

ELEMENTARY LANGUAGE IMMERSION: LESSONS FOR PRACTITIONERS
FROM CASE STUDIES IN FIVE STATES

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Washington State University
College of Education

December 2012

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To the Faculty of Washington State University:

The members of the Committee appointed to examine the dissertation of BARBARA JEAN MONDLOCH find it satisfactory and recommend that it is accepted.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation has been a collaborative effort; I am deeply grateful for the generosity and grace of so many. Six years ago, my chair, Dr. Paul Goldman, began shepherding several of my Franklin Pierce elementary principal colleagues and me through the Ed.D. process. Thanks in great part to his guidance, patience, and belief in us, three of us have earned our doctorates at WSU. I greatly appreciate his ability to understand the demands of balancing a principal's world with the rigor of a doctoral program. Paul allowed and encouraged me to write a dissertation driven by my personal passion for early language learning, even when it became clear that what I intended to be action research would eventually become a multiple-case study.

Dr. Kristin Huggins' class revealed an undiscovered passion of mine for qualitative research. She helped me wrap my mind around how to capture, code and analyze qualitative data. Her enthusiasm for qualitative research sparked my own.

To my mom, Sandra Smith, I cannot thank you enough for spending over 100 hours transcribing 22 interviews and helping with the devilish details of editing. Your gifts of expertise and time went above and beyond. If it weren't for you, I would still be pounding away without an end in sight. What a tremendous labor of love. Thanks, mom.

I am deeply indebted to the participants in my study. They graciously and enthusiastically shared their time, wisdom and passion for immersion programs with me. Without their candor and commitment, this study would not have been possible. Through them I came to realize that language immersion schools attract extraordinary teachers and leaders, and the reward for their sacrifices is the impact on students. Each and every one of them inspired me to continue my pursuit of increasing access to elementary language immersion programs.

One of the sweetest outcomes of this doctoral program has been the opportunity to share it with my principal colleagues, Carrie, Shaun, and Tim. I will treasure our countless hours discussing, bantering, laughing and bonding on the road, in flights, in class and after seminars. I often wonder if I would have stuck with this without the benefit of your company and support. I am honored to be your WSU Ed.D. "sister" and I will treasure you always. Along with that, I want to thank our superintendent, Dr. Frank Hewins, for encouraging us to do this.

Words cannot begin to capture my gratitude to my husband, Mark Mondloch, for his incredible support over the past five-plus years. Mark, you have surrounded me with love, prepared my meals, listened to my celebrations and angst, given me feedback on my paper, and sacrificed evenings, weekends and vacations while I worked on my studies. You managed to keep me afloat. Your steadfast love, encouragement and patience went above and beyond. I love you, and am elated for our future together.

I am thankful to my inspirational colleagues who share fervor for language education. I want to send a special shout out to Marty Abbott, Michele Anciaux Aoki, Bridget Yaden, Gregg Roberts and the ACTFL board members who helped me access resources, spur my thinking, and grow professionally.

Finally, along with those already mentioned, many people have fueled me along the way with their encouragement. To my children, friends and Franklin Pierce colleagues who have cheered me on, it made a difference. ¡Mil gracias!

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Abstract

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December 2012

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The realities of a global society magnify the need for U.S. students to be proficient in the 21st Century Skills of bilingualism, bi-literacy and cross-cultural appreciation.

Elementary Language Immersion programs offer sustained sequences of language instruction designed to accomplish those outcomes. This multiple-case study investigated one- and two-way, dual- and total-immersion programs at five schools in five states.

Interviews with 22 participants, observations from site visits at four of the schools and an analysis of print data revealed how those programs were designed, implemented and sustained. Results showed significant barriers as well as positive student and community outcomes. Challenges included budget cuts that reduced staffing, professional development and other resources; hiring, training and retaining quality staff; accessing suitable materials in the target language; maintaining program integrity into middle school and overcoming cultural barriers and community resistance. However, the standards-based programs studied showed evidence that students profited from language immersion, simultaneously acquiring a second language through content instruction, and performing at or above their peers on standardized assessments in English. In addition, Spanish-speaking students appeared to benefit academically and socially from two-way immersion programs, potentially narrowing the pervasive achievement gap over time.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

United States (U.S.) public schools face criticism and scrutiny for not adequately preparing students to be competitive with their counterparts from other nations in our increasingly global economy. The Executive Summary of a 2006 policy statement by the Committee for Economic Development (CED) stated:

To confront the twenty-first century challenges to our economy and national security, our education system must be strengthened to increase the foreign language skills and cultural awareness of our students. America's continued global leadership will depend on our students' abilities to interact with the world community both inside and outside our borders (p.1).

In light of the sense of urgency to increase the foreign language skills and cultural awareness of U.S. students, today's children will need increased access to high-quality language programs beginning at an early age. Elementary language immersion programs are one model being used to address this need. This study examined five elementary language immersion programs in order to identify successful implementation and delivery models that can provide guidance for schools and districts that are deciding whether and how to implement immersion programs.

Our economy and national security depend on linguistically and culturally proficient citizens, yet our educational system falls short in cultivating these skills, especially compared to almost every other nation with whom we compete economically (Asia Society, 2007; Committee for Economic Development, 2006). President Obama

acknowledged the importance in a March 2011, Town Hall meeting speech saying, “It is critical for all American students to have language skills. And I want everybody here to be working hard to make sure that you don’t just speak one language, you speak a bunch of languages. That’s a priority” (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2011a)

When critics complain that U.S. students do not compete with their educational counterparts in other countries, perhaps we can look at one clear difference in curriculum—the lack of second language instruction in our U.S. elementary schools. “The United States is the only industrialized nation that does not routinely require the study of one or more foreign languages” (VistaWide, 2012, p. 1). Twenty-two out of 25 industrialized countries have a policy of world languages starting in the elementary grades (Pufahl, Rhodes, & Christian, 2000), and 21 European Union countries require the study of a world language for nine years (Ingold & Wang, 2010).

As with such content areas as mathematics and sciences, language learning takes time. In traditional high school language programs, students are not afforded sufficient time to develop advanced language proficiency. Students studying a world language for two years in high school typically receive about 360 hours or less of instruction. According to a research review by The Language Resource Centre of the University of Calgary, “Learning a second language for 95 hours per year for six years will not lead to functional bilingualism and fluency in the second language” (Archibold, et al., 2006, p. 3). The research of Thomas and Collier (2007) suggests that it takes five to seven years or more to develop academic language proficiency. Beginning language learning in elementary school makes sense. When students have access to a sustained sequence of high-quality language study beginning at an early age, they can make “steady progress”

towards advanced and superior levels of proficiency and derive academic, cognitive and social benefits for students (Donato & Tucker, 2010, p. 5).

The executive director of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), Marty Abbott, described the situation, “While other nations are producing citizenry who are proficient in more than one language by the time they graduate high school, the U.S. remains largely monolingual in its approach to educating students” (personal communication, June, 2011). Becoming fluent in another language is considered a 21st Century skill (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2009), yet second language proficiency for U.S. citizens is the exception rather than the rule (Ingold & Wang, 2010).

Therefore, on the grandest scale we have put our economy, national security, international relations and reputation for producing well-educated citizens at risk by failing to ensure opportunities for sustained sequences of second language education that result in proficiency for students in the United States. At a more personal level, the dearth of language learning opportunities in the U.S. school system also short-changes students, especially potentially marginalized populations such as low-income students and Hispanics, both growing populations in our public schools (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Although our public schools are based on the notion of equity and excellence for all, as is presumably captured in the expression “No Child Left Behind,” examples of inequities and inequalities can be seen on large and small scales in the United States (Darling-Hammond; Jackson DeVoe, 2007). In our increasingly “flat” world as Thomas Friedman described it (2005), globalization requires students in the United States to have access to language programs designed to develop proficiency in other languages and

cultures (Committee for Economic Development, 2006).

Achievement gaps for low-income and marginalized minority groups have been prevalent and persistent (Education Week, 2011). Often these groups may suffer from limited access to educational programs like foreign languages (ACTFL, 2010a), that could help close the opportunity and achievement gaps and contribute to leveling the educational and economic “playing fields” for these students. These opportunities are limited for most students in the U.S., and even more so for low-income students (Rhodes & Pufahl, 2009).

Our traditional early-exit educational model has not resulted in positive outcomes for our largest population of English Language Learners (ELLs), Spanish-speaking students (Collier & Thomas, 2007). According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2012), currently over 15% of the U.S. population is Hispanic and over 22% of people under the age of 18 are Hispanic. Additionally, Hispanics are the fastest growing minority group, projected to constitute 30% of the population by 2050. As the number of students from Spanish-speaking homes increases, so grows the achievement gap between those students and their counterparts from English-speaking homes (Johnston, 2000). Goals 2000 (1998) aspired to eliminate the gap in high school graduation rates between U.S. students from minority backgrounds and their non-minority counterparts. Yet, over a decade later, demonstrated achievement gaps on standardized tests for Hispanic students persist, and along with Black students, they have the lowest on-time graduation rates (Swanson, 2011).

However, amid the sense of urgency there is hope. Thomas and Collier (2003) found that ELLs who participated in a sustained two-way immersion (TWI) program

achieved at the 50th percentile with their peers on standardized tests and had the lowest dropout rates. See Table 1 for an explanation of immersion-related terms. The professional world of language learning contains a long list of terms and acronyms unfamiliar to most educators. These are listed in the Glossary on page 239. School districts with TWI programs, such as in Pasco, Washington, also showed evidence

Table 1. Immersion-related Terms

Dual immersion

- Umbrella term for language immersion programs with the goals of bilingualism, bi-literacy, high academic achievement and cross-cultural appreciation
- At least 50% of content instruction is delivered in the partner language (a language other than English)
- There is no mixing of languages or translation during instruction

Two-way immersion

- A dual-immersion program in which 30-50% of the students are heritage speakers of the partner language and 30-50% of the students are heritage speakers of English
 - English-language learners spend the majority of their day with their heritage English-speaking peers.
-

that Hispanic students who participate in TWI met the state standards at the same levels or better by the time they got to high school, effectively closing the gap (Hill, 2010).

Two-way immersion could benefit all students, including low-income and heritage Spanish-speaking students who are deemed at risk of underperforming. Giving them the opportunity to reap the benefits of being proficient in another language can help prepare students with the 21st Century skills needed to be multi-culturally competent.

Being fluent in another language also gives students an edge in the work place, both in getting a job and making more money. Bilingual employees are able to earn between 5% and 20% more than their monolingual counterparts (Morsh, 2009), an important advantage for low-income and minority populations. By offering access to

high-quality language-learning programs to marginalized as well as privileged students, we can help close the achievement gap, better prepare our citizenry to prosper in a global economy, and ensure we as a nation are prepared to meet the increasing economic and national security demands in these times of rapid political, technological and economic change.

With the national emphasis on accountability, academic achievement, as measured by standardized tests, has become the focus of most educators. Concern exists that time spent on other languages may hamper academic performance; however, studies show that time spent learning languages does not interfere with academic achievement, and in fact, may improve it (Johnson, Flores, & Ellison, 1963; Thomas, Collier, & Abbott, 1993). In addition, Armstrong and Rogers (1997) found students performed better on standardized tests in English language and mathematics when they were involved in a two-way immersion program. Curtain and Dahlberg (2004) shared that teaching to the Five Cs of the National Standards for World Languages—Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1999), reinforced English language content in other coursework. Another study found that third grade language students performed better on standardized tests in language and math (Armstrong & Rogers, 1997). Research suggests that young children who are exposed to another language reach higher levels of cognitive development earlier than their counterparts (Bialystoc & Hakuta, 1994). Bilingual students performed better on tasks that call for divergent thinking (creativity), pattern-recognition and problem solving (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000). Further, becoming proficient in another language positively impacted

student attitudes about other cultures, creating more open-minded and compassionate citizens (Riestra & Johnson, 1964).

Moreover, Cazabon, Lambert and Hall (1993) suggested that when content is studied in one language, the concepts transferred to the second language, thus the time spent learning either language benefited students. Being able to learn content in their home language may prevent the need for ELL students to receive watered-down curriculum while they are developing proficiency in English.

Competency of challenging subject matter, including foreign languages, was identified as a national goal in the Goals 2000 report. However, because languages are not assessed through No Child Left Behind (NCLB), they are easily ignored, especially in elementary schools, in order to provide more instruction on reading and math (Donato & Tucker, 2010). In 2012, 46 states and the District of Columbia have signed on to all or part the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) designed to define the knowledge and skills students need to graduate high school prepared to succeed in careers and college (CCSSO; National Governors' Association). ACTFL (2011) developed a cross-walk document that demonstrated how explicit practices in the study of world languages contributed to the Common Core English Language Arts Standards. Ironically, by limiting language learning opportunities, we are missing a great opportunity to improve students' academic skills in multiple areas.

A multilingual society can better compete and protect itself in this rapidly changing, global world. Furthermore, becoming proficient in another language benefits students cognitively, academically, and socially. It is argued that dual immersion programs offer the least expensive and most effective outcomes for language acquisition.

In a dual-immersion program, all students, rich or poor, highly-capable or not, can reap the educational, cognitive, sociocultural, economic and global benefits of being bilingual (Calderon & Minaya-Rowe, 2003). Table 2 describes a rationale for increasing access to immersion programs in U.S. public schools. Because of the potential benefits to students, this study investigated one- and two-way, dual- and total-immersion programs in five

Table 2. Rationale for Elementary Immersion Programs

- Studies suggest second language learning provides academic, cognitive and social benefits.
 - Early and sustained sequences of second language instruction increase the likelihood of proficiency.
 - In this increasingly global society, our schools need to produce students with 21st Century skills.
 - There is evidence that two-way immersion can help close the achievement gap for ELLs.
 - Access to language programs is limited and disproportionately available to students of privilege.
-

U.S. schools across the country. The following questions guided the study:

1. How were the immersion models developed and implemented in the selected schools?
2. What are the program goals and standards in the selected immersion schools?
3. What do the schools do to achieve the goals and standards?
4. How are the students and programs assessed in the selected immersion schools?
5. What are the perceived and measurable impacts of the immersion program on students academically and socially, including subgroups such as ELL students, low-income students and students with disabilities?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the literature review, I first discuss some basic information on language-acquisition. Then, I provide context by introducing various elementary language program models. Next, I offer more in-depth information about the immersion-specific program models that will be the focus of this study. The following section addresses research on instructional strategies recommended for language-acquisition programs. Finally, I explore literature on program planning and implementation.

Language acquisition

Various theories about second language acquisition likely influenced program models and philosophies. Several studies that addressed age and language acquisition discussed a “critical period” that was biologically determined. In this context, a critical period referred to an optimal window of time in which language acquisition must take place for the brain and motor skills to develop (Lenneberg, 1967; Bickerton, 1981). Bialystok and Hakuta argued that there may be other linguistic and cognitive factors other than a “critical period” that give younger learners an advantage, including social factors such as simplified input and cooperative peers (1999). While scholars were not all in agreement about a “critical period,” evidence emerged regarding the timing of language acquisition. When studying the accents of immigrants, Oyama found that without regard to the amount of time spent in the country, the immigrants who were younger when they arrived spoke with less of an accent than those who were older (1976). Johnson and Newport (1989) also found a strong relationship between age of arrival and participants’ grammatical skills. Specifically, they found that children

immersed in a second-language environment before the age of seven developed native-like grammar usage. Youth up to the age of 17 still had an advantage, when compared to adults, but their accents could be distinguished from native speakers. According to Bialystok & Hakuta:

Informal observation irrefutably shows children to be more successful than adults in mastering a second language. Empirical studies confirm this pattern by demonstrating performance differences between children and adult learners on various tasks and measures. Yet both informal observation and empirical testing also yield exceptions to this rule (1999, p. 178).

Many variables influenced the relationship between age and language acquisition, however the evidence indicated that children often acquired languages more easily than adults and that children who were exposed to the second language before the age of seven had the greatest advantages.

Krashen and Terrell made a distinction between language learning and language acquisition (1983). Acquisition was associated with the relatively unconscious way a child became fluent in their first language through exposure in context. Language learning, on the other hand, described the explicit process of formally studying another language. In their theory, the best way to acquire a language and develop communicative proficiency was through exposure to comprehensible input in the target language through listening and/or reading. Krashen and Terrell encouraged comprehensible input (i) at the “i + 1” level. The phrase “i + 1” referred to input that was slightly above the learner’s proficiency level, but comprehensible due to context. The “i + 1” input could be viewed through the lens of Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development describing “tasks that a

learner has not yet learned but is capable of learning with appropriate stimuli” (Brown, 2007, p. 13). Therefore, ideally input is slightly above the independent level of the student.

Krashen and Terrell argued that that attention to meaning rather than form lead to language proficiency and that conscious learning such as the study of grammar “has an extremely limited function,” as an “editor,” (p. 30). The editor referred to the learner’s ability to recognize and correct grammatical errors.

The National Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century also focused on meaningful communication in the ‘5 Cs:’ Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 1999). The Communication standard included three frameworks for the communicative mode: interpersonal, interpretive and presentational. ACTFL, the national association for language teaching, developed an oral proficiency scale, a continuum that began with the novice level, and continued to intermediate, advanced and superior proficiency levels. Novice, intermediate and advanced levels had been further subdivided into low, mid and high categories. ACTFL developed Oral Proficiency Interviews (OPIs) that were used to measure language proficiency on the scale in dozens of languages in valid and reliable ways.

The 5Cs had been the gold standard for world languages classes. Traditional world languages classes could be likened to a language arts class in second (or third, etc.) language. In traditional world languages classrooms, content might be used to create a context for language acquisition (as described in the Connections goal), but the the driving force was learning the target language. Content-based language teaching (CBLT)

as seen in language immersion programs, on the other hand, moved the focus from learning the target language to learning content in the target language. “CBLT, which aims to embed L2 learning within a meaningful context, has typically been demonstrated to be an efficient means of encouraging the development of L2 skills” (Archibold, et al., 2006). Results from a review of the literature on second-language learning suggested that students were able to master content similarly to their peers at the same time they were acquiring a second language.

Considerable evidence existed to support the contention that students can successfully master content-area outcomes through immersion-style content-based instruction. Indeed, it would seem that "native like competence in the language of instruction is not absolutely necessary for age-appropriate academic development” (Genesse, Holobow, Lambert, & Chartrand, 1989). Met (1998) suggested selecting immersion content that was contextualized and concrete in order to increase the likelihood of comprehensibility.

Elementary Language Program Models

Several elementary language program models served a variety of purposes. As programs have developed around the country, terms related to elementary programs and models varied to some extent. This section will describe the most common elementary language program models in the United States.

According to the CAL Foreign Language Survey (2008), the number of elementary languages programs has decreased. There was disparity between the percentage of private and public elementary schools teaching foreign languages with only 15% of public elementary schools and over half of private elementary schools offering

language instructions. The programs were presented here in order of their percentage of use in the U.S. public schools:

1. FLEX
2. FLES
3. Dual immersion (including one-way and two-way)

FLEX. Foreign Language Exploratory (FLEX) programs represented almost half of the elementary language programs available in U.S. public schools (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2008). Typically short in duration, they were designed to give English-speaking students an introduction to a world language or a variety of languages in order to generate early interest and awareness of other languages and cultures. While these programs can pique students' interest in learning other languages and provide some language and cultural basics, they were not designed to provide sufficient depth and duration to result in proficiency. For this reason, I chose not to include FLEX programs in my study.

FLES. Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) was the second most frequently used program model in U.S. public schools. FLES offered students a minimum of 75 minutes a week of language instruction, emphasizing the development of reading, writing, speaking and listening in the target language as well as cultural appreciation. The instructional outcomes sometimes addressed the language itself, for example "Spanish as a foreign language" or another content area, for example "art," taught through that language. High quality, well-articulated FLES programs have been shown to lead to the positive outcomes (Armstrong & Rogers, 1997). Staffing was typically more expensive than for immersion programs, because they required a language specialist in addition to

the classroom teacher. And with 5-10% of instruction in the target language compared to 50%, it takes longer to develop proficiency. While the language education field recommended using the target language as the mode of instruction for a minimum of 90% of instructional time (ACTFL, 2010), I did not find empirical data to assess the actual percentage of TL use in FLES and FLEX programs. However, the percentage of target language use varied widely. The programs I have observed that used the target language almost exclusively appeared to have better outcomes.

Dual-language immersion. CAL, and others, used dual language as an “umbrella term” for all language-immersion programs. About 13% of public school elementary programs and 2% of private school programs called themselves immersion programs. In dual-language immersion (DLI), also referred to as dual immersion (DI), “the goals are full bilingualism and bi-literacy for all students in English and a partner language” (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2011, p. 1). According to Collier (1992), by developing a course of second language study that began early, and by teaching through content, students could reach proficient levels of language acquisition, transfer skills from one language to the other, and enhance their cognitive development.

In DLI, students spent part of the instructional day learning content in English and at least half of their instructional day in the partner language for a minimum of five years. In dual immersion programs, rather than studying a language discretely, students were learning another language through other content areas such as math, science, and literature, a strategy supported by research. “Language is acquired best when it is the medium of instruction, not solely as the object of instruction” (Mora, Wink, & Wink, 2001, p. 435).

One-way immersion. One-way immersion, also referred to as foreign language immersion, referred to DLI in which the learners are primarily English-speaking students learning another language and culture(s). One-way immersion exhibits all of the components of DLI as described above, with at least 50% of academic instruction taking place in the target language. Schools with one-way immersion programs typically serve English-speaking students and do not have enough native speakers of the partner language to offer two-way immersion programs.

Two-way immersion (TWI). Two-way immersion (TWI) is a type of dual immersion program in which “both native speakers of English and native speakers of the partner language are enrolled, with neither group making up more than two-thirds of the student population” (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2011). TWI programs are “enrichment education programs that foster language equity and are organized with the goals of bilingualism and bi-literacy for all children, language minority and mainstream students alike” (Torres-Guzman, 2002, p. 1). These programs are considered “enrichment” because students are learning a new language, in addition to the one they speak at home, and academic growth is expected in both languages. Additionally, these programs are expected to develop cross-cultural appreciation and high academic achievement (Howard & Loeb, 1998). Specifically, TWI programs must meet three criteria:

1. Classes consist of a balanced population of students who speak each language.
2. Language minority and language majority students are integrated for all or most of the school day.
3. Content and literacy instruction is provided to all students in both languages (Howard E. , 2002).

TWI was designed to serve both majority and minority students since a key component was the use of students' first language and another language as a medium for instruction and vehicle for academic content (Mora, Wink, & Wink, 2001).

Building upon an ELL's skills in their native language has historically been the exception rather than the rule in U.S. schools. Rather than treating students' native language as an asset, typical ELL pull-out programs or sheltered English-immersion programs treat native language as a deficit. The programs are designed to serve strictly language minority students with the goal of English dominance and the ability for students to participate in mainstream classes within one year (Krashen S. , 1998).

Controversy around bilingual education in the United States has existed since the colonial times, when, ironically, many settlers did not speak English. The repression of Native American languages resulted in the extinction of perhaps hundreds of languages since 1492 (Crawford, 1995). Waves of tolerance and intolerance were sometimes linked to historical events such as world wars, periods of progressivism and more recently to a time when "post-September 11th nativist attitudes" seemed to be impacting Bilingual Education Policy (Cerdeña & Hernandez, 2006). Nieto (2010) described the dichotomy:

From the idea that people of all backgrounds should become a melting pot to battles over whether English should be the official language, the history of the United States is replete with examples of vastly different approaches to what some have seen as the problem and others as the promise of diversity. As just one example, language diversity in our nation has always been complicated: It has been both lauded and vilified, seen as a terrible disability by some and as a precious resource by others (p. 1).

Legislation guaranteeing and denying rights for non-English speaking residents illustrated the pendulum shifts. The Bilingual Education Act (1968) decreed that a student should receive instruction in his or her heritage tongue for a transitional year while learning English, but the goal was to transfer to an all-English classroom as soon as possible. The 1974 *Lau vs. Nicholas* decision ensured all students access to the same meaningful curriculum as their peers regardless of their language background (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1997). While the U.S. government did not specify English as the official language, legislation in many states pushed for “English only” laws restricting language rights. The divisive campaigns disregarded research on language acquisition and bilingualism (Crawford, 1998; Krashen & McField, 2005), promoting an agenda of devaluing minority languages and cultures (Brown, 2007).

In Bilingual Education programs, there was no support for the minority language. Historically, the home languages of non-English speaking students had been viewed from one of three perspectives, (1) language as a problem, (2) language as a right, and (3) language as a resource (Ruiz, 1984). When language was viewed as a problem, the mission of the educational program became replacing the home language with the dominant language. When home language was considered a right, although students would not be discouraged from maintaining it, there was generally not support for continuing content instruction in students’ native tongues. In dual-language programs, students and their home language become a resource for both themselves and others. As Montague (1997) pointed out, when a child speaks the minority language in a TWI setting, “. . . he/she brings a great resource that can be used to validate his/her family and home customs, as well as augment the classroom repertoire of potential experiences for

his/her peers and teacher” (p. 410).

TWI was designed to benefit both language minority and language majority students and therefore served as an asset-based model. “Their aim is additive with respect to languages, rather than subtractive” (Torres-Guzman, 2002, p. 9). In TWI classrooms, language minority students are seen as a resource and have opportunities to shine just as language majority students do. Montague (1997) describes:

With the premise of dual language instruction, the view of a bilingual child with a locally relevant language shifts from a “compensatory and deficit model” to a “gifted and talented” orientation. In many schools, this means that minority language speakers are now finding validation, excitement, and enthusiasm about their presence in classrooms. Differences between individuals become celebrated rather than melted down (p. 411).

In addition to often having their native language undervalued, ELLs suffered another indignity in traditional U.S. public schools. NCLB allowed limited English proficient (LEP) students only one year to develop sufficient language skills before being held to the same standards as their native English-speaking peers (107th Congress, 2001), completely disregarding the research on how long it took for language acquisition. Language acquisition research on ELLs showed that it took one to three years for students to develop social (interpersonal) language and five to seven years or more to develop academic language (Cummins, 1979). By having the opportunity to study content in their native language, ELLs can progress with age-appropriate rather than watered-down content while they acquire academic English.

This idea held true for literacy development as well. Adults often worried that

when ELLs study in their native language, it would slow their English literacy development. The research suggested that the development of primary language literacy also supported literacy development in the second language (Ovando & Collier, 1998). In addition, studies had established that long-term instruction in a student's primary language contributed to English acquisition and mastery of content. For ELLs the level of proficiency in their first language was highly predictive of success in their second language (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000). Therefore, there were no disadvantages and major advantages to allowing students to learn in their primary language.

In TWI programs, classes were balanced to include approximately half of the students from each language group (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000). At any given time, half of the class could provide input and language modeling in their home language, so the classroom teacher was not the only language source and model. In TWI, language always had a context, and teachers and students communicated to make meaning in both students' dominant and non-dominant languages. Language instruction was relevant and served a specific purpose (Christian, Montone, & Carranza, 1997). Additionally, the TWI model created a win-win situation in which all students benefit from learning an additional language while they maintain and continue to develop their heritage language. As opposed to traditional ELL models, TWI created an environment of fairness because language-minority and language-majority students were on an equal playing field; they each had the opportunity to learn and grow from their interactions with one another (Howard & Loeb, 1998).

Defining a program model would be one of the first major decisions in implementing a TWI program. Several TWI program model variations had been used

successfully. The 90/10 model in which 90% of the instruction was provided in the minority language in the first year, 80% during the second year, gradually increasing English instruction each subsequent year, had been the most successful for minority language learners (Thomas & Collier, 1997). Another common model designated 50% of the instructional time for each language. This balanced model was helpful when the students were all along the bilingual continuum.

In order to assure the identified balance of time for each language, a key feature of Two-way immersion programs was the separation of the languages, to provide a distinct context for each language. “Learners more easily become bilingual when they connect each language to a separate context” (Hadi-Tabassum, 2004, p. 50). Hadi-Tabassum (2004) identified three primary contexts for dividing instruction:

1. Division by time. This could be accomplished in a number of ways, for example dividing instruction by the time of day such as mornings and afternoons, alternating days or even alternating blocks of time in which one language would be used for one week, and then the other would be used the next week.
2. Division by staff. In this approach, the students associated the language of instruction with the staff member with whom they were working. One advantage to this approach was that, although it would be preferable, it would not be required for all of the teaching staff to be bilingual.
3. Division by content. When languages were divided by content, specific subjects such as science and social studies were taught in the majority language while others like math and literature were taught in the minority language. In some cases, students received language and literacy instruction in both languages.

Other strategies had been used to divide the languages clearly, including hanging a sign on the white board or wearing a particular button or smock to indicate the target language. The most important piece was that students understood what language was expected and the teacher communicated only in the designated language during that time.

Effective Instructional Strategies

In their book, *Lessons Learned*, Gilzow and Branaman (2000) identified key features of some successful early foreign language programs. Most of the instructional strategies and features were also useful for general education. Strategies and content should be developmentally appropriate, and build on students' prior knowledge and skills. Instruction should be student-centered and differentiated, based on the individual needs of students (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000). Since language is integrated with rigorous academic content, "Second language instructional methodology is designed to make the content comprehensible without narrowing the focus of instruction to discrete points of language or vocabulary development" (Mora, Wink, & Wink, 2001, p. 10). As teachers were delivering instruction to both L1 and L2 speakers, they attended to making the content comprehensible to the L2 students while still keeping the lesson engaging and challenging to the L1 students (Howard & Loeb, 1998).

Instructional approaches were designed to achieve both language acquisition and learning goals. To do so, teachers integrated verbal and nonverbal cues, manipulatives and as much visual support as possible. Activities that required active participation, hands-on learning and interaction, such as cooperative-learning groups, contributed to linguistic, academic and social development (Torres-Guzman, 2002).

Program Planning

The Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE) conducted a study of dual language programs at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in which they identified several successful planning practices. Most respondents recommended allowing plenty of time, a minimum of one year, for planning the program (Sugarman & Howard, 2001). While ambitious, well-intentioned practitioners may have rushed the process, not allowing sufficient time to address key issues may put the ultimate success of the program at risk (Montague, 1997). In the schools in the CAL study, planning committees were established that involved the voices of multiple stakeholders, including teachers, building and district administrators, parents and community members. During the planning phase, the committee generally studied the needs of the parents and children living in the community, and familiarized all of the stakeholders with research about DLI, biliteracy development and second language acquisition (Gilzow & Branaman, 2000). During the planning phase, a program model was chosen and supporting curriculum selected. Site visits of other DLI programs took place at that time. Assessment strategies, criteria for accepting students into the program, hiring qualified staff and planning appropriate staff development activities all took place during the planning phase (Sugarman & Howard, 2001).

Program Implementation

A gradual phase of implementation, beginning with one cohort, and adding a new grade level each year as the first cohort advances, makes implementation of immersion programs more manageable for all stakeholders. For example, in the first year, the program would begin with just kindergarten, and then another grade would be added each

year until all elementary grades were included (Howard, 2002; Montague, 1997). This gradual phase-in reduced the risk of overwhelming the English-speaking children, especially at a time when standardized testing began, around third grade.

Instructional materials and curriculum needed to be selected that would prepare students to meet the state and district standards. As much as possible, it was helpful to include original works from the partner language, thus allowing students to view the authors as contributors and “intellectual role models” (Torres-Guzman, 2002).

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

When I initially envisioned my study and did my preliminary review of the literature, I intended to do an action research project designing and implementing an immersion program in my own district. Eventually, it became clear that fiscal and other realities would prevent me from implementing the program in time to conduct the action research for my dissertation. However, by conducting a multiple-case study, I was able to lay the groundwork for establishing how other schools designed, implemented and operated their language immersion programs, and hoped to use that information to help bring my dream of implementing an immersion program in a low-SES district to life.

Multiple Case-Study Design

Yin (2009) suggested that case studies are advantageous when the researcher attempted to answer “how” and “why” questions about “a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control” (p.13). In this multiple case study, I wanted to understand how existing elementary immersion programs had been developed and implemented so I could use that information to increase access to quality language-learning opportunities for other U.S. students. I relied on multiple sources of data from each of five language immersion schools to describe the implementation and delivery models of their elementary immersion programs. Data included interview transcripts, memos and pictures from school visits, readily available school information through electronic media such as school and teacher websites and state performance data.

Along with the publicly available data online, I requested print artifacts such as newsletters, mission and vision statements, goals and standards, schedules, and

brochures. I also requested assessment information that measured student performance in the partner language as well as in English.

While the print data provided valuable information, by far my richest source of data came from interviews with participants. I conducted three to six interviews at each school including a school administrator, program specialist(s), if applicable, target language teacher(s), and other teachers and, in some cases, other support staff totaling 22 interviews.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face, when possible, or via phone or Skype. Interviews lasted between 30-90 minutes, averaging just over an hour. I digitally recorded interviews and my mom transcribed them. Once transcribed, I compared the recorded interview with the transcriptions, and made corrections, when necessary. When the comments were unclear, I checked with the participants and/or triangulated the data to verify accuracy.

I conducted onsite observations when feasible. I was able to visit Parkland Language School, Lewis and Clark Elementary, Pacific International and Cousteau's School for the Arts and Sciences. Joplin's Landing was the only school at which I could not conduct a site visit due to logistics. At the schools, I interviewed some participants face-to-face. I also toured the schools, visited immersion classrooms of some of the interview participants and others, and took photographs of artifacts such as wall displays, bulletin boards, and learning spaces. For privacy reasons, I did not photograph students or teachers. I wrote memos for each site visit.

