in (see Appendix, Figure 4) that test the participant’s knowledge of their school building. Participants will have two minutes for each scenario. The first activity will ask participants to create written directions that get the lost parent from the main entrance to the cafeteria. The second activity will ask participants to direct the lost parent from the main entrance to the ESOL classroom. ESOL teachers often report that they feel ignored and isolated by others in the school building (Trickett et al., 2012). ESOL classrooms are often tucked away

into the far corners of the school building or in hidden areas. The purpose of this activity is get participants to reflect on if they even know where the ESOL classroom is. Difficulty giving directions to the location or even imagining where the room itself is may be a sign that participants are not being active in promoting equitable learning opportunities for ELLs or successful collaboration sessions with ESOL teachers. Teachers will be asked which set of directions was easier to make and why they might have made it to that conclusion. In summation, the warmup will end when the session leader asks, “What do the Results of these four games tell us about the inclusion of ELLs within the school Community?”

Main Part of the Professional Development

The session leader will begin to transition to the main part of the professional development session by first sharing the day’s objective: I can help lay the foundation for a successful community of practice (CoP) that helps to promote inclusion and equitable opportunities for ELLs. Following the objective, the session leader will take about five to ten minutes to share details from academic literature that supports the purpose of the day’s professional development session. Following the academic justification of the professional development session, the session leader will introduce Lave and Wenger’s (1991) definition for a CoP. After a short explanation, the session leader will then show and explain the three major parts of a CoP: identify the problem, create a community with members that work towards a common goal, and create practices that lead to change (Wenger et al., 2002). To facilitate an easier discussion, the session leader will provide the identified problem to the group. The identified problem will be on the Founding a CoP Worksheet (see Appendix, Figure 5) and reads: ELLs are isolated/marginalized from the school community and are not given equitable opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities. This isolation and marginalization has

effects on both their linguistic/academic and socioemotional development (Przymus, 2016; Martin-Beltran et al., 2019; Broh 2002; Ribeiro and Jiang, 2020; Rodriguez et al., 2009; Sanders et al., 2018; Panferov,2010). All of those studies share vital research that suggests ELLs are marginalized in their school community and their lack of participation in extracurricular activities could prevent their linguistic and socioemotional development.

Part 1: Identifying the Problem

At this point, participants will be asked to create a group of four. Their task will be to complete the Founding a CoP Worksheet (see Appendix, Figure 5). This handout will have participants begin to create the necessary steps and materials needed to promote equity in opportunities made available by the school. Participants will be asked to reflect on their warmup as they get started. Additionally, the session leader will that Araujo (2009) suggests that schools can promote successful communications home by organizing school system orientations or workshops where parents are given the opportunities to see how the U.S. school system and their local school functions. A key goal of the CoP should be to create equitable means of communications for the families of our ELLs. To really drive home this point, participants will be asked to open up their laptops and find the email that was sent to them at the start of the professional development. The first link will be to an out of state district website. With a partner, participants will pretend to be new parents in the district looking for what extracurricular activities are available at the school and how they might go about registering their child for the baseball team. Once logged on, the participants will quickly realize the website is in Russian and that their task may be nearly impossible, unless they know how to read Russian. This activity should serve as inspiration as groups set out to plan and create equitable communication and opportunities. Participants will have ten minutes for this portion of the activity.

Part 2: Creating a Community

Participants and their groups will be given ten minutes to complete Part 2 of the Founding a CoP Worksheet: Creating a community with members that work towards a common goal. Participants should consider: Who should be the founding members of the CoP? What departments should be present? Which administrators? Who from the student body would be formally invited by the staff? Would you have parents be involved? If so, how? It will be vital for groups to discuss student involvement as Przymus (2016) suggests that a CoP can be the method to bring students of different backgrounds that have shared goals and mutual interests together. A CoP has the potential to offer ELLs different opportunities throughout the school as they discuss their interests and goals in a safe community with their monolingual peers. After ten minutes, participants will be asked to write in the people that they would want to be part of the CoP. The information will be collected by a website the projects the words on the screen in which the more times a word or phrase is submitted, the larger the text for that word or phrase would be. Here, participants will be able to view who many believe should be key members of the CoP. The session leader should then take a few minutes to have a select few justify their group's responses.

Part 3: Creating Change

Next, participants and their groups will be given thirty minutes to work on Part 3 of the Founding a CoP Worksheet. Participants will be given a graphic organizer (see Appendix, Figure 5) that offers areas to write down ideas that promote equity in materials and communication, ideas for creating new opportunities that encourage ELL participation in the school community, and what they as educators can do each to support inclusion. Guiding questions will be present to serve as a guiding framework as educators work together to compile

meaningful information for each column. Participants are encouraged to use their laptops and tablet to research helpful methods that can promote inclusion and ELL participation in extracurricular activities. After thirty minutes, groups will bring a poster walk around the room in which they are given two minutes at each poster write down any and all of the ideas they came up with for each section of the graphic organizer. Each section of the graphic organizer will have a corresponding blank poster that is to be written on. After two minutes are one poster, groups will rotate and add information to the new poster. Once each group has contributed ideas to all three posters, groups will be given a sheet of stickers. Each group is to then revisit each poster and put a sticker next to their favorite two ideas for the CoP on each poster. Groups will return to their tables to debrief with the session leader when they are done.

Upon the debrief, the session leader will help the participants identify the popular aspects of the soon to be formed CoP, as decided on by some of the founding members of the CoP themselves, the participants. It will be these mutually shared ideas and goals that will foster inclusion and equitable opportunities for ELLs within the school community.

Closure and Exit Survey

The final portion of the professional development session will be an exit ticket through an online survey (see Appendix, Figure 6). The exit ticket will be open for five minutes and ask participants about their thoughts on the session and if they would recommend it to a colleague at another school, what they would do like to see done differently and their likelihood to continue to be a member of the CoP that fights for inclusion and equitable opportunities. Last, participants will be left with the definition of a CoP as offered by Lave and Wenger (1991), this time with the “as they interact regularly” emphasized.

Resolution and Outcome

If built correctly, the CoP created by the participants of the professional development session will continue to meet and develop tools and methods to promote inclusion within their school community. The CoP should begin a journey where members create and edit communication materials that promote equitable opportunities for ELLs and their families. These materials could be weekly or month translated newsletters, a professionally translated version of the school website, or even the creation of a staff member that works as a bilingual liaison that answers any questions multilingual families may have.

Part of the professional development sessions asks participants to ask themselves, “What can I do each day to support inclusion?” During the professional development, participants will be asked to tackle this question from the perspective of their many roles within the building such as teacher, coach, counselor, administrator, or club advisor. For ELLs to become comfortable enough to want to participate in certain extracurricular activities, coaches and club advisors must promote a strong sense of community, where everyone is valued equally. Without this, ELLs will continue to feel marginalized and unwelcome in certain school activities (Martin-Beltrán, 2019). Participants will be given time to reflect on how inclusive their programs are and then begin to plan ways to promote and more equitable experience for ELLs.

Districts can use this capstone and professional development session to help promote inclusion for ELLs within their school buildings. Many ELLs feel isolated and marginalized in their school communities and do not branch out far beyond their ESOL classroom. If teachers, coaches, and club advisors do not build an inclusive environment for all, ELLs may remain uncomfortable enough to never join an extracurricular activity, despite their passion. There may also be barrier preventing ELLs and their families from successfully joining extracurricular

activities. The main barrier is unequitable communication and materials that explain the steps and deadlines to register for such programs. This professional development session will give participants ample time to begin to reflect on the barriers their school may have in place, and brainstorm and create solutions to even the playing field.

ELLs need to be given an equitable opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities, as doing so will help them meet their linguistic and socioemotional goals. Preventing the inclusion of ELLs will only hurt their language learning, as ELLs will receive fewer opportunities to interact with their monolingual peers and engage in their L2. The CoP that this professional development sets up will set out to reflect on what the school has done in the past to prevent inclusion of ELLs and what the school can do to promote inclusion for ELLs going forward.