I developed my research questions by using my lens as an elementary principal and looking at many of the features of elementary immersion programs in the *Guiding*

Principles for Dual Language Education (Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007) to focus my inquiry. Specifically, I wanted to understand the strengths and challenges of each program model and the process engaged by the stakeholders to select and implement the model. I was interested in how program goals and standards were selected and, in particular, how the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning, as well as state and other standards, drove the immersion programs. I looked for the behaviors, barriers and procedures that helped or hindered the attainment of program goals. Good teaching drives program success, so I wanted to know how schools addressed recruitment, professional development and teacher support. I was deeply interested in how the program impacted the school community and the relationships within the community. Finally, a limited amount of student and program assessment data, along with participant perceptions, provided indicators of the program's impact on student learning.

The ultimate goal of this study was to contribute research to the field that would benefit those, like me, wanting to implement an immersion program. I believe all U.S. public school students should have access to sustained sequences of high quality language education in order to reap lifelong academic, cognitive and social advantages that result from being proficient in another language and understanding other cultures.

As Bogdan and Biklen (2007) suggested, I did my fieldwork primarily one case at a time. That is, I started with data collection at one school, and got a sense of the issues and themes in that setting before going to the next school. As my early data analysis illuminated unanticipated findings, and as I compared multiple segments of data, new

analytical categories emerged. These discoveries prompted me to add or modify future interview questions in order to investigate the issues more fully.

Participants

I studied the schools, given pseudonyms, in the following order based on when I had access: Parkland Language School, Joplin's Landing Elementary School, Lewis and Clark Elementary School, Pacific International School, and Cousteau's Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences. I had hoped to analyze and code the data at each school before collecting data at the next, but the timing of my access to participants did not allow for that. Instead, after each school, I reflected on the information through memos and considered adjustments in data collection strategies for the next school.

After all 22 interviews were completed, I analyzed the data more deeply one school at a time, in the same order in which they were collected. I used the constant-comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to analyze data by coding it inductively, then comparing the segments of data to develop the categories for the school. Because of my strong background knowledge in the field, rather than coding line by line, I coded by chunks or segments of information. Depending on the depth of the question, some responses provided multiple chunks of data while others were more limited.

After the first school was coded, I put each segment on index cards and grouped them to develop rough categories. I transferred the categories to a data collection sheet. Then, I numbered the lines in the transcripts and developed a color-coded key identifying each participant. For example, for the principal, I wrote "P" in blue. Each participant's data were recorded in a different color to allow me to visually gauge who said what on the data collection sheets. Then, I went through the interviews again and noted the

participant and line number in the category or categories where each quote fit on the data collection sheets. Sometimes the same quote fit in multiple categories. I noted particularly useful quotes with a star next to the line number.

It is important for the reader to recognize that many of the quoted participants are not heritage-speakers of English and, naturally, make some grammatical errors in their speech. I chose not to use [sic] to identify those errors. I urge those reading this study to do so sympathetically, focusing on the message of the participants without being distracted by possible interference from the participant's heritage language.

For each school, I repeated the process, adjusting the categories slightly in response to that school's specific data and what I had learned from the previous schools.

Once the data for each participant in a school were coded and categorized on the data sheet, and other artifacts were examined, I reviewed all the data from that school and wrote a draft about the school that captured the salient features that arose from the data. Rather than including everything about that school in its chapter, I focused on characteristics that seemed unique to the school or more common characteristics that were illuminated particularly well by that school's data. For each school, I included the context, implementation history, model, staffing issues and other relevant themes that emerged.

I also compared results for each school to information that had been previously collected for other schools. Through this cyclical process, I compared results from the schools I had already studied, chunking and codifying the data and triangulating it to discover key themes that emerge as the study unfolds (Stake, 2000). Many of the themes that crossed schools were addressed in a separate chapter. In an extra effort to ensure

confidentiality, I also deliberately reserved some of the more sensitive information for chapter 9 rather than including it in the chapters on the schools themselves.

Site Selection

Through a combination of two emergent sampling strategies, snowball sampling and opportunistic sampling (Patton, 2001), I selected five schools to include, representing a variety of models of immersion schools that are in different levels of implementation in five states in three regions across the U.S.: the Pacific, Mountain and South Atlantic (U.S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Opportunistic cases were selected as a result of unforeseen opportunities, in my case exposure to programs due to networking with leaders in the language education field and, in one case, a former-colleague who worked in a district with an elementary immersion school. I combined opportunistic sampling with snowball sampling in which individuals recommended other individuals who connected me to immersion schools where I might be able to gather rich, relevant data about the implementation and delivery of elementary immersion programs.

Once I had a bank of schools, I investigated each school online and through email and personal contacts to narrow the list to the five schools presented in the order they were studied in Table 3.

Stake (2000) posited that balance and variety were key considerations for selecting cases, and “opportunity to learn is of primary importance” (p. 1). I purposefully chose schools that were recommended by a reliable source, located in several regions of the country, portrayed a variety of models including total immersion, one-way immersion, and two-way immersion, and represented a variety of demographics. Several

Table 3. Overview of Schools

Traits	Parkland Language	Joplin's Landing	Lewis & Clark	Pacific	Cousteau's
Model	Total Immersion	Two-way immersion	Two-way immersion	One- and two-way immersion	Two-way immersion
Strand	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Target Language(s)	Mandarin, Spanish	Spanish	Spanish Rural, fully implemented	Mandarin, Spanish	Spanish
Unique Feature	Charter	State model		International school	Longevity
Neighborhood	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partial
Grades	K-8 ^a	K-5	PreK-6	K-5	PreK-5
Grades Implemented	K-3	K-3	K-6	K-4	K-5
Implementation year	2010	2007	2005	2008	1989
Region	Mountain	Mountain	Pacific	Pacific	South Atlantic
ELL above 25%	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Low SES	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
District size (school)	80,000+ (356)	5,000 (600+)	5,000 (550)	45,000+ (450)	100,000+ (1200+)

^aCurrently a K-3 school, planned to become K-8 by 2016

of the schools had unique features of which I was unfamiliar and wanted to learn more.

The five schools that I selected appeared to be successful and demonstrated the balance and variety needed to provide a rich opportunity to gain insights from which I could draw.

Parkland Language School. Parkland Language School was unique in two important ways. First, it was the only charter school included in my study, and it was

initiated by parents in the community who wanted their children to attend an immersion school. The unique governance structure, relationship to the school district and funding systems of a charter school added another dimension to my study. The second distinctive characteristic of the Parkland Language School was the total immersion model offering full-day instruction in Mandarin or Spanish. English was not taught at all until third grade, and then only 45 minutes a day. Finally, I was intrigued by the challenge of developing cohesiveness in a new school with two separate language programs, neither of which was English.

Joplin's Landing Elementary School. Joplin's Landing was chosen partially because of its location in Utah, the state with the fastest growing immersion programs in the country. They offered Spanish via a 50/50 model. While developing the Utah programs, Utah's World Languages Supervisor collaborated with respected national consultants and language leaders to create a replicable model to expand access.

A unique feature of Utah was their commitment to language learning by the governor and other decision-makers in one of the most homogenous states in the U.S. (U.S. Census, 2010). The goal was to have 100 language immersion programs by 2015. I thought it would be helpful to include a school from a state that was motivated to implement immersion programs in a methodical and large-scale manner. I was also very interested in how Utah generated buy-in and momentum for their programs.

Lewis and Clark Elementary School. Lewis and Clark Elementary school in the Canby School District in Canby, Oregon, was recommended to me by one of my former teaching colleagues. I want to include a couple of two-way immersion schools in various stages of implementation, and Lewis and Clark offers a two-way immersion program that

was first implemented in 2005. After phasing in one grade cohort each year, they have finally phased in all grade levels K-6. Therefore, achievement data should be available for ELL and native English speaking students who began the program as kindergarteners or first graders. Additionally, I am interested in the impact a strand program has on community cohesiveness without the umbrella of an “international school” model. Finally, since one of my interests is access for low SES students, at 68%, their free/reduced lunch status is significant and similar to my school.

Pacific International School. I chose Pacific because it was in a district which had a track record with immersion beginning in 2000. While it had a Mandarin FLES program prior, Pacific was still relatively early in immersion implementation. Launching in the fall of 2008, stakeholders were likely to be familiar with the implementation process. In addition, Pacific more closely resembled the diverse demographics in my district than the other DLI schools in that district. I was also interested in the concept of an International School, rather than solely an immersion school, because an International School was inclusive—not all students participated in immersion, but they were all a part of the International School focused on developing global citizens. The district developed their elementary school immersion model partly based on widely-touted dual immersion programs in Fairfax County Schools, the 11th largest district in country. I was able to visit an immersion school in that district and was impressed with their model, which served a diverse population with many low SES students. Finally, the current principal of Pacific was formerly the principal of the first International School in the district, so by interviewing him, I hoped to learn about the strengths and challenges of both programs.

Cousteau’s Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences. Studying Cousteau’s

allowed me to include an immersion program decades after it had been implemented. I was interested in how the program changed and adapted over time and what prompted those changes. By far the largest school in the study in a highly diverse urban community, I wanted to look at the logistic complexities the school faced running an immersion strand program in a school with over 1,200 students. Cousteau's also offered an opportunity to study a school with strong district support.

Participant Selection

In order to gain multiple perspectives, I interviewed three to five participants at each site. I interviewed the building principal or another administrator who was responsible for the leadership and management of all or most of the school including, but not limited to, the language immersion program. Next, I interviewed the program specialist at the school or district level (or both), if there was one. I predicted the program specialists would typically have more background in language acquisition and immersion programs than the principal did and probably worked more closely with the immersion teachers on a day-to-day basis. Finally, I interviewed one to four teachers and other support staff. Those teachers were selected based on the principal or program director's recommendations. I included at least one teacher of the target language(s) and others who taught in English or served in other roles. For each school I remained flexible and open to various possibilities of participants to interview in order to gather the richest data possible.

Selection of Terms

When dealing with cultures, demographics and language that may change over time, some vocabulary terms can become politically charged. For example, *foreign*

language was typically used to describe any language other than English in the U.S. for decades. Later, most language teaching organizations moved to the more inclusive *world language*, based on the fact that many languages other than English spoken in the United States are not foreign, such as Native American languages and American Sign Language.

Preferences of demographic groups also vary. For example, while *African American* is preferred by some, others use the term Black to more accurately include people of color whose ancestry is associated with areas other than Africa. Jorge Ramos, one of the Univision network's anchors said that the term *Hispanic* is more widely used on the east coast and *Latino* on the west (2012).

Government reports sometimes reflect the use of antiquated terms. For example, English Language Learners were identified as *Limited English Proficient* on many government documents that I consulted in this study.

For the purposes of this study, I used the language and terms of the participants or from the print data I reviewed. The glossary in the *Appendix* may be helpful in sorting out confusing acronyms and terms related to immersion.

Positionality

I approached this study as both a practitioner and leader. As a high school Spanish teacher for eighteen years, teaching everything from first year through A.P. Spanish, I became acutely aware that starting world languages in high school limited students' opportunities to become proficient before graduating. I became a passionate world languages education advocate, with the dream of implementing a sustainable elementary language program in my own school district.

When I left teaching Spanish to become an elementary school principal, part of

my motivation was to bring languages to our elementary schools. As an elementary principal, I maintained my ties to the language education world, over time serving as a board member and, eventually, president of my state, regional and national language teaching associations. My work on these boards provided countless opportunities to learn and grow professionally around language issues in schools. As an award-winning teacher and leader, and published Spanish textbook co-author, I hoped my language background would contribute to credibility and trust with the study participants.

I recognized that my positionality as a language educator and advocate had the potential to influence the way I perceived data. As a proponent, I had to be diligent about avoiding bias. Although I had strong beliefs in favor of language immersion and what constituted best-practices, I made a commitment to remain open to new discoveries, whether positive or negative, revealed by the data.

I identified several limitations to this study. Because I did a multi-case study, including schools in five states, I was limited to how much time I could spend with each school. Initially, I was concerned that gaining access and developing trust and rapport with the principals and other participants could prove difficult without time to cultivate relationships; however I did not find that to be the case. Instead, I found the participants to be welcoming, candid and extremely generous with their time. In fact, I collected more rich data than I could include in a single study. To do it justice, each school merited its own study.

In one of the five schools, I was not able to do a site visit, so for that school I could not triangulate my interview and print data with first-hand observational data. Having said that, I interviewed five participants from that school and received additional

valuable information from the state language coordinator. The consistent results lead me to have confidence in the validity and reliability of the data for that school.

Many interviews were conducted over the phone or via Skype, which may have limited my ability to create rapport with participants and to read nonverbal cues. However, judging from the participants' candor about the challenges of their program as well as the strengths, I felt confident that they were willing to open up to me.

The sample size in this study was relatively small. Because I studied only five out of approximately 600 elementary immersion programs in the country (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2008), my results might not have been as generalizable to other settings as I would have liked.

In the following five chapters on each school, I first established a context for the school. Next, I described the implementation process, which often impacted the model. Then, I described the model that resulted from implementation efforts. After that I discussed staffing issues and student outcomes revealed by the data.

Chapter 4

Parkland Language School

Parkland Language School (PLS), a one-way immersion charter school that first opened its doors in 2010, served grades K-2 at its inception, and was envisioned to become a K-8 total immersion school. At the time of this writing, students from kindergarten through third grade learned all of their content in either Spanish or Mandarin Chinese. The school was situated in a large metropolitan public school district that served more than 80,000 students in a Southwestern state.

Although PLS received some per-pupil funding from the large public school system, as a charter school, it was considered a non-profit corporation for educational purposes and had site-based control. Therefore, PLS determined its own enrollment and could receive waivers from the local public school district's board policies and procedures. This autonomy allowed PLS to manage its own fiscal resources. School leaders could freely choose curriculum, and hire, fire and pay staff without the restrictions of the collective bargaining agreement. The school was accountable to and held a short-term contract with its "authorizer" Denver Public Schools; if it did not produce results, it ran the risk of losing the contract.

A "school of choice," PLS was not a neighborhood school and did not have an identified catchment area. In the charter school system, families chose the schools for which they wanted to be considered, a lottery process ensued and families were notified of whether they had been selected or put on a waiting list.

While charter schools were required to use "non-discriminatory enrollment practices" (Charter School Facts, 2011), their student demographics didn't necessarily

reflect the diversity or breadth of student needs found in the public school authorizing body, as was the case with Parkland Language School. PLS's demographic information described a much less diverse and more affluent student body than the district served. For example, in 2012, about 80% of the district's public school enrollment included students of color, and over one-third were considered English Language Learners (ELLs). Approximately 40% of the governing district's students spoke Spanish as a home language. Vietnamese, Arabic, Karen/Burmese and Somali were among the other languages spoken in the district. Poverty impacted the vast majority of the district's students, with 72% of them qualifying for free or reduced meals. The district served 11% of their students in Special Education programs. Clearly, the public school district was impacted by the demands of serving the wide range of needs in an ethnically and linguistically diverse and economically challenged student community.

On the other hand, Parkland Language School enjoyed ethnic diversity, but was not currently impacted by the same profound demands as the authorizing district in terms of serving English Language Learners (ELLs), Special Education and low-income students. In the year PLS launched, African Americans, Hispanics and, Asians each composed 14% of the student body, with the remaining 58% of students identified as White. Less than 20% of students were considered economically disadvantaged and educators served less than 8% English Language Learners. The academic director said:

We have very few [ELLs] because the population of our student body is almost entirely non-native speakers of either Chinese or Spanish, but there are more Chinese than there are Spanish ELL students We have the largest Chinese adoption agency in the United States, I believe And so [one of our founders]

helped us locate a lot of families of Chinese students who wanted their children to be educated in their native language. And so that's how we ended up having more ELL students in Chinese. But, we have a very small population, and an even smaller population of Spanish at our ELL program.

Special Education students comprised yet a smaller percentage of PLS's student body. In the school's first year, less than 1% of the original 230 students qualified for Special Education in 2010, and in 2011 that increased slightly to 1.5%, still vastly below the percentage in the non-charter schools.

Implementation

Uniquely, among the schools in this study, parents initiated the Parkland Language School immersion program. The groundwork for the first public immersion school in the district began in the fall of 2007 as the brainchild of a couple of passionate moms whose children had attended a public charter school in another district. They recognized the benefits of language immersion programs, but lamented the lack of any programs in their local public school district. They went door-to-door and collected over 100 "letters of intent" from district stakeholders who were supportive of their concept. In 2008, they formed a partnership with a local foundation that was repurposing a large area of land that was formerly an industrial area. The vice president of the foundation, in charge of educational programs, remembered initially being reluctant to take on such an innovative project, but the dogged determination of the parents convinced him to become the PLS community founder and project director. He shared:

I tried to discourage them because I knew how difficult it was to start a school, and the district was not necessarily in the place where it was that accepting of

what could be considered more of an exotic model like this. And [the moms] ignored me They were going to do it anyway, so I said, “Okay, let’s do this.” The founders worked together to implement the first tuition-free total-immersion program in one of the largest school districts in the state.

The founders created a preliminary advisory board, inviting a bilingual educator, a retired principal, and Helena Curtain, a national consultant, to join them. Lacking a local language teacher, on the advice from the national consultant, they eventually recruited a retired local high school Spanish teacher. To select a program model, the advisory board networked with national experts on language immersion and gathered information and resources from sources including the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) and the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL).

After initially writing up a proposal to become a “School of Innovation,” which was rejected by the district, the founders proposed a charter school model. Following a number of revisions to the original proposal, Parkland Language School was approved as a charter by the public school district in June of 2009. The founders, high school teacher-consultant and others formed the charter school board of directors who had just over a year to develop policy and procedures, find a facility, and, most importantly, recruit staff and students.

Finding school leadership was at the top of their agenda. The group hired a heritage speaker of Chinese to be the Mandarin Program Director /Assistant Head of School. After an exhaustive national search, a Head of School was hired who got to work on tasks like recruiting families and hiring staff. However, in March of 2010, five months

before the school was to open, the Head of School suddenly resigned at a board meeting, and the school was left without a leader.

With only a few months before school started, and no time for another national search, the community founder was hired to lead the school. He did not have school administrative credentials. Instead of being “Head of School,” his title became Executive Director. A certificated principal was not required for the charter schools since they were considered a business and, as mentioned earlier, could be exempt from typical public school restrictions. The Assistant Head of School’s title was also changed to parallel her new supervisor’s title. She became Deputy Executive Director. Choosing the appropriate title for her was significant because, as a member of the leadership team shared, “This is a very culturally important note that you cannot reduce the position of somebody in China without disgrace.” In addition, the high school Spanish teacher, who was serving as a consultant and board member, was hired to be the Academic Director/Director of Spanish Language. These three individuals comprised the school’s leadership team.

They searched for a facility and found a schoolhouse that they leased from the public school district. The charter school occupied an older, but well maintained, two-story brick schoolhouse that was once a neighborhood school in the city. The spacious, newly high-tech classrooms, auditorium, gymnasium, art room, and cafeteria contributed to a comfortable learning environment. However, at the rate the school was growing, the building likely would not be sufficient for the K-8 school. As the executive director explained:

We’re growing more than I anticipated. I was really conservative, you know, in enrollment projection just to be safe. And I’m low. We’re going to have to add

on this building. We're okay this year and next year, and the year after that I need a couple more classrooms. And then ultimately we may have to move, we may have to locate the middle school somewhere else, because I don't know if we can actually accommodate K-8 here.

The next task involved hiring heritage speakers of Spanish and Mandarin. These educators needed to understand language acquisition and be qualified to teach content at the elementary level. The executive director confided, "That was one of the scary things at first." He said finding the Spanish teachers was not as difficult as finding Chinese teachers. Positions were posted on Craig's List, with the Charter League and on other websites. The first year, working with the Spanish Education Ministry, he went to Spain and interviewed about eighty teachers, initially hiring three of them. Those teachers came with a 3-year visa and a one-year contract that could be renewed.

An assistant director-in-training for the Spanish program at PLS described the visiting teacher program in a little more detail:

We'll work with the Spanish Embassy and we have three teachers . . . four, so far, from them, but it's a challenge because they tend to go back. So, we have a young population with, our staff is young and they move, and they want to travel. That's why they're here, right? They want to travel So they're in [this city] one year, and then they go to Thailand the next.

To develop some continuity, she said:

We try to go for the people we know, that we steal from other schools So, our goal is to find heritage-Spanish and heritage-Chinese teachers that live here so they can grow with us, and learn with us, and stay. So we don't have to continue

to teach brand new teachers in immersion program. But, we are probably going to have a combination of both [local and visiting teachers] all the time.

On finding local Mandarin teachers, the executive director said:

The Chinese, a little harder, because there isn't anywhere necessarily to be a full-time teacher teaching in Mandarin. There are people who teach in the cultural centers. There are people who teach just Mandarin, say in high school to high school students. There are some ECEs [Early Childhood Educators].

Teaching content based on the state standards *in* Mandarin sometimes required a different skill set than teaching Mandarin as a foreign language. Eventually, they hired two kindergarten teachers who were experienced in teaching Mandarin in an Early Childhood Education setting. They found others who worked in the Confucius Institute or at a local private Mandarin Chinese language school. They also hired some teachers through Hanban, the Chinese government's office for teaching Chinese as a foreign language. According to the executive director, Hanban teachers cost about half that of a teaching assistant.

Meanwhile student recruitment continued. The academic director shared:

Well there was a big campaign, too. Once we had a head of school in place, she went door to door to some 65 or so different organizations locally in the [foundation] area, because at the time before we started, we didn't even have a building.

An academic director said, “[The head of school] convinced many families that this is an up-and-coming way to educate your children, and there was a lot of interest.” She described the residential area they targeted as one of, “up-and-coming professionals who

were educated, and understood the importance of second-language learning, and or had had that experience before. And that was a huge draw from them, so the majority of our students come from [that] population.”

The executive director described the successful marketing campaign as including: A lot of night meetings and a lot of, everything. We had a marketing plan based on kind of multi-pronged advertisements in local and ethnic newspapers, a lot of door-to-door distribution. I think the first year we did a good 5,000 homes in this area door-to-door solicitation. We focused on, there’s about 35 childcare centers and in-home centers in this part of the city that we focused on 4-year-olds. A lot of community meetings. And then open houses here. A lot of folks that were interested who learned about our school, I’d say 80%, based on the response we get, were word-of-mouth.

He also described recruiting families who attended a nearby private International School:

And it costs about \$12,000 to go there. So, when we came on the scene, we offered quite the alternative, and so those folks formed quite a core. The first year, we got about 50 of their students. And they talked to ten other people, and then they talked to other people headed to [the private] school. And so we now are up to about 70, 75 kids from private schools going to [our school].

Successful recruitment efforts provided enough students to fill classes in kindergarten through second grade. Staff and students in place, the school opened its doors and welcomed its first students in the fall of 2010.

Model

The mission of the school was to “provide an innovative academic program to reach the highest levels of student achievement through comprehensive language immersion education.” All academic content was delivered in either Mandarin Chinese or Spanish from kindergarten through second grade. No English was used for academic instruction until third grade, and even then, it was limited to 45 minutes per week of English language instruction, focused on writing. A Mandarin teacher pointed to the total immersion model as one of the strengths of the program, saying:

I think our model, the 100% immersion, I think it’s a wonderful benefit, and a upside for all the students. No matter what’s their level, you know. They just exposed to the 100% . . . language environment. They just learned authentic language from teachers, you know. Not just the textbook language; authentic language. They learn from the real life language. So I think that’s the most strengths and the good things with our school.

The plan was to continue the same level of English support through grade five. Beginning in grade five, the expectation was to provide no less than 70% of content in the Target Language (TL), Mandarin or Spanish, and no more than 30% in English. According to the school’s website, the program would continue into high school with an expectation of 50% (dual) immersion at that point. Table 4 summarizes the plan for the delivery of content across languages.

The program was based on a one-teacher model at least through grade five. In grades 3-5 students would receive English instruction from a specialist rather than their

Table 4. Parkland Language School Division of Content Across Languages

Grades	Instruction in Target Language	Instruction in English
K-2	100%	0%
3-5	90%	10%
6-8	At least 70%	No more than 30%
9-12	At least 50%	Up to 50%

classroom teacher. It was not clear whether students would continue with a one-teacher model when the program reached sixth grade and instruction in English increased. Since English proficiency was a factor for many of the teachers, I predict they will move to a two-teacher model.

Plans to phase in another grade level each year put a target of 2016 to complete K-8 implementation when the first cohort, who entered as second graders, will have reached 8th grade. According to the executive director, “By growing slowly and starting out with a smaller student body, the school will be better positioned to intentionally train teachers, implement standards of excellence that help students meet state standards, and create infrastructure to help students achieve.”

However, generally immersion programs begin with one or two grades, kindergarten and/or first, and phase in from there. Including second graders in the implementation launch proved to be somewhat problematic. The rigor of second grade content proved especially challenging for students with no immersion experience, and integrating those students with others who had a language immersion background increased the complexity of differentiating for the teachers. A Spanish teacher shared:

So, it was a challenge last year when I started in second grade, because half of my class didn't have any Spanish, and they were second grade, so that was kind of a challenge. But, now for the rest of the rest of the program, it really works well.

Demand exceeded the capacity for students whose parents wanted them to become fluent in other languages and cultures. The first year, families of over 400 students applied for the 230 available seats. Students were selected through a lottery system and came from catchment areas of more than a dozen elementary schools in and out of the district. Siblings of selected students were given priority. The largest group of students, about 100, came from the typically well-educated and more affluent families in the [foundation] area.

In the second year of the program, almost all of the previously enrolled students (approximately 96%) elected to continue at PLS. About 100 new seats were available in the lottery for year 2, primarily for the new kindergarten cohort and some in higher grades. The Academic Director shared, "We did have some positions for first, second, and third grade. But that was kind of hard because we, you know, some of those kids had no background of immersion language education whatsoever. But they're surviving." Students who entered after kindergarten were called "newcomers" and attended a "newcomers' class" after school two days a week to help them catch up.

The steering committee had a goal of serving at least 40% low-income students, but so far they were at about half that rate. This was partly due to the location of the school. Bus transportation was offered the first year, but the public school district did not provide transportation for charter schools and at \$40,000 a year, the costs were prohibitive. The community founder shared:

It's been difficult because we planned to locate further north of here where that [lower income] population is, and we could not find a facility. This [building] is a DPS school that was closed, and we had to lease it as a charter. We leased the building. And this was the one available. It's a wonderful building, but it is not in the area. Without transportation, it's hard to have choice if you're lower income.

Curriculum. The curriculum was based on state standards and, aside from Singapore math, was very similar to what was provided in the neighborhood public schools, only it was delivered in another language. The executive director said:

It is very much based on . . . state standards, and it's all about high student achievement through language instruction, using the language to learn the content. And so you learn the language at the same time. So the name of the schools is a bit of a misnomer that way.

He believed following the state curriculum made it easier for parents to take the leap of faith necessary to come to the immersion school:

Because this curriculum is actually pretty similar to [the school district's], and it's state standards-based, they're learning the same stuff they're learning at a [district] elementary school, except for Singapore math. And so we assure people, look, if after second grade you decide you want to go to a regular elementary, you'll find your kid is at or above in the same place as those kids were. They're learning pretty much the same things.

A Spanish teacher concurred, "So we teach in the content of the state. We're doing it through a language that's not English. So they can acquire both."

The school was required by the district to have an English literacy plan for all grades, which was ironic since PLS did not teach English or in English until third grade, and even then for only a small percentage of the day. The academic director described her frustration in trying to help the district understand the school's mission:

And so, we had a bit of a battle at first because we submitted a [literacy] plan that includes both languages, and they said, "No, we're not interested in the languages," and they were not, like, understanding what our goal was, and our mission, our vision of our school, and who we were. And so, I had to redo the whole literacy plan.

Finding curriculum in the target language was difficult, especially in Mandarin. A Mandarin teacher said:

I think especially for Chinese language, I think curriculum is the key, you know. Besides a model, I think if you have the strong curriculum for Chinese is really hard language to find ample resources in the States. So, and if your immersion school has like a dual language program like us, then I think Spanish or some other western language are much, for my personal opinions, is much easier to finding resources than Chinese . . . especially for Chinese or Asian language, the curriculum is the key. And the teacher, and much much easier to work for your school and to do their best job to their student.

Resources

Naturally, opening a new school took a huge investment of time and involved a significant financial outlay. The foundation's support proved to be invaluable in the implementation of Parkland Language School. At the beginning of the project, the

foundation paid the salary of the community founder for two-and-a-half years to work on the project. They also contributed \$300,000 of initial funding that was used for a variety of purposes including hiring consultants, and paying start-up costs. In addition, the school procured a grant for \$195,000 from the State Department of Education and received a \$1,400,000 four-year Federal Language Assistance Program (FLAP) grant for the Mandarin program. Unfortunately, in the midst of a recessive economy and harsh budget cuts, in 2011 Congress cut off the federal grant in the middle of the cycle.

In addition to foundation support, grants, and the per-pupil allotment the school got from the district, large-scale, school-based fund raisers, more typical of private schools, also contributed to the coffers. For example the school hosted a gala event called “Dancing with the PLS Stars.” Modeled after the T.V. show, “Dancing with the Stars,” twelve parents and two teachers, many of whom were trained at a local dance studio, competed at an evening dinner event at the Four Seasons Hotel. Tickets were sold and “votes” were purchased to determine the winners of the contests. The school earned over \$35,000 from this event. The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) also raised money to support the school, and had recently purchased a new PA system.

PLS teachers and other employees were typically paid less than the negotiated rates paid to employees in the authorizing district, which reduced operating costs, especially considering that staffing was by far the biggest expense for schools. Those resources provided for a nice facility, curriculum, professional development and staffing for Parkland Language School.

In addition to total immersion, PLS offered a variety of before- and after-school enhancement and enrichment programs as well as after-school child care and a summer

language camp. The school participated in a “healthy eating/scratch cooking program,” and all students were entitled to a free breakfast. After-school tutoring for English and core content was available for students for a small fee when recommended by a teacher. Students also had the opportunity to take enrichment classes after school. Taught by PLS teachers and others, the classes addressed topics such as Chinese paper art, Latin dance, yoga and soccer for a cost of \$100-\$150 per session. All children including those not attending PLS were welcomed to the 6-week morning Summer Mandarin/Spanish Immersion Camps, in which students were grouped based on language proficiency, and afternoon "Summer Adventures" where students could explore science, technology, and play organized games. Recognizing the need, the academic director instituted a gifted and talented program. The variety of programs enriched the educational opportunities for students at Parkland Language School.

Staff Issues

All teachers at PLS were heritage speakers of the target language. Teachers’ experiences growing up in public schools in other countries necessarily influenced their expectations and approaches when they became teachers. Expectations of students varied greatly across cultures. A teacher in Mandarin described what she noticed and how she tried to make students feel comfortable in her class:

So some of the teacher were more of a, they using the more authentic Chinese way. They use that, what they been done in Chinese classroom, and some of the teacher, like me, I’ve stay in States a little bit longer time, so I just adapt lots of American classroom culture into my classroom. I trying to have my classroom not looks like a language classroom, just like a normal American grade school

classroom. So, that's my goal, and I using the target language to deliver all the knowledge I know in all subject area to my students, and they just like in the very familiar settings and with the same activities . . . their old, their previous teachers in the American school, they offered, but I change the language to using all Chinese, and yeah, so I think that's more inviting and more friendly for the kids who learn a different language.

When it came to classroom management, cultural differences between teachers and students were quite remarkable. The executive director said:

But your classroom management is something that we're really beginning to focus on more, because, and you know, for the Chinese, there was more expectation of children just knowing how to act. And [the U.S. students] need to be told, and they need to learn the rules, they need to learn the procedures, the process, and so that's an area that takes more work.

There was the perception that some of the Chinese teachers appeared to be hesitant to manage U.S. students who were culturally very different from what teachers had experienced in China. The academic director said:

And what we've discovered is the Chinese teachers were very disciplined in their own country, and they're disciplined here too, but they're kind of like afraid of the American students in that they don't want to do what they're not supposed do. But they're just not sure what that is. And so, when they say, you know, line up and stand here and stuff like that, they do it all in Chinese, right? The kids don't always understand, and so they don't [correct]. And so, it's taken a little bit more time . . . They have a harder time.

In order to address these issues, the school provided teacher training on Positive Behavior Supports and Interventions (PBIS) including establishing clear school-wide expectations.

State and federal teacher licensure requirements, as a result of NCLB, complicated efforts to recruit and retain heritage target-language teachers. The assistant Spanish program director said:

And getting them highly qualified in [the state] has been a challenge. They were taking the place tests to Praxis to be highly qualified. And it's still a struggle right now. [The district] is really pressing us and we already have a couple of teachers that might be in trouble in two weeks if they don't pass. So, those were definitely struggles.

Certification issues aside, all PLS teachers had access to immersion-specific professional development. Top notch national consultants provided training and conducted program site visits to coach and ensure program integrity. As a brand new school, teachers received additional professional development around non-immersion specific content such as state standards; district-mandated child abuse awareness and bullying prevention trainings; math curriculum; character education; behavior management; and differentiation.

When asked about some of the most pressing challenges in the program, the academic director quickly responded:

Language barriers of the teachers, and not understanding all the professional development that we try to offer. This is the truth. . . . Our biggest surprise was that . . . you know, when we tried to do a child abuse training, we had a person come in from the district who talked a mile a minute. Three times I had to slow

her down and say you need to speak very clearly and not, you know, speak so quickly, as most of our teachers are not proficient in English. And, [the teachers] got nothing out of it.

So, a professional development challenge for administrators mirrored the instructional challenge for teachers: assuring that the content was comprehensible to the target audience, no matter their language background.

Beyond that, some of the content was very new to teachers who were educated in other countries. One teacher explained:

I think, challenges, again teacher retention and, ah, preparing teachers to teach American curriculum has been hard. It's not just teaching mathematics that they already know, the content that they already know, when they have to go into [state] history, it's a completely new concept for them. And so there's topics that were new that were difficult for them.

Community

Parkland Language School functioned like a magnet school because the area had its own public neighborhood school and all students were selected through the lottery. While it was not a strand program in the sense that some students were in the immersion program and some students were not, as a two-language school it faced similar issues as strand schools in terms of keeping staff and students in both languages unified and connected. According to the parent handbook, students wore school uniforms that identified the immersion language, Mandarin Chinese or Spanish, in an effort to build identity and school community.

The leadership team looked at ways to build staff and student cohesiveness. One of the teachers described what she saw as a difficulty at the school:

The integration of the two programs. That is such a challenge. Culturally and the way we plan and prepare things, and it's been hard to meet and plan together. It's been hard to collaborate. It's just not the natural course of the language[s], and two years later we're still not sitting next [to each other] in staff meetings. You can see the Chinese on one side and the Spanish on the other. So that is one other one of the challenges.

She talked about how the classrooms were located in a way that the two language strands were even physically separated in the building. Even though the teachers attended the same math training, for example, they tended to do the follow-up planning in language-specific teams. The administrators were working on building more cohesiveness. The academic director confided, "We work so hard to build community, but it can be a challenge." The executive director shared:

What we learned last year was we were separating the staffs too much. In trying to focus on each program, we segregated them, and we really need to have one school with two languages. And so now we do planning across grade levels. And so, and the teachers now will know each other across the programs.

He talked about his perception of cultural differences between teachers:

The Chinese have a tendency to keep to themselves, more. The Spanish were more inclusive and more social. But there's much more blending than there was last year, and we're doing it too. With the kids every Friday we have school community meeting.

The school community meeting was a weekly school-wide assembly about core community values delivered in English.

Thematic unit planning had also helped to bridge the languages. The academic director said, “Thematic unit planning is very big for us because what we’re trying to do is build a community of the two programs together, and not split us down the middle and say, ‘Oh, that’s Mandarin. Oh, that’s Spanish.’”

Student Outcomes

School staff members said that parents often worried that students’ academic achievement in English would suffer without any instruction in English, but so far the data told a different story. While no data were available for the state standardized tests because they began at 3rd grade, in the 2010-2011 School Improvement Plan the goal was to have 80% of students meet the reading proficiency target (in English) on the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). Clearly pleased with their students’ results, the academic director shared:

As far as literacy for us, we are required by the state to assess our students in the Developmental Reading Assessment, and to get them to be at-level readers. And we were succeeding in that, believe me, because the transference from one language to the next in the case of Spanish is working very well. Not quite as well in Chinese because they’re learning those characters and the reading is a little bit slower. However they did meet our goals of 80% for at-level on the Developmental Reading Assessments.

The spring results from the first year showed that all grades met the goal including 87% of Kindergarteners, 90% of first graders and, grade 81% of second graders. Those scores

seemed particularly noteworthy considering that students were receiving all of their literacy and other instruction in another language. A Spanish teacher beamed, “Without mentioning the English one minute of the day, they still were acquiring the language because they were immersed in it and their parents were reading to them, and in Spanish it transfers.” The academic director said:

They live in an English-speaking world; the majority of the population of our students are English speakers. And so they are exposed to English media, and what we do is we encourage the parents to read to the children in English . . . And what we do, we do simply over and over. We just encourage that they read to their children an hour every night if they can.

On Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments, which were in English, students also seemed to be performing well. A Spanish teacher said, “We did the MAP testing and the NWEA testing, and all of our classes scored, the median of my class was way above what is expected for third grade.”

The PLS staff was also pleased with their students’ progress with target language acquisition. A second grade Mandarin teacher said, “You know the students pick up so quickly. So you are impressed. Young kids, they pick up, they understand what you are saying, and you know, and just way beyond you can expect it.” A third grade Spanish teacher agreed, saying, “They understand what we’re saying. So, it’s a very different approach . . . and our kids, by the time they get to content in first grade, that they need to produce things, they already have the language because they learned it in kindergarten.”

The educators at PLS relished the benefits to their immersion students beyond becoming bilingual and bi-literate. The Executive Director talked about the confidence he saw in students:

One of the by-products here is that they gain this sense of pride and accomplishment of just learning. They're learning the language and other people don't know it. And they're functioning in a different environment, and they know it's different, and they know this is not easy, and "I'm doing it!" And I've had a couple parents, after like six months of having a shy child or someone who was never very sure of themselves, see actually a change in their demeanor and personality that way.

A teacher described another positive outcome for students:

Just, it's not just about the language. It's about the culture, and making kids aware of the world outside of [the state] and their little city . . . Making global citizens out of these little kids so that they can compete in the 21st century in this world. And that's kind of our vision, and we want them to be prepared, and we want them to understand that the world is very big . . . [they] are learning languages and they're learning about each other too.

Parkland Language School demonstrated that dedicated parents, along with the support of business, can be the impetus for an immersion school. The charter school model allowed more flexibility in hiring and attracted students from typically educated affluent families who had the resources to transport their students outside of their neighborhoods. The staff commitment to the total immersion model combined with a focus on families reading in English at home resulted in students' succeeding

academically in two languages. Hiring only heritage speakers for teachers ensured students were exposed to authentic target language and also caused some professional development and staff-cohesiveness challenges. If success can be measured by demand and student outcomes, Parkland Language School and its students had a promising future.

Chapter 5

Joplin's Landing Elementary School

With a great deal of support for Dual Language Immersion (DLI) from the state of Utah, Joplin's Landing Elementary implemented its two-way immersion strand in 2007. As a strand program in a neighborhood school, parents had the choice to enter the DLI lottery or opt for the English-only strand. A strand program was necessary for the neighborhood school because not all families wanted their students in immersion, and students with no prior immersion experience who moved into the neighborhood after kindergarten or first grade were typically not prepared for rigorous, grade-level content presented in another language. Joplin's Landing followed the state model for DLI, and therefore received substantial state support for coordination, materials, and ongoing professional development.

State Model

Joplin's Landing represented a special case of immersion education because of the strong political and program support from all levels of Utah state government. Leaders in the politically conservative state paved the way for immersion education in the country by creating a replicable state model for creating bilingual and bi-literate citizens who are prepared for a global economy.

Dr. Larry K. Shumway, Utah State Superintendent of Public Instruction, talked about the initial impetus of the state program saying, "A few years ago, the State Board of Education spoke with legislators about the need to improve foreign language capability here in the state" (Utah dual immersion: Providing a world of opportunities for students, 2011). In 2008, State Senator Howard Stephenson sponsored Senate Bill 41

“International Initiatives,” which, passed by the Senate, provided funding for implementing DLI in Utah schools. Hoping to address the need for proficient speakers of other languages in the worlds of business, government and education, Former Governor Jon Huntsman Jr. joined the efforts and initiated the Governor’s Language Summit and the Governor’s World Language Council working to create a K-12 Language Roadmap for Utah.

Broad support came from the business community. In a CNN article, Gregg Roberts, World Languages and Dual Immersion Specialist for Utah’s Department of Education said, “The business community in Utah understands the economic importance of being fluent in two languages in order to increase productivity and reach on a global scale” (Shorland, 2012). Governor Herbert remarked, “This is a real leg up in economic development to have a population that can be fluent in speaking a multiplicity of foreign languages” (Utah dual immersion: Providing a world of opportunities for students, 2011). Larry Shumway, State Superintendent of Schools added, “I think we see an economic purpose in being open to the world that we hope will present a competitive advantage for ‘Utahans.’”

In addition to the competitive edge, Roberts noted, “The large Mormon community in Utah also embraces bilingualism as a missionary necessity The Mormon religion encourages its members to travel the world on mission trips to spread knowledge of Mormonism abroad. The ability to speak a second language is necessary to communicate in a host country.”

The Utah State Office of Education was charged by Governor Shuman to implement 100 model dual-immersion programs that would serve 30,000 Utah students

by 2015. In 2012, Utah offered DLI programs in four languages, Spanish, Chinese, French and Portuguese, in 78 schools reaching approximately 15,000 students and was expected to reach the targeted implementation levels prior to the 2015 goal.

The Utah DLI model required a 50/50 division of time in English and the partner language for grades K-6. In this “two-teacher” model, schools divided instruction between two language-specific teachers, one teaching in English for half of the school day and the other teaching in the partner language. That is, two teachers shared two groups of about 25 students each. The two-teacher model was affordable because it did not require additional teachers to be hired for language instruction and it was efficient because students were learning content and two languages at the same time. Because DLI began during the so-called “critical period” for language acquisition, before age 7, and students were afforded sufficient time in the target language, language educators expected that students would become proficient, and would have native-like pronunciation, before graduating high school.

Teaching exclusively in the identified language of instruction was a key feature of this state model. A state coordinator added, “There has to be evidence that there is true separation of the languages so that there is no mingling of the languages.”

With the expectations for divisions of language and time consistent, Utah schools chose from two options of the DLI model, one-way immersion or two-way immersion. According to the Utah State Office of Education’s Dual Language Immersion website, (2012), one-way immersion primarily served one language group, English-speaking students. Students in a one-way program spent half of their day learning English content and half of their day learning content in another language such as French, Mandarin,

Portuguese or Spanish. Often the only person fluent in the classroom during instruction in the partner language, the teacher was the only language model providing comprehensible input. Instructional assistants sometimes provided an additional language model for the youngest students.

Two-way immersion (TWI) primarily served two language groups, English-speaking students and Spanish-speaking students. These students spent half of their day learning content in English and half of their day learning content in Spanish. In a TWI program, ideally there was a 1:1 ratio of heritage English-speaking students and heritage Spanish-speaking students. A 2:1 ratio was an absolute minimum to be considered a two-way program. This arrangement ensured that one third to one half of the class was fluent in the target language at any given time and could be language models, no matter the language of instruction. Two-way immersion was only possible when there was a large enough population of Spanish (or another language) speakers to achieve the desired ratio.

The state articulated a K-12 instructional model that identified the content, based on the Common Core State Standards, and specified time spent in each content area in English and the partner language. The academic content was consistent with content for students who were not in an immersion program; the key difference was that half of it was delivered in another language.

Table 5 specifies how the instructional time was divided between the languages in the state K-12 articulation plan. Through 3rd grade, on the English side the students primarily studied English language arts with some collaborative “reinforcement” of math, social studies and science. The partner-language teacher instructed a shorter block of content. It is important to note that the reinforcement lessons were not a repeat of the

Table 5. Utah State Model for Division of Time, Course Articulation and Sequencing

Grades	Target Language (50%)	English (50%)
K ^a -3	Math (20%) Other content areas ^b (15%) Literacy (15%)	Language arts (35%) Math & content reinforcement (15%)
4-5	Literacy (25%) Math & other content areas (25%)	Language arts (25%) Math & other content areas ^c (25%)
6	Literacy (25%) Social Studies ^d , math & remaining content areas (25%)	Language arts (25%) Science ^d , math & remaining content areas (25%)
7	World languages 3 Honors ^e Foundations of social studies	Remainder of courses
8	World languages 4 Honors Health/Humanities	Remainder of courses
9	AP World languages World Geography	Remainder of courses
10	3000 level university course ^f Start of a 3 rd or 4 th language	Remainder of courses
11	3000 level university course Continuation of a 3 rd or 4 th language	Remainder of courses
12	3000 level university course Continuation of a 3 rd or 4 th language	Remainder of courses

Note: Source: Utah Dual Language Immersion documents: Dual language immersion instructional time & Utah dual language immersion model secondary course sequencing

^a DLI kindergarten was not offered at all schools

^b Content areas include Social Studies, Science, P.E., Art, Health and Music

^c After grade 3, many content areas were taught in both languages

^d Not taught in the partner language

^e After 6th grade, the division of time in languages was no longer identified as a percentage of the day, rather by the number of sections or classes

^f Providing the student passes the AP exam

language arts in the target language, and the majority of math, social studies and science content lesson. According to a state immersion coordinator, “We have purposely not selected materials that were taught simultaneously in both languages . . . as a second-language learner, if you know something is going to be presented to you in your native language, you’re going to tune out.”

Beginning in fourth grade, there were slight adjustments in the division of content with most of the conceptual instruction for math and social studies delivered in English, but the 50/50 balance of instruction in each language was maintained. After sixth grade, students were expected to be able to take two courses in the target language and take the AP language test in 9th grade. The hope was that high school students would be able to take college-credit career-specific classes (i.e. Spanish in the medical field) and have almost enough credits to graduate with a minor in the second language.

One of the key and distinguishing features of the Utah model was the comprehensive professional development that was provided for all DLI teachers (target language and English), principals and district administrators. Each summer all DLI educators were expected to attend all or part of a week-long intensive training called the Annual Utah Dual Immersion Institute (AUDII) organized by Gregg Roberts, the World Languages and Dual Immersion Specialist for Utah’s Department of Education. Highly-respected, nationally-recognized language experts including Tara Fortune, Mimi Met, Ann Tollefson, Greg Duncan, Peggy Boyles and more, delivered differentiated sessions to meet the needs of new and experienced DLI teachers (on both language sides), administrators, educators in one-way and two-way programs, and new and returning international guest teachers. The institute offered professional development on topics

such as foundations of the immersion model, core instructional strategies, oral language production, proficiency and formative assessment, literacy and language-specific information, and supporting struggling learners.

Once the school year began, the state provided follow-up training several times a year for teachers and administrators to create a cycle of continuous improvement. An enthusiastic state coordinator described the importance of including administrators in the training, “Another wonderful thing that has been done is to realize that, when you’re supporting an immersion program, you cannot just support the teachers . . . you need to continue to provide support for the administrators and district leaders.” State level DLI leaders met with all of the school principals five times a year, and district administrators were invited. She continued:

That really begins to solidify that state model that, by bringing on that on-going education, and problem solving. . . . And, unless you continually attend to those, continual improvement and at the same time fidelity of core principles, you can’t ensure quality. So that has been a great piece for us.

During the school year, teachers were provided release time to for ongoing professional development. Additionally, site visits were conducted by district and state coordinators, another strategy to ensure fidelity.

State support provided a framework and resources for the immersion programs. The state contributed \$10,000 to schools for the implementation of each grade to purchase materials and help with expenses. Many of the initial implementation challenges that other schools experienced were taken care of by the state. The state provided a research-based rationale that schools could learn from and share with

stakeholders. Utah already established the vision, chose the articulated K-12 models, selected and paid for curriculum and resources, and provided top-notch professional development and instructional coaching. Schools also benefited from state agreements with governments of other countries such as China, Spain, Peru and France to recruit proficient language teachers. The state model resulted in an unprecedented number of schools in Utah implementing best-practices DLI programs in just a few years.

School Model and Implementation

Joplin’s Landing, located in a 4,500 student district, enrolled 450 elementary children from kindergarten to 5th grade. The school was situated about five miles outside of a charming town center in a geographically gorgeous location. The students primarily came from two distinct demographics: affluent families who were Anglo and Latino working families, many of whom were very poor.

Joplin’s Landing embraced the state two-teacher model for DLI, dividing content equally between Spanish and English and providing instruction exclusively in the identified target language. Joplin’s Landing’s principal said, “We have a rule that the Spanish teachers only speak in Spanish to the children.” A teacher in the program in describing her partner on the Spanish side confirmed, “He does not speak English in his room ever. And in fact he, part of the program, the dual-immersion model, is that he doesn’t speak English at all in the school. . . . They [the students] shouldn’t even know he does speak English.”

Even with the articulated model and support from the state, a great deal of the work took place at the school level, since every school context and culture was distinct. The school principal pioneered the implementation of the immersion program. After

hearing about it at a district meeting, she brought the concept to the first grade team, who would be the first to implement, and they showed interest. At that point, she put together a committee consisting of parents and staff and held a variety of informational meetings at which stakeholders could provide input. The principal pointed to two strategies that helped to create buy-in from stakeholders: She invited a passionate and strong advocate, Gregg Roberts, the World Languages and Dual Immersion Specialist for Utah's Department of Education, to meet with them, and she arranged for teachers to visit existing programs that were the "cornerstone for the state."

Ultimately, after receiving input and visiting schools, the team decided that based on their demographics, the two-way immersion program with Spanish as the partner language would be the best fit for their school. They decided to approach it initially as a "pilot" program which seemed to assuage the anxiety of some stakeholders including some school board members and some teachers of the upper grades. A few school board members had attended some of the initial state meetings, and were already intrigued and interested in the program. Interestingly, some of the most enthusiastic stakeholders were the local real estate agents who anticipated the program would be a draw to potential home-buyers.

At each grade level there were three to five sections or classes, two sections that were dual-language and the rest that were considered "traditional." The principal believed that phasing-in the program made it easier for staff to adjust to it:

So in the first year, it was, it really flew under the radar for the most part for the majority of staff. They were just like, "Oh yeah, they're doing that thing, over there." And our upper-grade teachers really thought that it would go away before

it got to fourth and fifth grade. And it wasn't until probably the beginning of the third-grade year . . . they began to realize that this thing isn't going away. And so, by that time, it had, you know, it was pretty well established in the building, and had very good reports and support, that kind of thing, and so I think that helped. Having bumped down to include kindergarten and moved up to include fourth grade in 2012-13, DLI expanded well beyond "pilot" status. On the wake of Joplin's Landing progress, more schools in the district were joining the immersion movement, and all of the neighborhood elementary schools planned to eventually offer DLI to their students.

Because student interest and demand exceeded capacity, each year in January the school held a lottery to select the incoming kindergartners. Students were generally not admitted after kindergarten, unless they demonstrated some proficiency in the target language. Without prior immersion in the target language, the state curriculum was too rigorous for students to access. During the enrollment window, parents were encouraged to attend an information night about the program. If applying, they were asked to sign a letter of commitment. Essentially unenforceable, the letter helped parents understand that the program was a long-term endeavor that shouldn't be taken lightly.

Siblings of current students were grandfathered into the program. Interested families applied for the remainder of the 50 spots. Students were grouped into two categories, heritage Spanish-speakers and others, and the principal took turns drawing from each box, trying to ensure a balance of boys and girls, until the cohort was filled.

The school was very intentional about emphasizing that, as the principal described, it was a "complete choice" program that welcomed all students including those in Special Education. The district coordinator explained, "Any student can succeed in

dual immersion.” A state coordinator added emphatically, “My background is in special education, so I was very committed to make this program accessible to children with disabilities. . . . And I have in big letters here [on notes for administrators], DLI is not GT [Gifted and Talented] education, and it is not only for the affluent child in our communities.”

I heard from several educators at Joplin’s Landing that they believed every child was capable. Those who struggled academically in general education also tended to struggle academically in DLI. However, that didn’t mean they should not be in the program because they also stood to benefit from the advantages of dual language immersion.

Staff Issues

As with all schools, hiring and retaining quality teachers was crucial for student and program success. As a state coordinator explained, “That is a huge piece right there, because finding the right staffing, it’s critical. And finding qualified educators who also have high levels of language, target language proficiency, is very complicated, particularly in some languages more than others.”

Joplin’s Landing two-teacher model required two DLI teachers at each grade level, one teaching in English and one teaching in Spanish. A nearby charter school provided a pool of teachers for recruitment for the Spanish side. The principal explained, “As a charter . . . they don’t have as many resources as we do, and so we’re finding that their teachers want out of [the charter school], and want into some of the other schools.” At another DLI elementary school in the district, high school language teachers had been reassigned to the elementary schools in the wake of budget cuts, but that hadn’t yet

happened at Joplin's Landing. Other sources of bilingual teachers included foreign countries, such as Spain and Mexico, with whom Utah had Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs).

The school had additional support of a district coordinator who helped with the transition for the visiting teachers. She described:

And so [visiting teachers] have all different educational backgrounds and their educational systems in their countries were sometimes different. So the first thing that I do is I help our teachers who were coming from other countries acclimate to the American educational system. For example, one of the greatest differences is we expect all students to be engaged in the learning. . . . So after we kind of get the acclimated and teach them a little bit about our system, we go right to classroom management.

In addition to the district training, the visiting teachers participated in the summer AUDII program along with the rest of the DLI educators.

As we have seen in other schools, turnover became an issue affecting school continuity when normal teacher attrition was combined with the fact that visiting teachers only stayed for 1-3 years. The principal said, "I . . . wish that my teachers from Spain could stay forever. They're wonderful." One teacher, concerned about the impact of staff turnover said, "I'm the only [teacher] that's been there all three years, basically." Helping with the continuity issue, the school hired two teachers from Mexico and Peru who married in the U.S. and had since become local citizens.

When phasing in one grade at a time, only one new teacher a year was needed for DLI. Still, knowing that a bilingual teacher needed to be hired each year caused stress

inside the staff community. The principal of Joplin’s Landing said, “But, yeah, teachers were very afraid that, if they don’t speak another language, that they’re going to lose their jobs.”

So far, in the first three years, there had been no involuntary transfers or teacher cuts, because enough positions had opened up through natural attrition. But with the economic crisis continuing, concerns remained. And, with looming budget cuts, some educators resented the presence of foreign teachers. One teacher shared:

With budget cuts, you know a \$5 million shortfall, the board and district were telling us that probably there were going to be some teachers that have to go. . . .

And I can tell you, honestly, that there were teachers that were saying, “Well, why do we have two teachers from Spain here, when we’re going to have to fire teachers from [the local district]?”

The issue of potential teacher cuts appeared to weigh heavily on staff and impacted cohesion and support for the program.

Resources

The two-teacher immersion model offered the advantage of not having to hire additional FTE in order to staff the program since the language teachers were also the classroom teachers. For the first couple of years of implementation at Joplin’s Landing, each immersion classroom received additional support of instructional assistants (IAs) paid through the district. In the third year of implementation, except for some support in DLI *and* traditional kindergarten classrooms, the IA support was lost due to budget cuts. So, aside from professional development and materials, which in this case were mostly

provided by the state, the immersion program did not drain resources from the lump sum budget.

Having said that, the perception remained that while other areas were being cut, scarce resources were going towards the DLI program. A teacher shared her angst about rumblings from stakeholders, “There was animosity from other teachers in the district. Like, “Why were we doing this?” you know. The parents who didn’t want their kids in the program were like, ‘They’re getting all these resources.’” These perceptions highlighted the need for high levels of transparency and communication with all stakeholders, even those, or perhaps especially those outside of the DLI strand.

In spite of that obstacle, the principal said the program had transformed the school:

The main strength . . . it’s changed the school. And I think that part of the change that’s the most clear to me is the teamwork that’s involved. And that’s the teamwork within the program, and the teamwork in each individual grade-level team . . . because they are required and they want to work as teams across the grade levels. They’re all on the same page. And I think that that has . . . widened our horizons at school. We see that we can be teammates with teachers from Spain. We can be teammates with, you know, an aid from Argentina. You know, it’s kind of opened our eyes and made us a little more international in some ways, and so I think that has helped us to understand that we are bigger than just inside those walls at that school.

Student Outcomes

After only two full years of implementation, there were not enough data available to see long-term academic achievement results. The third-grade cohort had not received the results of their first state tests that were used to determine Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). And the state cautioned districts not to rely too much on early assessment results. The coordinator explained:

So we have just a little bit of data because, in the dual-immersion programs, they recommend that you don't attempt to collect data until third grade or later because it does take some time to develop the language and to see the results of the program.

However, Joplin's Landing still used a variety of formative and summative assessment tools to measure student progress. Teachers and specialists described using constant student observations and formative assessment along with their more formal measures. One teacher explained, "We've been doing DRA in Spanish . . . apart from that, to me student achievement is more recognized as: Were they using their Spanish? Were they writing successfully?" The principal added:

The teachers also have a more of a piece that they sit down and do some observations and one-to-one, you know: Can the kids say these words? Can the kids put this together? Do the kids, you know as they're moving along, do they seem to understand this? So more anecdotal kinds of things that they're looking at as well.

First- through third-grade students took Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) benchmark assessments, including Curriculum Based

Measurements (CBM), at least once a year to determine reading fluency and accuracy in English. Parents of students who were not reading at grade level received a letter that told the students' reading intervention plan. A math version, MIBELs was a recent addition to the slate of assessments.

Early data revealed that students in the DLI program were performing similarly to or slightly better than their peers. According to a district coordinator:

We have some recent data from our DIBELS scores which show that our students in dual immersion were performing at the same level as the students who were not in dual immersion. And so when I say at the same level, it's apples to apples. For example, students with learning disabilities in the DLI program were performing at par with students with learning disabilities not in the program. They disaggregated the data by subgroups and the principal confirmed, "What we were finding is that the kids in the immersion classes were achieving at the same level or above the other kids in the rest of the school."

The ELL students in the program, however, were making faster growth than those not in TWI at another school in the district. The principal explained that they compared data from the ELL students in the DLI program at Joplin's Landing with those with similar demographics at another school that did not have a DLI program. "So we looked at other classrooms that had the make-up exactly the same . . . and what we found is that we out-paced them."

Still, there was frustration that the ELL students, most of whom also dealt with a low socio-economic status (SES), had not yet caught up with their peers. The principal continued:

But with that, all that good stuff as well, we still were finding that our Hispanic students . . . have a huge gap—between our English learners and our non-English, and that is very frustrating. And we have all kinds of support that we feel like we have in place, but we haven't erased that gap. And, you know, in two years we're not going to.

Students' progress in Spanish was also being measured through a variety of assessments. Students in first and second grade took something similar to the DRA in Spanish called Calle de Lectura (Reading Street) to measure their independent reading levels. The district coordinator was encouraged by the results that they had so far. She described the results of a preliminary test designed to establish levels:

We found, it's supposed to be for K through 2, and when we tested our second graders, they were reading all the way past, there's a list of 200 sight words, and 82% of our second graders were reading beyond the last word test.

Joplin's Landing DLI third graders piloted the ACTFL Assessment of Performance Toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) to measure students' Spanish language proficiency. Since it was a pilot, they didn't receive scores with student-identifiers, but preliminary results showed that most L2 Spanish speakers tested at the Novice High level, on the ACTFL proficiency scale which was the targeted proficiency level set by the state. And, some students scored higher.

Joplin's Landing created a win/win situation with their two-way immersion program. Primarily low-income ELL students received half of their content instruction in their home language which helped them outperform their ELL peers. English-speaking students were poised to reap the benefits of being bilingual and bi-literate. As we will

see in a later chapter, the immersion program began to bridge divides between the two dominant cultures in the school. The program was implemented as a result of the impressive infrastructure of support that Utah immersion programs got from the state along with the pioneering spirit of the principal and other local stakeholders.

Chapter 6

Lewis and Clark Elementary School

Lewis and Clark Elementary implemented its two-way immersion strand program in 2005 in a district that spanned about 90 square miles in a northwestern state and served approximately 5,000 students. The town, bordered by rivers, was once a meeting place for Native American tribes in the Northwest. In the early 1800s farmers “squatted” the area which became an agriculture-based community that shipped its produce to cities on steamboats. For close to two hundred years, the agricultural community was relatively homogenous. However, at the turn of the 21st Century, Latinos began to arrive, which diversified the local population.

Four of the district’s elementary schools, including Lewis and Clark, were located in the town and two were rural. Lewis and Clark enrolled approximately 550 students including Head Start preschoolers through 6th grade. Lewis and Clark’s modern, spacious schoolhouse offered high tech classrooms and common meeting areas perfect for small group work and interventions. About two-thirds of the students at the school were identified as Hispanic and one-third as White. Half of Lewis and Clark students were learning English as a new language and close to 68% were economically disadvantaged. It was not coincidental that the percentages of Hispanic students and economically-disadvantaged students were quite close since many of those students shared both subgroups.

Implementation

In stark contrast to Joplin’s Landing state-driven program, the impetus to begin DLI at Lewis and Clark started at the schoolhouse level in response to changing

demographics. Over the previous decade, a significant number of Latinos, primarily Mexican, began living and working in the area. School and district stakeholders were concerned about meeting the needs of the growing population of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students and began to look at how they could better support them.

The district responded by hiring an ELL coordinator to implement a district ELL program for the first time, and by revisiting how they were allocating ELL funds. The state of Oregon funded ELL students (referred to as “Limited English Proficient” on the Oregon State Department of Education website), at 1.5 FTE which was 50% more than other students. That additional funding went into the general fund to be used at the district’s discretion. For years it was used for non-ELL specific classroom support, such as lowering class size. Seeking more targeted support for English-language learners, the new ELL coordinator worked with the superintendent to adjust the budget. Rather than using the ELL-generated dollars used for school-wide initiatives, they dedicated 90% of the additional funding specifically toward support for ELL programs.

The coordinator also secured a significant Title VII Grant that was used to provide some wide-spread professional development about English Language Learning for district staff. Since 97% of the ELLs were Spanish-speaking, the district decided to include a Spanish literacy component along with English Language Development in their ELL plan. Many, if not all, district educators attended bilingual education conferences and participated in professional development around the latest and best classroom practices for students learning English. The Lewis and Clark staff wondered if they could

go even farther. The current principal, who was an ELL teacher at Lewis and Clark at the time, remembered:

All that training really led to lots of things. Well . . . what's the next step for [our ELL] program? And so being at the school that had the biggest population [of Spanish speakers], we just started working on what would happen if we did something else.

Around that same time, the school reached the threshold to become school-wide Title I. As they worked on their school improvement plan, they heard from some parents of English-speaking students. The parents noticed that the Spanish-speaking students were being pulled out, and they wanted their children to have the opportunity to learn another language as well. Feeling that the school community was ready to move forward with immersion at that point, the leadership decided that two-way immersion was the best fit for their school. They began to design a program and implementation plan. However, they met obstacles. As the current principal, at the time of this writing, explained, "And so we started to go, and then there were budget cuts and it failed."

After a couple of years, the former principal of Lewis and Clark left, and the incoming principal happened to have experience with DLI. The current principal continued:

So, we hired him and he started the process going and then we just did lots of work to hire staff and work on curriculum and did not get any extra funding or support from the district at all. And so we just did it with teachers and parents . . .

They established a timeline for implementation, put together a DLI committee and began the important work of educating stakeholders. One of the key implementation

strategies involved having all staff and some parents visit existing programs in [the state].

The current principal described the process:

Everybody who was on staff at that time went to visit a program somewhere in [the state], and we had questionnaires and people asked the same questions when they went out. We sent everybody, our IAs, our teachers, our secretaries, everyone. And so they got a good feeling about what it was going to take.

The school reached out to neighborhood families. A Spanish-reading specialist acknowledged the current principal, who was the ELL teacher at the time, for connecting with many of the ELL families, “We can credit her for going door to door and talking to parents and educating parents and it’s, you know, pretty inspirational.” The principal remembered:

And the Spanish-speaking parents were easy to convince because we had done all the work with, “Yes, we have to learn English, but it’s really good to keep your home language. And if you don’t do this, your kids won’t keep Spanish, even if you still speak Spanish at home.”

The DLI committee shared information with the staff and educated parents at evening meetings. They showed parents, staff and school board members the award-winning documentary “Speaking in Tongues” (Jarnel & Schneider, 2010) about four diverse students participating in California immersion programs. They talked about studies that showed the benefits of TWI. The principal continued, “And so lots of parents were easily convinced . . . after we just keep showing them research.”

Many staff members and parents embraced the concept whole-heartedly, but others resisted. A teacher who was at the school throughout the implementation

remarked, “Well, there were people who have been very opposed to it, and say, ‘This, oh, it’s for the *Spanish* kids [emphasis added].” She said some staff members worried about how the program would impact staffing:

I’ve seen the struggles that the school has gone through bringing in a second program, and the resistance to it. And kind of the threat that, I don’t know if threat is the right word, or maybe the fear of the unknown, you know, with having to hire bilingual teachers and that replaces people. And for a lot of people that was really difficult.

In spite of the detractors, through the passion, hard work and commitment of the teachers and school leadership, and with the support of the superintendent and some parents, in the fall of 2005, Lewis and Clark began its first year of language immersion.

Model

Lewis and Clark offered a two-way dual-language immersion strand in Spanish and English with the goals of additive bilingualism, bi-literacy and cross-cultural competence for all DLI students while meeting grade-level standards. After seven years of phasing in one grade level at a time, the current sixth graders at the time of this writing were the first cohort to have had DLI for their entire K-6 elementary experience.

Two sections of DLI were offered at each grade level, leaving one section remaining that was not DLI. Technically, the remaining section couldn’t be considered “English only” because the number of ELL students at the school exceeded the capacity of the DLI program, so many ELL students were in the “English” strand with English Language Development (ELD) support.

The program was considered two-way immersion because it delivered L2 instruction to both Spanish-speaking students as well as English-speaking students. According to the TWI 50/50 model they were trying to follow, each class would be composed of about half English-speaking students and half Spanish-speaking students.