Chapter 4

Introduction

This capstone set out to find methods to help mitigate the marginalization felt by ELLs within their school community, specific to participation in extracurricular activities. A thorough literature review supported the notion that many ELLs feel isolated, marginalized, and stuck in their ELL classroom. Many ELLs are unable to participate in the same opportunities that are available to their monolingual peers because of barriers that exist within the school community. School communications, websites, and directions to join extracurricular activities may not be equitable for a school's linguistically diverse community. Additionally, schools may not be offering opportunities to ELLs and their families that promote diversity and inclusion. Research has shown that participation in extracurricular activities benefit students in many ways. Through participation, ELLs could see positive effects on their linguistic development and socioemotional needs as they become a larger part of the school community.

A CoP should be established to assist teachers, especially club leaders and coaches, and administrators in reflecting on and identifying any barriers of participation that may be present in the school community. Once these barriers are identified, educators can set out to create equitable materials and opportunities that promote inclusion. As the CoP continues to grow, students and families of the diverse school community should be invited to actively participate in the CoP. The overarching research question of this capstone can be used to guide CoPs as they begin to promote equity and inclusion: How can schools help to promote an increased sense of community among ELLs, ESOL teachers, and mainstream students and teachers? The professional development session in chapter 3 allows educators to develop the first steps in mitigating this problem.

Conclusions

Through investigating the question that asks how can schools help to promote an increases sense of community among ELLs, ESOL teachers, and mainstream students and teachers, many conclusions are clear. There are clear barriers that exist within a school community that prevent ELLs from participation in extracurricular activities. These barriers can include inequitable opportunities and communication or a school climate that does not actively value diversity. If districts are able to create school communities and materials that promote equity and inclusion for all of their students, ELLs could see higher levels of linguistic, academic, and socioemotional achievement.

Changing a school climate, its opportunities for ELLs, and creation of equitable materials for diverse community member cannot happen overnight. A CoP can be used as an excellent tool to mitigate the larger issue at hand. When educators, administrators, students, and families come together in a CoP, great change can be accomplished. When individuals come together and share in a mutual goal, greater progress can be made than when a few individuals work together. Bringing students and families into the CoP, can help the school staff create stronger and more meaningful relationships with the families that are not normally given equitable opportunities to be part of school events. Additionally, a CoP can be a guiding body in the structural and cultural changes that need to be made to address ELL inclusion within the school community.

Implications for Student Learning

When a CoP develops materials and opportunities that promote ELL inclusion in extracurricular activities, schools will be able to provide ELLs with greater academic and

socioemotional growth. When ELLs are not afforded the same opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities, they can be stuck in the “ELL bubble” (Przyums, 2016). This bubble can lead to severe isolation and marginalization. With this, ELLs become less likely to interact in their L2 with their monolingual peers outside of the classroom setting. There is extreme linguistic and socioemotional value in diversity among participants of an extracurricular activity. During the literature review, it was shown that interactions between ELLs and their monolingual peers, including during extracurricular activities, assist in the linguistic development of ELLs. This is because ELLs are given greater opportunities to speak in their L2 with their monolingual peers, who can provide quick corrective and contextual feedback.

The professional development session associated with this capstone will allow staff members to create the foundation of a CoP that sets out to create opportunities that are more equitable for ELLs in the school community. The CoP will be designed to eventually include students from diverse backgrounds. In the CoP, these students can help to set the path and goals of the CoP, suggest ideas based on experiences, and begin to set the standard for inclusion for the entire school building. As inclusion grows and is highlighted within the CoP, similar effects will be felt throughout the school building. The CoP will value diversity and create opportunities that allows for greater diversity in different parts of the school community such as clubs and sports. Through these opportunities, ELLs will become a bigger and more equal part of the school community.

Implications for Teaching

Great teachers respond to data and feedback. This can come from assessment data, informal observations, anecdotal notes, administrator comments, or student feedback. Great teachers learn from what the numbers and observers tell them. The data and feedback teachers

receive allows them to improve their craft and better meet the needs of their students. The most effective feedback comes from areas or actions that teachers do not even realize they are deficient in. This is not to mean that a teacher is necessarily bad at something, rather, there may be an area in need of improvement. Without the data or feedback, a teacher might never know that they have areas they can focus on to improve. Hopefully, this capstone has educators reflect on their inclusivity after analyzing the information and feedback shared during the literature review.