Table 6. Lewis and Clark Model for Division of Time and Content

Grades	Spanish	English	Classrooms
K-1	All subjects (80%)	English Language Development ^a or English Language Arts focusing on social studies, specials ^c (20%)	Self-contained ^b
2	All subjects (70%)	Theme-based social studies and some literacy, specials (30%)	Self-contained
3	Literacy, math, social studies/science (60%)	Literacy, math, calendar, some science and social studies units, ELD, specials (40%)	Two teachers
4-5	Literacy, math (50%)	Literacy, science/social studies, ELD, specials (50%)	Two teachers
6	Literacy, science (40%)	Literacy, math, social studies, health, ELD (60%)	Two teachers
7-8	Social studies and one other class ^d	All other subjects	Multiple teachers
9-12	At least one class ^e	Multiple teachers	Multiple teachers

^aEnglish Language Development (ELD) is only for ELLS

^bTaught by bilingual teachers

^c30 min./week of music, library and computer beginning in first grade

^dThis was the model, but may not happen

^eThe DLI educators hope to continue the program through high school

As can be seen in Table 6, the percentage of time spent in each language varied by grade level, starting with the most Spanish in the earliest grades. According to a learning specialist, they would have liked to have implemented a 90/10 model. In a 90/10

model, students receive 90% of their instruction in the target language in the first year, gradually increasing the English instruction by about 10% per year until instruction is balanced between both languages. But, with only half-day kindergarten and a state mandate to include 30 minutes of ELD a day for ELLs, they settled for beginning with 80/20, that was 80% of content delivered in Spanish in kindergarten and first grade and 20% of ELD for Spanish speakers or English Literacy for the students whose home language was English. Instruction in English increased by about 10% each year after first grade, with 50% of content delivered in each language during fourth and fifth grades and approximately 60% of the day spent in English at 6th grade.

Lewis and Clark used a three-tiered lottery system to select students for the DLI program. Students living in the school catchment area were eligible for the first round lottery. The principal divided the students by home language and gender and drew names, aiming for an equal number of students in each category. Because more than half of Lewis and Clark students spoke Spanish as their home language, those slots tended to fill up first leaving sometimes more than a dozen Spanish-speaking kindergartners on the waiting list. The learning specialist explained, “All our native Spanish speakers were from our boundary, and we still have 14 or 15, I’m thinking, of kindergarten students that were native Spanish speakers and we can’t serve them in our DLI program.”

English-speaking students that lived in the district but outside of the school boundaries competed in the second round. Finally, out-of-district students participated in the third round of the lottery. They had traditionally been put on a waiting list until August. However, the school lost some families who signed up in June, and were not willing to wait until August to find out if they had been accepted. The principal shared,

“And so some parents were, even though they want to be in the program, weren’t willing to do that because they’re all excited about the kindergartner going to school, and then they get flustered about [waiting].” Striving for an equal balance of Spanish/English language models, the principal and superintendent were reconsidering the practice of waiting until August to notify out-of-district families, especially because they were families that really believed in the model and wanted to be there.

In order to sustain the program, it was important that students remained in the program over time. If too many left, it would throw off class counts and overwhelm capacity in the English language strand. Ensuring enough Spanish speakers in DLI was not a problem because they were the largest demographic and the only language group who could be added to a cohort after first grade. The biggest challenge was to ensure a sufficient number of English speakers who were committed for the long haul.

Prior to the lottery, the school held an information night for parents of incoming kindergartners. At that time, families who wanted to be in DLI were asked to sign a six-year commitment letter, although it was not enforceable. Overall, student attrition remained low; very few families chose to exit their students from DLI. Of course over time, some students moved away, but most students who began in DLI remained. The principal noticed a pattern with the English speaking parents:

The English-speaking parents either go for it or they don’t. It’s funny because the people who seem to be on the fence the most were the people who were sometimes not as, I don’t see them as committed later on. So, I see people that I supported and tried to talk into coming in because they were interested, and so I spent a lot of time with them because they wanted a lot of information, a lot of

time. They're the parents who don't seem as committed. It's interesting because I think I gave them more information than other people had, but people who came to it on their own seem to be more willing [to stay].

So far, Lewis and Clark had been able to maintain two full sections of DLI in each cohort, grades K-6.

Model Versus Reality

The Lewis and Clark staff did extensive research to implement the model they felt would best meet their students' needs. However, due to several circumstances, the reality did not always match the model. For example, the principal was not able to maintain the optimal balance of 50/50 English language models to Spanish speakers; in some cases the ratio was more like 30/70. That was primarily due to two reasons: the high demand for Spanish-speaking slots with more ELLs than the program could accommodate, and openings beyond first grade could not be filled with English-speaking students unless they were already somewhat proficient in Spanish.

Another challenge had to do with articulation. As the first cohort reached fifth grade, middle school implementation plans were well underway for grades 6-8. Those plans got disrupted, however, when budget cuts forced the closure of a middle school. Different leadership was assigned to the middle school to which Lewis and Clark fed; the new middle-school administration lacked the buy-in that the Lewis and Clark staff had been intentionally cultivating with the prior administration and teaching staff. The new administration did not follow through with site visits and other implementation activities.

Because of the budget cuts, instead of moving to the middle school, the first DLI cohort of sixth graders, remained at Lewis and Clark. That shift actually benefited the

program because the elementary school could provide more instruction in Spanish than the middle school would have been able to provide. Originally, the goal was for middle school students to take two classes in Spanish. With the changes at the middle school, the Lewis and Clark principal doubted that would happen:

I think they're committed to keeping one class that's in Spanish, a social studies class. I don't think that's enough, and research shows that there needs to be two, but I don't want to push that too hard because one is better than nothing.

In addition, teachers complained that there were no dedicated funds to order materials in Spanish, which increased the time teachers spent on preparing materials for many content areas. However, the school was able to use the money the district set aside for a reading adoption to purchase book sets instead. They created a book room with tubs of books in Spanish organized thematically.

Being the lone immersion program in the district and without dedicated resources, Lewis and Clark educators struggled to ensure the K-12 model they envisioned. As resources continued to dwindle, their fight to maintain ongoing program fidelity appeared to take a toll on staff energy and morale.

Staff Issues

As with the previous schools in the study, hiring and retaining quality staffing was crucial to the integrity of the Lewis and Clark program. Unlike the previous two schools who primarily sought heritage speakers, Lewis and Clark focused on hiring teachers who were trained to address the needs of English Language Learners. When hiring teachers, the principal looked for teachers with ELL endorsements and experiences similar to the students at Lewis and Clark. All of the current DLI teachers were ELL-endorsed, so they

had training on second language acquisition. Teacher oral-proficiency was assessed through a district test that focused on grammar, and through interview questions that were asked in Spanish. The principal said, “I would say that it’s one of the strengths of our staff. You never go in when it’s Spanish time and hear the teacher speak English.”

The primary classes were self-contained, taught by bilingual teachers who taught in both languages. In the self-contained classrooms, the teachers used a variety of signals to indicate the target language. As one teacher described it:

Teachers do different things. I know one teacher who wears a scarf when she’s in Spanish. And so as long as she has the scarf on, everybody speaks Spanish. They try to be real clear with the time, you know, a very intentional transition for transitioning to English.

The school administrators used a variety of strategies to find staff including building on the strengths of the current staff. She explained:

So we have two teachers who teach in our program right now who came through, were IAs, and we mentored. I did a lot of mentoring, and helped them become teachers. And I think, so, that strategy of growing your own, but also attracting people. . . . It’s still hard to find really good, qualified bilingual people, but once we had a program established, it’s been easier. And they come in and they go, “Oh, wow!” you know?

At least one of the teachers was a former ELL student in the district. She reflected, “I graduated from [the local] high school, and I was an instructional assistant here. So I’ve been a student, instructional assistant, and now I am so fortunate to be a teacher.” The

IAs became teachers through a program at [a nearby university] called the Bilingual Teacher Pathway.

As the principal mentioned, once it was established, the TWI program attracted interested bilingual teachers, including employees at other schools in the district. The principal said, “They knew this was coming and they knew they wanted to do that, and so then they came.”

A principal who worked at Lewis and Clark during early implementation built capacity by hiring teachers a year out. As positions became open through retirement or attrition, he filled openings for the English strand with bilingual teachers who would later move into the DLI strand.

Another notable difference between Lewis and Clark and the other schools in the study was the lack of a program coordinator at the school, district or state level. As one teacher put it, there was “no DLI person in charge of the program.” All of the work, and there was lots of it, to plan and develop curriculum, articulate across grade levels, support and educate families, assess in both languages, build stakeholder support . . . all of it was done by people who already had full-time jobs with no additional compensation. The principal became discouraged trying to accomplish lofty goals without additional support from the district or state. The principal shared her frustration with the lack of sufficient resources:

It’s hard to sustain momentum, you know. And it’s hard, too, when we’re going through budget cuts, and sometimes I just go, and then I look at our test scores, and I just go oh, maybe this is just too hard. You know? And then, to just keep

going. Yep. But our kids were still better off in this program, even if we have all these challenges.

A scarcity of resources also made it difficult to maintain ongoing immersion-specific professional development. The Lewis and Clark DLI program had been plagued by series of budget cuts since the very beginning when the first launch was derailed. Another harsh round of cuts hit when the first cohort became third graders. Those reductions eliminated training days and time to design curriculum maps for grades 4-6. A teacher described the importance of a strong teaching force especially during the fiscal crisis:

And so . . . I just feel very lucky that we've been able to maintain our program and get really qualified teachers in the program at the point that we're at, because haven't had money to be able to continue the professional development we were doing beforehand.

Over and over again, the teachers pointed to the leadership and advocacy of the principal who was the school's ELL teacher when they first began implementation work. They described her as a strong leader who had a vision, was always providing information and was willing to make the tough decisions.

The principal acknowledged the teaching staff as a program strength. While having to relocate teachers as the program was being phased in initially caused friction among the staff, the principal noticed advantages, too:

But now, kind of on the other end, you can see how it's also strengthened [the teaching staff], because, in the time of budget cuts . . . we've been the only

building who's gotten to hire new staff, who brings new ideas and other perspectives and stuff, and other people haven't really been able to do that.

One of the teachers suggested:

I think in the long run it's turned out to be a better placement for those [relocated] teachers, in my opinion . . . we want teachers here that believe in the program and even though they don't speak Spanish, they want to support the program.

The teachers I interviewed agreed that the high quality teaching staff was essential. They reported that teachers collaborated well and went above and beyond. It was clear that they believed in DLI and celebrated the benefits they saw for their students.

Student Outcomes

As could be expected in a school where two-thirds of the students were still learning English, student scores on state assessments given in English fell below their English-speaking counterparts'. According to studies on second language acquisition, students generally need five to seven years to develop proficiency with academic language. The learning specialist said, "We know that research said these students, they're not going to demonstrate language proficiency maybe even until the middle school years." The Lewis and Clark educators clung to the belief that the elementary TWI program would help close the "achievement gap" by middle school.

Performance on the state test appeared to be relatively flat, but with the federal government raising the uniform bar (minimum score to meet standard) in math and reading, it was difficult to know if the DLI students were performing better than their peers had prior to DLI. It was clear that students from the first cohort who spoke Spanish

at home had moved from about 10% meeting or exceeding standard as measured on the Developmental Reading Assessment (assessing reading in English) as kindergartners to about 80% as fourth graders. The number of Spanish-speaking students jumped from 10% at or above grade level on the DRA in kindergarten to 50% at fourth grade. TWI ELL students exited the ELL program earlier than non-immersion students.

Spanish-speaking students achieved striking results on Spanish reading assessments, with over 90% of them meeting or exceeding the benchmark on the EDL, a reading assessment in Spanish, by fourth grade. When looking at ELL students, the principal noted:

When I've compiled the data and look at it and compare it to other schools, our kids were doing at or above what other kids were doing. And so, even though I expected it to take care of all the academic achievement and poverty issues, it really hasn't. It's supported kids. I think kids were much stronger students, but it hasn't yet allowed us to close that gap all the way.

A teacher who attended the district herself as an ELL student compared what it was like before and after implementation:

It has made an amazing impact on our ELL students. They were, all I can say is that I think finally we have a program that provides an opportunity, an equal opportunity for them to be successful, and for them to shine and for them to gain that confidence as a learner.

The principal reported improvement in student behavior since implementation and increased Latino engagement in school.

The educators also celebrated the positive results for students with English as their home language. Academically, almost 90% of them were meeting or exceeding the reading standard on the state tests. One teacher commented:

I also have seen just how incredible it is for native English-speakers to get an opportunity to learn a different language, and the community that we're building with the program with both English and Spanish speakers, I mean it's just amazing. . . . I just think it has brought a lot of good things to the school and I mean just great opportunities for everybody.

Students experienced the empowerment of communicating in another language for a genuine purpose. One teacher observed, "And also just I think it moves beyond within that community to see parents of my native English-speakers trying to talk to parent of a Spanish speaker and having their kids trying to translate."

As a visitor to the school, I was impressed. The clean and beautiful facility filled with diverse children seemed to generate a sense of school pride. Teachers maintained the integrity of immersion by staying in the target language. The high level of student engagement and sense of community seemed to contribute to positive student behavior. Students had access to technology like i-pods and i-pads that extended learning beyond the classroom walls and promoted oral proficiency.

One teacher summed up what it's like to be an educator there:

It's exciting, and it's rewarding, and it's exhausting . . . You know, there were days when it's just like, oh, I don't want to do this. I'm so tired. And then there's days when you just have those, I mean, it's just like . . . the kids! You have those

breakthroughs and you see a kid do something for the first time, or a kid who's so proud of themselves, and then it's like, okay, yeah, that's why I'm here.

Lewis and Clark Elementary school demonstrated that it was possible for a school, determined to help close the achievement gap for their high Latino population, to design and implement an immersion program at the school-level with little to no additional resources. While two-way immersion did not solve all of the educators concerns about the effects of poverty and bigotry on students, it did ameliorate the situation for ELLs in the immersion program and showed evidence of increased community cohesiveness.

Chapter 7

Pacific International School

Pacific became a neighborhood International School in 2008. At the same time, they implemented their dual-immersion language programs, which included one-way immersion in Mandarin and two-way immersion in Spanish. An urban neighborhood school, Pacific was one of more than 50 elementary schools in a large metropolitan school district in the northwest region of the country. Located in a richly diverse neighborhood, Pacific served a variety of cultures and ethnic groups. At the time of my visit, more than 42% of students were identified as Asian, almost 30% Hispanic and about 12% Black, which was the same percentage as White. Spanish speakers composed the majority of the more than 42% English Language Learners, with other students speaking a variety of languages including Cantonese, Vietnamese and Somali. Approximately two-thirds of the students at Pacific qualified as low-income.

The modest schoolhouse with an open-concept design was reminiscent of the 1970s. The building offered very limited natural light, and did not appear to have experienced any major remodels since initial construction. Students wore uniforms, based on parents' request according to the website, and appeared to be "crammed like sardines," as one teacher put it, into pods composed of several teaching areas without interior walls to buffer sound or block views. Bookshelves and cubbies partially denoted where one class's space ended and the next began. Even before becoming an International School, Pacific was known for embracing the rich diversity the neighborhood families provided.

Implementation

The concept of an International School Model was the dream of a previous district superintendent who passed away before he could bring the program to fruition in the school district. Pacific's principal described the late superintendent's dream:

He was an army general. He traveled around the world and coming to [this district], he had this vision of really capitalizing on our English-language learners, the fact so much of the people in [this area] were bilingual, bicultural, and he had this vision of an International School where kids, [local-] born kids as well as kids from other countries come together and work on academics, learn language together, and build their kind of global citizenship skills.

Based on the former superintendent's inspiration, the school district moved forward on implementing an International School. The district hired a director who was given a year to plan the initial school. She found a public relations person who was willing to work pro bono, and together they engaged the international business community and local community as stakeholders. They worked with the wife of the late superintendent to develop the program. They found a location at an existing elementary school in one of the more affluent neighborhoods in the city that was already offering a Spanish FLES program. Initially intended to be a K-12 program, school house capacity limited it to K-5, with plans to expand eventually through high school. They surveyed the community to determine which languages to teach and how to structure the program. Based on the input of the business and residential communities, they decided to offer immersion in Spanish and Japanese.

Finding families who wanted to enroll their children was not a problem. At that time, the district allowed families to choose the schools that their students attended, so it wasn't crucial to get complete buy-in from neighborhood families since they were not forced to attend that school. The school attracted many Latino and other bicultural families and families of employees at a nearby university who appreciated the importance of bilingualism and multiculturalism.

Later, the district adopted more of a neighborhood-school model. The International School was so popular that it had the longest waiting list of the 50 elementary schools in the district. Families moved into the catchment area so that their students could attend. The principal at Pacific International believed that caused property values to increase leading to a lack of access for less affluent families. With school board support, the district decided to open more International Schools in other regions of the district to expand access for its students.

Pacific was part of the next wave of potential International Schools in the district. The school was able to build off much of the implementation work that happened with the first International School since the model was already developed and successful. Still, the Pacific staff members, who would eventually vote on whether or not to implement, needed to be convinced that becoming an International School was right for Pacific. The principal shared:

Here at Pacific, there [were] such high needs, you know, we have 88% of our kids were kids of color, 65% free and reduced, and so the thought of changing into something kind of more innovative but nobody's seen it, you know, first hand necessarily, is a little nerve wracking.

In order to investigate the model and engage local stakeholders, the district invested \$20,000 in schools that were considering becoming “international.” As with most potential immersion schools, another primary concern revolved around the potential displacement of teachers. In spite of the concerns about the potential movement of staff, with a few abstentions in the vote, the majority of staff elected to become an International School with implementation slated for the 2008 kindergarten cohort.

Once a school chose to become an International School it received an additional \$100,000 of district support, according to the principal, “To pay for school visits around the country, to build professional development, things like that. . . . So teachers got to travel and visit other international immersion schools.” They used the resources to develop their specific model for Pacific and to offer two weeks of professional development, referred to as “Immersion Boot Camp” prior to implementation.

Model

There were three specific components that were common to all district International Schools intended to cultivate contributing students who succeed in a 21st century world: academic excellence, global perspectives and world languages. When describing the International School model, one teacher said, “[One] pillar is our language immersion program, which probably gets the most attention when people walk through the building, but really it’s just one piece of the overall program.” Under those umbrella concepts, schools were allowed to tailor their programs to meet the needs of their community.

Pacific had an entirely different demographic than the first International School in the district that served fewer than 20% low SES students and enrolled a less diverse

population, including a slight majority of White students. When designing their program, Pacific looked closely at the specific needs of their community. One teacher remembered:

Because when we started this, I mean we didn't really have a good sense of what it was going to look like. You know, we visited other schools and other programs, but what was it going to look like in a school with our demographic? That was really a question.

They decided to create what some referred to as a three-strand system including two-way immersion in Spanish, one-way immersion in Mandarin, and "English immersion." The English-speaking students tended to enroll in either the Mandarin or Spanish programs, which meant the English strand was composed almost entirely of English Language Learners from a variety of language backgrounds, hence the title "English immersion."

The two world-language immersion strands had been implemented through third grade at the time of this writing. Both strands offered 50% of instruction in each language. The division of content by language was different for each strand. As they continued to phase in fourth and fifth grades, determining what content was delivered in each language was considered a work in progress.

Two-way dual immersion in Spanish was selected because school staff believed, based on studies of similar programs, it would help their heritage Spanish-speaking students enjoy more academic and social success. In the Spanish two-way dual immersion strand, half to two-thirds of the students spoke Spanish as their home language. With language models in both languages, the program was considered two-way. The rest of the students in that strand either spoke English or another language,

other than Spanish, as their primary language. Content was divided between the two languages differently, depending upon the grade levels, as can be seen in Table 7, with all

Table 7. Pacific International Model for Division of Content in Spanish TWI Strand

Grades	Spanish (50%)	English (50%)
K-1	Literacy and social studies	Science and math
2	Some literacy and social studies	Some English literacy, science and math
3-5	Math and science ^a	Literacy and social studies integrated with international studies

^aContent division may be revised as new grades were phased in.

formal literacy instruction taught only in Spanish, and math and science taught in English through first grade. At second grade, some literacy instruction shifted to the English side. By third grade, math and science were taught in Spanish with literacy and integrated social studies/international studies taught in English.

The Mandarin Chinese strand also offered dual-language immersion, that is, 50% of content delivered in Mandarin and 50% in English. That strand had very few if any heritage Mandarin-speakers, hence it was a one-way program. The teacher, and in kindergarten and first grade, the instructional assistants, were the only language models in the class. In the K-5 plan, math and science were taught in Mandarin, and literacy and social studies were taught in English. Mandarin teachers intentionally embedded language goals as well as content goals in their lessons. Partly because of the complexity of the Chinese characters, they waited to introduce more formal Chinese literacy instruction until, they predicted, fourth grade. Although, according to a Chinese teacher, since it hadn't been implemented yet, content beyond third grade was "still under discussion."

With three programs in one school and annual adjustments required to phase in each cohort, the Pacific model was incredibly complex. A Mandarin teacher shared:

As the immersion program started, we never thought there was so many problems and so many questions and so many anxiety that needs to be solved. So in our school community, we work together. I will say it brings the whole community closer together to solve problems and to think, to brainstorming.

She said that school staff asked themselves:

How can we make the program even better? And how can everybody being benefit, not just the immersion students. We want everybody to be benefit through the program, not just a particular group of kids.

All three strands at Pacific International School participated in a globally focused social studies program. More than in any other school in this study, the culturally focused social studies curriculum was an integral part of the program. The head teacher described how they developed their social studies priorities:

It's really the social studies curriculum and how that looks different because it has a global focus. . . . we looked at the top concerns of the United Nations . . . and we try to weave those into various grade levels so that the children will get exposure to those and . . . understand big issues with how they can take action.

The Pacific educators were motivated to prepare students to be globally competent, and felt those skills gave their students an advantage as global citizens. The head teacher continued:

Children need to be global citizens. You know, it's just so incredibly obvious to me that we were thankful in this country producing young people who have this

just amazing perspective on the world, and a hunger for solving the problems of the world, and being in other environments, and being challenged by other cultures, and understanding cultural relativity, and the clash of cultural values, and all of that. And they really genuinely were excited about that . . . I mean I'm almost thinking that we're entering a stage of a new, sort of new stage of evolution with some of our kids

The principal talked about a study of the book *Educating for Global Competence: Preparing Our Youth to Engage the World* (Mancilla & Jackson, 2011) and how it was impacting their work, in particular, as it related to their integrated thematic content:

This year we had all International Schools come together to look at global competence . . . we talked about the limitations of looking at continents at each grade level, and out of a book study, we created this idea of, instead of looking at continents, that we would think about tackling global issues at each grade level, because global issues, the only way to solve them and understand them is looking at them cross discipline.

He talked about how they applied what they learned in the book study to their social studies curriculum:

So we're looking at taking grade levels and assigning kind of the major global issues of our time, like climate change, poverty, democracy building, human rights. And so, with that kind of umbrella focus for each grade level, then teachers can, they can still teach the social studies curriculum, they can still teach science, they can still teach literacy, all of those things, but they can integrate them under a kind of global issue that the kids were going to face when they get out of school.

The head teacher added that they wanted to empower their students to take action:

The social studies curriculum has become more issues-focused because again more of the competencies of being good global citizens . . . not only do you have the knowledge and the ability to communicate, but you also have the ability to take action. And so particularly with our third, fourth, and fifth graders, we've been looking really hard at different action projects that extend what they're learning into the real world.

Pacific International appeared to share the common articulation problems that plagued most other districts in this study. While the International School model was intended to be K-12, the reality was that it was sometimes difficult to bring the middle and high schools on board. The principal said:

I think that's a major flaw in the [district] system is that we don't have clear articulation K-12. I mean we're trying, but it's not something that's come down from the top in a real clear and organized fashion. But having said that . . . the head of International Schools, she's working with me . . . to kind of articulate what that transition's going to look like . . . I think people also underestimate how much buy-in is needed at the middle school, and you know middle school is a very different beast because it's in all the classes, different levels, they've got a lot of challenges.

In terms of middle school offerings, the head teacher said:

What they promised us is at least one period in their target language. We would like to see at least two, so, you know, we're making noises. And I think honestly

they would [like to see two] too . . . so they have two years to get ready. So they're gearing up right now.

Staff Issues

Offering three language strands at each grade level necessitated some creative staffing strategies. Pacific staffed each grade level with two teachers of English, and a .5 teacher in Mandarin and another .5 teacher in Spanish. One English teacher taught in the "English Immersion" strand and the other split the day between the other two world languages immersion classes. The Mandarin and Spanish teachers each taught two grade levels, K/1, 2/3 and eventually 4/5. The students looped up with their world languages teachers in each of the paired groupings.

As a new grade was phased in each year, the school faced new challenges. One teacher explained:

I think some of the problems just come from like the minor details of implementation, like new structure each year in a new grade level. Even next year when it rolls up to the next grade, like for instance when it hits second grade and when it hits fourth grade, the language teachers can't be full-time yet because they don't have that other [grade] to teach half day, and so it's just like there is a myriad of hiring issues of like just like structuring the day, sharing a classroom, or you know . . . I feel like once the model rolls up to fifth grade and we can see it all in action school-wide, it will be a really good thing.

Case in point: in the first year of implementation when they only had Spanish and Mandarin immersion in kindergarten, but not first grade, they only needed a .5 teacher for each language. Fortunately, the school was able to hire full-time teachers who used the

second half of their day to plan and develop curriculum until they added first grade the following year. With budget cuts and no district support for additional staffing, those expenses came out of the school's baseline funds and, participants feared, might not be sustainable throughout full implementation.

To find staff, like at Lewis and Clark Elementary, another TWI school, the principal tried to "home grow" as many teachers as possible, but he said that finding Mandarin teachers was especially difficult. He started early and looked "everywhere," including national teacher list serves. At least one teacher taught high school Spanish before coming to Pacific, but not all high school teachers had the elementary certification required to be considered highly qualified as defined in NCLB. The next year, the school was to get some extra support by hosting two Chinese "teachers in training" through the Chinese government program, Hanban. They were also hiring a visiting teacher from Spain who was certificated. The principal advised:

You just have to hire the very best people to start the program. It's all about how good the teacher is, especially those kindergarten/first grade teachers. They can make or break your program. If they're great, parents will be fine. If they're not, then you really have an attrition problem.

To proactively avoid sustainability problems due to attrition at the higher grades, the principal loaded the Spanish and Mandarin kindergarten classes heavily with 28-29 students. He said:

You have to start your kindergartens pretty high to manage attrition because as kids leave it's not like you can just add kids throughout the year or, you know,

because you have to have a certain level of proficiency in the language once you get to second grade in order to be successful.

The kindergarten and first-grade Mandarin and Spanish teachers had support from bilingual instructional aids because of the large class sizes, and the potential for language immersion, and school in general, to be somewhat overwhelming for the youngest ones. Imagine trying to line up 29 kindergartners who had no prior experience in a structured learning environment if they didn't understand a word you were saying. In addition to helping manage students, instructional assistants also provided another language model, which was especially important in the Mandarin strand.

The bulging class size issue could shift to the English immersion strand in the intermediate grades, since that was the strand in which all of the new students who enrolled after first grade were placed. Because of issues like class size and seniority that could impact collective bargaining agreements, teachers had to agree to different working conditions in an International School.

All of the Pacific International participants valued the collaboration that took place at the school. Each target language teacher in the immersion program was essentially a member of several teams, so collaboration needed to happen at many levels.

The head teacher explained:

As an immersion teacher you have to integrate vertically. You have to integrate horizontally, you have to integrate with your grade band, because it's a two-band grade band, so there's just not enough team meeting time in the year to get all the teams that need to gather together.

The teachers at Pacific seemed to take advantage of every opportunity to collaborate. From less formal conversations over lunch with grade-level colleagues, to official weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings for which district teachers earn an extra hour of pay, teaming was an integral part of the school culture. Some of the teacher collaboration happened naturally throughout the school day due to the open-concept layout of the schoolhouse. Everyone could hear what was going on in other classrooms and could build on what their colleagues were doing. One teacher said, “Because we’re open concept, we tend to have, I feel like, a higher level of collaboration than anywhere else I’ve ever worked.”

Systems were in place for more formal collaboration as well. Along with the weekly PLC meetings, the principal described how he runs staff meetings to facilitate horizontal, vertical and school-wide communication:

So I meet with the staff all together one Wednesday a month. And then grade-level teams meet the next Wednesday. Then the whole staff comes back together the following Wednesday. And then the last Wednesday, it’s job-alike, so immersion teachers get together, English teachers get together.

Even the librarian and art teachers collaborated with colleagues to teach integrated thematic projects. The librarian explained:

We’re an open concept school . . . collaborating, it has become just kind of seamless because I just feel like it is the biggest bang for your buck teaching, where I’m reinforcing what they’re doing in the classrooms. And so it just seems to make a lot of sense.

The principal agreed. As he talked passionately about the integrated thematic units that were the umbrella concepts for each grade level based on global issues, he emphasized:

It's a ton of collaboration. I mean I think collaboration in any school is so critical, but in a school like this, it's mandatory, you know. Otherwise the program is watered down or people weren't part of the mission and vision.

In years past, teams had one day a month of release time to work together, but that wasn't happening any more. However, the head teacher said that when new units needed to be created, they tried to provide release time for teachers. The costs for substitute teachers came out of the building budget. The district calendar provided for several 3-hour early dismissals per year, also primarily focused on collaboration. In the words of one passionate teacher, the "immersion program could not survive if teachers were not working together."

Family Involvement

The inclusive school culture cultivated by the International School model appeared to create a sense of ownership and enhanced family involvement. The welcoming environment seemed especially important for families who did not speak English and typically would have been less inclined to spend time at the school because of the challenge to communicate. The principal said, "I think, you know, by focusing so much on language, I think that it shows that we value multilingualism, which, it creates a much more safe and inviting environment for families who don't speak English as a first language." The head teacher added:

All of our families were just so excited about the fact that their culture and where they come from is not only valued, but it's really part of the teaching. It's a

strong part of the teaching that you can see weave all the way through all the grade levels . . . from kind of projects at various levels of complexity. So what our parents bring to the table, the stories, their experience of their home countries, actually becomes a really important part of a child's education in a global International School, as opposed to just something to leave behind because that was the old country.

The family-friendly school employed a variety of strategies to engage parents. Since families spoke more than a dozen different languages, the school employed bilingual instructional assistants who spoke many of the languages of their students including Somali and Vietnamese. The IAs helped translate written communication and interpreted conversations with parents.

Newsletters were often designed to be accessible to families who could not read in English. The head teacher described strategies some teachers used:

For example, second/third has a monthly newsletter that is not language dependent . . . they do pictorials, they have, you know, they have it . . . a bit of it translated into Spanish and Mandarin, and with English, but the kids do a math problem to show an example of the kind of math they've been doing. There is a calendar that is really just minimalist in its word usage, so finding other creative ways to communicate with families that were not so language-dependent.

There was a morning program run by an instructional assistant for Spanish-speaking families focused on Spanish literacy that another teacher described:

And now that we've sort of embraced the philosophy of getting stronger in your native language first, that morning program is just an extra hour of time where the

students were working [with their parents] on their reading skills in Spanish. And so I just feel like it has, for that group of people, it's facilitated the parental involvement in their children's lives at school.

Many staff members noticed the impact of that program for Spanish-speaking families.

As a different teacher shared:

It involves families in a really special and significant way in our school. And so those families end up being really involved in the PTA, where I feel like maybe at other schools those families might not have their voices heard as much.

The school had a family involvement coordinator who worked about 20 hours a week and was familiar with many community resources to support families. The head teacher described the coordinator's role:

She's sort of the first point of entry for our parents. So for instance in the fall . . . it's kind of like speed dating, but it's sort of a [parents'] night where we say, "These were all the things you can do in the school, these were all the ways that you can be involved in your child's education." So it's like a little involvement fair.

Parents had open access to and frequented the school library before, during and after school. The librarian explained:

Like in the library, a lot of families come in every day to check out books. We wrote a grant a few years ago and received \$20,000 for family check-out which is another piece to the puzzle of making sure families feel welcome here, regardless of what language they speak.

Part of the grant helped to purchase books in the languages that Pacific's families speak. She explained further:

The parents had library cards . . . I organize the books by Dewey, so and even the books in other languages, and I just put an S or a C or a V on the spine, or a T for Tagalog and that way the parents know where in Dewey this book would be.

In addition to the involvement opportunities I described, the school also hosted typical evening events such as math nights as well as immersion meetings with parents.

The principal described the immersion meetings:

So this year I held a Spanish immersion family meeting, a Mandarin immersion parent meeting, and just brought them together so that they could ask questions about the immersion model. They could give us input . . . I asked them to . . .

“Just tell us how you're experiencing it as a family.” We talk to them about data, about what were kind of the key aspects of the program. We talk to them about some of our concerns. We talk to them about our program change ideas, and we show them student work. And we help them to build relationships with each other.

In the immersion meetings, the parents and school staff had opportunities for two-way conversations as part of a feedback loop for school improvement. In addition, parents gained access to resources. The principal said:

Parents came to that meeting, shared resources on how to get kids to practice the language outside of school, what organizations they can join, and then we followed that up by inviting the immersion families back again to watch the

documentary *Speaking in Tongues*, so they could get a, kind of revisit the philosophy of the program, the benefits of the program.

Along with a “devoted” PTA, there was a Latino interest group. According to the head teacher, “They have a board that’s pretty effective. They meet monthly and they have four or five then large meetings a year just for Latino families, focusing on, you know, their concerns and interests.”

The school benefited from a high level of parent volunteers. One teacher talked about how volunteers were an integral part of her instruction:

I use the parents as a key component in instruction. I hunt them down, the native Spanish-speaking parents . . . When I’m doing home visits, or when I’m doing initial contact at the beginning of the year, I’ll ask people, you know, “When you can come? You’re a native Spanish speaker.”

She expressed that she wanted her students to be exposed to Spanish speakers in addition to herself:

Part of it is that I feel it’s of the utmost importance that the students were exposed to lots of speakers of Spanish. I feel particularly sensitive to that, given the fact that I’m not a native, I speak really well but I’m not a native speaker . . . on so many levels that’s so important to me, just on the linguistic level for the students’ being exposed to different vocabulary, different accents.

She also described the benefit of having extra Spanish speakers to help out with small-group instruction:

In my kindergarten . . . I have found that something that has always been a challenge for me is writing instruction when you have really beginning writers

and when it's in the second language of a lot of them. So I decided to do that in a more small-group setting . . . I do these rotations where I have groups of seven, four groups of seven students, and so for rotations, I'm with seven at a time and we meet for between 15 and 20 minutes, and one of the groups or two of the groups depending on the day is always run by one or two Spanish-speaking mothers.

I witnessed this process during my site visit. The teacher ran a small group and the other students were also focused and engaged while working with a parent volunteer. The teacher continued:

It's just so important in our school, especially that we want parent involvement.

They're showing their own children and just all the students such a good example of how they value education and learning is important and so it's really an important part of how I even just run my classroom. I really depend on people to help. And I just have that, it's really important to me.

The principal described what welcoming volunteers looked like at Pacific International:

When you walk into the Spanish immersion classrooms, you see Latino parents volunteering every single day. Our Spanish-speaking mothers, they come in with their kids, their babies, and lead small groups working on letter sounds, vocabulary, and it's awesome. They become experts in the building.

That was especially empowering because many of those contributing parents did not benefit from a comprehensive formal education and were still developing literacy skills themselves. He continued:

A lot of them weren't literate in Spanish, but were working on it. But certainly not [literate] in English. And so their comfort level to volunteer is not great on the English side. And we do see that here, too. You know, they're much less likely to volunteer on the English side. They don't feel as comfortable. But they come in droves into the Spanish immersion classes.

Student Outcomes

One of the distinguishing characteristics of Pacific International School was the powerful sense of community focused on viewing multiculturalism as an asset and the emphasis on preparing students to be contributing global citizens. The principal said, "I think that the power of International Schools is having English-speaking kids mingle with bilingual kids. It's like, ah, like a true International School . . . kids from all over the world coming to school together."

The head teacher described how the International School honored the diversity of the students:

So the greatest strength of going through an International School program is that it really holds up the diversity of our children, who were here anyway, as a strength and as a learning, you know, as a foundation for learning. So at its best, that's what I hope it will do.

Another teacher said, "In your day-to-day life as a student here, that you were shown that we value all cultures, different cultures, embrace different cultures, embrace different languages . . . I think that's, to me that's the biggest thing." This sense of pride seemed to extend beyond the immersion classes. The head teacher added:

Even the kids in the English immersion were excited that we were an International School. You know, it's, "I go to Pacific International School, you know. And I'm part of the *international* community here [emphasis added]." And again, I think it took the perception of our school from one where we served very challenged low-income children to where the same group of children is participating in a really shiny, exciting educational experience.

The open concept school design seemed to contribute to that inclusive environment because it connected teachers and learners across language strands. As one teacher said, describing her teaching area:

It's one big room with hollow pods . . . So the effect of that in terms of culture is, and especially since we've initiated this immersion program, because I've talked to teachers who were here before, the fact that you're sitting in English class, even if you're in English all day, and on one side of you kids were speaking in Chinese, and on the other side of you we're doing something in Spanish. It's just, that love of language or the fact that we're embracing this other language, gets to all of the students.

She talked about strategies that created an inclusive learning environment, even though there were three distinct strands at the school:

Even little things like when we do school assemblies, the K-1 team, we always have our students perform something in all three languages. All the students. Even the kids that were in Spanish all day, they learn a Chinese song really quickly . . . So it's just such a promotion of respect for a different language. And I think that inherently promotes a respect for a different culture.

The combination of a diversity-enriched student body, and a globally-focused, action-oriented, integrated curriculum seemed to inspire the Pacific International staff members.

In addition to learning other languages, and becoming contributing global citizens, the third pillar of the International School model was high student achievement. Since Pacific's program was still relatively early in implementation, state-assessment data were not yet available. However, the principal pointed to good news for heritage-Spanish speakers, based on other assessments:

We're seeing really promising results. In literacy for our Spanish immersion kids, we use the MAP test as one of our assessment systems, and just in analyzing our students in the Spanish immersion program, we're seeing, in the current first grade where they're not getting any literacy instruction in English, just about 10% make kind of the typical growth according to MAP. But second grade, half of them were making typical growth, half not. And that's the transition year. But third graders, our Latino kids, 90% of them were making typical growth or better on the MAP test. And the two kids who weren't, there's only 2 out of 22, who weren't making kind of the typical growth in literacy, those two kids have severe dyslexia. So all the rest of our Latino kids were making really promising growth, having come out of the immersion program.

As we saw at Lewis and Clark, TWI seemed to produce measurable benefits for ELL students.

Early student achievement results at Pacific International School suggested students were benefiting from language immersion. Along with language acquisition and student achievement, valuing diversity and cultivating global citizens formed the three

pillars of International Education. Educators at Pacific talked about the sense of pride they see in their students when their home language was considered valuable. One of the teachers described a personal story that had stayed with her, that illustrated how significant it was having the opportunity to learn in one's home language:

In my first year here I had a student who had just moved from El Salvador, and so just like zero English. No English at all. And in my [Spanish] classroom, she came into kindergarten [already] reading. She had a, you know, that was just her background, her family. And I know that in English, she never spoke. She did not say anything in English class for the first six months of school, and in my class she was the superstar.

The teacher talked about the importance of viewing ELL students from a strengths-based perspective and giving them the opportunity to access and demonstrate their strengths through their home language:

And I just think that that child and children like her, even if they don't come in as high capacity as this particular individual did, the fact that she was able to be the superstar and read and tell me all of this stuff, I feel like that had a huge impact on how she felt about herself as a student, and her abilities and her attitude towards school. I just feel if this poor child had been in English all day, she just wouldn't have spoken, and it would have been years before everyone realized how capable she was already.

As with the first International School in the district, school stakeholders felt like the model attracted families to the neighborhood. The librarian said:

I mean we're bursting at the seams. I mean the community itself . . . people were moving to the area to get their kids in the school. And, I think it also just builds a sense of a place for families to come, whether they speak English or not.

Pacific International School demonstrated that highly diverse communities can cultivate a strong sense of community and inclusiveness. Perhaps surprisingly, the wide variety of cultural representation, as opposed to Joplin's Landing and Lewis and Clark Elementary Schools who had two major ethnic groups, seemed to reduce the cultural divide and increase parental involvement. The strong emphasis on global citizenship in the International School model, contributed to more intentional teaching of cultures and emphasized global citizenship.

Chapter 8

Cousteau's Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences

Cousteau's Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences offered a two-way immersion program in Spanish that launched as a one-way program in 1989. With over 20 years of language immersion, Cousteau's more than tripled the longevity of the other schools in the study and had been fully implemented through fifth grade since the mid-1990s.

Cousteau's was one of over 100 elementary schools in a densely populated district that educated more than 150,000 students and spanned almost 400 square miles of a South Atlantic state. By far the largest elementary school in this study with over 1,200 students, Cousteau's families came from more than 40 different countries and spoke at least 20 different languages. At the time of this study, more than half of Cousteau's diverse population was identified as Hispanic, about one quarter was White, more than 10% Asian and less than 5% Black. Approximately 59% were labeled "Limited English Proficient" in the demographic information on the school's website. About two-thirds of Cousteau's students lived in low-income households as determined by Free and Reduced Lunch counts.

Perhaps because Cousteau's was situated in an "English-only" state, the immersion program seemed understated in the school literature. It was not included in the school mission and vision statement on the school website. Among other aspirations, the school's mission statement talked about helping students to reach their maximum potential across academic areas and to become responsible members of communities. Unlike other multi-cultural schools, there was no specific mention of languages or

cultures in the school's mission. In fact, when looking at the website, it was not obvious that Cousteau's had an immersion program at all. I found mention of the "partial immersion" program somewhat buried in a paragraph describing ten programs available to "enhance learning."

On the district website, however, there was a stated goal of "access to sustained sequences of world language learning resulting in communicative competence for all of its students." The district facilitated a variety FLES, FLEX and immersion programs to accomplish that goal. It was my sense that the immersion program vision came more from the district world languages department leadership than the school leadership.

Implementation

As we found with the other schools in the study, educating stakeholders was crucial to developing buy-in for Cousteau's immersion program. In the late 1980s, the district's World Languages proponents began talking with district decision-makers about immersion program models in Canada and the benefits of second language acquisition for students. As one of the country's earliest immersion programs, they turned to research from Canada to support their model. The district coordinator explained:

So we needed the leadership team at that high level as well as the school board to understand that even though the content areas were taught in another language, that [students] still were going to understand the content and be able to succeed and continue on in middle school and high school with the content as well as the language. So it was a leap of faith in '89. It's much easier now because we have history behind us.

One of the potential obstacles to convincing stakeholders was their own perceptions about language education based on some of their experiences in foreign language classes. The school leaders were challenged with helping those stakeholders overcome their beliefs about what second-language education looked like, and helping them understand that immersion education was very different. She elaborated:

We came in with really letting them understand, the biggest thing, and it's still the biggest thing today, is to communicate how this isn't *foreign language lessons*, that foreign language is going to be the tool to communicate the content. That was the biggest hurdle. So, because many of the stakeholders, they'd flash back to their foreign language education, and they're thinking chapter by chapter, conjugation charts, and just rote memorization of dialogue, and they couldn't figure out how were [students] going to do science. So it was really a change in the entire mindset. This isn't a foreign language class. The tool is language, but really the goal is content.

To overcome prior perceptions about language education, language leaders modeled lessons showing how, for example, a lesson in Spanish about the water cycle was primarily about the water cycle and the language was "almost a side-benefit." They modeled how a lesson would look with increased visuals and the use of manipulatives to convey the content and build vocabulary in the target language.

With support at the district level, the same information was shared with principals who could volunteer to explore the concept with their school community. The coordinator applauded the district leaders who were willing to go out on a limb to

implement an innovative program. She said, “It really was principals that were risk takers and a school board that was very receptive to the idea.”

In the late 1980s Cousteau’s principal brought the concept back to the staff, and they surveyed local stakeholders to gauge interest. Once community interest was established, the faculty voted to implement beginning in 1989. The school was able to choose what language they wanted to offer. The district coordinator remembered:

When the majority voted that they wanted the program, [they] had input in the language. And at that time back in ‘89 there were pockets of native Spanish speakers, but not the population that’s there right now. But they could kind of see the future and see what language might be needed in their community, and so they selected the Spanish, which worked out beautifully because now we have a two-way immersion model that we kind of morphed into that by looking at the community.

Model

In 1989, the program began with a partial-immersion model that primarily served English-speaking students, like the one-way programs described in the Utah models. The district coordinator described the model:

So we had a majority of English speakers, you know, the parents applying for the program for the students to learn Spanish. And it was the same partial immersion format that we have today with it starting at first grade, and it was math, science, and health was the content area that was taught in Spanish . . . We actually look for, even today in those schools where we don’t have the minority language in the community, we look for at least 10% of the native speakers in the language so that

we can have models speaking the language and to have the students be able to even use the language in the third person and with their peers. It was a challenge in the beginning of even getting that 10% [Spanish speakers] in that school. But over time, the Spanish-speaking population grew, and the school shifted to a two-way immersion program, serving approximately half heritage Spanish-speaking students and 50% students who spoke English or another home language.

Composing classes with 50% heritage Spanish-speaking students was no longer a problem because so many of the neighborhood students spoke Spanish as their home language. However, because Cousteau's neighborhood students came from diverse language backgrounds, the second half of the class was not always composed of heritage English-language models. As we will see later, that impacted the way students were divided among teachers. It also meant classes did not necessarily have 30-50% English-language models, and some students were learning content in their third language.

In 1993, Cousteau's became a magnet school, and added "for the Arts and Sciences" to its name. A distinguishing feature of this magnet school compared to typical magnet schools was that most of the student body was actually from the local, diverse neighborhood. Neighborhood students were automatically accepted in Cousteau's, and students outside of the catchment enrolled through the lottery. According to the assistant principal, the primary motivator to becoming a magnet school was to attract more English-speaking language models. In order to be considered for the lottery, students had to be proficient in English and at or above standard in language arts and math.

My data revealed that although the school featured its magnet program "for the Arts and Sciences" most, if not all, families who entered the school through the lottery

chose to enroll their students in the immersion option. About 300 families entered the lottery each year for approximately 40-50 openings in the immersion program.

From the immersion perspective, Cousteau's could have been viewed as a hybrid neighborhood/magnet school because the immersion program was a strand program and fewer than 25% of the students came from outside the neighborhood boundaries via the lottery process. Because of the neighborhood school/magnet school combination, Cousteau's was not able to completely balance language models in order to increase access to TWI for ELL students, like "pure" magnet schools could.

Cousteau's immersion students had two teachers in grades 1-5, with one teaching math, science and health in Spanish and another teaching literacy and social studies in English. While Spanish literacy was not taught specifically, it was integrated throughout instruction in the other content areas. As the assistant principal explained:

So they're making anchor charts together, and the teacher is modeling where to put the accent mark, and how to rate, you know, which tense is what. And I mean it's just like in a regular science or math classroom; we do a lot of integrating writing and science, so they're integrating writing and science in the Spanish immersion classroom. We do a lot of integrating writing in math, so they're integrating and writing in math [in the immersion classrooms]. We try to integrate language arts in whatever we do, because of the good practice.

When asked about the immersion model they used, the assistant principal described it as "fluid." The school had employed at least three potentially mind-boggling models to divide up students on the English side. They referred to the three models as pairing, fanning and panning.

Pairing, also known as flip-flopping, looked similar to the two-teacher model that we saw at Joplin’s Landing. The Spanish teacher taught content to one group of students in the morning, then swapped students with the English teacher who taught same content to the second group of students in the afternoon. In this model, two teachers shared two groups of students, with each teacher serving a total of approximately 60 students in their content areas.

Over time educators in the district noticed that pairing students in a two-teacher model had some disadvantages because the same cohort of students was together over several years. Some district schools, including Cousteau’s, turned to another model called “fanning.” A district coordinator explained:

The fan-out method was established with the other, the upper grades because principals did not like the feeling of a school within a school, and that cohort of 60 kids always being together for the entire six years and not mingling with the kids in the other non-immersion classes.

The familiarity of spending six years together as a cohort sometimes lead to social problems with students. She continued:

Not only is that tough on the whole schools community, you start seeing a lot of behavior problems with them because they start treating each other like brothers and sisters, you know. And they’ve been with the same kids for six years, you know, and they’re sarcastic . . . so it’s really good to at least have half the day where they’re with different kids.

Another drawback with pairing, perhaps more specific to Cousteau’s, was that in a school with so few English-speaking models, students outside of the immersion

program also needed access to those language models. When most or all of those English-language models were in the Spanish immersion program, if they didn't disperse on the English side, it limited the opportunity for other students to interact with them in class. A Spanish teacher said:

Because in our grade level, we have about 10 classrooms . . . but only two classrooms have students, language model students . . . that speaks English fluently, and their parents, they speak English fluently and they also [their] socioeconomic status is a little bit higher than the rest of our students.

With so many ELL students in the English-only strand, those students needed exposure to English speaking models as well. As mentioned, the assistant principal said that increasing the number of English-speaking models throughout the school was part of the motivation for becoming a magnet school twenty years ago:

And so the Spanish immersion, the pairing model really worked against what we were trying to do by making the school a magnet. It kept all those kids together in a group and then minimized the number of English language models in the other ten kindergarten, or first-grade classrooms. So we decided, yes, it's great for that group of 40 kids to pair, but it's at a detriment of the other 200 kids in that grade level. So we decided to do something called fanning.

To understand fanning, picture a class of 30 first graders, half Spanish-speaking and half primarily English-speaking. Those students would spend half of their day together learning math, science and health in Spanish. Then, instead of moving together to the other half of their day taught in English, they were split into five or six groups. Each group was distributed into a different class taught in English mixed with students

who were not in the immersion program. Fanning accomplished the goals of integrating the English-speaking students with other students socially and academically, however, it posed a communication challenge to teachers whose students now went to five different teachers for their content in English. So, another alternative, a blend of the two concepts was being tried called “panning.”

Panning, as the term implies, was a hybrid of pairing and fanning. Instead of distributing the students across five or six classes on the English side, teams of three or four teachers worked with a group of students. The assistant principal described it in this way:

Panning is, it's a group of four teachers . . . that work together and share those kids. So in a group of four, there's one Spanish immersion teacher; there's one regular teacher, science, math; one language arts/social studies teacher; and another language arts/social studies teacher. And they switch among them. So that Spanish immersion group is kind of being fanned, but only to two classes. So it's a smaller, more condensed fan. We call it a pan. And it's the best of all worlds because it allows us to have the English language models in the other classroom, it minimizes the number of communication issues among, you know, five, you know the Spanish immersion teacher can't communicate with five different teachers. It's hard to do that. So it minimizes that number down to two or three, depending on the size of the pan. And it keeps us in line with our vision of the magnet and bringing the families in from all over [the district] to support our English language learners.

Kindergarten used a different model than the other grades. Out of eleven kindergarten sections, two were offered in TWI. In first grade, the number of sections in the immersion strand doubled to four. The rationale, as shared by the assistant principal, was also based on the school demographics:

And the reason why we do that it because the kindergartners coming in were just learning the language. And to take all of the models out of those classrooms and put them into Spanish immersion kindergarten, it just doesn't make sense for our group of kids. That would mean there's zero to one language models per classroom, and that again is anti-magnet. So we, the parents don't like that because they want their kids in immersion first thing, you know. But we have to kind of look at the greater good and make our decisions based on that.

Unlike in grades 1-5, kindergartners in the TWI program did not pair, fan or pan. The assistant principal described:

In kindergarten right now the model is that the children stay with the same teacher all day. That teacher teaches them Spanish in the morning for example, you know, science and math . . . and some Spanish literacy in the morning, and then in the afternoon, the teacher switches languages over to English and teaches language arts and social studies. We used to have the kindergarten students switch teachers, because that's the preferred method in terms of the literature. However, developmentally, especially for our students with the limited pre-school experience, we found that it was too many transitions for a five-year-old.

Cousteau's used the same 50/50 model of half of the instruction delivered in Spanish (math, science, health) and half of the instruction delivered in English (language

arts and social studies) beginning in kindergarten through fifth grade. In middle school, students took one immersion class in language arts, and in high school students could pursue advanced and International Baccalaureate (IB) classes in Spanish.

As with other schools in the study, one of the foundational aspects of the district immersion model was that the teachers would be teaching and the students would be learning the same district standards, whether they were in the immersion program or not. As the district coordinator described, “It’s not going to be watered down . . . It’s not a separate program.”

Since it wasn’t considered a separate program, language proficiency was not previously included on the report card. In fact, report cards did not even identify that immersion students received their instruction in math, science and health in Spanish. However, for the first time the district planned to include target-language oral proficiency, written proficiency and culture standards on their new standards-based report cards.

Teachers had multiple ways to document students’ progress on the district standards and with the target language. For example, the Developmental Reading Assessment was used to gauge student progress with reading fluency and comprehension. Beginning in grade 3, students took the state assessments as required by NCLB. The district also had its own battery of assessments. Until recently, students were able to take the district assessments in Spanish or English, but beginning in the year of this writing, they will be given only in English. The assistant principal said:

So we made some changes, one of them being we’re no longer going to translate the district assessments into Spanish and give it to them. They’re going to take it

in English. So there's two big district assessments a year . . . and so the kids take those in English. Also the formative assessments that we give as a grade level, we're taking those in English . . . and that was a hard pill to swallow.

She said teachers argued that the pure immersion model said students should be able to take those assessments in Spanish, and she agreed, but, "At the end of the day, our kids were held accountable to take this test in English. So we have to do what we need to do to make sure that we're giving them the best chance."

Students' progress in Spanish was also tracked using formative and summative assessments developed and articulated by the district. The district used scaffolded analytic rubrics to measure progress on oral and writing proficiency benchmarks in four domains: level of discourse and task completion; comprehensibility; vocabulary; and language control, in grades K-6. The coordinator described:

Say for speaking, in first grade, second grade, and third grade, it's more of an interview format where two kids come up. And of course if we were looking at receptive skills for first grade: Were they able to identify different pictures? Do they know the vocabulary for those pictures? So we break it down in domains. Can they repeat after you? And, as they come up, the teacher fills the analytic rubric according to the domains of whether they're almost meeting, meeting, or exceeding expectations.

The district coordinator described a formative strategy in which teachers could quickly gauge the fluency levels of their students based on district domains using post-it notes:

So I have an activity going on where the students were working in group work to problem solve, and they're having to use the language to ask and answer

questions on a science unit, let's say. And so I'm going to walk around the room, and I'm going to have three packs of colored post-its, and I'm going to have a pink and a green and a blue. And pink is exceeding expectations, and a green is meeting, and a blue is almost meeting expectations. So as I walk around listening to the students, I am listening to all my different criteria of fluency for that grade level. If they're meeting expectations, I put the green sticky on the table and I say sign your name on this, you know, or the blue or the pink. And they sign their name. You switch the colors up sometimes. It depends if you want them to know their progress, or if this is just for teacher input. And then, as you do an exit ticket on that assignment, they put their sticky on their ticket. And so then when you put it on your chart, you look. Do I have primarily pink tickets? Or all exceeding in fluency? Do I have primarily blue tickets? Well they're almost meeting expectation. I'm going to have to work a little harder in my activities to develop the fluency up to what the benchmark is. So that's like a real quick and easy, ongoing snapshot of just one domain on a given lesson.

Teachers used strategies like these to measure target language production in the context of content instruction. Although not previously included on the report card, student assessment data were entered into a database that stayed in the student's assessment history through 12th grade. The district had a detailed assessment continuum that spanned 10 levels, beginning at kindergarten. Data included formative assessments given each year as well as summative assessments for grades 3 and 6. The district coordinator acknowledged, "We're really into kind of the data driven decision making on all of our programs."

Students were also asked to reflect on their perceptions of what they can do in the target language. They used a “Linguafolio-type” assessment that was composed of “I can” statements. Students were asked to reflect on their own progress towards the learning targets. When I asked the coordinator if the students’ perceptions generally lined up with the data from the performance assessments, she said:

This goes for high school too with all our performance assessments, they were usually harder on themselves than the teacher. They, [think] “Oh I can’t do this,” you know, and, “I’m lousy at this,” or whatever. And they’re very happily surprised when the teacher said, “No, no, no. You’re supposed to kind of stumble a little on fluency. You know, you’re just doing exactly where you’re supposed to be.” And to me that kind of input is what keeps kids going in language, because they would just always, they expect to be fluent, you know, after one year of language. So by giving them the input and letting them know what is the expectation for a third grader learning language . . . And sometimes we forget to do that, and in their brains they’re like, “I can’t figure this out.” And then they give up. And we don’t want them to give up.

The coordinator shared that all of this assessment information helped educators monitor student progress and drive instruction. “It’s a good way to monitor to make sure . . . like last year the student was here and I’m really seeing the child dip down. You know? What’s going on here? What do I need to work on . . . ?”

Staff Issues

Since Cousteau’s immersion program had been in place for so long, none of the school staff mentioned teacher displacement as a concern that impacted the school

culture. However, as with the rest of the schools in the study, they employed several strategies to find immersion teachers. The district coordinator said:

One nice thing is we're outside [a diverse metropolitan area], so we are very international anyway in this whole area. So very often we have teachers that come to [the district] to teach in the elementary program, and they happen to be bilingual. And we try to snatch them up at our job fairs, you know. "I know you're interviewing for a fifth grade job, did you ever think about teaching fifth grade in [another language]?" And they're like, "No, but let me think through it."

She said that they have the bilingual teachers with an elementary endorsement take the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) and the Writing Proficiency Test (WPT) "and then we train them with the specific strategies."

Like other schools, she talked about contacting teacher-training programs:

Now this year, we seem to have a larger Spanish need than usual, so what we do is we contact the universities within this region and the teacher ed program, elementary ed programs, to look to see if there are any bilingual students that might be interested in teaching in an immersion program. Then we also reach out and let the universities know that this is a need of ours, and that's really helpful. Now [two local universities] have licensure program, and that's helped us in those areas.

Cousteau's found themselves with a shortage of Spanish teachers when the licensure rules were changed. When I asked the assistant principal where she found her teachers, she said, "If you know any, please send them this way. We were full, and then the state changed their requirement this year." Formerly, teachers with K-12 Spanish or

ESL were allowed to teach in the immersion program, but that changed, requiring all elementary immersion teachers to have elementary education licensure. She said:

Well several of ours either have K-12 Spanish, or ESL, or both . . . So we have like six openings, because we had to take our Spanish immersion teachers and say, “I’m sorry you can no longer teach Spanish immersion.” We were able to keep like one and take the hit for it and send out that highly qualified letter and say, you know, we’ll do that for one, but we can’t do that for all.

Cousteau’s educators spoke with pride about the quality of their teachers. The assistant principal shared:

We have the highest number of book authors in [the district] here, the highest number of nationally board certified teachers . . . They use [our school] to send people, you know, we have a Taiwanese delegation, we have people from [other states] coming here, superintendents to see Spanish immersion. People are always coming here . . . and our teachers are so creative and innovative, and we give them the space to do that.

One of the ongoing challenges in this large district was keeping principals on board. In the next section, you will learn about a threat to program integrity based on administrators’ misunderstanding ELL math data. That was not the only example of school principals in the district potentially undermining district language policy. Another math-related situation occurred when the school wanted to offer a compacted math class to extend instruction for high achievers. Since this class was composed of both immersion and non-immersion students, and the teacher spoke English, instruction was

delivered in English, which cut into the 50% allotment for target language instruction.

The district coordinator said:

Well the nice thing is that math standards all changed . . . so the kids stay in the class, and the ones that can work above grade level were given extensions within the class, and the teacher differentiates. It's exactly what we were having done in the immersion programs, and now the model for the whole school works with immersion, which I'm happy to say, you know, none of the immersion kids now have to have math in English. But that was the program change that principals were overriding the policy mainly due to staffing.

Student outcomes

A common concern across the TWI schools in the study was the performance gap between the ELLs and the heritage-English speakers. This held true for Cousteau's as well. When the school saw that their Spanish-speaking students overall were not performing as well as they'd hoped in math, they contemplated changing the immersion program model. The district coordinator shared:

So they're looking at the [state] test scores in math, and they're noticing the native Spanish speaking population is way below the English [-speaking students]. There's a huge gap, you know. And they're saying, "Oh my gosh, look at what's happened here. We're going to have to make sure that when they're in the immersion-half of the day, that we're teaching them the English vocabulary, because look at these test scores.

But the district coordinator suggested they disaggregate the data to determine if the same pattern was holding true for the ELL students in the immersion program and the other

ELL students. She said, “It was just a huge ah ha moment for them.” The assistant principal explained what happens when she disaggregated Cousteau’s performance data:

When I got here, just because I wasn’t familiar with immersion and I wanted to make sure that, because at the end of the day the immersion students have to take the [state] assessment in English . . . here we were a very English-only state. And so I wanted to be sure that we were giving our kids the best opportunity possible to be successful on that test . . . So we started disaggregating the data, we just did math, to see how our native-Spanish speakers performed who were immersion students compared to our native-Spanish speakers who were not immersion students. And our native Spanish immersion students outperformed the native Spanish speakers not in immersion by a nice margin.

The district coordinator remembered saying to the school administrators, “You were about to change an entire strategy for those teachers to now teach in English when that wasn’t the population that needed addressing.”

This was a good cautionary tale about the risks of making program decisions without thorough data analysis. The task of comparing how ELLs and native-English speaking students in immersion programs compared with their peers outside of immersion programs often meant disaggregating the data by hand, especially when subgroups (ex. ELLs) were members of both groups. Compiling the data, a daunting task, had been crucial to making informed program decisions.

With more than twenty years of experience, Cousteau’s had addressed some surprises and unintended consequences that some of the other schools in the study might not have discovered yet. For years, many language educators at Cousteau’s avoided overt

error correction partially based on language theory about the impact of the affective filter on acquisition. Krashen and Terrell's Natural Approach theory asserted that students acquired language through comprehensible input and not through explicit grammar instruction. Like other schools in the study, Cousteau's language immersion program emphasized teaching content in the language, not necessarily explicitly teaching the language. However, when the students got to Spanish Language Arts in the middle school, Spanish teachers discovered something that surprised them. The language coordinator said:

When we first started immersion, the philosophy was not to focus so much on grammar, that they'll just get it through natural, you know, acquisition. And then in middle school, we'll go ahead with all the rules and everything. And our big surprise was when the students got to middle school in the mid '90s, many of the grammatical errors had fossilized, and it took twice as long to undo the bad habits. That is when they began to focus more on integrating language arts into the math, science and health lessons in Spanish. She continued:

So then we decided in the mid '90s to start really working on the language arts program and having the similar benchmarks. And then it can be reinforcing the English language arts, we just happened to be doing in the target language. But when we convey that as they're writing science and math, and constantly have that as an awareness, then we're catching those mistakes before they fossilize. So that was a big ah ha moment of what you, you know, hypothesize what's going to happen, and then what your data shows. And we're constantly working towards that.

Even though the K-12 transition plan was established early on, transition to middle school was not without its obstacles, as the district coordinator described:

Another big surprise was the attitude of our middle schools teachers, that we didn't anticipate having to do a lot of professional development with them, that they would see all the benefits and be so happy, you know. But what they looked at is taking that language arts focus only and looking at what [students] cannot do versus what they can do.

When the students arrived after having five or six years in Spanish immersion, the teachers expected them to be able to write narratives about their summer vacations. However, many of the immersion students were not able to do that because it was not the kind of language they had been experiencing in immersion. They had not been exposed to the travel vocabulary and narratives using the past tense that they would need to write about their summer vacations in science and math classes. The middle school Spanish language arts teachers expected the students to have had social language and vocabulary, but the students were most comfortable and fluent operating in the target language in the academic contexts of math, science and health. The district coordinator explained how they addressed the situation:

And so we had to train [the teachers] . . . if you want them to show you what they can do, the whole first month has to be to "Write up your favorite science experiment in elementary school, and tell me why you liked it." Or, "Let's do a math board game and come up with all the rules for the board game . . ." " We had to put it back into a content area for them to show what they can do, and then the

teacher got it and could fill the gaps . . . they were trying to bring the children into their language arts world, instead of the teacher going into the content world.

To address these misperceptions about what the students could do and not do in Spanish, the World Languages leaders took the middle school teachers to spend a day in the elementary schools. As they visited every grade level, the middle school teachers were then able to watch the students' linguistic progression. That helped the teachers to understand what language the students were bringing to the middle school and what their jobs as middle school teachers were, "to fill the gaps and refine the language, not to point out all the grammar errors that they're making in seventh grade. And that was a huge ah ha moment for everybody," said the coordinator.

As we have seen in other schools in the study, immersion students at Cousteau's were performing similarly to their peers, only they were also acquiring a second or third language at the same time. Additionally, ELL students in TWI were outperforming their counterparts not in a TWI program. The district coordinator said:

For the school board last fall, we looked at our SOL scores in all of our immersion schools. We're finding they're testing at if not better than their non-immersion counterparts in all of our schools. I mean the percentages are pretty much matching. Now in the programs where we have the same language, the minority language is the target language like at Cousteau's , then we saw the test scores go up.

She pointed out that results were slightly different for students acquiring a third language in the immersion programs, "But if it's a minority language other than the target language, so actually the target language may be the third language, we see a bit of a

delay in the beginning and then around third grade it picks up.” She also noted that out-of-neighborhood students who were selected by the lottery may have had lower rates of poverty and other challenging circumstances, which may have given them an academic advantage. She said:

Because parents provide transportation for this program, that when you’re looking at data, you’re not getting an average first-grade class. You might be getting the parents that are overachieving parents that are very literate in their home, and they’re driving, your know, one parent doesn’t work so they’re able to drive their children to the school.

But she also added:

Now with the 50% that are at that school anyway, and 50% that are native Spanish speakers, that might be a true indication of looking at that population of kids. But the ones coming that are being driven to the school may not be that population, you know. You may not be getting the poverty kids in that population.

She also felt like the magnet students from outside of the neighborhood catchment area may have an underrepresented special education population. In terms of special education she said:

And very often, if a child looks like they’re identified by Child Find as having special needs, very often the parents are reluctant to put them in a program where the language is other than their first language . . . So then our special ed numbers are not, you know, do not mirror that of the population of the school.

Cousteau's offered a rare look at a program which had learned lessons over decades. Strong world languages leadership at the district level proved essential for maintaining program integrity at the school level. Teacher collaboration crossed language and content borders resulting in truly integrated instruction. Clearly articulated benchmarks provided an opportunity to measure student progress in Spanish as well as on district and state benchmarks in other content areas. While the vast number of students created complexity, the school managed to engender a strong sense of community and pride.

Chapter 9

Standards, Assessment, Instruction and Context

The previous five chapters presented results that captured the salient features of each school's immersion program. In some cases, I included data that were unique to that school. In other cases, the school's data highlighted themes that crossed schools, but examples emerged in a particularly illustrative way at that location. This chapter addresses organizational aspects, standards, instruction, and cultural issues. Some information is included here because it allows me to compare the five schools. Other data are included because they could be easily discussed here and better protected the anonymity of participants.

Program goals

When asked about the mission and vision of the immersion programs, educators at all five schools responded in a consistent manner. Participants at each school stated, in slightly different ways, that they wanted their students to achieve bilingualism and bi-literacy, meet high academic standards and develop cross-cultural understanding. Educators at schools with two-way programs, Joplin's Landing, Lewis and Clark, Pacific and Cousteau's, also talked about wanting to close the performance/opportunity gap for their native Spanish-speaking students. Based on state assessments, ELL students at their schools were not performing at the same levels as English-speaking students. These results were not surprising. Language acquisition research that shows it takes 5-7 years to develop academic language proficiency partially explains the scores disparity. However, these schools found that over time, their ELL students in TWI were performing better

than ELL students who did not receive instruction in their home language. That outcome addressed a goal across TWI schools.