Before a CoP can be created, the professional development sessions asks educators to reflect on how inclusive their school environment is when it comes to ELLs. Do ELLs actively participate in extracurricular activities? Does the district do enough to promote equitable opportunities for ELLs and their families to be part of the school community? Are their equitable translations of school communications like newsletters and the school websites that inform diverse families of the opportunities available at the school? Do clubs, sports, and the school in general clearly value and promote one language over others? Hopefully coaches, club advisors, and teachers can begin to explore why ELL participation in extracurricular opportunities may be low.

Recommendations

Through a literature review, it is clear that there is not much data on ELL participation in extracurricular opportunities. There a lot of valuable research in regards to L2 development in social and informal settings. Similarly, there is valuable research in the area of self-esteem and inclusion and their impacts on positive academic and emotional growth. However, there is very little research on how ELL participation in extracurricular activities benefits the linguistic and socioemotional needs of ELLs, specifically. Most of the research is done in a general sense,

without focusing on ELLs. The reason ELLs should be the focus in such research is that scholars may find large discrepancies in levels of participation between ELLs and their monolingual peers. Uncovering these differences may then push scholars and educators to begin to ask “why” such disparities in participation exists.

Additional research should be done to uncover the barriers that prevent ELL participation in extracurricular activities in schools across the United States. Through conducting such research and after analysis by districts and educators, schools may begin to change. Schools may start to reflect on the barriers that exist within their buildings and start to create equitable opportunities and materials that promote inclusion. Schools offer so many opportunities for their students and ample communications to educate the community on said opportunities. However, methods of communication are not always equitable for the diverse families within the community. Additionally, if schools do not have steps in place that support and value diversity within the school community, ELLs may feel marginalized and lack the enthusiasm to join extracurricular activities.

Final Thoughts

ELLs are marginalized within their school communities. This marginalization often prevents ELLs from participating in the greater context of the school community. If schools want to better meet the linguistic and socioemotional needs of their ELLs, they need to create equitable opportunities that promote inclusion. Many school teams, clubs, and other extracurricular activities often lack ELL participants. A school climate that does not value diversity and actively promote inclusion is a climate that openly supports barriers to inclusion. If ELLs do not feel valued in their school community, many ELLs will often opt to not participate in activities outside of their scheduled classes. A CoP can be the first step in facilitating the

inclusion of ELLs into the school community. If done correctly, the inclusive school climate can trickle into the district community and create a more equitable and culturally respectful society.

Appendix

Figure 1

Agenda

- **Introduction – Who am I? Who are you?**
- **Warmup**
- **What is a Community of Practice?**
- **Group exploration**
- **Sharing of ideas**
- **Formulate an official plan**
- **Exit ticket**

Figure 2*Extracurricular Experience Warmup/Hook*

What extracurricular activities did you do in High School?	What did those activities teach you that influenced your journey through adulthood?

Figure 3

Participation Discrepancy Worksheet

Game #1	Game #2

Figure 5*Founding a CoP Worksheet*

Founding a Community of Practice

A CoP is defined as groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. (Lave and Wenger, 1991)

Part 1: Identifying the Problem:

ELLs are isolated/marginalized from the school community and are not given equitable opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities. This isolation and marginalization had effects on both their linguistic/academic and socioemotional development.

Part 2: Creating a community with members that work towards a common goal.

Who should be the founding members of the CoP? What departments should be present?
Which administrators? Who from the student body would be formally invited by the staff?
Would you have parents be involved?

Part 3: Creating practice(s) that lead to change.

Equity in Materials and Communication	Creating New Opportunities that Encourage ELL Participation in the School Community	What Can I Do Each Day to Support Inclusion?

Figure 6*Exit Survey*

1. What is one important realization you made today?
2. How likely are you to continue to be a member of your school's CoP?
3. What is one thing you would like your CoP to accomplish before the end of the school year?
4. Would you recommend this professional development to a colleague? Why or why not?
5. What should this professional development session continue to do for future participants? What should it change?

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