Participants had high expectations for their students. At least one person, and frequently several, from each school emphasized demanding a great deal of their students to achieve the vision. Immersion students were expected to meet the same high academic standards as other students in the district in *two* languages. The principal at Joplin's Landing said they have "huge expectations" for their students. A teacher from Parkland Language School talked about the need for immersion programs to maintain, "High, high expectations. Really high expectations from day one." Several educators talked about having to take a "leap of faith" to really believe in the immersion model and in the students in order to achieve the vision. As we will see later in this chapter, one of the biggest challenges for each school was to convince the parents to have that same confidence in the model, staff and students.

Another important goal that was expressed by all of the schools involved creating global citizens, prepared with 21st Century Skills that would give students an economic advantage in the workplace. As we heard from a teacher at Parkland Language School, "It's about . . . making global citizens out of these little kids, [so] that they can compete in the 21st century in this world." A coordinator for Cousteau's also talked about the 21st Century skills focus there:

So we're also going in that direction of linking 21st century skills to everything we do. And setting all of our strategies as project-based strategies that allow that collaboration, communication, creativity, you know, piece in there as well. And the critical thinking.

Standards

In this era of high accountability, standards-based instruction was a major focus of every school in the study. National, State and District standards appeared to be drivers of instruction in all schools in the study.

State Standards. Educators at most schools talked about the shift from current state standards to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). One teacher explained, “So I think that, you know, along with, we use the same standards, but I, there’s definitely a lot of sheltering going on.” Sheltering refers to strategies used to ensure language comprehension during the teaching of content. Educators frequently referred to professional development and implementation of frameworks developed for English Language Learners like GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design) and SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) to support sheltered instruction. One teacher talked about how she layers language-specific information onto the state standards:

We use the state standards for basically social studies and science. We [also] use them for language arts, but those are adjusted to the language. So we . . . compared the state standards to what things were applicable in Spanish, what things were not.

She said that most of the language arts state standards were “applicable to both languages,” but they needed to include some other skills:

Then we had to add a few things that were just of the language, Spanish language. And again, mostly conventions for writing . . . and then the way that we teach to read with syllables [in Spanish], and accent marks, and the rules of accent marks,

and things like that. So those were just things that we needed to add to the standards.

A teacher at Lewis and Clark seemed a bit disappointed that so much of the focus at her school seemed to be on the Common Core State Standards, saying:

It's tough when thinking about the new common core standards. I think that . . . without time to say these are the standards and what does that mean for Spanish instruction? I think a lot of times we end up, and for no fault of anyone, just teaching *in* Spanish [emphasis added]. Taking the same standards and teaching in Spanish.

She thought that it might be good to also look at what would be the best structure specifically for teaching Spanish language arts as well. The principal of her school agreed that it would be helpful to have language goals in Spanish. Joplin's Landing and Baileys are examples of schools that do have articulated language goals throughout their programs.

Other educators seemed to take pride in the fact that their students were expected to meet the same standards and benchmarks as non-immersion students. A teacher at Parkland Language School recounted:

Our goal is to get our kids to be completely fluent: bi-lingual, bi-literate as a native speaker, have the same kind of education within the content standards of the state and the country. So we teach in the content of the state. We're doing it through a language that's not English. So they can acquire both.

An administrator who had been a high school Spanish teacher, told me:

The fascinating thing about immersion is, the language is the vehicle for teaching our curriculum, but it isn't necessarily the goal in itself of teaching the language . . . even though they're focused on, for example, you know, the earth worm and its life cycle . . . [they] don't think about the words. They're totally focused on the content, and the language is the vehicle.

National Standards. With so much emphasis on the state standards or CCSS, I wondered what influence if any the national standards for language learning had on the immersion programs. Participants from two schools mentioned using the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning, in developing and guiding their programs, at least in part: Cousteau's and Joplin's Landing. While commonly called the ACTFL standards, the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning were actually a collaborative effort on behalf of ACTFL and several other language associations and developed through funding from the U.S. Department of Education, the National Endowment for the Humanities and additional support from some publishers.

What are commonly called the "5 Cs," Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities are at the heart of the national language standards. The principal of Joplin's Landing said, "On the Spanish side, the state has put together the standards for the language aspect of it, and they're using ACTFL standards, some of the ACTFL pieces." Cousteau's district coordinator also pointed to the 5 Cs, of the national standards, in addition to the district standards, as drivers for their program. The district language coordinator at Cousteau's talked about how the 5 Cs integrate with other district initiatives.

Our entire [district] is going with that focus of 21st Century Skills. So, it's such a wonderful marriage of what our initiatives are and what the five Cs are in our language program and the four Cs of 21st century skills and how that really works hand in hand. It's so aligned.

The "Communication" goal, with its focus on meaning rather than on the grammatical structure of language, was evident in every school. The emphasis on communicative proficiency distinguished so-called "traditional" grammar and translation-based foreign language classes with communication-centered instruction found in immersion and other programs.

Cousteau's district coordinator highlighted how "Communication" was the central goal and the "Connections" goal, connecting and acquiring information across content areas, was a strength in their immersion programs. She said, "The connections are there with the content anyway . . . that's a piece of cake for them. But I would say the communicative C is our overarching C. And then everything falls into place with that."

Cousteau's district provided vision, support and accountability with K-6 language benchmarks in addition to the standards that non-immersion students also address. This was an example of how the language immersion schools in this study expected their students to develop proficiency in another language in addition to meeting or exceeding all of the same standards that the districts' non-immersion students are held to.

With the L2 communication specifically targeted on content standards, in at least one case we saw students struggle to communicate about non-academic topics. At Cousteau's, because students received math, science and health instruction in Spanish throughout elementary school, those students tended to operate very comfortably in the

target language in those content areas from around third grade on. However when they got to middle school they struggled to communicate as fluently about more social or interpersonal topics, such as what they did on their summer vacation, simply due to a lack of exposure to that kind of language. The other four schools in the study included literacy in the target language for most or all of the elementary programs. It would have been interesting to see if there was a significant difference in TL interpersonal communication skills based on whether literacy was taught in the target language.

The standard of “Cultures” addressed the goals to “gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures.” This standard specifically pointed to students’ understanding of the relationship between the cultures’ products and practices and their perspectives. Even though culture is one of the 5 Cs and is mentioned as a key component of the vision and goals of every school in this study, when asked about how culture is addressed, almost every school said they needed to do a better job of teaching culture. One coordinator expressed what I heard at many schools, “You know, I have to say that that is the one piece that we have not fully developed yet . . . We haven’t really developed the curriculum to back that up yet, or integrate it. That’s next year, maybe.” Another administrator called their cultural program “hit and miss,” and a teacher added “We need a plan.” Another teacher complained that there was no curriculum to teach culture.

While most schools did not have an articulated plan to teach culture, educators that I interviewed said that culture was often imbedded in the literature in read-alouds, in calendar time, and in some social studies lessons. Since most schools did not describe an

articulated curriculum for culture, I do not have enough information to determine if teachers taught to the products aspects of the standard.

In regards to practices, participants provided abundant examples of teachers' sharing about the holidays and customs of generally their own cultures or cultures they had visited, heritage-language teachers often taught the cultures of their home country. Participants talked about using holidays and songs to teach about cultures. A teacher from Joplin's Landing said:

Culture, I think, is addressed . . . we all come from different cultures. We have two teachers from Spain. We have one teacher who's lived here for 15 years, but she grew up in Mexico . . . One of the Spanish teachers is actually from Catalunya. So she's got a subculture. And then, like I come from an immigrant culture, and so I think we all kind of choose to celebrate in a different way.

Having heritage-language teachers teach culture based on their own backgrounds added authenticity and sometimes complexity or confusion because cultures that spoke the same language varied in their traditions. For example, Father's day was March 19th in Spain and the third Sunday in June in Peru. Christmas traditions also varied. While many teachers from Spain would focus on the tradition of the Three Kings bringing gifts to children, a teacher from Catalunya celebrated a different tradition with her students, as her colleague described, "In Catalunya they have a log, and . . . you feed this log for like a week, and then you beat it, and then like, a present comes out."

One school, Pacific International, talked about an articulated culture-centered curriculum and school climate. At Pacific, the school moved from a curriculum that included studying continents at each grade level to one that focused on "an integrated

global perspective” weaving state social studies standards, district science content and culture at each grade level. In this shift, kindergarten students began with the concept of perspectives, as it related to culture, family and religion. The higher grades addressed big questions that were focal points of the United Nations such as, in first grade, “How are families and children alike and different? How does geography or climate affect how families live locally and globally?” After first grade, students addressed questions about “community and humanitarian assistance,” “environmental sustainability,” “global human migration and settlements” and “human rights and democracy.” Educators at Pacific International talked about wanting students to have a global perspective and the ability to take action. Out of the five schools, Pacific International had the most thorough and articulated plan to address the Cultures standard, although Pacific International educators never actually mentioned the national standards when describing their plan.

The standard of Communities was intended to ensure opportunities for students to use the target language in “real-life” settings generally outside of the classroom. In traditional world languages classes, helping students access language communities might have required taking field trips, volunteering or spending time in cultural centers, using technology to communicate with members of other cultures or any number of activities that connected students with native speakers outside of the classroom. In two-way immersion programs, that language community already existed in the classroom because at least one-third to one-half of the class, and often the teacher, were members of the target-language community. In one-way programs, such as at the Parkland Language School and the Mandarin program at Pacific, educators had to be intentional about creating opportunities for students to interact with the target language community, much

like teachers of many world languages, FLES and FLEX programs have had to do. Pacific connected communities by having sister schools in China and Costa Rica. The U.S. students collaborated with the Costa Rican students to create a beautiful bilingual calendar. Fifth-grade Mandarin Chinese immersion students planned to travel to China to culminate their elementary immersion program studies. However, because of concerns around immigration issues and a tendency for Latino families to be afraid to allow their children to spend the night away from home, they weren't planning a similar trip for the Spanish-speaking students. While educators didn't specifically mention the Communities standard, most provided evidence of using technology, native speakers in the community and other strategies to engage students with native speakers.

In addition to Communication, Connections, Cultures, and Communities, the remaining "C" in the National Standards for Foreign Language Learning stands for Comparisons. The Comparisons standard involved having students compare their own language and culture(s) with the language and culture(s) being studied.

This standard was not mentioned specifically by any participants. Many educators in this study, however, talked about teaching cultural comparisons and a few discussed teaching linguistic comparisons. When asked about how Pacific International addressed culture, the head teacher at Pacific International said:

So [we are] preparing children to be able to not only understand the differences and the similarities between the cultures that we have in the school, but also having some experience with being able to learn to communicate with children from truly different cultures.

The kindergarten social studies content presented a good example of “Comparisons.” The head teacher said, “They talk about ‘me and my family’ *and* ‘families around the world’ and how families are different in different places, and a little bit of the struggles that some families face in different parts of the world.” The driving force behind that shift was the book study, rather than the national standards, but the nevertheless the emphasis on comparisons was evident at Pacific International.

In terms of linguistic comparisons, I observed that some teachers in Spanish, for example, pointed out cognates, words that are similar in both languages, to their students. Those types of comparisons seemed to happen more frequently in Spanish because of the greater similarities to English including the Roman script. My observations and interviews did not reveal Chinese teachers comparing Mandarin to English, although it may have happened and I didn’t understand it because of my lack of proficiency in Mandarin.

Language and Content Objectives. Administrators in four of the five schools studied expected learning targets for both language and content, a component of SIOP and perhaps other instructional frameworks. The principal at Pacific International said:

When I walk around, one of the first things is that the teacher, when they’re planning a lesson, I expect to see content standards and a language standard as well. So if they’re teaching a fractions unit, I expect to see what they’re immersion, the language learning standard is, so they have to have two kind of parallel standards.

Two other principals said that posting objectives with language and content targets is “best practices.”

That concept seemed to resonate with teachers as well. A Chinese teacher described it this way, “Two teaching targets, two teaching points. I learn how integrate different subject area . . . So it’s really, it’s like weaving together, and it all makes sense to me . . . And to the children. They didn’t even realize . . . they are doing language in this math lesson.”

One principal connected the learning targets to explicit instruction. She said, “[Teachers] need to make the lessons explicit. They need to make sure that the kids know the, have the language objectives and the content objectives.”

Assessment

Assessment appeared to drive instruction in all of the schools in the study. Overall, I observed teachers mapping curriculum, designing lessons and assessing students based on state standards. In every school teachers collaborated to teach thematic units that integrated language and content. Schools used a variety of tools to measure student progress in regards to language and content standards.

Formative Assessment. Administrators and teachers in every school in the study talked about the importance of ongoing formative assessment, especially because teachers cannot assume that students understand the instruction. The district coordinator for Cousteau’s said, “So we teach the teachers how to communicate better with the children.” She said that they wanted students to be comfortable letting teachers know if they don’t understand something.

You know, “How many of you didn’t really understand this?” And they all raise their hands. That’s confirmation. I mean, they don’t ask that in English, but it’s like, “Oh good, I’m not the only one that doesn’t understand.” Then the teacher

re-explains it using a visual or whatever until the kids do understand. And doing those checkpoints is just helping the students understand their own progression in the language . . . So we've been giving them on-going staff development on being able to do these snapshots exactly where [students] are on a daily basis.

When asked about how she assessed students, a first grade Mandarin teacher said, "Ah, from the assessment for me mainly based on the formative assessment, since they are young." She talked about monitoring student participation and responses in daily activities and said:

Even through the game we do, we do the small group games . . . I can easily to test and checking the student if they know the language and they can response well, and in that setting, they are more comfortable to speak out. So that way I can check if they really understand and they can return, like returning my question, replies my questions. So that's how I usually use the formative assessment.

From exit slips to analyzing student responses to monitoring interactions, teachers understood that it was the formative assessments that happened continuously on a daily basis that allowed them to respond instructionally in a timely manner.

Immersion-specific Assessments. In addition to state and district assessments that all students took, participants also described specific assessments for students in the immersion program. All five schools used the EDL (Evaluación del desarrollo de la lectura), a Spanish version of the Developmental Reading Assessment to measure and monitor reading progress in Spanish. Parkland Language School used the Early Listening and Oral Language Proficiency Assessment (ELOPA), and Lewis and Clark used the

Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA) from CAL to measure speaking skills. Parkland Language School and Joplin's Landing were piloting ACTFL's new assessment tool, the APPLL. Cousteau's district assessments of language proficiency stood out with performance assessments at each grade level including analytic rubrics to measure reading and writing across specific domains. Cousteau's district had also moved to standards-based grading on report cards including grading language acquisition and cultural understanding.

Instructional Strategies

In order to meet rigorous standards, schools employed specific instructional strategies. Several commonalities across the schools emerged around instructional expectations and professional development. Because immersion teachers came from a variety of professional and cultural backgrounds, it became clear that school leaders should not make assumptions about immersion teacher preparation. One district coordinator said, "The big thing you need to know is that, because a teacher is bilingual and probably has an elementary ed endorsement doesn't mean that they know how to teach an immersion program." As with most specific program models, teachers benefited from professional development and support, in order to implement the immersion programs with fidelity.

Target language. Exclusive use of the target language by teachers appeared to be the most important instructional strategy across all schools. One coordinator said it simply, "During the school day, it's only in the target language. There's no translation." Every school had similar expectations. A coordinator at Cousteau's said:

Kids are going to get science, math, and health in Spanish, and they're going to get language arts and social studies in English . . . Their language arts and social studies teacher is a native English speaker, and they only speak English to that teacher. They don't even know Ms. Rodriguez speaks English, so they get the science, math, and health from her. Well we keep that philosophy all the way up, where our immersion teachers only teach the target language.

In addition to being an expectation that was articulated by the educators in each school, I observed the practice first hand in the four schools that I was able to visit, and the interview data in the fifth school corroborated the same practice.

Prior to this study, I had visited many schools that claimed to be immersion schools, however when I visited them, there was either not a clear delineation for target language instruction or it was not an expectation that was monitored. The result was a watered down program in which English speaking students knew they could defer to their most comfortable language at will. I credit the schools in this study for having articulated designators for what languages are used with whom and often for what purposes.

Student language production naturally progressed over the grades. I noticed that in kindergarten and first grade classes, students didn't always stay in the target language with each other and when interacting with their teachers. However, teachers consistently responded to those students in the target language, generally without drawing attention to the English. Occasionally, by the time they got to second grade, I noticed some teachers giving reminders or redirecting students to the target language. By the time students got to third grade, I heard students operating in the target language almost exclusively. That transition appeared to be pretty consistent across schools in the study.

Operating consistently in the target language was not without its challenges, especially for the youngest students who were just learning how to navigate school, learn the expectations, find the bathroom and negotiate relationships on the playground. Many students in the poverty-impacted schools had not had the opportunity to attend preschool, and so they were learning the expectations for a structured learning environment, such as lining up quietly, raising their hand to speak, and staying seated during instruction, for the first time in a language that was foreign to them (whether it be English, Mandarin or Spanish). In these situations, it proved very helpful to have the assistance of a fluent instructional assistant, who could be another language model as well as another supervisor, especially for kindergarten and first grade students.

Teacher proficiency. In order to operate entirely in the target language, the language proficiency of the teachers was a critical factor. If the teacher couldn't communicate comfortably and proficiently in the target language 100% of the time, it impacted the students. One principal recounted a situation in which she had a last-minute resignation that pressured her to hire quickly:

So at that late date, trying to find someone who was qualified for the program was a real challenge. And we ended up hiring someone and I did not clearly check the language proficiency on this individual. And throughout the course of the year it became clear that his language proficiency was not high enough. And that was a disappointment, and I think it was not good for the kids.

She said that the following year the students benefited from a proficient teacher and most students "caught up."

Three of the schools emphasized hiring native speakers of the target language; Parkland Language School only hired native speakers. At that school, some of the proficiency challenges were reversed—while the teachers were clearly proficient in the target language, many of them struggled with English. The level of English proficiency of some of the teachers made professional development and staff cohesion more challenging. A director described how they modified their professional development program to support the teachers:

It's really kind of hard with non-native speakers, our entire faculty are non-native speakers of English . . . so some of this [professional development] is lost in translation. . . . So they miss out on a lot of that . . . And we understand the problems we made last year with the difficulties with language barriers, and how much easier it is this year when we do it slow and not just pile it all on, you know, in an afternoon.

That school modified the delivery of professional development by implementing weekly release time of at least two hours, so teachers did not have so much information to process all at once. They also strived to improve the comprehensibility of the professional development.

Another school found that not all native speakers were prepared to teach in the target language. A coordinator gave this example:

And one of the great lessons that we learned and that we can pass on is that at first our people thought that, “Oh, we have someone who’s local, maybe a heritage speaker themselves, that’s perfect. They have a teaching license, they’ve been teaching. Let’s bring them on and they’ll be a great immersion teacher.” Well,

we found out that just because they may be heritage speakers themselves, they may not have the level of language proficiency that is necessary to really facilitate a kind of language acquisition that needs to be happening in that immersion classroom. So we actually made that mistake, and saw some classrooms that were not progressing the way that they needed to because of the teacher's own level of language proficiency.

After making that discovery, they established minimum proficiency levels of "advanced mid" for teachers and publicized in the job postings that the candidate must provide evidence of target language proficiency. A coordinator shared, "That has become a great screening mechanism for us to ensure quality in the programs."

Schools measure language proficiency in a variety of ways. Cousteau's required a minimum of advanced low on the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interviews (OPI) and Writing Proficiency Test (WPT). Joplin's Landing aimed for superior proficiency, but required evidence of advanced mid on the OPI or what they determined to be the equivalent on a state assessment that was developed by the state's foreign language teacher association. Parkland Language School only hired native speakers and did not use a formal proficiency assessment for those teachers. Lewis and Clark did not identify a specific proficiency level, but usually had teachers take a grammar-based district assessment and then asked some of the interview questions in the target language to gauge proficiency. Pacific International School advertised on the website that students learned the target language from native speakers. It also did not identify a specific proficiency level for teachers.

Comprehensible input. Schools in this study expected their teachers to be proficient in the target language upon hiring, and so target-language proficiency was not included among professional development activities. However, most schools did provide training, at least initially, on making the target language comprehensible to students. The district language coordinator for Cousteau’s emphasized the importance of making sure teachers had the strategies to make themselves understood because, “You can’t rely on the verbal communication right away.”

The importance of training teachers on how to provide comprehensible input was emphasized by leaders at every school in the study. One district coordinator described:

This is what we see quite often . . . if the student doesn’t get it, the teacher then repeats the exact same sentence. But if [the students] didn’t get it the first time, they’re not getting it the second time. So we have to teach [teachers] how to break the vocabulary down and then use a visual, too, to do the explanations, because you can’t rely on [students’] understanding the sentence.

The coordinator found the concept was especially “hard for a native speaker,” who wasn’t used to having to say things several different ways in order to be understood. She said, in that case, “The language is impeding the content knowledge, you know, so now we have to break the language down.”

An administrator in the same district gave an example of using circumlocution to aid comprehension:

So in terms of language acquisition [it’s] like talking around something, so saying it in multiple ways. So if somebody is trying to describe the blinds on the window, I, myself, as a Spanish speaker don’t know how to say blinds but I can

say those things that cover the window and keep the light out. So [we expect teachers] to be able to talk around things to get the kids to understand.

Educators at several schools talked about using ELL strategies to make language comprehensible. The librarian at Pacific International said, “Teachers are very cognizant of using ELL strategies in the classroom. Circumlocution, saying things other ways . . . a lot of visual cues as well a verbal cues . . . walking around the building, you’d see a lot of that.” The principal at Lewis and Clark confirmed:

People use a lot of visuals. You saw that when you walked around, I’m sure. A lot of the staff has been GLAD trained and had SIOP strategies, and so . . . even some of the beginning teachers have a good wealth of support.

Teachers used a variety of print visuals to create context and make input comprehensible, such as pictures and graphic organizers. An administrator described, “The rooms are very, very covered with different visuals that are going to enhance the learning so that the teacher can go right to it.” In every immersion classroom that I visited, I observed language-rich surroundings. Bulletin boards were crowded with displays, anchor charts, student work and more. Often, classroom objects were labeled in the target language.

In a second grade science unit on Monarch butterflies that I observed, the teacher used a picture of a butterfly to describe its parts and stages. The students created science journals in which they labeled pictures and diagrams in the target language. Eventually, the class created and published a book, with each student contributing a page to the book. As a culminating project, they demonstrated their knowledge at an event in which they created a “museum.” The teacher said, “The students work as curators, where their art

[projects] are displayed . . . displays we made [about] things that they have learned through the year. And on that night, they are able to demonstrate their knowledge to people coming.” Because students received an abundance of comprehensible input including clear visuals about the science content, second graders were able to write and talk about Monarch butterflies.

Immersion teachers in the study used gestures, movement and expressive tone of voice to communicate meaning. One principal said, “I look for really animated teaching.” Teachers in the immersion programs in the study capitalized on nonverbal communication to help students understand the meaning of what the teacher was saying even if they didn’t yet understand the words. Over time, the students’ brains built connections between the words and their meaning.

Several educators mentioned using TPR (Total Physical Response), a communicative form of language instruction that relied heavily on teachers modeling and students mimicking gestures and movement. An administrator described how a third grade Mandarin teacher used TPR to teach the Chinese alphabet, pinyin:

And so they know that the language that they teach to the children needs to be comprehensible, obviously, so they use a little TPR, but not exclusively, understand . . . And the gestures, the visual support in the classroom is really strong . . . For example, in the Chinese classroom, in the third grade they’re learning pinyin, which is the alphabet. But up until now, they’ve only learned characters. And so the third grade teacher has been working very hard at teaching pinyin, and is using body language with it, like a TPR, but it is great.

In a lesson I observed, that teacher physically modeled the shapes of the letters while teaching the students the names of the letters. The students followed the teacher's movements and commands, developing muscle memory, in a sense, to go along with the auditory input.

Hands-on or kinesthetic learning was emphasized at several schools. Many teachers provided opportunities for students to see and handle real objects such as using realia ("real" objects or pictures that usually come from the target language culture) and manipulatives (tools or objects that students can manipulate and move around) to bring the language to life. One teacher described some realia that she brought in as part of an animal unit she is teaching:

And so I'm using a lot of pictorial input charts . . . I am using a lot of realia to bring into the classroom. So we talked about feathers, and some snake skin that I brought in. So . . . just realia to bring in to make it meaningful for the children and so children can understand.

When I observed classrooms, students seemed to enjoy opportunities to learn in a kinesthetic way. In one third-grade science lesson I observed, students were working in small groups happily making simple machines with Legos. I was impressed that students could answer my questions in the target language.

Overall, administrators said they expected teachers to use multiple strategies, such as those described here, to present the target language in a developmentally appropriate manner that would help the students understand the content through a new language.

Thematic Units

In all five schools, teachers collaborated to develop curriculum maps and design thematic units. The thematic planning was generally the link that connected immersion teachers with other grade level teachers in strand programs. The principal at Joplin's Landing described how her teachers collaborated to develop units that connected the Spanish language-arts side with the English language-arts side without duplicating.

And so what the teachers have done is they sit down and kind of look together, you know, what's our theme for this week from one program or the other, and let's see what we can do to paste these together. So that some of the vocabulary might be similar and some of the, if they are doing like cause and effect on one side, they would want to do cause and effect on the other side. So that they're supporting each other on each side with the literature.

A teacher from Lewis and Clark described how thematic units have evolved at her school:

We started out with . . . kindergarten, we developed our, we work by thematic unit, and so we work on our thematic units for kindergarten, and then as the years have gone by, we have gotten together and looked at thematic units for each grade level, making sure that we're not teaching the same. Well, it might be that we're teaching the same thing, but as we move on to the grade levels, that they are expanding or adding and not just repeating the same information that we were teaching at the lower grade levels. So making sure that we're looking at the standards and that we're covering what needs to be covered.

Student Interaction

When talking about immersion strategies, several participants made reference to the need for a high level of student interaction. The principal of Lewis and Clark talked about student interaction, “using higher-level questioning techniques, and having . . . cooperative learning or structured talk with kids.” The principal of Pacific International explained what he wanted to see, “I look for structured talks and different strategies to get kids to talk to each other and practice the language.”

Student engagement was also important to the principal at Joplin’s Landing. She said, “[Teachers] really need to know how to engage kids.” A teacher from Parkland Language School said, “Interactive lessons that are engaging is an expectation.” She explained that teachers participated in professional development to help them create an interactive classroom that scaffolded language production:

We expect interaction between the students. With an immersion program, they need to talk. So we have given [teachers] ideas and we have the information training with [a consultant] last year. She came for two days and gave us some ideas about thematic planning and she had this strategy that I stole from her that’s wonderful, that’s “Tell your partner this and tell your partner that.”

The teacher also talked about how that interaction affects the noise level of an immersion classroom. “It’s a very loud class where there’s a lot of talking to each other, discussing things in partners, before sharing with me.” An administrator who did not have background in language acquisition talked about how he had to look at classroom management from a different lens in an immersion program, taking into account the need for students to interact, “But also, you know, the noise, the volume that goes along to a

certain extent in an immersion program, anyway, [it] is differentiating that.” So it’s important for administrators who may not have language backgrounds to understand that an immersion classroom should be focused, but not quiet, because student interaction is an important teaching and learning strategy.

Instructional Groupings

Educators at every school talked about the importance of instructional grouping of students in order to increase student to student interaction and engagement. The Spanish Education Director in training at PLS said, “We expect small-group instruction to happen both in math and language arts. Ah, not every single day, but it needs to happen regularly for guided reading, guided writing and math.” One principal specifically mentioned the use of cooperative learning groups as an expectation. A coordinator in another district talked about how those instructional groups are differentiated based on age:

We use engagement strategies, whole-class engagement strategies, also engagement strategies in small groups. So we do small-group work, we do centers in kindergarten through second grade. Starting in third grade, it’s more like small groups. And the hard part about centers is trying to keep them in the language because they always want to be social, but we have got methods for doing that.

A teacher at Cousteau’s talked about how group work was part of how she differentiated:

In math I am expected to use the differentiated instruction with my students, and also . . . I need to be working in . . . not only a class a lecture time but also work with a small group of students to meet their needs and to be able to differentiate

not only students who are struggling but also the kids who are working above and beyond, too, so we can keep them engaged, and also so that they can learn. Teachers and administrators valued the opportunities for increase student interaction, student engagement and differentiated instruction through flexible student grouping.

Language production

In the schools in this study, there was a universal expectation that students' receptive language, what they heard and read, was delivered in the target language. Expectations and practices for student language *production*, speaking and writing, varied significantly across schools, from not having specific expectations or policy to having clearly articulated K-6 targets and identified expectations about error correction. Because of language theory about the stages of language acquisition, including "the silent period," focusing on meaning rather than form, and concerns about raising the affective filter through overt error correction, some programs initially discouraged requiring target language production right away and correcting grammatical errors. At the two schools who had fully implemented immersion throughout all grades, language production and error correction expectations seemed to have evolved over time, based on reflections about student performance results. Educators at other schools talked about how their professional development reflected new perspectives about these topics.

When asked about the program standards, the district coordinator for Cousteau's said: "The communication standard, everything is performance focused, really working on output and really in a non-rehearsed setting. So really looking at communication." She talked about how people often forget that writing is a part of the communication standard as well as speaking. When asked about the instructional practices she expected

of her language educators, she said, “I would say the biggest thing is getting the students to produce language at our expectations.” She talked about strategies like redesigning the homework so that it involved more spontaneous language production in addition to “fill in the blank” items. “So those types of strategies are just bringing awareness to our language objectives.”

The principal at Pacific International agreed that students needed to be operating in the target language:

I look for teachers holding kids, you know, high expectations for language production. Basically the kids, you know, in lessons they should be listening and comprehending. They should be speaking, given opportunities to speak, opportunities to read, opportunities to write.

After finally implementing grades K-6 in the immersion program at Lewis and Clark, a teacher reflected:

And you know this is the first group that’s gone through, and I think that there’s things that we have done really, really well. I think there are lots of room for improvement as far as just having a stricter language policy, because I think we’ve really pushed Spanish, and we have done a lot of oral language work with getting students to speak more in Spanish, but the accuracy piece I think is one place that we really can improve on.

As was noted at Cousteau’s, once students arrived in middle school, after repeating grammatical errors over time, it was more difficult to correct them later. The district coordinator recalled, “Our big surprise was when the students got to middle school in the mid ‘90s, many of the grammatical errors had fossilized, and it took twice as long to undo

the bad habits.” That’s when they started paying closer attention to integrating language arts into the content areas of math, science and health.

A teacher at Parkland Language School reflected on her initial training with a national consultant:

I remember . . . you know, don’t make kids fossilize mistakes; make sure that you are always . . . expect high quality of their production . . . It’s not just, “They’re communicating .” We just need to make sure that they are communicating correctly. And, this that’s one of the things that kind of hit me.

A Mandarin teacher described a type of oral “exit slip” that she could use as a formative assessment on language and content production. “I dismiss them to line up for recess, I always give a question, an oral question, and they have to respond to me. And then I also . . . differentiate my questions, according to different students’ level.”

The data in this study would suggest that it would be helpful to have clear, articulated expectations for language production that allow for differentiation based on students’ needs, abilities and demeanor. Staff and students could benefit from professional development and policy or staff agreements around how to handle error correction in a productive manner that maintains a low affective filter while helping students develop language accuracy over time.

Differentiated Instruction

Teachers and administrators at all schools mentioned the need for differentiated instruction and scaffolding in order to meet the diverse language, content and social needs of students. One principal said, “I look for a lot of scaffolded language support.” Scaffolding refers to providing more structure, as needed, when introducing a concept,

and then gradually fading the support, allowing students to become more independent, as they are able. This transition, sometimes referred to as a “gradual release of responsibility,” does not always happen at the same time for all learners, therefore educators differentiate based on formative assessments, to meet the range of learner needs.

A district coordinator at Joplin’s Landing said that, in addition to the professional development on the essentials of immersion education that the state provided, “The last piece that we added at a district level is differentiation strategies because you do have the 50% native speakers and the 50% English speakers or the other language . . . Differentiation is a huge part of the classroom.” The principal at the same school talked about differentiating questioning strategies:

[Teachers] need to, you know, use the language level that’s appropriate for each one of the kids, so they need to know at what level are the children, so that they can adapt that. So, for instance in our third-grade class, we have kids who are, have been tested and are in the gifted range, and they’re also very high ability in Spanish, so our teacher is using more high-level questioning strategies with [those] kids because they understand it and she wants to expand that. And while . . . we may have kids who may not get all of the nuances of that question, to be exposed to it and to see what the responses are is also helpful to them, I think.

I observed several examples of differentiation in my observations such as ability grouping, heterogeneous grouping, adjusting the complexity of language and texts, and appealing to a variety of learning styles by delivering and practicing content in a variety of modes. All participants seemed to buy in to the idea that it wasn’t enough to deliver

content in the target language; they needed to make sure that their diverse students were accessing that content.

Sometimes differentiation within the classroom setting was not enough. All of the schools had strategies for providing more time and support for struggling students. Many talked about using Response to Instruction (RTI) to target interventions. Except at the one-way immersion school where many of the interventions happened after school, participants reported that pull-out interventions, those not addressed solely through differentiation, usually came on the English side of the student's school day. One principal shared:

But as the program has grown, we're very aware that you can't pull kids from Spanish sides. So we have a pull-out model where the kids get intervention in the reading center, and/or special education, that kind of thing. And . . . special education is not in Spanish, and our reading center, it's instruction in English as well. So trying to do all of that intervention schedule that's generally on the English side has been interesting because that schedule affects the whole school. Two TWI schools talked about how their Spanish-speaking special education students get their Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) in English. It seemed as though they thought it would be more helpful for those students to get SDI in their home language.

When all was said and done, the instructional expectations in these immersion schools simply reflected good professional practices—even for schools without immersion programs. I was struck by what one of the first teachers I interviewed said, “As an immersion teacher, I really don't see myself very different from a regular classroom teacher with this good teaching.”

Professional Development

As has been pointed out, specific and ongoing professional development made a big impact on the classroom instruction. Two schools pointed to the *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education* (Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007) as a key document that helped guide their program model and development.

Many teachers said that the bulk of the professional development they received at the school and district level was not immersion specific. One teacher explained:

Because we're the only program within the district, we've had to go to all the professional development for English-only classrooms, and it is different. I think we do an excellent job of modifying and choosing our own curriculum that we think is best.

That school initially received a lot of professional development about language acquisition around the time of program implementation, but did not have sustained resources for ongoing training. With the high rate of teacher turnover, and no district support, that made it hard to keep teachers on track. But their passion was the driving force. The teacher continued describing what she saw as a strength of the school, "I think commitment to DLI without any professional development, without any specific training, commitment to maintaining the model."

When I asked her where that commitment came from, she said:

I think . . . just thinking of our teachers in the program, if they're not a native speaker they've lived in another country for a good amount of time, and so just

that, I think the belief in being bilingual and just more worldly views . . . might actually be that passion.

With no language coordinator at the school or district level, it was really up to the principal and teachers to ensure program integrity. That's a heavy responsibility for people who already have at least full time jobs. The principal described the situation:

I don't know that we've been as consistent the last couple of years. We were so consistent with lots of things at the beginning. Part of it was because I was the ELL teacher, and so I did a lot of that work. And now I have ELL staff that are great, but because of budget cuts, they are people who have been moved into my building, and they're not bi-lingual, and they don't know about dual language, and so, and then now with this [principal] job, right, it's so big, and so I can't always keep up with the other stuff that I still want to do.

That school relied on sending teachers to conferences focused on bilingual education as their primary source of professional development for the past couple of years.

In contrast, because of the state model, Joplin's Landing had the most comprehensive, ongoing and imbedded professional development program, with all immersion educators participating in all or part of a week-long immersion institute every summer. Renowned national consultants presented at the institutes with break-out sessions differentiated for participants' roles and experience. In addition, schools in Utah had the support of district and state coordinators who provided training and, along with the national consultants, conducted site visits addressing model fidelity.

Cousteau's educators also talked a lot about the bulk of their professional development being non-immersion specific, however they had the support of a large,

well-established district program and coordinators who could help sustain the professional development through summer immersion institutes, monthly professional development opportunities and monthly meetings for vertical teams. This district oversight also was important in maintaining accountability to the program models.

Several schools talked about ACTFL as a source for professional development. One school used the ACTFL position paper on teaching in the target language as a tool to give teachers the vision and strategies for staying in the target language. While most schools couldn't afford it, the charter school routinely sent educators to the ACTFL Annual Convention and Expo. One year it sent every single one of its teachers and administrators as well as some instructional assistants to the convention. Other educators, especially the Mandarin teachers, talked about attending the ACTFL Convention and Expo and other conferences as important to their professional development. Interestingly, sometimes that option was not available to their colleagues in the Spanish strand because the funding for the professional development came from sources specific to the Mandarin program such as FLAP grants (which targeted "critical languages"), other grants and The Asia Society.

Prior to implementation, most schools offered a type of immersion boot camp, "Immersion 101" or AUDII, which provided the foundation for their programs. Several schools' teachers referred to training in GLAD, other thematic instructional models, SIOP, and TPRS as training that positively impacted their practice.

One school's educators talked about a SIOP model specifically for two-way programs called "Two-way Instructional Observational Protocol (TWIOP)." A program coordinator said that TWIOP was different from SIOP because it addressed the idea of

two home-language groups, “And so basically the difference [with TWIOP] is the cultural aspect, so that a few indicators that are added to the protocol are on culture.”

Teachers highly valued their opportunities for professional development. A Mandarin Chinese teacher called it “essential.” She said:

I have been to several workshops [by a national consultant]. Her workshops really bring a big influence on my instruction. Before then I didn’t know what does that mean, “imbedded my language into math?” But after attending her workshop, it give me a clear concept of how to bring the language into the math, and how to do two lessons, [teach] two things in one lesson.

An administrator who did not have a background in language acquisition, but worked in a district that had ongoing, embedded professional development said, “I don’t even have to tell any of these teachers about instructional strategies because they have them backwards and forwards.”

That contrasted with the experience at Lewis and Clark, where there were not resources for ongoing professional development and support. When asked about her most pressing challenges with the DLI program the principal said:

Time for professional development. Especially with staff that come on new to the program. And so having new staff every year that have to teach a new grade, and being able to upkeep that. . . . I thought at the beginning that once we started, we’d be good to go but . . . no year has been easier than the other year, right? So, in addition to strong training prior to launching the program, ongoing, imbedded professional development is crucial to sustaining a healthy program.

Community

One of the biggest obstacles with parents, community members and teachers was fear and resentment. Parent and community member fears have already been addressed, but teacher fear warrants a bit more discussion. One teacher spoke of her surprise to the reaction of some other district educators:

I think that, like the first year that I started . . . since we were the only program [in the district] that started, there was animosity from other teachers in the district. Like, “Why are we doing this?” you know. And so, I even, before I even started my first day at the school, I was on the steps of the school district office and some lady, to this day I don’t even know who she was, but she worked in one of the libraries, was like, “You’re doing a terrible thing.” . . . I feel like, you know, [the principal] rolled out the red carpet, and stuff. But I don’t necessarily feel like . . . everyone else was equally excited about the program . . . I think in a way some people are waiting for it to fail, too. I think they just thought like this is another . . . educational program, and it’s not going to work. And, you know, it’s been quite successful.

The principal at the TWI school in that district also recalled pushback from other educators in other schools in the district who were considering implementing TWI. She described:

The other barrier was misconceptions. And, so [the principal of another school in the district] had . . . a staff person who had taught in California during the years before Prop 227, I think it was called, and the bi-lingual model where the kids were taught in English half the day, and the exact same stuff taught in Spanish the

other half of the day. And she, ah, this staff person was very influential in the building, and was thinking that this was the same thing. And so, it didn't fly in the building as a result. So that was a barrier.

Educators at every school advised me to communicate about the research and program models with all stakeholders, inside and outside of the DLI program, in order to address misconceptions.

In every strand school in the study, it seemed a primary concern of teachers was the fear that if they did not speak another language, they would not be valued and could ultimately lose their jobs. Parkland Language School began as a language immersion school and, as a magnet school, the program did not threaten any of the jobs of the current staff members. The other schools transitioned to immersion programs, so each year of implementation they needed to have capacity for a target language teacher at the new grade level.

While the tension around the potential for job displacement was palpable at the strand schools, the reality was each school that converted to an immersion school continued to need English-speaking employees, and at the time of this writing, all but one school had capacity to implement each grade without involuntarily transfers or displacements due to the natural teacher attrition. In other words, teachers' worst fears almost never happened. However, each year that another grade was added, or more budget cuts loomed, there was a lot of anxiety on the part of administrators and staff about the possibility of having to move someone. That anxiety took a toll on community cohesiveness and impacted program support from some non-immersion teachers. One teacher, with tears in her eyes, described:

This is an interesting time, Barb, because, with budget cuts, you know a \$5 million shortfall, the board and district are telling us, and they're telling us that probably there are going to be some teachers that have to go. Now that hasn't happened yet . . . but I can tell you, honestly, that there are teachers that are saying, "Well why do we have two teachers from Spain here, when we're going to have to fire teachers from [our district]?" . . . It's hard to say, "No this program is worth it," when you see your friends having to be fired who have families too. You know. And so, it hasn't happened yet, but I can see where there might be, could be potentially some real hard feelings. And for [the principal] and for all of us, you know, that's a tough issue. So it's not that the district has to spend any more money for these teachers. But it is a position.

A teacher from the school that did have to involuntarily transfer staff said:

It's been tough. It's been tough, and I think in the long run it's turned out to be a better placement for those teachers, in my opinion. But we want teachers here that believe in the program and even though they don't speak Spanish, they want to support the program. Or even if they don't speak Spanish, they still have native Spanish speakers in their class, and so what are they doing, you know, that's promoting these same goals that we have for DLI. And so I think that we've come a long way in that, but we still aren't there.

In this era of "teacher accountability" based on test scores, one teacher pointed out another fear for teachers in TWI programs who have opted to teach students with demographics that make it harder for them to perform well on standardized tests early on:

The classroom perspective is that I have the lowest scores because I have the kids who are struggling to read and write English. . . . So actually, if you look at my scores, it like's wow, what's going on here? But then you see that I have all of the ELLs in my class. . . . So, you know, you just, it's working with how to support the one classroom that does have those challenges, and I'll tell you what Barb, if it ever comes down to paying teachers according to their students' test scores, I'll be out of the dual-immersion program. You know. I couldn't afford to have my pay salary based on my student test scores. It wouldn't be fair . . . It's a double whammy. Their socioeconomic and here, as you can imagine, we have those who are very well off and then we have those who are socioeconomically, you know, challenged because of the nature of this area. So, yeah, there's quite a discrepancy there.

The buy-in of parents, as key stakeholders, was essential for all programs. Educators talked about having an “open door policy” to help families feel welcomed and informed. Schools provided multiple opportunities for parents to learn about the program. They hosted evening events specifically for kindergarten and other parents who might be interested in DLI. They also held DLI-specific and cultural events for current parents such as curriculum nights and picnics. Schools included parent leadership, including Spanish-speaking parents in TWI schools, on their PTA and Advisory boards.

Parents. Participants at every school talked about using sharing research about DLI with parents. The English speaking parents were given research about the benefits of speaking more than one language, and the Spanish speaking parents were taught about the importance of maintaining and developing academic proficiency in one's home

language. Parents also needed to be reassured by the research that content transfers from one language to the next, as many Spanish-speaking parents feared that if their students spent time studying in their home language, it would delay their English acquisition. The principal at Joplin's Landing said:

The other barrier for the two-way program, it was for a little bit of time, is that we really needed to work with your Hispanic/Latino community to help them understand . . . that we most certainly wanted the children to learn English, but that we didn't want to take their Spanish away. And most of the families just wanted the kids to learn English. They felt like they already had Spanish at home. They knew Spanish at home, and we had to take some time to explain that this was far beyond family conversations at home. That this was something that was academic and that would benefit the children in high school and as adults. And that it was something that would only benefit the kids. And so that was kind of interesting to see that.

Teachers customized opportunities for communication based on the needs of the parents. Most teachers had print or electronic (sometimes bilingual) newsletters and blogs to keep parents in the loop. As mentioned earlier, one group of teachers created a calendar/newsletter that did not rely heavily on English literacy.

Several educators in TWI schools pointed out that phone calls and face-to-face conversations worked best for communicating with their Spanish-speaking parents. Teachers talked about doing home visits and talking with parents when they dropped their children off at class. Several educators mentioned that it was harder to reach Spanish-speaking parents who often worked erratic and long hours.

Joplin's Landing worked out a phone call system to reach parents about important events. A teacher described:

It's more challenging to get information to [Latino parents]. What we find with them is we have to plan well in advance to have a parent meeting, and the phone is the best way to get in touch with people. So we've created a parent phone list that goes from English-only speaking to bilingual parents that will eventually go down to Spanish-speaking only parents, so if there's something vital, we can get it through. When we send home flyers, we find that they don't always, they're not always read, regardless if it's in both languages. So the phone call is very personal. It increases our community within the program, because this parent is always calling this other parent. So, you know, it's kind of nice that way. They have each other's phone numbers.

All schools made a strong effort to give parents a voice and include them in their children's education. Still, many parents contacted the schools with worries about the immersion programs.

Parents worried about a number of issues including not being able to help their students with homework, not hearing their students speak the target language at home, and students not being happy because the work was hard. School staff worked diligently to help parents understand that most students needed time to adjust to school. A

Cousteau's educator said:

In the beginning, like in the lower grades, especially kindergarten/first grade, [parents feel] a little angst. Their child may come home crying, you know, but sometimes we tell them, "Well, did your neighbor's child come home crying

that's not in immersion?" I mean, they cry. They cry in the first grade. They cry in kindergarten. So you have to make sure not to blame everything on immersion, you know.

She talked about how early immersion students sometimes tell their parents that they don't understand what is going on:

So they get very anxious. So, it's trying to calm them down and trying to give them more information. But [the students are] so egocentric that they often think that they're the only ones in the class that don't get it, because the other kids are all nodding their heads. But every kid is thinking the same thing, "Oh, I'm the only one that doesn't get it," you know.

One of parents' biggest fears was not being able to help their children with homework. Schools reassured parents that students could succeed even if parents did not speak the target language. Some schools helped create parent networks so parents would have someone to call, who spoke their language, if their student needed help. Others sent homework instructions in multiple languages or created classroom blogs that parents could access for assistance.

Parents also worried that their child was not progressing as quickly as their neighbor's child who was not in an immersion program. A teacher at Parkland Language School recounted:

When we get communication from parents that is more negative, it is usually anxiety. They're worried about English. They're comparing their kids their neighbor's kids that in kindergarten are reading Harry Potter, and they don't know what's going to happen. We don't have fourth and a fifth grade level yet in our

school, so we can't really show them, well this is what a fifth grader looks and would be able to do.

Educators at two-way schools reported the same phenomenon. A teacher at Joplin's Landing described:

You know the native Spanish-speaking parents always want to know if their son or daughter is learning English, and vice versa with the English-speaking parents, "But they never speak Spanish at home," and we just go, "Of course they're not going to speak Spanish at home if you don't speak Spanish."

The principal at Lewis and Clark also talked about parents' concern that their students weren't producing the second language at home:

I think [parents] really support the program. Both groups of parents, the English speakers and the Spanish speakers, worry about the other language, because the English-speaking parents don't hear their kids speak Spanish, and they want their kids to perform like, oh translate this, and do this, and that's not how we're teaching them . . . But the same thing happens with the Spanish-speaking parents with English, and so it's funny that . . . it happens on both sides.

Some parents seemed to have unrealistic expectations about how long it takes for their children to acquire another language. School personnel addressed this by sharing language acquisition research with parents to help them understand the stages of development and the amount of time it can take.

A teacher from Lewis and Clark described how teachers help parents understand their students' progress:

And then after [evening events] I think a lot of it's done through teachers just on their own time of really working with the parents in their classroom and you know saying this is what achievement will look like, and this normal, and this is expected, and you know trying to find ways to share language growth with parents through videos or through certain presentations.

Teachers and administrators confided that dealing with parent concerns absorbed a great deal of their time and energy. One teacher talked about the pressure she felt from parents' demand on her time:

Parents, um, it's a charter school, so parents are very involved for the good and the bad. And parents have taken way too much time of our working day and of our planning time and of our meeting time with questions that are just anxiety. Sometimes they do have completely honest, good questions. But unfortunately, if you look at the whole picture, I think as much as they are involved and they are really positive and they will love this school, they're also very needy and very high maintenance. And so it's been a challenge for all of us, teachers, administrators, to say, yes I want to listen to you, but listen, I need to translate this to prepare for tomorrow.

Balancing the needs of parents and the demands of the program can be a struggle for teachers and administrators alike. Staff seemed to appreciate parents' willingness to be involved in their child's education, but also felt pressured by all of their other responsibilities and the amount of time it took to work with parents. Schools used studies about language learning to show stakeholders how the ability to think and communicate in another language helped develop cultural appreciation and citizenship skills. They also

highlighted how cerebral flexibility and creativity helped students to function in a rapidly changing global society.

In spite of the challenges, repeatedly schools reported relationships with parents as a strength. One principal said, “We have good culture. Yeah. We have good culture in the community. I think people feel welcomed when they come to our school. I think parents have a lot of access.” Two-way programs emphasized how much more involved their Spanish-speaking parents became and how much more valued they and their children felt after TWI was implemented.

Cultural Influences

Themes related to culture were woven throughout many aspects of this study. In addition to the goals of teaching cross-cultural appreciation, schools were impacted by the cultures of their students and parents, the cultures of their teachers and varying degrees of tolerance of other cultures by stakeholders.

Heritage-speaker teachers. All of the schools in the study looked for qualified native-speaking teachers of the target languages. In addition to providing authentic language models, these teachers enriched their classrooms by providing first-hand windows into cultures that speak the target languages. In addition to the richness these teachers bring into the classroom, there were specific challenges associated with hiring native-speaker teachers.

One of the most difficult aspects of hiring teachers from other countries was the fact that they often moved after one to three years. Regularly losing beloved teachers caused a sense of loss and seemed to take an emotional toll on the school. The high staff turnover also ran the risk of disrupting stability with so many new teachers hired who

needed all of the professional development the departing teachers received. Several participants in the program expressed a desire to keep their foreign teachers. The executive director at Parkland Language School said, “And it’s just like any school but almost more so here . . . I’m really trying to build a real stable staff. I don’t want people coming through one and two years and then going back to Spain.” Teachers from Spain can stay up to three years on their visa. It can then be renewed for another three years. He talked about his efforts to support them, and said, “I’m hoping . . . that they’re enjoying being here, and I want them to stay for four, five, six years. We need that stability really. It’s critically important here, you know. The kids need it.” All schools except Lewis and Clark took advantage of visiting teacher programs from various countries, and they all talked about the challenges of teacher mobility.

As I pointed out in some of the earlier chapters, there were also challenges that went along with hiring teachers who grew up in other educational systems, including some that came as surprises to administrators. One coordinator described some of the challenges:

Teacher retention and, ah, preparing teachers to teach American curriculum has been hard. It’s not just teaching mathematic—that . . . content that they already know, when they have to go into [state] history, it’s a completely new concept for them. And so, there’s topics that are new that are difficult for them.

Many educators in the study talked about the challenge for native-language teachers coming from very culturally different educational systems to adjust to the U.S. Schools. Almost all of the Mandarin teachers I observed were from China and many used, as one Mandarin teacher put it, the “authentic Chinese way” rather than modifying

their teaching styles to be more similar to typical U.S. classrooms. This sometimes appeared to lead to a bit of culture shock for students and teachers alike.

The executive director of the Parkland Language School said it was an adjustment for native-speaker teachers “learning how to deal with American parents who are more involved, American children, who are more questioning, and they’re not used to that.” While most educators felt they had good connections with the parents at their schools, they also talked about some of the demanding parents. One teacher shared that her biggest surprise when she came to her school was the way some English-speaking parents treated her.

I think that in the Spanish immersion program, something that surprised me when I was new to the [district] is that the parents who only speak English, they are very demanding. And I believe part of it becomes because lack of understanding of the program. . . . You know, every parent has the right to demand what’s best for their child, I agree with that, but the way they come across to you, sometimes, is not . . . a very good experience.

When I asked her if she felt the same pressure from the Spanish speaking parents, she said:

No. I think that it’s part, like, cultural. In our country, the teacher knows what is best for students. That’s how, you know, we grew up in our society . . . your teacher knows what’s best . . . But here, now, the parents have come and tell you what you need to do, and they question you. They don’t believe what you are saying.

This questioning of the teacher's skills and authority tended to happen most often at two-way immersion schools.

One teacher leader said:

We have teachers from Spain, Mexico, and France, and Peru. And so they have all difference educational backgrounds and their educational systems in their countries are sometimes different. So the first thing that I do is I help our teachers who are coming from other countries acclimate to the American educational system. For example, one of the greatest differences is we expect all students to be engaged in the learning regardless if you're doing whole class, small groups works or individuals works. And in some of the countries it's not like that, and they don't have engagement strategies that they utilize.

Several schools talked specifically about helping teachers from other educational systems with classroom management in U.S. schools. One language coordinator said:

So one of the very first things that I do after we kind of get them acclimated and teach them a little bit about our system is we go right to classroom management. And we teach them how you would manage an immersion classroom and what how that is different, perhaps.

Participants talked about how sometimes teachers were not sure how to handle U.S. students who didn't respond to their classroom management strategies. One supervisor felt that the Chinese teachers at her school especially struggled, partially, she thought, because they were trying to be respectful of the very different culture in which they were working:

And what we've discovered is the Chinese teachers are very disciplined in their own country, and they're disciplined here too, but they're kind of like afraid of the American students in that they don't want to do what they're not supposed to do. But they're just not sure what that is. And so, when they say, you know, line up and stand here and stuff like that, they do it all in Chinese, right? The kids don't always understand, and so [teachers] don't [correct] . . . They have a harder time.

The data in this study revealed the importance of attending to the challenges native-speaking teachers face and supporting them as they learn to navigate students, parents and school systems of a different culture.

Another challenge for native speakers was the certification process as required by NCLB. An educator at PLS shared:

Getting them highly qualified in [this state] has been a challenge. They are taking the placement tests, Praxis, to be highly qualified. And it's still a struggle. Right now [the district] is really pressing us and we already have a couple of teachers that might be in trouble in two weeks if they don't pass.

If the teachers did not pass, the school would be faced with the formidable challenge of finding new immersion teachers mid-year.

One teacher at Lewis and Clark talked about the push to hire native speakers in neighboring districts, and recommended considering another factors as well:

I think at [some other] school districts, there's this fight to get native speakers, you know, and you "just need a native speaker in the classroom." And I think it's really important to [also] look for teachers that are committed to DLI. [Non-native teachers] may not have the [proficiency] of a native speaker, but if you

have a teacher that knows about a DLI program and is so committed, I don't know, I think you really need to weigh your options for that.

That teacher suggested that teachers (native or not) need to be proficient in the target language and be prepared to embrace the immersion model.

Because languages and cultures cannot be separated, it was natural for cultural differences to both enrich and sometimes add a level of complexity to creating a cohesive, well-trained staff. The next section addresses school curriculum as it relates to culture.

The cultures of the teachers also tended to influence some of the content they taught. Native-speaking teachers seemed to prefer the vocabulary from their own region and sometimes judged the speech of native-speaking students, who used vocabulary from other regions or expressions that have evolved as Spanish is spoken more in the United States, as wrong. Naturally all languages varied across countries and regions where they were spoken and changed over time, however not all teachers tolerated the differences with diplomacy. One teacher described:

It's kind of an undertone in class at least in terms of, you know, all the students are coming from different backgrounds . . . So they have their own culture. They bring their own language, too, into the classroom. And so we do the best that we can to try to validate that without telling them that it's wrong, because it really upsets me when teachers will be like, "they can't speak Spanish anyway, you know, because they speak it wrong."

She talked about how students of families that have been in the U.S. longer sometimes speak a more Anglicized version of Spanish:

The Spanish starts to change because people start to come and mix [English] with Spanish. Some teachers will get, especially if they're coming from a [Spanish-speaking] country . . . they don't like it. And they will tell the kids, "You're wrong." . . . It can be really hurtful, especially if the kid is growing up in an immigrant culture, because they feel an allegiance one way or the other . . . and it just, it's just a really personal identification. And it also basically is saying to their parents, like, their parents don't know how to speak Spanish either. And so that's just, that's difficult to see.

The teacher said that in her classroom they do their best to acknowledge everybody's home language.

At Cousteau's, one teacher talked about how they made intentional decisions about what vocabulary and expressions to use in order to minimize confusions for students:

Because we also need to look for the vocabulary. It has to be consistent from one grade level to the other. And there's so many teachers, Spanish-immersion teachers that come from different countries, so we have to find a common grammar, that we use the same word for the same thing, so we don't confuse the kids.

She emphasized teaching students that there are a variety of correct ways to speak Spanish:

Yeah. I will say, "We say it [one way] . . . in Nicaragua, and in Spanish if we think about the standard Spanish, it will be [another way]." . . . but now what I do is that I said, "Okay, we call this ___, but if you were from Puerto Rico, this is

called ___.” So I try to validate each country, the contribution with words and say, “It’s okay if you go to another country and this is called something different. It’s okay.”

She said she wished that they could get all of the materials they received in math, art and science workshops already translated into Spanish. It was incredibly time-consuming for her to translate teaching materials, even though she was a native speaker, precisely because she had to take the time to look up the vocabulary. When I asked her how she chose which vocabulary words to use, she said:

The standard ones. I try to Google them and I will see if there are professional articles that describe that word, and I’ll say, “Okay this is what I remember when I was a child.” Because there, that [word] also will say the same thing . . .

She explained that her district created a list of common vocabulary words in Spanish for math, which helped them be consistent.

Mapping the curriculum for cultural instruction would help educators to ensure students build cultural content and competency intentionally over time. Districts might want to consider developing procedures for vocabulary that are inclusive (value all backgrounds), purposeful and can be explained to students.

Fear and resistance. One of the biggest obstacles with parents, community members and teachers was fear and resentment. First I will discuss staff fears, and then I will address concerns of parents and community members.

One teacher spoke of her surprise to the reaction of some other district educators when she began teaching in the immersion program:

I think that, like the first year that I started . . . since we were the only program [in the district] that started, there was animosity from other teachers in the district. Like, “Why are we doing this?” you know. And so, I even, before I even started my first day at the school, I was on the steps of the school district office and some lady, to this day I don’t even know who she was, but she worked in one of the libraries, was like, “You’re doing a terrible thing.” . . . I feel like, you know, [the principal] rolled out the red carpet, and stuff. But I don’t necessarily feel like . . . everyone else was equally excited about the program . . . I think in a way some people are waiting for it to fail, too. I think they just thought like this is another . . . educational program, and it’s not going to work. And, you know, it’s been quite successful.

The principal at the TWI school in that district also recalled pushback from other educators in other schools in the district who were considering implementing TWI. She described:

The other barrier was misconceptions. And, so [the principal of another school in the district] had . . . a staff person who had taught in California during the years before Prop 227, I think it was called, and the bi-lingual model where the kids were taught in English half the day, and the exact same stuff taught in Spanish the other half of the day. And she, ah, this staff person was very influential in the building, and was thinking that this was the same thing. And so, it didn’t fly in the building as a result. So that was a barrier.

Educators at every school advised me to communicate about the research and program models with all stakeholders, inside and outside of the DLI program, in order to address misconceptions.

In every strand school in the study, it seemed a primary concern of teachers was the fear that if they did not speak another language, they would not be valued and could ultimately lose their jobs. Parkland Language School began as a language immersion school and, as a magnet school, the program did not threaten any of the jobs of the current staff members. The other schools transitioned to immersion programs, so each year of implementation they needed to have capacity for a target language teacher at the new grade level.

While the tension around the potential for job displacement was palpable at the strand schools, the reality was each school that converted to an immersion school continued to need English-speaking employees, and at the time of this writing, all but one school had capacity to implement each grade without involuntarily transfers or displacements due to the natural teacher attrition. In other words, teachers' worst fears almost never happened. However, each year that another grade was added, or more budget cuts loomed, there was a lot of anxiety on the part of administrators and staff about the possibility of having to move someone. That anxiety took a toll on community cohesiveness and impacted program support from some non-immersion teachers. One teacher, with tears in her eyes, described:

This is an interesting time, Barb, because, with budget cuts, you know a \$5 million shortfall, the board and district are telling us, and they're telling us that probably there are going to be some teachers that have to go. Now that hasn't

happened yet . . . but I can tell you, honestly, that there are teachers that are saying, “Well why do we have two teachers from Spain here, when we’re going to have to fire teachers from [our district]?” . . . It’s hard to say, “No this program is worth it,” when you see your friends having to be fired who have families too. You know. And so, it hasn’t happened yet, but I can see where there might be, could be potentially some real hard feelings. And for [the principal] and for all of us, you know, that’s a tough issue. So it’s not that the district has to spend any more money for these teachers. But it is a position.

A teacher from the school that did have to involuntarily transfer staff said:

It’s been tough. It’s been tough, and I think in the long run it’s turned out to be a better placement for those teachers, in my opinion. But we want teachers here that believe in the program and even though they don’t speak Spanish, they want to support the program. Or even if they don’t speak Spanish, they still have native Spanish speakers in their class, and so what are they doing, you know, that’s promoting these same goals that we have for DLI. And so I think that we’ve come a long way in that, but we still aren’t there.

In this era of “teacher accountability” based on test scores, one teacher pointed out another fear for teachers in TWI programs who have opted to teach students with demographics that make it harder for them to perform well on standardized tests early on:

The classroom perspective is that I have the lowest scores because I have the kids who are struggling to read and write English. . . . So actually, if you look at my scores, it like, “Wow, what’s going on here? But then you see that I have all of the ELLs in my class. . . . So, you know, you just, it’s working with how to

support the one classroom that does have those challenges, and I'll tell you what Barb, if it ever comes down to paying teachers according to their students' test scores, I'll be out of the dual-immersion program. You know. I couldn't afford to have my pay salary based on my student test scores. It wouldn't be fair . . . It's a double whammy. Their socioeconomic and here, as you can imagine, we have those who are very well off and then we have those who are socioeconomically, you know, challenged because of the nature of this area. So, yeah, there's quite a discrepancy there.

In some schools I sensed that the teaching of culture was a politically sensitive subject. One administrator reported parents sometimes have misunderstandings about cultural content, "[Culture] is another thing people make a mistake about. I've had people ask me, 'Are they going to learn about Mao Tse Tung and communism?' You know that kind of thing in the Little Red Book?' No."

The ways in which schools addressed the study of cultures and cultural proficiency seemed to be impacted somewhat by the schools' demographics. At Parkland Language School the students had higher SES and less diversity. As a school of choice, the school leaders did not have to garner the support of parents who were opposed to linguistic and cultural diversity. Parkland Language School educators did not talk about issues of racism and classism impacting their school.

However, educators at two-way immersion schools talked about the resistance of parents and teachers who did not want the two-way program. One teacher said, "The parents who didn't want their kids in the program were like, 'They're getting all these resources.'" Another teacher described, "Well, there are people who have been very

opposed to it, and see this, ‘Oh it’s for the Spanish kids.’” She said that she doesn’t hear as much of that any more, but “I’m sure it’s still out there.” She described a shift in the community:

So we’ve had families transfer out [because of TWI], but . . . I see people valuing it. I think the language has a little more social status than it did in the past.

That’s something we’re still working on is figuring out how to give it that social status so that the kids want to speak Spanish in the cafeteria or on the playground.

It has academic status but not social. We’re still trying to figure out how to make that happen.

A principal at another TWI school with a wide socioeconomic divide also talked about community resistance. She said:

A couple of the stakeholders that we kind of dismissed after a little bit . . . were a very very small but vocal group that were racist . . . the best way to put it. And that they . . . took this as a benefit for our Latino families, and that that didn’t seem right to them.

She said she basically disregarded that group and kept moving ahead working with the rest of the stakeholders, “And only because it was, they’re very small and . . . it became clear that they were coming from a standpoint of hate, and that wasn’t what this . . . was about.”

That principal also described supporters, “And I think it’s also, there are really strong believers, and a lot of them, if their families are multi-cultural, they understand the need for their child to be multi-cultural.” But, she admitted, “There are places, little corners of the state where it’s like, they don’t want anyone to speak another language.”

Even some classroom teachers in the English strand did not welcome students who were not proficient in English. A teacher in one school described her horror at the reaction of a colleague who taught in the English strand when it was pointed out that something posted in the hall had an inappropriate Spanish word in it:

Another teacher and I saw something in the hallways, and we stopped And we went into the room and showed the teacher and it was a bad word, and . . . we're like yeah, maybe you should just, like, change the word or something . . . or however you want to handle it . . . it probably wouldn't be good if parents saw that 'cause a lot of the Latino parents walk their kids to class She's like, "Well, they can't even read anyway." And then she said, "Well, I got a new [Spanish-speaking student] today anyway and they probably can't read anyway. Who knows if they even speak English?" . . . I had to walk out of the room . . . it took me away that that person actually said that, but, I mean, you know, we're still there. We're still totally there. You know. And part of it is because, you know, that was going to be the only non-English student in that class, and, you know, of course the attitude of the teacher was quite shocking.

Other issues of potential bigotry and racism may have been under the surface and less overt; educators talked about a couple of strategies to combat them. As one principal described, in some cases they simply dismissed the folks who were overtly racist, allowing them to transfer to other schools. Sometimes immersion proponents shifted the focus of their campaigns to English-speaking audiences away from how language immersion would benefit heritage Spanish-speaking students, instead focusing on the advantages immersion would provide to English-speaking students. One principal

described how members of their community downplayed the advantages to native Spanish speakers:

[The program organizers] had really put the spin on that this was only for . . . economic reasons. That we wanted, that [the community] wants to build business. That it's good for business. That we have kids who will be, you know, in the international world and be ready for a global workplace.

By appealing to what potentially bigoted stakeholders wanted for their own children, through sharing research about the cognitive and academic benefits their own children could enjoy, it seemed to minimize or deflect the objections of some of those opposed to helping ELLs who were also attending the program. Clearly, schools attempting to implement TWI programs should be aware of potential resistance due to prejudice or fear of “the other.”

Cultural misunderstandings. Cultural misunderstandings sometimes caused confusion and impacted community cohesiveness. Cultural misunderstandings occurred across language groups, and sometimes within them.

As mentioned, many teachers used the celebration of holidays and cultural traditions as a tool for teaching about the target language culture. Some holidays, like the Chinese New Year, seemed to be easily embraced by parents while others, like the Day of the Dead, stirred controversy, at least at Cousteau's. The principal talked about a parent who was upset after a cultural art project in class:

And so the parent was very concerned because their child was learning all about Mexico, and things that teetered on the line of okay, this is religious? This is cultural? What is Day of the Dead? And is my child talking about souls of dead

people? And my child made an altar in that class. Yes, it was an art project, but that's really not what this parent and their culture and their religion supported. The administrator talked about a difficult conversation with the teacher, "Okay, here's what we can talk about and share. And then here's where we cross the line into uncomfortable. When we're talking about the occult, it's something you can talk about but maybe kids can't be making altars." The intensity of the parent's reaction surprised the administrator.

The administrator went on:

And you know, this parent said, "I don't want my child eating anything [at school]. They ate the Day of the Dead bread and that contains the souls of the dead spirits." It was just a lot of misunderstandings because that really, it's just bread.

The principal was in an awkward position trying to negotiate the different cultures of the teacher and the parent.

A teacher at another school also talked about teaching the Day of the Dead to her students:

Something that's really important for my family is Day of the Dead, so we do an altar, and we do all this stuff. The kids draw a picture of a cat they've lost or can bring in, and we kind of have this whole big ceremony. So, I think we all have different days that are extra, extra important to us.

It seemed like a fine line between talking about the customs and beliefs of another culture and perhaps sharing or promoting the spiritual or religious beliefs of that culture.

One teacher talked about another example of a cultural misunderstanding when an “Anglo” parent was upset because Latino children didn’t show up to birthday parties. The teacher described:

Like one parent came to me and she’s like, “You know, birthday parties . . . we went to a couple birthday parties and I know that the kids invited . . . Latino kids, and they didn’t show up.” And, you know, “Can you please say something to the kids?”

The teacher described feeling heartbroken because she didn’t have the resources to help families navigate cultural differences. The well-intentioned Anglo parent did not understand the cultural considerations and economic barriers facing most Latino families. The teacher replied to the parent via the school-home communication log about explaining that she felt social issues were something that needed to be resolved as a group. The teacher told me:

Parents in those communities need to come together . . . Me saying something to a kid means nothing. It’s like, personally I can tell you five kids whose parents can’t get out to a rural birthday party because they ride the bus. You know? And so there’s just so many obstacles.

The teacher talked about how some of the parents can’t read in English or at all, so they can’t read the invitation. She continued:

I just feel like it would be nice to have that support for the parents, and to better bridge the parents too, you know. Nobody has to be best friends, but just to be able to have some sort of, you know, “I would like your kid to come over, but it’s

gonna take some cultural brokering.” . . . I know one family, one of the oldest children was deported, and so they won’t let their younger kids out of their sight.

Even when the Anglo families made an effort to bridge cultures, their lack of awareness of the realities in which some of the Spanish-speaking families live, such as lack of access to transportation or fear of deportation, contributed to a misunderstanding that Latino parents didn’t want their children to play with Anglo kids after school.

The principal at another school also talked about wanting support for families to bridge cultural divides. When asked what she would change about her school, she responded:

And I would say a person to really work on parent involvement and outreach, because I think we could get to some of those issues that are deeper in our community about getting groups together. We have lots of divide.

She talked about a lack of acceptance of the growing Latino community by the Anglo community, saying:

And in some places there’s lots of acceptance of it; in other places there’s just lots of ignorance or resistance and challenges . . . even the police. My husband’s Latino. He gets pulled over all the time. So little stuff like that, right, that continues to isolate groups of people. Issues about immigration. So people stay isolated and not reach out to the community.

The principal talked about her dreams for Dual Language Immersion, “And so there are some of those cultural things that I thought, oh, DLI is just going to solve all these problems, and . . . it just can’t do all of that.” However, she also talked about how her students are more prepared to address the bigger societal issues after having experienced

TWI. “We have lots of kids who have better skills to reach out and figure some of those things out.”

Educators at schools whose student bodies were composed of primarily two home-language groups, Spanish speaking and English speaking, talked more about issues of classism and racism than schools that either had less diversity or more cultures represented. It made me wonder if the cultural divides had anything to do with why schools seemed to have less defined standards and plans for teaching cultural proficiency. Could political issues and navigating cultural understanding and misunderstandings between teachers, students and parents be why so few schools have an articulated plan for teaching culture?

Developing Cross-cultural Appreciation. Pacific International stood out for intentionally recognizing, celebrating and studying cultures. At Pacific International, where 87% of the students are of color, and an abundance of cultures are represented, they had rich access to a culturally diverse environment and the staff and families seemed to embrace cultural diversity as a unifying characteristic. One teacher said, “[Culture] . . . well that’s a huge part of what makes our school really special.” Another teacher talked about how the school embraced its multicultural population:

We have Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese , Somalia, all kind of culture, and we have this cultural night for we embrace all kind of culture, not because I’m teaching Mandarin, so Chinese get to be a dominant culture. It’s not that. We encourage people to be proud of who they are and bring their culture to share with the whole school.

The principal talked about how they introduced the idea of cultures to the youngest students:

With so many kids from so many different places, the Philippines, Thailand, China, you know, they use GLAD strategies to kind of map out kids, and kind of the different aspects of culture, and everything from like the basic like the types of food that their family eats to kind of religion, things like that. But that's how the teachers bring culture in like at first grade. It's just by having all the kids list all the different countries that their families are from, and then looking at the different aspects of culture.

Pacific International School integrated other strategies as well to develop cultural proficiency. For example, they hosted Culture nights where students celebrate their own and others' cultures. Like Lewis and Clark, they also had a book room with tubs of leveled texts, grouped by themes that included culturally authentic materials.

In addition to valuing the cultural diversity in the school population, as explained earlier, Pacific International also made a major shift in how they taught culture in social studies. As I walked the halls, visited classrooms and interviewed staff at Pacific International, I got the sense that it was clearly a school community that genuinely celebrated and welcomed all cultures.

Scarcity of Resources

Several community challenges, many of them having to do with resources, were quite consistent across most or all of the schools. Educators in every building talked about a lack of time, target-language materials and help in the classrooms.

At every school, educators saw the value of having instructional assistants in all kindergarten and first grade classes, if not longer. Instructional assistants, fluent in the target language, were needed to provide additional language modeling along with supervision and support, especially for the youngest students. In most schools, IA support had been cut due to recessionary budget cuts, as this teacher described:

So it's how to support [teaching so many ELL students in one class], whereas my traditional classrooms in my grade, they maybe have one or two ELL students, and I have eleven. And so that's a struggle, to say, you know, funneling the support where it's needed. And then with budget cuts, losing that support, losing the aids, like last year I was able to have an aid come in in the morning and I would do my progress monitoring while she did small-group time. And she would have a small group, and other kids would be at the centers, and I would pull kids. I didn't get that aid this year.

Teacher after teacher talked about their desire for increased support through instructional assistants.

Without fail, teachers at each school talked about the amount of time they spent gathering and preparing materials in the target language. Some curriculum was available in Spanish, less in Mandarin, and much of what they used had to be developed by the teacher.

Finding materials in Mandarin was the most challenging. One teacher from Pacific International said:

I spend a lot of time just at . . . translation . . . When I first stepped into this program, there's nothing ready. I just got everything math teachers manual in

English and that's it. So I have to translate it and come up with my work sheets and everything visual that my students will be seeing in my class has to be in Chinese. So just the translation part alone is a lot.

When I asked her if time was provided for her to translate and prepare print materials, she said:

I do not have extra time . . . my whole time is developing my lesson. I have no, besides I'm sleeping, my mind's constantly running about my lesson plan. If I know tomorrow I'm going to teach fraction, my mind is running about how am I going to run this lesson plan? What can I bring to this fraction lesson? So for me, preparing my lesson is 24/7. Even sleeping time. Sometimes I dream about a lesson plan. I wake up in the middle of the night, I get up and write it down.

That's my prep time.

Administrators also felt the time pressure as well. The Executive Director at Parkland Language School advised against trying to run a program without additional support:

I mean it's just, you have to have somebody doing it full-time, right? You doing it and running your school now, I mean, you might as well kiss your life goodbye.

Yeah. I mean, it's just, it wears on you . . . you have to be places, you have to talk about it, you know, you have to campaign for it. And that flat out will wear you out.

Hopes for the future

Many of the wishes that staff members had for the future had to do with increased access to resources . . . time, materials, professional development and

support in the form of instructional assistants, parent liaisons or program coordinators.

With demand exceeding capacity, and wait lists at every school, educators also talked about serving more students. When asked what she would change, one coordinator said, “Easier access for parents to get their children in the program . . . I have heard so much from parents that they wanted the program so badly but didn’t get selected by the lottery.” When asked the same question, the principal of Pacific International said:

I guess, gosh this is controversial, that’s a good question. I think I would change the, I wouldn’t do neighborhood schools. I think I would do option schools, even though that creates a whole slew of problems in itself for access. But I really feel like kids from wherever they live should be able to at least have the same opportunity to go to an International School than kids who live in the neighborhood. Because if you wanted to go to [another DLI school in the district], you’d have to be able to afford a million dollar house. That’s not fair.

He was in good company . . . administrators from three of the four schools that had strand programs said they wanted to be magnet schools so that the entire school could be DLI rather than having strands. Even though one advantage to an all-school program was continuity, the primary motivation the administrators in this study talked about was allowing access for all students at their school or more students in their district.

The administrator at the fourth school, Baileys, which was already considered a magnet program, also wanted increased access to the DLI program. One of the concerns at Cousteau’s that was shared at other TWI programs was that there wasn’t capacity for all Spanish-speaking ELL students to participate. So the idea of becoming a magnet

school in order to increase was a consistent theme across the schools with strand programs.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

As explained in Chapter 3, this research investigated one- and two-way, dual- and total-immersion programs in five U.S. schools in different states. The qualitative study primarily relied on observations and interviews of 22 administrators, teachers and program coordinators. Data were collected and analyzed in an attempt to determine how the immersion programs were developed, implemented and sustained. Additionally, the study looked at program standards, assessments, and instructional strategies. Finally, I was interested in student outcomes and the impact of immersion programs on school communities. In addition to several important smaller lessons, my research revealed three big ideas:

1. There was a distinction between immersion education and traditional world languages instruction.
2. Because each school context was different, implementation efforts necessarily varied.
3. While running an elementary immersion program necessarily increased the complexity of work for school personnel, it resulted in many positive outcomes for students and the school community.

Based on the results from the five schools in five states, I also have several recommendations to consider.

Major distinctions. The first big idea is the distinction between immersion programs and traditional world languages programs in terms of content and standards. Many adults in this country still view foreign or world language classes through a

grammar-based lens. The National Standards have begun to impact and drive world languages education towards the 5 Cs. Proficiency-based world languages programs generally teach the target language through a “language arts” approach. In my observations, the main difference between the immersion programs in this study and traditional “foreign language” or “world language” programs is that world language programs tended to build content around language acquisition goals, and immersion programs tended to build language acquisition around the content of the state or district standards.

Context matters. The second big idea that emerged from my data was that schools must respond to their own unique context to drive the change process. While there were factors that impacted the programs’ outcomes, no single way to design, implement and sustain an immersion program emerged. Each educational community’s culture and access to resources created unique circumstances, both challenges and opportunities, which needed to be addressed by immersion program leaders.

Parkland Language School created a total immersion school from the ground up with promising early results. Unlike other schools in the study, the design and implementation of Parkland Language School was parent driven. A charter school with the support of a private foundation, a low student-poverty rate and almost no Special Education or ELL students, Parkland Language School built its entire program around second language acquisition for all students in either Mandarin or Spanish. Students at the Parkland Language School were totally immersed in the target language throughout the school day. In addition to demonstrating growth in target language acquisition, students were exceeding expected growth on literacy measures in English, even though

they were not receiving instruction in English. Because they only hired heritage-language speakers to teach in their program, the teachers' cultures both enriched the educational environment and provided challenges. Teachers' proficiency in the target language and cultural experiences were assets. The level of English proficiency of the teachers made it difficult or impossible for many of them to access important professional development in English. Their cultural backgrounds and educational experiences sometimes made it more difficult for them to manage U.S. students. And, the school leaders found it challenging to develop staff cohesiveness in this two-language school with educators from very different language and cultural backgrounds. After its second year of implementation, Parkland Language School enjoyed incredible popularity among families. The school was the number one school of choice for entering kindergartners in 2012 and continued to have a long waiting list of families eager to enroll.

Joplin's Landing Elementary School enjoyed the benefits of state legislation that provided funding, structure, professional development and other support for language immersion education. In addition to giving students the opportunity to become bilingual in their neighborhood school, their two-way immersion program began to bridge two diverse groups of students, primarily wealthy Anglo students and predominantly poor Latino students. Because of the climate around class, race and immigration, leaders sometimes had to do political tap dancing, publicly emphasizing the economic and other benefits for Anglo students and underplaying the benefits to ELLs. While gaps in cultural understanding continued to exist, there was evidence that the school community and families were making efforts to be more inclusive. Latino students in the TWI program were outperforming their counterparts in the district who were not in immersion

programs on standardized tests. The support and resources of the state model simplified the implementation process and ensured funding for materials and professional development. Because of the articulated expectations at the state level, fewer decisions needed to be made at the building level to implement a dual immersion program with quality and fidelity.

Lewis and Clark Elementary School also offered a two-way immersion program driven by an influx of Spanish-speaking students into the traditionally Anglo, rural setting. Lewis and Clark's program was home-grown, driven by the educators in the school who saw a need to close the achievement gap for ELLs. Now fully implemented K-6, in addition to providing an opportunity for Anglo students to become bilingual, there was evidence that TWI elevated the social capital of the mostly economically challenged Latino students. The principal reported increased leadership, more engaged learners and fewer disciplinary issues with Latino students after TWI implementation. Students in TWI exited the ELL program sooner than students who were not in TWI. This school and community appeared to face formidable challenges overcoming resistance to "the other." School leaders had hoped the TWI program could eliminate the effects of poverty, abolish racism in the community and completely close the achievement gap. While participants agreed TWI made a positive difference for students, they expressed discouragement that they had not made more progress. Lacking additional resources from the district or the state to implement and sustain the program, the school staff carried the entire burden of supporting the program in a somewhat politically-charged environment. The lack of systemic support increased workloads, limited the sustainability of professional development and impacted staff morale. Lewis and Clark

elementary implemented and sustained their two-way immersion program almost exclusively through the dedication and goodwill of the school staff who believed in the TWI model and felt passionate about its benefits for their students.

The multi-cultural Pacific International School seemed to relish their diversity even before becoming an International School. Their one-way Mandarin and two-way Spanish language programs, housed in an open-concept school, contributed to a truly international ambiance. Students were surrounded by a variety of languages; classmates and staff represented many cultures and ethnicities. The abundance of non-English speaking parents volunteering in the school showed evidence of a welcoming environment. Their three-pillar International School model included high academic achievement, global citizenship and world languages. The new action-oriented social studies curriculum emphasized the importance of global citizenship. Offering three languages at each grade level, English, Mandarin and Spanish, complicated staffing and collaboration efforts. Each target-language teacher taught half-days in two grade levels and was essentially a member of three collaborative teams, one for each grade level along with their target language team.

Finally, decades after the immersion program began, Cousteau's Elementary School for the Arts and Sciences proved that language immersion programs with strong district support could stand the test of time. Even when the immersion program appeared to take a back stage to other school programs publicly in this "English only" state, inside the schoolhouse immersion students were actively engaged in integrated thematic units provided exclusively in the target language by passionate educators. School administrators in this gigantic school in a district of well over 100,000 students were not

always grounded in the immersion research and sometimes made decisions based on flawed data-analysis that could have potentially undermined the program. The district-level support proved essential for maintaining program integrity in those situations. Cousteau's TWI model of teaching science and math in Spanish throughout elementary school resulted in TWI heritage-language students performing as well as the English-speaking students on state test scores in math, and provided other benefits to both English- and Spanish-speaking students. The consistent division of content over time provided some surprises when students got to middle school. As expected, students could operate exclusively in the target language in those content areas. The middle school teachers expected them also to be able to write about language-arts centered topics. However, heritage English-speaking students struggled to do that initially, until they received instruction, since math and science was the focus of their K-5 Spanish instruction. Another notable discovery that impacted their instructional strategies at the elementary level was that, without correction, some grammatical errors became fossilized by middle school and were difficult to change. The school responded by integrating some literacy instruction and error correction into the math and science lessons. The district's comprehensive assessment system for reading and writing in the target language stood out for providing evidence of language proficiency growth over time. Recently, reading, writing and cultural goals were added to their new standards-based report cards.

While all the schools in this study provided evidence of positive outcomes for students, providing sufficient resources appeared to enhance the likelihood that programs could sustain themselves and maximize results. Certain resources tended to ease some of the burden on staff and support student and program success.

Schools with trail-blazing administrators who understood the principles of immersion helped to garner stakeholder support and ensure program fidelity. They played an important role in educating the community stakeholders on the research base for language immersion and specific program models. They owned the responsibility of hiring qualified and often-international teaching teachers who were the foundation of program success. Building administrators also addressed the complex challenges of scheduling and ensuring community cohesiveness. A lack of supportive building leadership could present insurmountable challenges to program implementation and fidelity at the elementary level, and as we saw when programs articulated to middle and high schools.

One principal in the study described how implementation was stalled at another elementary school in her district because of lack of leadership support. She said, “I think that one of the barriers to their implementation was that the leadership at the school did not find this attractive at all. They had felt like they were successful in what they were doing already, and did not think that this was something that would be helpful.” Clearly, not all communities felt the same sense of urgency that she did, although all of the elementary schools in that district eventually began implementing dual-language immersion. The principal said, “So I think that, you know, the leadership itself has got to know or feel that this something that is really important for kids, and be willing to step forward and support it wholeheartedly.” She went on to describe the importance of stability with school leadership:

Quite honestly, I think that is part or can be part of our situation here in [this state] is that we still have districts that have the feeling that, you know, every two to

three years they need to change the principals up. But when they do that, whether a program's in place, or your just beginning a program, they, I'm not under the impression that they take that into consideration . . . a leader in a building needs to support this program, know about the program, and be willing to sustain it.

Because it's one thing to implement it, but if you never give it any attention, or help it grow, it's not going to go anywhere.

She warned that programs could be undermined if districts have a culture of moving principals every few years unless the new administrator(s) shared the same commitment to DLI. Her point was underscored when, in fact, I noticed that Joplin's Landing had a new principal the year following this study.

When administrators understood the principles of second-language acquisition and the foundations of language immersion, they could communicate effectively with stakeholders and support program fidelity. Bilingual administrators seemed to be able to use their own experiences to connect with the target language community and students. Non-English speaking parents appreciated that they could speak with the principal with their doubts or concerns in their home language. When the principal and/or other staff spoke their heritage language, it appeared parents had increased access and were more comfortable being involved in their child's schooling.

The ability for teachers to collaborate within their grade-level band and in the cross-grade language band was an essential component for every school. Every district in the study provided weekly release time for teachers to collaborate to map curriculum, plan integrated thematic units, analyze student assessment data and respond

instructionally to the data. Horizontal and vertical team meetings assisted with program consistency and articulation.

Table 8 highlights the similarities and differences between the five schools in this study. Because contexts varied widely, there was no single blueprint for designing and implementing elementary immersion programs. The political climate, access to resources and cultural influences all played a role in how schools approached and sustained their immersion programs.

Table 8. Five Schools: Similarities and Differences

Similarities

- All schools taught to the same content standards as their non-immersion counterparts.
- All schools maintained program integrity by teaching in the target language.
- All schools' students reported outcomes the same as or better than their non-immersion counterparts on district and state assessments.
- All schools had to address political challenges.
- Two-way immersion programs significantly benefited ELLs.
- All participants were passionate about immersion.

Differences

- Schools divided content and time differently.
 - Differences in demographics seemed to influence the pace of student outcomes and community cohesiveness.
 - Established programs and magnet schools had more staff and community buy-in and less political turmoil.
 - Access to resources impacted program consistency and staff morale.
-

Student outcomes. The results of this study revealed that the process of designing, implementing and sustaining an elementary immersion program was demanding, yet the participants highlighted countless tangible and perhaps intangible rewards for students and the community.

Passionate, well-trained and adequately supported teachers were the heart of the successful immersion programs. Through countless hours of planning and materials

preparation along with skilled instruction, teachers brought languages and cultures to life for their students. They used research-informed instructional strategies including integrating language and content, delivering engaging lessons with active student participation, and continuously using formative assessment to drive instruction.

Evidence in this study showed the goals of bilingualism, bi-literacy and enhanced cultural proficiency appeared to be fully attainable over time. Assessment data revealed that students in language immersion programs gained proficiency in a second or third language through content-based instruction targeting district, state and national standards. Based on the body of research on second-language acquisition along with the evidence from this study, students had access to the academic, cognitive and citizenship benefits associated with learning another language without detracting from content instruction. In the schools in this study, students appeared to perform similarly or better than their non-immersion counterparts on school and district assessments.

English Language Learners appeared to outperform their non-immersion peers consistently. According to participants, those in immersion programs consistently scored higher on standardized tests. Accessing academic content in their heritage language seemed to markedly improve their performance on math and some other assessments given in English. In addition, schools reported increased social status and opportunities to shine for Spanish-speaking students in two-way immersion programs.

These indicators showed promise that, given sufficient time, TWI could help close the achievement gap for ELLs. Based on what the participants said about student achievement, it appeared that Spanish-speaking students could potentially experience a slight delay in English acquisition early on, but learning the content in their home

language allowed them to develop content rigor, so that, with time students outperformed their peers on standardized tests.

Recommendations. Study results lead me to several recommendations for implementation, delivery and decision-makers, as summarized in Table 9. While dual immersion programs were often touted as the least expensive model because they could be achieved with existing FTE, program planners need to provide resources in order to ensure sustainability and fidelity. Program budgets should include the costs of materials, including the time translating those not available in the target language, and resources for initial and ongoing professional development.

Instructional assistants proved to be a huge asset in the earliest years, kindergarten and first grade, when students had no prior exposure to the target language and were just learning the routines and expectations for school. In most schools IA time was drastically reduced or eliminated due to budget reductions. Educators mourned the loss of the IAs and repeatedly emphasized their value to get students off to a good start in immersion programs.

Student attrition also impacted program costs, and should be planned for in the program implementation stage. Districts handled student attrition differently. Some front-loaded the kindergarten and first grade classes and provided instructional assistants to ensure enough students to sustain the upper grades. In the largest district in the study, attrition hit at third grade when some students tested into the gifted and talented program that was housed at another school. In that case, the world languages department budgeted for additional staffing on the English side. Since they could not add students to immersion classes in the upper grades without a foundation in Spanish, this took pressure

off the bulging fourth and fifth grade classes taught in English. While there are many ways to address the attrition issue, school districts should plan ahead for this potential expense to maintain program sustainability.

Table 9. Recommendations

Recommendations for implementation

- Ensure sufficient resources including time for collaboration, materials in the target language and instructional assistants for K-1.
- Use research and real-life evidence (site visits) to educate and involve stakeholders. (Seeing is believing.)
- Consider using a magnet school model with transportation provided, if possible.
- Articulate a K-12 (or K-16) plan from the onset of the program and tend to it annually.
- Intentionally attend to cultural issues, recognizing that cultures of the students, community and educators impact multiple aspects of the program including cohesiveness.
- Plan for how cultures will be taught formally and informally.
- Set and communicate realistic expectations.
- Establish a plan to recruit, train and support high-quality staff that ensures some staff consistency over time.

Recommendations for delivery

- Adhere to and monitor program fidelity, including the use of the target language and instructional strategies, to achieve intended outcomes.
- Provide ongoing, imbedded professional development for all staff.

Recommendations for decision-makers

- Increase access to language immersion programs for all students, especially marginalized populations, to help close the achievement gap and to prepare citizens with 21st Century skills who can function elegantly in a global society.
 - Adopt a language policy, like Utah's, that articulates a replicable model-program and guarantees resources for professional development and materials.
-

Schools seemed to benefit immensely from having a school or district program-coordinator. Innovative immersion programs attracted a lot of guests who demanded extra time and attention. For example, most parents and stakeholders were unfamiliar with the model and needed information and opportunities to ask questions, understand the

research base, and tour the school. In two-way programs, bilingual staff needed to explain immersion benefits and address the concerns of heritage-language students' parents. For many it was counterintuitive that students would achieve better on assessments in English by receiving instruction in their home language. Program coordinators could also assist with ongoing immersion-specific professional development, coaching, assessment and data-analysis. It appeared unreasonable to expect the building principal and teachers to handle all of the above duties while simultaneously fulfilling their other job-specific responsibilities. In the school without that support, there was evidence of staff burn-out.

Several educational leaders wished that their schools could become magnet schools rather than strand schools to increase access and enhance cohesiveness. Demand exceeded capacity in every immersion program in the study. Administrators in TWI schools seemed particularly troubled that they did not have capacity for all of the ELL students who would have liked to have been in the TWI programs. Many Spanish-speaking students had to attend the English-language strands because the immersion strands filled up. Some educators saw this as an ethical dilemma because they knew the ELL students within the immersion program had better outcomes overall than the students in the English strand.

Operating as a magnet school could also increase community cohesiveness. All students would be language learners and all staff choosing to work there would presumably be supportive of the immersion concept. If the school opened as a magnet school, it could avoid the tension and resentment among staff that resulted from potential teacher displacement. A final advantage of a two-way magnet school model would be the

ability to balance language models so that close to 50% of students would be able to speak the target language at all times.

The potential risk of using a magnet-school model would be transportation issues. Providing transportation outside of neighborhood catchment areas was very expensive for school districts. However, if parents provided transportation, then many students whose parents are not able because of their work schedule or cannot afford transportation costs would be excluded. Inability to access transportation would undermine the goal of increasing access to immersion programs for less affluent students.

Another implementation recommendation relates to articulation. From the earliest stages of program development, K-12 articulation needs to be part of the vision and stakeholders from all levels need to be involved. Because programs are usually phased in one year at a time, it could take as long as six or seven years for a program to reach middle school. With all of the demands of implementation and delivery at the elementary school level, and years before middle and high school programs are impacted, discussions about program articulation are easily postponed. Since the middle and high school staffs stand to have a great deal of turnover over that time period, elementary schools and district leaders need to constantly cultivate the vision and educate their secondary counterparts on the tangible benefits years before the program is expected to move to the next level. Therefore, a K-12 or a K-16 (partnering with a University) vision and articulation plan should be established at the very beginning of the program, and attended to on an annual basis, so that middle and high schools have time to build staff capacity and develop shared beliefs.

I recommend several strategies that can help secondary stakeholders buy-in to the immersion concept. Secondary decision-makers should be apprised of the immersion research. Sharing disaggregated performance data about the immersion students coming to their school can personalize the data and speak to the heart of what most secondary administrators want and are held accountable for: high academic achievement and closing the achievement gap. Providing professional development opportunities regularly *before* the program reaches middle school can help lay the foundation for a sense of urgency and an understanding of best practices.

Further, just as when building stakeholder support at the elementary level, an effective way to create true believers is to have secondary educators observe students in action at their feeder schools, as Cousteau's district did. Unless they see it with their own eyes, secondary stakeholders may never be able to wrap their minds around the benefits a well-articulated immersion program can offer their students and school. Sometimes the most powerful voices come from the families themselves; provide opportunities for passionate immersion students and parents to have a voice and advocate for their needs.

The next recommendation is to be intentional about addressing issues of culture. Participants in the study seemed to be satisfied that their students were acquiring communication and academic content skills in their immersion programs, but many suggested that they would have liked a more articulated plan and support for teaching cultures and bridging cultural divides when they exist. Educators need to be aware of the potential impact of fear of and resistance to "the other" in their community. I recommend including culture in the original K-12 articulation plan rather than risk it becoming an after-thought.

Since each school's context is unique, practitioners need to analyze their own setting to determine the best course of action for implementing a program, asking themselves:

1. What is the purpose of our program? What mission vision and goals will drive our program?
2. Who are our stakeholders, how will we reach them and what do they need to know in order to buy into the immersion program?
3. What resources are available and how can we maximize those resources to achieve the program goals?
4. How will we attract qualified bilingual staff and how can we provide the professional development, support, resources and job-satisfaction that will encourage them to stay?
5. How will we ensure that educators employ the best practices available resulting in positive measurable outcomes for students?
6. How can we cultivate a cohesive community that embraces high standards for all and ensures students have 21st Century Skills and citizenship that prepare them for a global society?

I discovered that it is important to have realistic expectations and to communicate those to stakeholders. Language immersion programs cannot close all of the achievement gaps or repair all of a community's cultural divides in two or three years, but it seems they can make a difference in a community from the very beginning. Done well, with a continuous improvement cycle, skilled and dedicated staff and sufficient resources, there is evidence that language immersion programs absolutely can give students the lifelong

benefits of bilingualism and bi-literacy and cultural proficiency and at least begin to bring multicultural communities closer together.

Students with special needs, English-language learners and economically challenged students should have the same access to immersion programs as other students. As we saw in several schools, they should be expected to make the same or better growth as their counterparts outside of immersion.

It was important for stakeholders to realize that DLI benefits took time. The long-term benefits of early immersion, especially for ELLs, may be most evident as students moved into secondary school. While there is some literature in the field, there is a need for longitudinal research that disaggregates student data and measure factors such as academic achievement, cognitive flexibility, graduation rates, attendance rates, discipline referrals, and proficiency in both languages. We need studies that follow DLI students beyond middle and high school. More research is needed to fully understand the impacts of DLI programs on English language-learners and heritage English speakers including performance on state assessments, post-secondary graduation rates and potential impacts on socioeconomic status.

In order to achieve the lofty goals of bilingualism, bi-literacy and cross-cultural appreciation, schools must ensure program fidelity over time. Establishing and maintaining high expectations for students and staff is paramount. Program leaders must monitor the delivery of practices identified by language-acquisition research such as exclusive use of the target language and high-leverage instructional strategies. Providing quality professional development at the onset of the program, and including ongoing,

imbedded training and coaching with regular fidelity checks will help to ensure high quality teaching and positive student outcomes.

I have two recommendations for local, state and national decision-makers who want to graduate culturally proficient citizens from U.S. public schools prepared to succeed in a global economy with 21st Century skills. First of all, begin to close the achievement gap for potentially marginalized populations by increasing access to high-quality immersion programs. Secondly, accomplish that goal by developing language policy, like Utah's, that establishes a vision; identifies model, replicable programs; requires and monitors adherence to program standards; and allocates resources for materials and professional development.

In the schools I studied, coast to coast, participants agreed that running an immersion program was challenging, time-consuming, exhausting, and yet incredibly rewarding. Every single educator I interviewed inspired me with their passion and dedication. Participants emphasized the importance of making students feel successful and helping them to recognize their own progress. This study helped me recognize that program success is entirely dependent upon the commitment of the educators in the program and their access to resources.

Each of the schools in this study had at least one outstanding strength that I would highlight for practitioners. Parkland Language School employed a magnet school model that allowed the entire school to be focused on becoming proficient in another language and cultures. Lewis and Clark Elementary demonstrated the power of committed educators to implement a two-way immersion program with little or no additional resources. Cousteau's longevity and program integrity was partially ensured by their

comprehensive assessment system that demonstrated measurable outcomes over time. If all districts had the resources and support that Joplin's Landing had with Utah's state model, the United States of America could begin to break free from its monolingual limitations. If we were to combine Utah's systematic support for language learning, with a well-articulated plan for cultural competency like Pacific International School was developing, U.S. public schools would be better equipped to equitably prepare students to succeed and compete in a multi-cultural, global society.

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Appendix

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations Glossary of Terms

AAPPL	ACTFL's Assessment of Performance Toward Proficiency in Languages
ACTFL	American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
Bilingual education	Instruction intended to help non-English speaking students become proficient in English.
DIBELS	Dynamic Indicators of Basic English Literacy Skills, an early literacy assessment tool
DRA	Developmental Reading Assessment, a reading assessment tool
DLE	Dual-language education: Instruction in two languages with the goals of bilingualism, bi-literacy and cross-cultural appreciation. At least 50% to 90% of instruction is in a language other than English.
DLI	Dual-language immersion, another name for dual-language education
EDL	Evaluación del Desarrollo de la Lectura, a Spanish version of the Developmental Reading Assessment
ELD	English language development (ELL support)
ESOL	English for speakers of other languages, English language instruction for students whose heritage language is other than English.
ELL	English-language learner. A student whose heritage language is other than English.
FLES	Foreign language in the elementary school. usually taught by a specialist. FLES may or may not be taught completely in the target language and may include content instruction and/or language arts instruction. FLES programs are enrichment programs and have less contact time than dual-language programs.
FLEX	Foreign language exploratory courses. Designed to expose students to other languages and cultures. Some FLEX programs rotate students through a "wheel" of languages, for example students spend one trimester studying French, the next trimester studying German and the last trimester studying Spanish.
Foreign language	A language other than English, more commonly referred to as World Language because many languages other than English are not foreign. (Ex. American Sign Language, Native American languages)
Foreign language immersion	100% of instruction in a language other than English.
GLAD	Guided Language Acquisition Design
Heritage language	The language of one's parents or home, first language.
Home language	The language spoken in one's home
IA	Instructional assistant
L1	First language
L2	Second or target language

Limited-English proficient (LEP)	An antiquated deficit-based term to describe English Language Learners
MAP	Measure of Academic Progress
Native language	First language or home language, L1
One-way immersion:	Dual -language immersion intended to help English-speakers acquire another language
OPI	ACTFL's Oral Proficiency Interview
Partner language	Target language partnered with English
PLC	Professional Learning Community
SIOP	Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol
Target language	Language of instruction, other than English
Total immersion:	Language immersion in which students are immersed in the target language almost 100% of the time
Two-way immersion:	Dual language immersion in which one-half to one-third of the students are heritage-English speakers and the rest of the students are heritage speakers of the partner language (ex. Spanish)
World Language	A language other than English, also referred to as a foreign language
WPT	ACTFL's Writing Proficiency Test